

**Appendix 1: WCC Landscape  
Character  
Assessment  
Guidance for  
Principal  
Timbered  
Farmlands**

## Landscapes of Worcestershire Landscape Type Information Sheet

# Principal Timbered Farmlands

### Landscape Type Description

A small- to medium-scale wooded, agricultural landscape characterised by filtered views through densely scattered hedgerow trees. This is a complex, in places intimate, landscape of irregularly shaped woodlands, winding lanes and frequent wayside dwellings and farmsteads. It is a landscape of great interest and exception, yet also one of balance.



### Key Characteristics

#### Primary

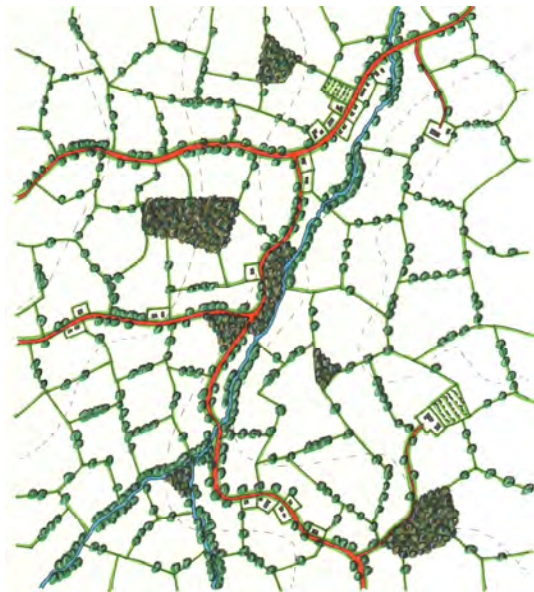
- Hedgerow boundaries to fields
- Ancient wooded character
- Notable pattern of hedgerow trees, predominantly oak

#### Secondary

- Organic enclosure pattern
- Small-scale landscape, hedgerow trees creating filtered views
- Brick and timber building style of old properties

#### Tertiary

- Mixed farming land use
- Dispersed settlement pattern



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

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 providing the essential sense of scale and enclosure, and creating the filtered views that are distinctive in this landscape. The resulting woodland character is essentially that of mixed native broadleaves, with oak the dominant species, lines of mature oak being a particular feature of the hedgerows as befits a landscape with strong links to its woodland origins. The scale and shape of the woodlands is also important, the woodlands ranging in size from small field corner copses to those of a size exceeding that of the surrounding fields.

## Landscape Type Information Sheet

# Principal Timbered Farmlands

In Principal Timbered Farmlands, the pattern of hedgerows is also important, not only in providing the basic fabric for the hedgerow tree populations, but also in emphasising scale and enclosure, the hedgerow composition being complex and rich in places where the links to woodland origins are strongest. The irregular outline of many of the woodlands, together with the pattern of hedgerows and winding lanes, contributes to the overall organic character of this landscape.

The basic concern for the retention of the character of this landscape is the loss of scale and structure that is already evident, and likely to accelerate. This is due to the decline and fragmentation of the elements of tree cover, most notably of the smaller scale elements, particularly the hedgerow trees. The age distribution of hedgerow oak is extremely unbalanced, with the majority of specimens classed as mature or veteran, with little evidence of new stock being planted, or natural regeneration being encouraged, to replenish these. This is an acute problem requiring priority attention. The distribution of woodlands is uneven throughout these landscapes and the streamside cover is also fragmented in places. Though traditionally a landscape of mixed farming, a gradual increase in arable land uses is evident locally, which can, in turn, be associated with loss of function, and eventual demise, of the hedgerow structure. Once this happens, the tree cover structure becomes fragmented, the scope for hedgerow trees become restricted and the sense of scale and enclosure lost. Although there is pressure for development in some of these landscapes, any concentrations of new development in particular localities would disrupt the inherent pattern of settlement dispersal.

It has to be recognised that the function of hedgerow trees in the landscape today, is primarily for environmental or visual enhancement. The lack of impetus to replenish stocks of hedgerow trees can, therefore, be attributed partly to a lack of motivation, but also for reasons of expense; the cost of establishment can be high - even trees arising through natural regeneration needing to be protected from stock in many instances-, the success rate of planted trees is often low, and the presence of hedgerow trees can reduce the efficiency of modern hedge trimming operations. Nevertheless the hedgerow oaks are considered to be perhaps the crucial element of the Timbered Farmland Landscapes, and appropriate initiatives need to be developed if the character of these landscapes is considered important enough to be perpetuated. These are landscapes where existing initiatives for woodland planting should be particularly focused. Opportunities for planting on non-farmed land should also be explored with tremendous scope existing along roadsides. Initiatives to protect, and to restore hedgerows should also be focused on these landscapes.

The overall strategy for the Principal Timbered Farmlands should, therefore, be one of both conservation and restoration, conserving the existing tree cover and hedgerow pattern together with the network of hedgerows, aiming to conserve and restore the historic, well wooded character of the landscape.

### Landscape Guidelines

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

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# Landscapes of Worcestershire

## Landscape Type Advice Sheet - *Land Management*

# Principal Timbered Farmlands

### Landscape Type Description

A small scale wooded, agricultural landscape characterised by filtered views through densely scattered hedgerow trees. This is a complex, in places intimate, landscape of irregularly shaped woodlands, winding lanes and frequent wayside dwellings. Its mosaic of agricultural land was cleared directly from woodland, on a piecemeal basis, and from former localised areas of open fields, resulting in a lack of strong settlement nuclei



### Key Characteristics

#### Primary

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

#### Secondary

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

#### Tertiary

- Mixed farming land use
- Dispersed settlement pattern



### Current Concerns

The basic concern for the retention of the character of this landscape is the loss of scale and structure due to the decline and fragmentation of the elements of tree cover, most notably of hedgerow trees. The majority of hedgerow oaks are classed as mature or veteran, with little evidence of new stock being planted or natural regeneration being encouraged. The distribution of woodlands is generally uneven and the streamside cover is also fragmented in places. Though traditionally a landscape of mixed farming, a gradual increase in arable land uses is evident locally, which can be associated with loss of function of hedgerow structure. Once this happens, the tree cover structure becomes fragmented, the scope for hedgerow trees become restricted and the sense of scale and enclosure is lost.

## Landscape Type Advice Sheet - *Land Management*

# Principal Timbered Farmlands

### Guidelines for Land Management

#### How to use this sheet

The aim of this information sheet is to provide *general guidelines* about the priorities for land management activities - focusing on relevant landscape features - within this Landscape Type. However, Landscape Types are generic descriptions of landscape character and any advice **must** be interpreted within the context of the site in question. Please also visit the Landscapes of Worcestershire mapping pages <http://gis.worcestershire.gov.uk/home/wcc-lca-maps> to click on your area and read the more specific ecological and landscape descriptions.

In the case of any habitat work, specialist advice should be sought from the County Ecologists and/or the appropriate agency (Natural England, Forestry Commission, Environment Agency, Defra) to ensure that the work is appropriate, is carried out at the right time of year, in the correct manner and in the best possible location. Surveys may need to be carried out to assess the sites for presence of protected species or existing habitat. With this in mind, please read on for opportunities for land/habitat management activities appropriate to this Landscape Type...

#### Woodland and Trees

The general guidelines for woodland in Principal Timbered Farmlands are to:

- **conserve** the ancient hedgerow oak population, and **enhance** the age structure where possible through new planting
- **conserve** all ancient woodland sites and restock with locally occurring native species
- **restore** the tree cover pattern through promoting the coalescence of fragmented relic ancient woodland
- encourage the **creation** of new woodlands, reflecting the scale, shape and composition of the existing ancient woodland character - oak should be favoured as the major species
- **conserve** and **restore** tree cover along water courses and streamlines
- seek opportunities to **enhance** tree cover along highways and other non-farmed locations

Whilst it is recognised from an ecological perspective, that 'new' ancient woodland can't simply be created, new woodland can - from the landscape perspective - reflect ancient characteristics in terms of shape/outline and species composition and so integrate into the landscape and strengthen its character. There may also be opportunities to restore areas of ancient woodland through the introduction of appropriate management, or the removal of alien species and appropriate re-planting.

#### Hedgerows

The general guideline for hedgerows in Principal Timbered Farmlands is to:

- **conserve** and **restore** the pattern and composition of the hedgerow structure through appropriate management, and replanting

There may be opportunities to plant new hedgerows, restore, strengthen or protect existing hedgerows and their patterns, and promote appropriate management - in terms of maintenance regimes and protection from stock. The species composition of existing long established hedgerows should be used to guide the composition of new hedgerow planting. There may also be opportunities to plant new hedgerow trees, extend the life of existing hedgerow trees through such means as tree surgery, protective measures, or protection of the setting (i.e. the hedgerow). The planting of new generations of hedgerow and field oak trees would be particularly beneficial. The use of protective designations such as TPOs might be relevant. The removal of inappropriate trees - such as belts of poplar may on occasion be appropriate, combined with new planting of a more appropriate feature in terms of species and location.

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# Landscapes of Worcestershire

## Landscape Type Advice Sheet - *Planning and Development*

# Principal Timbered Farmlands

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## Landscape Type Advice Sheet - *Planning and Development*

# Principal Timbered Farmlands

### Opportunities for Landscape Gain

#### Ancient Woodland

There may be opportunities to create new woodlands. Whilst ancient woodland itself cannot simply be created, from the landscape perspective new woodland can at least reflect ancient characteristics in terms of shape/outline and species composition.

There may be opportunities to restore areas of ancient woodland through the introduction of appropriate management, or the removal of alien species and appropriate replanting.

Development sites themselves may not always offer the best location to accommodate new woodland planting and to achieve its full potential. These opportunities cited above may be best realised on land elsewhere in the vicinity, by private agreement between the developer and landowner.

#### Hedgerows

There may be opportunities to plant new hedgerows, restore, strengthen or protect existing hedgerows and their patterns, and promote appropriate management – in terms of maintenance regimes and protection from stock.

The species composition of existing long established hedgerows should guide the composition of new hedgerow planting. Fencing and other uncharacteristic boundary treatments could be removed and replaced by hedgerows.

#### Hedgerow Trees

There may be opportunities to plant new hedgerow trees, extend the life of existing hedgerow trees through such means as tree surgery, protective measures, or protection of the setting (i.e. the hedgerow). The planting of new generations of hedgerow and field oak trees would be particularly beneficial. The use of protective designations such as TPOs might be relevant. The removal of inappropriate trees – such as belts of poplar may on occasion be appropriate, combined with new planting of a more appropriate nature in terms of species and location.

#### Enclosure Pattern

Opportunities to reflect the organic field pattern may materialise through the shape of newly planted hedgerows, the outline of new woodland planting, the definition of roadside boundaries and verges, the spatial distribution and orientation of new buildings, avoiding uniformity of pattern in all cases.

#### Small-scale, Filtered Views

Opportunities may arise to sub-divide large fields or parcels of land. Open plan schemes may be afforded some semblance of structure in order to create sub-division of area. The location and orientation of new buildings can create intimate areas, particularly if regular patterns are avoided. The planting of trees of appropriate scale can filter views, the incorporation of hedgerows can contribute to the small scale of an area. The incorporation of such features as chimneys, and other roof structures to reduce the uniformity of the roofscape can also contribute to creating an intimacy of scale and filtering of views.

#### Brick and Timber Building Style

Specialist advice should be sought from the District Council with regard to the specific details relating to this. It is not intended that new buildings should necessarily copy such characteristic styles although there may be opportunities to pick up certain details of scale, orientation, or finer detailing associated with doors, windows or other structures which could be reflected in new buildings. Care should be taken to avoid adverse affects to those buildings which exhibit such characteristics. Buildings which strongly reflect traditional styles may well be listed or situated in locations of Conservation Area status.

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## **Appendix 2: Revised Landscape Strategy**



# Land north of Droitwich Spa, Hampton Lovett

November 2022



# Droitwich Landscape Strategy

Turley Design were commissioned by Ridge and Partners, on behalf of Beechcroft Land to provide a Landscape Strategy for Land North of Droitwich Spa, Hampton Lovett. This Landscape Strategy is informed by a Landscape and Visual Assessment (LVA) undertaken by Turley and Ecology Appraisal undertaken by Ecology Solutions Ltd. This Landscape Strategy also reflects the guidance set out in the Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment (WLCA).

The purpose of this strategy is to ensure that the proposed development is landscape led, appropriate to the local landscape character context according to the WLCA, and conserves and where possible enhances key landscape characteristics within the site, while complementing the surrounding context. Most importantly, this Landscape Strategy optimises opportunities for landscape enhancement. The following objectives and principles collectively form a cohesive and resilient Landscape Strategy for the site.

## Objectives

The principal objectives of the landscape strategy are:

- to respect the local landscape character of the Principal Timbered Farmlands and demonstrate how the proposed development can contribute to the identified landscape guidelines for the area as set out in the WLCA
- to conserve and enhance existing natural assets within and surrounding the site and ensure the protection and enhancement of the biodiversity of the site.
- to preserve the sense of the site's semi-rural character while sensitively integrating the proposed development; and,
- to establish a strong green infrastructure network of new and enhanced areas of high quality, flexible and multifunctional green space, and other natural features as an integral part of the development. (In line with the Worcestershire County Council Green Infrastructure Strategy (WCCGIS) which places emphasis on the design of green infrastructure corridors to maximise their multi-functionality, ensuring that links to off-site green infrastructure strengthens the cumulative benefits of the networks.)

## Principles

### Landscape Setting

As described in the Principal Timbered Farmlands Landscape Type, within the WLCA, the site and immediate surrounding comprise landscape features that contribute to the scenic quality and character of the local area, such as a notable pattern of hedgerow trees, hedgerow boundaries to fields, organic enclosure patterns, rolling lowland and small-scale landscape with hedgerow trees creating filtered views. The site has some landscape and visual sensitivities, including existing residential properties along The Forest and St. Mary and All Saints Church to the north, views from Doverdale Park Homes, the A442 to the west and Leamington to Worcester Railway Line to the east as well as Flood Zone 3 to the southern extent of the site.

The low-lying topography of the site and existing surrounding landscape features including woodland and agricultural fields, alongside urbanising features, provides opportunities for the proposed development to be sensitively integrated within the semi-rural setting. A strong green infrastructure framework has been developed to help contain the proposed built development and reduce the potential harm on landscape and visual receptors. The following mitigation measures have been incorporated:

1. The developable extents of the site have been informed by the LVA, which highlights that development would be most noticeable in close-range views (much less so in medium to long range views) from residential receptors at The Forest and Doverdale Park, and from users of the PRoW to the north of the site. To reflect this, a series of landscape buffers and development offsets have been applied to the layout.
2. The Forest road runs parallel to the northern boundary of the site and has a strong local. This area is sensitive to change and therefore a c.100m landscape buffer has been applied between the lane and the proposed development to minimise visual impact and respect the setting of surrounding buildings.



Hampton Lovett Village Hall

St Mary's & All Saints Church

The Forest

Leamington - Worcester Railway Line

pointon Way

Doverdale Park Homes

A442 (Kidderminster Road)

Hampton Lovett Industrial Estate

Berry Hill Industrial Estate

A38 (Roman Way)

Fig. 1: Illustrative Landscape Masterplan

## Landscape Plan Key

- 1 Development area in least sensitive part of site
- 2 Min 100m wide landscape buffer between The Forest and Development edge
- 3 Green infrastructure improvements in Flood zone 3 area
- 4 Min 80m wide setback between A442 and development edge
- 5 Landscaped edge between Doverdale Park homes and proposed dwellings
- 6 Diamond Jubilee Copse retained and strengthened with additional planting
- 7 Mature woodland block adjacent to Elmbridge Brook retained
- 8 Additional native planting to reinforce wildlife corridor along railway
- 9 New tree planting at site entrance
- 10 Hedgerows reinforced with new planting including hedgerow trees
- 11 New landscaped edge – hedgerow and hedgerow trees
- 12 New field corner native copses
- 13 View lines to church tower
- 14 New publicly accessible open space managed by grazing
- 15 Informal public open space managed for biodiversity
- 16 Natural play area (LEAP)
- 17 Amenity grassland for informal play
- 18 Community social space
- 19 Outward-facing development edge
- 20 Areas of lower density development
- 21 Existing planting within site retained and reinforced
- 22 Scattered trees allow filtered views across the landscape
- 23 New wildlife corridor
- 24 Attenuation basin
- 25 Minimum 20% BNG across the site
- 26 Bat and bird boxes
- 27 Flood tolerant planting
- 28 Tree-lined streets
- 29 Native tree planting within development area
- 30 Garden boundaries defined with hedgerows
- 31 Informal hoggin path
- 32 Informal mown grass path
- 33 Internal paths create good permeability
- 34 Low level lighting throughout development area

3. Flood Zone 3 lies within the southern extent of the site, development has avoided this constraint and the area would be utilised for green infrastructure proposals.
4. An additional landscape buffer has been applied to the A442 Kidderminster Road to minimise visual and acoustic impact.
5. The proposals aim to be read as an extension of the existing residential development at Doverdale Park Homes, thus creating a consolidated and efficient area of urban form. The proposed built development would be respectful of the existing caravan park. The proposals front onto Doverdale Park Homes and apply a narrow landscape buffer with enhanced tree-lined hedgerow boundary planting to create a sensitive development offset with light visual screening. The south-eastern corner of Doverdale Park would maintain existing views out over the open landscape.
6. Recently planted Diamond Jubilee Copse has been retained and would be strengthened with additional planting.
8. A watercourse runs along the southern boundary of the site and is backed with semi-mature woodland to the south. This woodland, which is in ownership of the site's landowner, provides containment to the site from Berry Hill Industrial Estate to the south and would be retained.
9. The Leamington to Worcester Railway Line forms the eastern boundary. Native tree and understorey planting along this boundary would supplement the existing vegetation which would create a strengthened ecological corridor alongside the railway and containment to the areas of public open space to the north and south of the site.
10. New tree planting and landscaping to the entrance of the site would establish a welcoming gateway and sense of place for the site whilst also compensating the small loss of hedgerow to facilitate vehicular access.
11. Existing hedgerows would be strengthened and enhanced with additional hedgerows and additional tree planting (particularly oak) to comply with WLCA guidelines to strengthen hedgerows and maintain filtered views as a key characteristic of the area. Along the northern edge adjacent to The Forest, planting would be designed to maintain views from St. Mary and All Saints Church and properties on The Forest across an open landscape, yet at the same time filter the built form of the proposed development. An additional native tree-lined hedgerow would be placed north of the proposed housing to further filter views and soften the built form. The hedgerow would be informal with strategic gaps to allow proposed properties to offer natural surveillance of the northern public open space and Public Right of Way (PRoW).

### **Boundaries, Tree Belts and Hedgerows**

7. The site benefits from a strong framework of mature tree belts and hedgerows along the periphery, with good quality woodland immediately adjacent. These are landscape and ecological assets, which are identified as key characteristics of the Principal Timbered Farmlands in the WLCA. The development proposal looks to preserve and enhance these assets in order to:
  - Contribute to the 'unifying presence of tree cover' (identified in the WLCA as a key element of the Principal Timbered Farmlands) by setting development within a framework of tree planting, including a high proportion of Oak, in accordance with the WLCA guidelines.
  - Retain the organic plantation pattern of the local character area as a distinctive landscape characteristic of the Principal Timbered Farmland, which reinforces the setting of the development.
  - Soften the visual impact of the development in views from The Forest road to the north (including from the church).
  - Retain and reinforce existing trees and hedgerows, ensuring habitat connections are maintained and enhanced through the strategic location of native scrub and tree planting to facilitate wildlife movement, nesting, and foraging.
12. Species-rich, native hedgerow planting with scattered hedgerow trees would be introduced along the boundary to Doverdale Park to maximise screening where needed, yet maintain strategic filtered views as a key feature where appropriate.
13. Small field corner copses, with irregular outline, would be placed throughout the public open spaces, (in accordance with WLCA guidance) findings. These will consist of deciduous woodland mixes, with Oak being the primary species.

### **Visual Connections with The Forest**

14. The proposed layout has been carefully considered to incorporate views towards St. Mary and All Saints Church as key vistas within the development. Streets have been



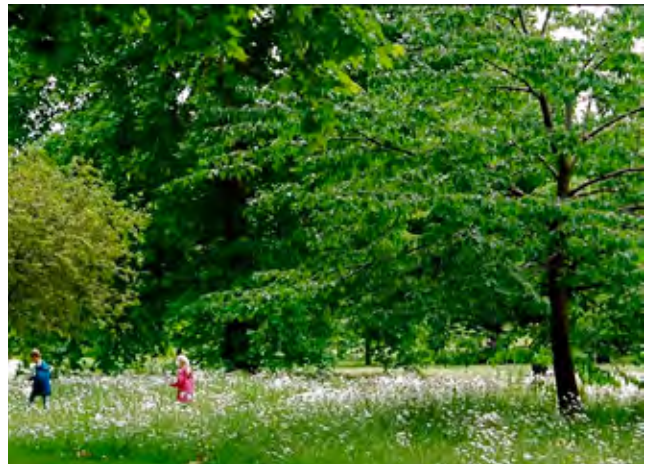
Outward looking development set back from the A442



Densifying of existing trees/ vegetation along the railway line



Existing woodland to create consolidated public open space



Development setbacks to create sensitively designed spaces



Buffered outward looking development toward 'The Forest'



Layers of landscape boundaries to filter views into development

orientated on a north-south axis towards the steeple and the development setback ensures the steeple is also a key view from the Site entrance.

### **Public Open Space**

15. Land to the north between The Forest and the application site (c. 2.5ha edged in blue) would become an area of informal grassland accessible to the public and managed by grazing. At present the Site is in private ownership with public access limited to the PRoW to the north of the site, the proposal will therefore offer a substantial area of new open space for public use.
16. Land to the south and west of the site would comprise an open semi-natural landscape setting of c.6.5ha in size to benefit new residents and the wider community. The open semi-natural landscape setting would create an enhanced landscape structure with native species-rich grassland meadows, strengthened areas of tree and hedgerow planting and landscaped drainage features. The enhancements would support the existing biodiversity, provide new habitats for birds, bats and amphibians, increase habitat connectivity and protect areas of ecological value.
17. A naturalised Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP) is located within the southern public open space, creating a focal point for play and leisure. Children would engage with the and explore nature through play equipment of predominantly natural materials integrated with natural elements such as grass mounds, sand, wood, and stone. The area of play would also include planting to enable children to experience seasons and natural scent, colour, and texture.
18. Adjacent to the children's play area would be an area of amenity grassland, suitable for informal recreation such as general and creative play.
19. Community social spaces would create areas for residents to gather and socialise. These are to include seasonally interesting planting and seating/picnic benches constructed from locally sourced materials. The southern space is located along the pedestrian and cycle path as a stopping place on the route between the development area and Droitwich town to the south.
20. The proposals look to ensure the development would have a positive frontage towards the public open space and open countryside beyond. Dwellings have been orientated to establish an outward looking development with an

attractive and responsive residential interface which would also provide natural surveillance, thus ensuring proposed open spaces and footpaths feel safe and welcoming.

21. A reduction in development density to the southern, northern, and north western extents of the proposal, interspersed with new tree planting and vegetation would create sensitive edges of properties. Typically, these dwellings have been set back behind front gardens with hedgerows.

### **Ecology**

22. All existing scrub, mixed woodland, ruderal planting, and hedgerows are to be retained throughout the site (excluding at the point of access). The rest of the site is currently modified grassland which will also be retained in formalised areas of amenity adjacent to the southern and northern extents of the built form. Beyond these areas, within the wider public open space, the modified grassland will be enhanced to neutral grassland with mixed scrub. It would be naturalised with rough, species-rich meadow grassland, areas of scrub, wildflowers, and native trees. This will enhance foraging opportunities for badgers, bats, and birds, as well as creating enriched habitats for amphibians, reptiles, and invertebrates.
23. Intermittent gaps in vegetation are in keeping with the local landscape character yet carefully considered landscaped connections are to be made which will connect currently fragmented habitats. This would be achieved through various planting treatments which maintain the wider visual gaps such as scattered trees, low hedgerows, long grasses and wildflower drifts to create robust wildlife corridors. This would include connecting the currently isolated woodland immediately south of Doverdale Park Homes with the Millgrove Plantation.
24. New native scrub and hedgerow planting would also provide enhanced navigational opportunities for bats. Rough grassland and wildflower margins along tree belt and hedgerow bases would increase their offering as habitat by providing foraging opportunities for bats and badgers, foraging and nesting opportunities for birds and hibernation/shelter opportunities for reptiles and amphibians.
25. The provision of an attenuation basin will also create enhanced foraging opportunities for bats and birds, as well as forming a seasonally wet habitat for reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates.

26. Through this targeted strategy of enhancement of existing features and introduction of new habitats, the development achieves a significant net gain in biodiversity value. The exact amount of biodiversity gain would be confirmed at reserved matters stage but the applicant has confirmed a commitment to achieving a minimum net gain score of 20%.
27. Bat boxes and bird boxes will provide provision for enhanced roosting and nesting opportunities, while the provision of logs piles/ hibernacula will offer enhanced hibernation options for reptiles and amphibians and an enhanced habitat for invertebrates. It is important to note that these in addition to the biodiversity net gain scoring/ value.

### Hydrology

28. An attenuation basin (24) is to be used as the primary form of SuDS within the development. This is located to the south of the amenity area, creating a landscape feature. This will manage rainwater runoff from the development by utilising the site's natural topography, flowing toward and into the basin before being discharged to Elmbridge Brook at a controlled rate. At reserved matters stage, the attenuation pond would be designed with wildlife features and wildlife friendly planting that will benefit natural species found on the site. This would establish an ecologically valuable habitat alongside the adjacent watercourse.
29. The area of the site within Flood Zone 3 has been excluded from built development. Planting within Flood Zone 3 would consist of wetland habitat planting species suitable for seasonally wet environments. This would assist in managing infiltration and run-off, supporting the natural hydrological cycle where possible.

### Streetscape and Footpaths

30. Tree planting is proposed along streets to create an attractive residential environment and to comply with the requirements of NPPF para 131. It would also help to integrate the built form into the wider landscape and would soften its appearance in close and mid-range views from the surrounding landscape.
31. To establish a green and visually attractive scheme, native trees, hedgerows, and ornamental planting would be incorporated within the streetscape and front gardens to soften the appearance of the built form. These elements would shape the character and sense of place of the proposal, provide focal points and aid orientation within the proposed development. Occasional tree planting of small to medium sized species would be used throughout

with some larger growing species being included where space is available.

32. Boundary treatments between properties and the street would be high quality and sympathetic of the semi-rural surrounding, through utilising hedgerows and ornamental planting.
33. A surfaced footpath through the southern public open space is to meander in line with the topography, creating an accessible environment for all and a key active travel link between the new development and Droitwich Spa.
34. Throughout the public open space is a series of informal mown grass paths. The footpaths offer informal routes from the proposed dwellings to The Forest, Hampton Lovett and Westwood Village Hall, St. Mary's and All Saints Church, the PRow and wider public open space as well as informal and attractive route through the site to the surrounding area.
35. A fully connected street network creates a development that is permeable, accessible and easy to orientate, encouraging social interaction and allowing residents to move around with ease. Street surfacing, carriageway widths and sensitive design of junctions will create an environment which prioritises pedestrians and cyclists.

### Lighting

36. Lighting design would minimise light spill and be appropriate to the semi-rural setting of the site. The existing tree belts and hedgerows of the site currently offer suitable habitat for commuting and foraging bats; the proposal would aim to avoid direct illumination of boundary vegetation to minimise habitat disturbance.





Community social spaces within public open space



Children's play area made from natural materials



Seating for community gathering and observation of wildlife



Species-rich grassland and green corridors to attract wildlife



Amenity grassland for informal recreation



Bird and bat boxes provide roosting and nesting opportunities



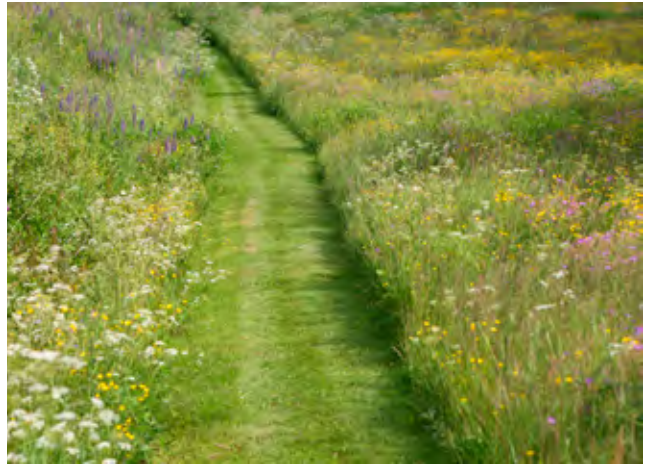
All development to avoid Flood Zone 3, remaining natural space



Wet meadow planting within attenuation basin



Active travel route to Kidderminster Road/ toward Droitwich Spa



Mown grass paths in wildflower for access and incidental play



Use of native and ornamental planting in streets



Green and visually attractive streetscape

## For further information contact

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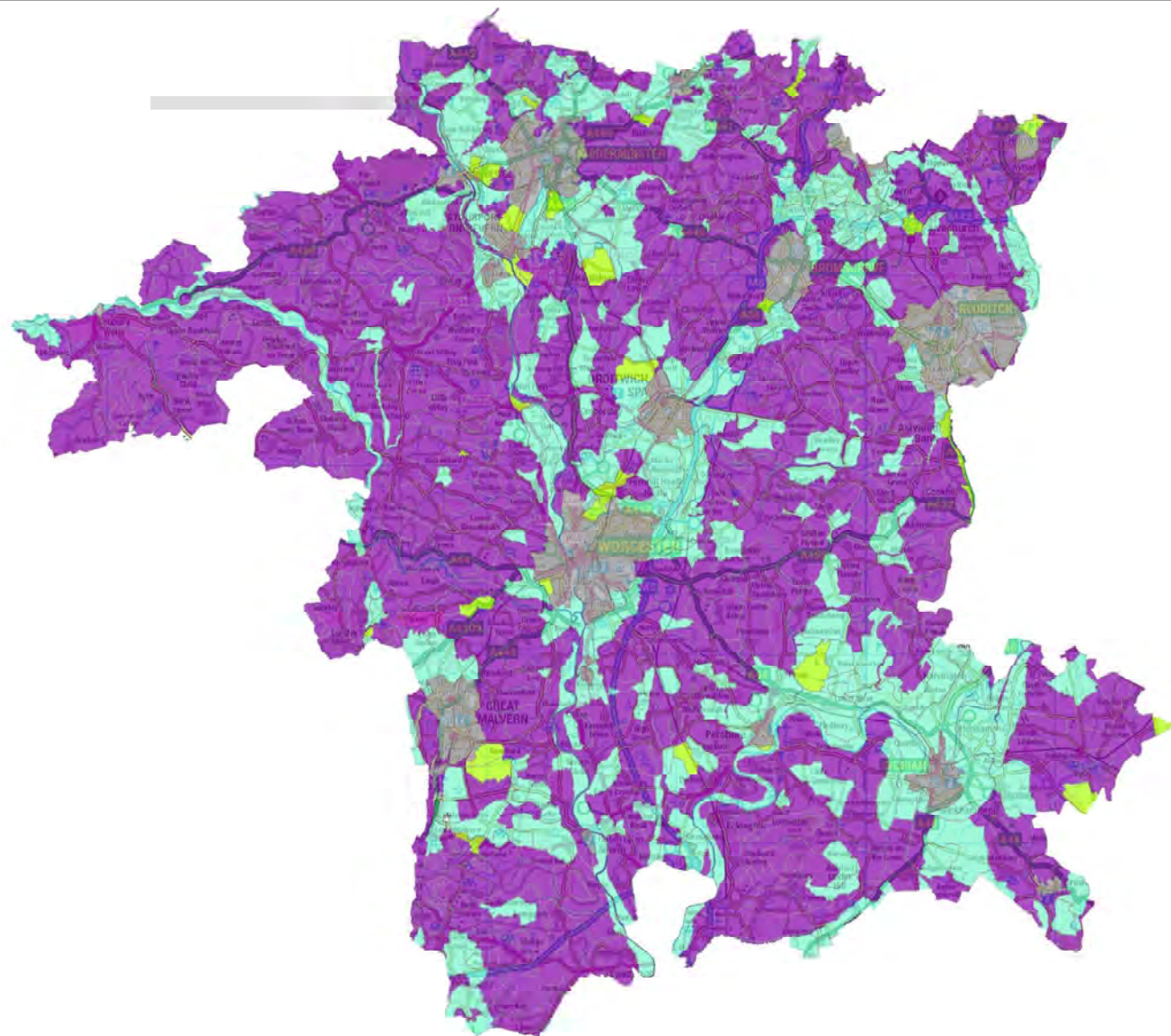
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**Date of issue**  
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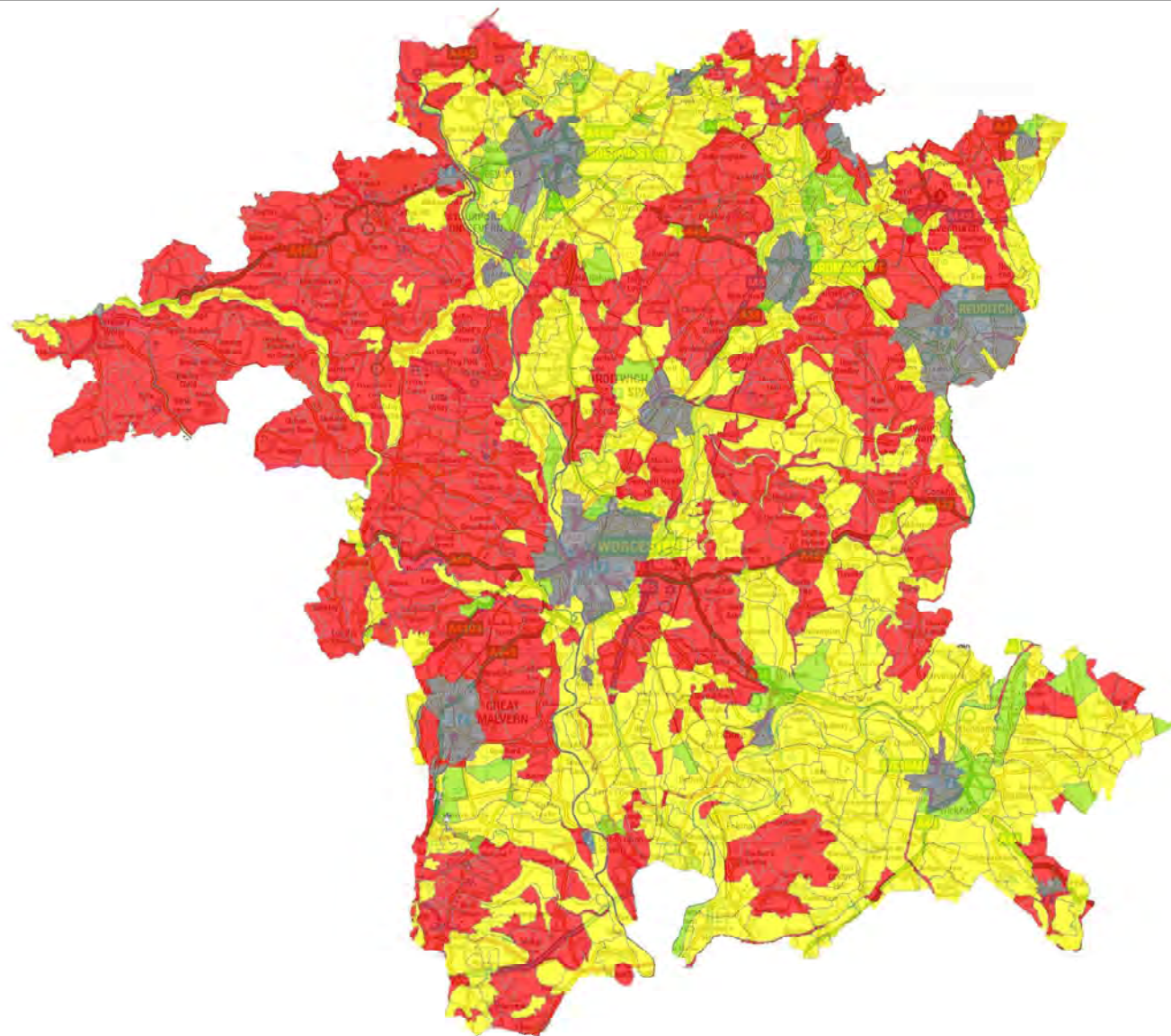
**Job Reference**  
RIDH3004

# Turley

**Appendix 3: WCC Mapping of Landscape Condition and Sensitivity** (Source: Maps 9 and 10 in Appendix A of the LCA Technical handbook)



- Good
- Moderate
- Poor
- Urban



- High
- Medium
- Low
- Urban

**Appendix 4: Assessing  
Landscape Value  
Outside National  
Designations' -  
(Appendix 4) The  
valued landscape  
'policy test' in  
England** Landscape  
Institute, Technical  
Guidance Note (TGN)  
02/21, 2021

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# A4 (Appendix 4) The valued landscape ‘policy test’ in England

## A4.1 2012 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

**A4.1.1** In 2012, the first version of the NPPF was published. It included a policy (paragraph 109) which stated that ‘The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: [inter alia] protecting and enhancing valued landscapes’.<sup>36</sup> No definition of a ‘valued landscape’ was given in the NPPF<sup>37</sup>. Planning Practice Guidance paragraph 036 Ref ID:036-20190721 provides advice on the use of policies for landscapes of a particular local value but there is no guidance on how to identify such landscapes.

**A4.1.2** The term valued landscape appears in the 2002 landscape character assessment guidance and in the title of GLVIA3 Box 5.1 (‘Range of factors that can help in the identification of valued landscapes’) which was published in 2013. However, the reference in GLVIA is a quote from the 2002 guidance and not a response to the use of the term ‘valued landscapes’ in the 2012 NPPF.

**A4.1.3** Following the 2012 NPPF the identification of ‘valued landscapes’ took on a new level of significance in planning appeals. Methods used to identify ‘valued landscapes’ in the context of the NPPF began to emerge, based on evidence presented by expert landscape witnesses at inquiry, Inspectors’/Secretary of State’s decisions, and court judgements. The evolution of approaches to the identification of ‘valued landscapes’ is summarised in **Appendix A5**. The ‘preferred’ approach that has emerged is based on the value factors set out in GVLIA3 Box 5.1.

**A4.1.4** One particularly influential judgment<sup>38</sup> accepted an approach which identified whether a landscape had sufficient ‘demonstrable physical attributes’ to take it beyond ‘ordinary landscape’. This judgment also found that the 2012 NPPF was clear that ‘designation’ and ‘valued’ in relation to landscapes do not mean the same thing. Although this approach is still widely accepted the particular term ‘demonstrable physical attributes’ is not used in this TGN because it can be misunderstood as focusing exclusively on physical factors and excluding the perceptual and associative factors that may contribute towards the value of a landscape.

## A4.2 2018/9 NPPF

**A4.2.1** In July 2018, the NPPF was revised, and the 2012 ‘valued landscape’ paragraph 109 was transposed, with modifications, to paragraph 170. The NPPF was revised again in February 2019<sup>39</sup> but paragraph 170 remained unchanged. There is still no definition of ‘valued landscapes’.

**A4.2.2** Paragraph 170 a) qualifies the term ‘valued landscapes’ as follows (qualification underlined): ‘Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

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<sup>36</sup> Planning Policy Statement 7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas P24 introduces the idea of valued landscapes which can be protected via of criteria-based policies rather than local designations.

<sup>37</sup> The Landscape Institute is aware of the lack of clarity regarding the expression ‘valued landscapes’. The LI drew attention to this wording in a response to the government consultation on the draft NPPF 2012, and again on the draft revised NPPF 2018 (in 2017). The LI continues to respond to all relevant government consultations, in particular those issued by MHCLG and DEFRA. The LI uses these invitations to comment and draw attention to any perceived lack of clarity or inconsistencies in the text of consultation drafts, making suggestions for revised wording where appropriate.

<sup>38</sup> Stroud DC v SoSCLG [2015] EWHC 488 (See Appendix 2 for further discussion of this judgement).

<sup>39</sup> The current consultation draft of a proposed revision to the NPPF (2020) does not include any changes to the wording of paragraph 170.





a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (*in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan*)’.

**A4.2.3** The precise meaning of *in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan* has been the subject of much debate, especially at planning inquiries, since 2018. **Appendix A5** refers to a number of decisions relating to its interpretation which provide an indication of the issues inspectors have considered to be relevant in the light of this qualification. However, there is no consensus on the meaning of the qualification and the interpretation of policy intentions and meanings can only be determined by the Courts. At the time of writing there have been no court judgments, post the 2018 revision, that have addressed the issue of ‘valued landscapes’.

**A4.2.4** This Appendix sets out the Landscape Institute’s guidance on how landscape professionals should identify ‘valued landscapes’ and in particular how landscape professionals might interpret the phrase ‘in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan’. It is intended to:

- *guide landscape professionals undertaking landscape assessments in England, so that their judgments about landscape value are based on a transparent and structured approach such as the one set out in Table 1 above; and*
- *assist decision-makers in England who have to interpret and balance the judgments made by different landscape professionals.*

#### Statutory status

**A4.2.5** The interpretation of the phrase ‘in a manner commensurate with their statutory status’ is relatively straightforward. Where a landscape has a statutory status, such as a National Park or AONB, it is self-evident that it is a valued landscape<sup>40</sup>. The great weight that should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in nationally designated landscapes is set out at NPPF paragraph 172 and relates to the statutory requirements with regard to natural beauty and (for National Parks only) the opportunities afforded for open-air recreation. Paragraph 170 a) does not alter those requirements.

#### Identified quality in the development plan

**A4.2.6** The interpretation of ‘identified quality in the development plan’ is not clear. There are two fundamentally different interpretations that have been adopted by inspectors, which are considered below in more detail:

1. It means non-statutory, locally designated landscapes;
2. It means any landscape where there is evidence to justify the identification of a ‘valued landscape’. Local designation alone may not be sufficient evidence.

In both cases it is assumed that the word ‘quality’ means degree of excellence.

#### Locally designated landscape

**A4.2.7** The phrase ‘identified quality in the development plan’ was interpreted by one inspector as meaning a locally designated landscape. This interpretation was accepted by the Secretary of State, although the acceptance was implicit not explicit.<sup>41</sup> However, this interpretation has not been adopted by subsequent inspectors who have identified problems with this approach, in particular:

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<sup>40</sup> In cases where a particular area within a National Park or AONB may not demonstrate the level of quality expected of its designation status, this does not mean that its value is diminished. Such an area is still a component of the nationally designated area with the characteristics associated with the park or AONB as a whole, and the aim should be to bring it back or much closer to the quality and character of the wider designated area so that it can be a positive contributor to the statutory purpose (to conserve and enhance the area’s natural beauty).

<sup>41</sup> App 3197293 Pods Brook Road, Braintree, Essex (June 2019).



- *that many planning authorities, following previous policy guidance,<sup>42</sup> no longer have local landscape designations; and*
- *that some local designations do not have an underlying evidence-base.*

**A4.2.8** At least one inspector has disagreed with the interpretation that any locally designated landscape must automatically be a valued landscape because in that case the parties agreed there was no evidence base to support the designation.<sup>43</sup>

#### Development plan policy support

**A4.2.9** Many inspectors have continued to consider evidence presented to support the identification of a 'valued landscape' whether a local landscape designation exists or not. Evidence that has been used in reaching judgements about whether a landscape should be considered to be a valued landscape includes:

- *factors that are generally agreed to influence landscape value as set out in GLVIA3 Box 5.1;*
- *the presence of qualities in the landscape that are identified in the development plan (which includes neighbourhood plans) as requiring protection, such as in policies that require development to respect key aspects of a local landscape identified in the local landscape character assessment; and*
- *when a local designation exists, whether the landscape in question demonstrates the landscape qualities that are identified as important for that designation.*

**A4.2.10** The Landscape Institute supports the evidence-based approach. The Landscape Institute does not consider that planning authorities which removed local designations following previous policy guidance, or those which never had local landscape designations, should be considered to have no 'valued landscapes' outside nationally designated areas.

**A4.2.11** Where a landscape has a statutory status, it will not be necessary to undertake an assessment based on Box 5.1 of GLVIA3 or the factors identified in Table 1 of this TGN. It may also be unnecessary where a local designation is supported by a strong evidence base. However, where there is little published evidence to support existing local landscape designations, an assessment based upon these factors would be helpful to support planning decision making.

#### Valued landscape definition

A 'valued landscape' is an area identified as having sufficient landscape qualities to elevate it above other more everyday<sup>44</sup> landscapes.

**A4.2.12** Where possible the development plan should be referenced to support the value placed on the landscape. Where the development plan is silent, evidence should be provided in the form of professional analysis. Key points to note are as follows:

- *It is not possible to set a definitive threshold in this TGN above which a landscape is considered to be a 'valued landscape'. It is a judgment that must be made on a case-by-case basis, based on the evidence. There should be a weight of evidence that supports the recognition of a landscape as valued above more everyday landscapes.*
- *The character and quality of landscapes across England are variable and what may be defined as reaching the 'valued landscape' threshold/criteria in one part of the Country may be considered to be an 'everyday landscape' in another.*
- *It would be expected that a 'valued landscape' would demonstrate the presence of a number of indicators of landscape value, as set out in Table 1, although it is possible for one indicator to be of*

<sup>42</sup> Planning Policy Statement (PPS 7): Sustainable development in rural areas (ODPM 2004) – see Appendix A3.

<sup>43</sup> App 3215534 Tuffs Road and Maple Way, Eye, Suffolk (March 2020) The local plan policy was based on an old structure plan and the parties agreed there was no evidence base for that.

<sup>44</sup> 'Everyday' landscapes may nevertheless have value to people.



*such importance (e.g. rarity, association or perceptual aspects) that the landscape is judged to be a 'valued landscape' even if other indicators are not present.*

- *The identification of landscape value needs to be applied proportionately ensuring that identification of 'valued landscape' is not over used.*
- *In line with the ELC's approach, landscapes that are not judged to be 'valued landscapes' may still have value, and NPPF paragraph 170 b) requires planning policies and decisions to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. It is well-established that a landscape does not have to be a 'valued landscape' to be afforded protection from inappropriate development (**see Appendix A5**).*



## **Appendix 5: Parameter plan**

**NOTE:**  
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This drawing to be read in conjunction with all relevant Architect's and other Specialists drawings, details and specifications.

1:250	0	0.5m	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5m
1:100	0	1m	2	3	4	5	6	7m
1:500	0	5m	10	15	20	25	30	35m
1:2500	0	25m	50	75	100	125	150	175m
1:1250	0	12.5m	25	37.5	50	62.5	75	87.5m
1:2500	0	25m	50	75	100	125	150	175m



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