

PREFACE / ADDENDUM TO THE BEWDLEY DESIGN CODE

December 2025

1. Updated Policy Context

This Preface has been prepared to accompany the Bewdley Design Code (AECOM, 2020), following feedback received from Wyre Forest District Council's Planning Policy Team regarding updates to the wider planning policy framework. It clarifies how the Design Code should now be interpreted and provides an updated policy context without altering the original document.

Since the Design Code was produced, the strategic planning framework for the district has changed. The Wyre Forest Core Strategy (2006–2026) and the Site Allocations and Policies DPD (2013) are now superseded by the Wyre Forest Local Plan 2016–2036 (Adopted April 2022).

All former policy references within the Design Code should now be interpreted in conjunction with the updated Local Plan policies, including those relating to design quality, heritage, biodiversity, landscape character, flood risk, and transport.

2. National Policy and Legislative Changes

Since the Design Code was written, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has been revised. Users should therefore read the Design Code alongside the latest NPPF, particularly:

- Chapter 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places
- Chapter 14 – Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change
- Chapter 15 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

3. Biodiversity Net Gain and the Worcestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The Design Code predates statutory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements and the publication of the Worcestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). Applicants should now:

- Provide a Biodiversity Gain Plan demonstrating the mandatory minimum 10% net gain.
- Demonstrate 30-year management and maintenance arrangements.
- Use the LNRS to guide habitat creation and ecological enhancements.
- Reference relevant local habitat mapping and data.

4. Climate Resilience, Sustainable Design and Infrastructure

Recent policy changes place heightened emphasis on sustainable design, including low-carbon construction, electric vehicle charging, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), flood resilience, and active travel. Development proposals should therefore use the

Design Code together with updated Local Plan policies such as SP.37, SP.31, SP.27 and related design and infrastructure policies.

5. Status of the Design Code

The Design Code continues to provide robust and locally distinctive design guidance for Bewdley. This Preface ensures it is interpreted within the correct and current statutory planning framework. No changes have been made to the original content of the Design Code itself.

6. How to Use This Preface

Applicants, planning officers and members of the public should:

1. Read the Design Code in full to understand Bewdley's design expectations.
2. Use this Preface to reference the updated Local Plan, latest NPPF, BNG requirements, and LNRS.
3. Ensure proposals demonstrate compliance with both the Design Code principles and the updated strategic policy context.

Bewdley Design Code Review

The Bewdley Design Code cites policies from;

- Core Strategy (2006-2026) – particularly Policy CP03 (Delivering Design Quality), CP11 (Quality of the Historic Environment) and CP14 (Providing Opportunities for Biodiversity and Geodiversity).
- Site Allocations and Policies DPD (2013) – For development management detail.

However, both of these have been replaced by the Wyre Forest Local Plan (2016-2036). The new plan consolidates and updates the policy framework, meaning the Design Code’s policy cross-references are now out of date and need aligning with the current Local Plan policies.

Relevant updated policies in the Wyre Forest Local Plan (Adopted 2022)

The following adopted Local Plan policies now cover the themes that the Design Code discusses:

Design Code Theme	Old Policy Reference	Updated Local Plan (2022) Equivalent
High quality design and character	CP03	Policy SP.20 and DM.24 Quality Design and Local Distinctiveness
Historic environment	CP11	Policy SP.21 - Historic Environment DM.23 Safeguarding the Historic Environment
Green infrastructure and biodiversity	CP14	Policy SP.28 – Green Infrastructure Policy SP.23 – Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity
Climate change and sustainable construction	CP02	Policy SP.37 - Renewable and Low Carbon Energy
Landscape and setting of Bewdley	CP12/ SAL.UP5	Policy SP.22 - Landscape Character Policy DM.26 - Landscaping and Boundary Treatment
Flood risk and water management	CP02 / SAL.CC7	Policy SP.31 - Flood Risk Management
Transport, parking and connectivity	CP07 / SAL.CC1	Policy SP.27 – Transport and Accessibility in Wyre Forest

Biodiversity Net Gain

Applicants must now demonstrate BNG compliance where BNG applies. Bewdley's Design Code should refer to biodiversity statements and indicate expectations for on-site provision, off-site options and how to use the metric – or where applicants may rely on statutory credits. This is a change from pre-BNG guidance when the Design Code was written.

The Design code should also signpost the Worcestershire LNRS and county/local habitat mapping so that proposals contributing BNG or habitat gain target the locations and habitat types that deliver the most value locally. The LNRS will be a material consideration in the decision making process.

Recommended updates:

- Replace all Core Strategy and DPD references with the equivalent 2022 Local Plan Policies (see table above).
- Add a brief note at the start of the Design Code such as:

'Note on policy context: The Wyre Forest Local Plan (2016-2036) adopted April 2022, is now the statutory development plan for the district and replaces the previous Core Strategy (2006-2026) and Site Allocations and Policies DPD. All references in this Design Code should be read in conjunction with the equivalent policies in the adopted Local Plan'

- Update Section 2 or the introductory policy context to summarise the key local plan design and heritage policies.
- Check conformity with the NPPF (as updated in 2025) and, where relevant, insert new references to:
 - NPPF Chapter 12 – Achieving well designed places
 - NPPF Chapter 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
 - NPPF Chapter 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change.
- *Include a section on Biodiversity Net Gain and signpost the Worcestershire LNRS.*

Summary

The Bewdley Design Code continues to provide a valuable and locally distinctive framework for managing change within Bewdley. Its general approach remains consistent with the overall aims of the Wyre Forest Local Plan (adopted 2022) and the national Planning Policy Framework. However, several elements now require updating to ensure full policy alignment and ongoing relevance:

1. Policy context: The Design Code still refers to the superseded Wyre Forest Core Strategy (2006-2026) and associated Development Management Policies. These should be replaced with references to the Wyre Forest Local Plan (2016-2036) as discussed previously.
2. National policy changes: Since the Design Code's publication, the NPPF has been revised, and Biodiversity Net Gain has become a statutory requirement. The code should be updated to include explicit guidance on BNG delivery (minimum 10% gain, 30-year management) and cross reference the Worcestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) to ensure ecological enhancements are targeted effectively.
3. Climate resilience and sustainable design: The updated NPPF and Local Plan place greater emphasis on climate change, adaptation, sustainable drainage, low-carbon design, and active travel. These principles should be incorporated into the Code's guidance on layout, landscape, design and infrastructure.

Overall, while the spatial principles and design guidance remain robust and locally appropriate, the Bewdley Design Code would benefit from a short, targeted addendum or minor revision to:

- Update policy references to the adopted Wyre Forest Local Plan (2022)
- Incorporate new statutory and national policy requirements (BNG, LNRS, climate resilience, EV infrastructure)
- Confirm its continued conformity with the latest NPPF

AECOM

Bewdley Neighbourhood Plan

Design Code Document

August 2020



Quality information

Document name	Ref	Prepared for	Prepared by	Date	Reviewed by
Bewdley Neighbourhood Plan Design Code	DR-10503	Bewdley Town Council	Lucy Sykes AECOM	06/08/2020	Lee Wood

Document History

Revision	Revision date	Details
01	28/02/2020	Draft report sent to QB for comment
02	31/03/2020	Comments received back from QB
03	15/05/2020	Draft report reviewed by AECOM
04	25/06/2020	Second draft report sent to QB
05	20/07/2020	Final draft sent to Locality
06	06/08/2020	Final signed off. Final report sent to QB and Locality.



Aerial of Bewdley Neighbourhood Plan Area

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Introduction

01

View looking east along High Street

Introduction

Background

Bewdley Town Council is currently in the process of writing and formulating the Bewdley Neighbourhood Plan, a document which will help to shape and to influence development within Bewdley for the period until 2036.

Locality is the national membership network for community organisations that brings local people together to produce neighbourhood plans. Through the Locality framework, the Town Council has approached AECOM to develop design guidance which can be applied across the Neighbourhood Plan area. This Design Codes document will provide guidance and clear design principles for new development to adhere to, helping to protect and enhance the rich, historic character of Bewdley and its assets.

Purpose

The purpose of this Design Code report is to raise an appreciation for Bewdley's existing townscape character, and to use this understanding to provide design guidance which will help to protect the town's identity as it grows in the future. Bewdley has a strong identity given its Conservation Area vernacular and landscaped setting; this report seeks to safeguard these positive aspects of place. It will identify the various character areas of the town, and provide a set of guidance which aligns to the local and national planning policy context, and the ambitions of the Neighbourhood Plan Community Steering Group (NPCSG).

Methodology

The process that was undertaken in order to produce this report was as follows:

- The Town Council appointed AECOM's Design team to produce a Design Code report;
- AECOM representatives attended an inception meeting and walk about in Bewdley with Town Council representatives to define the brief;
- AECOM developed an understanding of the design principles that would protect the heritage setting and character of Bewdley, and produced a draft Design Code report;
- An engagement workshop was held with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to ensure their values were captured in the document;
- After capturing the feedback from the draft report, AECOM issued the final Design Code document.

Study Area

The Design Code report is considered to be applicable across the entirety of the Bewdley Neighbourhood Plan Area. Figure 1 indicates the boundary of the study area.

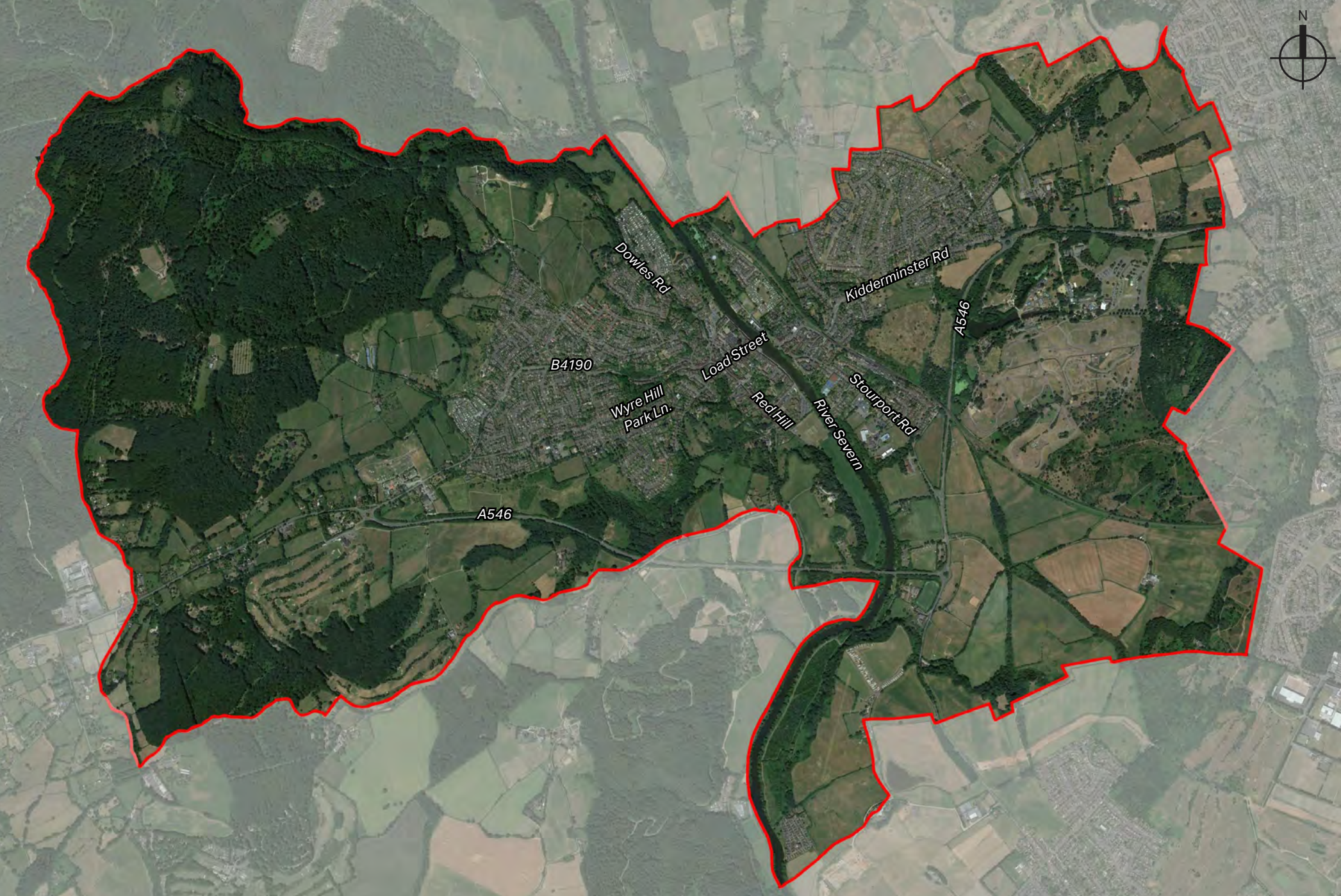


Figure 1: Bewdley Neighbourhood Plan Area





Bewdley Conservation Area

Planning Policy Review

02

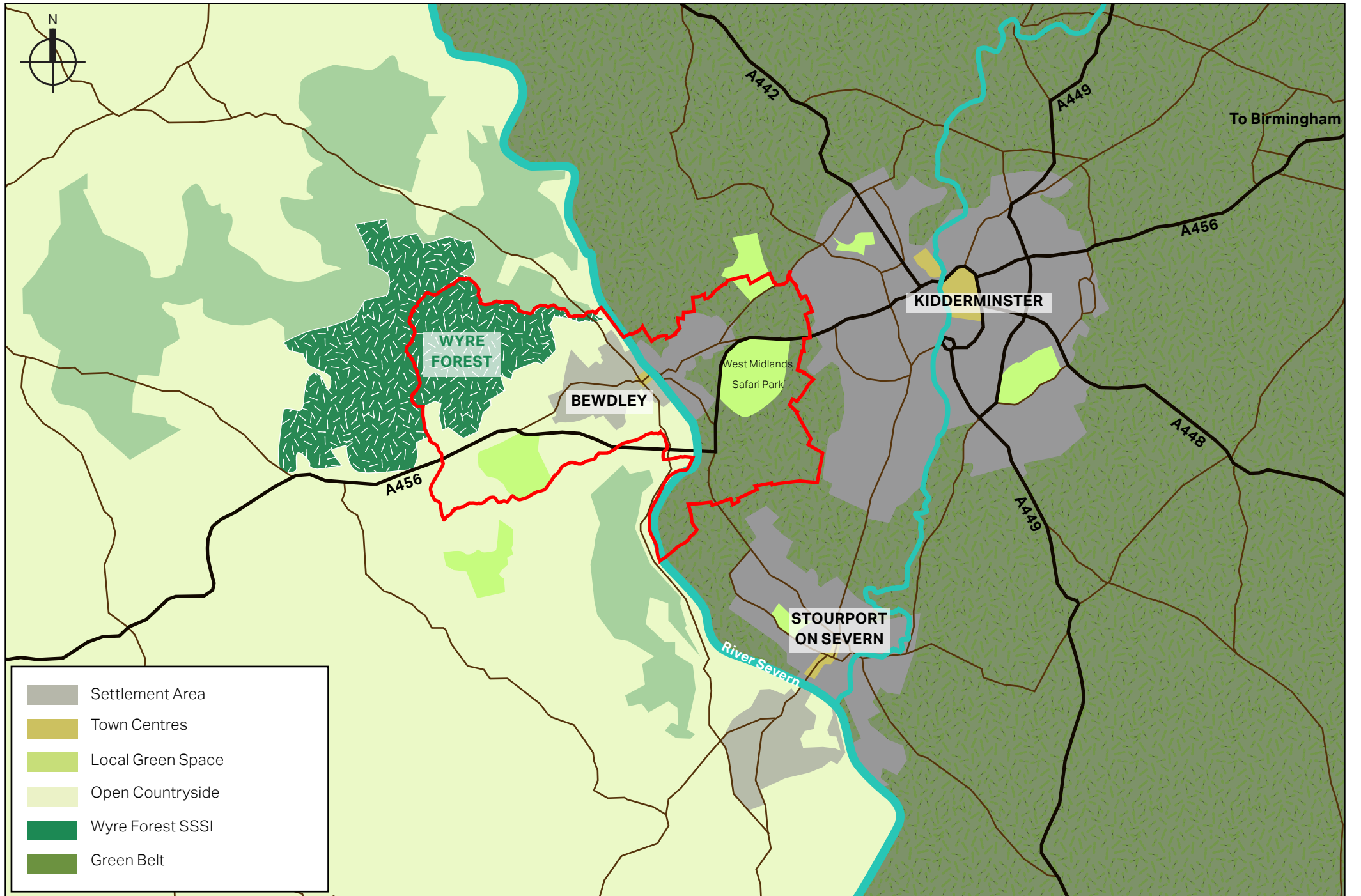


Figure 2: Bewdley wider context

Planning Policy Review

National Planning Policy

Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2019

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) outlines the Government's overarching economic, environmental and social planning policies for England. The policies within this framework apply to the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans, and act as a framework against which decisions are made on planning applications.

The NPPF states that a key objective of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, which will be achieved through three overarching objectives. One of these is an environmental objective, which seeks to contribute to protect and enhance the natural, built and historic environment. The parts of particular relevance to this Design Codes report are:

Part 7 (Ensuring the vitality of town centres)

encourages a positive approach to the growth, management and adaption of town centres, given their role at the heart of local communities.

Part 12 (Achieving well-designed places) states that design policies should be developed with local communities, so that they reflect local aspirations and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of the areas defining characteristics. It tells how Neighbourhood Plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development. It encourages developments which are visually attractive, sympathetic to local character and history including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.

Part 13 (Protecting Green Belt land) outlines the importance the Government attaches to Green Belts, and the role of these designations in preventing urban sprawl and keeping land permanently open.

Part 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment) encourages awareness of the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and recognising the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services.

This national guidance will be adhered to and supported within this Design Code document.

National Design Guide 2019

The National Design Guide sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in principle and in practice. It supports the ambitions of the NPPF to utilise the planning and development process in the creation of high quality places. It is intended to be used by local authorities, applicants and local communities to establish the design expectations of the Government.

It identifies ten characteristics which underpin good design; Context, Identity, Built Form, Movement, Nature, Public Spaces, Uses, Homes and Buildings, Resources and Lifespan. This report will use the principles of this National Design Guidance to help inform the Design Codes.

Local Planning Policy

Wyre Forest District Council Core Strategy 2010

The Council's Core Strategy identifies the development strategy to be delivered in the District in the period to 2026. It establishes the vision for the District, which seeks to retain Bewdley as a thriving market town which meets the local community's needs, preserves its historic character, riverside environment, and opportunities for visitor attraction. Bewdley is recognised as a Market Town.

Policy CP01 (Delivering Sustainable Development Standards) outlines how new development proposals demonstrate a reduced impact on the environment through sensitive design, siting, layout and construction methods.

Policy CP03 (Promoting Transport Choice and Accessibility) expects developments to contribute to new or improved walking and cycling facilities.

Policy CP11 (Quality Design and Local Distinctiveness) tells how development should sensitively connect to the surrounding streets and spaces, and designs should help to improve sustainable transport systems. New development should consider heritage assets. Design should combine active frontages and secure private areas, and address community safety and crime prevention.

Policy CP12 (Landscape Character) recognises the importance of landscape character as an asset within the District. New development must protect and enhance the character of the local landscape, and strengthen it where possible.

Policy CP15 (Regenerating the Waterways) encourages the river to be enhanced as an integral part of the District's green infrastructure.

Emerging Local Plan Pre-Submission Publication (October 2019)

The new Local Plan will replace the current Adopted Core Strategy and the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan. The Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination in April 2020. Although subject to further comment and amendment, this gives an updated understanding of policy ambitions for the District in the future.

Policy 6B (Locating New Development) encourages the effective use and re-use of accessible and available brownfield land, whilst safeguarding and enhancing the open countryside and maintaining the Green Belt.

Policy 6E (Role of Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley as Market Towns) identifies development within Bewdley Conservation Area should preserve and enhance the area.

Policy 7A (Strategic Green Belt Review) identifies the general presumption against inappropriate development within the Green Belt, but also discusses how changes to the Green Belt boundary may be made at Kidderminster and Bewdley to meet development needs.

Policy 9 (Health and Wellbeing) states developments need to have consideration of future occupiers, including elderly people. They need to be high quality and energy efficient, and accessible by active and public transport.

Policy 10B (Town Centre Development) proposals for town centre uses such as residential and recreational will be supported if there is no significant adverse impact on the overall vitality and viability of the existing town centre.

Policy 10C (Sustainable Tourism) encourages development which assists in promoting the waterways as a tourist attraction.

Policy 11A (Quality Design and Local Distinctiveness)

states all development is expected to be of a high quality and should integrate into its surroundings.

Policy 11D (Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity) tells how development likely to have an adverse effect on Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and other irreplaceable features will not be permitted unless under considered circumstances. Proposals for garden boundaries should be permeable to native wildlife.

Policy 11F (Regenerating the Waterways) encourages development which preserves and enhances the historic riverside character of the Bewdley Conservation Area.

Policy 14 (Strategic Green Infrastructure) seeks to retain, protect and enhance Green Infrastructure assets. The adoption of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) is encouraged.

Policy 18B (Residential Infill Development) development is expected to contribute to the existing character of the area in terms of design, density and layout.

Policy 25 (Safeguarding the Green Belt) does not permit development in the Green Belt except in very special circumstances.

Policy 26 (Safeguarding the Historic Environment) encourages repairs, alteration, extensions and conversions of heritage assets to be sympathetically designed with respect to the form, character, and materials of the original heritage asset.

Conservation Area Character Appraisal for Bewdley (Revised January 2015)

Policy 27A (Quality Design and Local Distinctiveness)

expects development to reinforce local distinctiveness and conserve/ enhance heritage assets and landmarks. It should respond to surrounding buildings and distinctive features or qualities, should maximise the street frontage, and have regard to the common building line, historic street pattern and skyline. It provides detailed design requirements for new developments which should be considered as part of the design process.

Policy 27B (Design of Extensions and Alterations)

provides detailed design guidance about how extensions should respond to their local context.

Policy 27C (Landscaping and Boundary Treatment)

provides design guidance for boundary treatments.

Policy 27E (Wyre Forest Waterways) encourages the creation of a high quality riverside environment to support the River Severn so long as this does not harm the character of the Conservation Area or wider landscape.

Policy 34 (Bewdley Site Allocations) identifies the allocated sites within Bewdley, and provides high level design guidance for each. The details of these policies are elaborated within Section 07.

This report provides an in-depth analysis of the Bewdley Conservation Area. It establishes the special architectural characteristics within the designation and can be used as guidance to ensure the preservation and enhancement of this character under new developments. It has been used to underpin the codes written for the Conservation Area within this report. In particular it has informed the understanding of the Built Character Area, described in Section 04.

Worcester County Council Landscape Character Assessment (October 2011)

The Landscape Character Assessment is an important tool in understanding the landscape context around Bewdley. It has informed the descriptions of the Landscape Character Areas and provides high level planning and development guidance specific to each. Given the landscaped context of Bewdley, understanding these character areas is important to ensure its protection. The Landscaped Character Areas, and how these relate to the town, are discussed in more detail in Section 04.

Design Guidance SPD (2015)

The Design Guidance SPD provides detailed advice on the Councils expectations for high quality development and how the design policies should be interpreted. It identifies how designs can respond and complement the existing local character and identity of the District. It provides specific guidance on design within town centres. Where relevant to Bewdley, parts of this guidance have been extracted and incorporated into the codes of this document.

Shop Front Design Guidance for the Historic Environment SPD (June 2004)

This document provides guidance on the design and appearance of shop-fronts within the historic core to help improve the appearance of the street-scene. It describes the architectural principles of shop-front designs which are considered appropriate within Bewdley. It details signage design and other features which affect the street-scape, and has been incorporated within Section 05 of this Design Code report.

Green Infrastructure Strategy (October 2012)

The vision of the Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy is to create a network of GI which will link the three towns of Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley together and to the surrounding countryside by 2026. Developments are expected to contribute to this delivery. Key ambitions for Bewdley include retaining the traditional riverside GI and developing a community orchard. This GI strategy has informed the codes of Section 05 in particular.





Place Assessment

03

View east along Welch Gate/ the B4190

Structure and Evolution

Bewdley was established as a river crossing settlement upon the western bank of the River Severn, mirrored with Wribbenhall on the eastern bank of the river. The two communities are joined by a bridge over the river, and collectively make up the Bewdley Neighbourhood Plan Area. Bewdley Neighbourhood Plan Area now has a population of 9,240 (2011 census data) within 4,234 households.

Early development concentrated on either side of the river crossing. The settlement origins are of a high density, reflecting the traditional street layout and the constraints of the local topography. Many early buildings are orientated towards the river and indicate the early street pattern, which centred on Load Street and Upper Street on the western banks, and Kidderminster Road and Stourport Road on the eastern banks.

The opening of the Staffordshire and Worcester canal impacted local trade along the river, as goods began to bypass the town. The opening of the Severn Valley Railway in 1863 also had an effect on the towns trading.

More recent development has radiated from these historic cores in an east-west direction, in the form of residential estates with a more suburban character. These have expanded the settlement boundary into the surrounding landscape. The old railway line has influenced the sprawl to some degree, with the viaduct crossing over Kidderminster Road creating a pinch-point to development on the eastern banks.

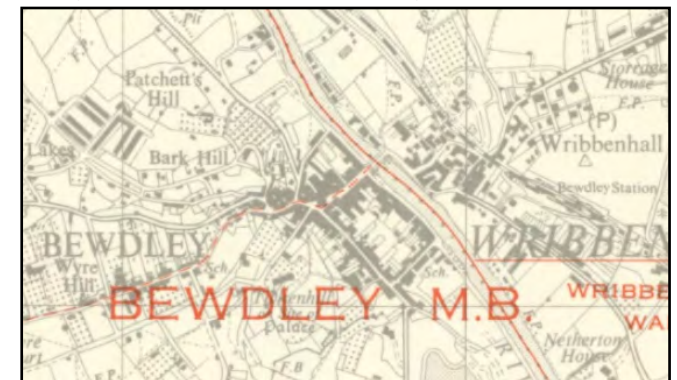
Although still a relatively nucleated settlement, expansion is bringing Bewdley into closer proximity to the settlement edges of Kidderminster in the east and Stourport-on-Severn to the south, both of which are also subject to expansion in their own right.



Bewdley Town Centre 1883 (Scottish National Library)



Bewdley Town Centre 1929 (Scottish National Library)



Bewdley Town Centre 1949 (Scottish National Library)



Figure 3: Bewdley Figure Ground
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Landscape and Open Space

'Bewdley' is derived from 'beau lieu', meaning beautiful place, attributed to both its landscaped setting as well as its historic vernacular. It is located within the context of an unspoilt and undulating countryside.

Various environmental and landscape designations surround the settlement area; the Wyre Forest National Nature Reserve (NNR), which is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in parts, exists in various parcels to the north west of Bewdley. It forms one of the largest ancient oak woodlands in England and is celebrated as a key recreational asset. It is critical to maintain the integrity of this woodland in terms of its biodiversity value and landscape quality, and protect it from development pressures.

The eastern edge of the Neighbourhood Area is designated entirely as Green Belt land. This designation covers the West Midlands Safari Park, and the Devils Spittleful SSSI. This designation is particularly important in maintaining distance and preventing coalescence from Kidderminster, which exists adjacent to the eastern border.

Landscape Character Areas, as defined by Worcestershire County Council, overlap the area. These are discussed in more detail in Section 04.

Recreational areas of open space exist in various forms, and tree cover across the area is high, helping to contribute to its very high landscape value.

- 1- Bark Hill Play Area/Amenity Greenspace
- 2- Riverside North Park
- 3- Millennium Green, Shaw Hedge Road
- 4- Shaw Hedge Road Play Area
- 5- Bewdley Leisure Centre/Bewdley School Sports Field
- 6- Bewdley Cricket Club Pitch
- 7- QEII Gardens
- 8- St Anne's School Playing Field
- 9- Wyre Hill Play Area
- 10- Severnside North Amenity Greenspace
- 11- Bewdley Tennis Club
- 12- Greenacres Lane Amenity Greenspace
- 13- Derwent Drive Amenity Greenspace
- 14- Queensway Amenity Greenspace
- 15- Garden of Rest
- 16- Beales Corner Amenity Greenspace
- 17- Bewdley Bowling Club
- 18- Wharton Park Golf Club



The Devil's Spittleful SSSI (Source: Geograph)



Bewdley Queen Elizabeth Gardens (map reference 7) (Source: Geograph)



Bewdley Cricket Club (map reference 6)

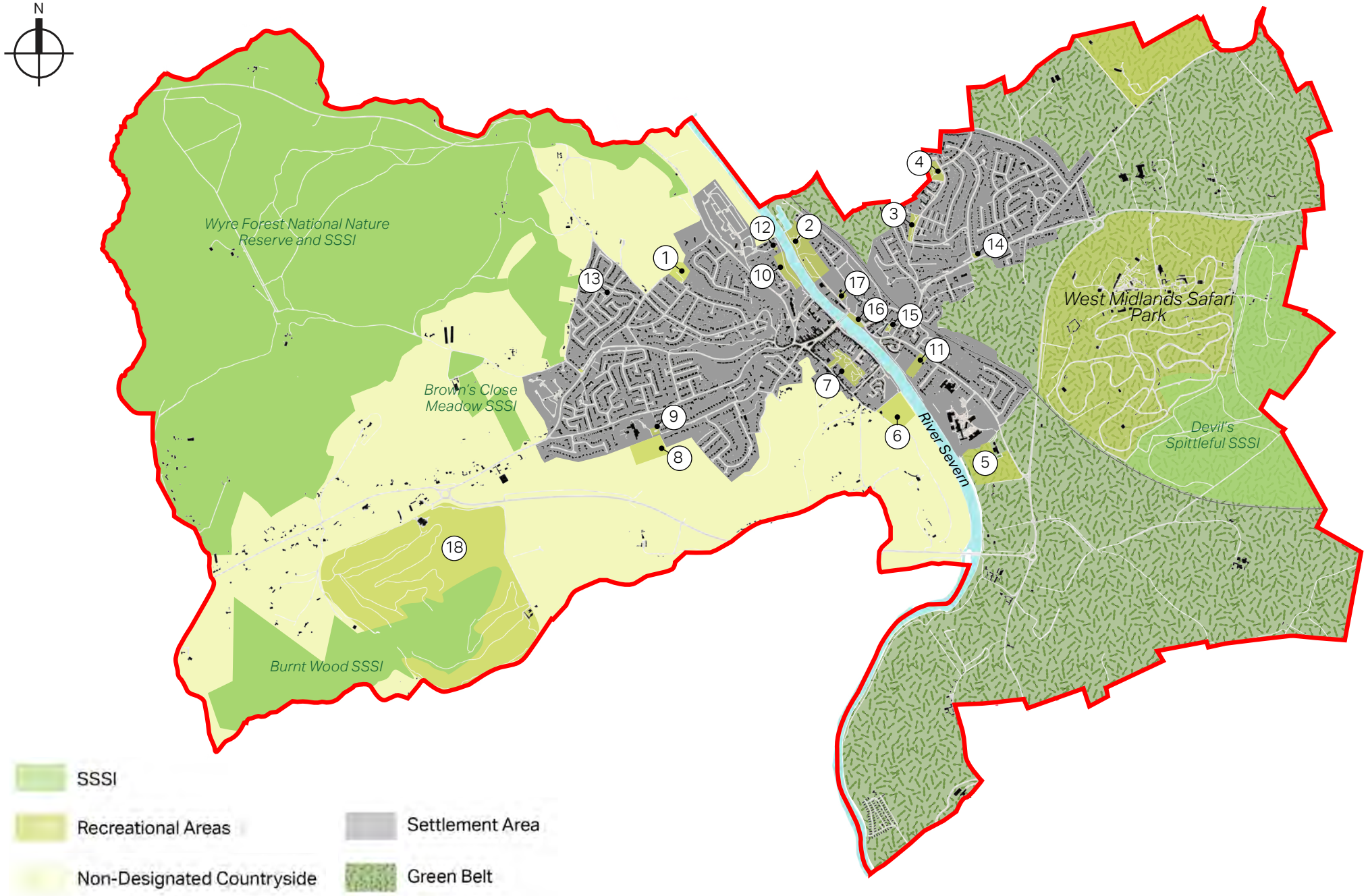


Figure 4: Place Landscape Character Areas / Greenbelt

Flood Risk

The River Severn runs north-south through the town. An attractive landscape and recreational asset, the river has played a major role in the development of the settlement. It offers uninterrupted views along the north and the south of the town out to the surrounding countryside. However, it poses a notable flood risk, and is responsible for the long history of flood events within Bewdley.

Much of the early development of the town is located within the low lying flood plain, in Flood Zone 3. Given the risk, the Environment Agency installed flood defences in 2003 on the western bank to help mitigate the impacts of a flood event. These 'demountable defences' are erected on the western side in the event of a flood, and otherwise have very little impact on the streetscape or views across the river. Flood risk on the eastern side of the river is addressed with a series of temporary barriers.

Flood risk poses a threat to the resilience and character of buildings within Bewdley, and as such will be consideration within the design coding of this document.



View looking south down the River Severn



View looking north up the the River Severn



Bewdley during a flood event (Source: Geograph)

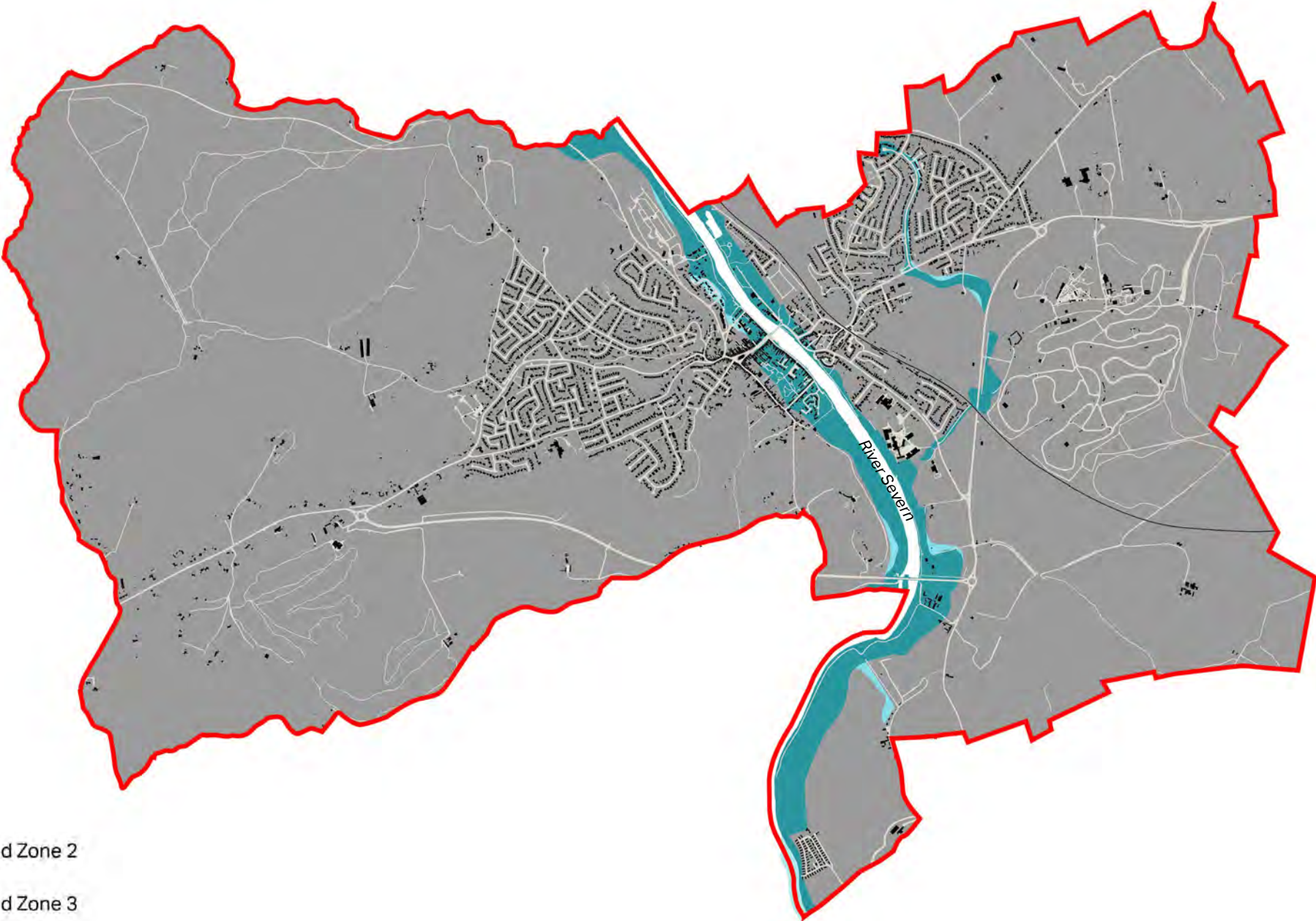


Figure 5: Place Open Space

Movement and Streets

The closest main line railway station to Bewdley is in Kidderminster, 3.5 miles to the east. The Severn Valley heritage railway station no longer functions as a main line railway, and is instead used for tourist and educational purposes.

From Bewdley it is possible to reach Kidderminster, Ludlow, Stourport, Stourbridge and Bridgnorth by bus. There is a level of dependency on the car, which is reflected by the high vehicle presence in the town. Although the A456 provides a by-pass of the settlement to the south, there is a significant amount of traffic use on the B4190 through the town centre. The narrow bridge is especially a congestion point where significant conflict exists between pedestrian and vehicle movement.

Despite the vehicle presence, Bewdley is a highly walkable town as it is compact with a large number of walking routes connecting the town with the surrounding countryside. Public Rights of Way (PRoW) are abundant and important in maintaining this relationship to the landscape. National Cycle Network Route 45 runs through the Neighbourhood Area, connecting to the Wyre Forest.

The movement network can be understood within a street hierarchy as below. Each street has different characteristics and functions. These are discussed in more detail in Section 05 (Movement Network).

- Strategic Routes
- Primary Routes
- Secondary Routes
- Residential Streets
- Rural lanes
- Public Rights of Way (PRoW)



Strategic Road - View of the A456, north from the railway bridge (Source: Geograph)



Residential Route - Park Close



Primary Route - Looking north along Dowles Road



Rural Lane - Looking north west along Dry Mill Lane



Secondary Route - Looking east along Wyre Hill



PRoW - Running north of the Cricket Club

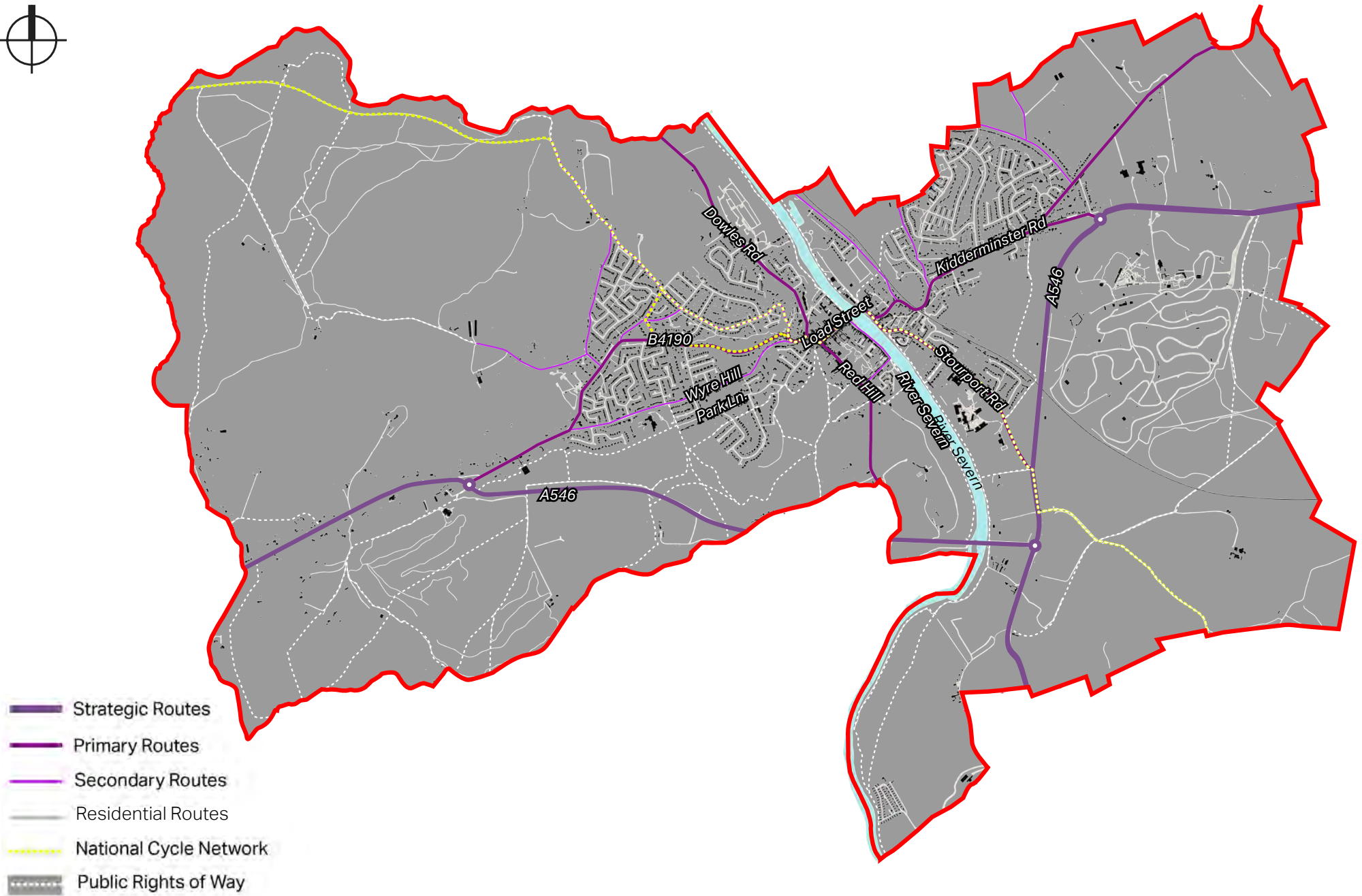


Figure 6: Street Hierarchy and Movement
AECOM

Topography and Views

There is a strong contrast in topography either side of the River Severn providing a sense of natural containment within the core of the neighbourhood area. Hard carboniferous rocks in the west especially create steep valley sides. There is considerable exposure of the roofscape of the Conservation Area because of its position within the river valley. The undulating gradients allow for long and short views across the town and out to the surrounding landscape, which helps to confirm the rurality of the settlement.

The river provides a natural focal point within the landscape, with topography falling towards this channel. It casts views northwards and southwards, and is supported by green infrastructure along the majority of its length through the area.



View looking north along the River Sever

Heritage

Bewdley has an especially rich heritage within its core. The Conservation Area is centred around the parish church of St Anne. It captures the town centre, the riverside, and parts of Wribbenhall on the eastern banks. It is 42.8 hectares in size.

The combination of medieval and Georgian architecture contributes to a strong vernacular, which is reflected in the high number of listed buildings within the town (there are approximately 295 listed within the Neighbourhood Plan, the vast majority of which are within the Conservation Area). These are especially focussed around Load Street, High Street and along the river. Bewdley Bridge is the town's only Grade I listed structure, and was opened in 1801.

The rich heritage of Bewdley has catalysed a strong tourist economy within the town, a key feature of which is the preserved Severn Valley Railway Station. The river still plays an important role in the town centre, as does its proximity to the Wyre Forest. Other local tourist attractions include the West Midlands Safari Park located to the east of the town centre boundary. The attraction of these features and the recreational landscape supports a seasonal tourist economy, and means caravan sites and holiday parks are common within the Neighbourhood.

The strength of vernacular within the Conservation Area is important to retain and protect from development pressures. This Design Code report will identify the features of local vernacular and built form which require safeguarding in order maintain this distinctive Bewdley character.



Bewdley Bridge- a Grade I Listed structure



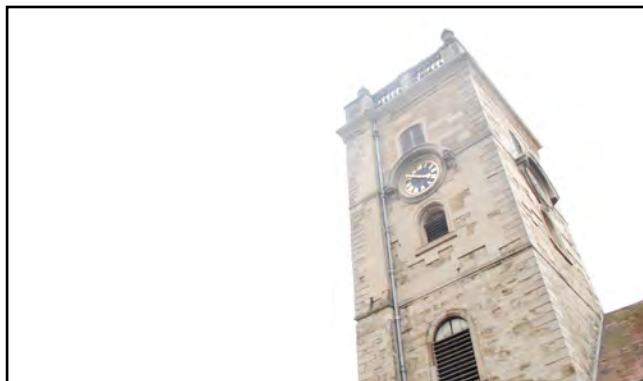
Many of the Georgian and medieval structures are listed



Grade II Listed riverside structures



Severn Valley Railway Station



St Annes Church- a key landmark feature within Bewdley



Severn Valley Railway Line (Source: Geograph)



Figure 7: Listed buildings within the Bewdley Conservation Area



234

ALLER
STATION
HOTEL



Character Areas

04

View east along Westbourne St to the B4190 junction

Character Areas

Bewdley has a rich character, defined by a culmination of its riverside setting, its relationship with the surrounding landscape and topography, and the strength of vernacular within the Conservation Area. However different character areas can be identified across the neighbourhood area, each with their own nuances and design qualities. These are considered in this Section within two types; **Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)** as defined in the Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment (Oct 2011) and **Built Character Areas (BCAs)**, which have been identified as part of this report.

The combination of these will be used to help understand how future development should respond sensitively to both its landscaped and built context. Below is an overview of the existing character of these areas. Understanding these character areas can help to generate design cues for development to adhere to.

Landscape Character Areas

Much of Bewdley's character relies on its landscaped setting. It is therefore crucial that developments respect and respond to the nuances of the local landscape. The eight Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) which surround the town are considered in more detail below. These are identified within the Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment (Oct 2011), which provides an overview of the LCAs typical characteristics and references to high level planning advice where appropriate. In addition to the characteristics, which are defined on a regional scale, this report references how they apply within the local Bewdley context.

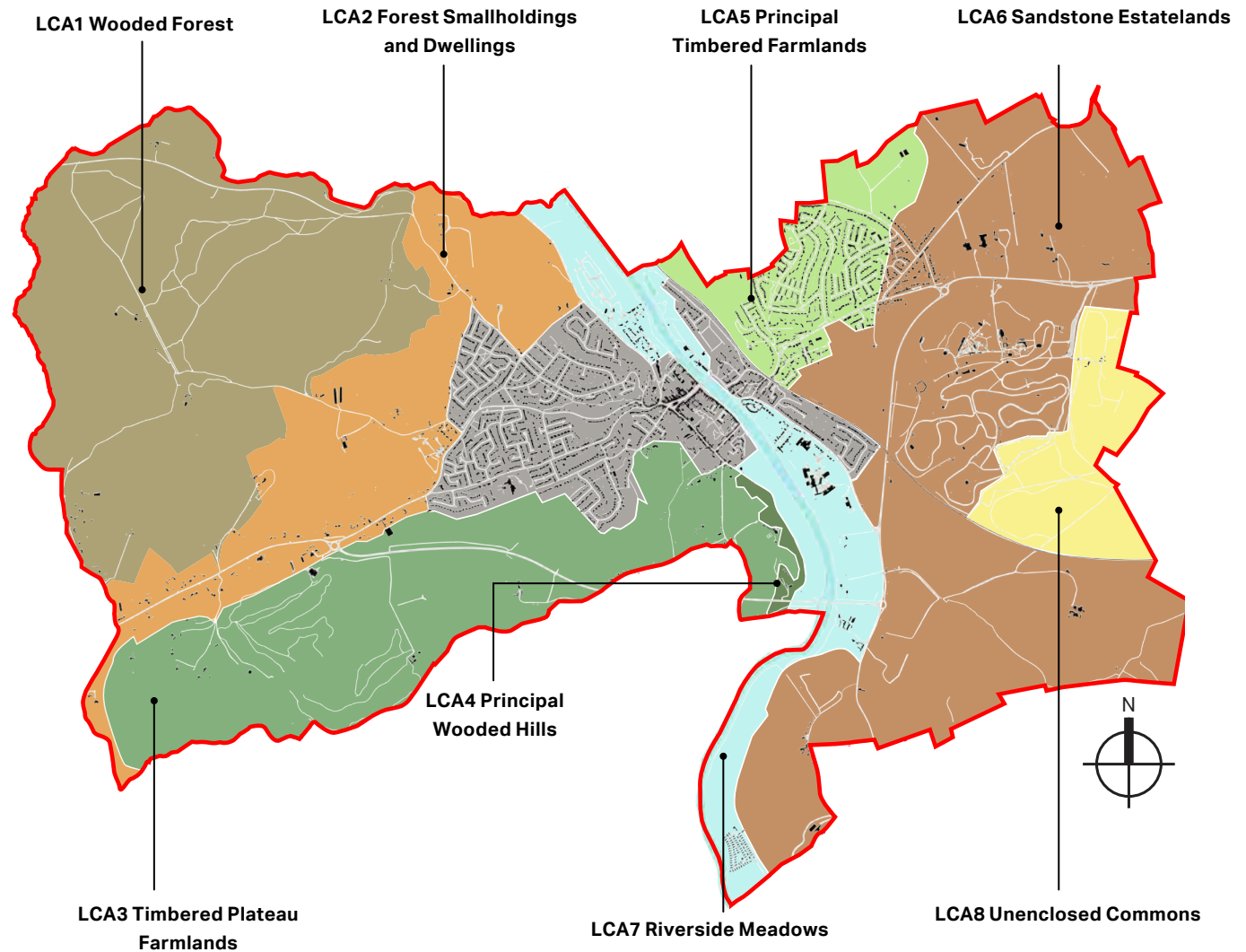


Figure 8: Landscape Character Areas within Bewdley



The Wyre Forest (Source: Geograph)

LCA1 Wooded Forest

The Wooded Forest LCA is defined as a landscape dominated by dense tree cover and woodland of an ancient character, with only short distance views possible given its enclosure. It is a simple and unsettled area, aside from wayside cottages. The mass of woodland provides a sense of remoteness and depth.

Within Bewdley...

The Wyre Forest is a strong feature to the north west of the neighbourhood area, and is covered by this LCA. The ancient woodland sites are well protected, and given the areas protection as a NNR SSSI it is unlikely to be subject to inappropriate development which would require design guidance. Urban influences should, however, be avoided where possible. Extensions and alterations of existing buildings need to have due regard to their setting in this sensitive area.



Tanners Hill (Source: Geograph)

LCA2 Forest Smallholdings and Dwellings

An intimate, densely settled landscape characterised by strings of wayside cottages and smallholdings. Key characteristics include hedgerow boundaries, an intricate network of narrow, winding lanes, and a distinctive building style of small cottages with brick or stone.

There is a random, opportunistic nature to the development pattern in this area, which is structured by tree cover and hedgerow. The rustic nature of the small scale plots and the relationship to open space is at risk from development and infilling. The distinctive, small scale, settled, rural character should be conserved. Guidelines include conserving the narrow winding lanes, enhancing the tree cover and the hedgerow, and conserving field enclosure.

Within Bewdley...

The Forest Smallholdings Landscape Character abuts the northern edge of Bewdley settlement boundary, and separates the settlement edge from the Wyre Forest. It is therefore an important landscape buffer between the urban and natural landscape, and needs to sensitively reflect this relationship. The transition between the built and natural environment needs to be well considered and sensitively executed. There are clear parcels of land with hedgerow definition, and efforts should be made to retain these boundary distinctions.



Aerial view of Snuffmill Pond (Source: Bing Maps)

LCA3 Timbered Plateau Farmlands

This character area is defined as a mixed farming landscape of hedged fields, scattered farms, woods and wooded valleys. The varied landform creates a sequence of visual perspectives. There is an ancient wooded character, with a dominant woodland pattern of linear woodland along streams.

The key elements of the landscape are topography and woodland, and filtered views. Guidelines include promoting coalescence of fragmented woodland, promoting woodland planting, conserving the pattern of hedgerows and infilling gaps in tree cover along the watercourses.

Within Bewdley...

The Timbered Plateau Farmlands relates to land between the settlement edge and the A456. There are various PRoW which permeate this space, which also serves a recreational function given the presence of the golf course and sports pitches. Whilst some SSSI protection exists, this is quite a socialised natural space. The woodland cover and trees help to contain the settlement and provides a degree of buffering against the A456. Long views and this wooded context should be protected, whilst also enabling opportunities for public enjoyment of this space.



Views towards the Principal Wooded Hills

LCA4 Principal Wooded Hills

The Principal Wooded Hills account for land alongside the river. Across the region it is described as an upstanding, wooded landscape with a sloping topography often on the edge of higher ground. Irregularly shaped ancient woodlands and wooded streams interlock with hedged fields.

Within Bewdley...

In Bewdley this Landscape Character Area exists as only a small slither of land which follows the western bank of the river in the south. Given the minor presence of this LCA, there is unlikely opportunity for development to respond to its particular features.



View of Crundalls Lane on the settlement edge (Source: Bing Maps)

LCA5 Principal Timbered Farmlands

The description of the wider LCA is one of a small to medium scale wooded, agricultural landscape with filtered views through densely scattered hedgerow trees. It is a complex and intimate landscape with frequent wayside dwellings and farmsteads.

Within Bewdley...

This LCA has been developed beyond its description within the Neighbourhood area and currently comprises a developed residential estate. There is permeating public and private greenspace and some maintenance of tree lines.



West Midlands Safari Park (Source: Geograph)

LCA6 Sandstone Estatelands

An open, rolling landscape which is characterised by an ordered pattern of large arable fields, straight roads and state plantations. Fields are typically defined with straight thorn edges which confirm this functional landscape. Isolated brick farmsteads are present along with a cluster of wayside dwellings. These areas are primarily arable in land use, and represent a planned enclosure pattern.

Within Bewdley...

The Sandstone Estatelands is an important area in maintaining the separation between Bewdley and the Kidderminster settlement boundary. It exists to the east of the neighbourhood plan area and captures the West Midlands Safari Park, which benefits from a landscaped setting. The A456 cuts through this LCA which is otherwise largely undeveloped.

It is important to maintain this as an area of separation and to avoid coalescence with Kidderminster, and also to preserve the setting of the Safari Park. The area is protected by Green Belt designation so inappropriate development is unlikely to be acceptable.



Landscape character along the Riverside Meadow

LCA7 Riverside Meadows

A linear river landscape associated with a flat, generally well-defined floodplain. It is characterised by a meandering, tree-lined river which is flanked by meadows and across a low lying topography. Tree cover consists of linear tree belts along ditches, watercourse and in hedgerows. These landscapes accommodate a degree of flooding.

Guidance seeks to retain the unity of the linear form of these landscapes, conserve continuous tree cover along hedgelines, and avoiding the drainage of waterside meadows.

Within Bewdley....

The River Severn and land along its channel is captured within this LCA. There is a focus within Bewdley to enhance the riverside environment whilst not undermining the character of the Conservation Area or landscaped setting. A balanced approach will therefore be required for this area to assimilate the natural and built environment.



Aerial view of the Unenclosed Commons (Source: Bing Maps)

LCA8 Unenclosed Commons

The overriding characteristic of this LCA is the lack of enclosure with a sense of wilderness. There is often a high nature conservation value due to the unimproved and scrub-like status of this area. The settlements associated with commons are often much sought after and subject to enlargement and remodelling. There is risk of developing a suburban character as a result. It is important that the integrity of small communities is retained and preserved.

Given the legislation relating to common land it is unlikely that the erection of new dwellings will be acceptable. Proposals for infill development in the gardens/ plots associated would result in unacceptable increase in density, damaging the settlement pattern by diluting the ad-hoc, irregular, spatial distribution.

Within Bewdley....

Although adjacent to the settlement edge of Kidderminster, this area within Bewdley has a remote atmosphere. It is bordered by the railway line and the safari park, and is expansive with woodland and open grassland, with little boundaries within. A balanced approach will therefore be required for this area to assimilate the natural and built environment.

Sensitivity

The Landscape Sensitivity map shows the potential impact of developments within the neighbourhood area. The coverage of high and medium sensitivity areas within Bewdley highlights the importance of having design guidance which can be adopted so as to not jeopardise this important landscape setting. It will therefore be important for development to respect guidance in these areas of sensitivity.

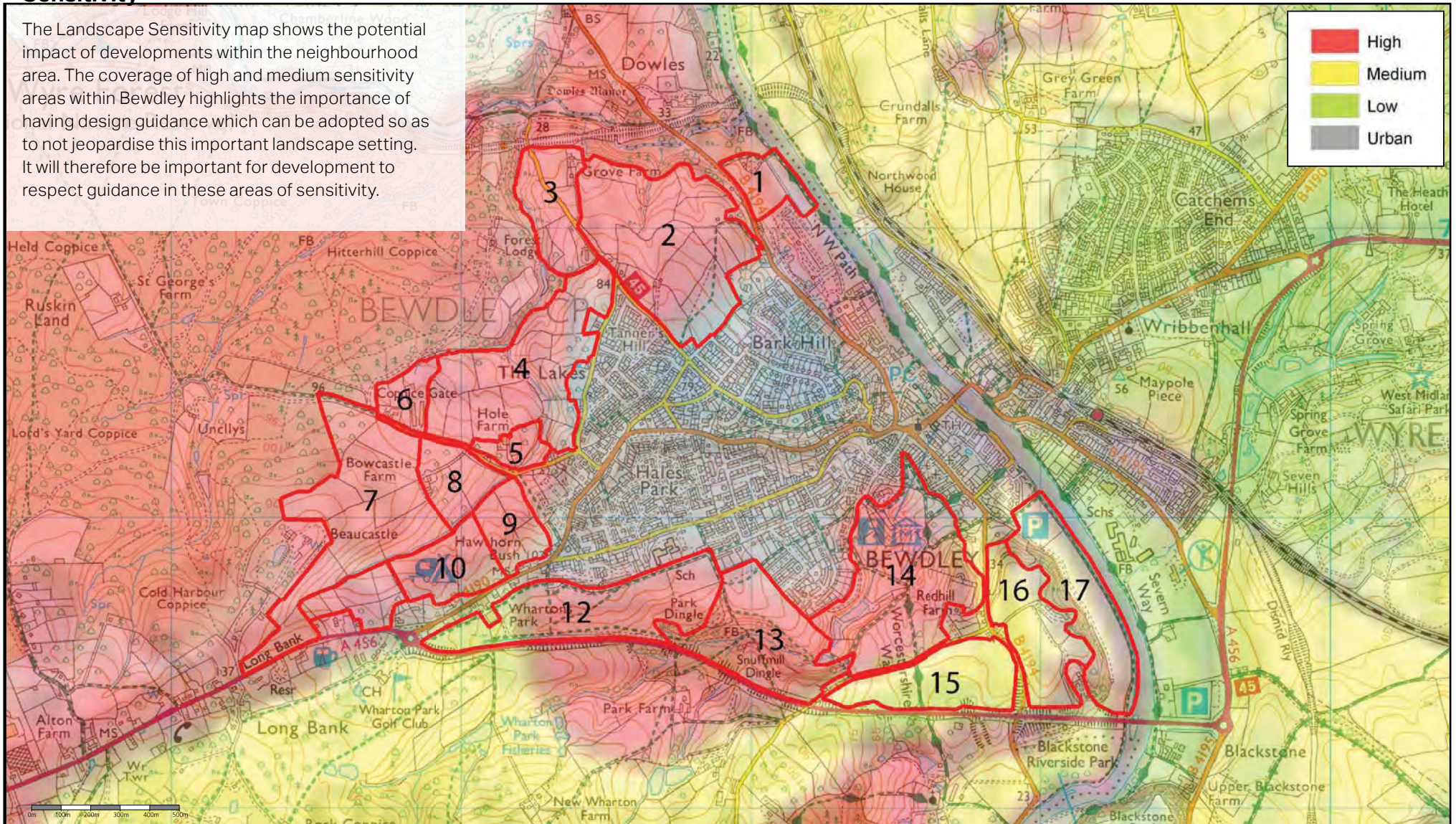


Figure 9: Landscape Sensitivity Map- Parcels Plan (Bewdley Local Green Space Review)

Built Character Areas

In addition to the LCAs, it is valuable to also define the urban characteristics of the Neighbourhood area. The WCC Landscape Character Assessment (Oct 2011) considers the settlement area under one, 'Urban' category. This report has further defined the 'Urban' into various Built Character Areas, which captures the different building styles and vernaculars within the settlement. This will help to understand the nuances of the built environment with more clarity, which will inform the guidance of the codes.

The Built Character Areas (BCAs) include:

- **BCA1- Conservation Area**
- **BCA2- Suburban Development**
- **BCA3- Outlying Dwellings and Farmsteads**

BCA1 Conservation Area



BCA2 Suburban Development



BCA3 Outlying Dwellings and Farmsteads

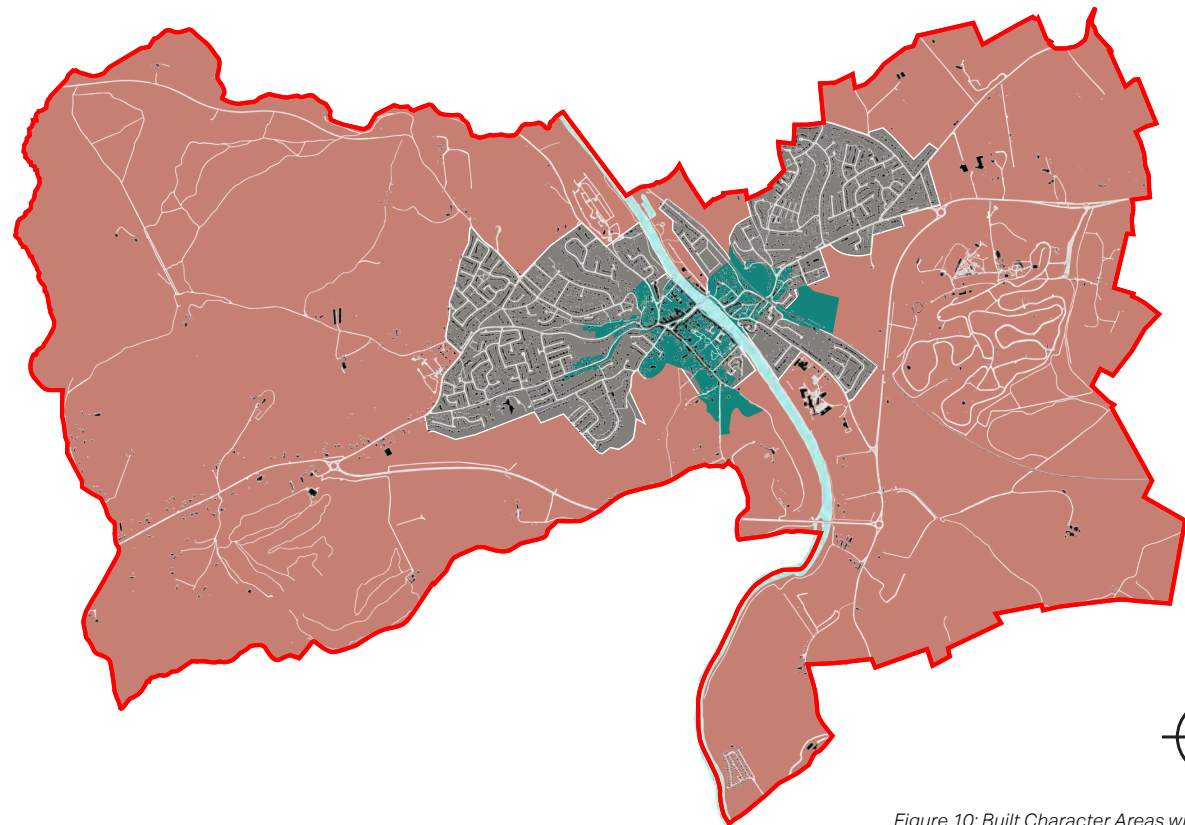


Figure 10: Built Character Areas within Bewdley

BCA1- Conservation Area

The Conservation Area comprises the historic core of the town and its adjoining landscape features. Much of the built environment is protected through its Conservation Area status and the designations of listed buildings which are in abundance. Design guidance will help to ensure preservation of its unique character. Important architectural features are explained and noted below.

Density and Enclosure

The Conservation Area has a close knit relationship to the medieval street pattern. Traditional buildings are high in density and have a continuous building line which follows the curvature of the street network, achieving a continuous sense of enclosure and definition. Building plots on the western side of the river are generally long and narrow, and arranged at right angles to the street.

Whilst the building frontages occupy the perimeter edge of the block, many of the narrow units extend a considerable length to the rear, to a length which is almost out of scale to the frontage seen from the street network. The depth of these units is often underestimated as a result. Such is the plot depth, additional buildings are often present to the rear of those on the perimeter edge, unseen from the highway. Plots are more shallow on the eastern side of the river.

Buildings are predominantly 2-3 storeys high, although Load Street does extend up to 4 storeys in part. This achieves a massing which confirms the town centre as a core within the Neighbourhood Area. Most streets are of equal or greater width to the height of their buildings with the exception of High Street which is narrow and has a high sense of enclosure.

In some cases, units are set back slightly from the street creating a recess in the building line, but often without separation from adjoining units.



1- Continuous building line and 2- typical building height is 2 to 3 storeys



3- Recess in building line exposes gable ends and provides some set back from street



4- Buildings follow the curvature of the medieval street pattern



5- Intimate enclosure of the street



Figure 11: Example of building layout and enclosure within the Conservation Area

Building Style and Materiality

There are three clear building styles within the Conservation Area. The combination of these styles is unique and complementary to the character of the area.

- 1) The predominant architectural style is of the Georgian period, considered to have a 'polite' appearance with plum coloured, well-fired brick and a classically inspired façade. Buildings often have strong symmetry and windows are usually the same width.
- 2) Timber framed buildings which reflect the late medieval to 17th Century origin. These express front facing gables, wooden framing with wooden pegs and jetted upper floors.
- 3) Although less common than the other styles, there are 19th Century and Edwardian buildings present within the Conservation Area. These reflect influences from both the Georgian and Medieval period.



A typical Georgian facade



A typical medieval facade



The relationship between the Georgian and medieval units is critical to the Conservation Area (Source: Geograph)

Roofscape

Given the overhead views offered by the local topography, the roofscape is an important feature of the Conservation Area. Roof ridges typically run parallel to the street, with the exception of some units which have hipped roof ends facing the street.

Chimneys are common throughout and are mostly tall, square or rectangular, and of matching brick to the building. These are often ridge mounted and occur at party divisions. Dormers are also a common feature throughout the area and generally have pitched roofs and lead clad sides. These are typically of a complementary size and scale to the building and, together with the chimneys and narrow frontages, help to achieve vertical rhythm.

In the timber framed medieval units, front facing gables are incorporated into the built form helping to differentiate these buildings from their Georgian neighbours.

The predominant roofing material is a small clay tile, typically darker than the brickwork. Grey slate is also present.



1- Front-facing gable ends



2- Dormers and chimney stacks add rhythm



3- Front-facing pitched roofs create a consistency to the building line and roof-scape.

Windows and Doors

Windows and doors are distributed regularly within the front elevations of the buildings, helping to create a strong sense of rhythm and maintaining the sense of continuity along the street

There is consistency to the door and window openings. Medieval buildings generally have flat headed windows and doors, which are framed by the painted black/ brown timbers of the building frontage, whilst there is classical inspiration to the Georgian buildings which have semi-circular window heads. Window heads are also differentiated with brickwork or stone. In some cases, the windows are recessed with projecting stone or timber cills. The window frames themselves are typically wooden and painted white. Sash windows dominate. Bay windows are sometimes present either on the ground or first floor, and help to enliven the unit whilst respecting the frontage of the street.

Traditional timber doors are common; however there is an attractive habit of painting the front doors a variety of colours. Small porches frequently overhang the door, either as a pitched structure with a slate roof, or a simple flat or curved overhang.



Coloured doors help to establish building identity and personalisation



Porches help to define doorways, whilst steps help to overcome level changes.

Boundary Treatments and Gardens

Given the buildings position along the perimeter of the plot, many of the units front directly onto the street, with very little set back. This leaves little opportunity to adopt front boundary treatments. A small number of steps to the front door help to address level changes and offer some privacy. Traditional railings are also evident to the front of dwellings along High Street, and in other cases red brick walls provide the differentiation between public and private space.

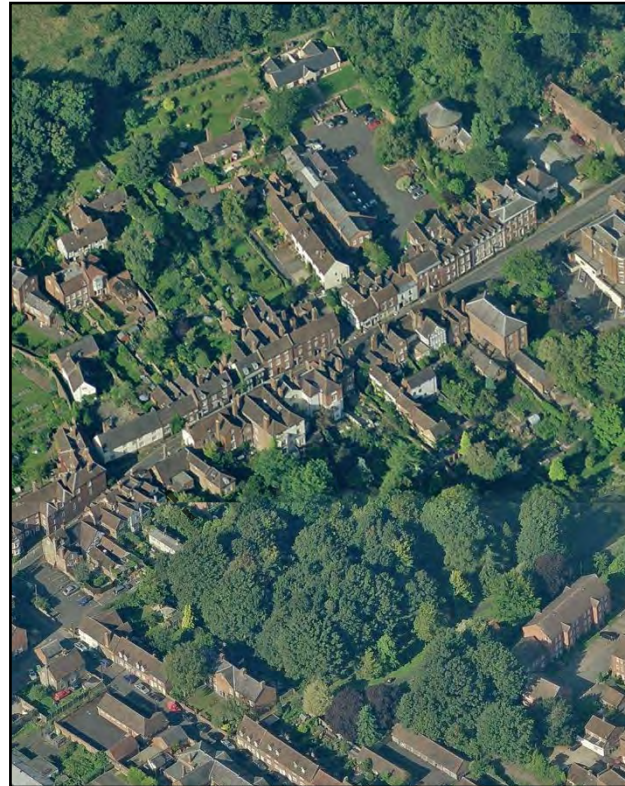
Gardens extend to the rear in narrow plots, and are defined at the end by walls. The length of the plots is considerable and offers space for a variety of functions. Typically, rear gardens are present but these spaces are also used for car parking, extensions of the building, or delivery of infill developments. The length of these plots mean the Conservation Area has a deceptive amount of green space in the form of gardens which are largely hidden.

Where front gardens are present on detached dwellings, they are attractive, traditional and help to establish the context of the building.

Views

Views within the Conservation Area are quite contained given the enclosure of the built environment, the continuous building lines, and the rising topography, which create a close feel. The strength of the Georgian and Medieval vernacular means the views along building lines are consistent and pleasant.

Longer views open up to the edge of the Conservation Area where the buildings become less densely arranged. The riverfront offers pleasant long views out to the countryside.



Rear gardens tend to be long and narrow



Steps offer some separation from the buildings and the street



Iron fencing complements the Georgian facades



Front gardens establish an attractive setting for the buildings where they exist



The adoption of planters can help to enliven the streetscape and offer some boundary

Streetscene and Movement

The contained nature of the street and its enclosure create a pleasant urban environment. Streets are supported with pavements which are narrow and contribute to the intimacy of the area. Pedestrian accessibility to the side and rear of units is achieved through alleyways or side tunnels which permeate the building frontages. Traditional street lighting and planting complements the streets, however there is an abundance of ill-matched street furniture along Load Street which feels cluttered.

Commercial units are concentrated on Load Street, and varying shop frontages activate the street here. There is little consistency to the design of these; some are a high quality and help to enliven the area with a respectful, traditional design whilst others are of a poor quality and undermine the local character. Whilst the spill-out activity of some units is inviting, the lack of consistency is a distraction from the architectural merits of the Conservation Area.

Tarmac is a common surfacing material, although it does not complement the built environment. There are some areas with cobbles, paving and traditional grey slab paving. Severnside North and Severnside South exhibit more traditional setts and paviour blocks which add to local character. Some kerbs are defined with stone edging, but they are mostly pre-cast concrete.



1- Tarmac is common surfacing, whilst 2- paving material is more varied. 3- Cobbles and 4- traditional street lighting help to establish the historic vernacular.



Some stalls can cover the traditional shop front and interrupt the streetscape



Bins can obstruct pedestrian movement

Parking

Given the close relationship to the street, on-plot parking to the front of buildings is not often provided. Instead, courtyard parking to the rear is a common parking solution. The visibility of vehicles along narrow streets detracts from the attractive vernacular and the setting of the traditional units. On-street parking is common along Load Street, Lax Lane, and Wyre Hill which undermines the streetscape of these roads.

Materiality and colours of the area:



On-street parking along Lax Lane



On-street parking along Wyre Hill



White or creams of rendered walls or painted brickwork;



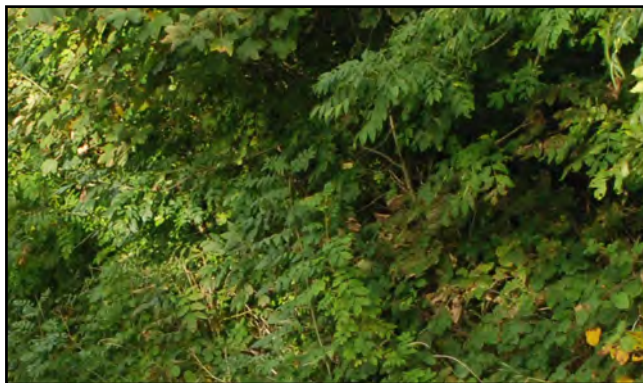
Reddish-plum brickwork of Georgian buildings



Whites of door and window frames



Black/brown timbers and white/cream infilling of Medieval buildings



Greens of grass, shrubs and trees



Reflected colours on the river surface.

BCA2 Suburban Development

The historic centre of the town has become enlarged with suburban development on both sides of the river, principally in an east-west direction. To the west, this mainly dates from the 20th Century, whilst to the east this dates from the 19th Century and 20th Century. The piecemeal nature of the town's growth has resulted in clusters of development with a mixed vernacular; very little homogeneity of style exists across the clusters. Whilst some styles may be more welcomed and appropriate to the area than others, this patchwork of development adds variety to the townscape, and is typical of most settlements in the country. Despite differences, there are some commonalities between these more recent, suburban units.

Building Style, Orientation and Materiality

There is no consistency in terms of building height or densities, rather a mosaic of building styles and types dominate which represent incremental growth over the 20th Century. The character is more modern and less traditional than the Conservation Area. Two storey dwellings with simple pitched roofs fronting the residential streets are the predominant style of the character area, however some bungalows (see [Hornbeam Close](#)) and three storey dwellings (see [Winbrook Road](#)) are evident.

The area is characterised by a suburban arrangement. Buildings are typically detached or semi-detached, although short rows of three to four units do exist (see [Queensway](#), [Langford Court](#)). There are breaks within the building line which contribute to a loose enclosure, and all units are set back from the road network with a front garden. Back gardens are common, but plots do not extend to the same extent as those within the Conservation Area.

Dwellings reflect standard designs seen across the country, and do not particularly reflect any local influences. Materiality, roofing, windows and detailing are consistent with the parcel of development within which the building is located, but generally has little reference to the style of the surrounding units. Varying façade styles contribute to mixed frontages and characters.

Boundary Treatments and Gardens

Dwellings predominantly include front gardens and are set back from the residential street. A mixture of boundary treatments help to define public and private space. Many front gardens are landscaped or accommodate on-plot parking with driveways, contributing to an open, spacious and suburban character. Examples of fencing and modern built brick walls undermine the otherwise rural characteristics of the Neighbourhood Plan area, especially on the settlement edge where development affronts the surrounding landscape.

Streetscene and Parking

Development parcels are low density and arranged in a cul-de-sac layout, orientated around the road which serves them. Tarmacked streets and pre-cast concrete kerb lines are the norm. Whilst functional, this contributes little to the environmental quality to the place. Such materiality reinforces the street as a functional movement network, rather than having placemaking qualities in its own right.

The streets are relatively wide and suburban in character compared to those within the Conservation Area. Double-sided pavements, open-plan front gardens and driveways create a spacious feel. Some pedestrian linkages (sometimes the remnants of pre-existing footpaths) exist between the cul-de-sacs, however many result in a termination of the road and do little to encourage permeability between parcels.



Kidderminster Road



Brook Vale



Sabrina Drive

BCA3 Outlying Dwellings and Farmsteads

Also common within Bewdley are isolated units, typically of an agricultural nature or traditional character. This BCA is defined by its landscaped setting and helps to confirm the rurality of the settlement with wayside farmsteads and traditional buildings. The buildings bleed out into the surrounding countryside and help the transition from the landscaped environment to the built environment.

Building Style, Orientation and Materiality

These buildings generally have larger plot sizes and tend to exist on the settlement edge or along the narrow lane network. They are larger units and exist in a low density arrangement, mainly as detached brick farmsteads. They dot the landscape and the narrow lanes.

Boundary Treatments and Gardens

Units are contained within their plots with a vegetated boundary of hedgerow, trees or landscaping. In some instances, agricultural practices surround the unit and define a larger plot size. There is a very close relationship between the buildings and the landscape which surrounds it.

Streetscene and Parking

The narrow lanes and long access tracks serve these buildings, although some are present on the primary route network as the settlement has grown around their location. Parking is usually provided on plot but generally obscured by boundary treatments or due to the size of the plot.



View towards an outlying building from Kidderminster Road



Narrow access routes serve many of the buildings within this Character Area





Engagement

05

Turning the corner on Kidderminster Road

Engagement

AECOM has liaised with Bewdley Town Council NPCSG throughout the production of this Design Code document. Following a Site Visit to Bewdley with the NPCSG, AECOM led an engagement session on 4th March 2020. This was a platform to share the work undertaken on the Design Code Document to date. A draft version of the document was distributed prior to the workshop taking place.

On the day, AECOM representatives delivered a presentation which was followed by an open discussion with the NPCSG to help confirm certain elements of the document. The narrative of the document and both the landscape and built character areas were discussed to ensure that the group agreed with the approach undertaken. The group then identified whether any codes should be strengthened to achieve the aims of the Neighbourhood Plan. This exercise helped AECOM to understand further the priorities of the NPCSG and made additions into the second draft document accordingly. It was also a good opportunity for AECOM to explain the process of applying and using the Design Code Document once it had been completed.





Overdale
House
25m





The roofscape of Bewdley Conservation Area

Design Codes

05

Spatial Areas for Coding

The neighbourhood area has been divided into various Landscape and Built Character Areas. The previous section discussed the defining traits of these areas as currently exist.

The Spatial Areas for Coding are slightly different to the LCA and BCA. The purpose of identifying the Spatial Areas is to provide high level guidance which can be applied to each of these areas, based on the understanding gathered from the landscape and built character analysis. Future development will need to consider the Spatial Areas and respond with a design accordingly which is sensitive to the area it is located.

Each Spatial Area can be characterised by different development pressures.

A) Conservation Area: The main threats to the Conservation Area are an erosion of the setting and context of its heritage assets and historic character. Codes will seek to preserve this character and ensure the historic vernacular is protected.

B) Riverside Corridor: The Riverside is the area most subject to flood risk within Bewdley. Codes for this area will have regard to flood risk and seek to maintain the attractiveness and accessibility of the riverside setting.

C) Residential Areas: The priority for the Residential area is to secure high-quality residential design within the suburban extensions to Bewdley. Coding will encourage the adoption of best practice design principals whilst also allowing for architectural flexibility.

D) Forest Edge: Development within the Forest Edge Spatial Area has the potential to erode the setting of the Wyre Forest. Codes will help protect this sensitive landscape from inappropriate development.

E) South- west Plateau: The South- west Plateau area accounts for land between the settlement edge and the strategic road network. Codes will protect the recreational value of this space and ensure any development acknowledges its relationship to the A456.

F) Kidderminster Gap: The Kidderminster Gap is Green Belt land and is important in maintaining separation between the Bewdley and Kidderminster settlement areas. Codes will seek to protect the openness of this area.

The Codes

The design codes are a set of best practice design guidance which development should seek to respond to. Not all codes are relevant to all areas; some codes relate specifically to different Spatial Areas. The matrix table helps to distinguish which codes apply to which Spatial Area, and which apply across the entirety of the neighbourhood area. This allows for a nuanced application of the codes which addresses the development opportunities and pressures unique to each area. A matrix table (Table 1) identifies where each code should be applied to each character area.

The design codes are separated into themes to enable their application. The codes of this section have been informed by the local policy context, baseline understanding of Bewdley, appreciation of the LCAs and BCAs, and a range of other supporting documentation which is signposted. The themes include;

- Structure and Layout
- Built Form
- Heritage Assets
- Site Edges
- Views
- Water and Drainage
- Movement Network
- Parking
- Shop Frontages
- Boundary Treatments
- Streetscene
- Green- Blue Infrastructure
- Building Material
- Eco- Friendly Design

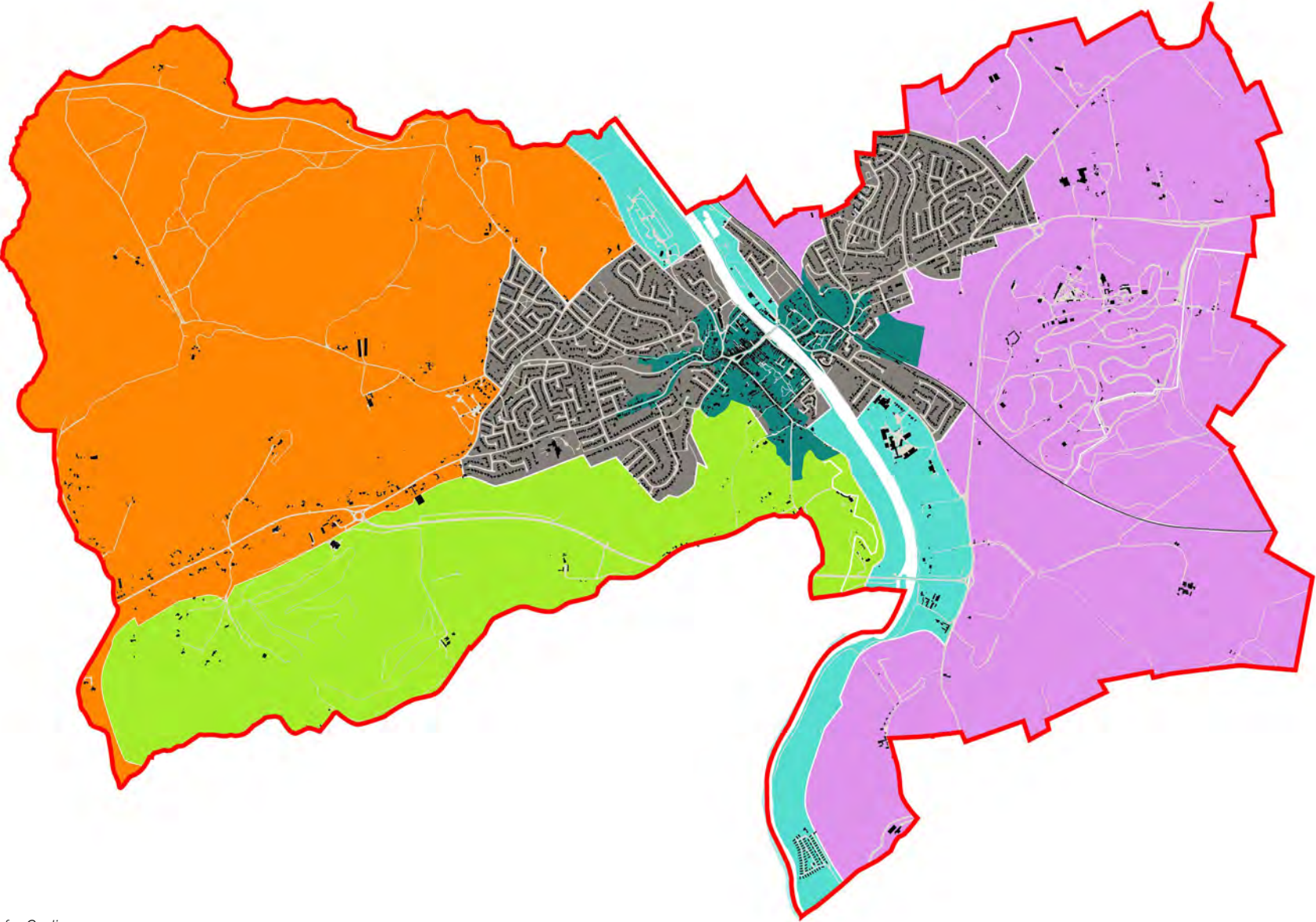


Figure 12: Spatial Areas for Coding

Forest Edge

South-west Plateau

Residential Area

Riverside Corridor

Conservation Area

Kidderminster Gap

Code Theme	Code Reference	Conservation Area	Riverside Corridor	Residential Area	Forest Edge	South-West Plateau	Kidderminster Gap
Structure and Layout (SL)	Code SL1 Structure and Layout	X	X	X	X	X	X
Built Form (BF)	Code BF1 Built Form	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Code BF2 Conservation Area	X	X	-	-	-	-
	Code BF3 Conservation Area	X	X	X	X	X	X
Heritage Assets (HA)	Code HA1 Heritage Assets	X	X	X	X	X	X
Site Edges (SE)	Code SE1 Landscaped Edges	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Code SE2 Strategic Road Screening	-	X	X	-	X	X
	Code SE3 Built Edges	X	X	X	X	X	X
Views (VEW)	Code VE1 Views	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Code VE2 Forest Views	-	-	-	-	X	-
	Code VE3 River Views	X	X	X	-	-	-
Water and Drainage (WD)	Code WD1 Water and Drainage	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Code WD2 Flood Resilient Housing	X	X	X	-	-	-
Movement Network (MN)	Code MN1 All Streets	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Code MN2 Primary Routes	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Code MN3 Primary Routes (Town Centre)	X	X	-	-	-	-
	Code MN4 Secondary Routes	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Code MN5 Residential Streets	-	-	X	-	-	-
	Code MN6 Rural Lanes	-	-	-	X	X	X
Parking PK	Code PK1 Parking	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Code PK2 Courtyard	X	X	X	-	-	-
	Code PK3 On-Plot Parking	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Code PK4 On-Street Parking	X	X	X	-	-	-
	Code PK5 Cycle Parking	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Code PK6 Visitor Cycle Parking	X	X	-	-	-	-

Table 1: When to use the codes

Code Theme	Code Reference	Conservation Area	Riverside Corridor	Residential Area	Forest Edge	South-West Plateau	Kidderminster Gap
Shop Frontages (SF)	Code SF1 Shop Frontages	X	X	-	-	-	-
Boundary Treatments (BT)	Code BT1 Boundary Treatments	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Code BT2 Landscaped Edges	-	-	-	X	X	X
	Code BT3 Urban Edges	-	-	X	-	-	-
	Code BT4 Boundary Treatments (Cons. Area)	X	X	-	-	-	-
Streetscene (ST)	Code ST1 Streetscene	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Code ST2 Streetscene (Cons. Area)	X	X	-	-	-	-
Green-Blue Infrastructure	Code GB1 Green-Blue Infrastructure	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Code GB2 Biodiversity	X	X	X	X	X	X
Building Material (BM)	Code BM1 Building Material	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Code BM2 Conservation Area Materiality	X	X	-	-	-	-
Eco-Friendly Design (EF)	Code EF1 Eco-Friendly Design	X	X	X	X	X	X

Structure and Layout (SL)

Code SL1 Structure and Layout

There is huge variety in building form and vernacular across the Neighbourhood Area. The intention is not to create streets of homogeneity, but to ensure diversity is achieved in a well-considered way, whilst avoiding pastiche replications of styles.

- Buildings should be aligned along the street with their main façade and entrance facing it. Building line should be responsive to the existing units, and respect the existing building lines, plot widths and setbacks.
- Diversity of building type is typical within the settlement area. Where mixed development exists, a variety of sympathetic styles is encouraged, so long as this has a positive relationship to the surrounding units.
- Respond to the existing development pattern of its proximity with regards to existing block sizes, layout and structures.
- Be arranged in a legible layout which is permeable and complementary to the arrangement of adjoining development.
- The original boundary lines of pastures and the road network should seek to be retained
- Development on the settlement edges should be open, small scale, visually permeable, and unobtrusive in order to respect its surrounding context. It should avoid standardisation of layout and reflect organic, ad-hoc growth. Clustered groups of new housing are not considered to be appropriate.
- Residential development should seek to create sustainable places which foster a sense of community rather than large scale estates.
- Development should be visually attractive and of a robust structure. It should be built to stand the test of time, with sufficient living space both indoors and outdoors for comfortable habitation.
- Buildings should orientate to have a positive relationship with the river and not obstruct access for all to enjoy it as a corridor. Ideally development would be set back from the river edge. The siting, configuration and orientation of buildings must optimise views of the River with natural surveillance, and should encourage access to, from and along the water.
- Building frontages should offer natural surveillance to the street network and any areas of public space.
- Street widths should have an appropriate response to the scale of the adjacent buildings.



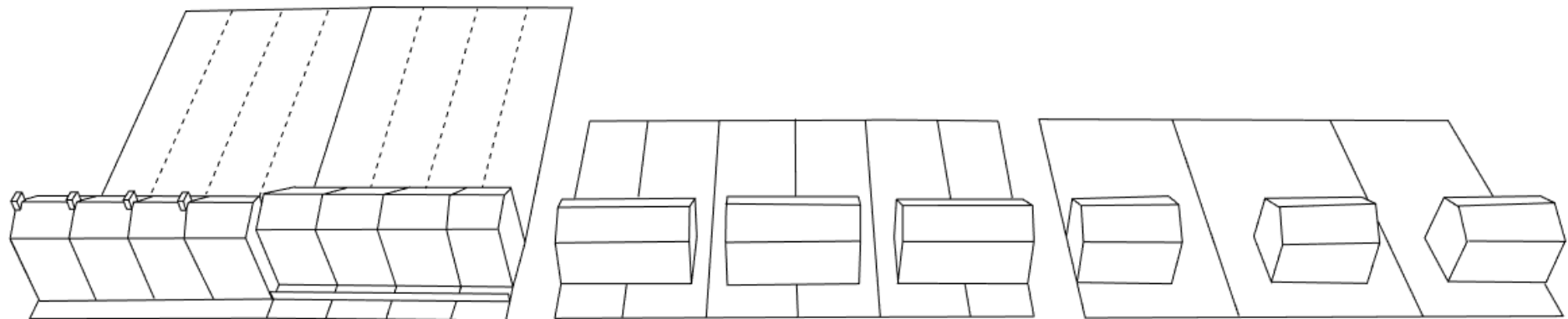
Figure 13: Code SL1- Layout and arrangement types within Bewdley

Built Form (BF)

Code BF1 Built Form

Built form is the three-dimensional pattern or arrangement of development blocks, streets, buildings and open spaces. Together these features create the built environment and contribute to its character and sense of place.

- Proposals should respond to and reflect the identity of the local setting by way of height, scale, spacing, layout, design and materials of buildings.
- Enclosure should seek to reflect the Spatial Area within which the development is located.
- Significant increases in size or scale of existing properties should be avoided to help maintain the integrity of the landscape. This is especially important in units located on the settlement edges.



High density development

Higher density is considered appropriate within the Conservation Area, along Load Street and High Street in particular.

Medium density development

Low density development

Lower density development should be adopted at the settlement edges to help transition into the surrounding landscape.

Figure 14: Code BF1 Built Form- Density

Code BF2 Built Form (Conservation Area)

It is important to retain the built structure of the Conservation Area.

- Buildings should seek to adopt a position on the perimeter edge of the block upon which it is located, helping to maintain a border around the block which is typical within the Conservation Area. The historic street pattern should be preserved.
- Infill development within the narrow plots is acceptable so long as it does not unduly impact on the enclosure, form or building line of the street. Infill development or extensions should have regard to the units which they are located to the rear of in terms of both scale and privacy.
- It is important that new development does not interrupt the strong building lines and continuous frontages already exhibited in the Conservation Area. Small recesses from the street are in keeping with the traditional form and offer some set back if adopted.
- Consideration should be given to the position of a building and how it relates to a termination of a building line or a street. These important positions should be defined with a design of an appropriate nature.

See also:

Building for Life 12 (2015) Section 7 (Creating well defined streets and spaces)

Bewdley Conservation Area Character Appraisal

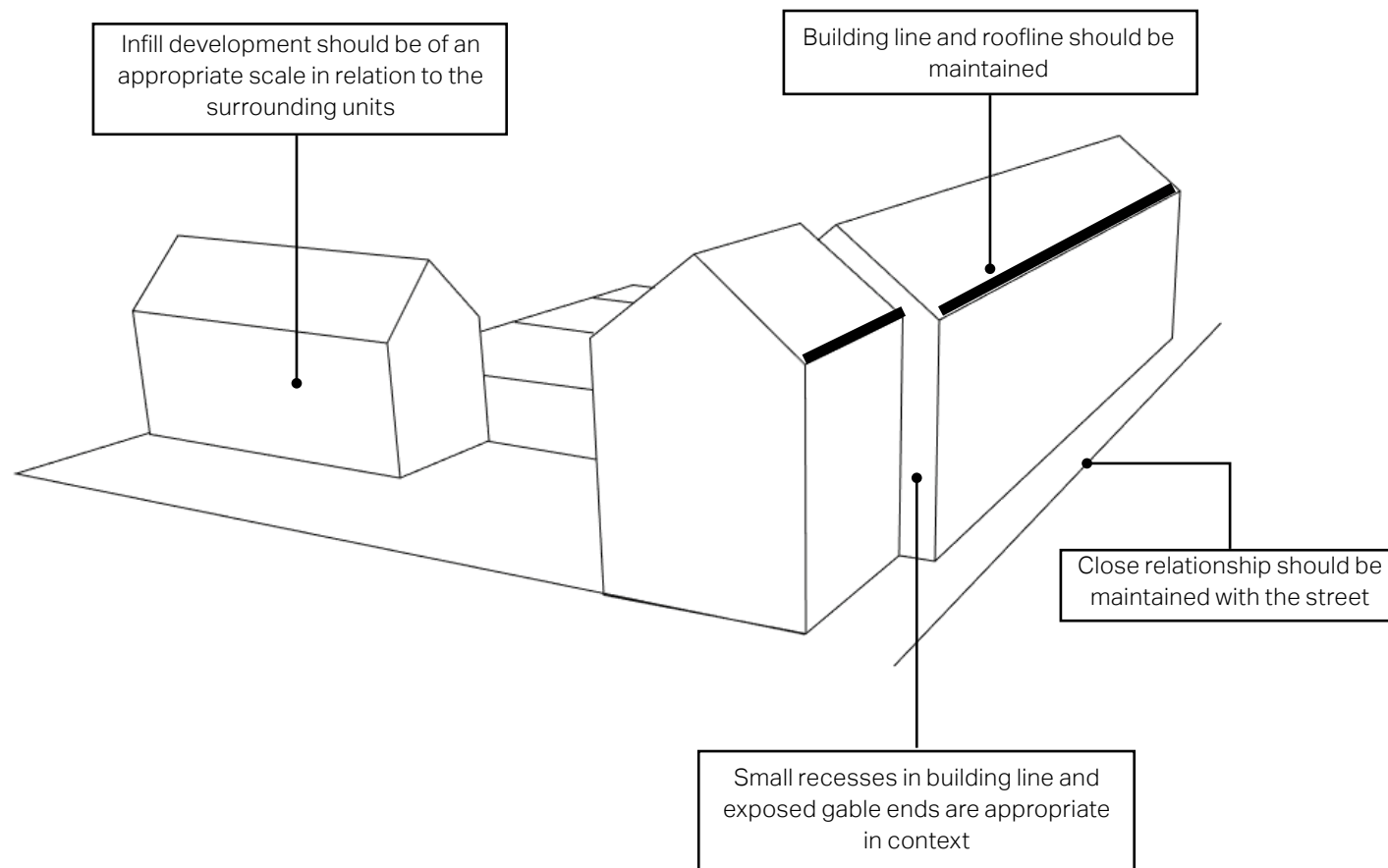


Figure 15: Code BF2- Built Form (Conservation Area)

Heritage Assets (HA)

Code HA1 Heritage Assets

- Development proposals in or adjacent to the Conservation Area and Listed Buildings should consider the setting and the context within which the application site is set, whilst clearly demonstrating that the proposals complement the local character. Developments should respect and respond positively to any heritage assets within its physical or visual vicinity.
- New development should emphasise the historic character of Bewdley
- Old buildings and structures should be retained as visible reminders of the historic evolution of the town. Sensitive conversion is also considered acceptable.

See also:

Bewdley Conservation Area Character Appraisal
Streets for All: Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places- Historic England (2018)

Site Edges (SE)

Code SE1 Landscaped Edges

- Boundaries on the settlement edge should be densely vegetated. The edge should be softened in relation to the adjacent landscape. It should be designed to have a minimal impact on the adjacent undeveloped land.
- Edges of settlement development should adopt regular breaks in built form to increase visual permeability and opportunities for views. The layout should relate to the surrounding landscape context.
- Seasonal developments such as caravan parks are common within Bewdley given its tourist attraction. These sites should seek to maintain the rural setting which they occupy and not infringe on the landscape setting. Soft boundaries which blur the site into its context are encouraged.

Code SE2 Strategic Road Screening

- Any development near the strategic road network should be sufficiently screened in order to mitigate against any noise/ visual impact incurred from the road network

Code SE3 Built Edges

- Edges of urban developments and how they relate to the surrounding units should be well considered and should positively engage with the edges of existing developments and surrounding building elevations.

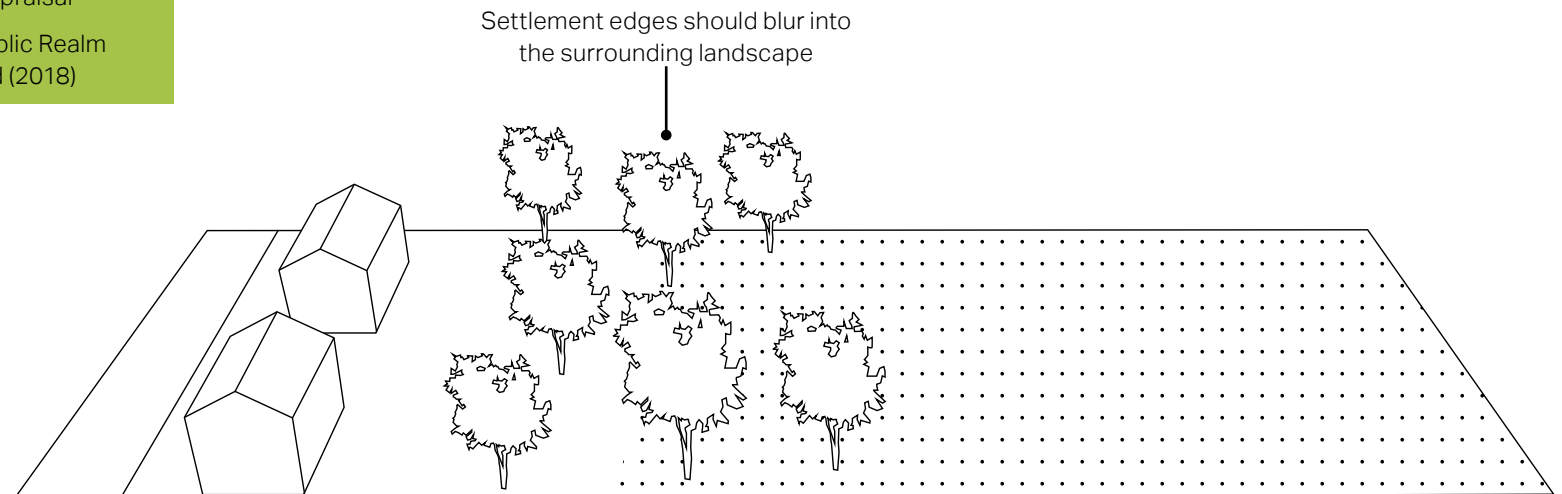


Figure 17: Code SE1- Landscaped Edges

Views (VE)

Code VE1 Views

- The views identified in the **Bewdley Conservation Area Character Appraisal** and **Figure 7** should be protected.
- Development should seek to maintain visual connections to the surrounding local landscape and long views out of the settlement. Development on the settlement edge should adopt a density which allows for spaces between buildings to preserve views of the countryside setting.
- Key views of settlement landmarks should be maintained and incorporated as development features to help safeguard the settlements distinctive identity and help with legibility. These include the Church, the River, the Severn Railway Line and the Wyre Forest.
- Development in elevated positions should be aware of its position above other units and consider the privacy of those below. Buildings on a slope should be orientated to enjoy views to the surrounding landscape, but should adopt appropriate screening measures to ensure privacy of other units is maintained.
- Trees and landscaping should be an integral part of the design strategy to help blend and embed development within its surrounding and provide privacy

- Adopting flat roofing can significantly impact the aesthetics of a development, and detract from the quality of views across the roofscape. The proposed use of flat roofs will be assessed on their merit but are not generally encouraged within Bewdley.
- Development should be aware of its position within the local topography and ensure the height and massing of units does not impose on views across the landscape. It should be built into the hillside rather than along ridge-lines.

Code VE2 Forest Views

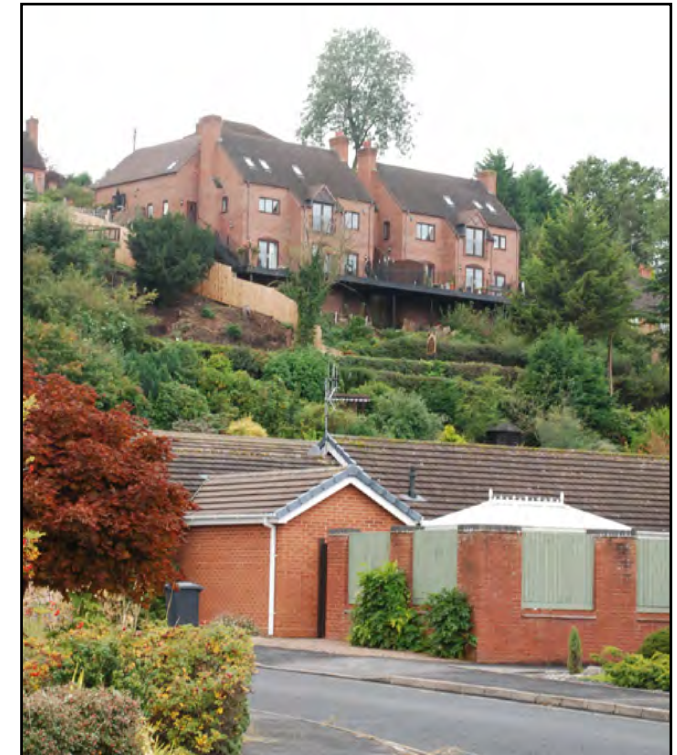
- Development should have regard to views into the forest, and also consider its impact on views enjoyed out from the forest into Bewdley.

Code VE3 River Views

- Development should consider its position along the river and its impact on the long views north/south.

See also:

Bewdley Conservation Area Character Appraisal
Figure 7 - Views within Bewdley



An example of poorly screened development which does little to address privacy of other residents



Views towards the River Severn should be protected and maintained.

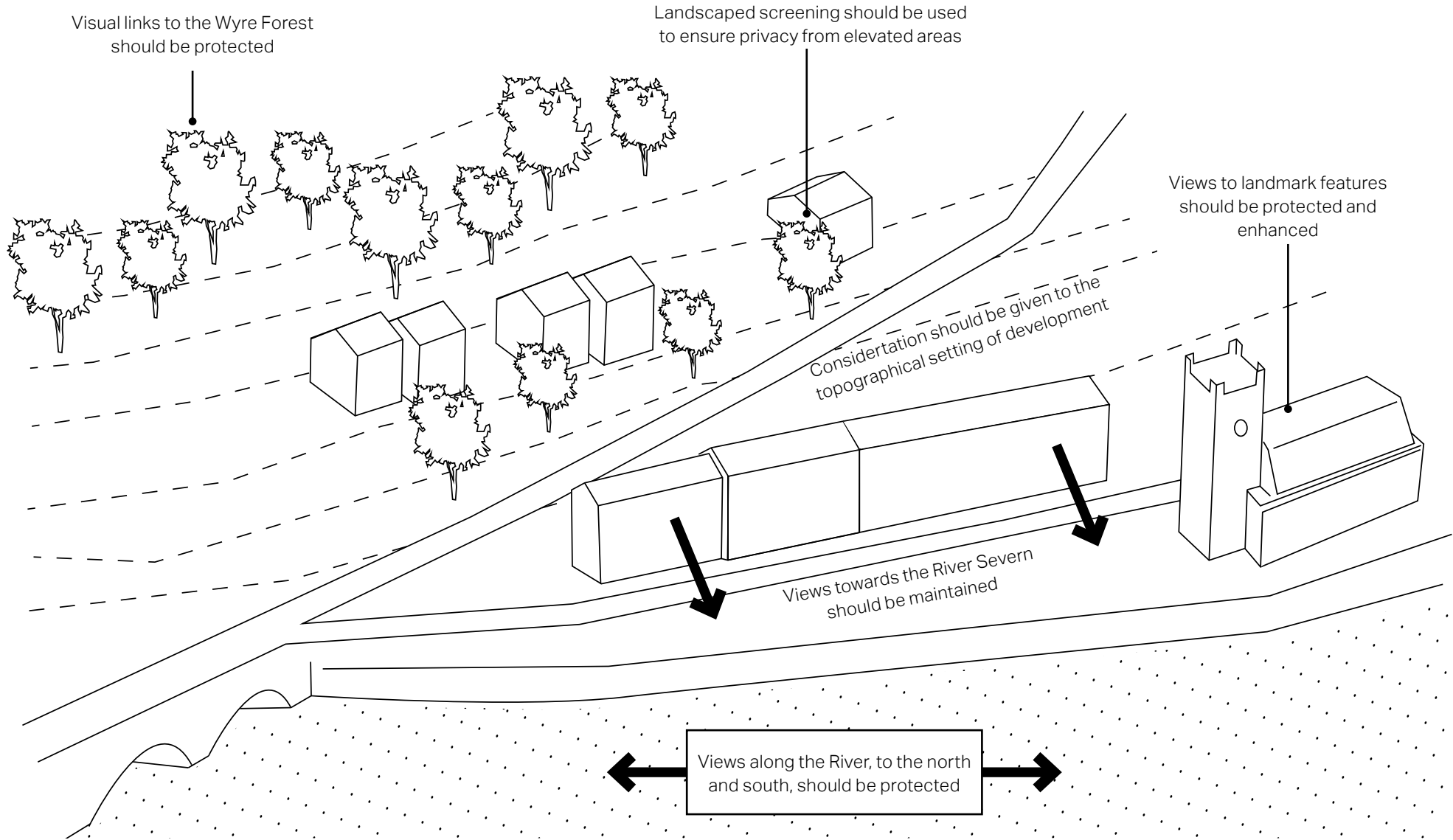


Figure 18: Code SE1- Landscaped Edges

Water and Drainage (WD)

Code WD1 Water and Drainage

Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) play an important role in the management of surface water run-off in new developments. They help to mitigate adverse effects of stormwater runoff and also provide opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. Worcestershire County Council is Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), and has the role of the SuDS Approving Body (SAB).

Development should seek to address the principles for the Severn Valley North and Bewdley Fringe areas (**WCC Green Infrastructure Strategy 2013**), which include restoration of the Severn floodplain and protecting and enhancing environmental quality.

- It is encouraged that SuDS are be integrated into developments to help address surface water run-off from the development site.
- Development in elevated positions should have careful consideration for drainage impacts and any potential impact of surface water run off.

See also:

WCC Green Infrastructure Strategy 2013

The SuDS Manual (CIRIA)

Improving the flood performance of new buildings: flood resilient construction (2007) Department for Communities and Local Government

Water Sensitive Urban Design in the UK (CIRIA) (2013)

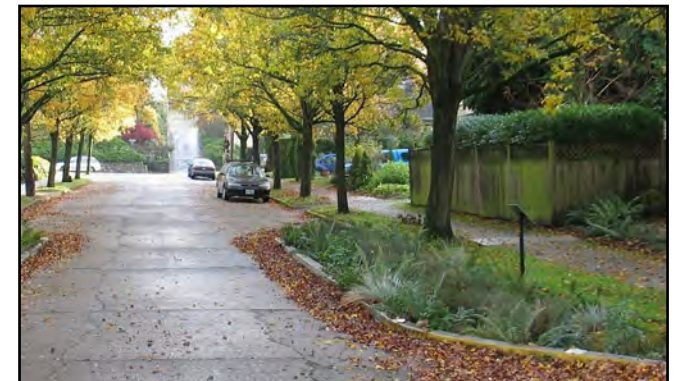
Code WD2 Flood Resilient Housing

The riverside area of Bewdley is located within the floodplain. There are several design approaches which can be incorporated into new development which can help to minimise flood damage, as outlined in national guidance (**Improving the flood performance of new buildings, 2007**).

- Development of sites within the flood risk areas is discouraged. Any development which is located within the floodplain needs to be carefully considered against its potential impact on flooding.
- Boundary treatments within the flood zone are encouraged to be designed with high water resistance materials and/ or effective seals to minimise water penetration, provided these treatments are in keeping with the local character.
- The site drainage system and management of surface water runoff are important considerations within any development plan.
- Reference should be made to '**Improving the flood performance of new buildings: flood resilient construction (2007) Section 6**' for more detailed guidance on flood resilient design and construction.
- Careful layout of internal space can be an effective measure to minimise the impact of floods. Living accommodation and essential services should be designed to be located above predicted flood levels to improve resilience of properties within the flood zone. Proposals should take a proactive approach to incorporating flood resilience into designs.



SuDS pond feature



Street landscaping and planting can help to reduce surface water run-off



Roadside SuDS

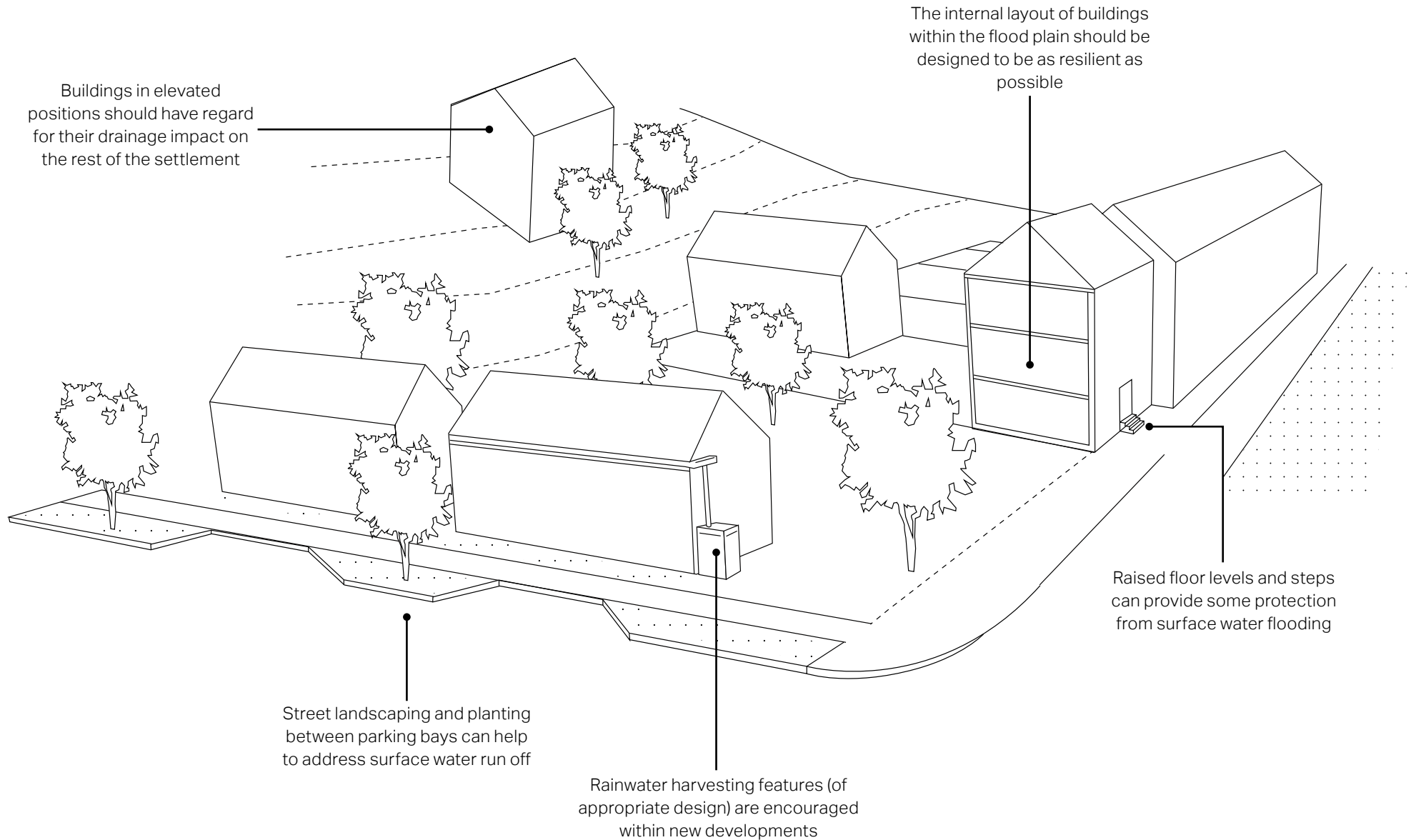


Figure 19: Code WD2 - Flood Resilience

Movement Network (MN)

Code MN1 All Streets

Streets must be designed to meet the technical highways requirements, but also are encouraged to adopt sound placemaking principles. They should be considered an attractive and safe 'place' by all users on foot, cycle, public or private transport, and address the needs of all including those with a disability.

Worcestershire County Council is the Local Highway Authority responsible for the construction, maintenance, operation use and control of Adopted Highways within Bewdley. Street design should refer to the **Worcestershire Streetscape Design Guide (2018) Section 3 (Layout and Connectivity)** and requirements as established in relevant statutory legislation.

- Carriageway widths should be appropriate for the particular context and use of the street. Design should take into account the volume of vehicular activity and pedestrian activity.
- Streets should not be built to maximise vehicle speed or capacity. Streets and junctions must be designed with the safety and accessibility of vulnerable groups in mind, with traffic calming measures applied where appropriate.
- New developments should be designed to improve non-vehicular connectivity. It should connect to the existing footpath, PRoW and cycle network where possible. Where possible, residential streets should connect through to other street or PRoW networks. The adoption of filtered neighbourhoods, where pedestrians and cyclists enjoy permeability, is encouraged but should be delivered with regard to building privacy and security.

- Developments should maintain PRoW and permeability across the area and recognise the importance of recreational uses and routes within Bewdley. Development should take care not to extinguish these routes, and should seek to open up links to the surrounding landscape and countryside.
- Cycle lanes and infrastructure should be delivered in accordance with the **West Midlands Cycle Design Guidance (2019)**

Bewdley is a popular tourist and visitor destination. To help maximise the visitor experience, it is important to incorporate an effective wayfinding network.

- Ensure wayfinding is considered through the adoption of appropriate signing. A number of existing wayfinding solutions are already adopted within Bewdley. New wayfinding infrastructure should be designed to align against and complement the existing features.
- Wayfinding in the Conservation Area should have particular regard to its setting, so as not to detract from the vernacular of buildings.



Existing wayfinding structures in Bewdley

Code MN2 Primary Routes

Primary roads constitute the main access into the villages, and connect settlements to each other. They are also the main routes used for utility vehicles and bus routes. Primary routes should be designed to accommodate heavier traffic flows and through routes. In Bewdley, the B4190, B4194 and B4195 act as primary routes which bring people into the town.

- Primary routes should be designed to be suitable for higher traffic volumes, as they act as through routes for vehicles. However primary routes should fulfil their placemaking roles, be supported with an attractive streetscape, and also have regard for pedestrian movement.

- Primary routes should uphold the character of Bewdley.
- Direct access to residential car parking should be avoided along primary routes so as not to interrupt the flow of traffic. On-street parking is discouraged on primary routes.
- The creation of long, straight sections of road should be avoided in order to reduce opportunities for speeding.
- Shared on pavement footpaths and cycleways are encouraged where possible,



View along the B4190 (Kidderminster Road), a Primary Route

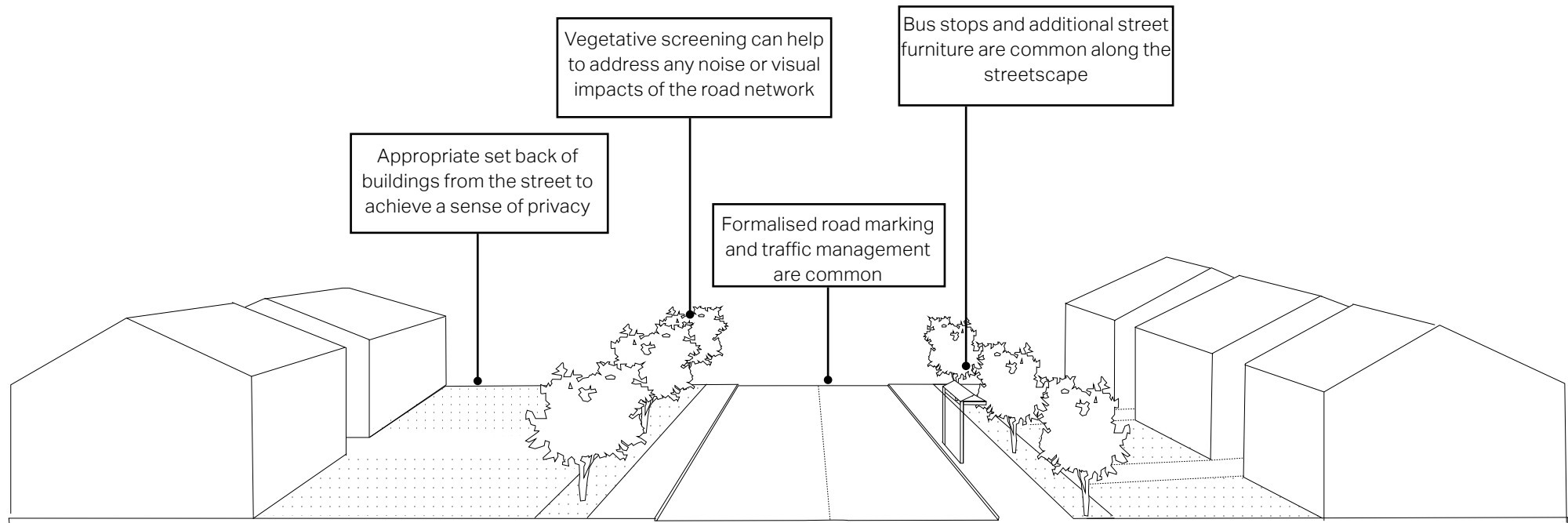


Figure 20: Code MN2 Primary Route Features

Code MN3 Primary Routes (Town Centre)

Primary routes adopt a different design when passing through the Conservation Area. There is a closer relationship between the street and the built form given the medieval street pattern and enclosure of buildings, leaving the primary routes more spatially constrained than when approaching the settlement area. This results in the narrow pavement width and a heightened sense of enclosure.

In Bewdley Conservation Area, primary routes should have regard for the narrow pavement width. Traffic calming measures and efforts to enhance the pedestrian experience of the town centre should be considered and are encouraged. The historic form of streets should be maintained by retaining original kerb lines. Surfacing should be simple and respect the proportional relationship between footways, buildings and the carriageway.



View along High Street, a Primary Road in the Conservation Area

Code MN4 Secondary Routes

Secondary routes provide access between primary routes. They should emphasise the human scale and be designed for lower traffic volumes compared to primary routes

- Carriageways must be designed to be shared between vehicles and cyclists. Vertical traffic calming features such as raised tables may be introduced at key locations such as junctions and pedestrian crossings.
- On-street parking needs to be carefully designed so as not to impede the flow of vehicles as they travel along secondary routes. This parking solution should be considered early in the design of secondary routes.



View along Wyre Hill, a Secondary Route

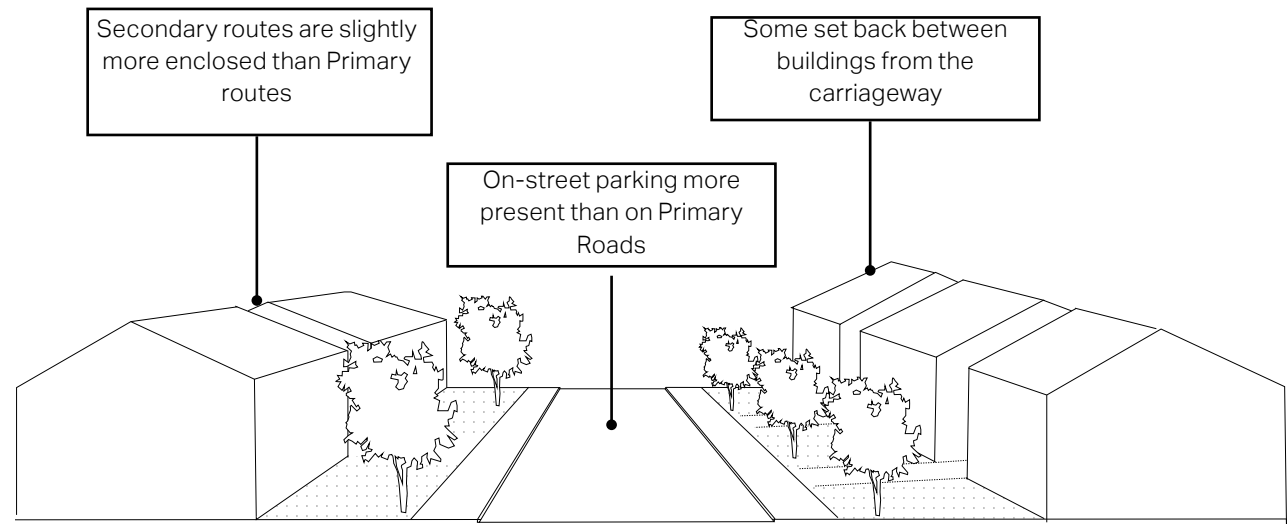


Figure 21: Code MN4 Secondary Route Features

Code MN5 Residential Streets

Residential streets generally serve a smaller number of units and consequently can be of a more intimate scale. With limited vehicular use, these streets work well as informal, shared spaces.

- All residential streets should be designed to enable to access and egress of waste collection and utility vehicles.
- On-plot parking is encouraged to support residential streets and remove the presence of parked vehicles from the shared streetscape.

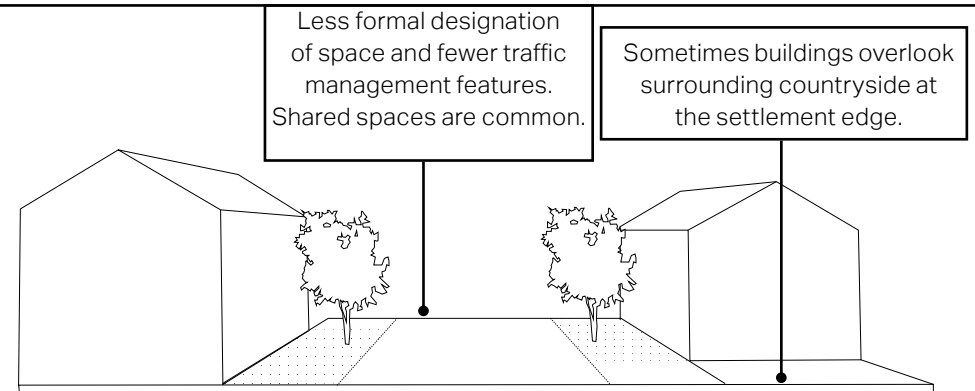


Figure 22: Code MN5 Residential Street Features

Code MN6 Rural Lanes

Rural lanes permeate from the settlement into the landscape, and are important channels in confirming the identity of Bewdley. They create an intimate experience of moving around the settlement area and its periphery, into the countryside.

- Development should seek to maintain a close relationship to the narrow roads which helps to reinforce rural character and scale. Dry Mill Lane, Hope Pole Lane, Tanners Hill, Grey Green Lane, Crundalls Lane and Heightington Road in particular should have their enclosure preserved.
- It is important to adopt hedgerow and soft boundaries along the rural lanes. Breaks in hedgerow are discouraged.

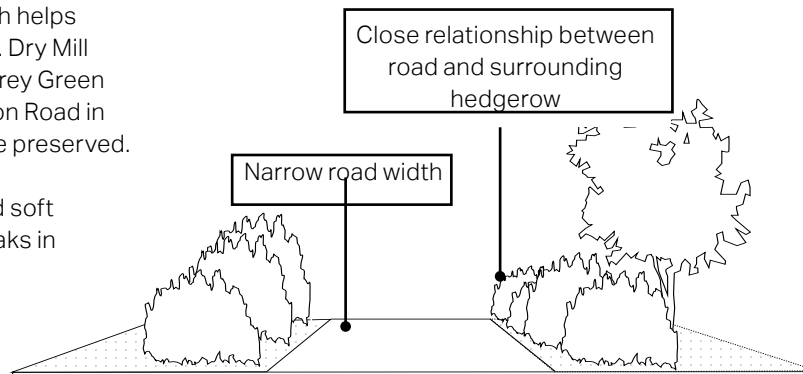


Figure 23: Code MN6 Rural Lane Features



View along Clarence Way, a Residential Street

See also:

- Design Manual for Roads and Bridges
- Department for Transport's Manual for Streets 1 and 2
- Worcestershire Streetscape Design Guide (2018)
- West Midlands Cycle Design Guidance (2019)
- Traffic in Villages – A toolkit for communities
- Streets for All: Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places- Historic England (2018)

Parking (PK)

Code PK1 Parking

It is important that appropriate parking solutions are adopted which serve the needs of a place, whilst avoiding any negative impact on streetscape. The narrow nature of the traditional street layout and abundance of on-street parking means the historic character of the town centre is undermined by vehicle presence. This is less the case in areas of more recent residential development, where on-plot parking is more common. Developments should ensure parking provision aligns with the **Worcestershire Streetscape Design Guide (2018) Section 4 (Planning for Parking)**.

- All car parking spaces should be a minimum of **2.4m x 4.8m**. For residential development, circulation space around the vehicle is required, so dimensions increase to **3.2m x 6.0m**. A minimum of **6.0m** is required in front of garage doors.
- Sufficient parking should be integrated into development where possible in order to lessen the impact of parked cars on the streetscape. Given the continuous building lines and narrow streets of Bewdley's Conservation Area, the impact here is particularly noticeable and should be regarded.

- In general, parking should not dominate external spaces, especially where the introduction of parking would conflict with the pedestrian environment or detract from features of historical importance. Parking solutions should have regard to impacts on traffic flow and should seek to avoid exacerbating congestion and pinch points. Vegetated front gardens should be considered to help lessen the impact of parked cars on the streetscene.
- It is encouraged that properties are equipped with Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV) charging points

Code PK2 Courtyard Parking

Courtyard parking is common within the Bewdley Conservation Area. These help to provide off-street parking located internally within a development block, and can help to reduce the visual impact of vehicles parked on the street.

- Where adopted, parking courtyards should be carefully designed to ensure natural surveillance and be supported by appropriate lighting. Courtyard layout should seek to reflect the nature of the plot boundary, which is typically long and narrow.

Parking courts should be easy to access. The adoption of high quality materials and landscaping will help to assist in softening the visual impact of the courts, and help to blend into the green space which is commonly found in the interior of blocks in the Conservation Area.



A high quality on-street parking precedent



Electric vehicle charging points are encouraged (Source: Geograph)

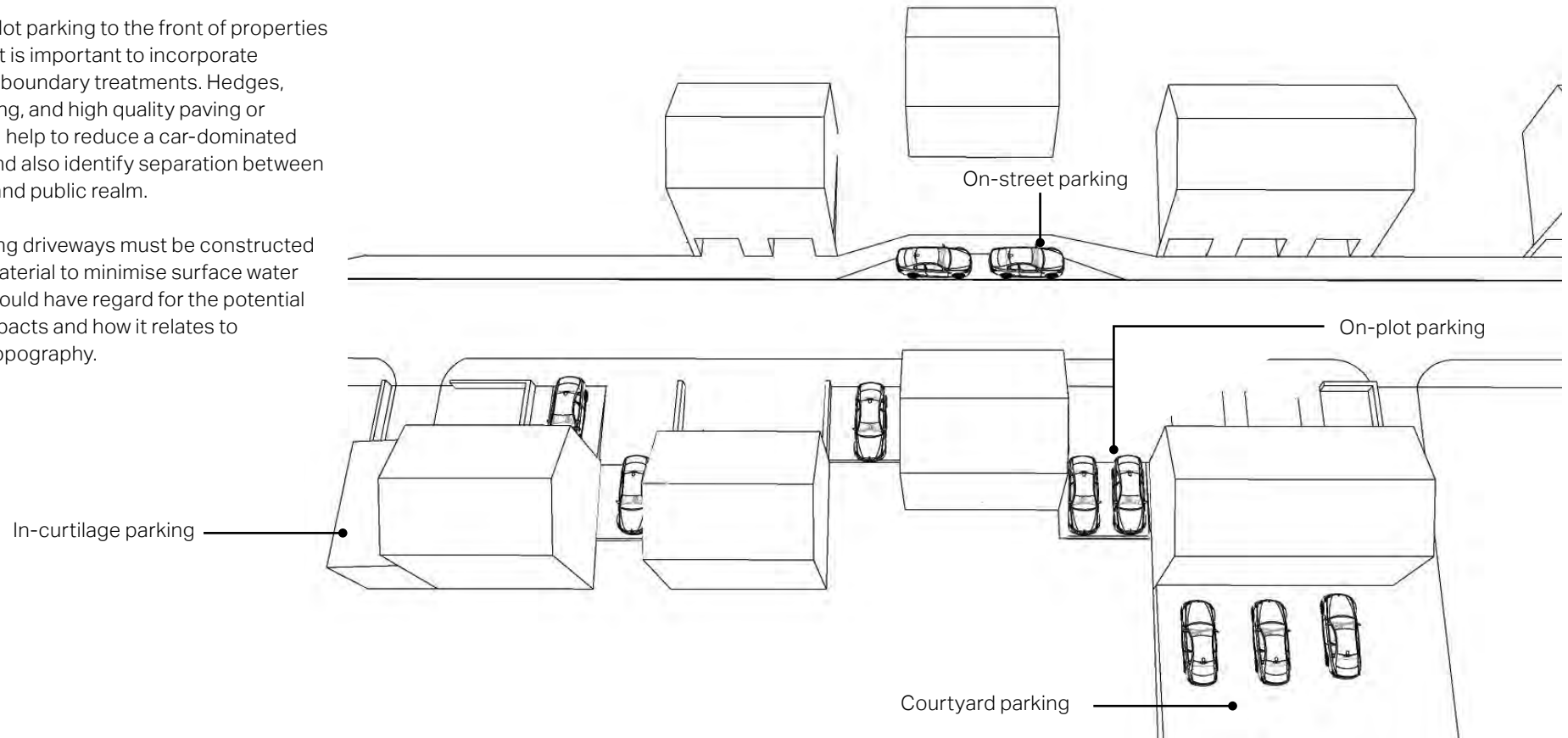
Code PK3 On-Plot Parking

- On-plot parking can be visually attractive when it is combined with high quality and well-designed soft landscaping. Front garden depth should be sufficient for the occupation of a large family car, or the policy-determined parking requirements of the building. Sufficient parking spaces per dwelling should be provided to enable off-road parking and reduce on-road parking.
- Where on-plot parking to the front of properties is adopted, it is important to incorporate appropriate boundary treatments. Hedges, trees, planting, and high quality paving or landscaping help to reduce a car-dominated character and also identify separation between the private and public realm.
- Hard standing driveways must be constructed of porous material to minimise surface water run-off. It should have regard for the potential drainage impacts and how it relates to Bewdley's topography.

Code PK4 On-Street Parking

- Streets should be designed in a way to enable on-street parking should it be required, however it should be provided in small groupings, and be sensitively demarcated and softened with landscaping treatment to lessen the visual impact on the street scene. Where possible, planting or gaps should be incorporated after every 5 continuous bays of parallel parking.

- On-street parking is common along Load Street, Park Lane and Lax Lane. The impact on Load Street, which forms the commercial core of Bewdley, is particularly noticeable, and has a considerable impact on the street-scene of this area.



Code PK5 Cycle Parking

In order to encourage cycling as an active mode of transport, cycle storage should be considered alongside car parking. All new residential developments should have regards to the location, spatial requirements and aesthetic of these features. The **West Midlands Cycle Design Guidance (2019)** provides the options for residential cycle parking, based on the most to the least secure methods shown in Table 2 below:

- New housing development should provide adequate and secure covered storage for cycles and mobility scooters, with level access to the highway within the ownership boundary of each property. Secure and combined electric cycle, mobility scooter and electric vehicle recharging points are also encouraged where appropriate.
- Residential cycle parking needs to be secure and dry, with access restricted to legitimate users. Designs should have reference to the standards and advice established within the **West Midlands Cycle Design Guidance (2019)**.

See also:

West Midlands Cycle Design Guidance (2019)

Code PK6 Visitor Cycle Parking

Bewdley is popular with tourists and visitors, and is located along the National Cycle Route 45. There is an opportunity to promote cycling by providing cycle parking within the public realm, especially within the town centre, the riverside, and in proximity to features of interest.

- Visitor cycle parking should be provided in convenient, overlooked locations with easy accessibility.
- Cycle parking needs to have regard for the sometimes narrow pavement widths of Bewdley. It should not obstruct pedestrian or vehicle movement or flow.

Most Secure
Internal parking area within private residence, easily accessible from the street
Parking within private garage area of property
Cycle parking facility within residential curtilage
Shared secured cycle parking store for up to 12 households
Shared secured cycle parking store for more than 12 households
Shared cycle parking store, no controlled access
Outdoor cycle shelter accessible from public street
Least Secure

Table 2: Most and least secure residential cycle parking (West Midlands Cycle Design Guidance (2019).



Secure residential cycle parking



Communal cycle parking



Example of town centre visitor cycle parking

Shop Frontages (SF)

Code SF1 Shop Frontages

The Shop Front Design Guidance for the Historic Environment SPD

provides Load Street forms the commercial core of Bewdley, and is lined with various shopping and commercial units.

- Shop fronts should respect the character, scale and design of the building and its detail.
- Shop frontages should avoid bright colours and favour designs sensitive to the historic environment of the town. Shop fronts should engage with visitors by not blanking out windows.
- Shop signage should be sensitive to its surroundings. Original features and fittings should be reused when possible, and suitable materials should be used for replacement if not. No more than one hanging sign should be erected for a shop.
- Careful thought should be given to the illumination of shop fronts in the historic area. Internally lit fascia's are not acceptable in the Conservation Area or on Listed Buildings.
- New shops outside the Conservation Area may take cues from historical styles but with a modern interpretation.

See also:

Design Guidance SPD (2015)

Shop Front Design Guidance for the Historic Environment SPD



Figure 24: Code SF1 guidance for shop-frontages

Boundary Treatments (BT)

Code BT1 Boundary Treatments

- Boundary treatments should seek to be consistent and reinforce the boundaries of current existence. They should correspond with the existing alignment and seek to tie-in with neighbouring properties.
- New development should use boundary treatments which are common or complementary to the street and enhance the historic character of the town.
- Materials proposed for boundary features should be of a high quality, responding to the character of the buildings in the area. Modern materials may be appropriate where they enhance the local character.

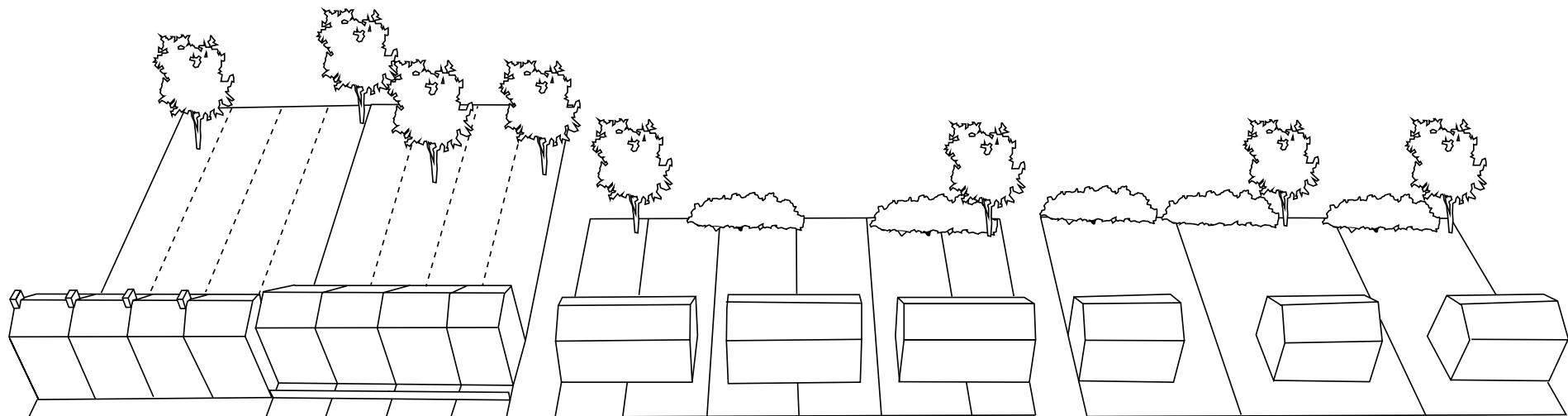
- Front gardens should be included only where this is characteristic of the area. Front gardens are not typical to the Conservation Area.
- The retention and planting of garden trees is encouraged. Trees should be introduced into the streetscene which are carefully considered and positively contribute to the public realm, whilst not becoming dominating when fully grown.

Code BT2 Settlement Edges

- Soft, vegetated property boundary treatments would be appropriate on the settlement edge or riverside locations. There is opportunity to plant new hedgerow for landscape and biodiversity gain. Existing hedgerow should be retained where possible.

Code BT3 Urban Edges

- Within the more built up areas of Bewdley, a variety of boundary treatments are considered appropriate. Landscaping is encouraged where possible, but other harder borders are also considered appropriate providing they are in keeping with the streetscene.



Long, narrow plots with green space to the rear are common in the Conservation Area, where front boundaries are less common.

Soft boundaries help to blur the settlement boundaries into the surrounding landscape

Code BT4 Boundary Treatments (Conservation Area)

There is typically a very close relationship between the street and the buildings within the Conservation Area, where narrow pavements and streets abut directly to traditional buildings with no boundary of separation. Whilst this close relationship to the street is important to the character of the Conservation Area, privacy can be achieved in some ways through appropriate boundary treatments.

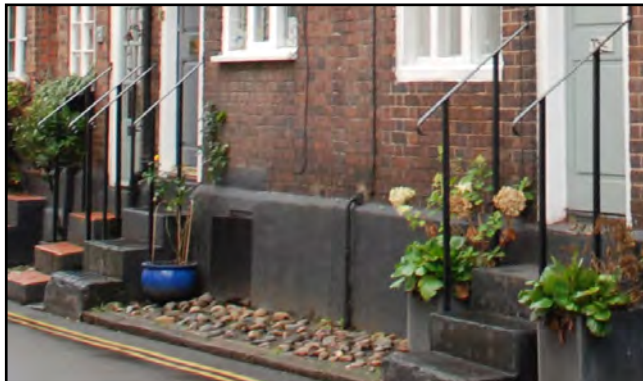
- Where adopted, boundary treatments should not impose on the narrow pavement or disrupt the movement of pedestrians.
- Consideration should be given to the existing boundary treatments within the Conservation Area as appropriate precedents. This could include typologies in the images shown.



High level red brick wall



Iron fencing



Small amount of steps



Low level red brick wall



Attractive planting accompaniments



Cobbled building apron

Streetscene (ST)

Code ST1 Streetscene

- The local topography means that much of the development has been cut into the landform. Grassed and vegetated verges alongside the highway network are a common way of responding to this gradient change, and contribute to the streetscape in these elevating areas. Grass verges should be incorporated into new development in areas where buildings are set back from the road, but should be accompanied with considered maintenance arrangements.
- External and street lighting design should be appropriate to the area, seeking to minimise light pollution whilst providing a safe environment.
- Street design should support the use of space by residents and visitors through the adoption of high quality, attractive materials and the provision of street furniture. Cluttering the streetscene with unnecessary or ill-placed features should be avoided.
- Materials used in the public realm should be of a high quality and respond to the character of the town. Materials should help legibility and create a sense of place where the car is a guest. More formal paving is encouraged to be introduced along the riverside and within the Conservation Area in order to emphasise these as focal points in Bewdley. Materials and designs which allows for shared use by pedestrians, motorists and traders within the town centre are encouraged, provided these are delivered in a safe manner.



Grass verges within Bewdley are common



The close relationship between the street and the vegetation should be maintained

Code ST2 Streetscene (Conservation Area)

- The use of high quality materials including brick, cobbles or stone slabs should be encouraged above the use of tarmac to pave streets, helping to reinforce the local character and complement the buildings. This should especially be adopted along Load Street, High Street and the Riverside.
- Traffic signage, lighting and highways infrastructure should be minimised or consolidated to reduce cluttered streetscape. Avoid inappropriate street furniture and highway surfacing.
- Lighting solutions should be designed to respect the Conservation Area. White light is considered to be more sympathetic to the character and period of the area, with black metal lamp posts and traditional detailing.
- Road markings should be softened in colour where possible; the use of white lines can detract from the traditional character of the street.
- Satellite dishes should be positioned to the rear of properties where appropriate to avoid intrusion on the street scene and not to interrupt the rhythm of the buildings.

Planting helps to enhance the appearance of the public realm

Traditional features, such as the post-box, should be retained

Paving and street materiality should be accessible for all and contribute to the character of the buildings



Existing streetscene along Load Street

Green and Blue Infrastructure (GB)

Code GB1 Green and Blue Infrastructure

Green infrastructure (GI) is the planned and managed network of green spaces and natural elements which connect and exist within our urban environments. Integration of green and blue infrastructure has proven health, environmental and economic benefits. It fulfils a multi-functional role, enables sustainable growth, and enriches the streetscape experience. The **Worcestershire County Council Green Infrastructure Strategy (2013)** identifies Environmental Character Areas. Bewdley falls into the 'Protect and Enhance' and the 'Protect and Restore' Character Area.

GI provision in residential developments can be varied and can include informal space, footpaths, bridleways, cycleways, SuDS, natural habitats and street trees. GI can also include gardens which are the responsibility of individual owners but can contribute to ecological networks if managed appropriately.

- Development should seek to retain the linearity of tree lines and hedges across Bewdley. Field boundaries should be reinforced with appropriate planting. Planting should reflect the natural shrub species of the locality and utilise native Worcestershire species. Birch, Hawthorne and pine are considered appropriate tree species.
- Where tree removal is unavoidable a replacement strategy should be developed through consultation with Wyre Forest District Council.

- Given the importance of woodland within the local landscape, opportunities should be taken to develop and protect woodland located within any development site.
- Consideration should be given to the provision of growing areas, either in the form of individual gardens or communal spaces, to ensure all residents have the opportunity to grow their own food. Include gardens to all houses which provide an opportunity for a growing area which still offers additional suitable private amenity space.
- The retention of green spaces including small pastures and orchards between houses is encouraged.
- Blue infrastructure is encouraged. Water features such as ponds and streams to support wildlife diversity and improve community quality of life should be considered within designs. Any access from new development to the waterway should be convenient, attractive and safe.
- Maintenance of a traditional and continuous riverside stretch of green infrastructure is encouraged.

See also:

Worcestershire County Council Green Infrastructure Strategy (2013)



GI permeating a residential development



Allotments also have social and wellbeing benefits



SuDS offer attractive placemaking qualities

Eco-Friendly Design (EF)

Code GB2 Biodiversity

- Biodiversity improvements could include hedge planting, linear orchards, provision of bird/bat boxed and wildflower verges. The provision of wildlife friendly habitats is encouraged.
- Protect and enhance existing wildlife corridors, and natural features of sites that have importance with regard to their biodiversity. These should be accessible to all. Wide field margins are encouraged.
- Development should seek to create new habitats within the site or the wider town, such as a small wetland nature reserve, on site bat houses, wildflower meadows, habitat aimed at encouraging and preserving rare local species. Vegetation and planting should be maintained during appropriate seasons to avoid conflicts with nesting birds.
- Native species should be utilised and planted where possible in order to complement the existing biodiversity.



Bat boxes (Source: Geograph)

Code EF1 Eco Friendly Design

It is important that new developments adopt sustainable, eco-friendly designs which complement the existing architectural style of the town.

- Eco-friendly design should be considered at the design stage, with consideration of passive solar heating, cooling and energy efficient strategies. These should respond specifically to local site conditions and the opportunities presented in these areas.
- Retro-fitting renewable technologies to heritage buildings should be done with care to protect the character of the existing building.
- Developments should demonstrate innovative design and the increased use of natural materials, incorporating green roofs, where possible. Green roofs could especially work well in locations which are overlooked due to local topography.
- Designs should encourage local recycling, energy production and energy efficiency.
- Rainwater harvesting helps to capture and store rainwater, and also enables re-use of greywater. They are useful to adopt to help reduce surface water run-off, which could help Bewdley to address drainage and flood concerns. These systems can have an impact on the external appearance of buildings if not pre-considered. Efforts should be made to conceal the units, or install them with attractive materials, cladding and finishing's.

Solar panels help to achieve energy efficiency; however they can have an aesthetic impact on the roofscape. There is high visibility of Bewdley's roofscape given the local topography, so adoption of solar panels should have regard for any impact.

- Solar panels on historic buildings and within the Conservation Area should not detract from the appearance of the building, or its historic vernacular. It should not interrupt building line or roofline. Panels should especially have regard to the position below any views in the landscape.
- Solar panels should be design from the onset. Tile or slate colours, which are complementary to the existing roofing materials of the building or the nearby units, are encouraged.

Building Materiality (BM)

Code BM1 Building Materiality

Careful selection of architectural detailing and building materials can help to contribute to the distinctive character of Bewdley. New development can achieve this by drawing inspiration from the varied details of the village's existing architecture.

- It is important that new development positively responds to the character of Bewdley. Development should protect traditional materials, scale and design details. A pastiche mix of traditional styles is not considered to be appropriate.
- Contemporary architectural solutions are encouraged but must be well considered, of a high quality design, and reflect the existing built fabric of Bewdley. Development which proposes innovative design will be expected to respect and take account of local heritage and character.
- Locally sourced materials should be utilised where possible, both on new build developments and on conversions.
- Materials and finishes should be high quality and sympathetic to heritage colours of the area.
- A palette of colours on building facades emphasises the quality of Bewdley and helps to build diverse character. Warm tones relate to the brick building materials and help to achieve variety. Other colours and tones of relate to the surrounding landscape.
- The choice of exterior colours used should help to integrate buildings into its context.



Contemporary architecture of a high quality design at the Medical Centre



Attractive material useage

See also:

Bewdley Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Code BM2 Conservation Area Building Material

It is important that new development built within or adjoining the Conservation Area reflects and harmonises with the medieval and Georgian vernacular styles which contribute to local character.

Doors and windows should be positioned regularly along elevations to maintain rhythm along the streetscape and to complement the repetition of existing units.

Painted brickwork or woodwork in inappropriate colours should be avoided, unless attractive and in keeping with the painted doorways in existence.

The inclusion of a pitched, flat or arched porch is acceptable and should take cue from the existing porches in the area. Porches should be of an appropriate scale to the building they occupy, and should not unduly interrupt the movement of pedestrians.



Horizontal banding across linked/ terraced units should be applied to provide a strong horizontal emphasis

Consideration should be given to the roofscape and its impact on views from elevated positions. Small clay tiles and grey slate are encouraged. Buildings located along primary roads are encouraged to adopt a forward facing pitch and to continue the ridgeline of adjoining units.

Dormers are only considered to be acceptable if they respect the size and scale of the building which they occupy. They should not interrupt, but should contribute to, the vertical rhythm of a building line. Velux roof lights should be avoided where possible, in favour of an appropriately designed dormer window.

Consideration should be given to the existing window headers and cills which help to define windows. Arched window headers, white window frames and sash windows are welcomed. Unpainted, concrete window cills are discouraged.

Where possible timber doors with timber framing should be adopted. UPVC is strongly discouraged.



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Residential units along Wyre Hill (northern side)

Site Specific Codes

06

Application of the Codes

There are four Sites allocated under the Emerging Local Plan within the Neighbourhood Plan Area. Each of these is supported with a policy which outlines high level design guidance for development to adhere to.

This section considers each of the Sites alongside their policy guidance, and signposts codes from this document which are applicable to their development.

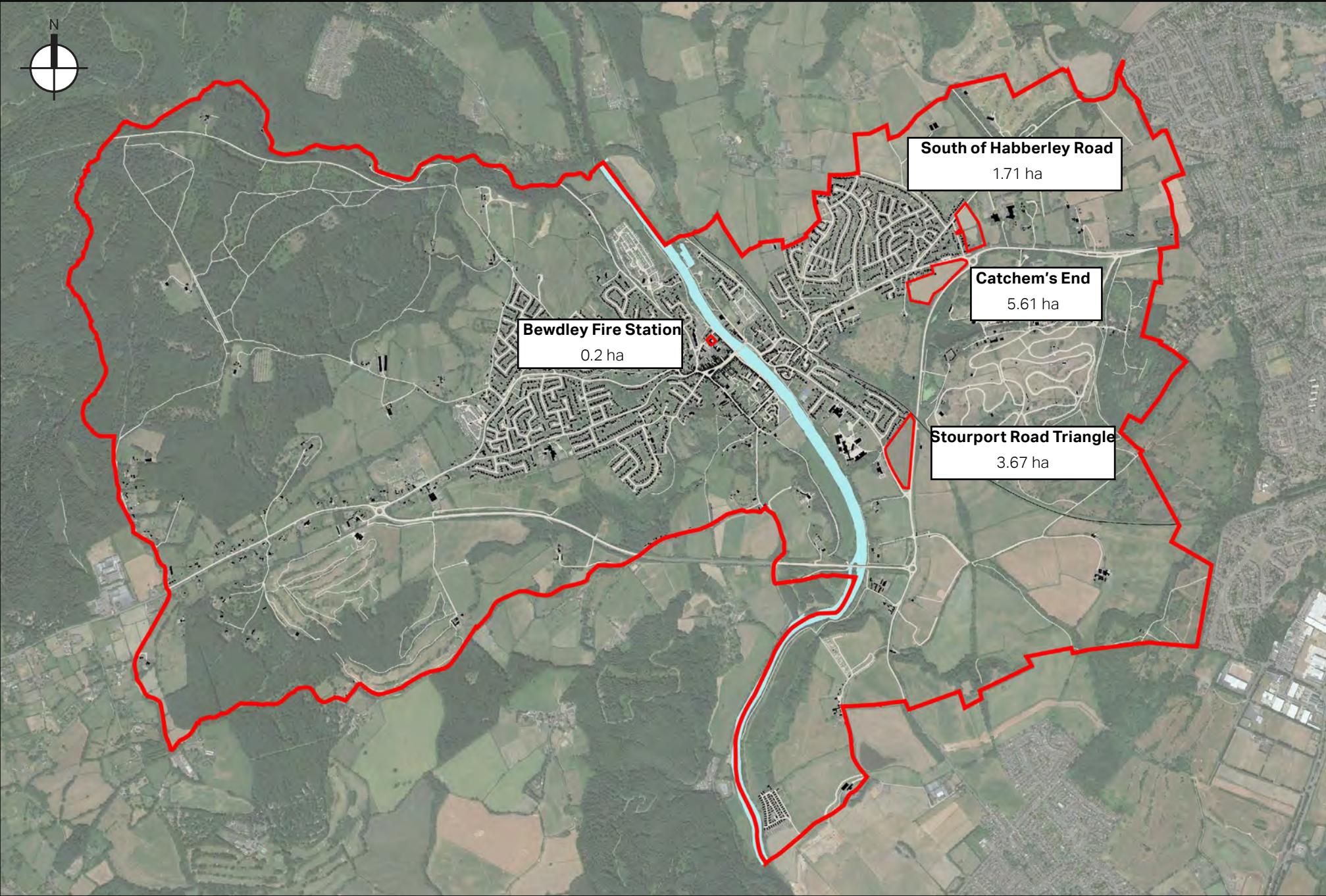


Figure 26: Site Allocations within the Neighbourhood Plan Area

Code Theme	Code Reference	Bewdley Fire Station BR/BE1	Stourport Road Traingle WA/BE/1	Catchem's End WA/BE/3	Land South of Habberly Road WA/ BE/5
Structure and Layout (SL)	Code SL1 Structure and Layout	X	X	X	X
Built Form (BF)	Code BF1 Built Form	X	X	X	X
	Code BF2 Conservation Area	X	-	-	-
	Code HA1 Heritage Assets	X	X	X	X
Heritage Assets (HA)	Code HA1 Heritage Assets	X	X	X	X
	Code SE1 Landscaped Edges	-	X	X	X
	Code SE2 Strategic Road Screening	-	X	X	X
Site Edges (SE)	Code SE3 Built Edges	X	X	X	X
	Code VE1 Views	X	X	X	X
	Code VE2 Forest Views	-	-	-	-
Views (VEW)	Code VE3 River Views	X	-	-	-
	Code WD1 Water and Drainage	X	X	X	X
	Code WD2 Flood Resilient Housing	X	X	-	-
Water and Drainage (WD)	Code MN1 All Streets	X	X	X	X
	Code MN2 Primary Routes	X	X	X	X
	Code MN3 Primary Routes (Town Centre)	X	-	-	-
Movement Network (MN)	Code MN4 Secondary Routes	-	X	X	X
	Code MN5 Residential Streets	X	X	X	X
	Code MN6 Rural Lanes	-	X	X	X
Parking PK	Code PK1 Parking	X	X	X	X
	Code PK2 Courtyard	X	X	X	X
	Code PK3 On-Plot Parking	X	X	X	X
	Code PK4 On-Street Parking	X	X	X	X
	Code PK5 Cycle Parking	X	X	X	X
	Code PK6 Visitor Cycle Parking	X	X	-	-

Code Theme	Code Reference	Bewdley Fire Station BR/BE1	Stourport Road Traingle WA/BE/1	Catchem's End WA/BE/3	Land South of Habberly Road WA/ BE/5
Shop Frontages (SF)	Code SF1 Shop Frontages	X	-	-	-
Boundary Treatments (BT)	Code BT1 Boundary Treatments	X	X	X	X
	Code BT2 Landscaped Edges	-	X	X	X
	Code BT3 Urban Edges	X	X	X	X
	Code BT4 Boundary Treatments (Cons, Area)	X	-	-	-
Streetscene (ST)	Code ST1 Streetscene	X	X	X	X
	Code ST2 Streetscene (Cons. Area)	X	-	-	-
Green-Blue Infrastructure	Code GB1 Green-Blue Infrastructure	X	X	X	X
	Code GB2 Biodiversity	X	X	X	X
Building Material (BM)	Code BM1 Building Material	X	X	X	X
	Code BM2 Conservation Area Materiality	X	-	-	-
Eco-Friendly Design (EF)	Code EF1 Eco-Friendly Design	X	X	X	X

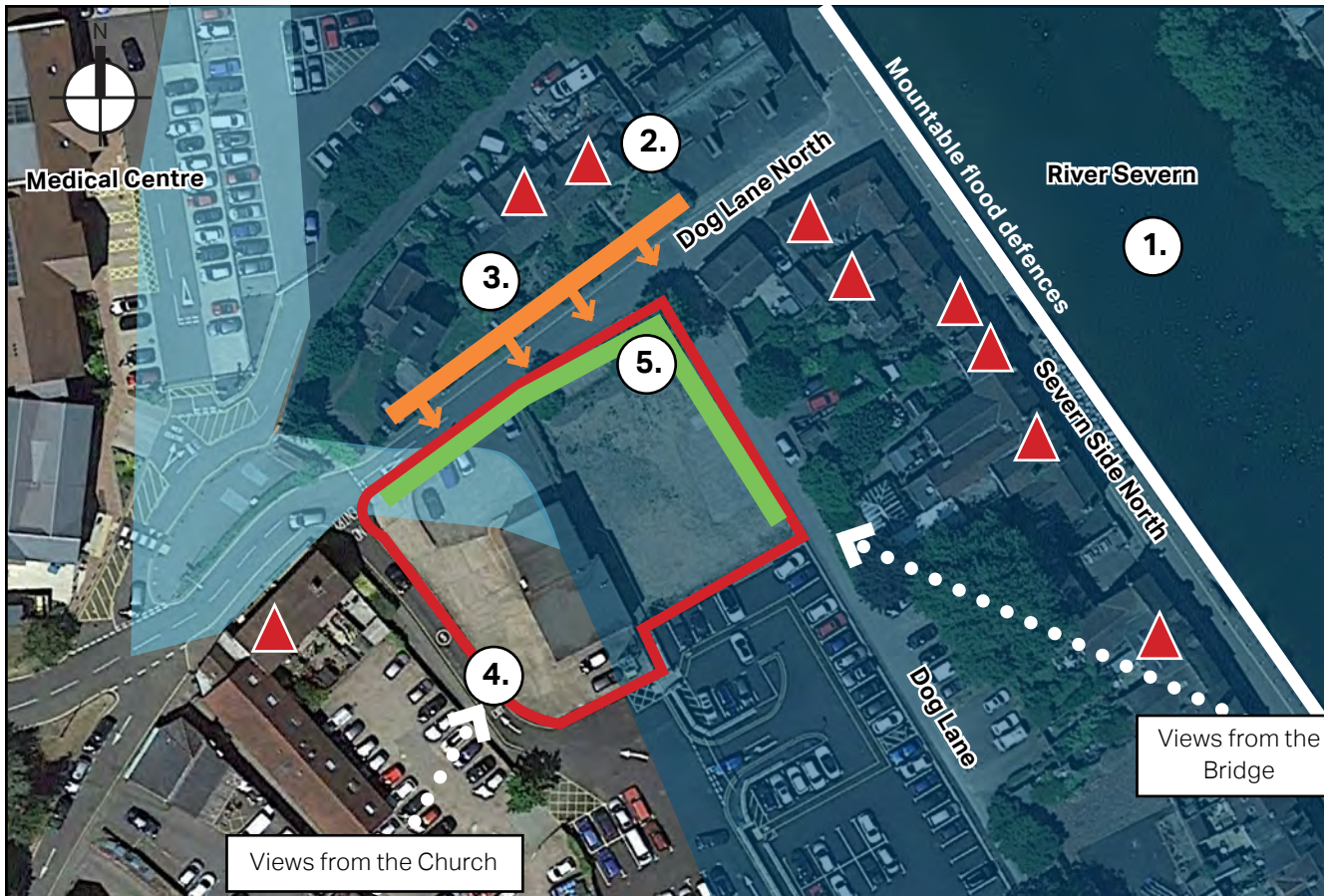


Figure 27: Bewdley Fire Station Site BR/BE1 with Policy considerations

- Flood Zone 2
- Flood Zone 3
- Listed Building
- Locally Listed Building
- Views
- Landscaping Consideration
- Green Infrastructure Consideration
- Drainage Consideration
- Adjoining Property Consideration
- Potential Linkages

Bewdley Fire Station BR/BE1

This Site is allocated for residential development within the **Emerging Wyre Forest Local Plan (October 2018)**. Below is an extract of **Policy 34.1** which relates directly to the Site:

- 1.** Proposals for this site should address and mitigate against flood risk. Part of this site is located in flood zone 3 (defended by demountable barriers) and flood zone 2 (undefended). There should be no habitable rooms at ground floor level.
- 2.** Proposals should be sympathetic to its location within Bewdley Conservation Area and the many listed buildings nearby. It should respect the scale, morphology and materials of the Conservation Area.
- 3.** Development on the site should utilise the change in levels across the site to reduce the overall height of the built form, so that the impact on designated assets on the opposite side of Dog Lane is reduced to a minimum.
- 4.** The impact of development on views across the town from the north, towards the church tower, and across the town from the Bridge should be analysed and used to determine the form of any new buildings on the site.
- 5.** Any landscaping should be sympathetic with existing soft landscaping and private gardens nearby.



Bewdley Fire Station, located on the Site (Source: Geograph)

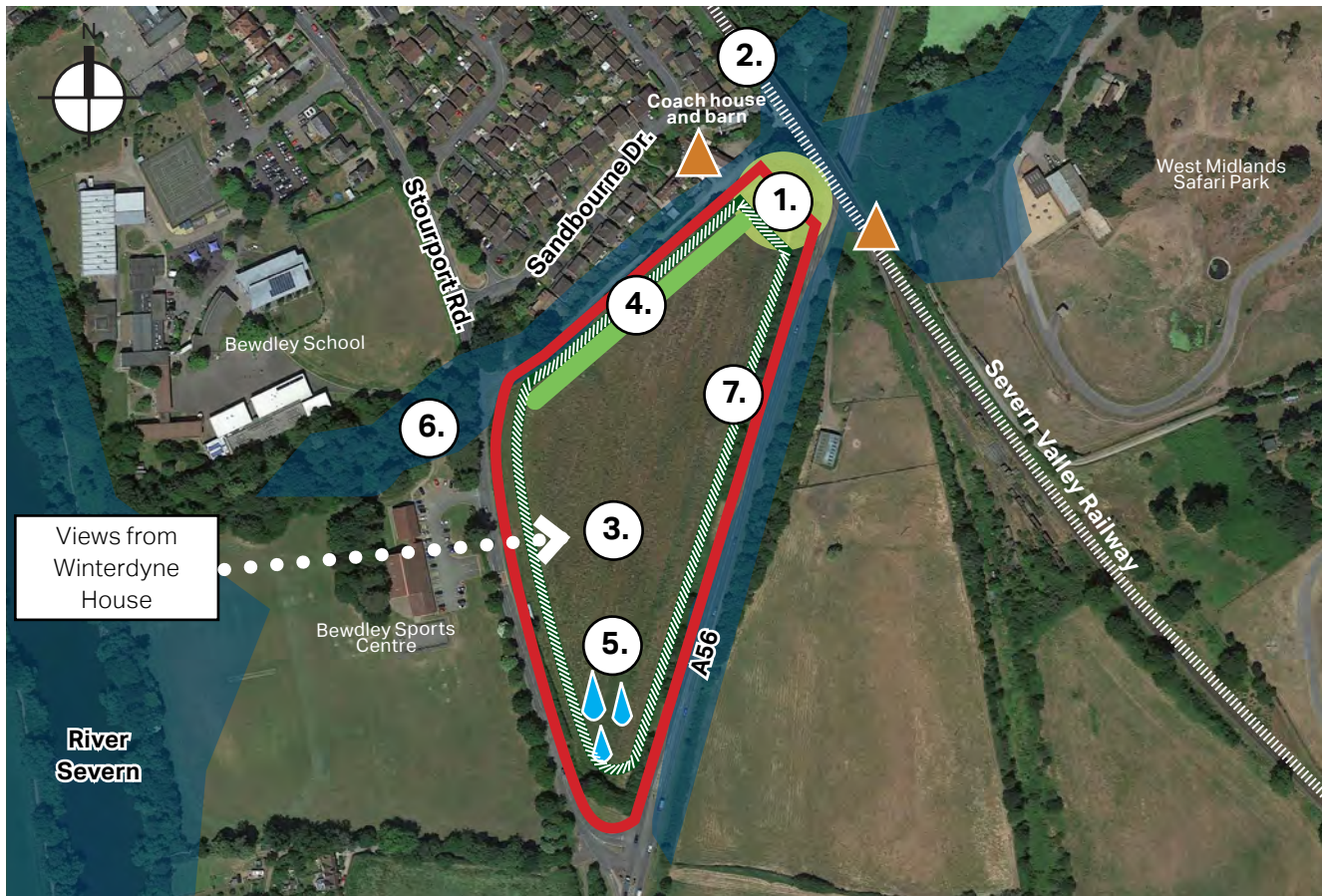


Figure 28: Stourport Road Triangle WA/BE/1 with Policy considerations

- Flood Zone 2
- Flood Zone 3
- Listed Building
- Locally Listed Building
- Views
- Landscaping Consideration
- Green Infrastructure Consideration
- Drainage Consideration
- Adjoining Property Consideration
- Potential Linkages

Stourport Road Triangle WA/BE/1

This Site is allocated for residential development and is removed from the Green belt within the **Emerging Wyre Forest Local Plan (October 2018)**. Below is an extract of **Policy 34.2** which relates directly to the Site:

- 1.** The northern part of site adjacent Severn Valley Railway viaduct should remain as open space with no built development. This is the site of the former walled garden (non-designated heritage asset). The wall to the former walled garden of Sandbourne House is to remain intact with the existing gate in the wall used to provide pedestrian access into the site.
- 2.** Development should respect the setting of the locally listed viaduct (northern boundary) and coach house and barn (west of site).
- 3.** Development should be designed to minimise adverse impact on both the SVR and Bewdley Conservation Area. Building heights should be restricted to 2 storeys to minimise impact on views from/to Winterdyne House (Grade II*).
- 4.** Enhanced green infrastructure should be provided alongside the Riddings Brook with a buffer strip provided alongside.
- 5.** SuDS should be provided on-site to deal with additional surface water run-off. These can be used to enhance amenity areas and provide wildlife habitats.
- 6.** A detailed site specific flood risk assessment should be undertaken to confirm the extent and depths of flooding in the future and ensure that finished floor levels will be above any future flooding levels.
- 7.** Enhanced landscaping should be provided along the site boundaries to provide noise buffering. Hedgerows should be protected and enhanced, especially along the northern boundary to promote connectivity to nearby woodland.

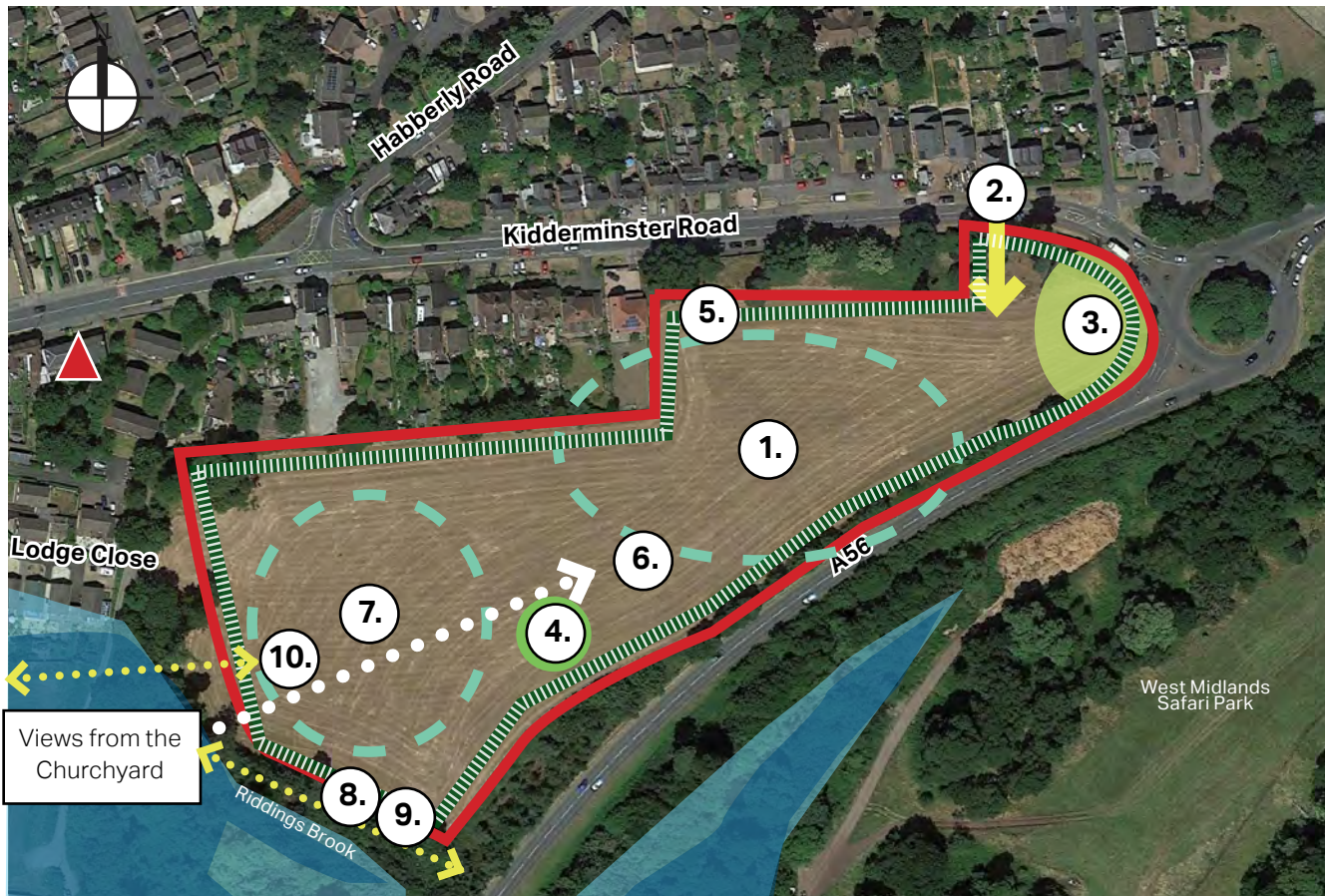


Figure 29: Catchem's End WA/BE/3 with Policy considerations

- Flood Zone 2
- Flood Zone 3
- Listed Building
- Locally Listed Building
- Views
- Landscaping Consideration
- Green Infrastructure Consideration
- Drainage Consideration
- Adjoining Property Consideration
- Potential Linkages











Catchem's End WA/BE/3

This Site is allocated within the **Emerging Wyre Forest Local Plan (October 2018)**. Below is an extract of **Policy 34.3** which relates directly to the Site:

- 1.** The eastern parcel of land is allocated for residential development.
- 2.** Access will be taken from Kidderminster Road. Part of the existing boundary wall should be removed only in order to give the required visibility splay.
- 3.** The area nearest the roundabout should be left undeveloped with appropriate landscaping used to soften the visual impact. The parkland character should be retained where possible.
- 4.** A play area should be provided as part of the open space provision (location not defined).
- 5.** Site boundaries should be buffered and enhanced to benefit Green Infrastructure connectivity. Mature broadleaved trees along boundary should be retained to help screen the development.
- 6.** Building heights should be limited to 2 – 2.5 storeys to limit impact on setting of All Saints Wribbenhall and Churchyard (Grade II).
- 7.** The western site parcel is allocated as open space. The potential to use some of this land for allotments should be explored with the Town Council.
- 8.** The opportunity to open up Riddings Brook should be investigated.
- 9.** A footpath/cycle link should be provided alongside the Brook to link in with the existing local footpath network.
- 10.** The possibility of providing a footpath/cycle link to rear of Lodge Close through the wet woodland should be explored. This would connect the new housing with the open space on the western parcel. Access into the wet woodland between the 2 sites should be limited to this link path to protect the sensitive habitat.
- 11.** Bat and bird boxes should be integrated into buildings with hedgehog access provided under garden fences.



Figure 30: Land south of Habberley Road WA/BE/5 with Policy considerations

-  Flood Zone 2
-  Flood Zone 3
-  Listed Building
-  Locally Listed Building
-  Views
-  Landscaping Consideration
-  Green Infrastructure Consideration
-  Drainage Consideration
-  Adjoining Property Consideration
-  Potential Linkages

Land south of Habberley Road WA/BE/5

This Site is allocated for residential development and is removed from the Green Belt within the **Emerging Wyre Forest Local Plan (October 2018)**. Below is an extract of **Policy 34.4** which relates directly to the Site:

- 1.** Development should respect the scale, morphology and materials of the adjacent historic suburban character.
- 2.** Site access is to be taken from Habberley Road.
- 3.** Well established trees and hedgerows should be retained and extended north to connect with the hedgerow along the B4190 and provide screening to the development from the hotel grounds.
- 4.** The potential to open up the existing highway drain to form part of the Green Infrastructure provision should be explored.





Next Steps

07

Western bank of the River Severn

Next Steps

This document has provided an analysis of Bewdley, with particular regard to its landscaped and built environments. It has sought to understand the local vernacular, character and influences on the town which needs to be considered as part of the development process. This document has provided an evidence base for the Bewdley Town Council Neighbourhood Plan, and it is recommended that the codes are embedded within the forthcoming plan as policy.

The design codes within this document should give certainty to developers as they will be able to design a scheme that is reflective of community aspirations, and also offers guidance to good design and placemaking principles.

Future developers should also make sure that they have observed the guidance in the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government's National Design Guide, as well as the many other documents referenced within this report.

Developers should also note that housing developments of any size should strive to achieve carbon neutrality in line with the Government's forthcoming Future Homes Standard. Further standards on residential developments should also be obtained from Building for Life 12, a government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods.





