

# LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

## Supplementary Planning Guidance 2004



Updated 2009





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Herefordshire's Landscape Character Assessment was researched, co-ordinated, written and updated by Jane Patton, my predecessor, during the period 1999 – 2006. She received invaluable support, encouragement and practical help from a number of people, in particular from Chris Bray and Kay Adams of Worcestershire County Council. Kay Adams and Jonathan Porter (Countryside consultancy) undertook the initial survey work for Herefordshire, while Bill Jackson (Estate Agent), provided them with office accommodation in Leominster. Steven Warnock, the regional consultant for the production of Landscape Character Assessments, provided expert advice. Advice and encouragement also came from other Local Authorities with whom he was working, notably Dr. Stephen Potter in Staffordshire, Jerry Birbeck in Warwickshire and Rob Pinsent from Shropshire. Dr. Delia Hooke provided much of the initial historical/cultural survey information and analysis, while Paul White from Herefordshire Archaeology later gave valuable insights from his Historic Landscape Characterisation. Penny Oliver of the CPRE (Council for the Protection of Rural England) provided extra data and analysis, particularly regarding woodland cover. Dr. Peter Oliver from the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust checked and re-wrote the geological and soil entries. Anthea Bryan from the Herefordshire Nature Trust provided data and Geoff Gwatkin supplied copies of the county tithe maps. Bridgit Symons, (working for Countryside consultancy at the time, and who is currently Planning Ecologist for Herefordshire Council), did the ecological fieldwork required and provided ecological data and analysis. Steve Dring and Gill Eyre undertook the site visits needed to verify information in the Landscape Character Assessment. Councillor Phil Edwards, former Cabinet Member for the Environment, provided the foreword to the Landscape Character Assessment when it was published and adopted in 2004. Alexandra Millward, the former Conservation Technician, undertook the design and desktop publishing of the Landscape Character Assessment. Sarah Connelly, Conservation Technician, has updated the design and format of this document.

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2009





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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 GENERAL

**1.1.1** The terms “Landscape” and “Landscape Character” are familiar to most of us, but what exactly do they mean? On reflection, most people would find them difficult to define and the more one might try to rationalise a definition the more elusive those definitions become. This Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) seeks to explain the modern concepts of landscape and landscape character and to offer guidance in the application of Landscape Character Assessment to professionals and lay persons alike. Although termed **Supplementary Planning Guidance**, the advice offered is somewhat broader in that it can be used for land management purposes and to enable local communities to identify the landscape elements that contribute to local distinctiveness. This will be particularly helpful when undertaking non-development control work such as preparing Parish Plans.

**1.1.2** The Landscape Character Assessment SPG provides the guidance necessary to comply with the landscape policies of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (UDP). It is intended to promote the use of landscape assessment as part of the development control process, to increase awareness of the countryside’s character and to ensure that future development is compatible with that character. It has been written as far as possible in non-technical language for ease of understanding and to make it accessible to anyone who requires information about the Council’s policy and practice for the conservation, enhancement and regeneration of the rural landscape.

**1.1.3** A technical handbook has also been produced. This contains further descriptions as well as exhaustive raw data from the Landscape Character Assessment database. A full range of definitions is included in the technical handbook, even though terms that are used throughout this SPG 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.

### 1.2 ADVICE ON HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

**1.2.1** The document 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 upon which some of the UDP policies are based, along with a brief analysis of changing character trends and guidance for future management and development.

**1.2.2** In order to gain a full understanding of the Landscape Character Assessment process the reader is encouraged to read the whole of Part One in the order it is written. However, for a quick resume, 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 precepts of Landscape Character Assessment in a graphical format. A quick step-by-step guide for potential developers is included in section 6.2. This section could also be viewed as an indicative process for evaluating the suitability of other non-built development.

**1.2.3** Part Two sets out the Landscape Types; each having a double page spread for ease of reference. The primary and secondary characteristics have been derived from the detailed evaluation of “significance” which is explained in Appendix A, clause A2.4. A thumbnail plan of Herefordshire indicates the disposition of the Landscape Type and the colours relate to those used in Fig. 8 – Map of 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 management guidelines demonstrate the broadbrush 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.





# PART ONE - LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND ITS APPLICATIONS

## PART ONE - LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND ITS APPLICATION







## 2.0 THE PLANNING SYSTEM

### Summary

- Government guidance promotes the use of landscape character assessment (LCA) in the planning process
- Previous local AGLV (Area of Great Landscape Value) designation is supplanted by LCA
- Relevant Unitary Development Plan (UDP) policies that have been informed by, or mention, the LCA are set out in full
- A representative summary of anticipated application for the LCA is explained

### 2.1 DESIGNATION AND THE NEED FOR LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

**2.1.1** Land use planning issues have traditionally been tackled through the designation of “special areas”, where change, in particular new development, is considered to be undesirable and is restricted through strict planning policies. The emphasis of most Development Plans has been to protect or preserve those areas of the countryside that were considered to be the most beautiful. The criteria for defining these areas were somewhat subjective, being based on a notion of qualitative beauty. The landscapes that were identified as being the best or most beautiful were often those remote areas with dramatic topography which, because of their physical nature, were generally under less pressure from development than the gentler lower lying landscapes.

**2.1.2** This process led to a hierarchy of protective landscape designations. The most important were those nationally recognised landscapes designated as National Parks, and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Within Herefordshire there are two such designations: the Wye Valley AONB and the Malvern Hills AONB. There are no National Parks. Next, are areas considered to be of regional importance, identified as Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV), followed by landscapes of local significance that would be identified and shown in Local Plans. Other protective designations, based on nature conservation issues, are in use at all levels of scale.

**2.1.3** Whilst it is possible to re-define local landscape designations using a character based framework to assess the relative value, or importance of particular landscapes, this still does not address the fact that designation is a rather blunt planning tool that does not necessarily lead to the protection or enhancement of landscape character. Nor does it tackle the problem that

designation of one area tends to devalue other non-designated areas. Increasingly, therefore, it is recognised that it is not enough simply to protect our most valued landscapes, but that every landscape makes a contribution – no matter how small – to the overall picture. The new computer technology of GIS (Geographic Information System) has allowed us to develop methods of assessment which are structured and repeatable, which clearly separate the process of description, and classification from those of analysis and which rely on well argued, professional judgement in evaluation.

**2.1.4** The challenge for planners and land managers is to find new ways for accommodating change, whilst retaining and, where possible, strengthening pattern and diversity in landscape. This does not mean that things should necessarily be kept as they are, but if we are serious about conserving regional character and local distinctiveness, new ways need to be found not only to manage the countryside more effectively, but also to guide and control the forces for change.

**2.1.5** The Landscape Character Assessment has enabled us to move away from previous dependence on regional and local designation and in doing so to take a more holistic approach to the issues of land use change.

### 2.2 APPLICATION OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

**2.2.1** The Landscape Character Assessment is not an end in itself. Rather, it is a powerful tool that 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. The potential applications for this tool are many and varied. A representative summary is set out below:

#### i) Planning

- Use during the strategic planning process to identify sites for future housing or industrial allocation.
- Contribute to landscape capacity studies relating to land allocation at county level.
- Inform and underpin development policies within County, Unitary and Local Plans.
- Use to prepare design guidance for new built development.
- Inform development control decisions.
- Include as part of the landscape and visual impact analysis when assessing development

proposals, particularly during the preparation of Environmental Impact Assessments.

- Inform and justify 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 or biodiversity enhancement during the development control process.

## ii) Landscape Conservation, Management and Enhancement

- Provide the basis for appropriate and sustainable land use change, e.g. opportunities for new woodland.
- Contribute to the appraisals of other organisations, e.g. the Forestry Commission's Woodland Grant Scheme.
- Use to prepare landscape management plans.
- Enable sustainable and targeted grant aid.
- Inform the targeting of agri-environmental initiatives.
- Contribute to allied studies and initiatives such as Historic Landscape Characterisations, Parish Plans, Village Design Statements.
- Inform the County Biodiversity Action Plan and subsequent initiatives.
- Contribute to wider initiatives that address other aspects of sustainability such as tourism.

## 2.3 GOVERNMENT PLANNING GUIDANCE

**2.3.1** The Government's Rural White Paper, *Our Countryside: The Future*, was launched in November 2000. It sets out its vision of 'a **protected countryside** in which the environment is sustained and enhanced, and which all can enjoy.' One of the ways that it intends to achieve this is to 'develop a more holistic approach which takes better account of all **landscapes** in national best practice guidance.' The White Paper then goes on to promote the use of Landscape Character Assessment as a tool in the achievement of its goal to ensure that 'the countryside is safeguarded for its own sake'. The White Paper specifically mentions the countryside character framework formulated by the Countryside Agency and mentioned in sections 2.3.6 and 3.1.3 of this SPG.

**2.3.2** The Government considers sustainable development to be the cornerstone of both its rural and planning policies. As part of their commitment

to the countryside the government has given an undertaking in the Rural White Paper to '**help rural communities make the character of the countryside an economic as well as an environmental asset**'. An understanding of the character of the landscape is therefore required in order to ensure, wherever possible, that local distinctiveness and "sense of place" are preserved and strengthened through countryside initiatives and future development.

**2.3.3** At a regional level, the government issues guidance for the production of Regional Development Plans. This Regional Planning Guidance (RPG), which is now known as Regional Spatial Strategy, sets priorities for issues such as housing, transport and waste disposal that need to be addressed at a wider geographical scale than individual District Local Plans. The West Midlands RPG 11, which includes the Herefordshire area, was published in June 2004 and stresses the need to use landscape character assessment when preparing guidance. Policy QE1 of the Quality of the Environment chapter states '*Local authorities and other agencies in their plans, policies and proposals should:.....d) protect and enhance the distinctive character of different parts of the Region as recognised by the natural and character areas and associated local landscape character assessments ....*'

**2.3.4** The Government also provides guidance to Local Authorities on the interpretation and implementation of aspects of planning law and policy. This guidance is published as a series of Planning Policy Statements (PPS). Each one deals with a specific subject and is identified by title and number. These replace previously published Planning Policy Guidance (PPG).

**2.3.5** The Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment has arisen from the requirements of PPG7 entitled *The Countryside – Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development* revised in February 1997, and of PPS7 entitled *Sustainable Development in Rural Areas*, published in 2004. PPG7 and PPS7 set out how the Government's objectives for rural areas should be reflected in land use planning. They promote the use of landscape character assessment to understand, safeguard and enrich the quality of the whole landscape for its own sake, whilst still accommodating appropriate development.

**2.3.6** Under the heading of Local Countryside Designations, PPS7 states that '*The Government does not believe that local countryside designations are necessary .....In reviewing their development plans, **planning authorities should remove any existing designations** and*



adopt criteria-based policies.....'. Furthermore, PPS7 draws attention to one of the key principles of National Planning Policy which states that '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.' PPS7 promotes the national landscape character approach formulated by the Countryside Agency as being an important part of the process to accommodate necessary change in the countryside without sacrificing local character. This advice has encouraged many Local Authorities, including Herefordshire, to carry out county based landscape character assessments. In the Midlands region several Local Authorities have undertake their assessments using the same methodology as Herefordshire. This is resulting in a progressively unified system of landscape character assessment applied to the whole Midlands region. **In Herefordshire, the evaluation of the Landscape Character Assessment, combined with advice in PPS7, has led to the decision to seek an alternative approach to local landscape designation.** The analysis resulting from Landscape Character Assessment is intended to supplant the previous designation of Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) by identifying the key characteristics of the local landscape character.

## 2.4 UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

**2.4.1** The Herefordshire UDP reflects the aspirations of the Herefordshire Plan, which is the underlying strategy for the future of the County. The Herefordshire Plan sets out a vision to:

- Create fair and thriving communities which will be inclusive for all allowing equal and free access to opportunities and services;
- **Properly protect and enhance the environment through sustainable development;**
- Build a strong, competitive and innovative economy with a balanced mix of businesses, jobs and homes.

This SPG primarily supports, complements and provides further detail for the landscape policies set out in the Natural and Historic Heritage chapter of the UDP, particularly policy LA2. It also, to a greater or lesser extent, impacts on the policies relating to biodiversity, the built environment and archaeology. The guidance contained in Herefordshire Council's Biodiversity SPG is particularly pertinent to landscape issues. The two SPGs are complementary and designed to give supporting advice and to overcome any perceived conflict of interest.

In order that this SPG can be used as a stand alone document, the directly relevant policies contained in the UDP are set out below.

### 2.4.2 **UDP Strategy**

This chapter sets out the overall strategy of the UDP and includes a set of guiding principles along with strategic policies for the development and use of land. There are four guiding principles and one strategic policy pertinent to this SPG.

#### **Guiding Principle P5**

*The UDP will promote forms of environmental management which minimise the depletion of scarce and non-renewable resources, reduce energy consumption and waste, and encourage use of recycled and renewable resources.*

#### **Guiding Principle P6**

*The UDP will favour those forms of land use and development which work within environmental capacity, which demonstrate beneficial environmental impacts or minimise adverse impacts on key resources such as air, water, land, biodiversity, accessibility, or demonstrate successful mitigation or compensatory measures for environmental damage.*

#### **Guiding Principle P7**

*The UDP will protect, restore and enhance environmental assets, giving special attention to irreplaceable resources and to the distinctive character of local environments. It will give high priority to conserving and enhancing the characteristic Herefordshire landscape, designated areas, historic buildings, archaeology, features of geological interest and biodiversity and the processes which support them, and ensuring sympathetic integration of new land use and development.*

#### **Guiding Principle P10**

*The UDP will promote high design standards in the location, setting, layout and construction of both new development and improvements to existing developments. High priority will be given to energy efficiency in terms of design form and use, location and transport requirements.*

#### **Strategic Policy S1 Sustainable Development**

*The Plan will promote development and land use change which in terms of its level, location, form and design contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. This means avoiding or minimising adverse impacts on the environment whilst providing necessary dwellings and employment together with appropriate infrastructure, services, transport and amenities.*

Sustainable development will be promoted by:

1. protecting and enhancing the natural environment and historic heritage, especially irreplaceable assets;
2. respecting patterns of local distinctiveness and landscape character in both town and country, and safeguarding landscape quality and visual amenity;
3. conserving and minimising use of natural resources - particularly non-renewables - and encouraging resource enhancement and alternatives to the use of non-renewable resources;
4. regenerating or recycling previously-used resources - including previously-developed land, buildings and infrastructure - and perpetuating the use of existing infrastructure and facilities wherever possible;
5. increasing energy conservation, energy-efficiency, and energy generation from renewable sources;
6. minimising waste and pollution and adopting sustainable treatment systems;
7. directing necessary new development to locations, settlements and sites that best meet the appropriate sustainable development criteria;
8. requiring more sustainable design in all aspects of new development, redevelopment and regeneration;
9. ensuring that development respects the needs of local communities and encouraging greater self-sufficiency within local communities;
10. seeking more equitable access for all sectors of the community to opportunities for homes and livelihoods, natural and historic resources, health, recreation, amenity, education and facilities and services;
11. supporting sustainable economic activity and high and stable levels of employment;
12. supporting more sustainable approaches to land use and land management in rural areas;
13. reducing the need to travel, securing safe and convenient accessibility between different land uses and maintaining, improving and integrating opportunities to move safely and conveniently by modes other than personal motor transport;
14. improving health and safety through reduced pollution and safer design of the built environment and landscaping;

15. avoiding or minimising adverse impacts of human activities, land uses and development on the physical environment.

### **Strategic Policy S7 Natural and Historic Heritage**

The following assets comprising the County's historic and natural heritage will be protected, restored or enhanced:

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;

1. sites and features of international, national and local nature conservation interest, species of biodiversity interest and areas of geodiversity;
2. the historic heritage including archaeology, buildings and areas of historic or architectural importance, and natural landscapes; and
3. landscape features that contribute positively to local distinctiveness and quality of the local environment.

#### **2.4.3 UDP Policies, Natural and Historic Heritage**

Several policies within chapter nine of the UDP are directly relevant to this SPG. In broad terms, they aim to conserve and enhance the natural and historic heritage of the County whilst promoting change that contributes positively to people's quality of life.

#### **Policy LA1 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

Within the Malvern Hills and Wye Valley Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, priority will be given to the protection and enhancement of the natural beauty and amenity of the area in the national interest and in accordance with the relevant management plans.

Development will only be permitted where it is small scale, does not adversely affect the intrinsic natural beauty of the landscape and it is necessary to facilitate the economic and social well-being of the designated areas and their communities or can enhance the quality of the landscape or biodiversity.

Exceptions to this policy will only be permitted when all of the following have been demonstrated:

1. the development is of greater national interest than the purpose of the AONB;
2. there is unlikely to be any adverse impact upon the local economy;
3. no alternative site is available, including outside of the AONB; and



- any detrimental effect upon the landscape, biodiversity and historic assets can be mitigated adequately and, where appropriate, compensatory measures provided.

**Policy LA2 Landscape character and areas least resilient to change**

Proposals for new development that would adversely affect either the overall character of the landscape, as defined by the Landscape Character Assessment and the Historic Landscape Characterisation, or its key attributes or features, will not be permitted.

Proposals should demonstrate that landscape character has influenced their design, scale, nature and site selection. Where appropriate, developers will be encouraged to restore degraded or despoiled landscapes to their inherent character.

**Policy LA3 Setting of settlements**

Development outside the built up areas of Hereford, the market towns and rural settlements, which is acceptable in terms of other Plan policies, will only be permitted where it would not have an adverse effect upon the landscape setting of the settlement concerned.

Important visual approaches into settlements, views of key buildings, open areas into development, green corridors, ridgelines and surrounding valued open countryside will be particularly protected and, where necessary, enhanced.

In appropriate new developments around existing settlements the creation of open space, urban parks, green wedges, and tree lines will be promoted where they complement and enhance landscape character and townscape.

**Policy LA5 Protection of trees, woodlands and hedgerows**

The enhancement and protection of individual trees, tree groups, woodlands and hedgerows will be secured by:

- placing Tree Preservation Orders where necessary on trees, groups of trees and woodlands of amenity value, and making use of hedgerow protection legislation;
- resisting proposals that would cause loss or damage to trees (including veteran trees), hedgerows, mature traditional orchards or woodlands which are worthy of retention. In particular, proposals affecting protected trees and Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodlands will

be subject to rigorous examination. Where the felling of protected trees is accepted replacement planting will be sought;

- requiring development proposals to include an acceptable landscaping scheme submitted in accordance with policy LA6, the retention of those trees and hedgerows considered important to local amenity, together with measures to ensure their protection during development, and the replacement of trees and woodland lost to development with an equivalent area of planting; and
- where appropriate taking into account as a material consideration the Woodland Management Guidelines produced for the Malvern Hills and Wye Valley AONBs and the Government's England Forestry Strategy together with Forestry Commission guidance on Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodlands.

Management agreements to enable new or increased public access to woodlands may be entered into, particularly where there is a shortage of such opportunities within the particular locality.

**Policy LA6 Landscaping schemes**

Landscaping schemes will be required to be submitted as an integral part of any development proposals that will affect the visual amenity or character of the location. Landscaping schemes will be required to:

- assess the existing character and features of the particular site and its wider landscape character in accordance with policy LA2, indicating how these have contributed to the overall design approach and which features, including trees, will be removed;
- indicate and make arrangements to protect and retain existing trees and hedgerows, in accordance with policy LA5 and also other landscape features worthy of retention; and
- include new landscape works to ensure development integrates appropriately into its surroundings in terms of scale, enhances any existing character and features and especially takes the opportunity to remove eyesores and improve disfigured or despoiled land;

Landscaping works should be undertaken during development or as soon as practicable thereafter. In the case of major proposals, consideration should be given to advanced landscaping works being carried out before building or enabling works are commenced.

## **2.5 HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISATION**

**2.5.1** Herefordshire Council has completed a Historic Landscape Characterisation of the whole county that provides a basis for the definition of historic landscape understanding and protection. 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 process while the latter is primarily concerned with the combination of physical and cultural factors that are expressed visually in the landscape.

**2.5.2** The Historic Landscape Characterisation was carried out after the main bulk of the Landscape Character Assessment had been completed. It was originally thought that the two studies could share the same Land Cover Parcel boundaries (see section 4.2) but it was soon proved to be impractical. The historic study relies heavily on the patterns of field enclosure 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 Historic Landscape Characterisation has given us a much greater understanding of the derivation and evolution of the landscape that we see today. This in turn has influenced the thinking behind the cultural aspects of the Landscape Character Assessment. Similarly, certain aspects of the landscape study have influenced or confirmed the findings of the historic study. The Historic Landscape Characterisation has informed the Landscape Character Assessment as much by the process of elimination and revision as by addition. This may not be apparent to those who have not been involved in the day to day work of the two studies.



### 3.0 THE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

#### Summary

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

Assessment is quoted in the Topic Paper as one of a number of examples of practitioner best practice.

**3.1.4** Although now complete, the Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment 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.

#### 3.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSESSMENT

**3.2.1** There are a number of fundamental aims and objectives that the Landscape Character Assessment has substantially already attained within Herefordshire. 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 2.2.

The primary aims and objectives are: -

- a) To enable an understanding and appreciation of the character and diversity of the Herefordshire landscape, both in its own right and as part of the national framework.
- b) To identify and describe the various Landscape Character Areas within Herefordshire.
- c) To identify the range of Landscape Types within the county through an understanding of their inherent characteristics.
- d) To identify and develop landscape related strategies and priorities through an analysis of inherent character and current landscape condition.
- e) To enable the analysis and evaluation of landscape character and so arrive at an understanding of the sensitivity of different landscapes to change.

#### 3.1 BACKGROUND

**3.1.1** The Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment was started in 1997 through a funding partnership involving the previous Hereford and Worcester County Council, the District Councils, Countryside Commission (later The Countryside Agency and now Natural England), Forestry Commission, Environment Agency, English Heritage and Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE).

**3.1.2** The character assessment takes account of, and integrates with the national programmes of: -

- Countryside Character undertaken by the Countryside Agency.
- Natural Areas carried out by English Nature.

These two organisations, with help from English Heritage, have produced the “Character of England” map, and its accompanying publications, which depict the natural and cultural dimensions of the landscape at a broad-brush, regional scale. The Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment progresses this regional approach at a reducing scale of detail.

**3.1.3** Guidance published in April 2002 by The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage provides the latest updated advice on Landscape Character Assessment. This is not a prescriptive document as it acknowledges that there are various approaches to the subject, all of equal merit. During the preparation of this SPG, further topic papers were produced by The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage to support their landscape character assessment guidance. Topic Paper 6: “Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity” was published in final draft form in January 2004 with contributions from Herefordshire Council. The Herefordshire Landscape Character

#### 3.3 DEFINITIONS

**3.3.1** 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.

**3.3.2** The **landscape** could perhaps be defined as: -

“The human perception of the land at a scale that is smaller than the global environment but larger than the individual site.”

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

“An expression of pattern, resulting from particular combinations of natural and cultural factors that make one place different from another.”

**3.3.3** The Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment 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 that 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 landscape, unless they constitute a repeated element.

b) Landscape character is not a purely visual phenomena, 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.

## **3.4 CHANGE IN THE LANDSCAPE**

**3.4.1** 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 Landscape Character Assessment 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.

**3.4.2** The physical properties of the landscape’s geology, topography and soil provide the fundamental structure of its character. Superimposed on this structure are the cultural patterns resulting from man’s activities. These cultural patterns arise 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 restraints such as land tenure and ownership.

The combination of cultural patterns, together with the physical or physiographic properties of the landscape, define what we refer to as the inherent character of the landscape.

**3.4.3** The landscape is not static, it has always changed, but the pace of change has been faster at certain times of recorded history than at other times. Certainly in the last 50 years, the acceleration of change in rural areas has dramatically increased. Herefordshire’s Historic Landscape Characterisation, produced by the County Archaeology Section, has recognised that while some of the Herefordshire 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.

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.

**3.4.4** A strategic 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 a key determinant 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 allowed to overwhelm and destroy the inherent character of the landscape). In some landscape types, 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.

**3.4.5** The Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment, through its identification of the distinguishing characteristics of the landscape, enables change in the landscape to conform as far as possible with these variations in character. For example, at a very basic level, new woodland planting should be directed to those areas where woodland is an inherent characteristic feature of the landscape and therefore appropriate. More



specifically, if locations are being sought for the creation of large blocks of limited species commercial forestry, the most appropriate landscapes towards which such proposals should be directed would be those with a planned character, where the tree cover pattern is defined by discrete, or interlocking blocks of woodland and where the appropriate woodland cover is poorly represented. Fig.3 explains the process of thought when considering new woodland planting.

**3.4.6** When considering future development land allocation in the UDP, or assessing planning applications through the development control process, the capacity of the different Landscape Types to accommodate change has been assessed. Any change of use through development will inevitably lead to a loss of some landscape features. It is at this stage that the landscape's ability to accept that development without undue harm should be considered. Whilst it may be possible to accommodate change within particularly sensitive or ancient landscapes, the scale of change is likely to be very limited before the character of the landscape is compromised. This is especially true if the least resilient attributes of landscape character are those that are affected by the change.

By contrast, a landscape that is less sensitive, such as those that are intensively farmed, should be able to tolerate a wider range and higher (though not unlimited) level of change. For example, future housing land allocation might guide new residential development away from sensitive landscapes, thus reducing the risk of weakening characteristics considered essential to their definition, such as a dispersed settlement pattern.

**3.4.7** The detailed design of any new development should respect the inherent character of the local landscape and seek to strengthen rather than weaken that character. For example, screen planting should reflect the tree cover pattern of the immediate landscape type in order to integrate with the local landscape character. New housing development should seek to be sympathetic to the traditional vernacular in terms of style, materials and layout (described as settlement pattern by the Landscape Character Assessment).

**3.4.8** There are certain types of development that, because of their scale and nature, will fundamentally alter the inherent character of the rural landscape. In Herefordshire, 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. Mineral extraction can only take

place where economically viable deposits occur. Modern quarries are inevitably sited in rural areas where hard rock is to be found on elevated hilly land and sand and gravel deposits along the river valleys. In this situation, 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 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.

**3.4.9** The emphasis on the appropriateness of a development in a landscape, and the landscape's ability to accept that development without undue harm, can only be partially assessed through the Landscape Character Assessment. 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 published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment in their 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: Second Edition'). Additional sustainability tools such as 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 Landscape Character Assessment which is able to inform them at every stage. Fig.2 shows how the Landscape Character Assessment 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. There are always situations where other interests, such as the economic need for new industrial development or the extension of existing sites are considered to be of greater importance and the findings of the Landscape Character Assessment are then utilised to develop appropriate mitigation measures.





## 4.0 CLASSIFICATION AND DESCRIPTION

### Summary

- The first stage of landscape character assessment sets out the physical, tangible aspects of characterisation and its methodology is described in this chapter
- Landscape character areas and landscape character types are explained and examples given
- Attributes and their indicators are set out

Figure 1 Hierarchy of landscape character units



### 4.2 FIRST STAGE OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT – METHOD

#### 4.1 EXPLANATION

4.1.1 There are two stages in the process of Landscape Character Assessment 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 SPG. The second part 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 5.0.

4.1.2 The process of characterisation will identify two types of unit:

- Firstly, there will be landscape character areas, which in the Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment are called Sub-regional Character Areas and Landscape Description Units (LDU). The larger areas are at a regional scale while the smaller LDUs are at a much more local scale. 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 North-west Herefordshire Hills Sub-regional Character Area or Downton Gorge LDU which is one of a number of LDUs found within it. Their individual descriptions are held in the Technical Handbook.
- Secondly, there will be 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 Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment). 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.

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

4.2.2 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 termed Landscape Description Units and are the building blocks of landscape character. They form the basis on which all subsequent classification and evaluation takes place.

4.2.3 The Landscape Description Units were defined by a combination of three earth science and three cultural indicators, known as definitive indicators because they defined the boundaries of the Landscape Description Units.

4.2.4 The three earth science indicators of geology, topography and soils were identified through specialist map reference. These are known as permanent definitive indicators since they are not subject to change through man's influence. They are jointly the most influential factors that contribute to the character of the landscape.

4.2.5 A further 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.

The desk study relied heavily on map analysis to understand these definitive indicators. In the case of settlement pattern particular emphasis was placed on historical maps.

Each indicator is broken down into its constituent attributes. Thus settlement pattern in Herefordshire can be described as clustered, wayside, dispersed, scattered or unsettled. In other parts of the country there may be additional settlement pattern attributes.

**4.2.6** Once the Landscape Description Units had been defined, additional descriptive information about the landscape 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 Black Mountains as these have an unwooded character.

**4.2.7** During the process of field survey it was apparent that there was often a minor variation of attributes within a Landscape Description Unit. This was particularly true of land use and the historic patterns of field enclosure. The Landscape Description Units were therefore subdivided as necessary into smaller sub-landscape units called Land Cover Parcels. The data from both the desk study and the field survey is held in a database at the Land Cover Parcel scale. Thus each Land Cover Parcel is a totally homogenous unit within which there are no variations of attribute and within which the landscape is a visual entirety.

**4.2.8** Since the Landscape Description Units and Land Cover Parcels 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 that are not picked up by the definitive or descriptive indicators. These are landscape features that 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.

**4.2.9** Having completed both the field survey and desk study, it was then possible to group the Landscape Description Units into visually coherent Landscape Types, based on the visual prominence

of the indicators that defined each Landscape Description Unit. Prominent indicators are those that have an immediate visual impact when viewed from the Landscape Description Unit 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.

**4.2.10** Thus Landscape Description Units and Land Cover Parcels 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.

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 Herefordshire are also found throughout the rest of the country. The Landscape Types are described in more detail in Part 2, section 7.0 of this document.

**4.2.11** At a larger scale, it is also possible to divide the landscape into broad descriptive areas. 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 Sub-regional Character Areas and they relate closely to the eight county "Countryside Character Areas" defined by the Countryside Agency and shown on their 'Character of England' map. The detailed analysis possible through field survey has enabled the Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment to more accurately define the boundaries of these areas and to increase their number to twelve.

**4.2.12** The location and list of Sub-regional Character Areas is shown in Fig. 9. The descriptions of both these and the Landscape Description Units are available in the technical handbook, which accompanies this SPG. 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.



Figure 2 Landscape Character Assessment as a working tool in Development Control process

QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED IN THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PROCESS

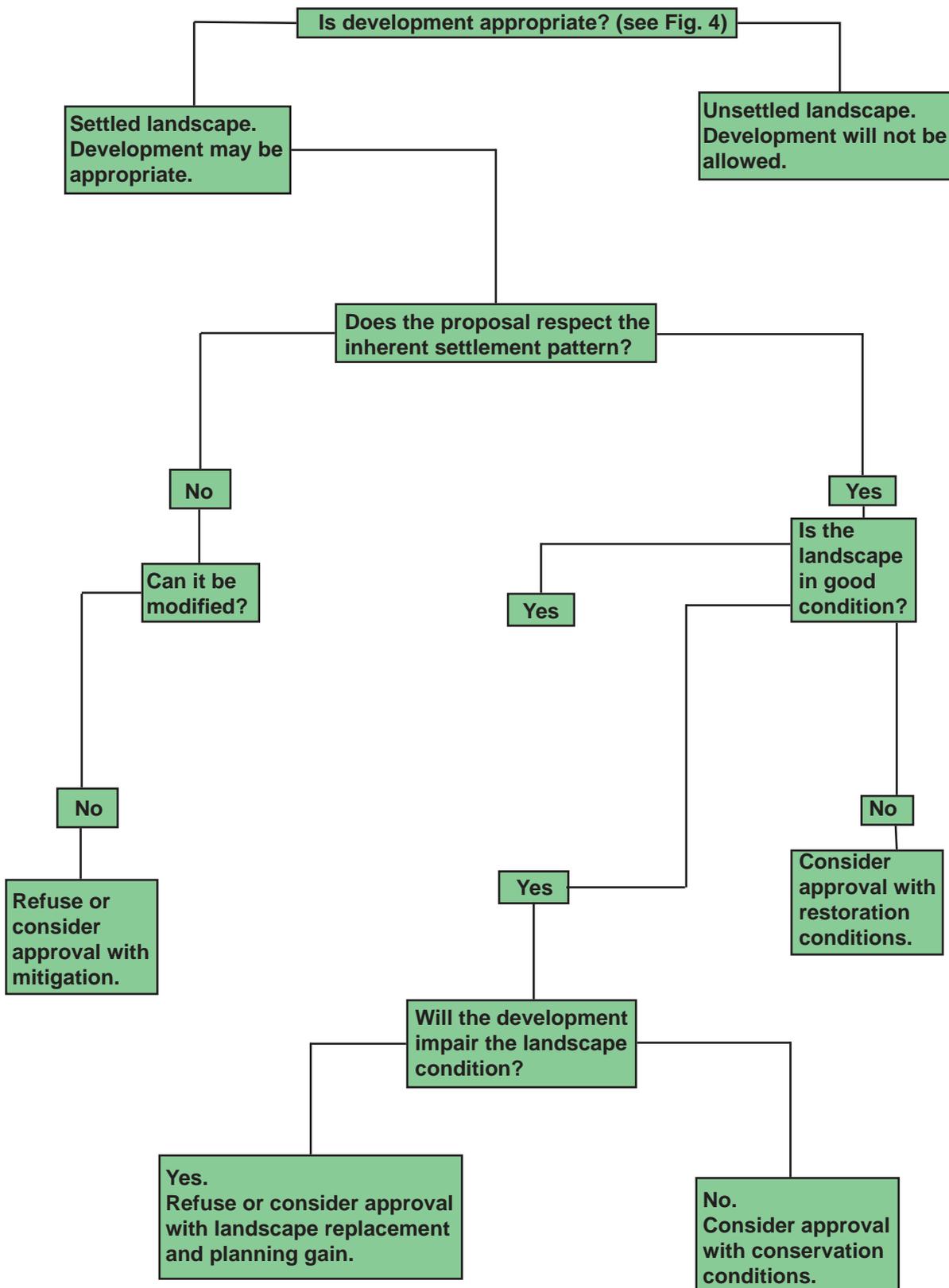
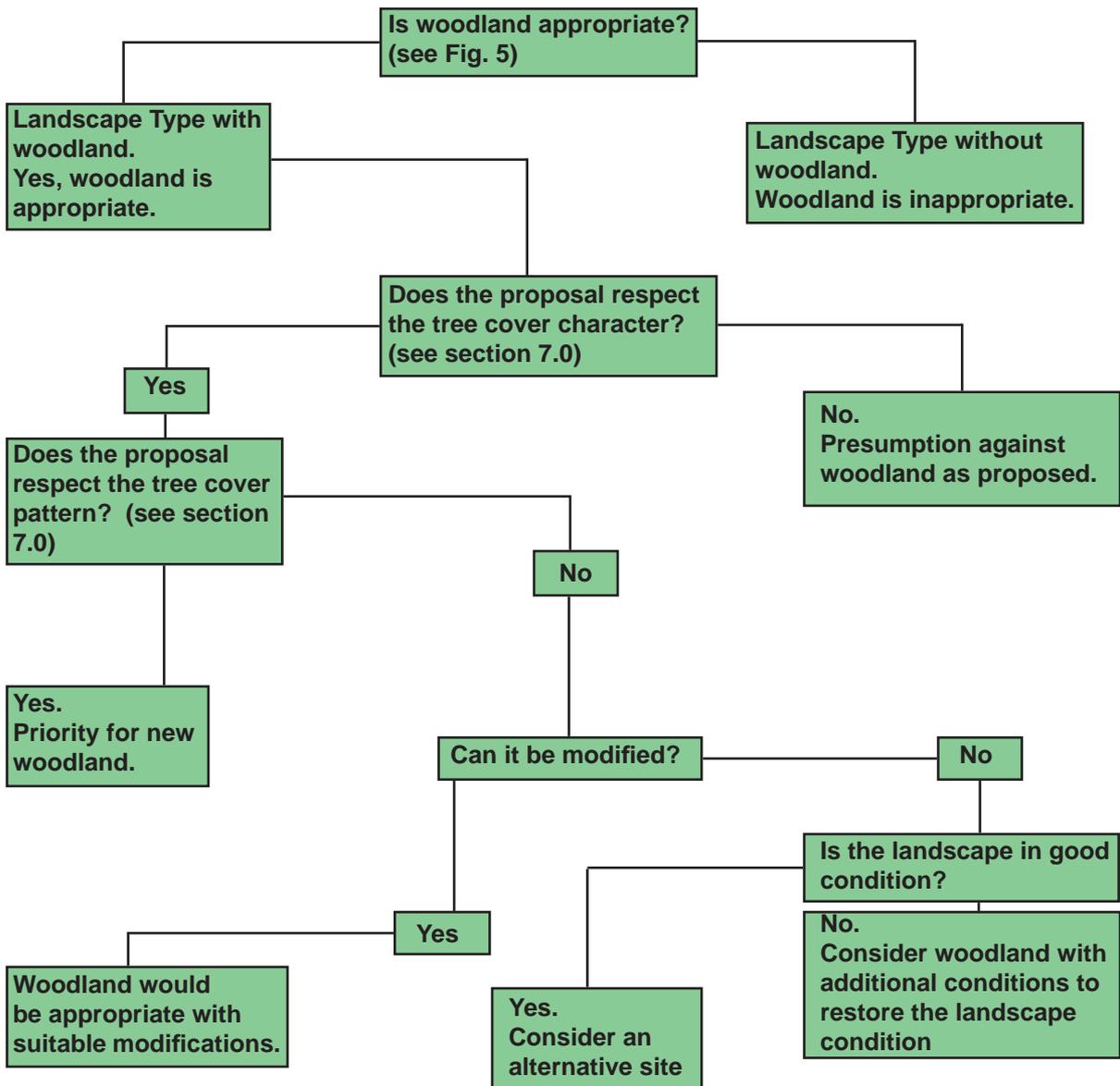


Figure 3 Landscape Character Assessment as a working tool in woodland creation

QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED WHEN CONSIDERING NEW WOODLAND





**Figure 4 Settlement pattern**

There are six unsettled Landscape Types within Herefordshire. The remainder are settled.

**UNSETTLED LANDSCAPE TYPES**

High Hills and Slopes  
Wooded Forest  
Unenclosed Commons  
High Moors and Commons  
Riverside Meadows

**SETTLED LANDSCAPE TYPES**

**Scattered settlement pattern**  
Principal Wooded Hills  
Enclosed Moors and Commons  
Ancient Border Farmlands  
Ancient Timbered Farmlands

**Dispersed settlement pattern**  
Timbered Plateau Farmlands  
Principal Timbered Farmlands  
Principal Settled Farmlands  
Settled Farmlands on River Terrace  
Sandstone Farmlands

**Wayside settlement pattern**  
Forest Smallholdings and Dwellings  
Enclosed Settled Commons

**Clustered settlement pattern**  
Wooded Hills and Farmlands  
Wooded Estatelands  
Sandstone Estatelands  
Estate Farmlands  
Plateau Estate Farmlands

**Figure 6 Indicators**

**DEFINITIVE INDICATORS**

Topography  
Geology } Earth science  
Soil Type }

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

**DESCRIPTIVE INDICATORS**

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

**Figure 5 Unwooded landscapes**

There are four unwooded Landscape Types within Herefordshire. The remainder are wooded.

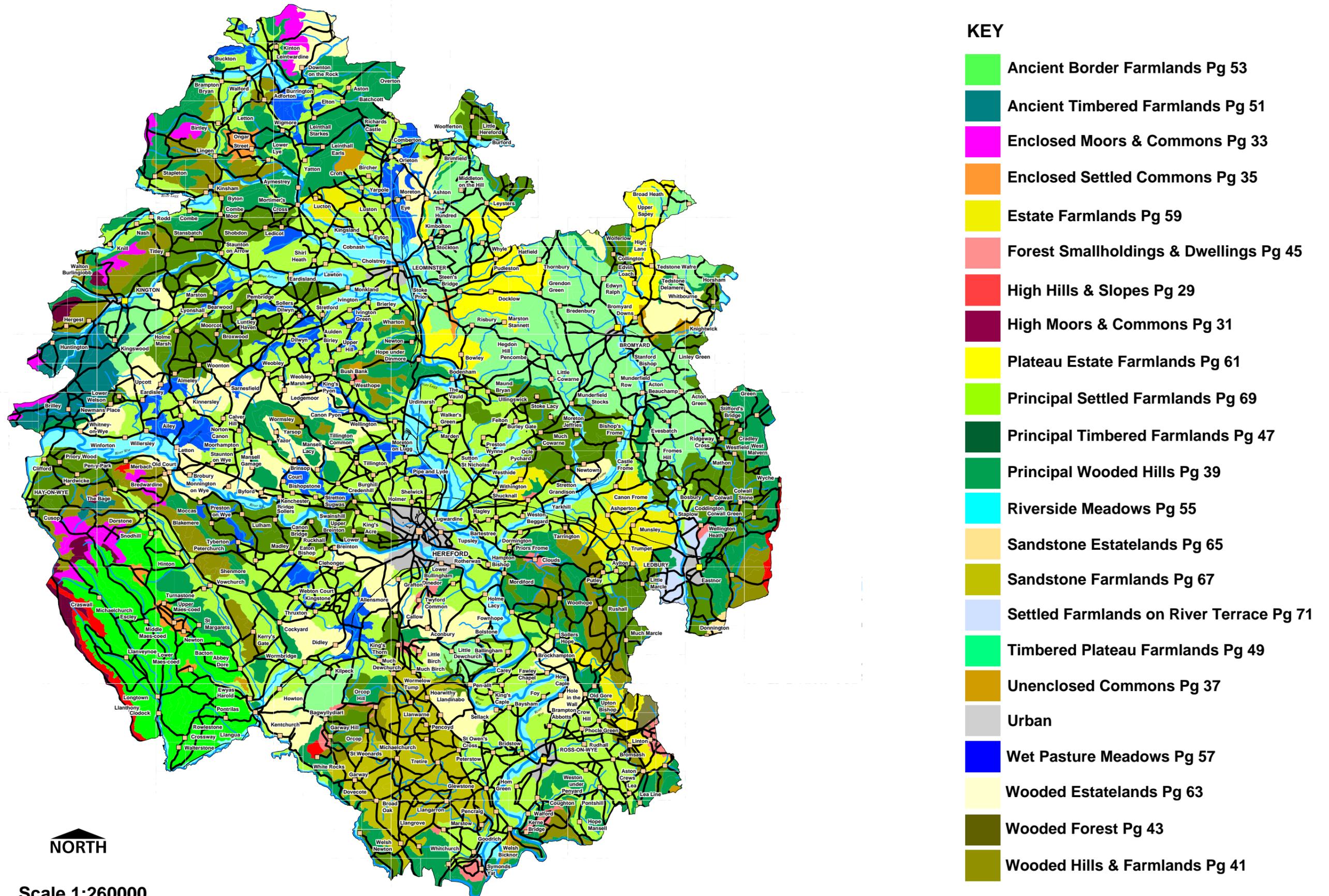
**UNWOODED LANDSCAPE TYPES**

High Hills and Slopes  
Enclosed Moors and Commons  
Unenclosed Commons  
High Moors and Commons

**Figure 7 Attributes**

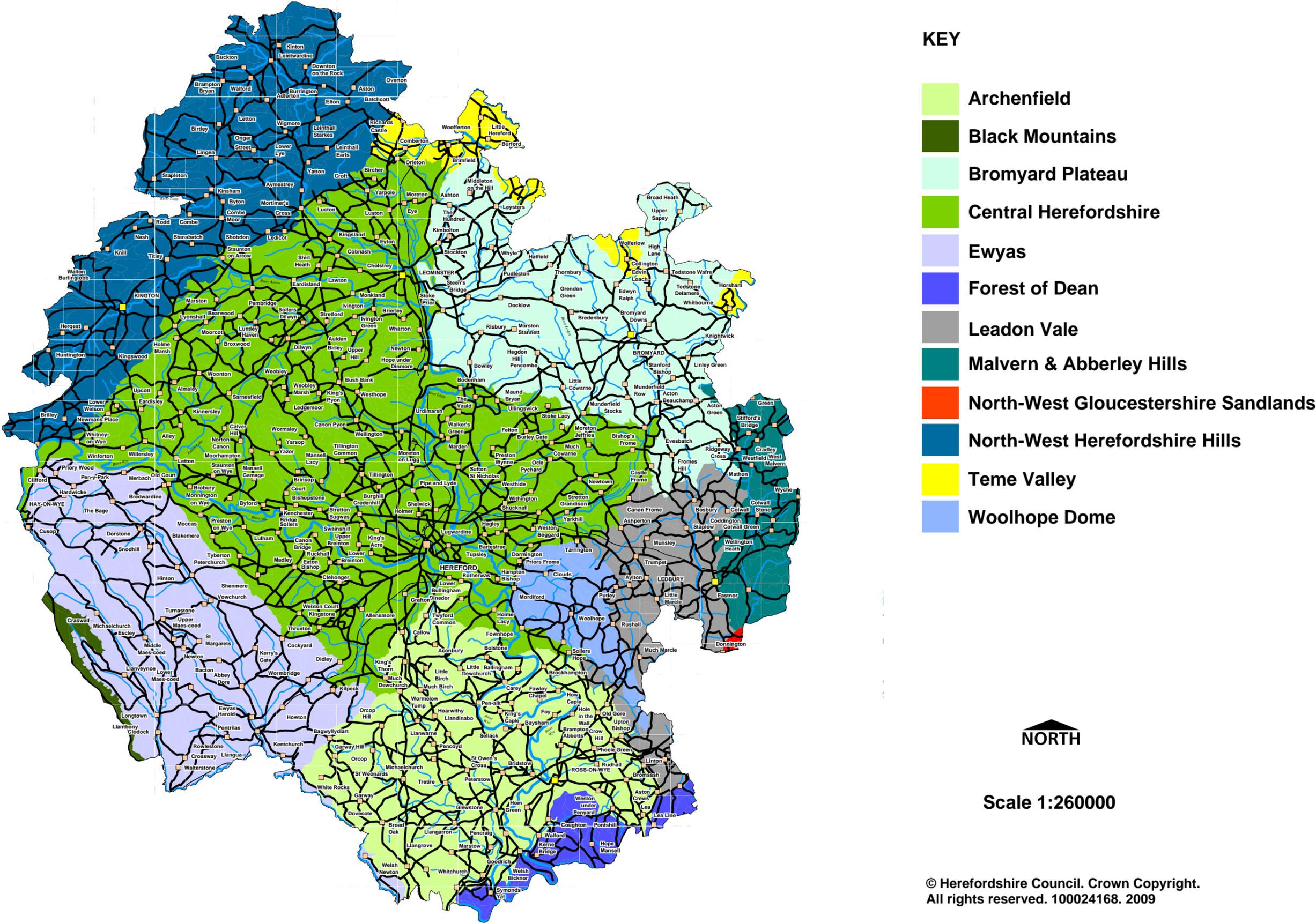
<b>LAND USE (FARM TYPE)</b>	<b>ENCLOSURE PATTERN</b>
Rough	Unenclosed
Pastoral	Organic
Mixed	Variable
Woodland	Sub-regular
Cropping	Planned
Arable	
<b>SETTLEMENT PATTERN</b>	<b>TREE COVER CHARACTER</b>
Unsettled	Unwooded
Scattered	Ancient
Dispersed	Planned
Clustered	Trees
Wayside	
<b>SPATIAL CHARACTER</b>	<b>TREE COVER PATTERN</b>
Exposed	Continuous
Large	Linked
Medium-open	Discrete
Medium-framed	Groups
Small	Scattered
Intimate	Linear
Variable	
<b>INDICATIVE GROUND VEGETATION</b>	<b>CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES</b>
Healthy/acid grassland	Building style
Moorland	River
Wetland	Parks
<b>FIELD BOUNDARIES</b>	
Hedges	
Hedge/ditch	

Figure 8 Map of Distribution of Landscape Types



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Figure 9 Map of Distribution of Sub-regional Character Areas





## 5.0 ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

### Summary

- The second stage of landscape character assessment sets 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 primary and secondary characteristics of each Landscape Type are clearly set out in the descriptions contained in section 7.0 of this SPG.

### 5.1 SECOND STAGE OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT – METHOD

**5.1.1** 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. 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. The principals of analysis and evaluation are set out briefly within this chapter of the SPG. The Technical Handbook contains further information.

**5.1.2** It was recognised that by analysing and evaluating the three definitive cultural indicators and the six descriptive indicators of each Landscape Type, 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 scale.

### 5.2 SIGNIFICANCE

**5.2.1** 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 into Landscape Types.

**5.2.2** The various combinations of the consistency and visual prominence defined each indicator of each Landscape Type as **primary, secondary or tertiary characteristics**.

### 5.3 VULNERABILITY

**5.3.1** 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 addressing the combination of function and trend 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.

**5.3.2** 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

**5.3.3** The attributes were then considered with regard to their stability and an informed judgement was made regarding the likelihood of future change, based on knowledge of current and past change.

### 5.4 TOLERANCE

**5.4.1** 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.

**5.4.2** Tolerance can be assessed by considering the replaceability of individual attributes. It addresses the potential for re-creating an attribute should it be damaged or destroyed as a result of land use change. Both the timescale of replaceability and the complexity of the attribute are taken into account in order to arrive at an understanding of the potential for like to like replacement.

## **5.5 RESILIENCE**

**5.5.1** 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 significance, vulnerability and tolerance together.

**5.5.2** A comparative scale of resilience can be created to illustrate the contrasting 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

**5.5.3** This 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 Land Cover Parcel 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 a Land Cover Parcel of Landscape Type Wooded Hills and Farmlands would be seen as resilient and therefore, in theory, new woodland planting would be acceptable. However, if the Land Cover parcel 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 Land Cover Parcel were in poor condition through lack of woodland then woodland may be welcome, although with large scale elements the whole Landscape Description Unit would need to be assessed in order to maintain the optimum proportion of woodland to mixed farming.

## **5.6 SENSITIVITY**

**5.6.1** In order to assist the preparation of the UDP, and to aid the considerations of development control, 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 Land Cover Parcels, at which scale information on the condition of the landscape is held. 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. This is carried out by assessing the overall resilience of the Landscape Type, coupled with the condition of the LCP. The condition is based both on the loss of attributes from the landscape and the addition of attributes that may or may not be appropriate.



## 6.0 UTILISATION OF THE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

### Summary

- Community involvement and opportunities to use the LCA are discussed
- Step by step guidance is given for those considering new development proposals
- The role of the LCA in directing or influencing land management is explored and the concepts of conservation, restoration and enhancement are explained

- Identify the Landscape Type in which the site is located (see Fig.8, Map of Distribution of Landscape Types).
- Assess whether this is an **unsettled landscape** (see Fig.4, Settlement Pattern). If the proposal is for built development within an unsettled landscape there would be a **high presumption against** development.
- If the site is not within an unsettled landscape, assess the primary and secondary characteristics of the landscape character for the appropriate Landscape Type (see section 7.0). New development that would cause unacceptable adverse change to the landscape character **will be resisted**.
- Other planning applications that do not constitute built development should consult the description of the relevant Landscape Type (see section 7.0), 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 conform to and strengthen the key characteristics of the landscape.

### 6.1 LOCAL INVOLVEMENT

**6.1.1** The Landscape Character Assessment, as explained in this SPG, has a heavy emphasis at the level of the Landscape Type. This is the scale at which most strategic local planning guidance is undertaken and is directly relevant to the Herefordshire UDP. However, the Landscape Character Assessment is also a powerful tool when considering the landscape at a smaller, site specific scale.

**6.1.2** At the level of Landscape Description Units or Land Cover Parcels 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, peoples' 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 peoples' memories and folk lore.

**6.1.3** During the preparation of studies such as Parish Plans or Village Design Statements, the Landscape Type descriptions can be used as a base, with additional information from the Landscape Character Assessment 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.**

### 6.2 FUTURE BUILT DEVELOPMENT

**6.2.1** Developers should follow the steps set out below in order to assess the potential for their proposal and the most appropriate design treatment. Fig.2 shows this process in more detail.

### 6.3 UNTYPICAL SITES

**6.3.1** Throughout all the Landscape Types 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 an ornamental parkland. Sometimes the area is too small to be singled out as a different Landscape Type. This is particularly true of the many tiny 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.

**6.3.2** 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 would not be considered favourably.

**6.3.3** It must be emphasised that this SPG gives guidance at a broad scale. It does not replace the need for detailed site analysis and evaluation, neither does it address the visual impact of any particular development as this can only be undertaken individually for each site as and when the nature of the development is known. Visual Impact Assessment or Environmental Impact Assessment of the proposals may also be required and are just two of a range of environmental sustainability tools that could aid the decision making process.

## **6.4 LAND MANAGEMENT**

**6.4.1** The descriptions of the Landscape Types in Section 7.0 of this SPG 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.

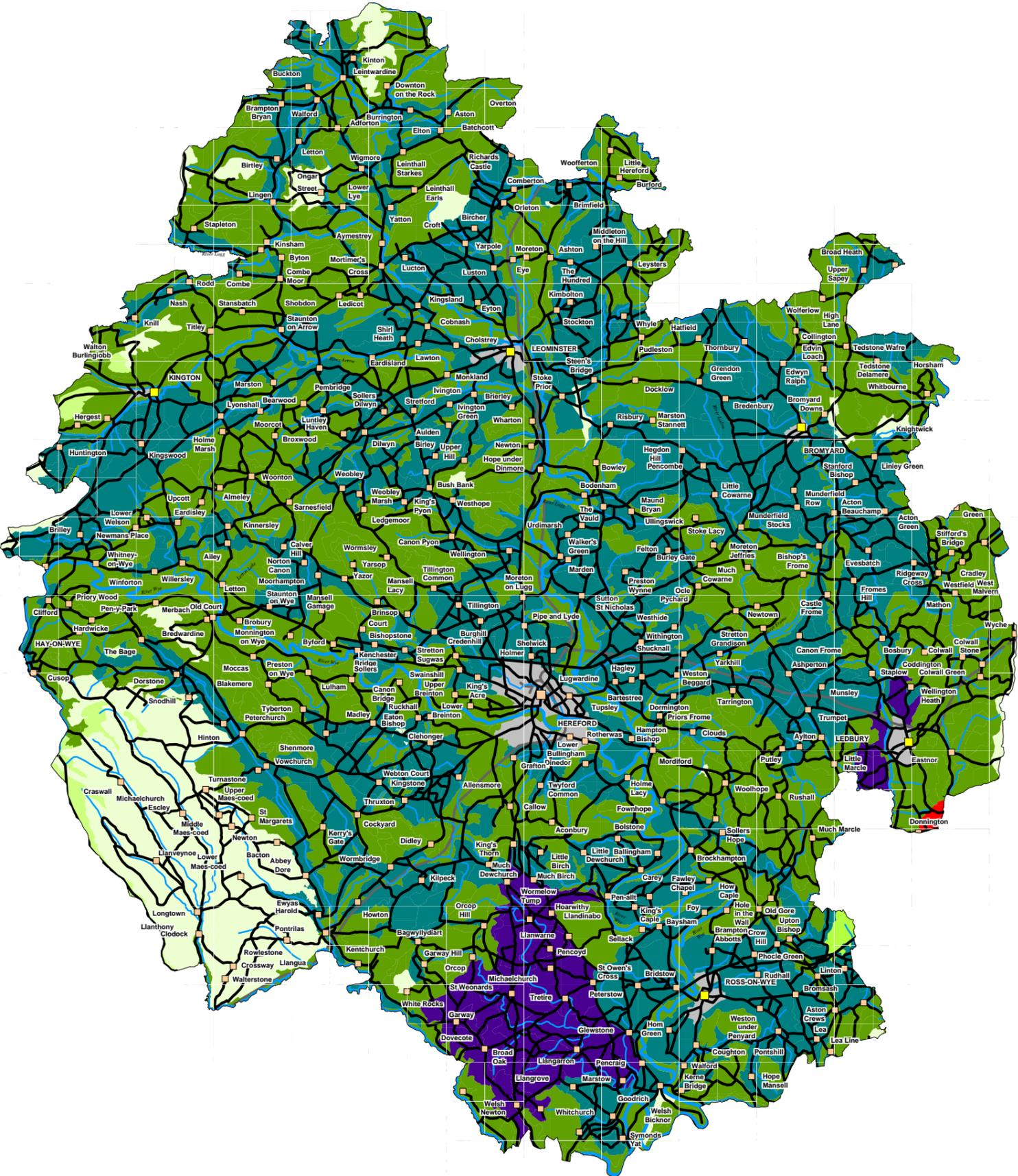
**6.4.2** Future land management can help to direct change so that the character of the landscape is not compromised. Indeed, the character of the landscape can be strengthened by appropriate management. Again, it is the principal of appropriateness that underpins acceptable land management and development.

**6.4.3** Opportunities for future beneficial land management can be considered under the three banners of **conservation, restoration and enhancement** (see Fig.10, Map of Landscape Management Objectives). Where an attribute provides a significant contribution to landscape character (i.e. is a primary or secondary key characteristic) and is well represented the aim should be to conserve. An example of this might be the ancient woodland in Landscape Type Principal Wooded Hills. Where the significant attribute is in poor condition, such as a gappy hedgerow, the management should be based on conserving what remains and restoring the attribute to an acceptable condition. 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.

**6.4.4** 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 Landscape Description Unit 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 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.

Figure 10 Map of Landscape Management Objectives



**KEY**

- Conservation/Restoration/Enhancement
- Conservation/Restoration
- Conservation/Enhancement
- Restoration/Enhancement
- Restoration
- Conservation



**SCALE 1:260000**

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# PART TWO - DESCRIPTION OF LANDSCAPE TYPES

## PART TWO - DESCRIPTION OF LANDSCAPE TYPES



## 7.1 HIGH HILLS AND SLOPES

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These are areas of unenclosed highland characterised by steeply sloping topography and extensive tracts of rough grassland and heath. The landscape's unique qualities embrace an invigorating open and exposed spatial character with large scale views, a dramatic, wild topography and an absence of human habitation. This is a distinctive Landscape Type, not least for the contrast it provides with the surrounding more gentle enclosed agricultural landscapes.

This is a landscape that owes its character primarily to a combination of its past management and its physical structure. In Herefordshire, this Landscape Type is restricted to the summits and upper slopes of the Malvern Hills on the eastern boundary and to similar areas of the Black Mountains on the western boundary. These are areas that in the past have been largely open expanses of unenclosed common used for rough grazing. Traditionally, the stocking levels would have been sufficient to keep extensive scrub encroachment at bay, so maintaining the distinctive exposed character and producing a close, botanically valuable sward in the process. Today, the reduction in grazing, particularly on the Malvern Hills, has resulted in a much greater diversity of vegetation, as bracken, scrub and secondary woodland are gradually encroaching the lower slopes. The steep topography has discouraged road building and settlement. Consequently, these are areas that tend to be bordered by roads, rather than crossed by them. The sparse settlement that does exist is associated with the occasional road and is a site specific feature rather than a character attribute that affects the landscape as a whole.

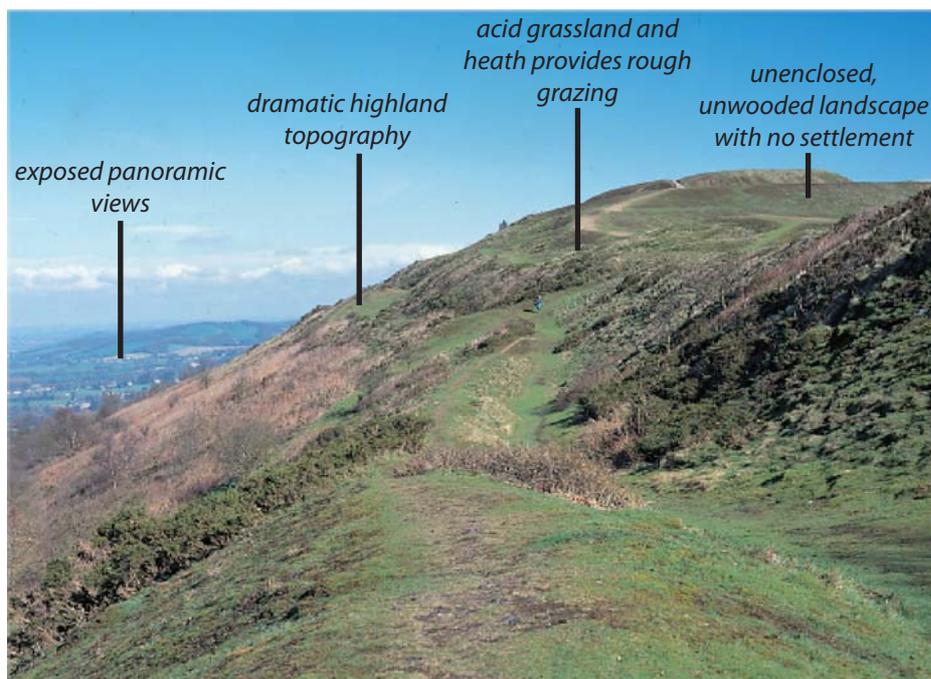
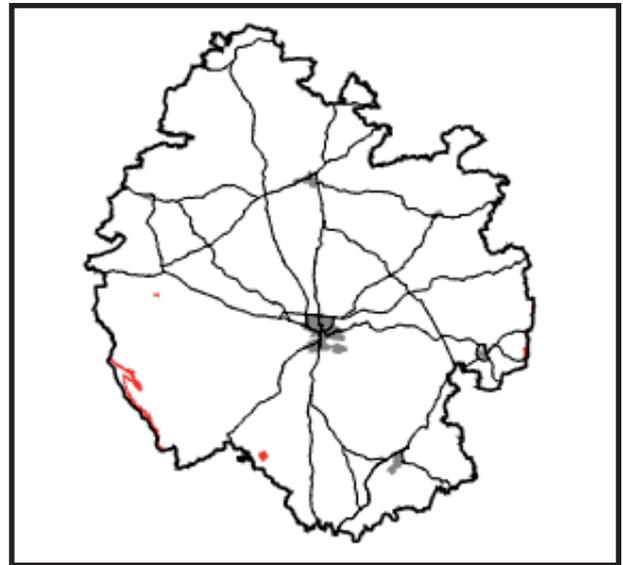
### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

#### Primary

- prominent, steeply sloping highland topography
- extensive area of acid grassland and heath
- expansive area of unenclosed land
- exposed, panoramic views
- unsettled landscape with few signs of human presence

#### Secondary

- rough grazing
- unwooded landscape

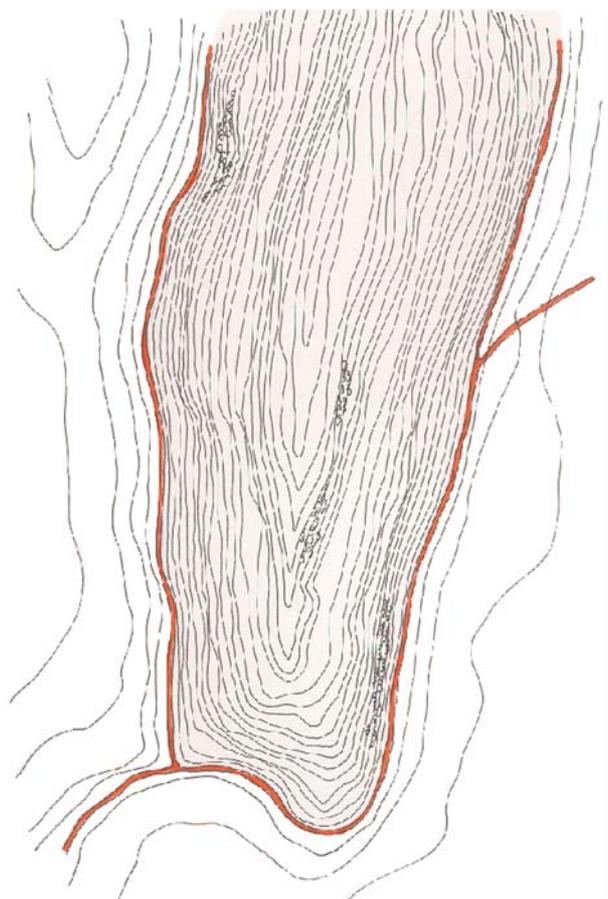




### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

The landscape character of High Hills and Slopes is heavily dependant on the traditional management of open grazing. In recent years a significant reduction in stocking levels has resulted in the dramatic increase of scrub, bracken and secondary woodland and the consequent decrease in the percentage of open grassland. Additionally, increasing visitor pressure has resulted in path and grassland erosion. This is especially marked on the Malvern Hills. Since the traditional landscape character is dependant on open rough grassland, these landscapes are rapidly becoming compromised and their future management must recognise the impact that it will have on landscape character.

At one extreme the process of scrub encroachment could be allowed to continue, resulting, particularly on the Malvern Hills, in a total change of landscape character. This would obliterate the traditional character, along with the rapidly declining valuable grassland habitat and may not be culturally, aesthetically or ecologically acceptable. At the other extreme, the land could be cleared of all scrub and tree growth and returned to its grassland status, but the problem of stocking levels would remain. A compromise approach would seem to be most practicable with the acceptance of a degree of scrub and woodland cover, particularly on the lower slopes, but rigorous bracken and scrub control on the higher land.



#### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

This is an unsettled landscape in which any built development would be inappropriate. The coherent character of these landscapes should be conserved by refusing new built development and other urban influences such as street furniture and lighting.

#### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

This is an unenclosed landscape, traditionally an area of open common land. Fences, hedges or other methods of enclosure are not appropriate here although temporary fencing may occasionally be necessary to control grazing.

#### WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

The character of this landscape depends on its open grassland. Trees are not part of this character and the introduction of woodland would therefore be contrary to the inherent landscape character.

#### MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

The overall management strategy should primarily be one of **conservation**, together with an element of **restoration**. The open grassland character of the hills should be conserved and opportunities for returning areas of bracken or scrub to unimproved grassland should be explored.

CONSERVATION	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve all remaining areas of semi-natural grassland.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restore areas of former grassland whilst acknowledging the need to retain other habitats of importance for endangered species. To this end, maintain the upper slopes as grassland and allow a mosaic of grassland dominant scrub habitats to establish the lower slopes.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve the coherent landscape character by avoiding tree planting, built development and urban influences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restore existing footpaths by using visually sensitive, appropriate methods in order to control visitor pressure and protect adjacent grassland.</li> </ul>

## 7.2 HIGH MOORS AND COMMONS

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

This is a landscape of unenclosed highland on the summits of the hills. It is characterised by its flattish or rolling topography with occasional dramatic rocky outcrops. Soils are usually peaty with typical moorland plant associations. The vegetation is a moorland mix of rough grass, gorse, heather and ling. There is often a noticeable absence of bracken, one of the features which most easily distinguishes this landscape type from the High Hills and Slopes. Although grazing is an important factor in maintaining the character of the landscape, the thin peaty soils and extreme exposure discourage tree and scrub growth.

This is an uninhabited, wild and invigorating landscape with long panoramic views over the surrounding countryside. It is a landscape that has been shaped by natural forces and owes little of its character to man's influence. Generally, there are no roads and few footpaths or other signs of human activity.

In Herefordshire this Landscape Type is restricted to the summits of the Black Mountains and other high hills along the western border with Wales.

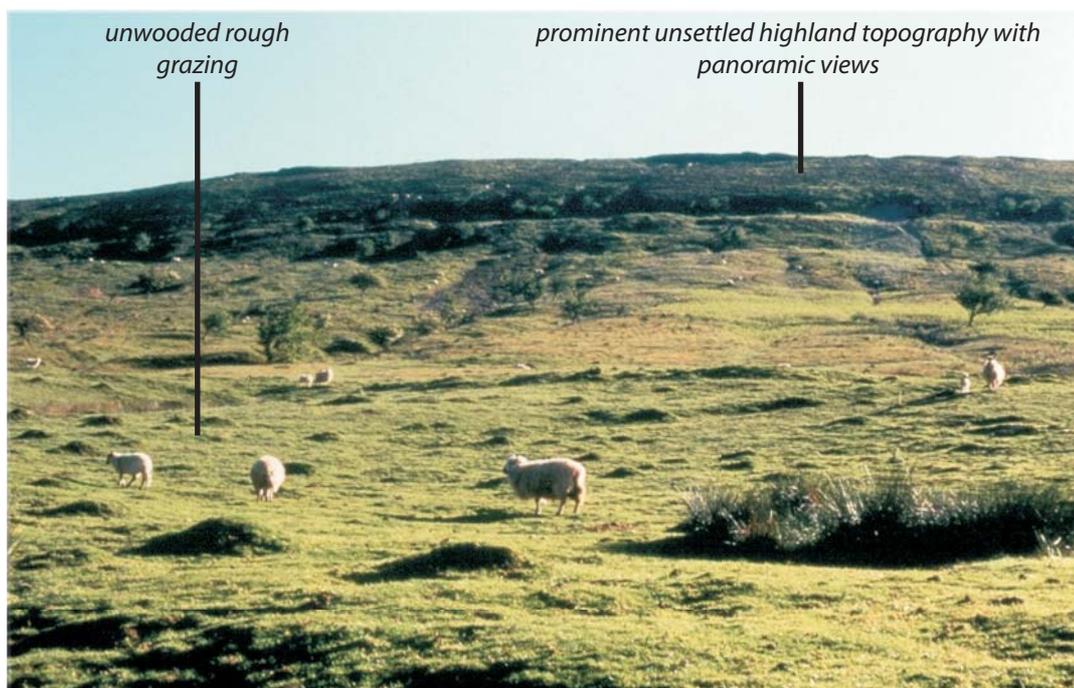
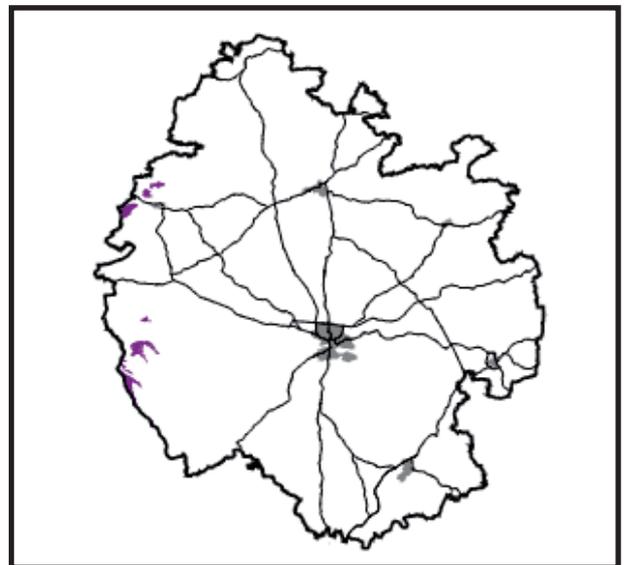
### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

#### Primary

- prominent highland topography
- extensive areas of rough acid moorland
- expansive unenclosed landscape
- exposed panoramic views
- unsettled landscape with few signs of human presence
- unwooded landscape
- rough grazing

#### Secondary

- peaty soils
- no bracken



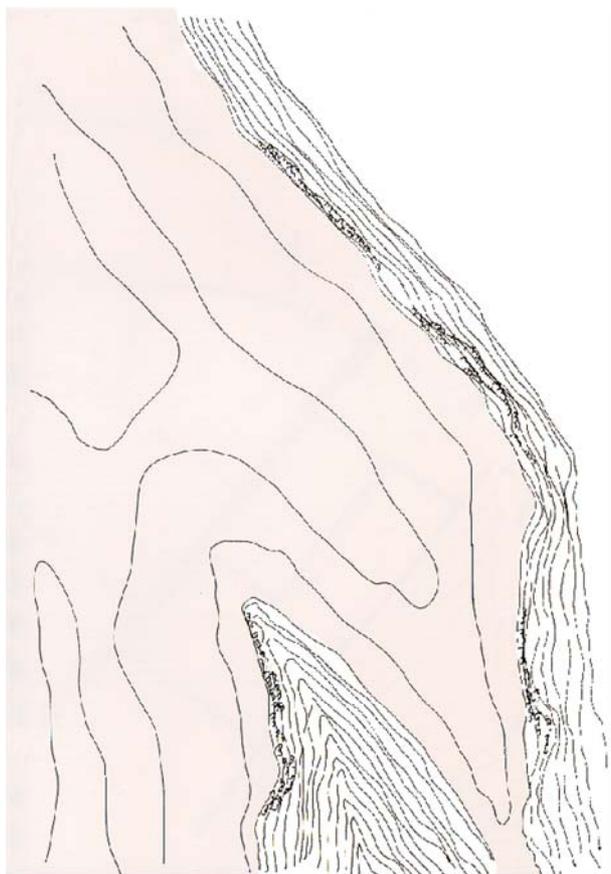
*unwooded rough grazing*

*prominent unsettled highland topography with panoramic views*



### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

The character of High Moors and Commons is probably under less threat than any other Landscape Type. These remote, exposed areas are under little pressure from built development, except for wind farms, and are generally unsuitable for arable cropping. Nevertheless, the extreme economic pressures on today's farming communities have resulted in limited attempts in some areas to enclose and plough the more sheltered parts with a view to arable cropping. The inherent unsuitability of the landscape for this purpose is likely to ensure that this land use change will remain a rare occurrence. Increasing numbers of visitors has also resulted in visual detriment through localised path erosion and associated habitat loss.



#### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

This is an unsettled, inhospitable landscape in which any built development would be inappropriate.

#### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

This is an unenclosed landscape of moors and rough commons. Any enclosure would be to the detriment of the landscape character, although temporary stock fencing may be required from time to time to control grazing.

#### WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

Trees are not characteristic of this landscape. The extreme exposure and thin soils discourage the growth of any scrub or secondary tree growth.

#### MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

Conservation is the primary management strategy for this Landscape Type. Inappropriate introduced features such as fencing, arable crops or attempted tree planting are not common but, perhaps because of their rarity, they are very noticeable in this landscape of extremely simple character. The aim should be to encourage the removal of these jarring intrusions. However, if minimal fencing is required for the control of grazing animals it should be of a visually unobtrusive stock proof post and wire construction.

CONSERVATION
• Conserve the rough acid moorland
• Maintain appropriate grazing levels
• Encourage the removal of inappropriate introduced elements such as tree planting
• Preserve the landscape character by shunning tree planting, built development or land use change
• Discourage land management change such as conversion to arable or agriculturally improved grassland
• Ensure recreational use is sustainable

### 7.3 ENCLOSED MOORS AND COMMONS

#### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These are enclosed, upland landscapes with exposed rolling topography. The former moorland and common has been enclosed with hedges to provide medium sized fields of a planned nature. Trees are very sparse and settlement is largely restricted to isolated farms. The roads are generally laid out on a straight grid, sometimes sunken and with mature hedges. Where commons have been enclosed the scale of the landscape is inclined to be smaller with smaller fields, more shelter and occasional wide road verges. Here there may be more trees than is typical. The poor soils and exposed character discourage arable farming and similarly prevent the successful establishment of trees in exposed areas. Consequently this is a pastoral landscape, mainly based on sheep rearing, with occasional isolated farmsteads.

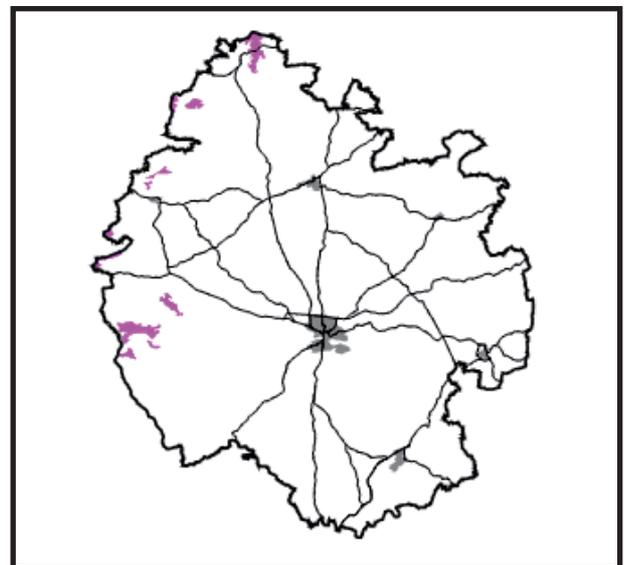
#### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

##### Primary

- sparsely scattered settlement pattern
- pastoral land
- unwooded landscape
- hedges define field boundaries
- planned enclosure pattern
- medium-open views

##### Secondary

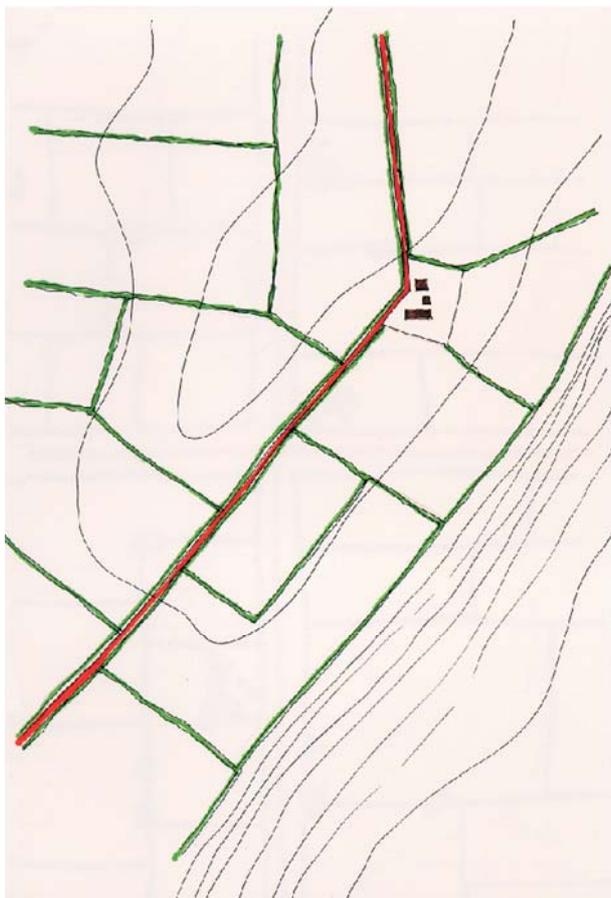
- exposed upland topography





### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

These are relatively stable landscapes. Their upland exposure and remote location ensure that development pressure is at a minimum. Generally, the settlement pattern remains sparsely scattered and the landscape pastoral. The poor soils have discouraged farm diversification although, in places, some attempt to grow arable crops has been made. Some areas are in particularly poor condition with “ranching” noticeable where the hedges have not been maintained and have been broken through by grazing stock. This leads to the gradual destruction of the lower parts of the hedge so that ultimately all that is left is a row of top heavy shrubs such as hawthorn or blackthorn with no growth at hedge level.



#### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Settlement in these landscapes has developed as a pattern of sparsely scattered farms. The landscapes could accept an occasional additional agricultural dwelling if this is in accordance with UDP policy but the density must remain very low. The scale, style and materials of any new houses should reflect that of the traditional local buildings.

#### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

The enclosure of former moorland and common was carried out in a planned and organised manner to achieve medium sized geometrically shaped fields. There is a tendency to change the scale of the landscape by removing hedgerows or cutting them back to such an extent that they eventually die.

#### WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

This is an unwooded landscape with occasional stunted trees beside the scattered farmsteads. The poor soils and highland exposure discourage the establishment of trees.

#### MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

Land use management should concentrate on the twin issues of **conservation** and **restoration**. The greatest threat to these landscapes is the loss of appropriate scale through field enlargement and removal of hedges.

CONSERVATION	RESTORATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve the scale and planned nature of the enclosure pattern</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where hedges have been lost encourage hedge planting, particularly on their original alignment</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve the existing hedges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage the re-instatement and gapping up of existing hedges</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage traditional hay meadow and roadside verge management</li> </ul>	

## 7.4 ENCLOSED SETTLED COMMONS

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These are generally relic, occasionally extant, commons located on high ground in upstanding areas of topography. They are usually fairly flat or with a moderately gentle landform. In Herefordshire they are found on free draining, sandy soils where the uncultivated patches of land support bracken and other heathy or acid grassland vegetation. Tree cover is sparse and restricted to trees around buildings and in gardens. The small to medium sized, pastoral fields are divided in a regular pattern and were probably enclosed from former common land in the nineteenth century. Many are shown as unenclosed or only partially enclosed on the early nineteenth century Ordnance Survey maps. The hedges are generally of holly, which was grown in nurseries set up for enclosure purposes and used in preference to other native hedging in exposed, well drained conditions. Settlement is typically a low density of small, wayside dwellings. The road network consists of narrow, straight roads with right angle cross-road junctions intersecting the old common land. Wide roadside verges are also typical of previously enclosed common land but these are not always present.

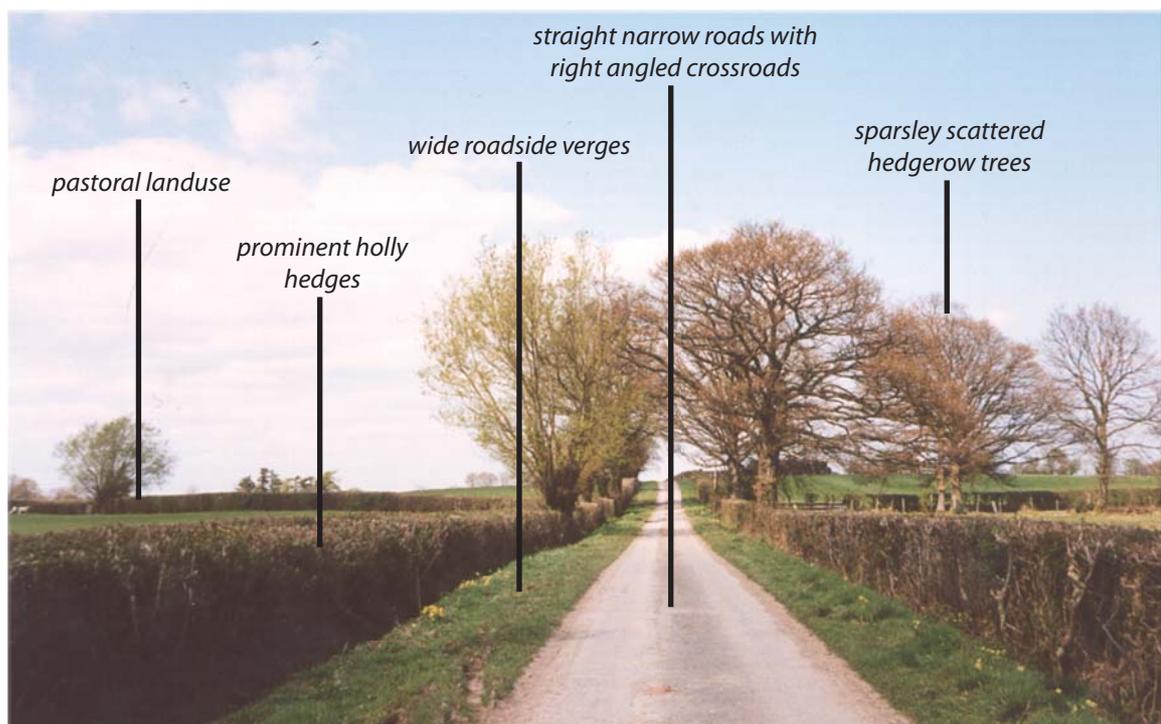
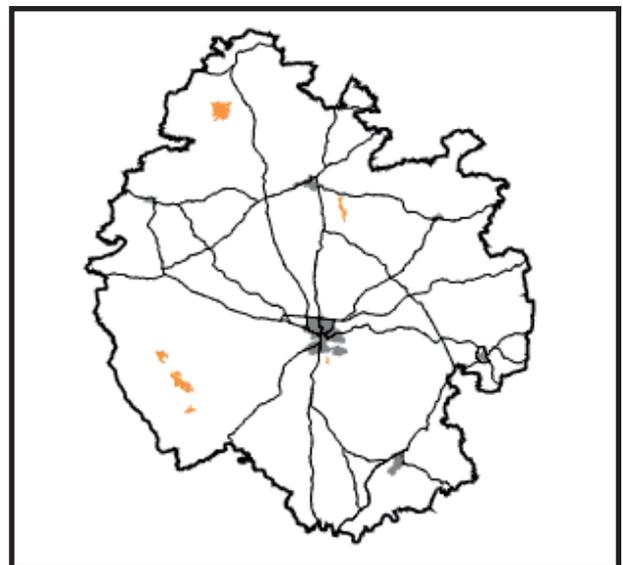
### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

#### Primary

- **pastoral land use**
- **prominent holly hedges**
- **wayside settlement pattern**
- **straight, narrow roads with right angled cross-road junctions**

#### Secondary

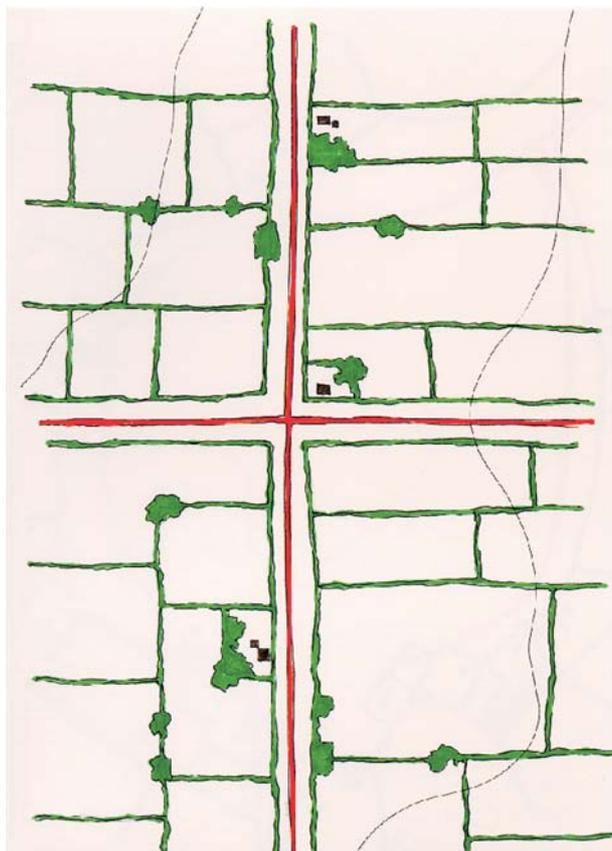
- **wide roadside verges**





### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

Typically, these landscapes are subject to the same range of character changes that are prevalent throughout much of Herefordshire. Farm diversification has led to some arable cropping, although this has been limited by the exposed nature of the land. Hedgerows have been removed in places, so altering the scale of the enclosure pattern, and the scale and density of the settlement pattern is slowly altering as additional houses are built and the original small cottages are extended and “improved”. However, in these landscapes the exposure and rural isolation have ensured that development pressure is inhibited and the rate of landscape change has therefore been relatively slow.



#### 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 UDP 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 of small to medium scale fields. The removal of hedgerows has led, in some places, to a change in landscape scale.

#### WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

This is an unwooded landscape where trees are restricted to occasional hedgerow trees and those planted around the dwellings. New woodland would not generally be appropriate here.

#### MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

Future management should concentrate on the issues of **conservation** and **restoration**. The greatest threat to these landscapes is the gradual erosion of their key characteristics, such as the loss of hedgerows, and misguided efforts to introduce trees into what is fundamentally a treeless character.

CONSERVATION	RESTORATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage the traditional pastoral land use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resist proposals for woodland creation</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve the scale and planned nature of the enclosure pattern</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where hedges have been removed, encourage hedge planting along the original alignment</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve the existing hedges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Re-instate and gap up hedges in poor condition using single species to match the existing</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain a low density, wayside settlement pattern</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain the wide road verges according to principles of nature conservation</li> </ul>

## 7.5 UNENCLOSED COMMONS

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

This is a category of landscape character that offers a tremendous variety of scale and size. 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. 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.

These are open landscapes characterised by a lack of enclosure and overall sense of wilderness. They are predominantly unsettled landscapes, but where settlement is present, it is usually restricted to wayside dwellings situated around the perimeter of the common. The style, scale and pattern of these is particularly distinctive, typically being small 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 commons are traditionally grazed, and this unimproved rough grazing land, along with substantial stands of regenerating semi-natural vegetation is invariably associated with a high nature conservation value.

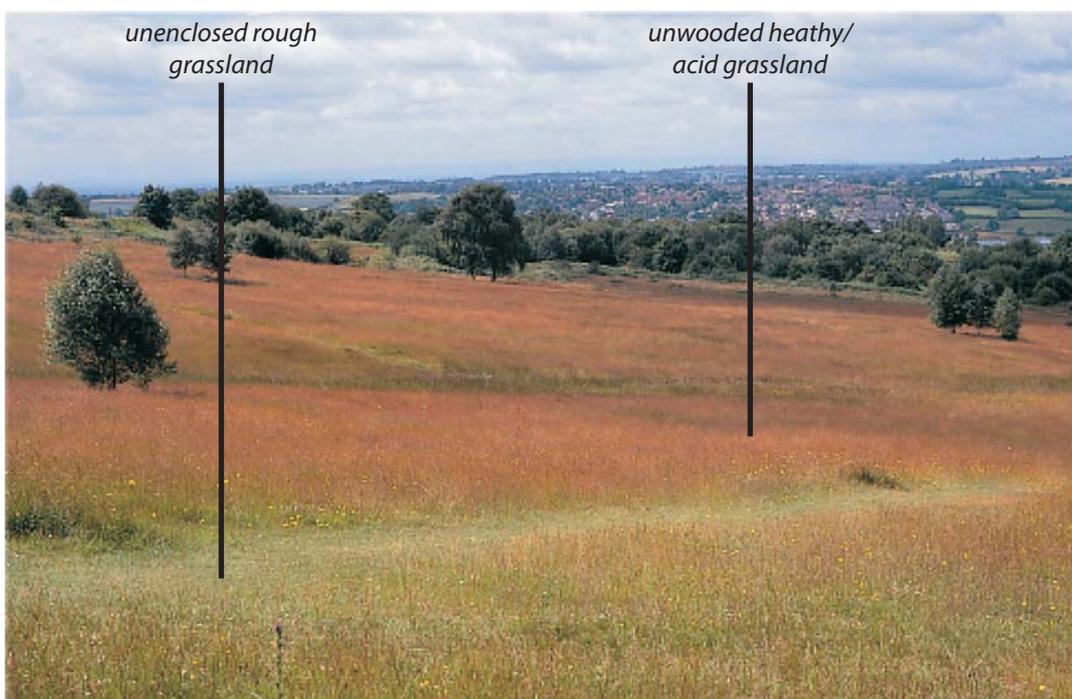
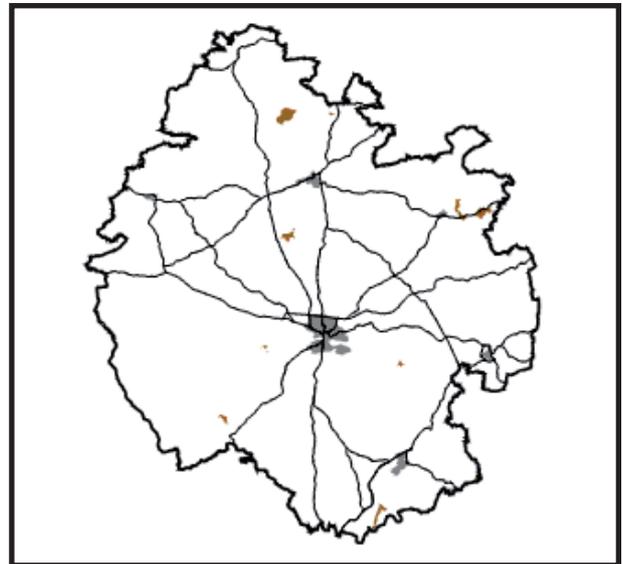
### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

#### Primary

- rough grazing land use
- unenclosed land

#### Secondary

- unwooded landscape
- variable spatial character
- heathy/acid grassland vegetation
- small wayside cottages found on the perimeter of the common often constructed from red brick or stone





### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

The character of unenclosed commons has developed through, and been reliant on, the exercise of local people's commoners rights. Unfortunately, during the last 50 years there has been a marked trend away from the pursuance of these rights. Increased affluence, a working population that is becoming divorced from the land, an increase in traffic and population, and thus an increase in danger to stock, together with more stringent regulations concerning animal husbandry have all contributed to the demise of commoners' grazing. The resulting low density, or absence of livestock has led to the rapid encroachment of bracken and scrub over many commons, and a consequent problem of future management. Elsewhere, some commons are valued for their recreation and amenity value and are being managed in municipal fashion with regular cutting of the sward and sometimes associated ornamental tree planting. These commons, particularly, have become desirable residential areas. The property values are increased and a more affluent population moves in with sufficient wealth to enlarge the original cottages. Thus a suburban character is formed and the integrity of the traditional settlement character is lost.



#### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

These are fundamentally unsettled landscapes, but over the years an element of settlement has built up. The degree of settlement varies markedly from common to common 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.

#### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

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

#### WOODLAND OR 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.

### MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

Management strategies for Unenclosed Commons must combine both **conservation** and **restoration** of landscape character. The unity of built vernacular and settlement pattern should be conserved through planning control, while the distinctive spatial character and scale of the landscape should be conserved by restoring the traditional land use and undertaking management priorities.

CONSERVATION	RESTORATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve the spatial pattern, scale and individual character of the wayside dwellings</li> <li>Conserve and restore the distinctive spatial character of the landscape by discouraging enclosure or tree cover</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define management objectives and strategies that will enhance landscape character whilst integrating nature conservation interests, amenity use and local historic integrity</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discourage a tidy municipal approach to management</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove ornamental planting</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage the resurgence of commoners' rights to graze</li> </ul>

## 7.6 PRINCIPAL WOODED HILLS

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These are upstanding, densely wooded, hilly landscapes with a steeply sloping topography. The inherent character is derived from the pronounced relief and the dominant, flowing woodland cover which provide a strong sense of unity and visual integration. These are landscapes of large irregularly shaped ancient woodlands and wooded streamlines which interlink with the surrounding hedged fields. The nature of the physiography, particularly the steepness of slope, has inhibited clearance for agricultural use in the past, although a small proportion of pastoral fields are now present. These landscapes have therefore retained a significant cover of ancient semi-natural woodland, typically occurring in extensive, linked belts. Where clearance has taken place in the past, the presence of strong hedge lines with a good representation of hedgerow tree cover contributes to the visual integration of the landscape. The ancient semi-natural status of many of these woodlands confirms their high nature conservation value. These landscapes are sparsely settled by farmsteads and wayside cottages. Views are usually framed between the woodland blocks.

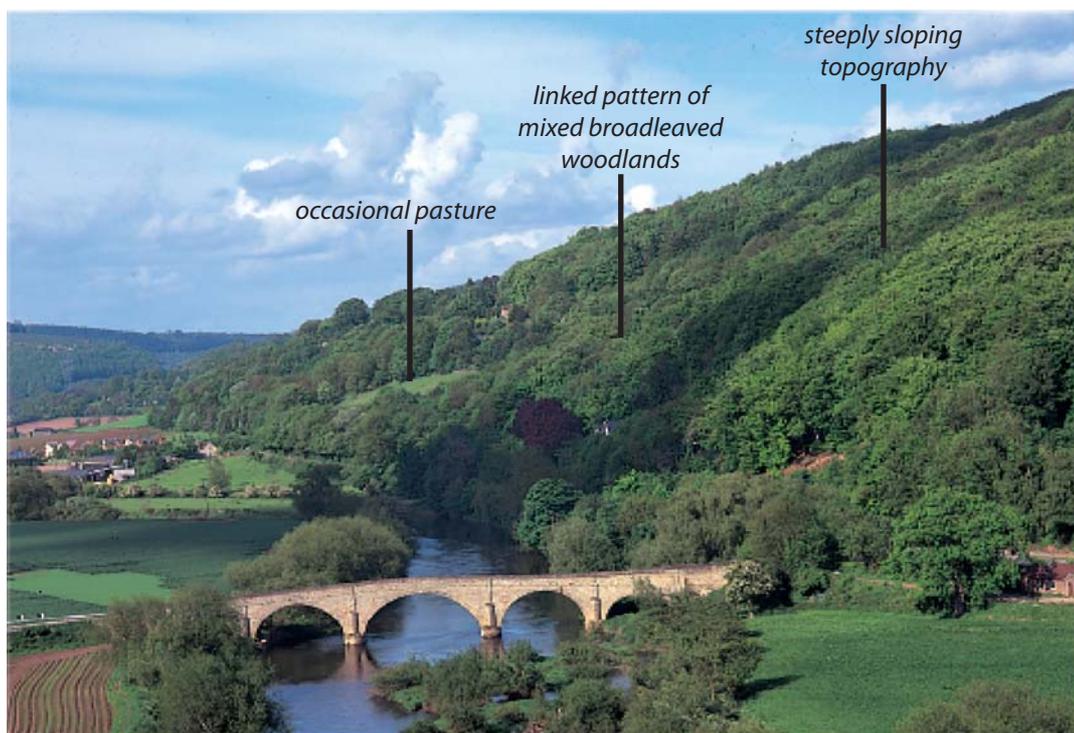
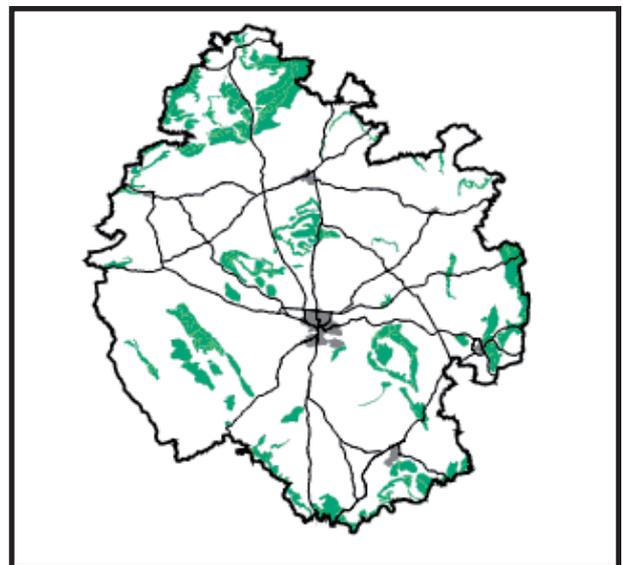
### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

#### Primary

- varied, often steeply sloping topography
- ancient wooded character made up of mixed broadleaved woodlands, often of ancient origin

#### Secondary

- wooded land use with occasional pasture
- hedges define field boundaries
- linked woodland pattern
- medium-framed views
- scattered settlement pattern





## FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

The distinctive character of this Landscape Type is due to its often steeply sloping topography and dominant woodland cover. These are highly visible landscapes, framing long distance views and therefore their visual integrity is of paramount importance in the rural landscape. Previous forestry practices have often resulted in geometrically shaped blocks of woodland with a high proportion of conifers which can severely disrupt the visual unity of the landscape. This is particularly true when conifers are viewed on the skyline. The nature conservation value of these woodlands is also compromised by deviations from their inherent species composition. Similarly, more recent woodland clearance and the gradual loss of trees along hedgerows and stream sides damages both the biodiversity and landscape character. The hedgerow and streamside trees are a vital component in maintaining visual integration between the areas of historic clearance and those still wooded. In many places the hedgerows tend to be dominated by mature and veteran trees, often with few of the younger hedgerow trees needed to perpetuate the character.



### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

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

### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

The enclosure pattern is an organic composition of irregularly shaped pastoral fields bounded by hedges and often cleared from the adjoining woodland. Any changes to woodland cover, either through clearance 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 assorted origin.

### WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

Typically, at least three quarters of the land area of this Landscape Type is under tree cover. The woodlands, often of ancient semi-natural character are of native deciduous species with a mixed age structure linked to each other and the surrounding landscape by well treed hedgerows and streams.

## MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

The aim of future management should be to retain the dominance of woodland with a small proportion of integrated irregularly shaped pastoral fields. Emphasis should be placed upon both restoring the ancient semi-natural character of the woodland cover and maintaining an overall interlocking pattern of woodland and grazed fields with a high proportion of hedgerow and streamside trees. The three aspects of **conservation**, **restoration** and **enhancement** are therefore applicable to this Landscape Type.

CONSERVATION	RESTORATION	ENHANCEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve and restore the ancient broadleaved character of the woodland</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen the wooded character of hedgerows and streams by additional planting and/or regeneration</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve the organic, irregular pattern of assorted fields</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In areas where the interlocking pattern of woodland is no longer evident, seek to restore the wooded character through additional woodland planting, linking any fragmented existing woodland</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forestry practices should respect the character of the landscape, promote traditional management techniques and take particular care when assessing the visual impact of new planting and felling coupes</li> </ul>

## 7.7 WOODED HILLS AND FARMLANDS

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These are medium to large scale upstanding, wooded landscapes with a sloping topography and well defined character. In Herefordshire they tend to be on a smaller scale than in some other parts of the country. They are similar to the Principal Wooded Hills, but with more of an emphasis on farmland. Here the woods tend to occur as discrete blocks separating the larger areas of enclosed hedged fields. The latter often being associated with a small village or hamlet. The steepness of slope is generally less severe than the Principal Wooded Hills and therefore has been less of a constraint for agriculture. 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.

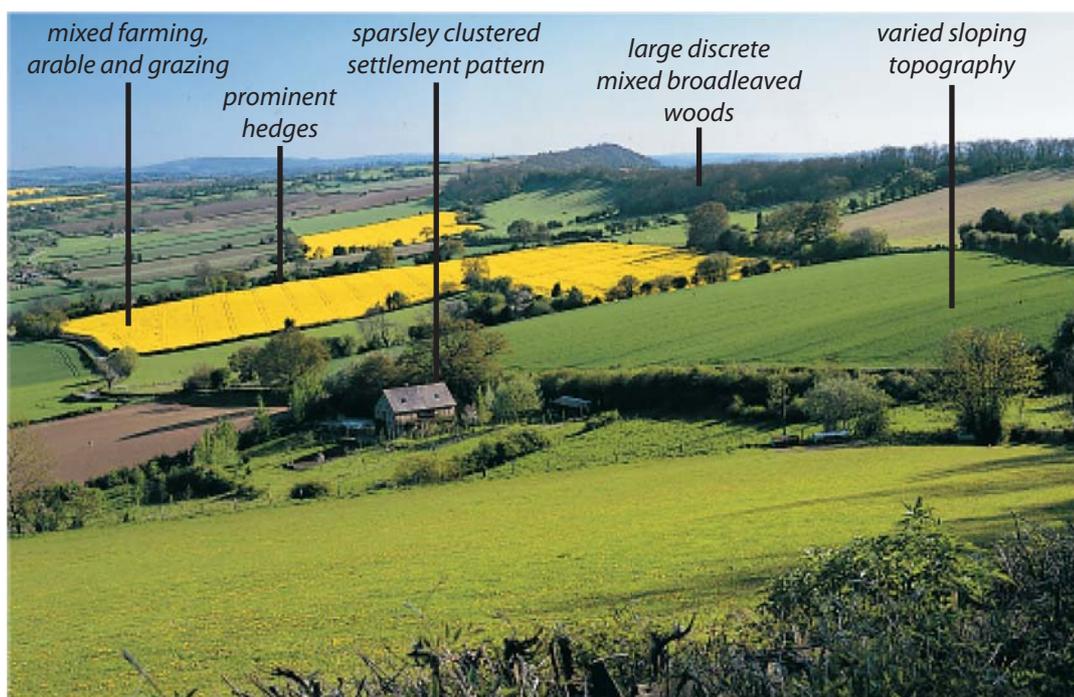
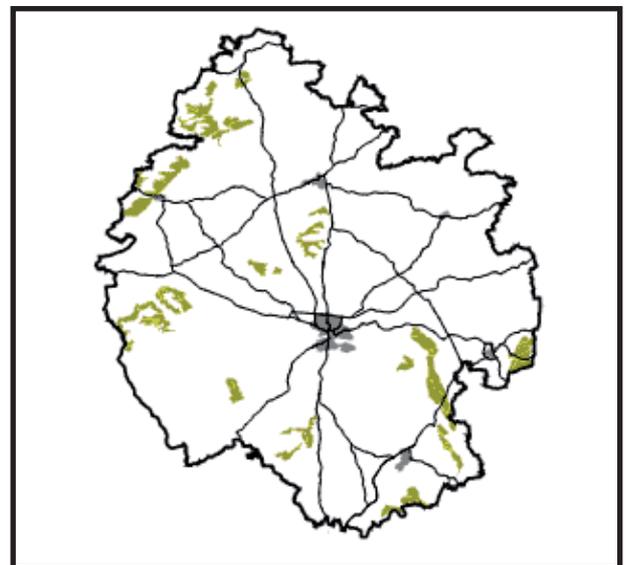
### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

#### Primary

- varied, sloping topography
- field boundary hedgerows are visually very prominent because of the topography

#### Secondary

- mixed farming land use
- ancient wooded character
- tree cover pattern of large, discrete woods
- medium-framed views
- sparsely clustered settlement pattern





### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

Land use change in this Landscape Type has tended to weaken the character of the landscape and unfortunately, these landscapes often lack a strong sense of visual unity today as they are so easily compromised. The strength and scale of this character has frequently been reduced by both the loss of elements such as hedgerows and hedgerow and streamside trees and the addition of inappropriate small-scale features. Previous conifer planting in some areas also contributes significantly to the loss of landscape character.



#### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Settlement in these landscapes is typically of 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 UDP 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.

#### WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

Large, discrete blocks of ancient semi-natural woodland are typical of the Wooded Hills and Farmlands. Also typical are the strong hedgerows and wooded streams, which link the woodland blocks to each other and the surrounding landscape.

### MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

The strategy for this Landscape Type should be one of mixed **conservation, restoration** and **enhancement**. There are opportunities for planting new large woodland blocks, particularly where there has been documented woodland clearance. However, the historical patterns of land clearance should also be respected and conserved, species rich permanent pasture being a particular feature of the upper slopes. These landscapes also offer opportunities to restore and enhance the historic patterns of linkage through strengthening hedgerow and streamside planting.

CONSERVATION	RESTORATION	ENHANCEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve existing blocks of deciduous, native, woodland</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek to restore the ancient broadleaved woodland character as necessary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance tree cover along watercourses and hedges</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve all remaining areas of species rich permanent pasture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek opportunities to restore the balance of woodland cover</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve and restore the historic pattern of large hedged fields, with priority being given to strengthening primary hedge lines</li> </ul>		

## 7.8 WOODED FOREST

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

In Herefordshire this Landscape Type is only found in the Queen's Wood and Linton Wood area, near Upton Bishop. It represents the northern extent of a vast tract of Wooded Forest stretching across Gloucestershire and encompassing the Forest of Dean.

This is a landscape dominated by dense tree cover, which effectively blocks all but immediate short distance views. It is essentially unsettled, although there are occasional wayside cottages, often with adjacent small fields of an 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.

It is possible that the woodland may previously have been partially 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 only 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 reflects the absence of a prolonged period of agricultural activity, the occasional cottage probably relating to woodland occupations. The interdependence of the 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.

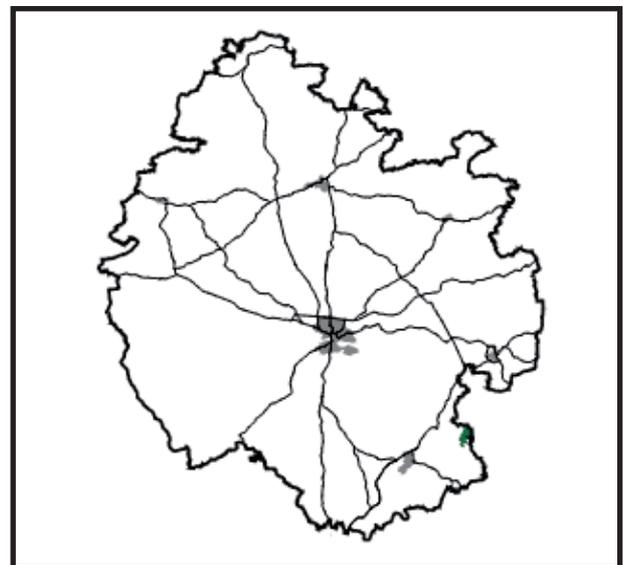
### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

#### Primary

- a heavily wooded landscape with continuous tree cover
- ancient wooded character with views restricted by the close proximity of trees
- unsettled landscape

#### Secondary

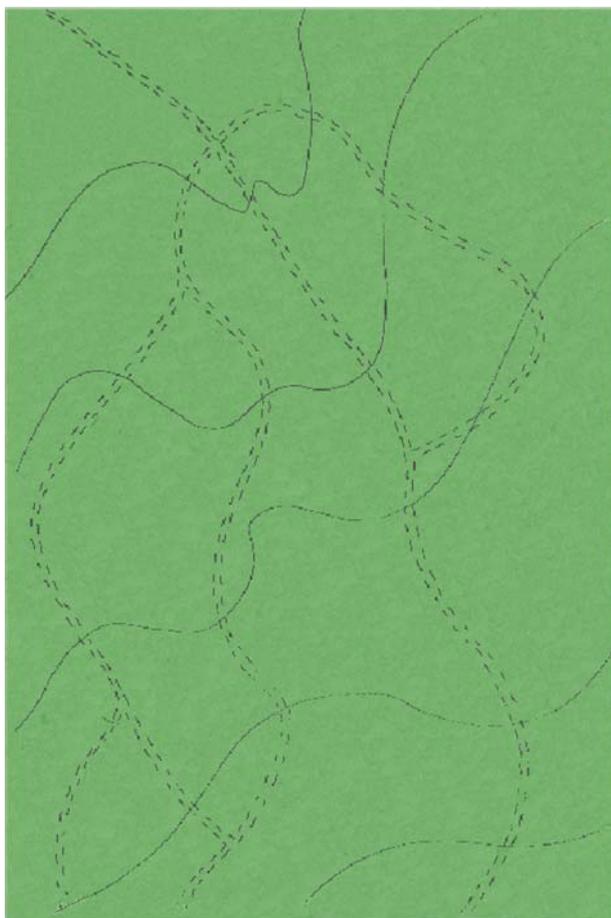
- heathy/acid grassland ground vegetation





### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

Previous forestry initiatives have resulted in some diversification of the woodland character of this Landscape Type. However, the importance of the woodland's nature conservation interests is now well appreciated and this, together with an increasingly sympathetic attitude to Landscape Character on the part of forestry organisations, is slowly leading to a restoration of the ancient wooded character. The occasional wayside cottages, with their accompanying small parcels of cleared land are typical of the landscape character. Unfortunately, there is a tendency for these to be extended or remodelled, both of which inevitably result in an alteration of scale and consequent weakening of landscape character.



#### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

This is fundamentally an unsettled landscape but one that accommodates the occasional small scale wayside dwelling. 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.

#### WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

The continuous woodland cover is occasionally punctuated by small parcels of land that have been cleared to accompany a wayside cottage. The woodland character is of ancient broadleaved woodland.

#### MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

The Forestry Commission's guidance for the management of ancient woodland should be supported and promoted in this landscape. Much of this woodland will already be subject to agreed management plans which should be followed. The character and integrity of the few wayside dwellings and their accompanying land parcels should be conserved. Any increase to their size or scale should be discouraged. Future management should therefore be based on principles of **conservation**.

CONSERVATION	
•	Conserve all ancient woodland sites and restock with appropriate broadleaved species of local provenance, particularly favouring native oak
•	Conserve the unsettled woodland character, particularly resisting added urban influences and changes to building scale

## 7.9 FOREST SMALLHOLDINGS AND DWELLINGS

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These are intimate, densely settled landscapes characterised by strings of wayside cottages and associated smallholdings. They nestle within a complex matrix of pastoral fields and narrow lanes, often 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

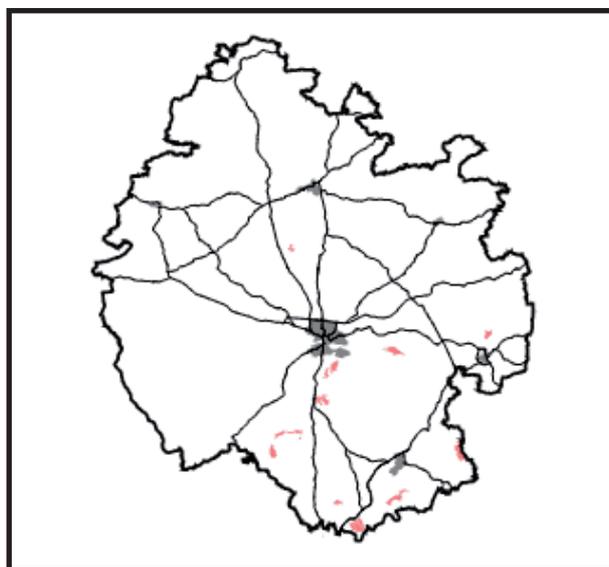
##### Primary

- **field boundary hedgerows are prominent, dense and well structured**
- **tree cover provided by individual densely scattered trees in hedgerows and gardens**
- **intimate landscape of domestic scale**
- **densely settled pattern of smallholdings and wayside cottages separated by small orchards and pasture**
- **distinctive individual small dwellings constructed out of red brick or stone**
- **complex, intimate network of narrow intersecting lanes which form a distinctive pattern on plan**
- **non-conformist chapels, often constructed of corrugated iron**

##### Secondary

- **heathy/acid grassland ground vegetation**
- **pastoral landscape**

They primarily owe this character to the clearance, enclosure and subsequent settlement of areas of former woodland and associated small commons. 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 and pockets of remaining rough ground with heathy/acid grassland vegetation contribute to the scale and are reminders of the origin of these landscapes. The hedgerows often have significant associated tree cover and provide an important structural element to the landscape. Interestingly, these communities in Herefordshire are characterised by the presence of small non-conformist chapels often cheaply constructed from corrugated iron.

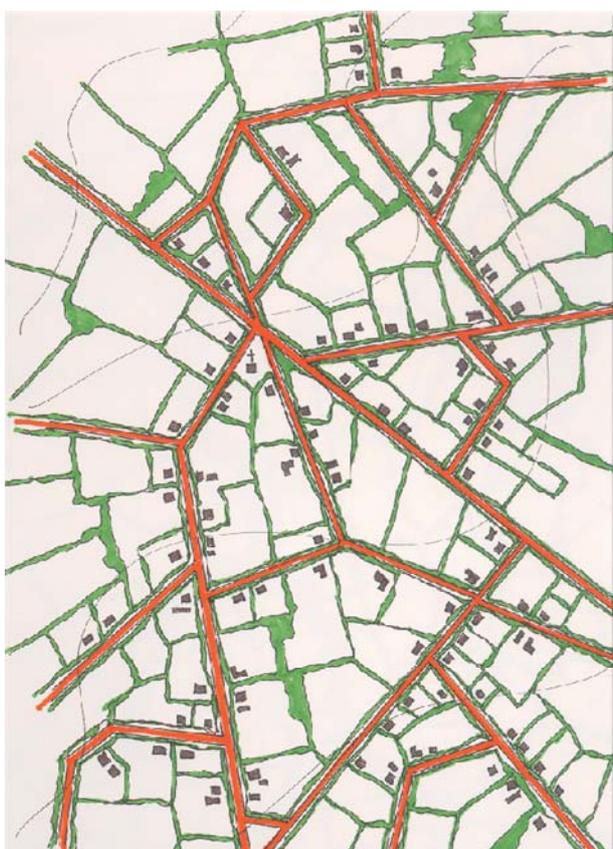




### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

The Forest Smallholdings and Dwellings are particularly vulnerable to changes in character brought about by built development. Increased affluence and mobility have encouraged long term residents and newcomers alike to extend or remodel the original modest cottages. The many small plots of rough land or pasture offer considerable scope for infill development, putting further pressure on these landscapes. The pattern and character of the individual dwellings is one of the most significant characteristics of this Landscape Type and increasing urbanisation is the greatest threat to their character.

An increase in horse or pony ownership has led to the conversion of small pastures to paddocks, a change of use which often leads to degradation and loss of hedgerows. The pastures themselves can often be of considerable nature conservation interest and this can easily be lost through inappropriate management.



#### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

This Landscape Type typically demonstrates a dense settlement pattern with a complex matrix of narrow intersecting lanes fringed by wayside cottages interspersed with small hedged pastures and pockets of rough grazing. Additional individual dwellings may be appropriate in some circumstances where the scale of the original settlement would not be compromised and where it is in accordance with UDP policy. However, clustered groups of new housing as typically proposed by developers would not be sympathetic to the landscape character.

#### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

The enclosure pattern is always small scale but varies considerably in its form. Examples of regularly laid out fields are as common as those of a more irregular, organic shape.

#### WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

Few of these landscapes still contain any significant woodland element. They do, however, possess a distinctly verdant quality, due to the prominent hedges and the many mature hedgerow trees, small orchards and garden plantings. Woodland introduction would not normally be appropriate in these landscapes.

### MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

The overall management strategy should be based on the **conservation** of the small scale, settled rural character of the landscape, together with limited **enhancement** of the tree cover. The conservation of the character, particularly the scale and detailing, of the cottages and smallholdings, together with their pattern and setting should be a priority, achievable through the enforcement of planning control and design guidance. The retention of the open spaces within the settlement matrix should be encouraged, paying particular attention to the areas of permanent pasture and to the hedgerow structure. Management should resist the temptation to “tidy” and thus urbanise these landscapes, which rely on an overgrown quality to maintain their rustic charm.

CONSERVATION	ENHANCEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve and enhance the tree cover, particularly hedgerow trees and traditional small orchards</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve the pattern, scale and detailing of settlements, including the open spaces within them</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve the small scale enclosure pattern of hedged fields through appropriate management</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage the retention of and appropriate management of permanent pasture</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve the pattern of narrow intersecting lanes</li> </ul>	

## 7.10 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 made up of a mosaic of small to medium sized fields, irregularly shaped woodlands and winding lanes.

The key element of these landscapes is the strong unifying presence of tree cover in the guise of woodlands, hedgerow trees, and linear tree cover associated with streams and watercourses. The combined presence of these tree cover components creates the fundamental sense of scale and enclosure, together with the filtered views that are distinctive in this landscape. The woodlands are of ancient semi-natural character, comprising mixed native broadleaved species, with oak being dominant. Lines of mature oak are a particular feature of the hedgerows, which are visually very dominant. They are usually species rich, complex habitats supporting a wide range of flora and fauna as well as the numerous hedgerow trees. The scale and shape of the woodlands is also important, ranging in size from small field corner copses to those of a size exceeding that of the surrounding fields. 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.

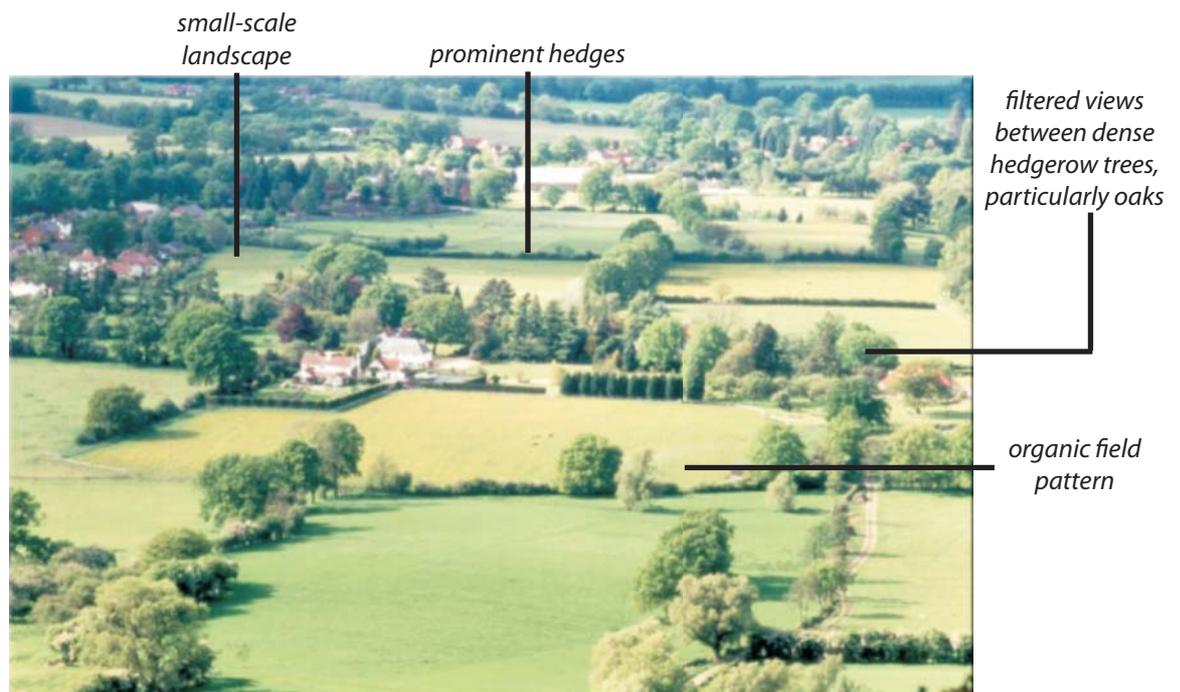
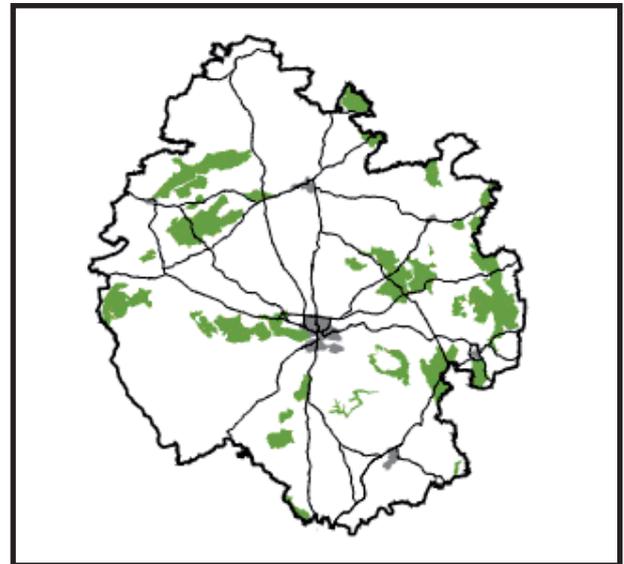
### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

#### Primary

- hedgerows define field boundaries
- ancient wooded character portrayed by the hedgerow trees and woodland
- densely scattered hedgerow trees, predominantly of oak
- filtered views between the hedgerow oaks

#### Secondary

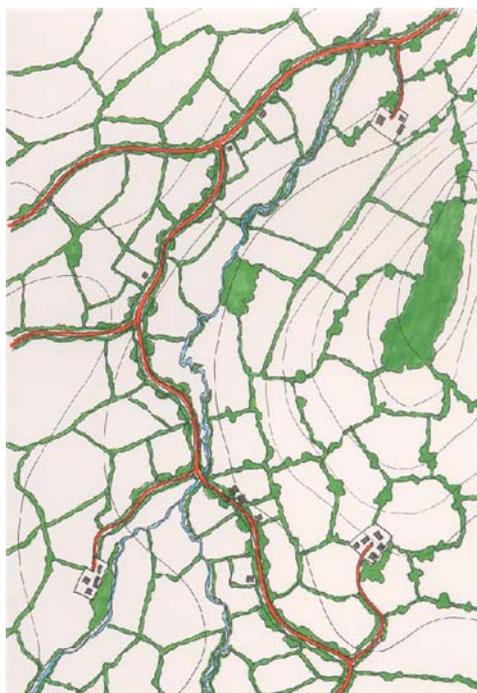
- organic enclosure pattern
- small scale landscapes





## FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

The deterioration of the distinctive character of these landscapes is very evident and continuing. This is due primarily to the decline and fragmentation of the tree cover elements, particularly the hedgerow trees. The age distribution of hedgerow oak is markedly unbalanced, with the majority of specimens being mature and little new stock or natural regeneration being encouraged to replenish them. The distribution of woodlands is uneven throughout these landscapes and the streamside cover is also often fragmented. A gradual increase in arable land use is resulting in loss of function of many hedgerows and this in turn will lead to a gradual demise of the hedgerow structure through inappropriate management. Development pressure has resulted in new dwellings which do not respect the characteristic settlement pattern.



### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

These landscapes typically have a dispersed settlement pattern of frequent roadside dwellings and farmsteads, set amongst winding lanes. In accordance with UDP policy, additional individual dwellings would conform to the settlement character, 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

The organic enclosure pattern indicates an unplanned landscape arising from the previous enclosure of both former woodland and open fields. 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 hedge lines.

### WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

The scale and shape of the woodlands is very varied, ranging from small field corner copses to woods larger than the surrounding fields. There is considerable scope for additional small-scale woodland planting. However, large scale planting or linking up existing fragmented woodlands to form large blocks would not be appropriate. The prominent hedgerows and lines of hedgerow oaks provide the visual and ecological linkages between woods.

## MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

The hedgerow oaks are the most crucial element of the landscape character and hedgerow tree planting initiatives must be supported if the character of the Principal Timbered Farmlands is to be perpetuated. Opportunities for additional small woods should also be pursued. The overall management strategy should therefore be one of **conservation**, **restoration** and **enhancement** of the existing tree cover and hedgerow patterns.

CONSERVATION	RESTORATION	ENHANCEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve and restore the pattern and composition of the hedgerow matrix through appropriate management and replanting</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain the distinctive hedgerow oaks and enhance their age structure through new planting or encouraging the growth of existing plants to tree size</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve and restore tree cover along watercourses and streamlines</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek opportunities to enhance tree cover along roadsides and in other non-farmed locations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve all native broadleaved woods and copses and restock with locally occurring native species</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage the planting of new small woods, reflecting the scale, shape and composition of the existing woodland character and favouring oak as the dominant species</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve the organic pattern and character of the lane networks</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve the historic dispersed settlement pattern</li> </ul>		

## 7.11 TIMBERED PLATEAU FARMLANDS

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These landscapes are an upstanding version of Principal Timbered Farmlands and in Herefordshire occur in their greatest concentration on the Bromyard Plateau. They are varied, agricultural landscapes of hedged fields, scattered farms, woods and wooded valleys associated with undulating relief. The dominant landform is one of the most prominent characteristics and tends to override the patterns of tree cover and field shape. Variations in topography within this landscape create a changing sequence of visual perspectives, ranging from open vistas on plateau summits to more secluded scenes along valley bottoms.

The tree cover 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 much less significant. The more pronounced undulating topography tends to throw the organic pattern of woodland and hedgerows into greater visual prominence. It also provides fairly open views with the scale defined by the size of both woodlands and fields. 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 steeply incised wooded dingles associated with 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.

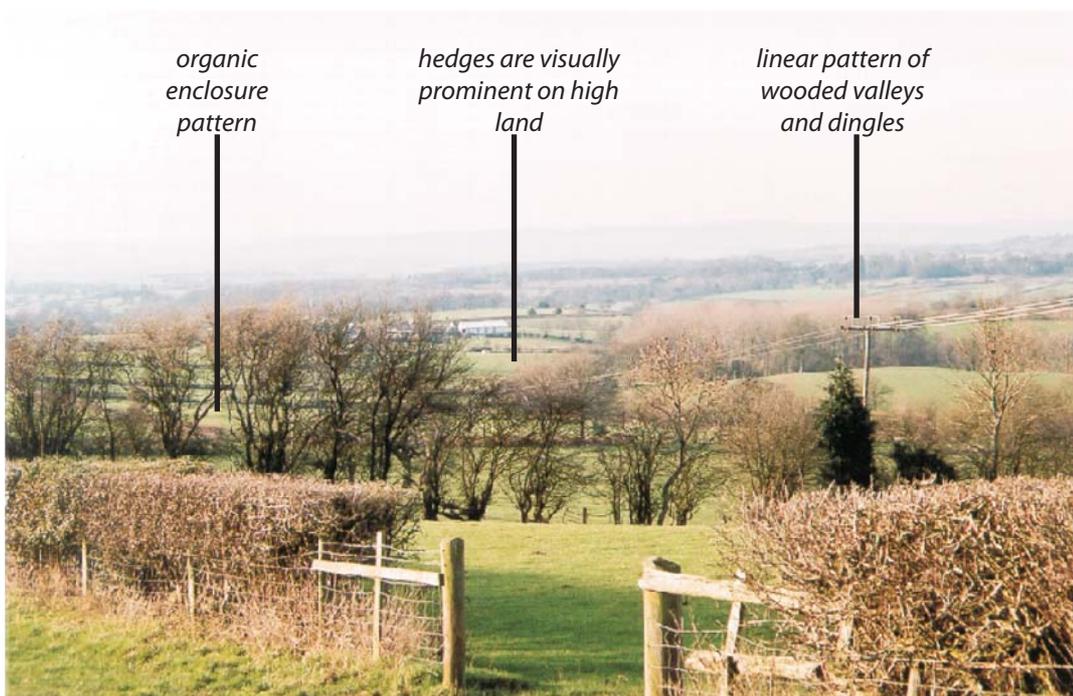
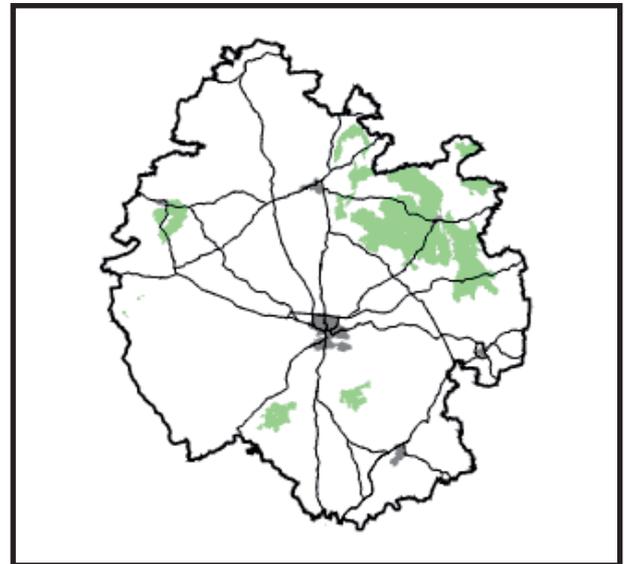
### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

#### Primary

- **field boundary hedgerows are thrown into visual prominence by the landform**
- **wooded valleys and dingles**
- **ancient wooded character**

#### Secondary

- **mixed farming land use**
- **linear pattern of woodland**
- **organic enclosure pattern**
- **medium-open views**



*organic enclosure pattern*

*hedges are visually prominent on high land*

*linear pattern of wooded valleys and dingles*



### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

Generally, this Landscape Type has retained its inherent character in better condition than many other areas. The prominent landform and wooded valleys and dingles are the most dominant characteristics and the least likely to be degraded. Notwithstanding this, the modern problems of impoverished hedgerows, loss of hedgerow trees and little new tree planting or regeneration is as true in these landscapes as it is generally across the county.



### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Timbered Plateau Farmlands generally have a dispersed settlement pattern of individual farms and hamlets. There are also occasional wayside dwellings and villages, which contribute to a rather varied settlement character, but always of a dispersed nature. New housing, in accordance with UDP policy, could therefore be accommodated as modest additions to existing village or hamlet clusters or as individual dwellings. The density of development must remain low if the dispersed nature of the settlement pattern is to be respected.

### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

The undulating landform throws the landscape's organic enclosure pattern into strong visual relief.

### WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

Woodland cover is dependant on hedgerow trees and woodlands, both of which are dominated by oak. The woods are essentially of ancient semi-natural character and vary considerably in size. They are usually discrete woodlands, linked by hedgerows. The linear pattern of woodland, following steeply incised stream dingles is a particular feature of this Landscape Type. Opportunities for new woodland creation abound in these areas but should respect the ancient character of broadleaved native species, mixed age structure and an irregular outline.

### MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

Management guidance for these landscapes should concentrate on the **conservation** and **enhancement** of existing hedgerows and woodland. Appropriate management to strengthen hedgerows and replace the lost hedgerow oaks, either by new planting or controlled regeneration would strengthen the pattern of the landscape. The scale could be strengthened by management techniques which encourage the natural regeneration of existing woodland and wooded dingles.

CONSERVATION	ENHANCEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve all native broadleaved woodlands and restock with species of local provenance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance the age structure of hedgerow oaks through new planting or selective regeneration</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek to influence management techniques to ensure the conservation and enhancement of hedgerows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage new woodland planting to reflect the shape, scale and composition of the existing ancient woodland character and favouring oak as the dominant species</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage natural woodland regeneration</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve and restore tree cover along dingles and streamsides</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve and restore tree cover along dingles and streamsides</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain the dispersed settlement pattern</li> </ul>	

## 7.12 ANCIENT TIMBERED FARMLANDS

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

In Herefordshire, this variation of Principal Timbered Farmlands is situated to the south of Kington on the western border with Wales. It occupies an area that has been identified by the Herefordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation as having one of the oldest field patterns in the county. This is a small scale, wooded agricultural landscape with a noticeable rolling landform. It is made up of a complex mosaic of small to medium sized irregularly shaped fields, small woods, narrow, winding, often sunken lanes and sparsely scattered farmsteads and wayside dwellings.

The key characteristic of this Landscape Type is the significant tree cover in the form of small, irregularly shaped woodlands, thickly scattered hedgerow trees and linear tree cover associated with watercourses. The frequent woods and copses, together with the many mature hedgerow oaks and thick hedges create an intimately enclosed landscape of filtered views, typical of the Timbered Farmlands. The notable hedges, which are usually species rich and of ancient origin, provide a valuable, complex wildlife habitat. The pastoral land use is a further indication of an ancient field pattern, as the small fields and rolling topography discourage arable farming and its associated loss of hedges.

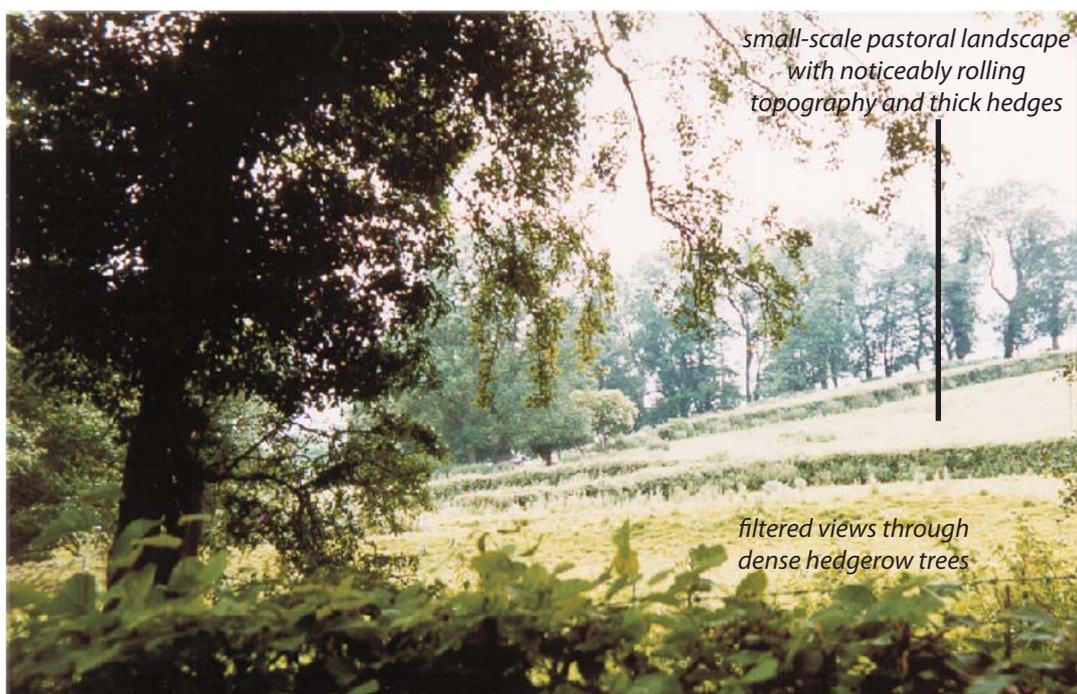
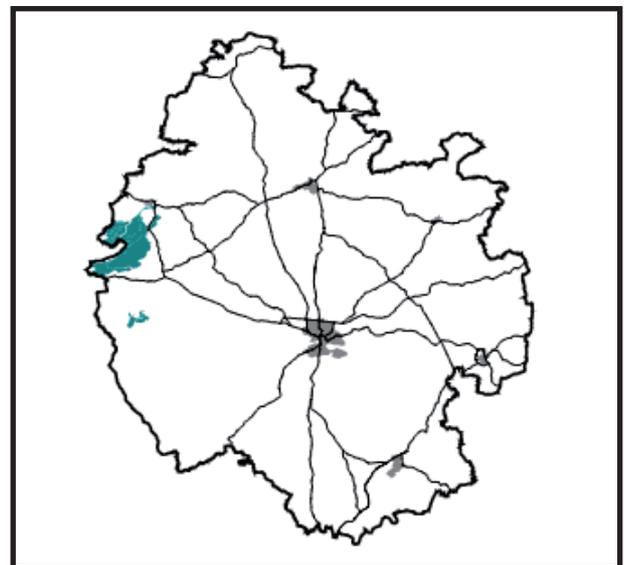
### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

#### Primary

- **pastoral land use**
- **noticeably rolling topography**
- **thickly hedged landscape**
- **ancient tree cover character**
- **densely scattered hedgerow trees**
- **filtered views through hedgerow trees**
- **small scale landscape**

#### Secondary

- **scattered pattern of farms and wayside dwellings**
- **organic enclosure pattern**





## FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

There has been arguably less development pressure and change to this part of Herefordshire than most others. The character of the landscape is generally in good condition, relying heavily on the topography and tree cover which combine to produce a small scale, intimate landscape. Nevertheless, when one consults early Ordnance Survey maps it is apparent that during the last century there has been considerable loss of hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodlands and a significant addition to the housing density. Therefore, although the pace of change may be slower here than in many other places, it is nevertheless taking place and leading to a weakening of landscape character.



### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

This landscape supports a pattern of sparsely scattered farmsteads and wayside dwellings with occasional clustered hamlets. The density of the settlement is very low, even with the additional modern dwellings. This is not an area that could support substantial additional housing. In accordance with UDP policy, the occasional individual dwelling could be accommodated without too much detriment to the landscape character but groups of new houses, even if sited within hamlets, would compromise the settlement pattern.

### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

This landscape's organic enclosure pattern is one of the oldest in the county and strongly contributes to its quintessential ancient character. The stringent enforcement of Hedgerow Regulations should ensure the survival of this characteristic.

### WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

The most significant characteristic of this landscape is its tree cover of densely scattered hedgerow oaks and frequent small woods and copses. The woods are small, irregularly shaped, comprising native broadleaved species, although some limited conifer planting has been carried out in the past. They are

scattered fairly evenly throughout the Landscape Type. There is considerable scope for additional native woodland planting that conforms to the ancient tree cover character of the existing woodland.

## MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

In common with the other Timbered Farmland types, Ancient Timbered Farmlands has lost a proportion of its tree cover and suffers from a lack of age differential. Although the landscape appears well wooded, the hedgerow oaks are generally mature and there has been little investment in younger trees to perpetuate the character of the landscape. The same is true of many of the woodlands, even though in some, modern forestry practices will ensure the continuation of the woodland element. The overall strategy for Ancient Timbered Farmlands should therefore reflect that of the other Timbered Farmlands, namely one of **conservation** and **enhancement** of the existing tree cover and hedgerow pattern.

CONSERVATION	ENHANCEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve all native broadleaved woodlands and restock with native species of local provenance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain the high density of trees in the hedgerows through appropriate tree management and new planting or regeneration</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve and restore the pattern and composition of hedgerows through appropriate management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage the planting of new woodland, reflecting the scale, shape and composition of the existing ancient woodland character and favouring oak as the dominant species</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek ways to encourage the continuing maintenance of pastoral land use</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve the organic pattern and character of the matrix of winding lanes</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain the sparsely scattered settlement pattern through stringent planning control</li> </ul>	

## 7.13 ANCIENT BORDER FARMLANDS

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

This Landscape Type is found along the south-western border of Herefordshire where the Herefordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation has noted the field pattern to be one of the most ancient in the county. The character type lies to the west of the Golden Valley, encompassing the Olchon, Monnow and Escley Valleys.

This is a remote, small scale, pastoral landscape with a dramatically rolling topography. The pattern of small, irregular, often rounded shaped fields is only seen in this part of the county. It is possible that the traditional Welsh pattern of inheritance, which favours the subdivision of the land, may have contributed to this distinctive characteristic.

The woodlands are usually small, ancient semi-natural woods, of a linear form, following the watercourses and steeply incised dingles. However, the predominant tree cover is provided by the many scattered hedgerow trees, which together with the thick, species rich hedges, are a notable feature of the landscape. The roadside verges sometimes contain bracken and other plants indicative of sandy soils. This is particularly evident on the higher ground where soils are more impoverished. Settlement is of sparsely scattered hamlets and small livestock farms, linked by narrow winding lanes. A distinctive building style is evident, particularly in relation to the agricultural barns of narrowly coursed local grey stone with tight dry joints and stone slate roofs.

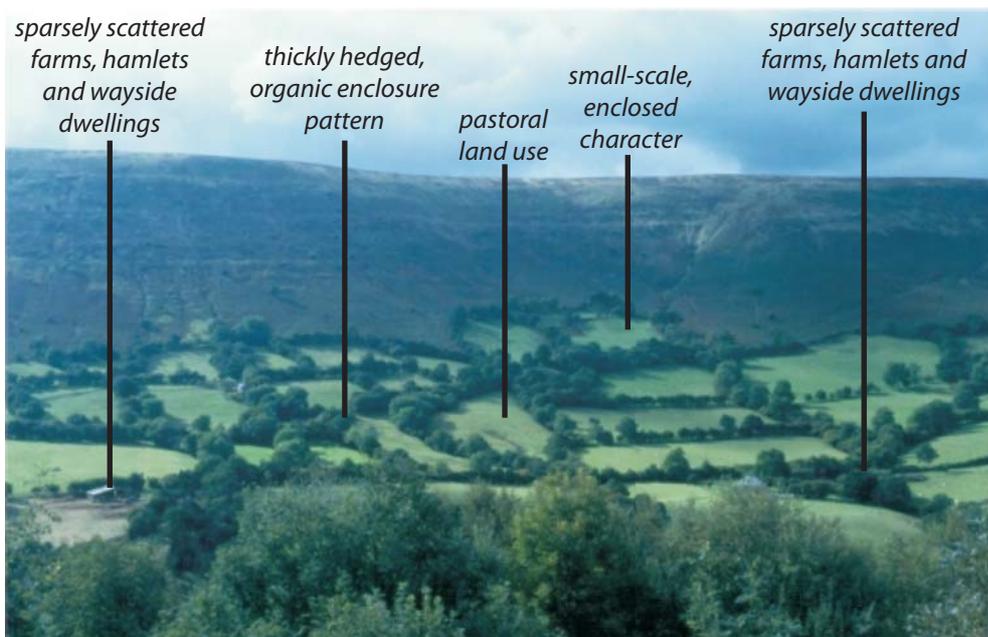
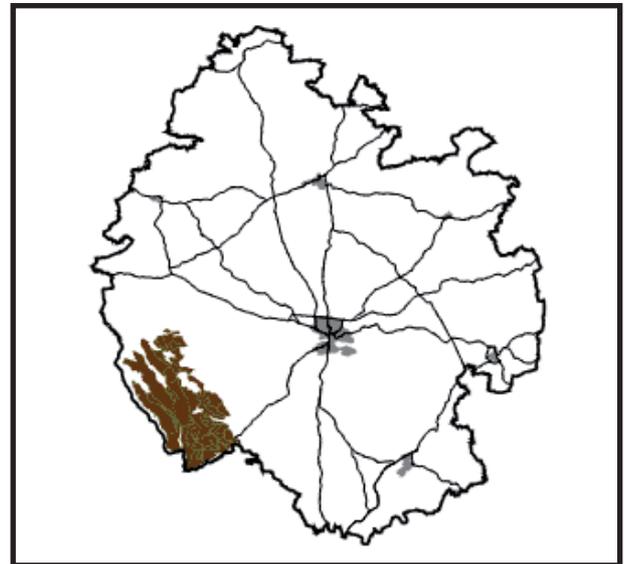
### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

#### Primary

- **pastoral land use**
- **thickly hedged landscape**
- **ancient tree cover character**
- **scattered hedgerow trees with linear woodland along dingles and streams**
- **organic enclosure pattern**
- **small scale, enclosed character**
- **distinctive building style**

#### Secondary

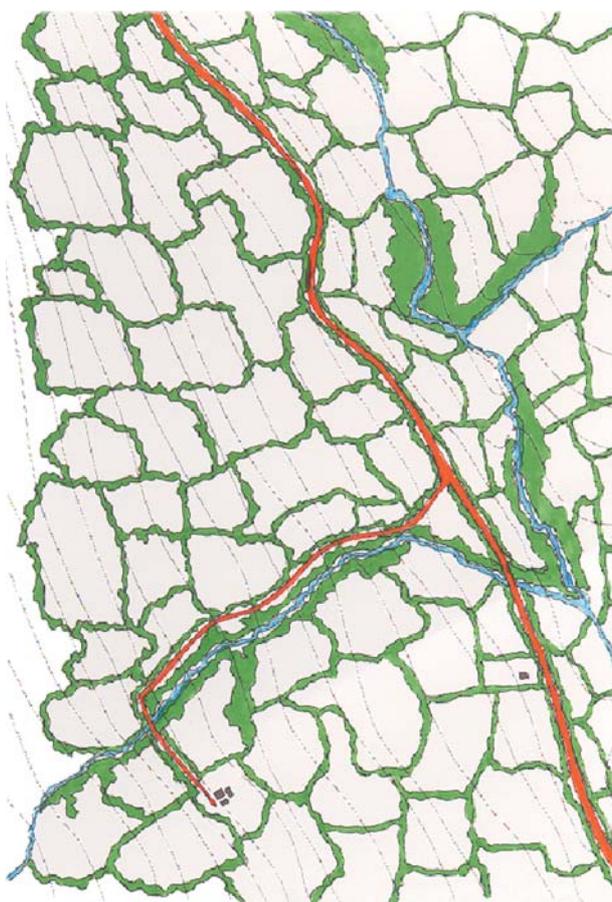
- **scattered pattern of farms, wayside dwellings and hamlets**





## FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

This remote and highly distinctive landscape is suffering from a pronounced degree of degradation. The various elements that contribute to the landscape character are all vulnerable to external influence. The overwhelming dominance of the hedgerows is being lost through lack of maintenance; allowing stock to browse and trample through them. This is leading to a 'ranching' characteristic as fields are being opened up to each other. The subsequent loss of the distinctive field pattern, the hedgerows and their associated trees is extremely noticeable in this unique landscape. Intensification of agricultural practices is also leading to loss of biodiversity and consequent loss of visual features such as traditional hay meadows. Similarly, the low density of the scattered settlement pattern is being eroded as new dwellings are built which do not respect either the scale, density or vernacular style of the area.



### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

The sparsely scattered, low density settlement pattern is particularly vulnerable to change. New development should be discouraged and strictly controlled to prevent inappropriate clustering.

### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

The organic, small scale enclosure pattern is particularly evident in the Olchon Valley where the steeply sloping topography throws it into sharp relief.

### WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

This is a verdant landscape with abundant hedgerow trees, small ancient semi-natural woods and thickly treed, deeply incised dingles and stream sides. Large scale woodland is not a feature.

### MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

The overall strategy for Ancient Border Farmlands must be one of **conservation** with a strong **restoration** element. Initiatives to encourage landowners to maintain hedges and fence lines should be actively pursued in order to halt the 'ranching' effect. There are opportunities for new, small scale woodland planting of an ancient character and linear form, particularly strengthening the planting along dingles.

New development should be restricted in order to conserve the sparsely scattered settlement pattern. Owners should be encouraged to appropriately restore the locally distinctive buildings, particularly the narrowly coursed, dry jointed, stone barns.

CONSERVATION	RESTORATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve and restore the existing and historic hedgerow lines</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve the pastoral land use, i.e. livestock grazing and hay cuts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen the enclosure pattern through hedgerow regeneration and new planting</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve the sparsely scattered settlement pattern</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen the tree cover through additional planting and regeneration of existing woodland</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote the appropriate restoration and maintenance of distinctive vernacular buildings</li> </ul>

## 7.14 RIVERSIDE MEADOWS

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These are linear, riverine landscapes associated with a flat, generally well defined, alluvial floodplain, in places framed by steeply rising ground. They are secluded pastoral landscapes, characterised by meandering tree lined rivers, flanked by riverside meadows which are defined by hedge and ditch boundaries. Settlement is typically absent. Throughout these landscapes, the presence of extensive areas of seasonally grazed waterside meadows has in the past provided a strong sense of visual and ecological unity. These are landscapes that accommodate a degree of annual flooding, a factor which has been reflected in the traditional 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. The natural fertility of Riverside Meadows has often been maximised by employing devices such as sluices to control and direct the silt laden flood waters. The unique Lammas Meadows bordering the River Lugg at Hereford are an excellent example of traditionally managed riverside meadows where the historic pattern of cutting and grazing has been continued for centuries. Tree cover is a notable element of Riverside Meadows, usually in a linear pattern along the hedge and ditch lines and to the banks of watercourses. Typically, species are alder and willow, the latter often pollarded. This Landscape Type is associated with large rivers, and in the case of Herefordshire, the Rivers Arrow, Clun, Frome, Leadon, Lodon, Lugg, Monnow, Teme and Wye.

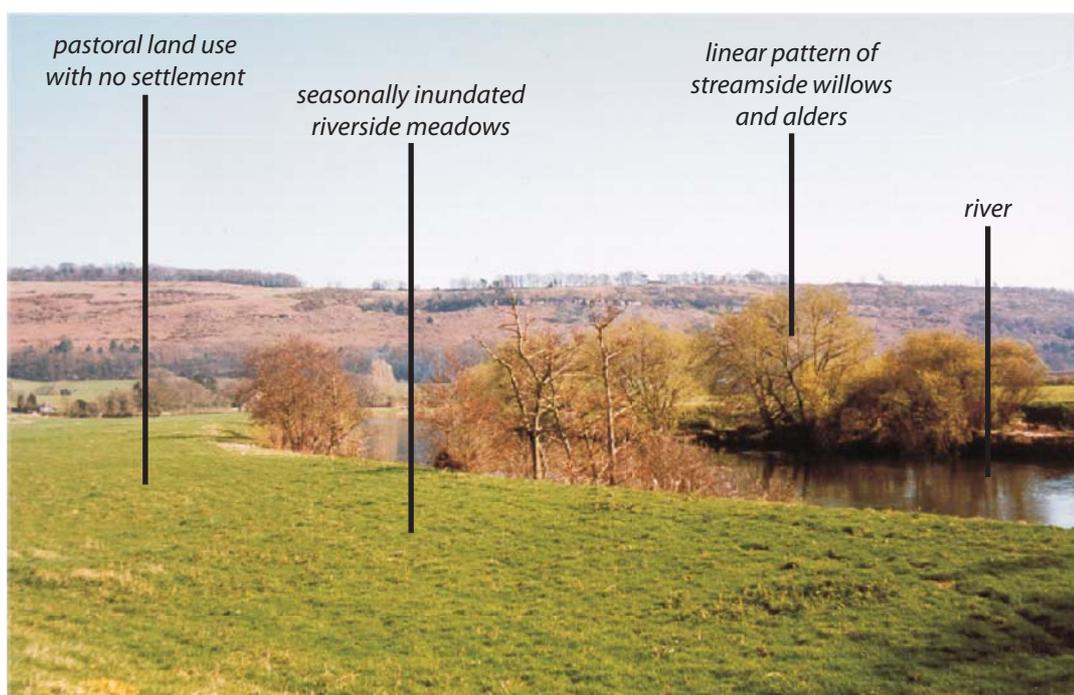
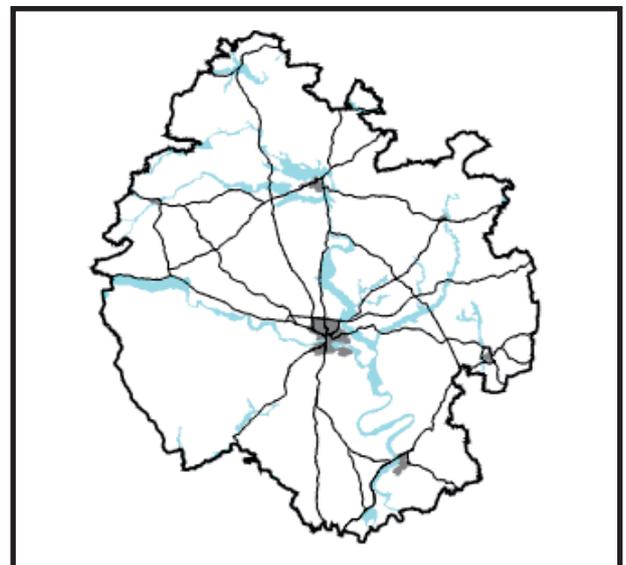
### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

#### Primary

- **pastoral land use**
- **well defined linear patterns of willow and alder**
- **tree cover represented by stream side and hedgerow trees**
- **unsettled landscape**

#### Secondary

- **wetland habitat**
- **river channel**
- **hedge and ditch boundaries**





## FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

The strongly consistent visual and ecological character that has arisen through traditional methods of land management has been noticeably impoverished during the post war period. A rapid increase in arable cropping, in Herefordshire notably potatoes, has disrupted the classical patchwork of water meadows and pasture. The decline in the traditional practices of seasonal grazing and hay making, together with flood alleviation works which involve the controlled channelling of flood water with associated straightening and bank re-profiling have all led to a reduction in ecological and visual interest. Elsewhere, built development has been undertaken and the resulting risk of flooding has often been overcome by the construction of uncharacteristic structures such as bunds, flood walls or flood relief channels. These are linear landscapes where the sense of unity relies heavily on extensive views along the length of river corridors. Added features such as roads or embankments which dissect the river corridor have resulted in numerous instances of visual fragmentation.



### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

These are essentially unsettled landscapes with occasional mills or other buildings directly associated with the river.

### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

The pattern of enclosure is that of a planned nature where regularly laid out fields are hedged, ditched and traditionally managed.

### WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

Tree cover is typically that of lines of alder and willow along the banks of the rivers and wet ditches. The grazing meadow land use has forged the landscape character and woodland is generally therefore not a feature of Riverside Meadows, although there may be some limited opportunity for wet woodland creation.

### MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

Built development should be actively discouraged as it will always lead to a conflict with flood water as well as being contrary to the landscape character. Similarly, arable cropping not only

leads to loss of landscape character but also to erosion and river pollution through silt and nitrate rich run off, particularly in flood conditions. Wetland habitats are becoming more scarce, therefore opportunities to **conserve** and **restore** them and to **enhance** biodiversity and landscape character by returning the land to a controlled annual flooding regime should be encouraged.

CONSERVATION	RESTORATION	ENHANCEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve, restore and enhance continuous linear tree cover along hedge lines, ditches and watercourses</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve and restore wetland habitats and seek opportunities for further wetland habitat creation</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve all areas of permanent pasture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek opportunities to return arable areas to pasture</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek to retain the strongly linear form of the landscape</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore opportunities to return to traditional patterns and processes of natural flooding cycles</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discourage further drainage of waterside meadows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek opportunities to restore natural river bank and bed features and resist further loss of river habitat</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discourage built development</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discourage construction works that would interrupt the linear unity of the landscape</li> </ul>		

## 7.15 WET PASTURE MEADOWS

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

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. These are secluded, pastoral landscapes characterised by a regular pattern of hedged fields and ditches fringed by lines of willow and alder. Pollarded willows are often a distinctive feature.

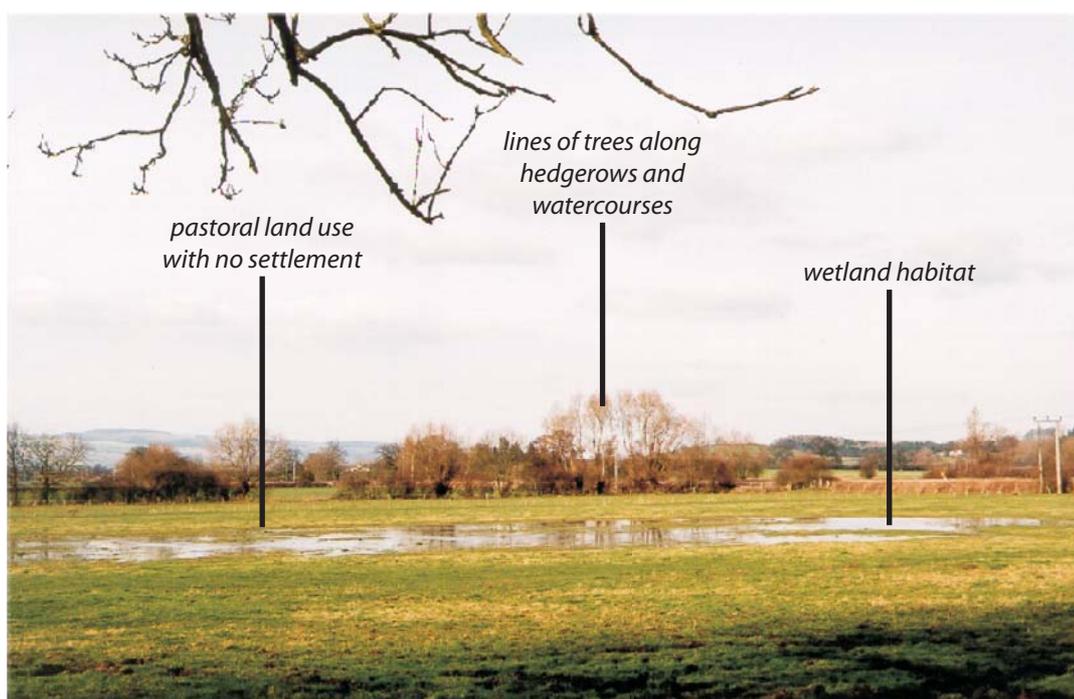
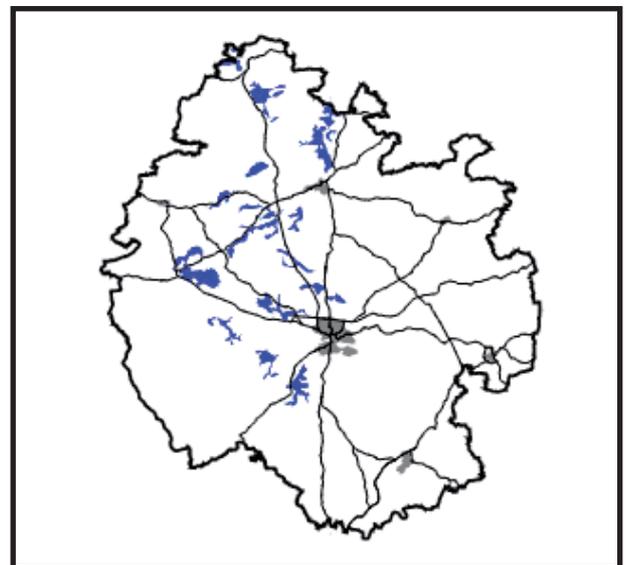
### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

#### Primary

- **pastoral land use**
- **linear tree cover pattern**
- **tree cover provided by hedgerow and watercourse trees**
- **unsettled landscape**

#### Secondary

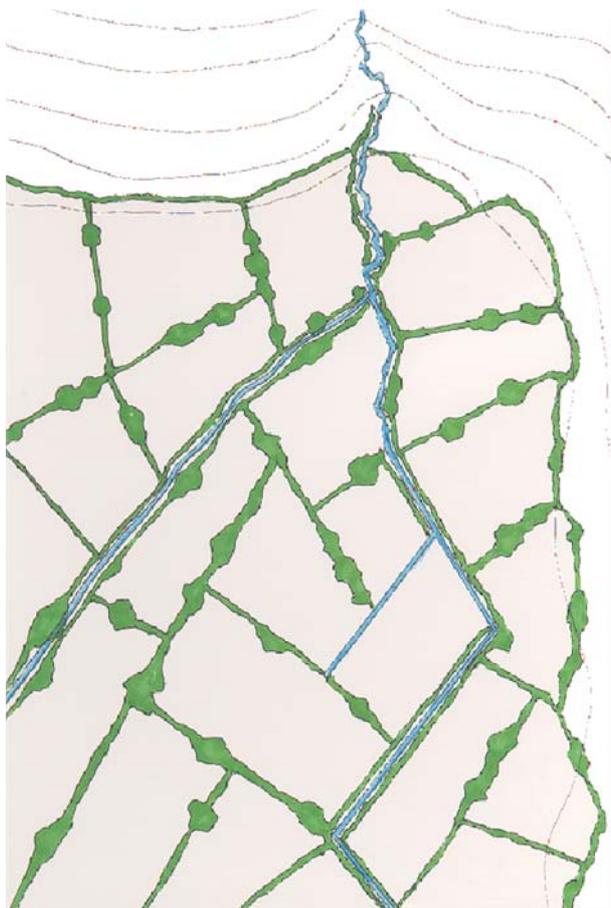
- **wetland habitat**
- **hedge and ditch boundaries**





### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

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.



#### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

These are unsettled landscapes. No development should be allowed.

#### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

Wet Pasture Meadows are often unenclosed, but where enclosure has taken place it is of a planned nature with a regular pattern of hedged fields.

#### WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

Wet Pasture Meadows and Riverside Meadows have a similar linear pattern of willows and alders lining the hedges and wet ditches. Willows are usually pollarded. Woodland is not appropriate in Wet Pasture Meadows.

#### MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

The sustainable land use for these areas is still pastoral. This in turn is compatible with the significant ecological potential of Wet Pasture Meadows and the opportunities they offer for wetland creation or restoration. They should be regarded primarily as areas of **conservation** and the unsettled, undeveloped character perpetuated. There are also numerous opportunities for landscape and biodiversity improvement through **restoration** and **enhancement**.

CONSERVATION	RESTORATION	ENHANCEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve all permanent pasture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek opportunities to convert arable land back to wet pasture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage the creation of new wetland habitats</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve and restore linear tree cover along watercourses, ditches and hedgerows</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage the retention and appropriate management of existing wetland habitats</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discourage activities likely to increase the drainage or lower the water table of these areas</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discourage the creation of permanent lakes or ponds</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discourage any settlement or other building or construction work</li> </ul>		

## 7.16 ESTATE FARMLANDS

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

The majority of this land has historically been in the ownership of a few land owning families who have influenced the character of the landscape by laying it out in an ordered fashion. This is a mixed farming, medium scale landscape where the medium to large sized fields are defined by hedgerows. The views are framed by tree groups associated with its planned character. These are often small, geometrically shaped plantation woodlands, possibly used in the past for shooting purposes, together with the tree features associated with large country house estates and ornamental parklands. This landscape type is similar to the Wooded Estatelands but it lacks the medieval parks and associated ancient woodland. Settlement is largely restricted to discrete clusters of dwellings and associated small estate villages.

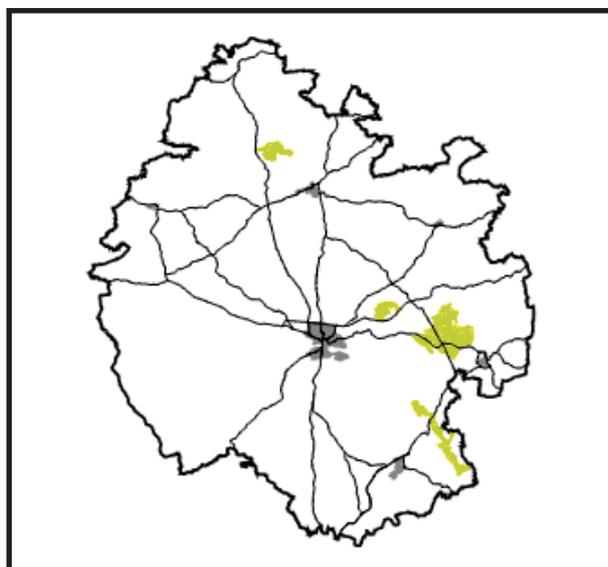
### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

#### Primary

- hedgerows define the field boundaries

#### Secondary

- mixed farming land use
- planned woodland character
- medium-framed views
- clustered settlement pattern





### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

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.

The specimen tree planting 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 interest. The post war demolition of many of these houses has left relic landscapes that no longer fulfil their original function. Throughout Herefordshire, the unmistakable silhouettes of ancient cedars, redwoods, Wellingtonias and Corsican pines mark the remnants of these ornamental plantings.

Estate villages with distinctive architectural styles and detailing are a feature of this Landscape Type. However, the strongly unified character of these settlements is being increasingly compromised by modification and new development.



### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

The settlement pattern is of clustered groups of dwellings, often estate villages. New development which tends towards a clustered pattern would be appropriate in these landscapes if in accordance with UDP 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

This is a planned landscape with a sub-regular pattern of medium to large hedged fields. In Herefordshire, the fields tend to be smaller than in some other parts of the country.

### WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

The woodland character is of a planned nature with individual geometrically shaped plantation woodlands and ornamental plantings.

### MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

These are landscapes of limited value to wildlife but with the potential to increase their ecological interest whilst strengthening the landscape character. They can accommodate considerable new woodland planting as well as benefiting from the restoration of the parkland and ornamental tree planting.

New woodland should favour separate, geometrically shaped woods as well as increased planting along watercourses. The conservation of the hedgerow pattern is important and an associated improvement in conservation field margins would greatly benefit wildlife. New settlement should be sited with care in order to protect the integrity of the estate villages. Management emphasis is therefore concentrated on **conservation** and **enhancement**.

CONSERVATION	ENHANCEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve the enclosure pattern of sub-regular hedged fields</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance tree cover through further planting of small scale plantations and tree belts</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and restore parklands and the tree cover associated with country house estates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the establishment of wide field margins for wildfire benefit</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and enhance tree cover along watercourses</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve the integrity of estate villages</li> </ul>	

## 7.17 PLATEAU ESTATE FARMLANDS

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

This Landscape Type is found in areas of upstanding, undulating topography and is considered to be the upstanding version of Estate Farmlands. In Herefordshire it is concentrated on the Bromyard Plateau and includes the estates associated with Hampton, Broadfield and Pudleston Courts, Hennor House and Buckland. This is an ordered, estate landscape of regularly shaped, medium sized fields separated by prominent, single species hedges and small woodlands. The tree cover consists of small woods and game plantations, along with a significant proportion of specimen trees, often conifers, associated with the ornamental grounds and parklands of the frequent large country houses. The long views from these upland landscapes are framed by the tree groups, often sited for this purpose.

Land use is of mixed farming with arable crops predominating where the landform is flatter. Settlement is generally restricted to discrete clusters of dwellings, large country houses and associated small estate villages. In places the roadside verges support bracken and other heathy or acid grassland vegetation.

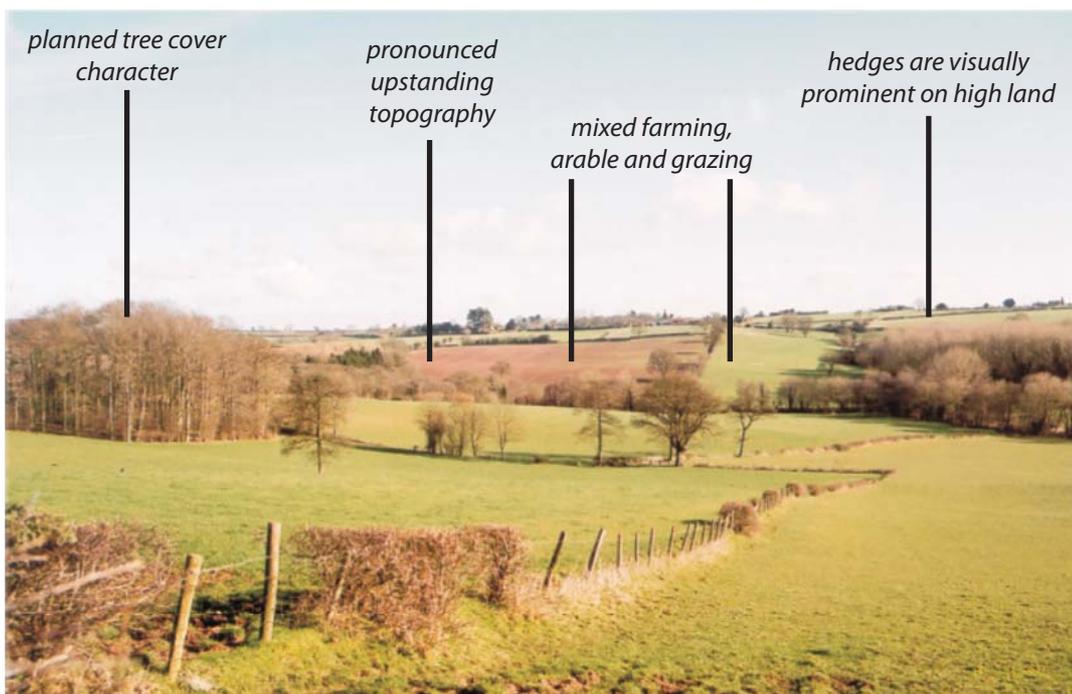
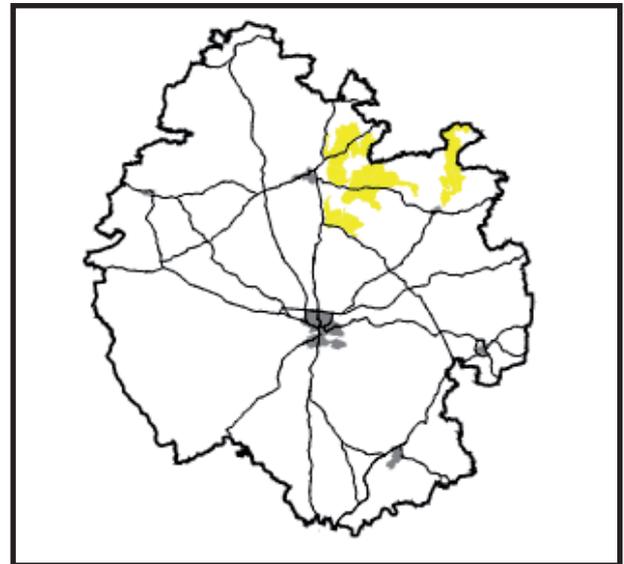
### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

#### Primary

- **pronounced upstanding topography**
- **mixed farming land use**
- **hedgerows are rendered prominent by the landform**

#### Secondary

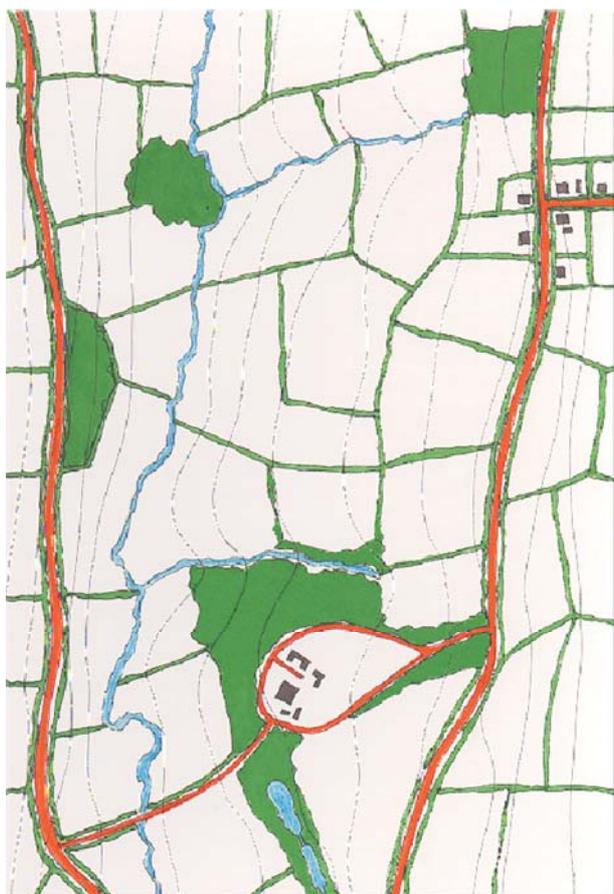
- **planned tree cover character**
- **groups of trees, often ornamental species**
- **medium-framed views**
- **small estate villages and clusters of dwellings**





## FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

In common with the other estate landscapes, Plateau Estate Farmlands has suffered an impoverishment of its landscape character through hedgerow and tree loss, as well as the addition of inappropriate small scale elements which confuse the large scale, ordered character. Increased arable farming has led to hedgerow neglect, with little regeneration or new planting. The game plantations and ornamental trees associated with large country houses are often over-mature and, lacking their original function, are not being replaced. Many of the grand houses have been demolished or are in multiple ownership with consequent degradation of their associated redundant landscape. New housing, particularly in estate villages is often contrary to their distinctive scale and style and results in stereotypical featureless development throughout the county.



### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

The clustered settlement pattern would accept new development that is in accordance with UDP policy, but care should be taken when siting housing in estate villages to avoid compromising the distinctive character of the village. Scale, styling and materials should all reflect the local built environment.

### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

These are planned landscapes with a varying but geometric pattern of enclosed, hedged fields. In Herefordshire the size of the fields tends to be smaller than in some other parts of the country.

### WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

Tree cover consists of small estate woodlands and plantations, usually of a regular shape. Ornamental, exotic planting, particularly of conifers, is a noticeable feature. Much of this planting is now over-mature and in rapid decline.

### MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

The overall strategy for these landscapes should be to **conserve, restore** and **enhance** the distinctive estate characteristics. This should be carried out with ecological improvements in mind. There are many opportunities for additional woodland planting which should be of a scale and pattern

commensurate with the woodland character. Broadleaved native species should be planted in preference to conifers or single species plantations. The restoration of distinctive ornamental tree planting should also be encouraged, although this will to an extent be dependant on the relevance to present land ownership.

CONSERVATION	RESTORATION	ENHANCEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve, restore and enhance the integrity of estate villages</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve and restore parklands and seek to replant key ornamental plantings</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen landscape character through further planting of small scale woodlands, plantations or tree belts</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve and restore the pattern of hedged fields</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance tree cover along watercourses</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance biodiversity potential by promoting the development of features such as wide field margins</li> </ul>

## 7.18 WOODED ESTATELANDS

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

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. 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. Berrington Hall and Brockhampton Park are particularly striking examples. Similarly, medieval parkland and its associated ancient woodland is often a feature of Wooded Estatelands. Estate villages may also be associated with these areas, and these 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 whole Landscape Type will reflect the influence of a limited number of landowners over an extensive area of land.

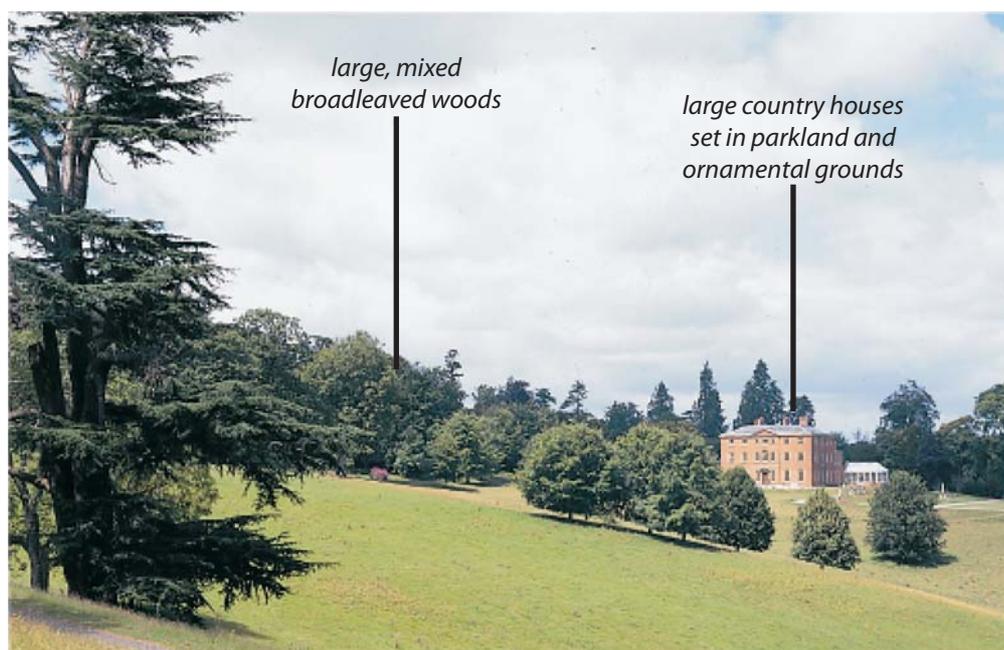
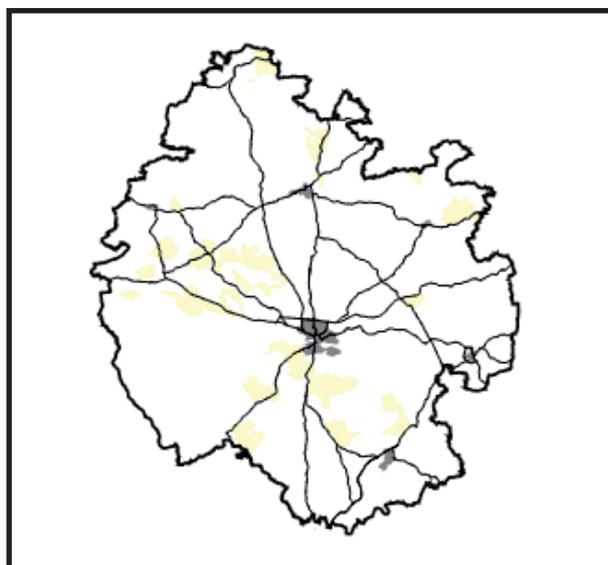
### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

#### Primary

- large, discrete blocks of woodland

#### Secondary

- mixed farming land use
- hedgerows used as field boundaries
- ancient wooded character
- medium distance framed views
- clustered settlement pattern, often of small estate villages
- large country houses set in parkland and ornamental grounds





## FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

Hedgerows provide a unifying presence in this landscape by linking the large blocks of woodland. The intensification of arable farming in these areas has unfortunately resulted in the loss and deterioration of many of the hedgerows and thus the fragmentation of landscape character. The introduction of conifers to the woodlands has also weakened the inherent character of the landscape. The many parklands often originated from medieval deer parks but have been significantly reduced in size, frequently leaving the former parkland trees marooned amongst arable cropping. This is a large scale landscape with a character that is dependant on a small number of strongly defined characteristics. The introduction of small scale elements does as much harm to the character as the loss of the inherent features.



### 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 UDP policy but it must be carefully sited in order to protect the visual integrity of the estate villages.

### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

The enclosure pattern is not a strongly defined characteristic of these landscapes, being of a variable, planned nature.

### WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

The large, discrete woodlands are generally of ancient character with a species mix of native broadleaved trees and shrubs, a mixed age structure and a varying, irregular outline.

### MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

There is a need to **conserve** and **restore** the hedgerow fabric, although in such a large scale landscape, the focus could be on the primary hedgerow pattern of ownership, parish and roadside boundary hedges. The existing broadleaved woodland should be **conserved** and encouragement given to the reversion of

conifer plantations to native broadleaved species. There is considerable potential in these landscapes for **enhancement** through planting additional large, discrete, broadleaved woodlands. Many of the component features of the parklands are now over-mature or in a relic state and while these, in particular veteran trees, should be protected, initiatives to facilitate parkland restoration should be promoted. Opportunities should particularly be sought to reunite the original scale and conceptual framework of parklands by encouraging the reversion of arable land back to permanent pasture. New development should be correctly sited to reduce the impact on estate villages.

CONSERVATION	RESTORATION	ENHANCEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve all ancient woodlands and encourage restocking with locally occurring native species</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek to restore hedgerow linkage to all woodland blocks in order to provide visual cohesion and wildlife corridors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote new large scale woodland planting of a scale and pattern commensurate with the landscape character</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve and restore the hedgerow pattern</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that new woodland planting is of native broadleaved species, with oak dominating</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve and restore parkland, including veteran trees</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve the integrity of estate villages</li> </ul>		

## 7.19 SANDSTONE ESTATELANDS

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

This Landscape Type is only represented in Herefordshire by two Land Cover Parcels which make up the northern tip of the North-west Gloucestershire Sandlands Sub-regional Character Area around Bromsberrow. Sandstone Estatelands are much more extensively represented in Gloucestershire and Worcestershire.

These are open rolling landscapes characterised by a pattern of large arable fields, straight roads and estate plantations. This is a planned landscape in which strong, regular patterns of field layout, road networks and woodland shape play a dominant structural role. Large, discrete plantation woodlands are a notable structural component of the landscape, although it is the field pattern that provides the overall unity. The field boundaries are often defined by single species elm hedgerows, reflecting the late re-definition of much of this landscape. Further structure is provided by tree belts and linear tree cover along watercourses, although this is essentially a fairly open, large scale landscape with a notably sparse hedgerow tree presence. The plantation woodland tends to be of limited or single species, often non-native with a single age structure. Parkland features and associated ornamental planting, together with estate villages, can all contribute to the diversity of these landscapes. The isolated brick farmsteads and clusters of wayside dwellings are interspersed with occasional small estate villages and their accompanying country house. The presence of gorse and bracken reflects the sandy nature of the soils.

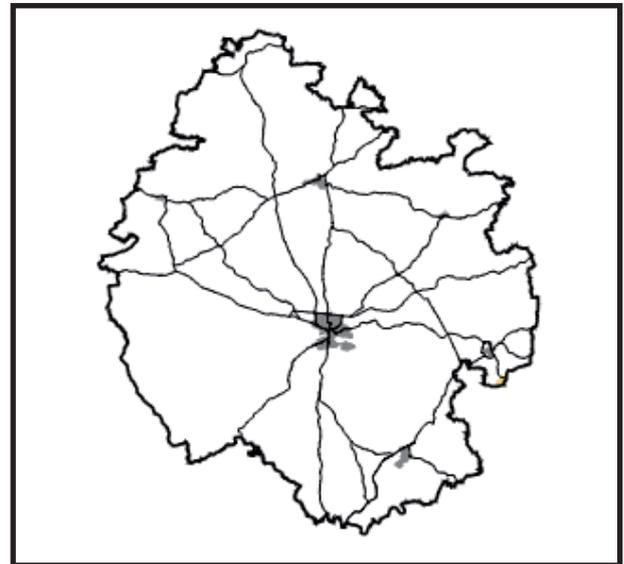
### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

#### Primary

- highly intensive arable land use
- hedgerows used for field boundaries
- planned enclosure pattern of straight boundaries and roads

#### Secondary

- heathy/acid grassland ground vegetation
- planned woodland character
- discrete woodland pattern
- large scale landscape
- clustered settlement pattern





### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

These are large scale landscapes in which the intensive land use has resulted in an overwhelming dominance of arable cropping. Hedgerows have therefore lost their primary function of stock containment and their continual deterioration has robbed these landscapes of much of their unifying presence. The deterioration of parkland and its encroachment by other land use is very evident, with many parkland trees now marooned in a sea of arable crops. The distinctive natural, heathy grassland is becoming increasingly rare as intensive management of non-productive land destroys the native plant communities.



#### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

The settlement pattern varies between isolated brick farmsteads, clusters of wayside dwellings and occasional estate villages. In Herefordshire this area is dominated by the Haffield estate.

#### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

These are large scale landscapes with a regular geometric pattern of large hedged fields.

#### WOODLAND OR 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.

#### MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

In Herefordshire this Landscape Type is minimally represented at the southern end of the Malvern Hills. The landscape here has undergone the same hedgerow loss and field enlargement that is so typical of the estate landscapes in Herefordshire. The primary management aims should therefore concentrate on the **restoration** of those landscape features that have been lost or degraded.

#### RESTORATION

- Restore existing hedges through appropriate management and replanting
- Seek opportunities to replant hedgerows that have been removed, favouring the original alignment
- Seek opportunities to restore the historic parkland
- Encourage the re-establishment of heathy grassland road verges through appropriate management

## 7.20 SANDSTONE FARMLANDS

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

In Herefordshire, Sandstone Farmlands are only found in the Archenfield Sub-regional Character Area. These are upstanding agricultural landscapes with a moderate to gently undulating landform. The fertile, free draining soils support a range of agricultural uses with a tendency for sheep to be grazed in smaller fields near the farms and land further from the farm buildings being used for agricultural crops, including market gardening. This is an ordered, prosperous landscape with medium to large, regularly shaped fields separated by straight, single species hedges. Unusually, these hedges are often of holly, although hawthorn and occasionally hazel are also used. Hedges along the lanes however, are more often of mixed species including holly, hazel, hawthorn and elm. Roadside verges often support an associated heathy/acid grassland ground flora, which reflects the sandy nature of the soil. Like the Enclosed Settled Commons, holly was grown in nurseries set up for enclosure purposes and often used in preference to other native hedging species in these exposed well drained conditions. Tree cover is limited, being restricted to sparsely scattered hedgerow trees, some remnants of linear woodland running along the bottom of the steeper stream valleys and groups of trees around farms. Settlement is generally a dispersed pattern of substantial farmsteads and country houses with a characteristic four square style and mainly built of Old Red Sandstone with hipped slate roofs.

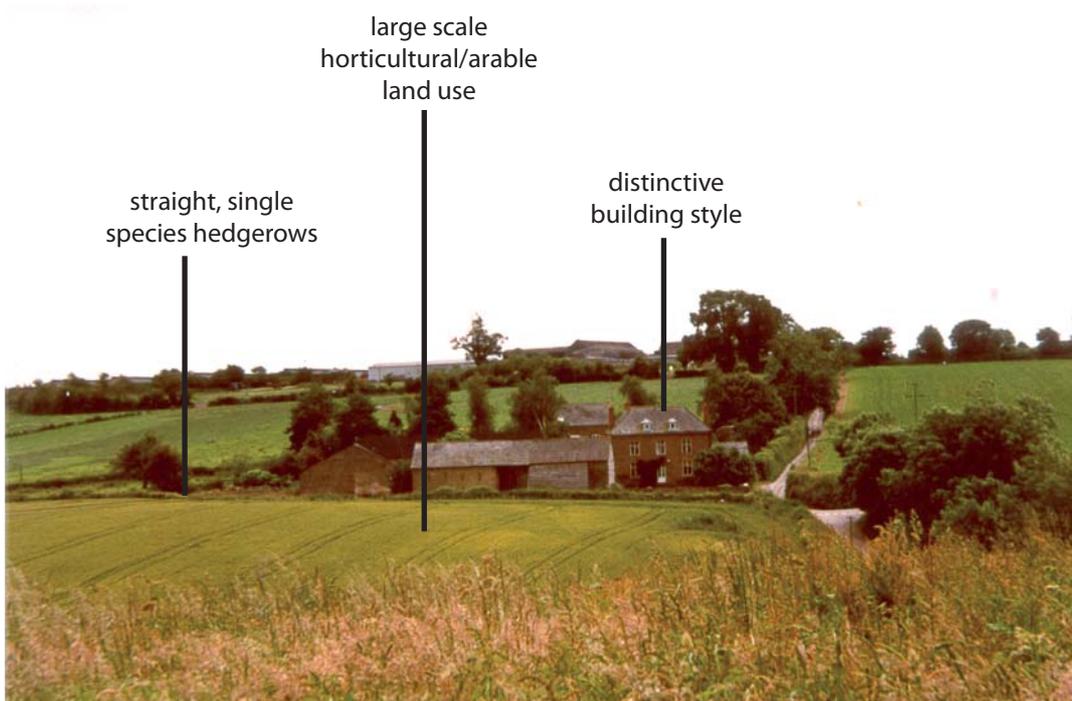
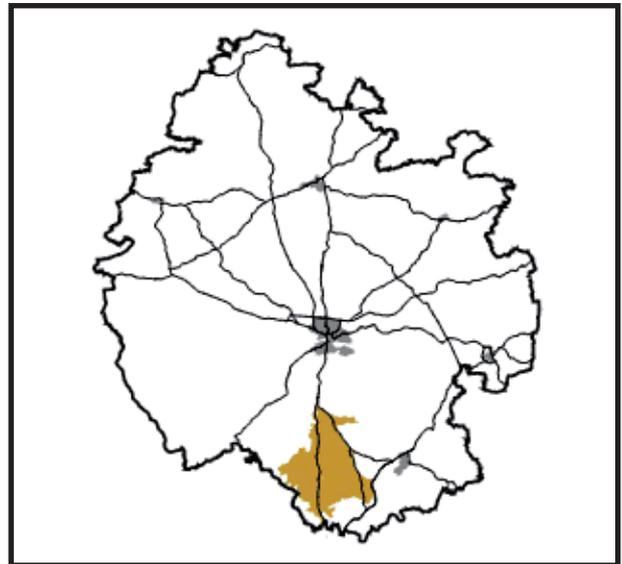
### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

#### Primary

- fields divided by straight, single species hedges, often holly
- distinctive building style

#### Secondary

- horticultural cropping/arable land use
- large scale landscape
- dispersed settlement pattern





### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

Sandstone Farmlands are one of the most intensively farmed Landscape Types within Herefordshire. The escalating requirements of modern arable and horticultural cropping have led to a decline in hedgerow density as hedges are removed to enlarge fields, cut back brutally to reduce their land take or left derelict. Similarly, the hedgerow trees and fragments of woodland are gradually disappearing. Generally, this is a landscape that is becoming more featureless as its agricultural practices develop at an ever enlarging industrial scale.



#### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

The inherent settlement pattern of dispersed farmsteads and country houses has become compromised in places by the imposition of new housing which tends to have a clustered pattern. The large scale of this landscape will accept new development but individual dwellings would be preferable in order to preserve the dispersed settlement pattern. Any development must be in accordance with UDP policy.

#### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

The sub-regular enclosure pattern of medium to large regularly shaped fields has become less characteristic as fields have been enlarged to accommodate modern arable machinery.

#### WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

The linear pattern of woodland along the more deeply incised streams is becoming less distinctive as trees are lost and not replaced. Similarly, tree groups around individual farmsteads and large houses are not as prominent in the landscape as they once were. Additional woodland in this Landscape Type should respect the linear nature of the existing woodland pattern.

### MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

The impoverishment of landscape character in these areas is due to both loss of landscape features and the imposition of inappropriate elements. The principal aims of future land management should therefore be to **restore** those remaining landscape features that contribute to the character of the area and to appropriately **enhance** the landscape where features have been lost. Sympathetic management of the remaining hedgerows, along with new hedgerow planting of holly along the original alignment would do much to restore the landscape character. Similarly, there are opportunities for new tree planting along the steeper stream valleys where agriculture is restricted by the topography.

RESTORATION	ENHANCEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage appropriate hedgerow management, including gapping up with like species</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote new hedgerow planting, ensuring that species conform to those traditional to the area (usually holly) and along the original alignment</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that the enclosure pattern of medium to large rectangular fields is respected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote native broadleaved linear tree planting along sloping stream valleys</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage appropriate management of streamside trees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage tree planting of native species in association with dwellings</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance the dispersed settlement pattern by discouraging groups of new houses while encouraging individual dwellings</li> </ul>

## 7.21 PRINCIPAL SETTLED FARMLANDS

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

The rolling, lowland area of Central Herefordshire is dominated by this Landscape Type. These are settled agricultural landscapes of dispersed, scattered farms, relic commons and small villages and hamlets. The mixed farming land use reflects the good soils on which they are typically found. Networks of small winding lanes nestling within a matrix of hedged fields are characteristic. Tree cover is largely restricted to thinly scattered hedgerow trees, groups of trees around dwellings and trees along stream sides and other watercourses. The composition of the hedgerow tree cover differs from that of Timbered Farmlands in its lower density and lack of oak dominance. This is a landscape with a notably domestic character, defined chiefly by the scale of its field pattern, the nature and density of its settlement and its traditional land uses. Hop fields, orchards, grazed pastures and arable fields, together make up the rich patchwork which is typical of Principal Settled Farmlands.

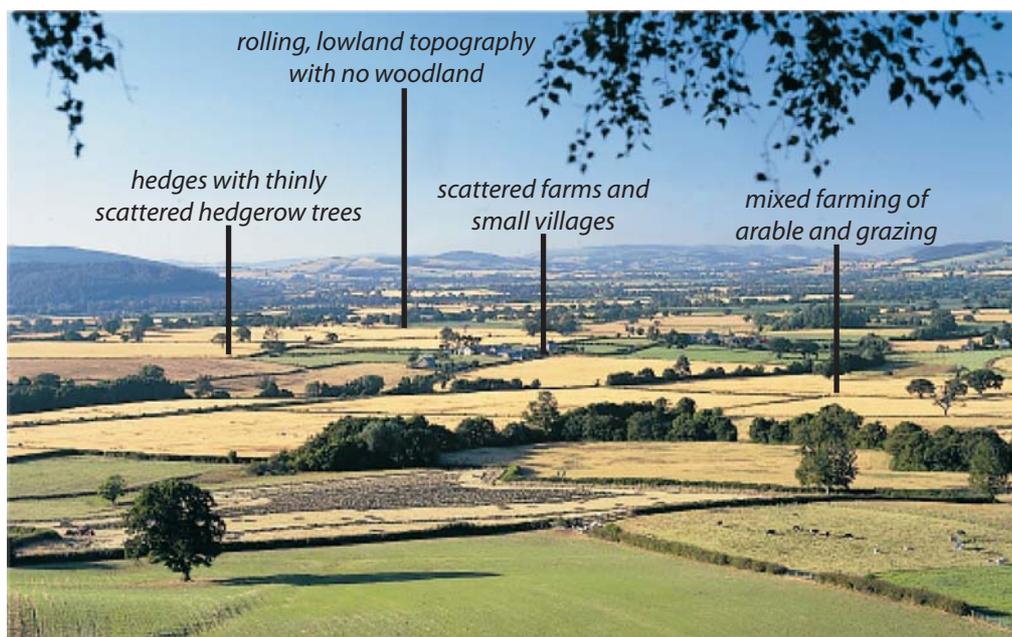
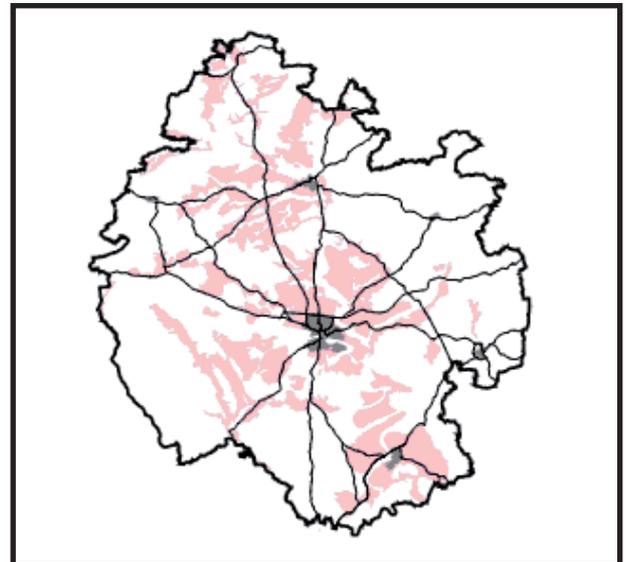
### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

#### Primary

- hedgerows used for field boundaries

#### Secondary

- mixed farming land use





### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

The pattern of small to medium sized hedged fields is vulnerable to change as the tendency towards arable dominance reduces the functional need for hedgerows. In spite of the Hedgerow Regulations, inappropriate maintenance is still resulting in the degradation and loss of the hedgerows which are one of the most significant features of the landscape. Intensification of farming practices is also resulting in a simplistic visual uniformity as landscape character is eroded. Development pressure in many of these areas has resulted in a distinctly nucleated or clustered settlement pattern which is contrary to the landscape character.



### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

The dispersed settlement pattern of farmsteads and hamlets is capable of accommodating limited new development if it is in accordance with UDP policy. Low densities of individual dwellings would be acceptable as long as they are not sited close enough to coalesce into a prominent wayside settlement pattern. Additional housing in hamlets and villages should be modest in size in order to preserve the character of the original settlement.

### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

The enclosure pattern varies considerably but is generally of a planned sub-regular nature. The small to medium sized fields are vulnerable to amalgamation through hedgerow loss.

### WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

Tree cover is most notable along stream sides and watercourses, 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.

### MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

The overall strategy for Principal Settled Farmlands would be to **conserve** and **enhance** the unity of small to medium scale hedged fields. Opportunities

for new tree planting should be concentrated along watercourses where the linear tree cover pattern could be strengthened. Additional tree planting in the vicinity of settlement would also be appropriate and would assist in emphasising the domestic quality of the landscape. New woodland should not be introduced as it is out of place and would compromise the landscape character. The mixed farming land use is becoming increasingly arable and the small permanent pastures are gradually declining. These are often species rich and initiatives to safeguard them should be strongly promoted. New development should remain at a low density with most housing associated with existing hamlets and villages.

CONSERVATION	ENHANCEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve and enhance the hedgerow pattern</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve and enhance tree cover and wetland habitat along watercourses</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek opportunities to conserve remaining areas of permanent pasture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen patterns of tree cover associated with settlements</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek to maintain a balance of arable and pastoral land use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek opportunities to maintain and increase traditional standard orchards</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain the integrity of a dispersed settlement pattern</li> </ul>	

## 7.22 SETTLED FARMLANDS ON RIVER TERRACE

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

This landscape shares many of the characteristics of the Principal Settled Farmlands. These are areas defined by the highly fertile, free draining, sandy brown soils of the river terraces which give rise to the predominantly horticultural cropping land use. Settlement here tends to be sparsely dispersed and is limited to small discrete clusters. These areas have a small to medium scale field pattern with very sparse hedgerow tree cover and consequent open views. They may have been void of woodland for a substantial period of time as they have always been the most fertile and productive agricultural land. In Herefordshire this Landscape Type is only found along the River Leadon near Ledbury.

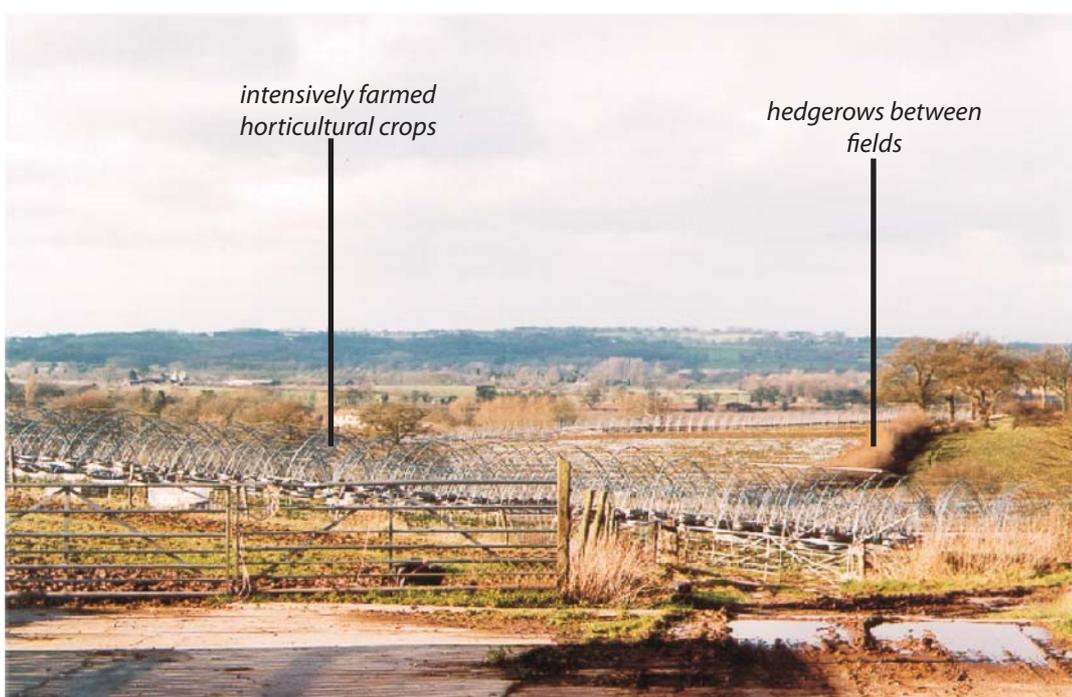
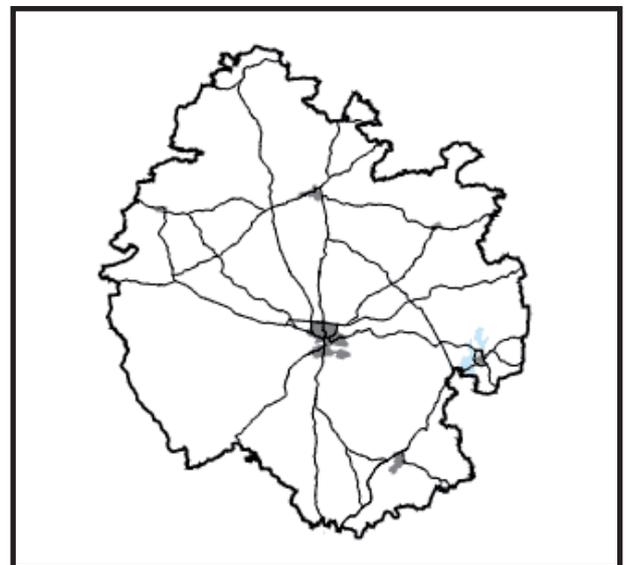
### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

#### Primary

- horticultural cropping land use

#### Secondary

- hedgerows delineate the field boundaries





### FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

This Landscape Type is limited to two areas of intensively farmed land on either side of the River Leaddon. The demands of modern horticulture have resulted in a landscape that is generally denuded of hedgerow trees and where the remaining hedgerows are themselves in very poor condition. Tree cover is now limited to those around buildings and those growing along water courses where the land is not required for crops.



#### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Pressure for built development has been resisted in these areas that are so valuable for horticulture. However, limited new development could be accommodated, either as small clusters or individual dwellings, but only in accordance with UDP policy. The density should remain very low.

#### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

The sub-regular pattern of hedged fields has been lost in many areas as hedgerows have been removed or neglected.

#### WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

This is a landscape of sparsely scattered hedgerow trees, groups of trees around buildings and limited tree cover along water courses. Woodland is not normally a feature of this landscape.

#### MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

The poor condition of much of the landscape of these areas is predominantly due to the loss of landscape features, coupled with the intensity of farming. The **restoration** and **enhancement** of those features that contribute most to landscape character should therefore be a priority when considering future land management. There are considerable opportunities for visual and biodiversity benefits through changes in management practices which could be accommodated within modern farm practices.

RESTORATION	ENHANCEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage appropriate hedgerow restoration and management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wherever possible, re-establish the original enclosure pattern by new hedgerow planting</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage appropriate management of streamside trees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote native broadleaved tree planting along watercourses</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage greater habitat diversity through the provision of features such as wide field margins</li> </ul>





## APPENDIX A. 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. The AGLV designation has been supplanted by the Landscape Character Assessment.

### **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).

### **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?

f - Economically and practically functional in its traditional form; potentially maintained without financial support.

mf - Functional in a modified form or only maintained with support.

c - Cosmetic, no practical or economic function since the historic function is redundant 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.

**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.

### **Herefordshire Plan**

The strategic vision for the future of the county.

### **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.

### **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 homogeneous 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)**

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. LDU's are identified by description and those with similar visual characteristics are grouped into Landscape Types.

### **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 unique combinations of the twelve characteristics that define landscape character. Landscape Types are generic descriptions of landscape characters 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.

**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 Statements (PPS), Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG)**

Central Government guidance on all aspects of planning law and policy.



## **Regional Planning Guidance, Regional Spatial Strategy**

Central Government guidance on regional issues such as the environment, housing, transport and waste disposal.

### **Replaceability**

The degree to which it is possible to replace an element in its original form.

- l - Possible to replace in its original form over the medium to long term (15-50 years).
- m - Only possible to replace in a modified form. This modification may reflect the extent of time depth association with the attribute.
- s - Possible to replace in its original form in the short term (up to 15 years).

### **Resilience**

Significance X Vulnerability x Tolerance (at Landscape Type level)

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.

### **Rough Grazing**

Landscapes characterised by low intensity grazing of rough pasture associated with poor soils.

### **Rural White Paper**

The document in which Central Government sets out its policies and aspirations for the rural environment.

### **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**

Resilience x Condition (at Land Cover Parcel level)

The degree to which the Resilience of a landscape is influenced by its current condition.

### **Significance**

Consistency x Visual Prominence (then Converted To Primary, Secondary Or Tertiary)

The degree to which an attribute contributes to the overall character of a landscape as defined by its consistency and visual prominence.

- P - Primary - both consistent and prominent.
- S - Secondary - either consistent and apparent or variable and prominent.
- T - Tertiary – either has insignificant prominence or a variable pattern that is apparent.

### **Small Spatial Character**

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.

### **Spatial Character**

The visual perception of spatial character as defined by the combination of open spaces, views and elements that make up the landscape.

### **Sub-regional Character Areas**

Individual, unique areas at a broadbrush, regional scale that are identified by description.

### **Sub-regular Enclosure Pattern**

An interlocking, regular pattern of fields and lanes with curving boundaries.

### **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

Additional planning guidance on individual topics to enable a greater understanding of Local Authority policies and strategies.

**Sustainable Development**

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.

**Tolerance**

The degree to which change is likely to cause irreparable damage to the essential components that contribute to landscape character.

**Tree Cover**

Relates to the overall cover of individual trees or woodland of the area.

**Tree Cover Character**

Relates to the origin and overall composition of tree and woodland cover.

**Tree Cover Pattern**

Relates to the spatial juxtaposition of individual trees and woodland cover and the shapes of woodlands.

**Trees**

Landscapes in which trees rather than woodland comprise the dominant visual element of cover.

**Trend**

The likelihood of future change to the inherent character of the landscape based on an analysis of recent and present day change.

< - 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.

**Unenclosed**

Open, usually rough mountain, marsh or common grazing land. Includes rough land sub divided into very large enclosures.

**Unitary Development Plan**

The forward planning document for Unitary Authorities, replacing County Structure Plans (prepared by County Councils) and District Local Plans (prepared by District Councils).

**Unwooded**

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.

**Veteran Tree**

A tree that is of interest biologically, aesthetically or culturally because of its age.

**Visual Impact Assessment**

A procedure designed to identify the visual impact on short, medium and long distance views of any particular development proposal.

**Visual Prominence**

The degree to which the defined attribute is visually prominent in the landscape.

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.

**Vulnerability**

Function X Trend

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.

**Water Meadow**

A riverside meadow laid out in such a way that the river water could be used to regularly irrigate the land.

**Wetland**

Plant communities associated with seasonally or permanently waterlogged soils. Indicators species may include rush or common reed (Phragmites).

**Woodland**

Land covered by trees that supports other physical, biological and cultural resources.





## APPENDIX B. SUPPORTING REFERENCES

British Geological Survey

**England and Wales** (maps, various sheets)

British Geological Survey, Nottingham

The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002)

**Landscape Character Assessment. Guidance for England and Scotland**

Countryside Agency Publications, Scottish Natural Heritage

Countryside Commission and English Nature (1996)

**The Character of England: landscape, wildlife and natural features** (map) CCX 41

Countryside Commission, English Nature

The Countryside Agency (1999)

**Countryside Character. Volume 5: West Midlands** CA11

The Countryside Agency, Cheltenham

Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (2000).

**Our Countryside: The Future – A Fair Deal for Rural England**

Rural White Paper. H. M. Stationery Office, London

Department of the Environment (1997)

**Planning Policy Guidance 7 (revised): The Countryside –**

**Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development**

H. M. Stationery Office, London

Forestry Commission (1994)

**Forest Landscape Design Guidelines**

H. M. Stationery Office, London

Forestry Commission (1992)

**Lowland Landscape Design Guidelines**

H. M. Stationery Office, London

Government Office for the West Midlands (2004)

**Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands (RPG 11), (now Regional Spatial Strategy)**

H. M. Stationery Office, London

Gwatkin, G. (1996)

**Herefordshire 1840 Tithe Surveys**

Gwatkin, Ross-on-Wye

The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2002)

**Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment** Second Edition

Spon Press, London

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2004)

**Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas**

H. M. Stationery Office, London

Ordnance Survey

**Landranger** maps at 1:50,000 scale, **Pathfinder** and **Outdoor Leisure** maps at 1:25,000 scale

Ordnance Survey, Southampton

Rackham, O. (1986)  
***The History of the Countryside***  
Dent, London

Ragg, J. et al (1984)  
Soil Survey of England and Wales. Bulletin No.12  
***Soils and their use in Midland and Western England***  
Harpenden

Soil Survey of England and Wales.  
***Soils of Midland and Western England*** (map at 1:250,000 scale)  
Harpenden

Stamp, D. (1941)  
***The land of Britain – The Report of The Land Utilisation Survey of Britain*** Part 64,  
Herefordshire  
Stamp Geographical Publications, London

Whitehead, D (2001)  
***A Survey of Historic Parks & Gardens in Herefordshire***  
Hereford and Worcester Gardens Trust



## APPENDIX C. STATEMENT OF CONSULTATION

This SPG has been produced to augment the Unitary Development Plan (UDP), providing more specific guidelines for those considering submitting and determining planning applications. The first deposit version of this was presented to Members on 19th July 2002 and subsequently published separately alongside the First Deposit UDP in November 2002

Following the publication of the draft version of this SPG in November 2002, it was placed on deposit for public consultation until 31st January 2003.

Organisations thought to have an interest in landscape character assessment, and all Parish and Town Councils were sent a copy and invited to make comments. Copies of the document were also made available at deposit locations around the County including the main libraries and 'Info in Herefordshire' points and the availability of the document highlighted on the Council's web-pages.

Comments have been received from 27 individuals and organisations as a result of the specific consultation on the SPG, although a number of comments made to the First Deposit UDP policies LA1 and LA2 were also relevant. Those who responded to the consultation are listed below.

Dr Anthea Brian  
Burghill Parish Council  
The Church Commissioners  
Country Land & Business Association  
The Countryside Agency  
CPRE  
English Heritage  
English Nature  
Forestry Commission  
Friends of the Golden Valley  
Herefordshire Nature Trust  
Highways Agency  
Gloucestershire County Council  
H & W Earth Heritage Trust  
H & W Gardens Trust  
Kington Town Council  
Ledbury Town Council  
Llangarron Parish Council  
Malvern Hills Conservators  
Malvern Hills AONB  
Mason Richards Planning  
NFU  
Penny Farquhar Oliver  
RPS Chapman  
RMC Aggregates  
Welsh Newton & Llanrothal PC  
Worcestershire County Council

The responses and amendments proposed to the SPG were reported to the Council's Planning Committee on 16th July 2004 when the SPG with the amendments was agreed for adoption as interim Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Herefordshire unitary Development plan.

The SPG was updated in 2006 to take into account both the comments made by the Inspector about the Landscape Character Assessment in the Inspector's Report dated March 2006 and changes to the UDP. The design of the Landscape Character Assessment was refreshed and the format of the Landscape Character Assessment updated in 2009.