

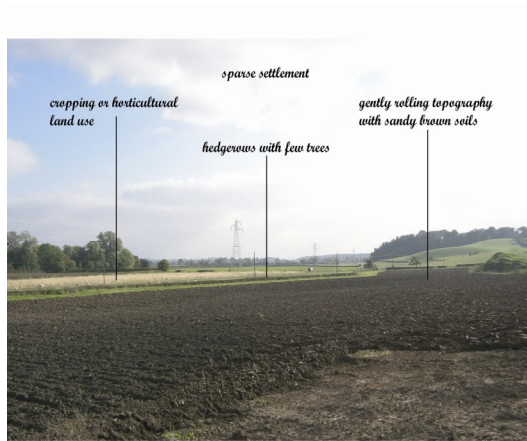
# Landscapes of Worcestershire

## Landscape Type Advice Sheet - *Land Management*

### Settled Farmlands on River Terraces

#### Landscape Type Description

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



#### Key Characteristics

##### Primary

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

##### Secondary

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

##### Tertiary

- Sub-regular enclosure pattern



#### Current Concerns

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

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

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### Guidelines for Land Management

#### How to use this sheet

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

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

#### Trees

The general guidelines for trees in Settled Farmlands on River Terraces are to:

- **conserve** and **enhance** tree cover along watercourses
- **enhance** patterns of tree cover associated with settlement

Woodland is not characteristic of these medium-scale, open landscapes but tree cover is strongly represented along watercourses and in association with settlement.

The population of trees associated with settlement should be safeguarded and augmented as required with additional planting in order to perpetuate and strengthen the visual impact of this characteristic. New development should be designed to allow space for substantial tree planting (and the planting of forest scale trees – trees that are likely to make a visual impact in the landscape as opposed to trees of small stature which are so often used in the landscaping of new development).

#### Hedgerows

The general guideline for hedgerows in Settled Farmlands on River Terraces is to:

- **conserve** and **enhance** patterns of hedgerows

There may be opportunities to plant new hedgerows, restore, strengthen or protect existing hedgerows and their patterns, and promote appropriate management – in terms of maintenance regimes and protection from stock. The species composition of existing primary (long established) hedgerows should be noted and used to guide the composition of new hedgerow planting. Fencing and other uncharacteristic boundary treatments could be removed and replaced by hedgerows. Bear in mind that Settled Farmlands on River Terraces may well have ancient hedges, particularly those defining parish or ownership boundaries, together with patterns of internal hedgerows, that may well be protected under the Hedgerow Regulations.

For more information visit our website [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/lca](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/lca) or contact the Worcestershire County Council Environmental Policy Team on 01905 766038