

## Landscapes of Worcestershire Landscape Type Advice Sheet - *Land Management*

# Wooded Estatelands

### Landscape Type Description

A large-scale, wooded agricultural landscape of isolated brick farmsteads, clusters of way-side dwellings and occasional small estate villages. Key visual elements in this landscape are the many large, irregularly shaped ancient woodlands, often prominently situated on low crests. It is a landscape that, due to its scale, lacks intimacy and can appear rather functional.



### Primary

- Large discrete blocks of irregularly-shaped woodland
- Mixed farming land use

### Key Characteristics

#### Secondary

- Rolling topography with occasional steep-sided hills and low escarpments
- Semi-regular pattern of large, hedged fields
- Woodland of ancient character
- Discrete settlement clusters often in the form of small estate villages
- Medium distance framed views
- Large country houses set in parkland and ornamental grounds



### Current Concerns

The large woodland blocks tend to be discrete units but rely on the presence of hedgerows to achieve a sense of visual cohesion within the landscape. Hedgerow loss and deterioration is evident, particularly in areas where intensive arable farming is dominant, resulting in isolation of the woodlands. Some dilution of the ancient character of the woodlands has taken place, largely through coniferisation. The extent of many of the parklands has been severely reduced, with former parkland trees now standing amidst arable cropping.

There is a need to conserve and restore the hedgerow fabric as well as the mixed broadleaf composition of the existing woodlands. New woodland planting would also strengthen and enhance the character. Parkland restoration initiatives should be promoted widely, particularly to reunite the original scale and conceptual framework of parkland by encouraging the conversion of arable land back to permanent pasture.

## Landscape Type Advice Sheet - Land Management

# Wooded Estatelands Guidelines for Land Management

### How to use this sheet

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

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

### Woodland

The general guidelines for woodland in Wooded Estatelands are to:

- **conserve** all ancient woodland sites
- **restore** woodland character by restocking with locally occurring native species
- encourage the **creation** of large-scale woodlands, reflecting the scale and shape of existing woods and favouring oak as the dominant species

This is a large-scale landscape of farmed land and woodland – the former is the dominant land use while the latter comprises 30-40% of the land cover and is the critical element in defining the landscape character. Whilst it is recognised from an ecological perspective, that 'new' ancient woodland can't simply be created, from a landscape perspective, new woodland *can* reflect ancient characteristics in terms of shape/outline and species composition. In this landscape, the woodlands are characteristically very large, of ancient semi-natural character and irregular, or semi-regular outline so new planting should reflect this. There may also be opportunities to restore areas of ancient woodland through the introduction of appropriate management, or the removal of alien species and appropriate replanting.

### Hedgerows

The general guidelines for hedgerows in Wooded Estatelands are to:

- **conserve** and **restore** the hedgerow pattern, with particular attention given to primary hedgerows and hedgerow tree cover
- seek to ensure hedgerow linkage to all woodland blocks, for visual cohesion and wildlife benefit

Hedgerows are an important element in achieving a sense of visual cohesion in these landscapes with their large, discrete blocks of woodland. There may be opportunities to plant new hedgerows, restore, strengthen or protect existing hedgerows and their patterns, and promote appropriate management – in terms of maintenance regimes and protection from stock. The species composition of existing long established hedgerows should guide the composition of new hedgerow planting.

### Parkland

The general guideline for parkland in Wooded Estatelands is to:

- **conserve** and **restore** existing parkland areas

Opportunities should be particularly sought to reunite the original scale and conceptual framework of parkland areas, by encouraging the conversion of arable land back to permanent pasture. New generations of tree planting can be encouraged to perpetuate the parkland character, together with the restoration of other ornamental plantings, garden buildings and water features – specialist advice (English Heritage/Hereford and Worcester Gardens Trust) should be sought for such restoration work and reference should be made to the original designs for such areas.

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



**worcestershire**  
county council