

Environmental Character Area Profile for the Minerals Local Plan: 17. Broadway and Cotswold corridor

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Minerals development usually takes place on previously undeveloped land and can therefore result in permanent change to the natural environment and green spaces in Worcestershire. The impacts of both the working and the restoration of mineral sites need to be considered in detail in the development of the Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan (the MLP).
- 1.2. The Council will take a 'green infrastructure' (GI) approach to considering these impacts. The GI approach is a different way of thinking about the green spaces in Worcestershire. It moves beyond solely considering the environmental benefits of green spaces and integrates the consideration of economic, health and social benefits in the planning and management of green spaces. Rather than considering each green space in isolation it looks at the ways in which individual sites and corridors of green space collectively form the distinctive character of Worcestershire that attracts both visitors and business to the County.
- 1.3. The components of GI include biodiversity, landscape, historic environment, access and recreation and water (also known as blue infrastructure). The GI approach requires thinking about the environment as an integrated system of stepping stones or nodes in a wider network¹.

Green infrastructure and mineral workings and restoration

- 1.4. There is significant potential for mineral workings to destroy existing networks of green infrastructure if the nature and character of these networks is not taken into account. However there is also significant potential to contribute positively to green infrastructure through the restoration of mineral workings.
- 1.5. The GI approach extends beyond thinking about designated sites of biodiversity or historic interest. This means that the impact of a mineral working on the wider environment and the integrated system of stepping stones or nodes in a wider network² will need to be considered.

Environmental Character Areas³ and the Minerals Local Plan

- 1.6. The Worcestershire Green Infrastructure Partnership has undertaken an analysis of the landscape character, biodiversity and the historic environment of Worcestershire to identify 30 distinct GI Environmental Character Areas (ECAs). Details about how these were developed is set out in *Planning for a Multifunctional Green Infrastructure Framework in*

¹ Green Infrastructure Guidance – Natural England.

² Green Infrastructure Guidance – Natural England.

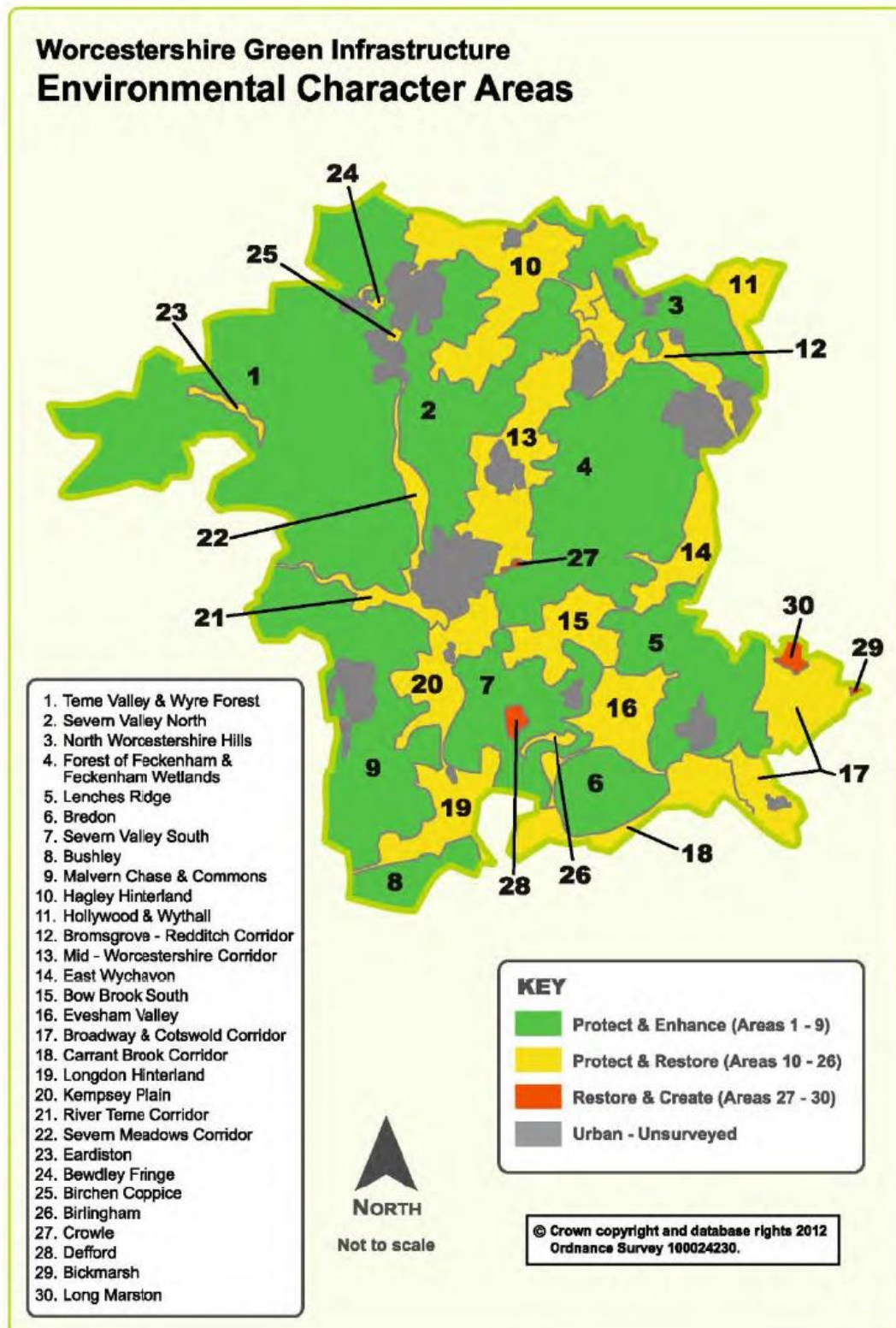
³ Worcestershire County Council (July 2012) *Planning for a Multifunctional Green Infrastructure Framework in Worcestershire: Green Infrastructure Framework 2*

Worcestershire: Green Infrastructure Framework 2 (2012) available at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/GI

- 1.7. These underlie the distinctive character of Worcestershire and it is the Council's intention that the unique characteristics of each area will drive the restoration strategy for the Minerals Local Plan.
- 1.8. This is one of 30 profile documents which set out the characteristics and priorities for the each ECA. It sets out the mineral resources in the ECA and the GI priorities identified by the Worcestershire GI Partnership. These priorities are structured around biodiversity, historic environment, landscape character, water environment (also known as blue infrastructure) access and recreation and transport. The document is also supplemented by other locally relevant information as appropriate.
- 1.9. This information will be used to develop the spatial strategy and restoration priorities for each ECA.
- 1.10. Profiles for each of the following ECAs are available on our website www.worcestershire.gov.uk/mineralsbackground:
- 1.11. The Environmental Character Areas are:
 1. Teme Valley & Wyre Forest
 2. Severn Valley North
 3. North Worcestershire Hills
 4. Forest of Feckenham & Feckenham Wetlands
 5. Lenches Ridge
 6. Bredon
 7. Severn Valley South
 8. Bushley
 9. Malvern Chase and Commons
 10. Hagley Hinterland
 11. Hollywood & Wythall
 12. Bromsgrove – Redditch Corridor
 13. Mid-Worcestershire Corridor
 14. East Wychavon
 15. Bow Brook South
 16. Evesham Valley
 17. Broadway & Cotswold Corridor
 18. Carrant Brook Corridor
 19. Longdon Hinterland
 20. Kempsey Plain
 21. River Teme Corridor
 22. Severn Meadows Corridor
 23. Eardiston
 24. Bewdley Fringe
 25. Birchen Coppice
 26. Birlingham
 27. Crowle
 28. Defford
 29. Bickmarsh
 30. Long Marston

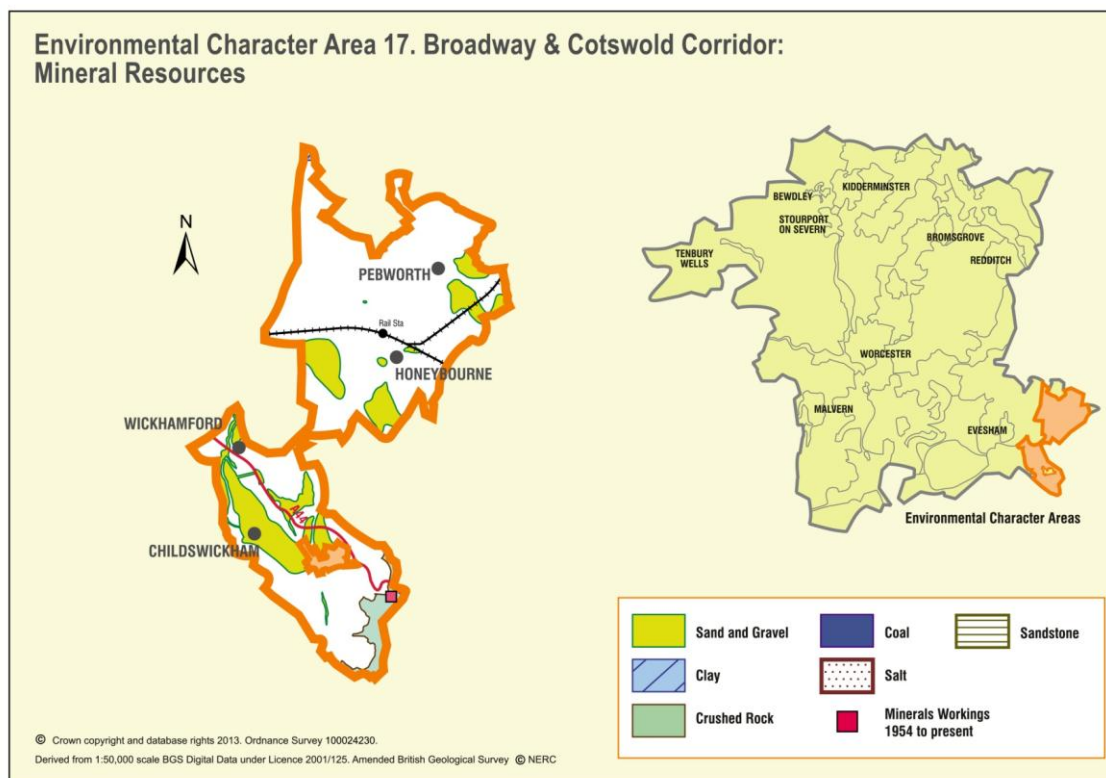
These are illustrated on Figure 1. Environmental Character Areas.

Figure 1. Environmental Character Areas



2. Characteristics and priorities of the Broadway and Cotswold corridor ECA

Figure 2. Environmental Character Area 17 Broadway & Cotswold Corridor: Mineral Resources



Mineral Resources

Aggregates

2.1. Details about the aggregate resources in this ECA are given in the background report "Analysis of Mineral Resources in Worcestershire" available on www.worcestershire.gov.uk/mineralsbackground. The following is therefore only a simple summary.

Sand and gravel

2.2. There is no evidence of workable sand and gravel resources in this ECA.

Hard rock

2.3. Crushed rock resources suitable for aggregate use also exist and were worked at Fish Hill quarry, Broadway until 2010 when the quarry closed; the site is currently being restored. The company have stated that they have no interest in extending the site.

Industrial minerals

Clay

- 2.4. Clay resources exist and were worked commercially at Honeybourne where Lower Lias clays were extracted for the manufacture of bricks, tiles and drainpipes at least as late as 1966, that operation has now ceased.

Silica sand

- 2.5. There is no evidence that suitable resources exist.

Coal

- 2.6. The memoir records that anecdotal claims that there are coal deposits in the area but there is no evidence that deposits exist.

Building stone

- 2.7. Building stone was produced at Fish Hill Quarry, Broadway until about 2010. The site has now closed.

Brine

- 2.8. There is no evidence of brine working in this area or that Halite deposits might exist at depth.

Future Growth

- 2.9. The key driver for mineral extraction is to provide the raw materials required for the economy to function properly and for homes and infrastructure to be built. Minerals are unevenly distributed. Some of the minerals that we need are not found in Worcestershire and will need to be imported from outside the County. Many minerals are expensive to transport, particularly aggregates as they are a relatively low value and bulky material, and they are likely to be used close to their source, meaning that some local mineral extraction will be needed to support local growth in housing and the associated infrastructure that is required, or to provide raw materials for local industry. On average, about 80 per cent of mineral products are used within 30 miles of the quarry.
- 2.10. This ECA is a rural area within Wychavon District. The district anticipates the development of 5,807 homes, 18.5 ha of employment land and a new neighbourhood centre in the next 14-18 years⁴. The ECA includes the Category 1 villages of Broadway and Honeybourne and the Category 3 village of Pebworth which are proposed for some development in the South Worcestershire Development Plan proposed submission document⁵.

⁴ Information gathered by Worcestershire County Council in early 2013. This gives a good indication of the likely levels of development which can be expected, but for the latest figures please refer to the relevant City, District or Borough Council.

⁵ Category 1, 2 and 3 villages are fourth in the five tier settlement hierarchy set out in the South Worcestershire Development Plan proposed submission document. Their role is predominately aimed at meeting locally identified housing and employment needs. They are

- 2.11. These and other areas beyond the boundary of the ECA, such as Chipping Campden to the east in Gloucestershire which is identified as needing 160 new houses up to 2031 in the Draft Cotswold District local Plan Preferred Development Strategy Consultation Document, could create demand for minerals in this Environmental Character Area.

Green Infrastructure priorities⁶

- 2.12. All Environmental Character Areas (ECA's) have been placed into one of three categories based on their overall score for Green Infrastructure.

These are:

1. Protect and enhance
2. Protect and restore
3. Restore and create

- 2.13. The category is based on an assessment of the ECAs landscape character, biodiversity and the historic environment characteristics. These characteristics were each attributed a score, with biodiversity being given a greater weighting than landscape and the historic environment, each of which were given equal but lower weightings.

- 2.14. The strategic GI approach for the Broadway and Cotswold corridor ECA is to *protect and restore*. The overarching principle identified by the GI partnership is to protect and restore the characteristic Cotswold landscape and its key features including neutral and calcareous grasslands and field boundaries.

Landscape and biodiversity

- 2.15. The Broadway and Cotswold Corridor Environmental Character Area lies on the south-eastern border of Worcestershire and encompasses the rural countryside around Broadway, the village itself being excluded. It straddles the boundary of two Regional Landscape Character Areas (RCA), identified by the County Landscape Character Assessment: the Vale of Evesham which extends over the greater part and the Cotswold and Bredon Hill RCA which covers the most southerly part. The southerly RCA also corresponds to the boundary of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 2.16. The areas within the Vale of Evesham RCA have been classified by the County Landscape Character Assessment as a combination of three Landscape Types: Principal Village Farmlands, Village Claylands and one area of Village Farmlands with Orchards. These are all low lying agricultural areas, concomitant to the rest of the Vale of Evesham.

therefore suited to accommodate market and affordable housing needs alongside limited employment for local needs. The scale of allocated development is significantly less than that for the urban areas and is aimed at helping to address housing needs and support local services.

⁶ Worcestershire County Council (July 2012) *Planning for a Multifunctional Green Infrastructure Framework in Worcestershire: Green Infrastructure Framework 2*

- 2.17. Village Claylands do not support woodland and are characterised by medium-to-large scale pastoral fields, separated by hedgerows with scattered hedgerow and streamside trees. These are landscapes with heavy, poorly drained soils where the continuing pastoral land use has preserved large areas of ridge and furrow from previous medieval cultivation. The settlement pattern is nucleated with farms being sited within or on the edge of villages and not in the open countryside as most of the western part of the county. There is limited opportunity here for biodiversity interest, although the streams offer important habitats.
- 2.18. The areas classified as a mixture of Principal Village Farmlands and Village Farmlands with Orchards are intensively farmed for arable or market gardening crops. Again, there is limited biodiversity interest, although ground nesting and arable associated birds may be important. Woodland is not characteristic, tree cover being confined to sparsely scattered hedgerow and streamside trees. This area was once heavily treed with hedgerow elms and their death transformed the character of the landscape. The settlement pattern is again nucleated, reflecting late enclosure of vast areas of former communally worked open fields.
- 2.19. The boundary of the Cotswolds AONB and the Cotswold and Bredon Hill RCA is marked by a sudden and dramatic change in topography where the Cotswold scarp rises sharply from the flat Vale of Evesham. Here the Landscape Types change to Principal Wooded Hills on the slopes and Limestone Estatelands on the highest parts at Broadway Hill which is marked by Broadway Tower and Burhill Iron Age Fort just on the border with Gloucestershire.
- 2.20. The Principal Wooded Hills are characterised by large, interconnecting blocks of woodland on steeply sloping topography. The small, organically shaped fields were assarted from the woodland and make up a small percentage of the overall area. In contrast, the Limestone Estatelands are characterised by large fields, separated by drystone walls on thin, stony soils. Woodland is of a planned character being generally estate plantations and belts of trees with a noticeable element of beech, which thrives on such poor soil.

GI Priorities:

- 2.21. The landscape priorities identified for the Broadway and Cotswold corridor ECA are⁷:
- Enhance and protect the hedgerow field boundaries which vary considerably across the multiple landscape types here in character and pattern: from the planned enclosure pattern of drystone walls in the Limestone Estates and planned enclosure pattern of hedgerows defining medium-to-large fields in the Village landscapes (sub-regular in the Claylands) to the organic pattern of hedges in the Wooded Hills.
 - Woodland character, too, should be enhanced and protected – from the large interconnecting irregularly shaped blocks of the

⁷ Worcestershire County Council (July 2012) *Planning for a Multifunctional Green Infrastructure Framework in Worcestershire: Green Infrastructure Framework 2*

Wooded Hills and the estate plantations of the Limestone Estates to the unwooded, treed Village landscapes. In the latter, hedgerow and watercourse trees should be protected and/or replanted to address density and age structure where relevant and notably the extensive apple and plum orchards and hedgerow fruit trees of the Farmlands with Orchards should be protected or enhanced where appropriate.

- Depending on the very different character areas, the priority habitats within this ECA are lowland meadow (neutral grassland) and calcareous grassland, broadleaved woodland, hedgerows, veteran trees and traditional orchard. In intensively farmed areas, connectivity across the landscape with linear corridors consisting of arable field margins, well-managed hedgerows and buffering along streams and ditches is important to allow the movement of species within the farmed landscape.
- Newly created GI features should aim to augment the existing resource concentrating on the main priorities for protection and creation including neutral and calcareous grassland, field boundaries, traditional orchard connectivity through linking, merging and buffering existing and newly created habitats.

Historic Environment⁸

2.22. This is a diverse archaeological landscape, with significant prehistoric and Romano British settlements aligned along the small watercourse that runs between Broadway and Childswickham, suggesting that this stream held particular significance. Such remains therefore are likely to occur anywhere along its route. Where free draining soils occur there is an increased presence of early settlement and occupation sites, while on the heavy soils relic medieval landscape features predominate. The Roman Road Rylind Street bisects the northern part of the character area.

At Broadway Hill (at Fish Hill Quarry), the discovery of a skeleton in 1954 and reports of finds including a sword, led the Evesham Historical Society to undertake preliminary investigations of what turned out to be an Anglo-Saxon cemetery. As a result of the preliminary investigation, in 1955, five disturbed and three intact graves were subsequently excavated by the Ministry of Works (Cook 1958).

2.23. The historic landscape character ranges from areas of post-medieval enclosure of former medieval open-field cultivation to larger Parliamentary Enclosure with an overall low-density of settlement.

GI Priorities:

2.24. The historic environment priorities identified for the Broadway and Cotswold corridor ECA are⁹:

⁸ Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council and Cotswold Archaeology (R Jackson and H Dalwood et al) (November 2007) "Archaeology and aggregates in Worcestershire: A resource assessment and research agenda" Supported by English Heritage through the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund.

⁹ Worcestershire County Council (July 2012) *Planning for a Multifunctional Green Infrastructure Framework in Worcestershire: Green Infrastructure Framework 2*

- Explore opportunities to protect below ground archaeology associated with extensive prehistoric and Romano-British settlement in the low hinterland surrounding Broadway.
- Buffer historic landscape features, such as earthwork boundaries, ridge and furrow and relic parkland landscapes. Protect and enhance diverse multi-period historic field patterns and hedgerows that distinguish the historic landscapes of lowland farming around Broadway and the rising slopes of the Cotswold upland.
- Enhance and create linkages with the irregular historic woodland that populate the rising slopes of Cotswold upland.

Geodiversity

2.25. There is one Local Geological Site in this ECA, Broadway Quarry.

Blue Infrastructure

2.26. There are a number of minor watercourses and one main river, the Badsey Brook, in this ECA; all drain into the river Avon with the exception of a very small area of the south west of Broadway, which falls within the Thames catchment and is managed by Thames Water.

2.27. The river Avon is one of the main causes of flooding in Evesham, it is fed by the watercourses in this ECA.

2.28. Wychavon LPA consider that the following areas within the ECA are not defended to a satisfactory standard: Badsey, Cleeve Prior and North Littleton (all of these are outside of or only partly in ECA 17, but could be affected by watercourses within it that drain into them).

2.29. Groundwater flooding is not considered to be a major issue in the South Worcestershire Joint Core Strategy area.

2.30. The River Severn Catchment Flood Management Plan makes this a Policy 3 area, where it will "Continue with existing or alternative actions to manage risk at the current level."

Water Quality

2.31. Apart from a small area near North and South Littleton, this ECA is categorised as having water company point source and agricultural/rural diffuse pollution pressure. The upper reach of the Badsey Brook (much of which is in this ECA) has been classified as bad, the lower reach has a poor ecological status, both as a result of poor (lower reach) and bad (upper reach) levels of Diatoms. Both parts contain unacceptable levels of phosphorus to be able to achieve a good status.

2.32. The River Avon east of Evesham, as fed by this ECA, passes the Chemical Assessment under the WFD.

2.33. Groundwater status in this ECA is good.

Water Supply

2.34. No water available.

GI Priorities:

- 2.35. The blue infrastructure priorities identified for the Broadway and Cotswold corridor ECA are¹⁰:
- Reduce dependence on raised flood defences, as this is unsustainable in the long term, by taking opportunities to restore sustainable natural storage of floodwater on undeveloped floodplains.
 - Make more space for rivers through urban areas via 'blue corridors' (i.e. Restoring access for floodwater onto key strips of floodplain. This requires redevelopment to be limited to flood-compatible land-uses e.g. parkland).
 - Some designated 'aquatic conservation' sites are in unfavourable condition. Activities that affect these sites must be changed to improve their condition.
 - Ensure that the run-off from all proposed development is minimised. For example, SUDS must be encouraged and targeted within planning approvals.
 - Encourage the retro-fitting of SUDS where surface water flooding is already a problem. Support ecological improvements. Examples of this include Severn & Avon Wetlands Project; Natural England's three fluvial SSSIs; Cotswold AONB.
 - Reduce the impacts of abstraction on the environment as part of the Restoring Sustainable Abstraction programme.

Access and informal recreation

- 2.36. This ECA is in Wychavon District. Only 3.6% of the Wychavon District is accessible natural greenspace, this is the lowest proportion across all districts in Worcestershire. As a whole accessibility to greenspace is poor with only 20% of households in Wychavon are within 5km of 100ha+sites and 2% of households within 10km of 500ha+sites.
- 2.37. There are no sub-regional recreation assets in this ECA; however the Broadway Tower Country Park (just inside the Gloucestershire county boundary) which is of sub-regional importance and Worcestershire County Council Fish Hill picnic site immediately adjoin it and the Cotswold Way and Wychavon Way pass through the south of this ECA.
- 2.38. There are deficiencies in opportunities for access and recreation across the Vale of Evesham, with the Rights of Way network being less dense than in any other area of the County. There is also a lack of sites such as Country Parks, picnic places and Registered Commons. Few nature reserves exist although there are a number of smaller community sites such as Village Greens and Millennium Greens.
- 2.39. Provision is required at both a strategic and neighbourhood level. At a neighbourhood or local scale there is scope for towns and villages to address natural greenspace needs within the rural communities. This should be a requirement of development and other options should be explored for existing communities such as stewardship agreements.

¹⁰ Worcestershire County Council (July 2012) *Planning for a Multifunctional Green Infrastructure Framework in Worcestershire: Green Infrastructure Framework 2*

GI Priorities:

- 2.40. The access and recreation priorities identified for the Broadway and Cotswold corridor ECA are¹¹:
- Consider the proximity to and ability to integrate with the rights of way network, recreational way-marked routes and the cycle network;
 - Accommodate associated facilities necessary for the use and enjoyment of the site in a manner that is appropriate and able to integrate with the landscape character, wildlife and cultural interests.
 - Act as a greenway from town into the countryside and utilise existing canal, former railway lines, river corridors and wherever possible link with public transport routes.
 - Adopt minimum quality standards, (commensurate with its location and scale) that sites and routes should be expected to achieve will be those from the Green Flag Award Programme, and the Country Parks Accreditation Scheme, as appropriate.

Transport

Road

- 2.41. The A44 crosses the southern end of the ECA to connect Evesham to the north with Broadway and the Cotswolds to the south east. Other roads in this Environmental Character Area are more minor.
- 2.42. The Worcestershire Advisory Lorry Route Map does not show any low bridges which would restrict the movement of vehicles over 16'3" (4.95m) on the lorry route network, however there is a steep gradient of 10% at Fish Hill near Broadway. Local roads may have further restrictions and will need further assessment if they are to be used for accessing mineral resources.

Rail

- 2.43. The Cotswold Line crosses the north end of this ECA, connecting Worcester and Evesham with the Cotswolds and Oxford, Honeybourne Station is within the ECA.

Water

- 2.44. There are no navigable waterways within the ECA, although the River Avon borders the northern edge of the ECA at Marlcliff. It is an operational river navigation, capable of carrying commercial traffic and is navigable for 45 miles from Tewkesbury to Stratford on Avon.

GI Priorities:

- 2.45. The GI transport priorities identified for the Broadway and Cotswold corridor ECA are¹²:

¹¹ Worcestershire County Council (July 2012) *Planning for a Multifunctional Green Infrastructure Framework in Worcestershire: Green Infrastructure Framework 2*

¹² Worcestershire County Council (July 2012) *Planning for a Multifunctional Green Infrastructure Framework in Worcestershire: Green Infrastructure Framework 2*

- Opportunities should be sought to protect, enhance and create green infrastructure that promotes sustainable movement by walking and cycling, reducing the need to travel by car by providing pleasant environments that promote sustainable transport as a means to minimise the impact of transport on the natural environment and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

LTP Priorities:

2.46. The LTP 3 transport priorities identified for the Broadway and Cotswold Corridor ECA are:

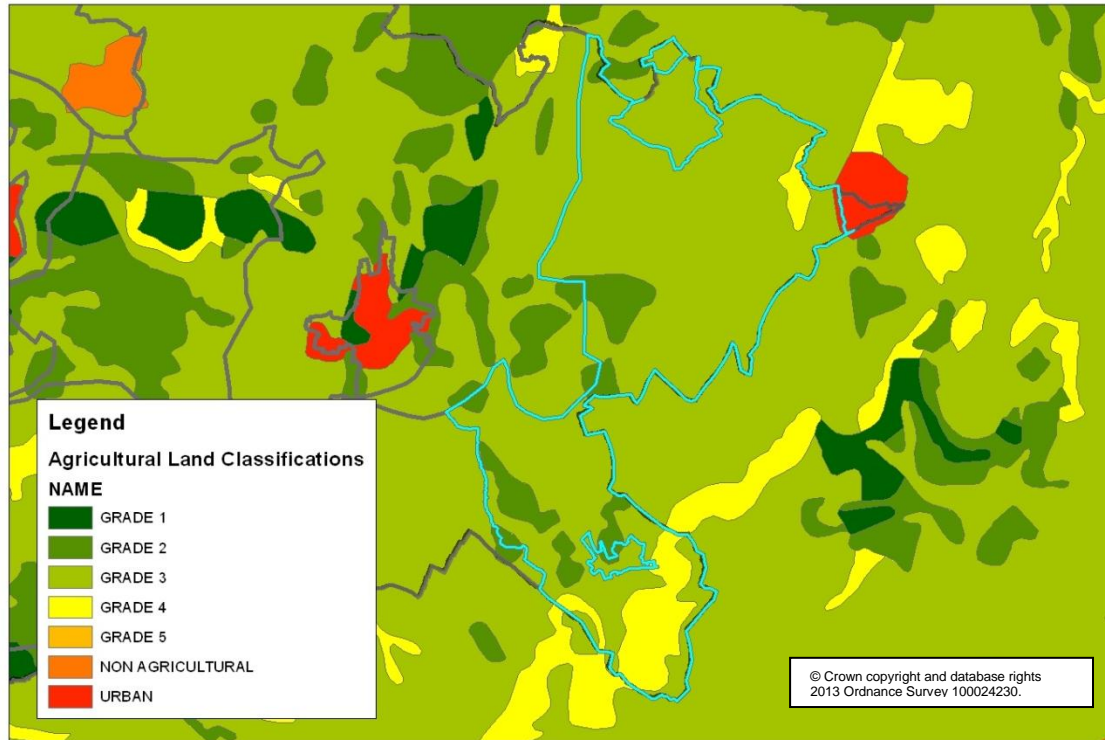
- **Worcester to Evesham rail line dualling scheme** - A proposed scheme to reinstate dual track between Worcester and Evesham, to further increase capacity on the Cotswold Line route. Dependent on the rail industry to progress this in the long term.
- **Honeybourne to Stratford rail line reinstatement study** – this would involve the development of a business case and clear identification of local benefits to support the reopening of the railway link between Honeybourne and Stratford-upon-Avon and may be progressed in the long term, subject to agreement and support from key partners.
- **Honeybourne station enhancement scheme** – this would involve enhancements to station facilities to accommodate increased passengers and stopping services arising from the extension of the Gloucestershire and Warwickshire Railway to Honeybourne Station. This scheme is dependent on the extension of the Gloucestershire and Warwickshire Railway from its current northern terminus at Toddington (Glos) to Honeybourne. This may be progressed in the long term, but Honeybourne Station is currently being improved as part of the major dualling project on the Cotswold rail line by Network Rail.

Agriculture/Forestry

2.47. The majority of the land use in this ECA is mixed farming and cash cropping. Cash cropping covers market gardening as well as arable farming and is strongly associated with the Vale of Evesham, where, on soils ranging from heavy Lias clay to freely draining river terrace gravels, and on holdings ranging in size from a few acres to over a thousand, almost every variety of market garden crop is grown. There are also some areas of pastoral land and horticulture in the ECA.

2.48. Agricultural land quality across the area is dominantly grade 3 land with some areas of higher quality grade 2 land and some lower quality grade 4 land is present, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Agricultural land quality



2.49. The forestry commission's woodland opportunity maps show that some of the southern end of this ECA is listed as priority 1 or 2 for woodland creation which could benefit landscape character, biodiversity, cultural heritage and/or public access (Figure 4). They also show that the same area is an ancient woodland landscape but this is not prioritised for woodland restoration (Figure 5).

Figure 4. Woodland creation for landscape, biodiversity, heritage and public access

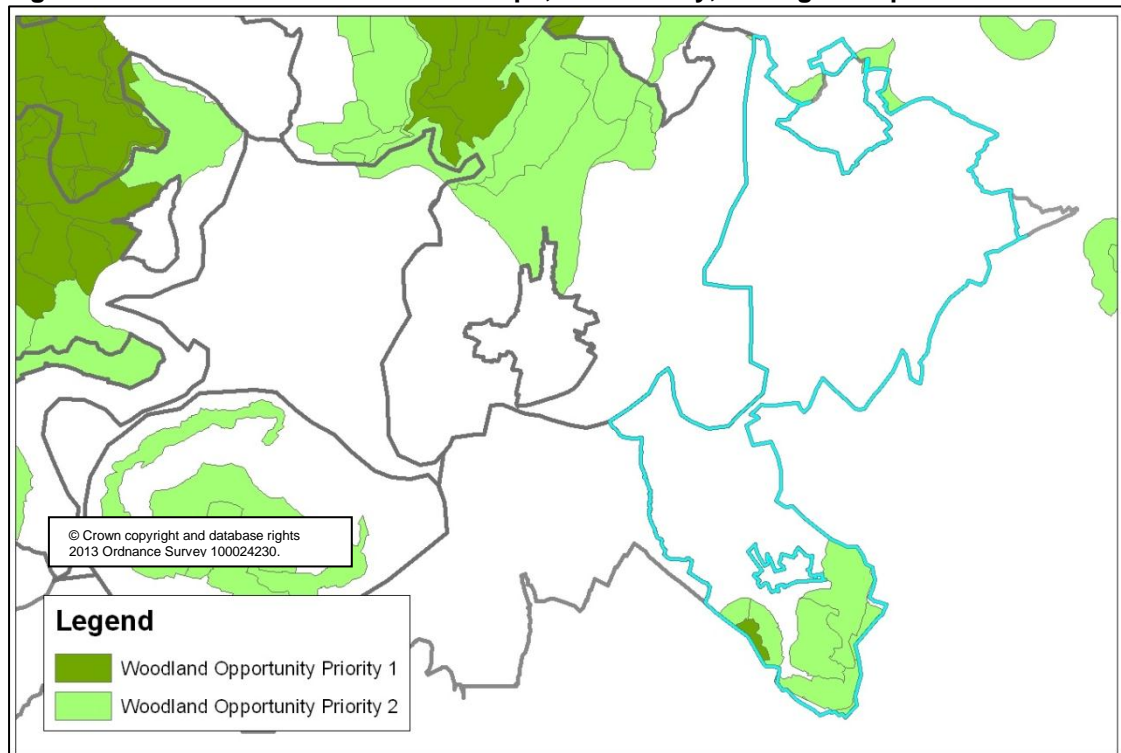
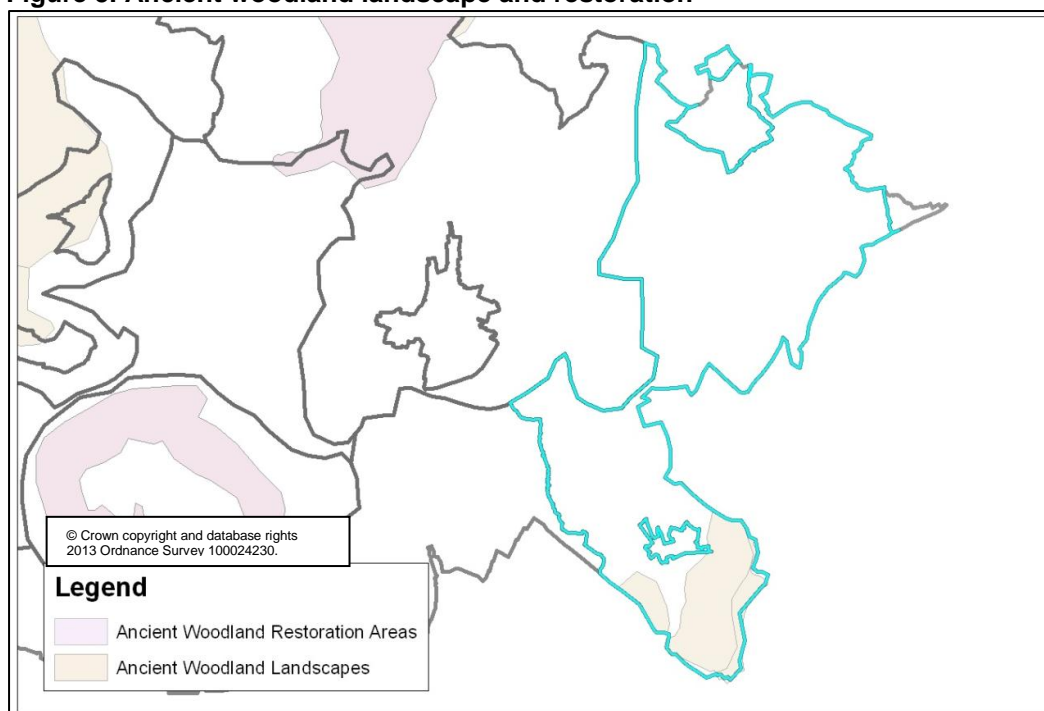


Figure 5. Ancient woodland landscape and restoration



Climate Change

2.50. Some effects of climate change will be similar across the whole county and many of the issues which can be addressed are likely to be common to all ECAs, such as:

- Improving air quality
- Providing flood risk management solutions
- Preventing water and soils pollution as a result of climate change related extreme weather conditions
- Promoting energy efficient and low carbon solutions
- Contributing to renewable energy production

Opportunities and issues

2.51. Green Infrastructure features such as buffering of watercourses provide a way of minimising fluvial flooding. Planned landscaping incorporating flood defences could provide both short term benefits and sustainable drainage schemes (SUDS) are a mechanism for managing both fluvial and pluvial flood risk.

2.52. Agricultural and horticultural businesses could face damaging water shortages in the coming decades as a result of climate change. In many parts of Worcestershire, water resources are under severe pressure. The majority of catchments in which horticultural production is concentrated have been defined by the Environment Agency as being either over-licensed and/or over-abstracted. Well executed water storage facilities could not only provide water supply for the business in the dry periods but a wide range of green infrastructure benefits such as biodiversity or

landscape and opportunities for increased physical activity and exposure to nature.

- 2.53. The soil types in most of this ECA are inherently at risk of subsidence and heave. It is possible that changes in weather patterns as a result of climate change may worsen these tendencies.
- 2.54. Locally significant areas of heathland, bracken and conifer woodland in this ECA are amongst the habitats most at risk from fire as a result of climate change.

Socio-economic considerations

- 3.55. The analysis of the socio-economic situation in Worcestershire in this strategy considers the economy and health & well-being at a high level. It is not intended to draw a full picture of the economy or health and well-being in the county, instead it focuses only on the indicators which are of most relevance to green infrastructure:
 - **Economy:** unemployment, household income and deprivation levels.
 - **Health and well-being:** health deprivation, heart diseases, obesity, mental health problems and respiratory conditions.
 - **Access to sites for informal recreation:** considers links between informal recreation opportunities and mental and physical well-being.
- 2.56. There is thought to be a link between green infrastructure and some aspects of health. The issues of obesity, respiratory conditions, mental health, heart disease and health deprivation have been considered in this context.
- 2.57. 26% (120,000) of the Worcestershire's adult population is obese and another 40% is overweight. The adult obesity levels in Worcestershire are higher than the national average. The level of childhood obesity is around the national average, at 10% of five year olds and 18% of eleven year olds. In terms of land cover, most of the Worcestershire area has some problems with obesity.
- 2.58. Obesity and respiratory problems in this county generally follow the same geographical pattern. Mental health problems, by contrast, tend to be found in the and around major settlements. Although mortality rates from cardiovascular diseases are significantly lower than the national rate, patterns of heart diseases are more dispersed than the other health indicators assessed and poor performance is found across the county. Contrary to other health indicators, heart diseases are least prevalent in some of the urban areas.
- 2.59. The overarching principles identified by the GI partnership regarding socio-economic matters for this ECA are:
 - Primary focus on overall health related improvements.
 - Support opportunities to address low household incomes.