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## 1 Introduction

**1.1** This document sets out the Green Infrastructure Strategy for Wyre Forest District. The document expands upon the Green Infrastructure Study and as such these two documents should be read in conjunction with each other. The Green Infrastructure Study sets out a strategic view of the Green Infrastructure assets which exist within the District and looks at some basic principles for developing the network further. This Green Infrastructure Strategy will develop the concept of green infrastructure further and will set out more detailed guidance for incorporating green infrastructure into new development within the District.

### What is Green Infrastructure?

**1.2** The Green Infrastructure Study provides detailed background on the concept of green infrastructure. Although many definitions of Green Infrastructure are available, it was considered most appropriate for the Green Infrastructure Study to take its definition from the West Midlands Green Infrastructure Prospectus, as follows:

#### Definition of Green Infrastructure

*Green infrastructure is the network of green spaces and natural elements that intersperse and connect our cities, towns and villages. It is the open spaces, waterways, gardens, woodlands, green corridors, wildlife habitats, street trees, natural heritage and open countryside. Green infrastructure provides multiple benefits for the economy, the environment and people.*

*Green infrastructure may also be seen as the life support system of an area; providing functions and environmental services to a community, such as employment, recreation, physical health and mental well-being, social interaction, contact with nature, drainage and flood management, climate change adaptation and pollution control. It may be considered the essence of local character and sense of place, the very heart of a community, or dear to the hearts of many thousands some distance away.*

*It spans administrative and political boundaries; it is publicly and privately owned, and it may be semi-natural or man-made in its origins. It may be green, brown or blue - think of canals, derelict land, woodlands in winter or ploughed fields. It may be wrapped around by houses, schools, factories and commercial properties.*

*In urban situations it complements and balances the built environment; in rural settings it provides a framework for sustainable economies and biodiversity; in between it links town and country and interconnects wider environmental processes".<sup>(1)</sup>*

**1.3** Green infrastructure includes assets in both public and private ownership. The multi-functional nature of the green infrastructure network means that not all assets will have public access, however, they can still play a vital role in providing habitats for biodiversity, contributing towards natural shading and urban cooling, defining the landscape and contributing

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1 *Green Infrastructure - A Prospectus for the West Midlands Region, WMRA*

towards sustainable water and resource management. Many green infrastructure assets will have public access and it is these assets that will provide opportunities for recreation, sustainable transport and education, as well as having positive health benefits.

**1.4** Green infrastructure includes the following features:

- Amenity open space
- Green corridors
- Parks and Gardens
- Registered Commons and Village and Town Greens
- Natural and semi-natural open space
- Country parks
- Historic parks and gardens and landscapes
- Agricultural land
- Nature reserves
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Scheduled Monuments
- Locally designated heritage sites, including county wildlife sites
- Waterways and water bodies, including the network of pools and streams
- Public rights of way, cycleways and other recreational routes.

## **Purpose and Scope of the Strategy**

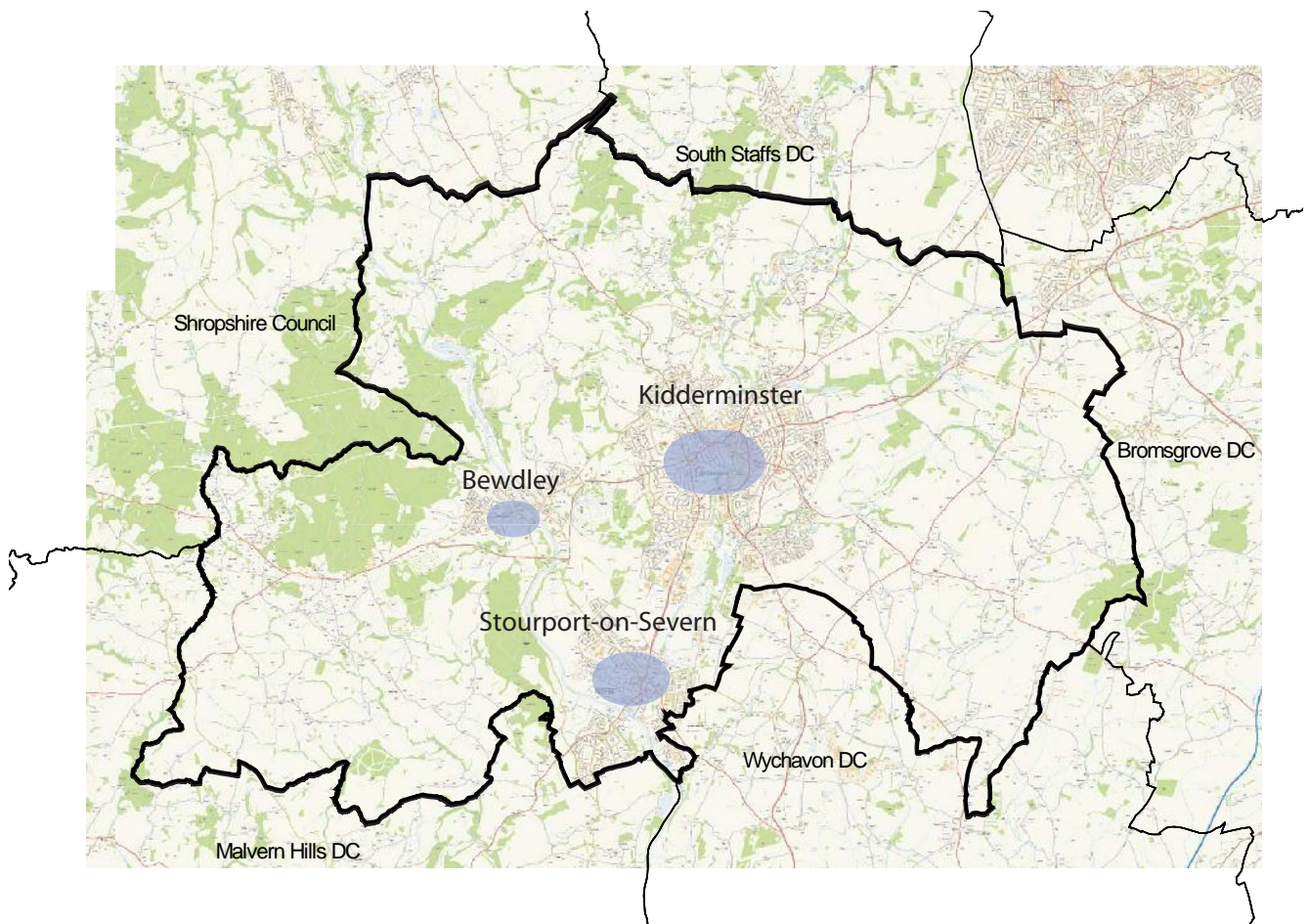
**1.5** The strategy sets out general principles for green infrastructure across the District but also focuses on the development areas and sites identified through the Local Development Framework (LDF) process and establishes how development within each of these areas, and where relevant, development on specific sites should contribute towards the green infrastructure network. Green infrastructure does not stop at the District boundary and it is important to understand that many of the assets mentioned, particularly linear routes, cross the District boundary. The landscape of the area is rich and varied and features landscape types ranging from urban and sub-urban landscapes through to urban fringe and rural, these landscapes support a variety of habitats and species.

**1.6** The Adopted Core Strategy for the District sets out the level of growth required and the broad locations for that growth up until 2026. Growth will be focussed within the existing urban areas of Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn on brownfield sites. As such, planning for green infrastructure provision within Wyre Forest District is very much focussed on ensuring that new development provides linkages to, and maximises opportunities presented by the existing green infrastructure network. New green infrastructure incorporated into development sites will be small scale but nevertheless will have the opportunity to make a significant contribution within those sites and localities.

**1.7** The Green Infrastructure Strategy forms part of the evidence base for the Wyre Forest District LDF. It sets out the framework for delivering new green infrastructure within the District by identifying both generic principles which will apply across the District and more specific principles for the areas and sites which will accommodate new development.

**1.8** The map below shows the District boundary, the location of the three main towns within the District and the neighbouring local authorities.

## District Context Map



### Why Have a Strategy?

**1.9** Wyre Forest District has a highly valued natural environment, however, the urban areas often lack green space and this is particularly apparent in Kidderminster town centre. The District must provide 4,000 new homes, along with new employment, retail and office floorspace between 2006 and 2026. All new development within the District during this period is to be focused on brownfield land, with a particular focus on Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn. The regeneration of Kidderminster is a fundamental part of the policy set out within the Adopted Core Strategy and as such an Area Action Plan is being prepared. Regeneration offers the opportunity to enhance the green infrastructure network within the towns by securing improvements to the existing features such as the river and canal corridors, and establishing new linkages and spaces.

**1.10** The Green Infrastructure Strategy is based on four priority areas which have been identified through the study and are set out within policy CP13 of the Adopted Core Strategy. The four priority areas have been identified as green infrastructure assets which are essential to the District's local distinctiveness. The priority areas are:

- The Rivers Severn and Stour and the associated wetlands
- The Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal
- The District's heathlands and grasslands
- The Wyre Forest and associated areas of high landscape and biodiversity value.

**1.11** The District's waterways have the potential to link existing green infrastructure assets and provide for habitat connectivity. The waterways link the urban areas to the open countryside beyond and collectively they form an important multi-functional green infrastructure asset.

**1.12** The District has some of the most important and distinctive acid/lowland heath communities within the County. New development should contribute to the continued protection and enhancement of these types of communities wherever possible.

**1.13** The Wyre Forest itself is one of the largest remaining ancient woodlands in Britain. It provides a recreational use as well as being home to many habitats and species. Part of the Forest is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a further area is designated as an National Nature Reserve (NNR). Dowles Brook runs through the forest.

**1.14** Developing green infrastructure is also an important element of addressing climate change. The District will be faced with hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters, with heavy bursts of rainfall becoming a more frequent occurrence. Green infrastructure can help to address this by contributing to urban cooling, restricting the flow of water into the watercourses and reducing the impact of flooding.

**1.15** Green infrastructure can also play a key role in enhancing quality of life by providing high quality living environments, improved health and well-being and greater opportunities for physical recreation. This can increase life expectancy and reduce the burden on the healthcare system.

**1.16** The Green Infrastructure Strategy has been developed to give a clear overview of the aspirational green infrastructure network and the green infrastructure benefits which new developments are expected to deliver.

## 2 Policy Context

**2.1** A review of relevant national, regional and local policy is set out within the Green Infrastructure Study. Since this time, three significant changes have occurred in relation to the policy context. The Secretary of State has announced the abolition of Regional Strategies and this is expected to be enacted through the Localism Bill, the District Council has adopted its Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework has been published. The policy review set out here will focus on these changes and how they affect planning for green infrastructure.

### National

**2.2** The National Planning Policy Framework was published in March 2012 and it replaces all previous Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Planning Policy Statements with the exception of PPS10: Planning for Waste. The NPPF sets out the policy direction for green infrastructure as well as a number of related themes. The NPPF seeks to create healthy and sustainable communities by promoting multiple uses of land to deliver both recreational and environmental benefits. It seeks to safeguard biodiversity and geodiversity and protect the Green Belt and open countryside from development.

### Regional

**2.3** The Regional Strategy set out the level of residential, employment, retail and office development which the District should deliver up until 2026. Additionally, the Regional Strategy set out policies to guide new development in terms of location and standards. Local planning policies were required to be in accordance with Regional Strategies. The Wyre Forest District Core Strategy was submitted to the Secretary of State before the announcement regarding Regional Strategies was made, therefore, the Core Strategy was based on the volume of growth set out within the Regional Strategy. The Secretary of State's intention to revoke Regional Strategies was fully considered during the Examination in Public, however, it was considered that the evidence base upon which the Regional Strategy was based is still valid and therefore, the housing numbers were appropriate.

### County

**2.4** The Worcestershire Green Infrastructure Partnership is made up of representatives from The Worcestershire Wildlife Trust, Natural England, The Environment Agency, The Forestry Commission, English Heritage, Woodland Trust, Sustrans, the County and District Councils. The group are working towards producing a green infrastructure strategy for the County and have produced two papers as part of this work. Development of a green infrastructure framework at a sub-regional level is of importance in considering cross boundary relationships such as connectivity, flooding or the proximity of sites as stepping stones or nodes in a wider network.

**2.5** The Framework will be developed in a number of stages. The first stage led to the publication of a paper entitled 'Planning for Landscape, Biodiversity and the Historic Environment in the Development of Green Infrastructure Strategies in Worcestershire'. The purpose of the paper is to introduce the concept of Green Infrastructure (GI) and to identify the key themes that Worcestershire County Council's Strategic Planning and Environmental Policy, Archaeology teams, Natural England together with the Forestry Commission can assist with in addressing the matter in Worcestershire. The paper also acts as a signpost for those who are involved in the development of GI strategies and other planning and environmental policy to areas of advice

and guidance. Although green infrastructure is a multi-functional concept, the paper concentrates on ecological sustainability, landscape character, biodiversity, natural processes and the historic environment.

**2.6** The second paper is entitled 'Planning for a Multi-Functional Green Infrastructure Framework in Worcestershire'. The paper is the second in a series of papers towards the development of a Worcestershire GI framework that will enable the strategic planning, coordination, delivery and management of existing and future green spaces that cuts across local authority administrative boundaries.

**2.7** The Green Infrastructure partnership has also prepared a number of concept statements for particular sites and areas across the County. One of these statements relates to the South Kidderminster Enterprise Park and this has informed the development of this strategy.

### District

**2.8** The Core Strategy was adopted by the District Council in December 2010. It sets out the development strategy for the District - the levels of growth which will be delivered up until 2026 and the broad locations where it will be accommodated. The growth figures from the Adopted Core Strategy are set out below:

**Table 2.0.1 Amount and Location of Development up Until 2026**

Type of Development	Quantity	Broad Location
Residential	4,000 new dwellings	Brownfield sites mainly within Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn with a small amount of development in Bewdley and the rural areas to meet local needs.
Employment	44ha	Mainly focused on the Stourport Road Employment Corridor.
Office	40,000 sq m	Sequential approach - Kidderminster town centre first
Retail	25,000 sq m	Kidderminster town centre

**2.9** The majority of new development within the District will take place on brownfield sites. It is acknowledged that brownfield sites can be home to a range of species of flora and fauna. As part of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), the potential residential sites were considered by Worcestershire Wildlife Trust. This exercise did not highlight any concerns in terms of the biodiversity value of any of the potential residential sites within the District. The redevelopment of brownfield sites offers the opportunity to enhance the environment of the District, to improve the river and canal corridors and to bridge gaps in the current green infrastructure network. There are also opportunities to enhance accessibility to greenspace within existing residential areas.

**2.10** The Adopted Core Strategy also sets out policies for the delivery of new development. Three of these policies are of relevance to this strategy:

- Policy CP12: Landscape Character seeks to safeguard landscape character within the District by using the County Council's Landscape Character Assessment to guide new development within the rural areas of the District. This policy also sets out the intention to establish a Severn Valley regional heritage park to link Stourport-on-Severn to Ironbridge.
- Policy CP13: Providing a Green Infrastructure Network sets out the broad priorities for green infrastructure and sets the principle for developer contributions towards green



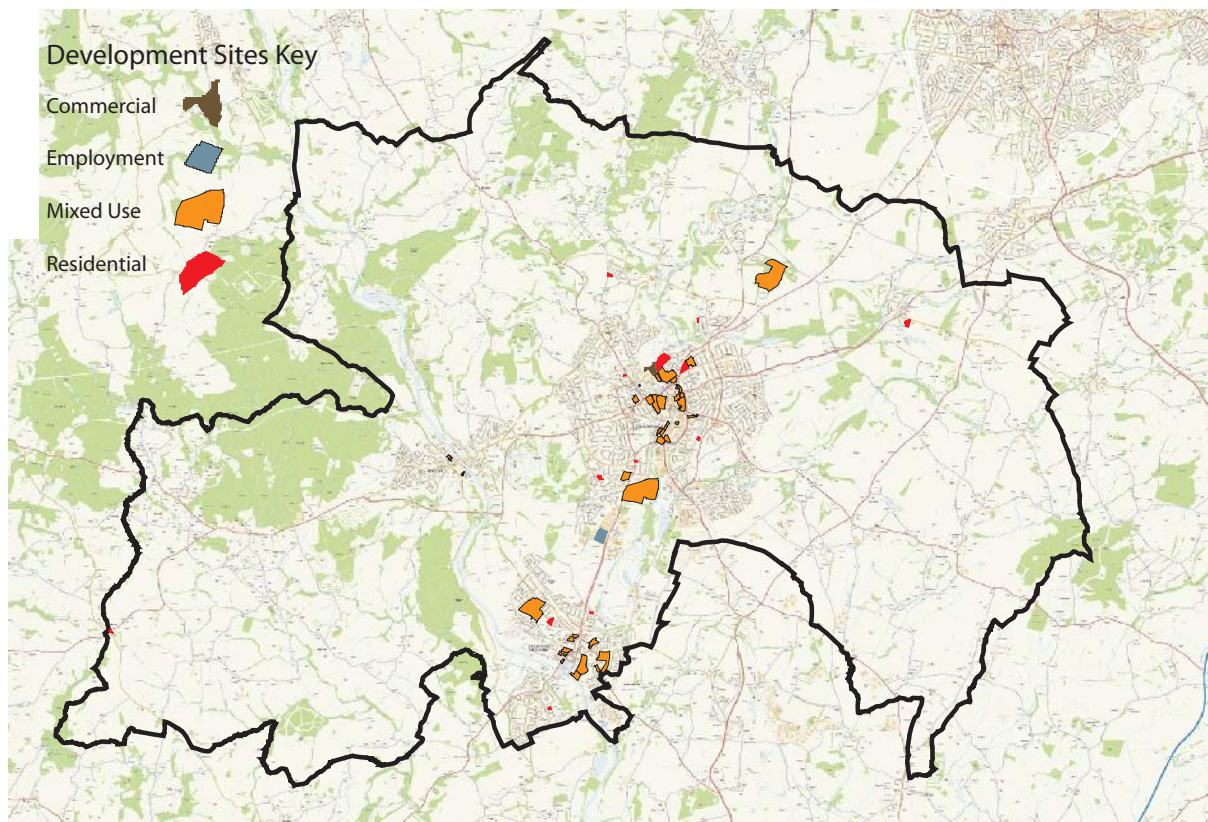
infrastructure projects. The policy also requires all new developments to provide open space where technically feasible which will increase the level of vegetation across the District.

- Policy CP14: Providing Opportunities for Local Biodiversity and Geodiversity safeguards existing identified biodiversity sites and establishes the principle of further tree planting across the District as part of new development where this is appropriate and feasible.

**2.11** As demonstrated by the review of the Core Strategy, the growth which will take place within the District over the next 25 years is not significant enough to warrant major new green infrastructure projects as would be the case if urban extensions were being proposed, therefore, the focus for green infrastructure provision will be addressing typologies where deficiencies have been identified, and ensuring the new development does not exacerbate these deficiencies, whilst ensuring the new developments connect into and enhance the existing green infrastructure network.

**2.12** The Site Allocations and Policies and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan Publication documents set out the District Council's preferred sites for development. These sites have been developed from the evidence base available and from representations received during the issues and options consultation. The sites are shown on the map below in order to give an indication of where development is likely to take place.

### Development Sites within Wyre Forest District



### 3 Methodology

**3.1** This Green Infrastructure Strategy aims to:

- Respond to specific local needs and circumstances which differ markedly across the different areas of the District.
- Safeguard the existing green infrastructure assets within the District whilst enhancing them to deliver a comprehensive green infrastructure network enabling the District's communities to interact with their local environment in a variety of ways.
- Be capable of informing development management decisions by guiding the green infrastructure requirements for development sites as well as being capable of directing funds, including developer contributions.

**3.2** The approach considers green infrastructure resources and assets, current and future demands and opportunities, and the potential benefits a multi functional green space network can bring, particularly in relation to proposed areas of growth within the District. The approach takes the following stages:

- **Stage 1: Identifying the Green Infrastructure Resource**
  - Identify existing green infrastructure assets (this step was achieved through the separate Green Infrastructure Study).
  - Identify networks of strategic spaces, gaps and barriers.
  - Consider the public benefit of spaces, including social, economic and environmental needs and opportunities.
  - Analysis of existing green infrastructure and the need for new green infrastructure both now and in the future.
- **Stage 2: Developing the Green Infrastructure Strategy:**
  - Identify and analyse locally distinctive strategy areas.
  - Develop the strategy looking at where new links need to be provided and where existing elements of the network need to be improved.
  - Consider the implementation and deliverability issues.

## 4 Green Infrastructure in Wyre Forest District

**4.1** This chapter sets out a brief overview of the green infrastructure assets which exist within Wyre Forest District. Further detail on the existing green infrastructure assets within the District can be found within the Green Infrastructure Study.

**4.2** The existing green infrastructure network has been identified using the following datasets:

- Landscape Character Areas
- Landscape Condition for Green Infrastructure
- Worcestershire County Council Environmental Character Areas
- Tree Preservation Orders
- Green Belt
- Conservation Areas
- Natural England Natural Areas
- Worcestershire Biodiversity Action Plan
- SSSIs, NNRs, Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and Special Wildlife Sites (SWSs)
- Garden Ecology
- Worcestershire Habitat Inventory
- RIGS
- Waterways and flood mapping
- Derelict, Vacant and Unused Land
- PPG17 audit
- Public Rights of Way and Cycle paths.

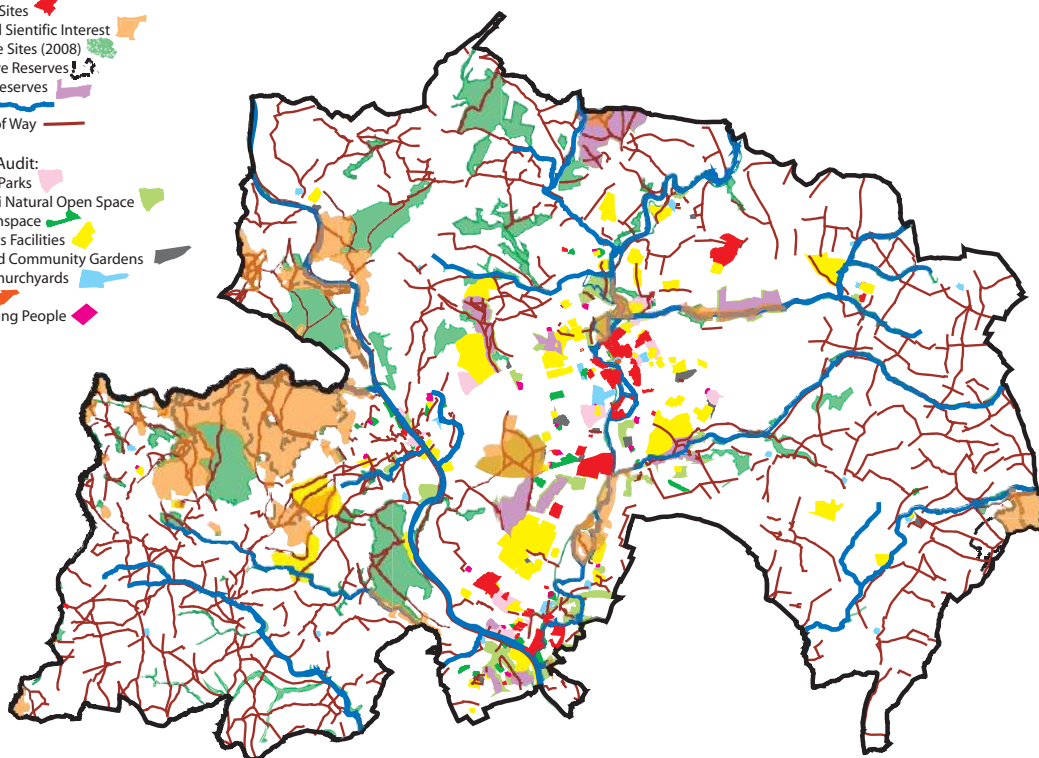
**Landscape at Areley Kings**



**4.3** The key spaces and linkages can be identified by mapping the SSIs, NNRs, LNRs, SWSs Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites (RIGS), Open Space, Sport and Recreation Audit sites and the waterways, Public Rights of Way and cycle paths within the District. The maps below show these green infrastructure assets across the District. Further information on all of these green infrastructure assets can be found within the Green Infrastructure Study.

KEY

- Development Sites ■
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest ■
- Special Wildlife Sites (2008) ■
- National Nature Reserves ■
- Local Nature Reserves ■
- Waterways —
- Public Rights of Way —
  
- Open Space Audit:
- Town & Local Parks ■
- Natural & Semi Natural Open Space ■
- Amenity Greenspace ■
- Outdoor Sports Facilities ■
- Allotments and Community Gardens ■
- Cemeteries & Churchyards ■
- Civic Spaces ■
- Children & Young People ■



## Environmental Character Areas

**4.4** The Worcestershire County Council Environmental Character Areas have been developed since the preparation of the Green Infrastructure Study. These areas were developed as part of the Worcestershire Green Infrastructure Partnership's work and are based on landscape character areas, biodiversity and the historic environment. These characteristics were assessed and each attribute scored, with the amalgamated score for all the characteristics being used to determine the category for each ECA. The scores were determined by a weighted sum which gives greater importance to biodiversity as the key component of Green Infrastructure, with landscape and historic environmental character having an equal but lower weighting. The boundaries shown on the map are intended to be soft edged and indicative and do not define firm boundaries on the ground.

**4.5** The Environmental Character Areas have been placed into one of three categories based on their overall score for Green Infrastructure. These are:

- Protect and enhance
- Protect and restore
- Restore and create

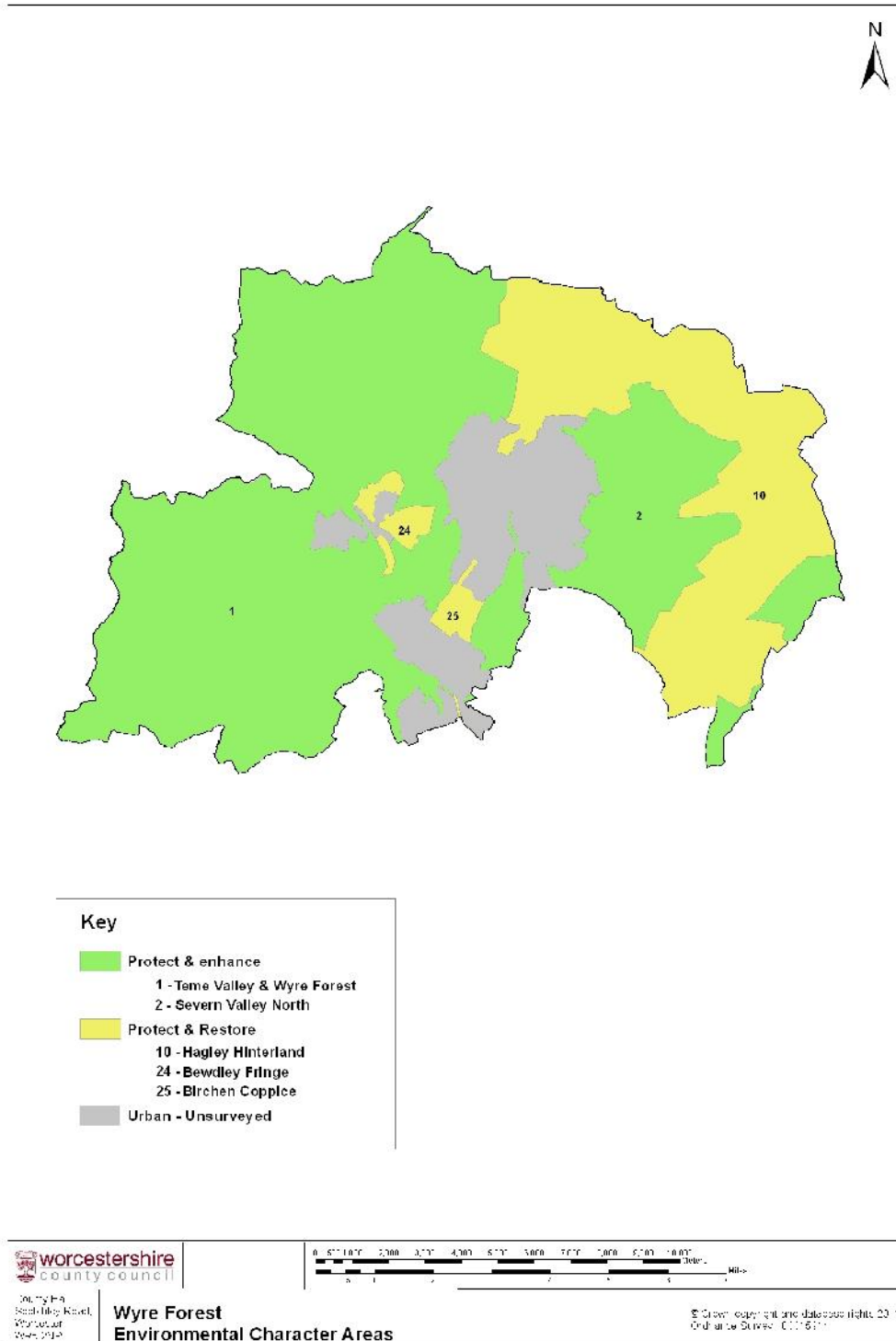
**4.6** The Character Areas which cover Wyre Forest District are:

- Teme Valley & Wyre Forest - Protect and enhance
- Bewdley Fringe - Protect and restore

- Birchen Coppice - Protect and restore
- Hagley Hinterland - Protect and Restore
- Severn Valley North - Protect and Enhance

4.7 The full analysis of these areas and the recommended actions are set out at Appendix A.

**Wyre Forest Green Infrastructure Environmental Character Areas**



### 5 Need and Demand Analysis

**5.1** This section sets out an analysis of the need and demand for green infrastructure, taking account of growth within the District up until 2026. The analysis considers need and demand based on the open space standards set out through the PPG17 audit and looks at spatial priorities for green infrastructure having regard to social deprivation and environmental functions.

**5.2** The analysis is set out under four themes:

- Sustainable Resource Management
- Socio-economic Factors
- The Growth Agenda
- Deficiencies in Accessible Greenspace

#### Sustainable Resource Management

##### Flood Risk

**5.3** The Level 1 and Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessments (SFRAs) aim to inform the preparation of the Local Development Framework, identify key flood risk areas, review flood defence infrastructure, model flood risk across flood zones and analyse site specific flood risk. The Water Cycle Strategy considers flood risk, water resources, water supply, wastewater collection, wastewater treatment and demand management and looks at the improvements necessary to reach the required level of development.

**5.4** The SFRAs and Water Cycle Strategy identify the following characteristics within the area:

- The Rivers Severn and Stour and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal are the main watercourses within the District.
- The main tributaries of the River Severn within the Wyre Forest District are Dowles Brook, Snuffmill Brook, Riddings Brook, Burnthorpe Brook and the River Stour. Dick Brook and Gladder Book rise within the District and flow in a South Easterly direction before joining the River Severn to the South of the District.
- The main tributaries of the River Stour are Drakelow Brook (Hors Brook), Honey Brook, Blakedown Brook, Blake Brook and Hoo Brook.
- The Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal runs parallel with the River Stour throughout the length of the District. It has a number of locks which regulate water levels. Flooding issues can occur if the canal becomes overloaded with water from the River Stour.

**5.5** The possible causes of flooding within the Wyre Forest District include:

- Overflow of watercourses and existing flood defences including water retention facilities such as flood storage reservoirs/washlands and storm water balancing ponds;
- Breaching of flood defences (including flood storage areas);
- Mechanical, structural or operational failure (including due to blockages) of hydraulic structures, pumps etc
- Localised surface water flooding (including sewer flooding, highway drainage flooding and overland flooding
- Manmade waterways such as reservoirs and canals;

- Functional Floodplains or Washlands; and
- Groundwater flooding.

**5.6** Green infrastructure provision can be designed to help to mitigate against flooding by providing multi-functional open space which becomes a storage area for floodwater when necessary. SUDS systems can also form a key part of green infrastructure networks. Green infrastructure can also bring indirect benefits by slowing down the flow of water and the rate at which it reaches river and stream channels.

### Historic Environment

**5.7** The historic environment of Wyre Forest District is an important resource with a large number of assets including listed buildings, locally listed buildings, Conservation Areas and historic landscapes as well as a wealth of undesignated assets. Green infrastructure and the historic environment are intrinsically related. The historic environment can overlap with green infrastructure in the form of historic landscapes and historic parks and gardens. Green infrastructure can also enhance the setting of Listed Buildings and be central to the character of Conservation Areas.

**5.8** The key issues for the Green Infrastructure to consider in terms of sustainable resource management are the inter-relationship between flood risk management and delivering green infrastructure and the safeguarding and enhancing the historic environment through green infrastructure protection and delivery.

### Socio-Economic

**5.9** The following statistics for the District are relevant to green infrastructure planning. These statistics are taken from Nomis, Neighbourhood Statistics and the Wyre Forest Health Profile 2011:

- The November 2010 Wyre Forest Viewpoint survey indicates that 28% of the population are very satisfied with their local area as a place to live and 57% are fairly satisfied.
- In 2010, the average weekly income for all employed Wyre Forest District residents was £343, this has increased since 2006 but is lower than the regional and national averages.
- The 2010 mid-year estimates show that the District has a population of 98,100. Approximately 55,000 of these people live in the District's main town - Kidderminster. Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley have populations of approximately 20,000 and 10,000 respectively. The 2001 census show that only 3.63% of the District's population are from BME groups, this is approximately 10% lower than the regional average.
- The District has an ageing population with a high number of over-45s, particularly over-65s. At June 2009, the percentage of the population who were over retirement age (males over-65, females over-60) was 24.2% which is higher than the regional and national figure.
- 23% of year 6 children within the District are obese compared to 20% within the West Midlands region and 18% nationally (Sept 09-Aug 10).
- 17.4% of reception children within the District are obese compared to 13.3% regionally and 13.2% nationally.
- The estimated level of adult obesity is higher than the national average.
- Average life expectancy within the District is similar to the England average for both men and women however, it is 7.9 years lower for men and 7.6 years lower for women in the most deprived areas compared to the least deprived areas.

- Health priorities for Wyre Forest District include smoking, obesity and diabetes.
- Educational attainment is lower in Wyre Forest District with only 49% of pupils achieving 5 A\*-C grades at GCSE compared to 55% nationally.
- At the time of the 2001 census, 43% of the District's working population travelled to work by driving a car or a van, 6% walked and 1.5% cycled. Regionally and nationally, a smaller proportion of people drive, whilst roughly the same proportion walk or cycle.

### Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

**5.10** The IMD provides a comprehensive picture of deprivation across the District. The figures for Wyre Forest District highlight the following:

- There are some pockets of deprivation within the District, most notably, the Rifle Range area of Oldington and Foley Park ward which is the 350<sup>th</sup> most deprived super output area within the country. The Horsefair area of Broadwaters ward is also within the top 10% most deprived Super Output Areas. These areas are also the most deprived in terms of income levels and again, both areas fall into the top 10% of SOAs nationally.
- In terms of employment deprivation, four areas of the District fall into the top 10% most deprived nationally, these are the Rifle Range area within Oldington and Foley Park ward, the Horsefair area within Broadwaters ward, the Walshes area within Areley Kings ward and the Offmore area within Offmore and Comberton ward.
- In terms of health, two areas of the District fall within the most deprived 10% nationally, these are the Rifle Range area within Oldington and Foley Park ward and the Offmore area within Offmore and Comberton ward.
- In terms of education, the Rifle Range area within Oldington and Foley Park is the 8<sup>th</sup> most deprived Super Output Area nationally. Horsefair area and the Sion Hill estate within Broadwaters ward, Comberton estate within Offmore and Comberton ward, the Habberley estate within Habberley and Blakebrook ward, the Sutton Park estate within Sutton Park ward, the Birchen Coppice estate within Oldington and Foley Park ward, the Manor estate within Lickhill ward, and the Walshes area of Areley Kings ward.
- In terms of barriers to housing and services it is the rural areas which are most deprived, particularly the wards of Rock, Blakedown and Chaddesley, and the Northern part of Wribbenhall ward. This is likely to be because this domain takes into consideration factors such as those under 35 whose income means that they can not afford to enter home-ownership, and road distance to a post office, primary school, supermarket or convenience store and GP surgery. Many of the rural villages do not have easy access to these facilities and have much higher average house prices than the urban areas.
- In terms of crime, the areas which are most deprived and in the top 10% nationally are the Rifle Range estate within Oldington and Foley Park ward, and Kidderminster Town Centre.
- The Living Environment domain considers social and private housing in poor condition, homes without central heating, air quality and road traffic accidents. The area immediately to the west of the town centre within Sutton Park ward and part of Greenhill fall into the 10% most deprived Super Output areas of living environment. These areas are characterised by high density terraced housing which may lack central heating and be in poorer condition because of its age.



IMD Key 2010



10% Most Deprived



21 - 50% Least Deprived



11 - 20% Most Deprived

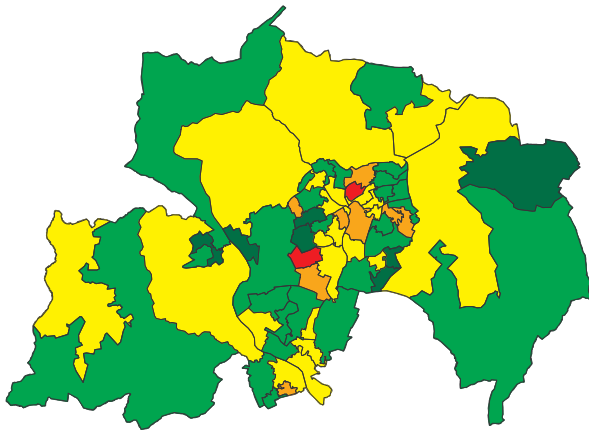


20% Least Deprived

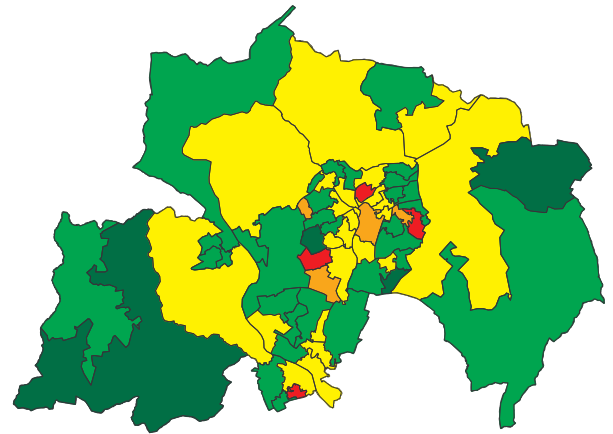


21 - 50% Most Deprived

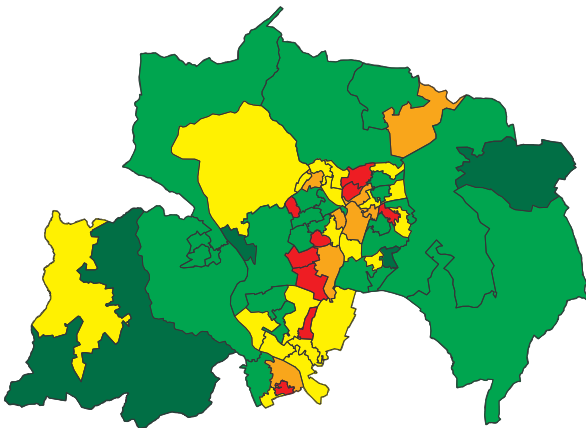
Overall IMD 2010



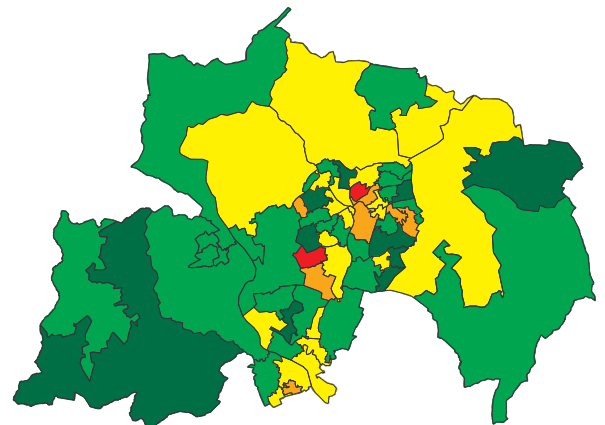
Employment IMD 2010



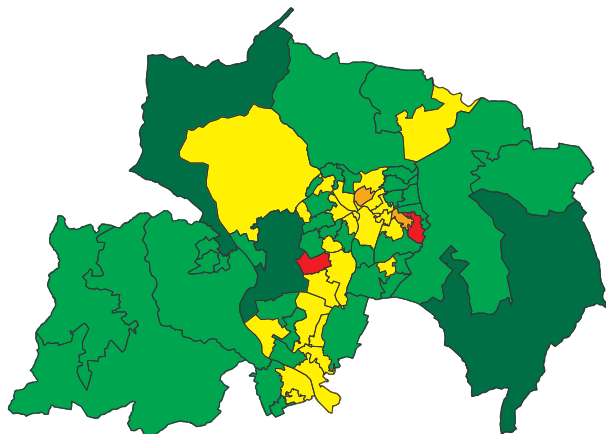
Education IMD 2010



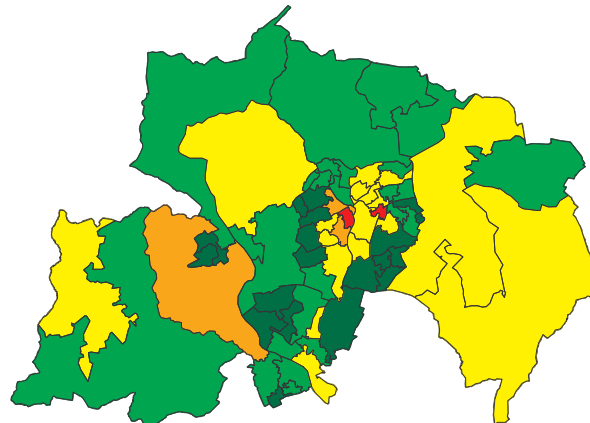
Income IMD 2010



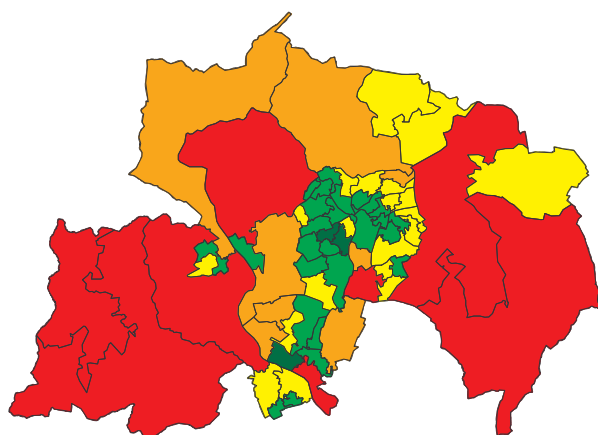
Health IMD 2010



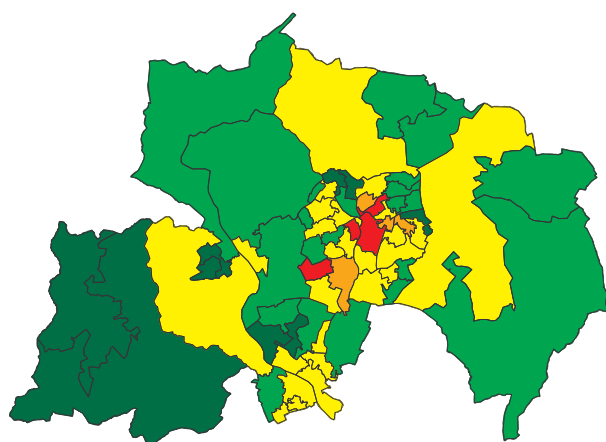
Living Environment IMD 2010



Barriers to Housing IMD 2010



Crime IMD 2010



**5.11** Although links can sometimes be established between high levels of deprivation and a lack of green space, particularly in terms of health deprivation, this link can not be made within Wyre Forest District. The Rifle Range is the most deprived area within the District, however, it has access to a large area of natural open space, as well as smaller areas of amenity greenspace and play facilities. All of those areas identified as being deprived have access to green space.

## Regeneration Initiatives

**5.12** Regeneration is a key focus for the District's development strategy. The ReWyre Prospectus focuses on the regeneration of Kidderminster as the District's main town and identifies the following opportunities which are relevant to green infrastructure:

- Possible down-grading of Kidderminster Ring-road;
- Connecting the tourism attractions of the District with the town centre;
- Connecting the town with Churchfields;
- Creating 'a vibrant high quality mixed-use town centre' at the heart of the community maximising employment prospects through investment in new offices, tourism, leisure and shopping opportunities;
- Delivering the 'South Kidderminster Enterprise Park', focussing on environmental technology businesses to create a regionally significant business location which includes the former British Sugar site;

- The regeneration of extensive brownfield sites delivering renewed housing choices including new affordable homes and stronger communities;
- Delivering a town that capitalises on its natural and cultural assets;
- Continuing the work which has seen salmon and otters return to the River Stour and Kidderminster Town Centre through cleaning up and realising the redevelopment potential of adjacent sites;
- Raising design quality to ensure that new development maximises the potential of the environmental and heritage setting and enhancing the quality of public streets, spaces, the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal and channels of the River Stour.

**5.13** A Rural Economic Strategy has been prepared for the District. This document sets the vision for rural economic growth and development from 2008-2014. The document includes a SWOT analysis, the key opportunities from this which relate to green infrastructure are:

- Biomass and wood fuel supply chains.
- Build stronger links to the nearby urban areas.
- Geo-park in the West of the District.
- Forestry Commission's Grow with Wyre project at the Wyre Forest.
- Improve accessibility.
- Open up culverts as part of the development of green infrastructure/corridors along the District's waterway networks.
- Potential to explore the opportunities that may exist for production of biomass fuel.

**5.14** The main socio-economic issues for the Green Infrastructure Strategy to address are ensuring that the opportunities identified through the Rural Economic Strategy are seized, planning green spaces which meet the needs of an ageing population whilst providing opportunities to reduce obesity levels, particularly childhood obesity levels, and encouraging walking and cycling for leisure and as a mode of transport. In terms of addressing deprivation, more could be done around education and the benefits of using green space as well as promoting existing green space to local communities to encourage its use.

## The Growth Agenda

**5.15** As set out in table 2.0.1, the growth within the District up until 2026 will be in the region of 4,000 new dwellings. These homes will be focused primarily on brownfield sites within the existing urban areas. The indicative locational split is as follows:

- Kidderminster - 60%
- Stourport-on-Severn 30%
- Bewdley and the rural areas - 10%

**5.16** Population projections (ONS) show that by 2026, the District's population will have increased by 6% to 104,200. Based on the location of new housing developments, the majority of this increase is likely to occur within Kidderminster, with Stourport-on-Severn also seeing a significant level of growth. Population growth in Bewdley and the rural areas is likely to be limited as a result of limited housing numbers being directed to these areas.

**5.17** The population increase within Wyre Forest District could have the following implications for green infrastructure provision:

- Increased pressure on water and sewage resources which can be mitigated by using Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and incorporating water efficiency measures into new homes. The Adopted Core Strategy requires all new developments to incorporate SuDS where feasible and all new residential development to meet Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 for water efficiency.
- Increased pressure on road and transport linkages, particularly between the main urban areas of Kidderminster and along the Stourport Road Employment Corridor. This can be mitigated by the provision of walking and cycling infrastructure which provides links to essential services and facilities as well as recreation, employment and recreational areas.
- Increased pressure on green spaces can be mitigated through the provision of additional green infrastructure resources including on-site recreational and landscaping provision and new linear routes.
- Increased pressure on health resources can be partly mitigated through the provision of additional green infrastructure including walking and cycling routes.

**5.18** In terms of the growth agenda, the main areas which the Green Infrastructure Strategy will need to consider are the impact of population growth on access to green infrastructure, the role of green infrastructure in reducing traffic congestion by encouraging walking and cycling as modes of transport, and the role of green infrastructure in encouraging healthy and active lifestyles which will alleviate pressure on health services.

### Accessible Green Space Deficiency

#### Open Space Standards

**5.19** Wyre Forest District Council commissioned consultants PMP to undertake an audit of the quantity, quality and accessibility of open spaces within the District in compliance with PPG17. The study was published in October 2008. The study addresses the following types of open space:

- Parks and gardens
- Natural and semi natural open space
- Amenity green space
- Provision for children and young people
- Outdoor sports facilities
- Indoor sports facilities
- Allotments
- Cemeteries and churchyards
- Civic spaces
- Green corridors

**5.20** The key findings from the Open Space, Sport and Recreation audit were as follows:

- **Accessibility:**
  - Access to parks and gardens within the rural areas of the District is good with the majority of residents being within the recommended drive time of a facility. In the urban areas however, there are a number of key areas of deficiency with a large proportion of residents within the Kidderminster West and Stourport-on-Severn areas being outside the accessibility threshold of a park.

- Access to natural and semi-natural open space is high across the District with most residents being able to access space within the recommended 10 minute walk time.
  - Amenity greenspace is poorly distributed across the District, key areas of deficiency exist in the East Kidderminster, north west Kidderminster and the north of Stourport-on-Severn. The majority of residents within Bewdley can access amenity greenspace within the recommended 10 minute walk time.
  - Children's play space is well distributed across the District, however, there remains some key areas of deficiency within Kidderminster.
  - There is a good distribution of facilities for young people across the District, however, due to the lack of facilities a number of people are outside the recommended distance threshold, particularly in Kidderminster and in the north of Stourport-on-Severn.
  - There is an even spread of outdoor sports facilities across the District and most residents are within the recommended distance/time threshold. However, tennis courts and larger sites with multiple facilities as well as bowling greens are focused in Stourport-on-Severn.
  - Despite an even distribution of allotments in Wyre Forest there are a number of areas of deficiency. Clear accessibility deficiencies are evident in Bewdley, the centre of Stourport, the centre of the western half of Kidderminster and north east Kidderminster.
- **Quantity:**
    - Quantity of parks is perceived to be sufficient, however, improving the quality is considered to be more important than increasing the quantity.
    - The need to protect natural and semi-natural open space was a key theme emerging through the consultation undertaken.
    - There are mixed perceptions relating to the quantity of amenity greenspace.
    - The consultation shows that the quantity of facilities for children and young people, as well as the quantity should be improved.
    - There is a lack of provision of allotments across the District.
  - **Quality:**
    - Quantity of parks is perceived to be good by residents.
    - Quality of natural sites is important to residents and the wider benefits of these sites are recognised. Both the recreational and aesthetic value if these sites are perceived to be particularly important.
    - The quality of amenity greenspace within the District is varied but overall can be considered to be average.
    - The consultation identified a number of quality issues with facilities for children and young people, the key concern was the lack of imaginative facilities available.
    - The quality of allotments throughout the District is average.

**5.21** The report recommends a number of actions to enhance the quality, quantity and accessibility of provision across the District. These are set out by typology below.

- **Parks and Gardens:**
  - All parks and gardens should be protected from development.

- Seek to create a network of high quality town and local parks within the District. Improvements to local sites should focus first in those areas where there is a lack of town parks.
- Seek to increase access to all parks within the District, particularly the strategic parks such as Brinton Park, Memorial Park and Jubilee Gardens.
- Upgrade existing amenity greenspaces in areas deficient in parks in the Bewdley analysis area.
- Prioritise the development of a new local park within Areley Kings, Spennells, and within the south east and west of Kidderminster.

- **Natural and Semi-Natural Open Space:**

- Identify opportunities for improving the quality of natural and semi-natural open spaces both in terms of the wildlife and habitat values of the site, but also for recreational purposes.
- Maximise biodiversity on natural and semi-natural open spaces.
- Seek to increase access to natural and semi-natural open space in Bewdley, Stourport-on-Severn and West Kidderminster.
- Consider opportunities for new provision within Bewdley, north-east Kidderminster and west Kidderminster.

**Natural and Semi-Natural Open Space, Britannia Gardens, Stourport-on-Severn**



- Protect natural open spaces in Bewdley and Stouprort-on-Severn from development.
- Enhance the quality of natural and semi-natural open space in the rural areas. Should the opportunity arise consider the provision of more formal natural and semi-natural open spaces in larger settlements such as Rock and Far Forest.

- **Amenity Green Space:**

- Seek to improve the quality of amenity green spaces, achieving a minimum score of 70%.
- Focus on the qualitative enhancement of existing facilities within Bewdley.
- Should the opportunity arise provide new amenity green spaces within Franche and Habberley.

- **Children's Play Areas:**

- Use findings of the quality assessment to inform a programme of improvements across facilities for children and young people.
- Encourage and facilitate the involvement of children and young people in the design and development of local facilities.
- Ensure facilities meet the recommended quality standard.
- Investigate opportunities to deliver new facilities for both children and young people at school sites.
- Seek to increase access and maintain the high quality of Northwood Lane Play area.

- Seek to increase access to existing young people's facilities in the Bewdley area. Should the need arise consider the provision of a new young people's facility within the Greenacres Lane amenity greenspace.
- Seek to increase access to children's play areas in Stourport analysis area, particularly access to larger valuable sites such as Memorial Park play area.
- Consider the provision of a new young people's facility within Memorial Park.
- Seize opportunities to provide new young people's facilities in Areley Kings.
- Encourage the development of 'The Wild Walshes Play Project' within Stourport to ensure maximum benefit for children and young people is gained from this project.
- Provide a new facility for children within the existing areas of deficiency in the Kidderminster East analysis area (Comberton/Broadwaters).
- Consider the distribution of children's play areas north of Kidderminster town centre to extend the catchments to residents located in areas of deficiency. Offmore and Comberton ward is a particular priority.
- Consider the provision of a new facility for children at Captain's Pool Road.
- Prioritise the new provision of young people's facilities within Aggborough and Offmore.
- Seek to increase access to Brinton Park play area to maximise the opportunities the site provides for residents located in areas of deficiency.
- Consider the provision of a new play area within Woodbury Road AGS.
- Seize opportunities to provide a new facility for young people within Franche or Habberley.
- Consider any potential opportunities for new provision of a young people's facility within the north east region of the Kidderminster West analysis area.
- Prioritise the new provision of a young people's facility in the centre of Kidderminster West analysis area. Consider the location of a new young people's facility within the Bewdley Hill AGS.
- Protect rural facilities and support Parish Councils in the provision and maintenance of these sites.
- Consider public transport links in the planning and development of new facilities for young people and ensure that facilities are accessible to young people within the rural areas.
- Seek to improve access to existing children's play areas in the rural east analysis area, taking into account natural barriers that may affect access.

#### Britannia Gardens Play Area



#### ● Outdoor Sports Facilities:

- Focus on increasing access to, and improving the quality of, existing tennis courts in the District.
- Seek to enhance the quality of bowling greens within the District.

- Protect all outdoor sports facilities from development.
  - Seize opportunities to provide a publicly accessible grass pitch within the Bewdley analysis area.
  - Prioritise the new provision of a grass pitch within the Kidderminster East analysis area. New provision should be located in an area where there is a lack of pitches and demand for a new facility.
  - Seize potential opportunities to provide new sports pitches in the Kidderminster West analysis area. Consider the use of developer contributions to achieve this new required provision.
- **Allotments:**
    - Ensure that new housing developments allow for any increase in demand for allotments.
    - Seek to increase the quality of existing allotments.
    - Investigate the demand for the provision of new allotments in the Bewdley analysis area and provide a new site if demand is expressed. This should be centrally located in order to serve as many residents of the town as possible.
    - Monitor the demand for the provision of allotments in the Stourport analysis area and examine the need for additional sites across the area as the population grows.
    - Protect existing sites in the Kidderminster East analysis area and consider opportunities for new provision, ideally located within the area of existing deficiency.

- **Cemeteries and Churchyards:**

- Stakeholders should recognise and promote the nature conservation value of closed cemeteries and churchyards and consider working towards developing more awareness of ecological management of cemeteries and churchyards.

### Areley Kings Churchyard



- **Green Corridors:**

- The Council should work with Worcestershire County Council, the PCT and other key partners to help maximise the use of green corridors and Public Rights of Way in the District.
- Building on the popularity of green corridors, the Council should look to enhance and develop pathways along the rivers and canals.
- Linking green corridors with open spaces within the District should be a key priority for the Council. This will provide opportunities for informal recreation and alternative means of transport, using all types of open space.

**5.22** The key areas for the Green Infrastructure Strategy to address in relation to deficiencies in open space are:

- Addressing identified deficiencies in open space provision.



- Ensuring that new developments provide open space in accordance with the quantity, quality and accessibility standards established within the audit.
- Ensuring that opportunities are taken to address strategic deficiencies in open space provision.

## 6 Vision, Aims and Objectives

### The Strategic Vision for Green Infrastructure

**6.1** In line with the Wyre Forest District Green Infrastructure Study, the strategic vision for green infrastructure within the District is set out below:

#### **Green Infrastructure Vision:**

In 2026 a comprehensive network of green infrastructure will have been created across Wyre Forest District linking the three towns of Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley to each other and to the surrounding open countryside. New residential, commercial and industrial developments will have contributed towards the delivery of green infrastructure and this will have delivered a range of benefits for the District's residents and visitors. The District will be a more attractive place to live, work and invest.

Local biodiversity will have been enhanced particularly the three principal habitat types: woodland, wetland and heathland; open spaces and green corridors will have been developed, leading to enhanced recreational opportunities, improved walking and cycling routes and lower obesity levels.

In Kidderminster, the River Stour will have been opened up as part of the town centre's regeneration and will form a green corridor and be home to a number of the District's protected species. The Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal will continue to provide pedestrian and cycle linkages through the town and onto Stourport-on-Severn and the surrounding rural areas. Kidderminster will be an attractive town with street trees and green roofs helping to enhance biodiversity and reduce the impacts of climate change, including surface water run-off and the urban heat island effect.

Stourport-on-Severn will be enhanced to provide strong linkages between open spaces along the riverside and around the canal basins. The riverside itself will have been transformed into a diverse open space which provides opportunities for outdoor events, recreation and play, biodiversity, leisure walks, and cycling.

Bewdley will continue to develop as a thriving riverside town, attracting tourists all year round. The town will retain and develop strong links with the Wyre Forest itself, particularly by exploiting the opportunities that the forest offers for biomass. The town will retain its traditional riverside green infrastructure and a community orchard will be developed within the town.

In the District's rural areas, key sites such as the Wyre Forest itself will continue to provide recreational opportunities alongside the other significant benefits of green infrastructure. Walking and cycling links will be enhanced between rural sites and the District's three towns.

#### **Key Principles:**

**6.2** The following key principles form the heart of the Green Infrastructure Strategy and should be applied to all developments regardless of size:

- **A Network of Green Infrastructure:** Green infrastructure can assist in determining where new development takes place. Existing green infrastructure assets should be safeguarded and where new development is located adjacent to such assets, it should make a positive contribution towards them. Green infrastructure can also add value to a development, however, it needs to be planned within the context of the local landscape. All new green infrastructure should connect into existing green infrastructure elements and should contribute to delivering a connected network of spaces, places, and corridors throughout the District.
- **Multi-Functionality:** Each element of the green infrastructure network can perform a number of benefits both for people and nature. The more functions an element of green infrastructure can perform, the higher its value.
- **Quality and Design:** Design of green infrastructure should be to a high quality standard and wherever practicable, involve local communities in the design process to ensure sustainability and deliver social, economic and environmental benefits.
- **Linking Town and Country:** Green infrastructure can bring the countryside into the towns. Green infrastructure should focus on providing links between the three towns of Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley and on linking each of the towns to their surrounding rural hinterlands.
- **Sustainability:** All new development, including new green infrastructure provision should take into account the wider need to deliver sustainable places. As such, green infrastructure provision must consider issues such as social inclusion, community cohesion and economic regeneration. It is important that local communities are engaged in the planning and design of green infrastructure provision in order to ensure that it meets their needs.
- **Investment for the Future:** Green infrastructure investment needs to come from a broad partnership of agencies, statutory and non-statutory. This investment needs to be regarded as public investment for the benefit of all. Green infrastructure planning should have at its heart a conservation, improvement and maintenance agenda.

## Objectives

**6.3** The following objectives will be addressed through the Green Infrastructure Strategy:

1. To identify and map the potential for new and enhanced assets including opportunities for landscape, habitat enhancement, mitigation for climate change and flood risk management and the provision of new green spaces. With particular emphasis on the three towns and linking them with each other and the wider countryside.
2. To improve health and quality of life through the provision of a comprehensive network of high quality greenspaces and green corridors which provide opportunities of healthy exercise through access, recreation, movement and leisure.
3. To identify opportunities to improve existing, and create new green infrastructure alongside new development in the District through developer contributions.
4. To identify a set of overarching principles for the planning, design and long-term management of green infrastructure in the District.

## 7 The Proposed Strategic Green Infrastructure Network

**7.1** This section sets out the proposed strategic green infrastructure network for Wyre Forest District as specified in objective two. This has been developed alongside the Site Allocations and Policies DPD and the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan DPD. It sets out the aspirational green infrastructure network, strategic objectives for the delivery of green infrastructure provision and assesses the limitations of this strategy.

### 7.1 Aspirations for Green Infrastructure

#### The Strategic Green Infrastructure Network

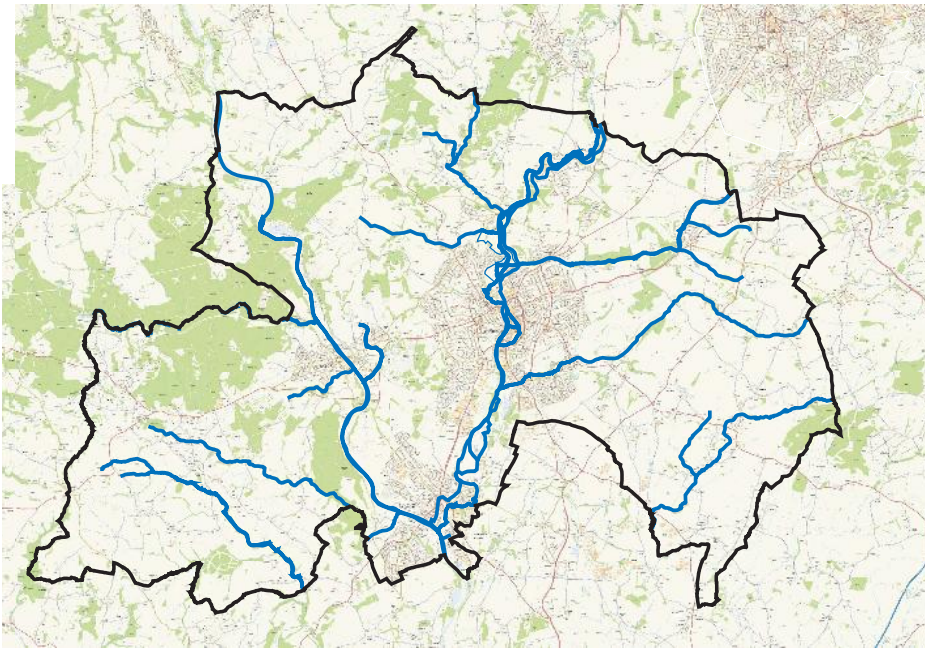
**7.2** The existing strategic green infrastructure network is made up of a series of spaces which are linked by corridors. The different elements of the network perform different functions. Many of the elements of the green infrastructure network are multi-functional. The corridors are strategically important as they provide a connection between different elements of the network for both people and nature. The corridors provide access from the town centres into the wider countryside and often cross District boundaries. The corridors within the network provide opportunities to access recreation and prevent the fragmentation of habitats. Where gaps and weaknesses in the connectivity of the network have been identified, proposals to improve corridors have been identified.

#### Key Aspects of the Network

##### Corridors

- **The River Severn** connects Stourport-on-Severn to Bewdley and the rural areas beyond, it provides walking links and is a valuable nature corridor.
- **The River Stour** flows through Kidderminster and provides some limited riverside pedestrian routes. Recent developments in the town such as the Morrisons and Tesco supermarket developments have addressed the river frontage providing enhancements for biodiversity as well as pedestrian opportunities. The River Stour is culverted through much of the town centre and there is a desire to open up river as part of new developments wherever possible. The River Stour is a valuable wildlife corridor.
- **The Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal** links Stourport-on-Severn to Kidderminster and rural areas beyond. The Canal corridor is both a Special Wildlife Site and Conservation Area and as such it is an important biodiversity corridor as well as being a key part of the landscape. The towpath provides walking and cycling links and is a part of the national cycle route network. The canal passes through the town centre, however traditionally development has turned its back on the canal. There is now a desire to utilise the canal frontage to create more attractive development and the increase in value that this brings is widely recognised. More recently, Waterside Grange and other residential developments have successfully addressed the canal frontage. Some of the District's key development sites are along the canal corridor, most notably the former British Sugar site.
- **Streams:** The District has a number of streams which are specifically important for providing connectivity for biodiversity. The streams connect together a number of pools. Flooding from these streams has become more of a concern in recent years and this will need to be considered through site specific development proposals where appropriate.

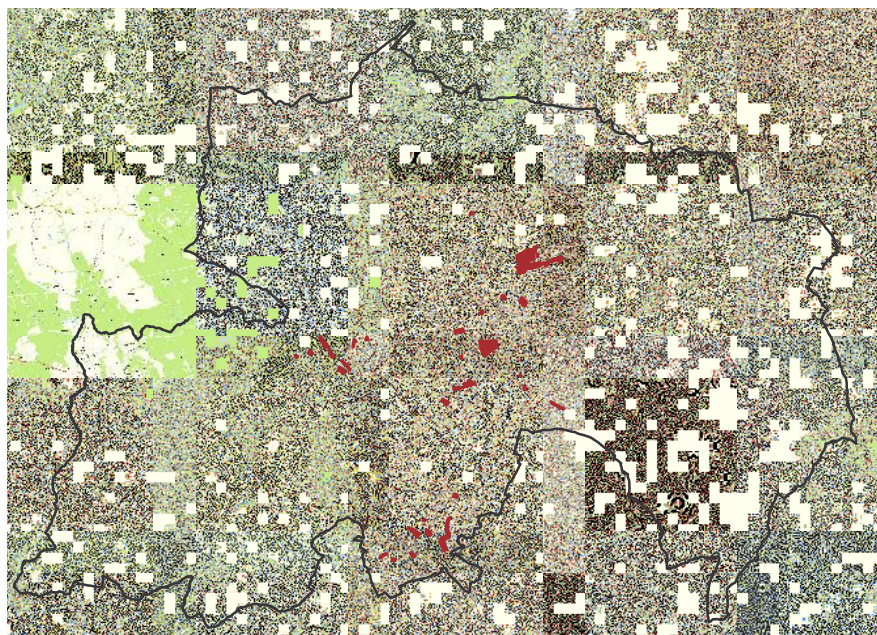
### Waterways



### Spaces:

- **Jubilee Gardens** is a key open space within the heart of Bewdley town centre. The recent community orchard project has further developed and expanded this space.
- **Brinton Park, Broadwaters Park, Springfield Park and St George's Park** all provide valuable open space provision within close proximity to Kidderminster town centre. Both Broadwaters Park and Springfield Park have a close relationship with the District's blue infrastructure. Better connectivity is needed from the town centre to all of these spaces.
- A good network of **amenity greenspace** already exists within the District, new development should provide additional spaces and consider how they connect to the wider green infrastructure network.

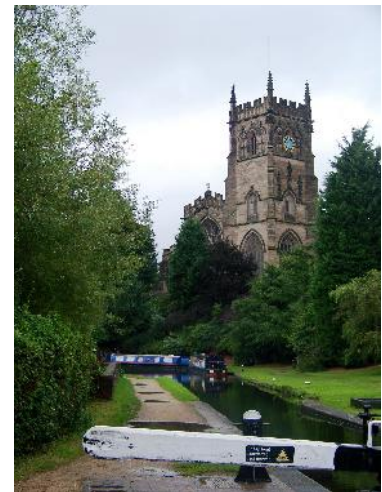
### Green Spaces



## Landscapes and Townscapes:

- **Bewdley** 's landscape is characterised by the steep valley of the River Severn and wooded escarpments which are valuable for biodiversity, air quality, water management and landscape character. Whilst these spaces are not recreational spaces their contribution to the character of Bewdley should not be under-estimated. There is a need to ensure that the wooded escarpments are not eroded by continued pressure for infill development within the town.
- **Kidderminster** town centre lacks street trees and green spaces, there is a need to ensure that new development in the town centre creates attractive townscapes and provides green roofs where possible to encourage wildlife by provide stepping stones and to make the town centre more attractive.
- **Stourport-on-Severn's** key green infrastructure assets are arguably the riverside meadows and canal basins, new development should enhance the connectivity between these spaces. The town centre offers views out to the open countryside which should be protected.
- There are important views into the **Open Countryside** from all three of the District's towns, these should be safeguarded.
- **The Wyre Forest** is a significant green infrastructure asset in the West of the District. It is important for nature and recreation, and is a significant part of the District's landscape.

**The Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal, Kidderminster**



## 7.2 Strategic Objectives for Green Infrastructure Provision

### District-wide Green Infrastructure Objectives:

**7.3** The objectives set out below have been informed by the Green Infrastructure Study and the County Council's green infrastructure work. The objectives are reflective of the fact that the development strategy for the District set out within the Adopted Core Strategy is based upon brownfield regeneration within the existing urban areas. The nature of the development strategy means that improvements to the green infrastructure network will be focused around improving access to, and linkages between the different elements of the existing green infrastructure network as well as addressing both deficiencies arising from new development.

#### District Wide Green Infrastructure Objectives

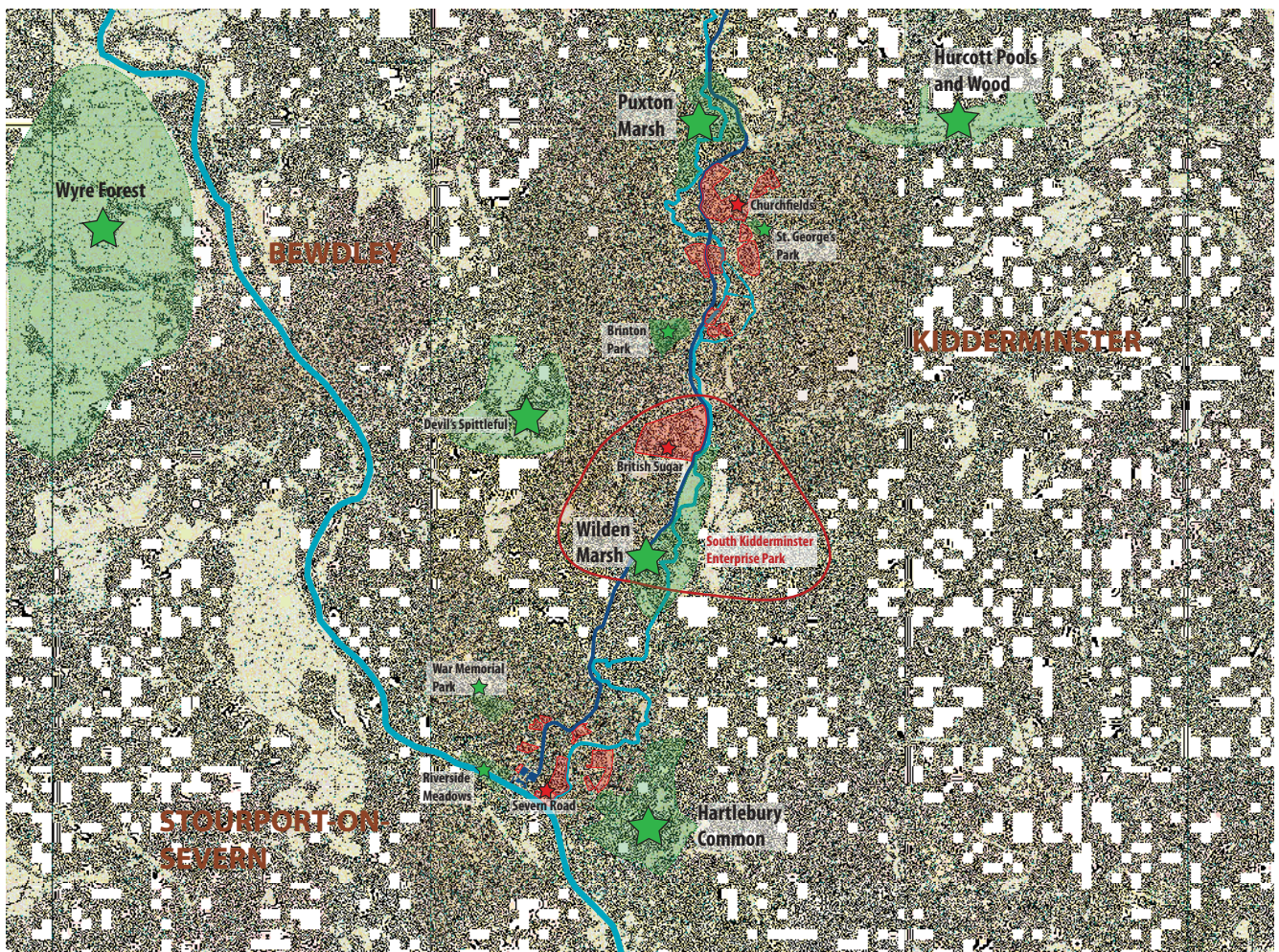
Within Wyre Forest District new development should:

- Seek to retain existing open space and sports provision and where it can be demonstrated that this is not feasible, appropriate compensatory provision should be made.
- Seek to retain mature trees where appropriate.
- Provide appropriate pedestrian and cycle access to the existing green infrastructure network in order to encourage active recreation and travel.

- Provide opportunities for wildlife and biodiversity incorporating appropriate soft landscaping and features which act as green stepping stones.
- Incorporate SUDS schemes which offer benefits for the green infrastructure network and consider how flood alleviation schemes can incorporate green infrastructure provision.
- Consider the use of green infrastructure to adapt to and mitigate against climate change.

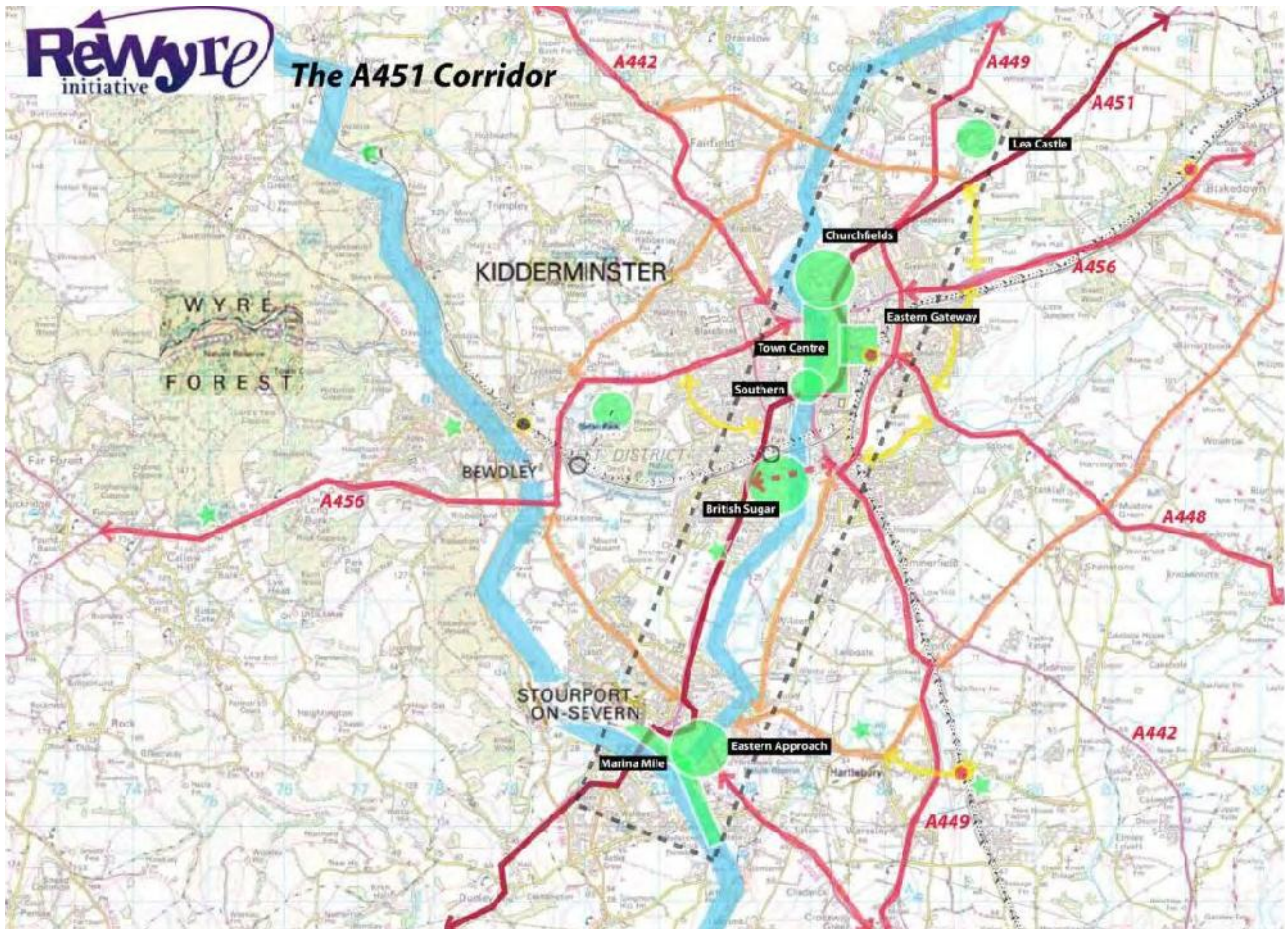
**7.4** The development strategy for the District concentrates on the regeneration of Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn. Employment development is focused within the South Kidderminster Enterprise Park which includes two main corridors, the Stourport Road Employment Corridor and the Worcester Road Employment Corridor. Therefore, much of the District's development up until 2026 will be concentrated along the River Stour Corridor, providing opportunities to enhance this significant green infrastructure corridor. The map below shows the Stour and Severn Valleys and highlights some significant green infrastructure assets and some of the key development sites.

### River Stour and River Severn Corridors



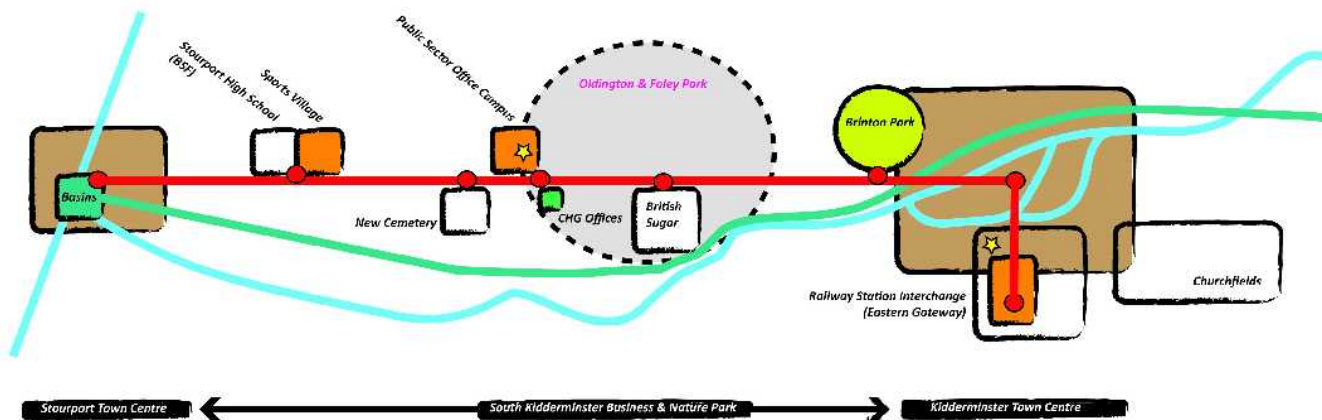
**7.5** The map below highlights the key development sites within the A451 corridor which includes the Stourport Road Employment corridor. Key opportunities for green infrastructure relating to the development sites are also highlighted.

A451 Corridor



7.6 The concept diagram below shows the key locations along the Stour Valley/A451 corridor. There is potential to link development sites into the green infrastructure network using the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal and the River Stour.

River Stour/A451 Corridor - Investment Opportunities



7.7 This section will demonstrate how the development sites will be required to contribute to the green infrastructure network. The sites are set out on an area basis.



## Kidderminster:

**7.8** The Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan will provide the regeneration framework for the town centre and immediate surroundings. The plan will allocate sites for specific uses as well as setting out development management policies which are specific to this area. The town centre is a highly urban environment and the area inside the ring road has virtually no green infrastructure despite its setting within the Stour valley and the River Stour following through the town centre. Over recent years this has begun to be addressed through new development however, the diagram below shows that whilst there is a substantial green infrastructure network around the outskirts of the town centre this does not currently extend inside the ring road. Beyond the immediate town centre, the Habberley Hills and surrounding landscape provide a natural bowl or hinterland to the Stour valley. This provides the town with a picturesque backdrop and emphasises the town's links to the natural systems beyond the urban edge. Key to achieving an integrated green infrastructure network will be making visual, ecological and physical links to these features.

### Kidderminster Green Infrastructure Assets

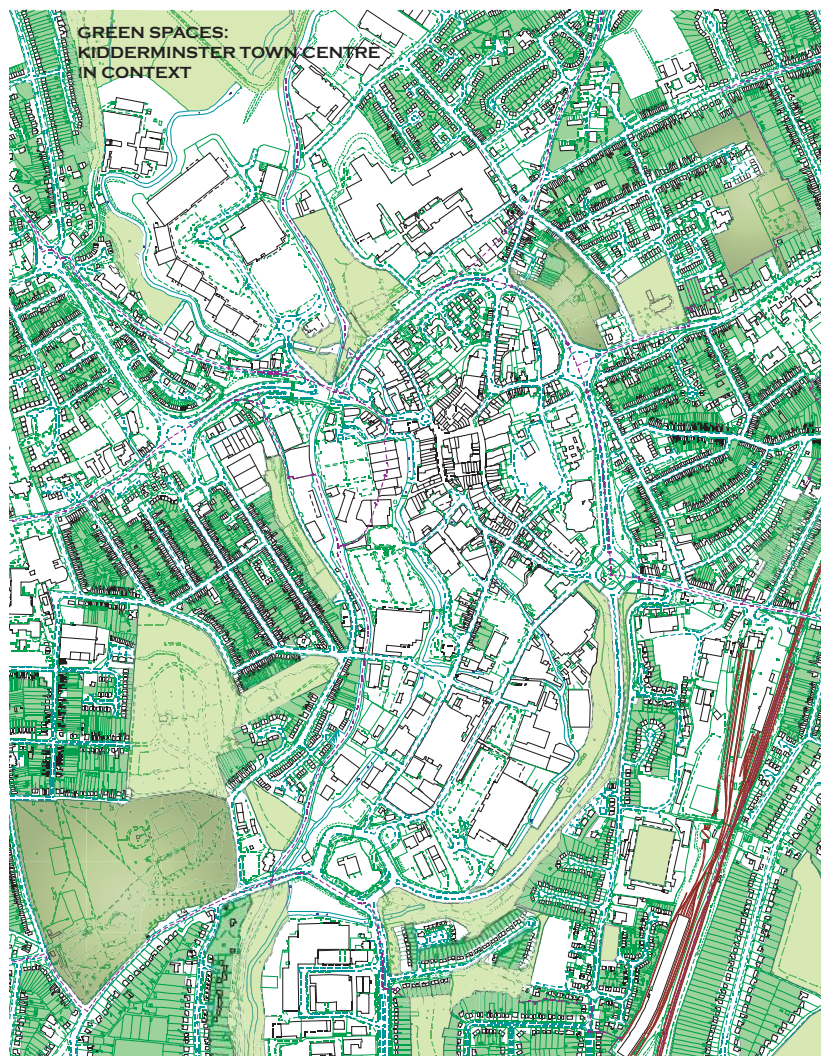


## Green Infrastructure Opportunities

**7.9** Park Lane presents an opportunity to provide a town centre park. This is a steep but tiered site adjacent to the Timber Yard which is a potential redevelopment site highlighted within the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan. A new bridge link is proposed over the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal which would help to link this space with the town centre. The site's relative isolation provides a peaceful setting and a process of natural regeneration has provided a haven for wildlife.

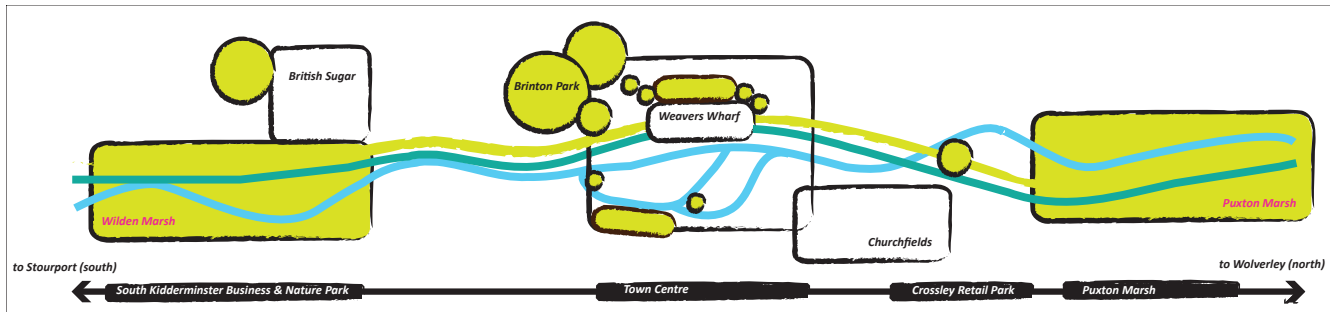
**7.10** Opportunities also exist to introduce soft landscaping to the ground of St. Mary's Church. Whilst the churchyard itself is an important part of the green infrastructure network, the piazza which lies between the ring-road and the church has limited soft landscaping. The Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan seeks to soften the impact of the ring road and create better linkages between Church Street, St. Mary's Church, and through to the Churchfields area of redevelopment. This could present opportunities to soften the landscaping in front of St. Mary's Church.

### Green Infrastrucutre in the Kidderminster Central Area



**7.11** The diagram below shows the strategic green infrastructure network running from Puxton Marsh to Wilden Marsh along the A451/Stour Valley corridor. The River Stour together with the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal provide significant opportunities to green the town centre, addressing the deficit identified in the diagram above.

**Picture 7.1 Green Infrastructure Opportunities - Puxton Marsh to Wilden Marsh**



## Development Sites and Green Infrastructure Requirements

### Churchfields:

**7.12** The Churchfields Masterplan sets out a number of development principles for the area, the principles of relevance to the Green Infrastructure Strategy are:

- Utilise the open space network and topography for visual interest and recreation.
- Provide a positive frontage to the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal.

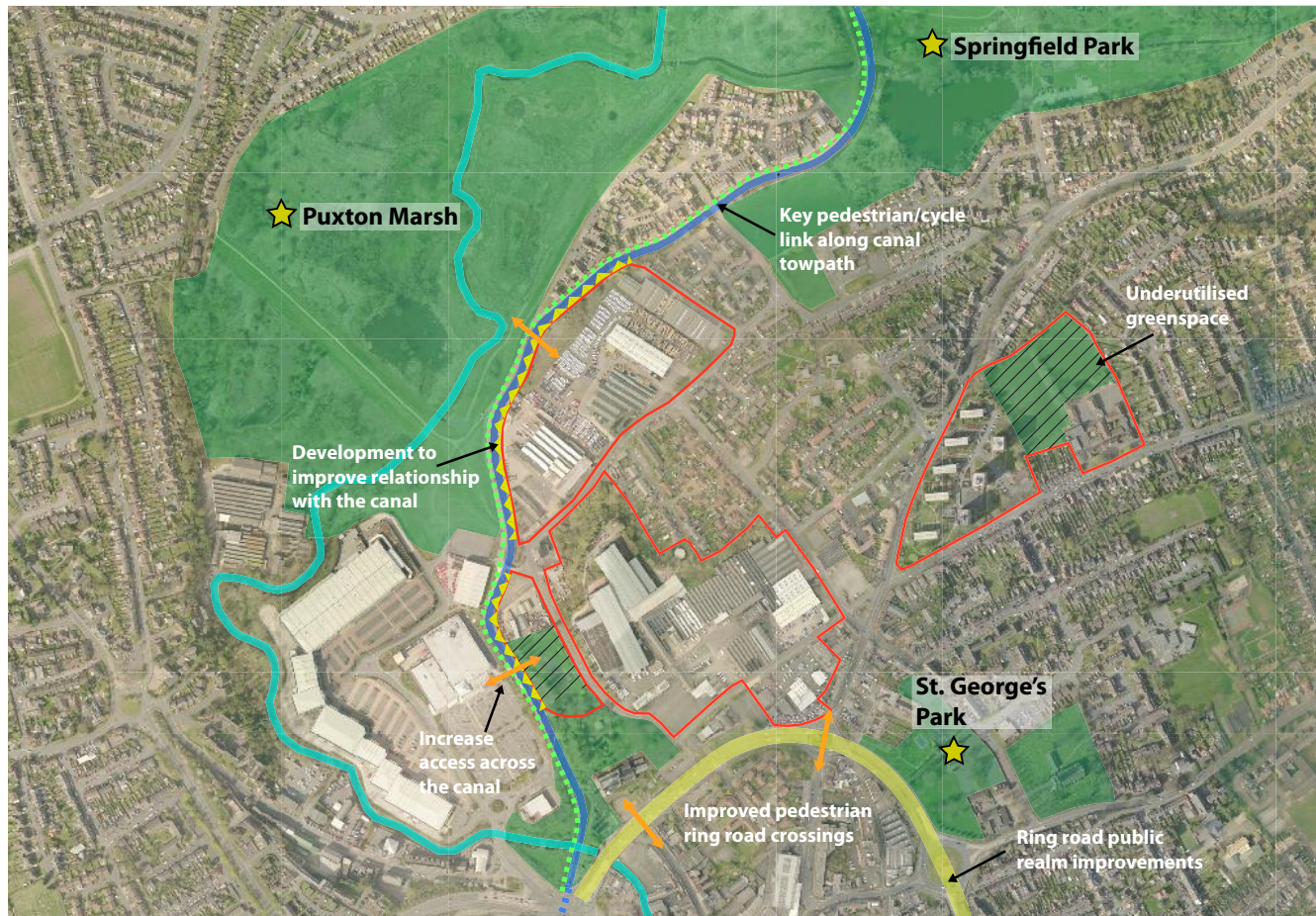
**7.13** Sites within the Churchfields Masterplan area of Kidderminster will be expected to contribute to the green infrastructure network by ensuring that the overall level of open space and play facilities within the area meets the quantity/quality and accessibility standards set out within the District Council's PPG17 audit. Additionally, new development should provide active frontages onto the canal corridor to encourage its use as a pedestrian and cycle route. Developments should provide good pedestrian and cycle access through the area and to the canal corridor, as well as to the adjacent Springfield Park.

**7.14** Within the Churchfields area:

- New development will be required to contribute towards a new network of opens spaces. Each site should include green linkages which take account of the wider landscape setting. Compensatory provisions should be agreed within the Masterplan area to overcome the loss of the currently under-utilised open space adjacent to the canalside.
- New development will be required to provide a positive relationship with the canal corridor. This will include increased natural surveillance to be provided by incorporating development which fronts the canal, and increasing opportunities for pedestrian and cycle connectivity throughout the area to the canal corridor.
- New development will be required to provide safe and attractive pedestrian and cycle links to Springfield Park, and Puxton Marshes SSSI. These areas will provide the main recreational spaces within the Churchfields area.
- New public spaces should incorporate soft landscaping, including street trees where appropriate.

- Development on the Crossley Park site will need to incorporate adequate protection against flooding. The development should be sited adjacent to the canal and the area adjacent to the river Stour should provide green infrastructure.
- The former Sladen School site will be expected to retain, or provide compensatory provision for the existing playing fields in order to increase access to sports facilities within the area.

### Churchfields - Green Infrastructure Opportunities



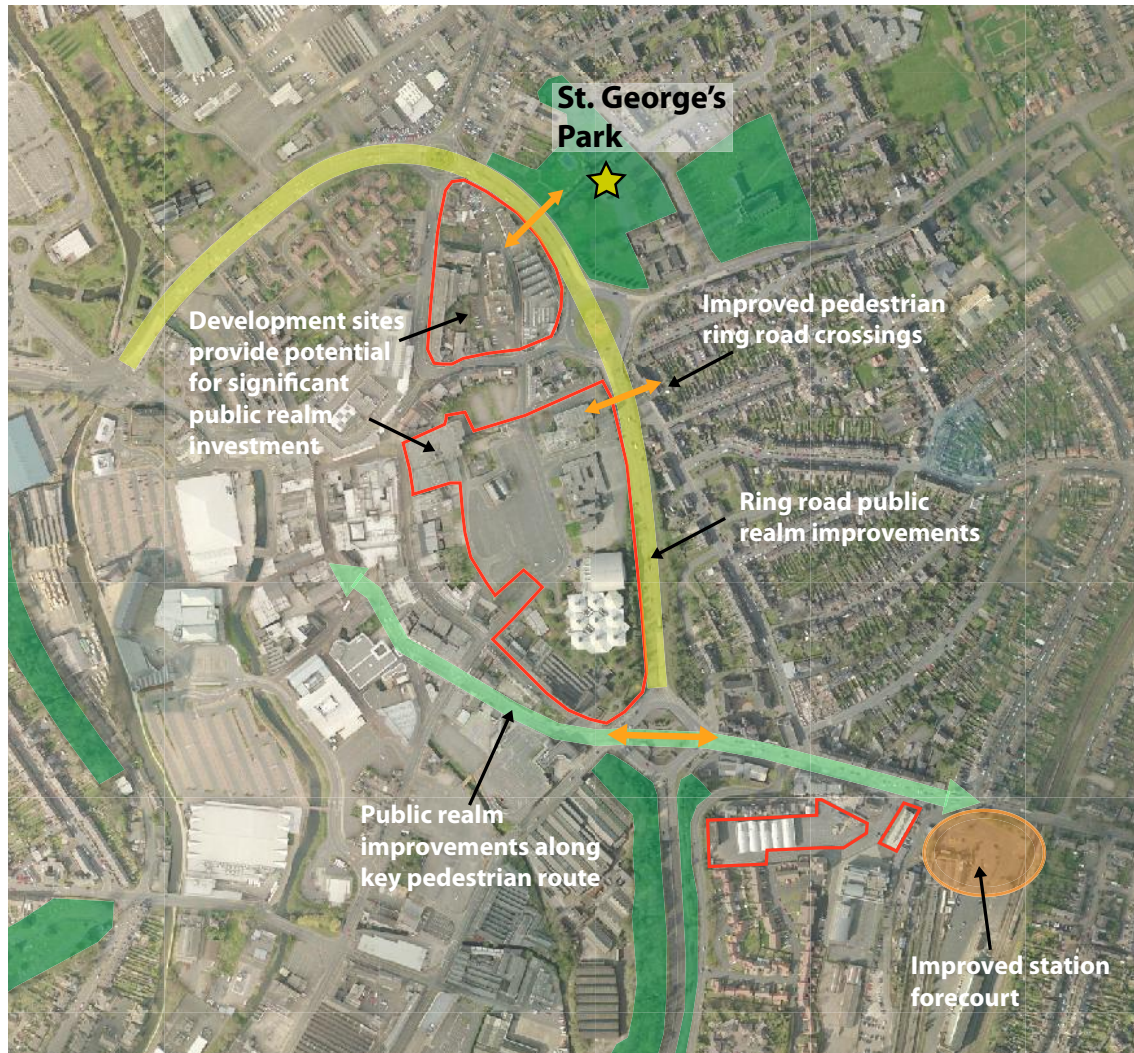
### Eastern Gateway

#### 7.15 Within the Eastern Gateway Area:

- New development will be required to consider soft landscaping which makes a contribution to the green infrastructure network, particularly street trees where appropriate.
- At Kidderminster Railway Station, appropriate soft landscaping should be incorporated to create a high quality public realm and a new civic space around the forecourt. This will contribute towards the wider green infrastructure network by offering opportunities for species and providing natural stepping stones.
- Development should provide appropriate linkages to the nearby St. George's Park. In order to achieve this, a new pedestrian crossing facility will be required to cross the ring road in the Waterloo Street area. Redevelopment of the Waterloo Street site will also be required to contribute to the natural surveillance of St. George's Park.
- Throughout the area, new high quality public spaces will be expected to deliver a mixture of both hard and soft landscaping, providing opportunities for enhanced pedestrian and

cycle movement and biodiversity opportunities. A key issue to address here is accessibility between the town centre and the rail station, enhanced pedestrian connectivity will be required to incorporate soft landscaping.

### Eastern Gateway - Green Infrastructure Opportunities



### Western Gateway

**7.16** Within the Western Gateway area:

- New development must incorporate the 'green on the hill' and include appropriate pedestrian linkages to Park Street. The open space currently has no public access and fly-tipping is a major issue. The aspiration is to improve provide an attractive woodland park here which has opportunities for recreation and also enhances the biodiversity value of the space.
- Proposals must also include soft landscaping which is appropriate to the defining position of the site within the River Stour valley.
- Pedestrian and cycle access to the canal, as well as natural surveillance of this important corridor, should be considered as part of new development.
- A new pedestrian bridge over the canal should be provided to provide access to new canalside development and to the 'green on the hill' open space. This will provide access to open space within close proximity of the town centre and also enhance pedestrian linkages between the town centre and the adjacent residential areas to the west. A feasibility

study was undertaken by Taylor Young looking at this concept. Further details are set out within the implementation section of this strategy.

- A new area of usable open space should be created immediately adjacent to the canal. This will provide accessible greenspace within close proximity of the town centre.
- New development at Weavers Wharf should also provide natural surveillance to the canalside, this will help to reduce problems with anti-social behaviour and increase the attractiveness of the corridor as a walking and cycling route.
- Any redevelopment of Crown House, located on top of the culverted River Stour, should provide improvements to the environment of the river.

### Castle Wharf

#### 7.17 Within the Castle Wharf area:

- New development should provide a positive relationship with the river Stour and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire canal, increasing natural surveillance and enhancing the green infrastructure value of these corridors.
- Any new development will need to address flood risk and solutions which contribute to the green infrastructure network should be fully considered.

### Western Gateway and Castle Wharf - Green Infrastructure Opportunities



## Crossley Park and Mill Street

**7.18** Within the Crossley Park and Mill Street area:

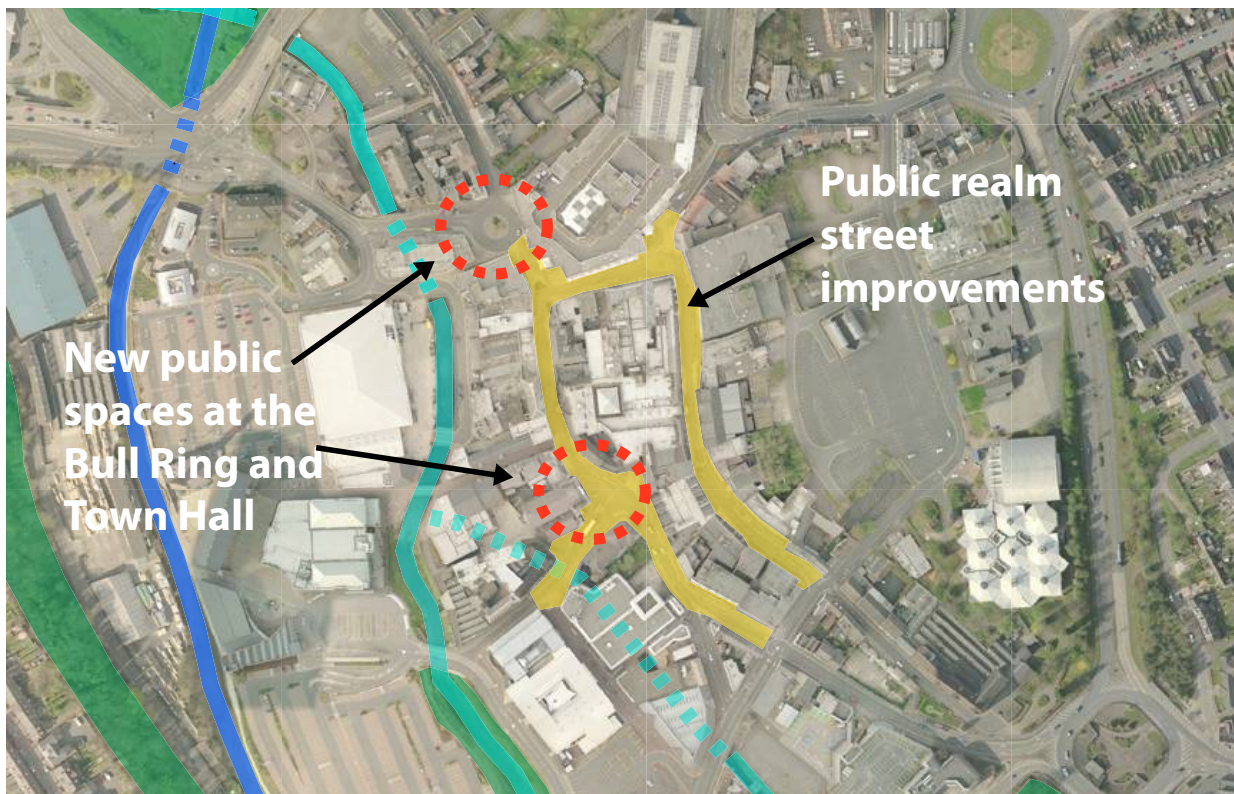
- Proposals should incorporate soft landscaping to address flood risk.
- Proposals should seek to enhance the setting of the River Sever, seizing opportunities to green the River Corridor in this area and improve opportunities for biodiversity.

## Traditional Town Centre

**7.19** Within the Traditional Town Centre area:

- Two new public spaces have been identified within this area, at the Bull Ring and outside the Town Hall. Both of these spaces will be required to provide a mixture of hard and soft landscaping.
- Street improvements should include soft landscaping measures, specifically street trees where appropriate.

### Traditional Town Centre - Green Infrastructure Opportunities



## Heritage Processions Area

**7.20** Within the Heritage Processions area new development opportunities will be limited as the focus is on retaining existing historic buildings and converting them to new uses. Therefore green infrastructure delivery will also be limited. However, new development at the Frank Stone site will be required to provide a positive relationship with the River Stour and contribute to the improvement of the riverside environment and enhance the biodiversity value of the River corridor.

## Heritage Processions - Green Infrastructure Opportunities



### South Kidderminster Enterprise Park

**7.21** The South Kidderminster Enterprise Park area is the main focus for new employment generating uses within the District. The area is already substantially urbanised and new development will be brought forward through the regeneration of currently redundant brownfield sites. The area lies within the A451/Stour valley corridor and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal flows through the area. As such, there are opportunities for green infrastructure improvements to be brought about through regeneration. Worcestershire County Council have prepared a separate Green Infrastructure Concept Statement for this area which is available from the District Council's web-site. The principles set out below are aligned to those within the Concept Statement.

#### 7.22 South Kidderminster Enterprise Park:

- This area includes the Stour Valley corridor, the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal corridor and the Wilden Marsh and Meadows SSSI and new development must not have a detrimental impact on these features. Wherever possible, new development should enhance pedestrian and cycle access to the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal towpath.
- New development within the Stourport Road Corridor should add to the strong tradition of tree-lining along the corridor.
- The former British Sugar site is the largest site within the area and represents a significant regeneration opportunity. Redevelopment of the site must provide a comprehensive green infrastructure network within the site which connects important wildlife area and utilises existing habitats.

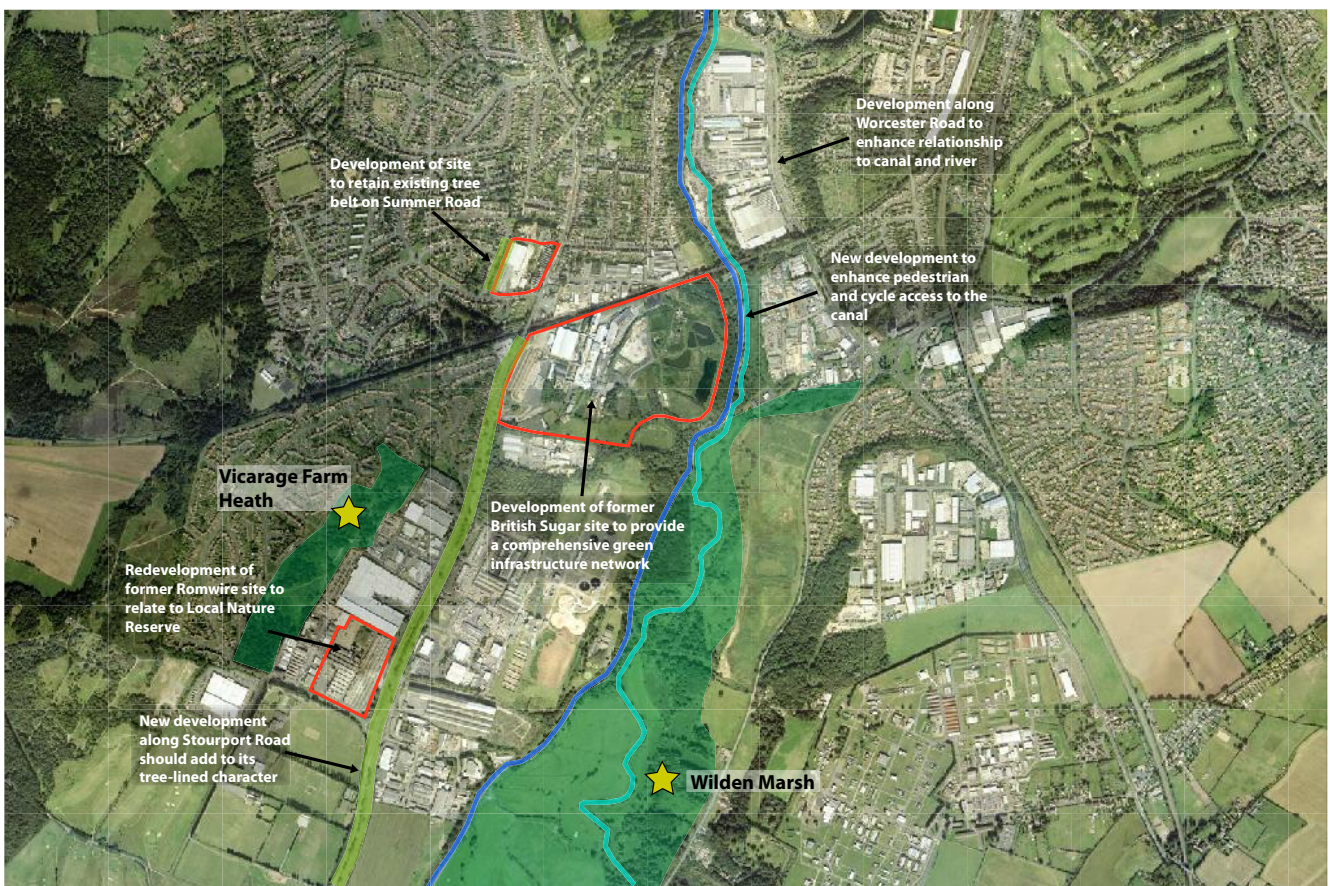


- A full network of pedestrian and cycle links should be incorporated which aid movement through the site by non-car modes. These routes should link to the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal towpath, providing sustainable transport opportunities to both Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn.
- Development at the Oasis Arts and Crafts and Reilloc Chain site must retain the existing tree-belt along Summer Road.
- Redevelopment at the former Romwire Site must relate well to the nearby Local Nature Reserve and must provide suitable pedestrian and cycle access to this facility.
- New development within the Worcester Road Employment Corridor should seek to enhance the relationship between the sites and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Corridor and the River Stour Corridor where appropriate, helping to increase pedestrian and cycle access to the canal corridor and to provide natural surveillance to both of these environments.

## Summer Road Tree Belt



## South Kidderminster Enterprise Park - Green Infrastructure Opportunities



## West Kidderminster

### 7.23 West Kidderminster:

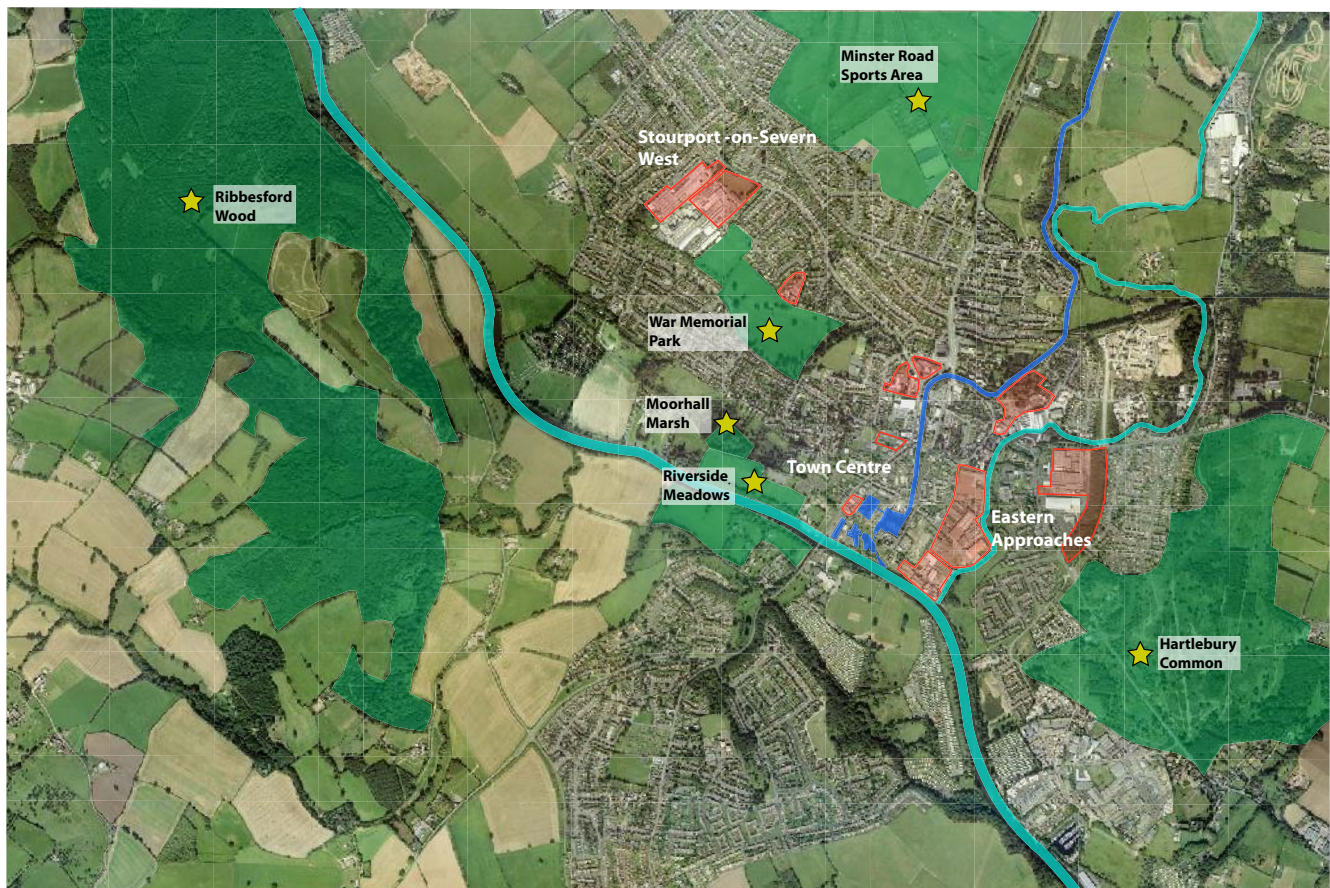
- Development at the Blakebrook School site must provide links through to the open space at Church Walk and must ensure that key trees on-site are retained and incorporated appropriately into new development.

## Kidderminster - Smaller Sites

**7.24** A number of other smaller sites have been identified for development within Kidderminster. The most significant in terms of green infrastructure provision is Broadwaters Community Centre. This site is bordered by a wooded escarpment and open space. The escarpment should be maintained and the development should provide links to this and the open space.

## Stourport-on-Severn

### Strategic Green Infrastructure Assets - Stourport-on-Severn



## Stourport-on-Severn Town Centre

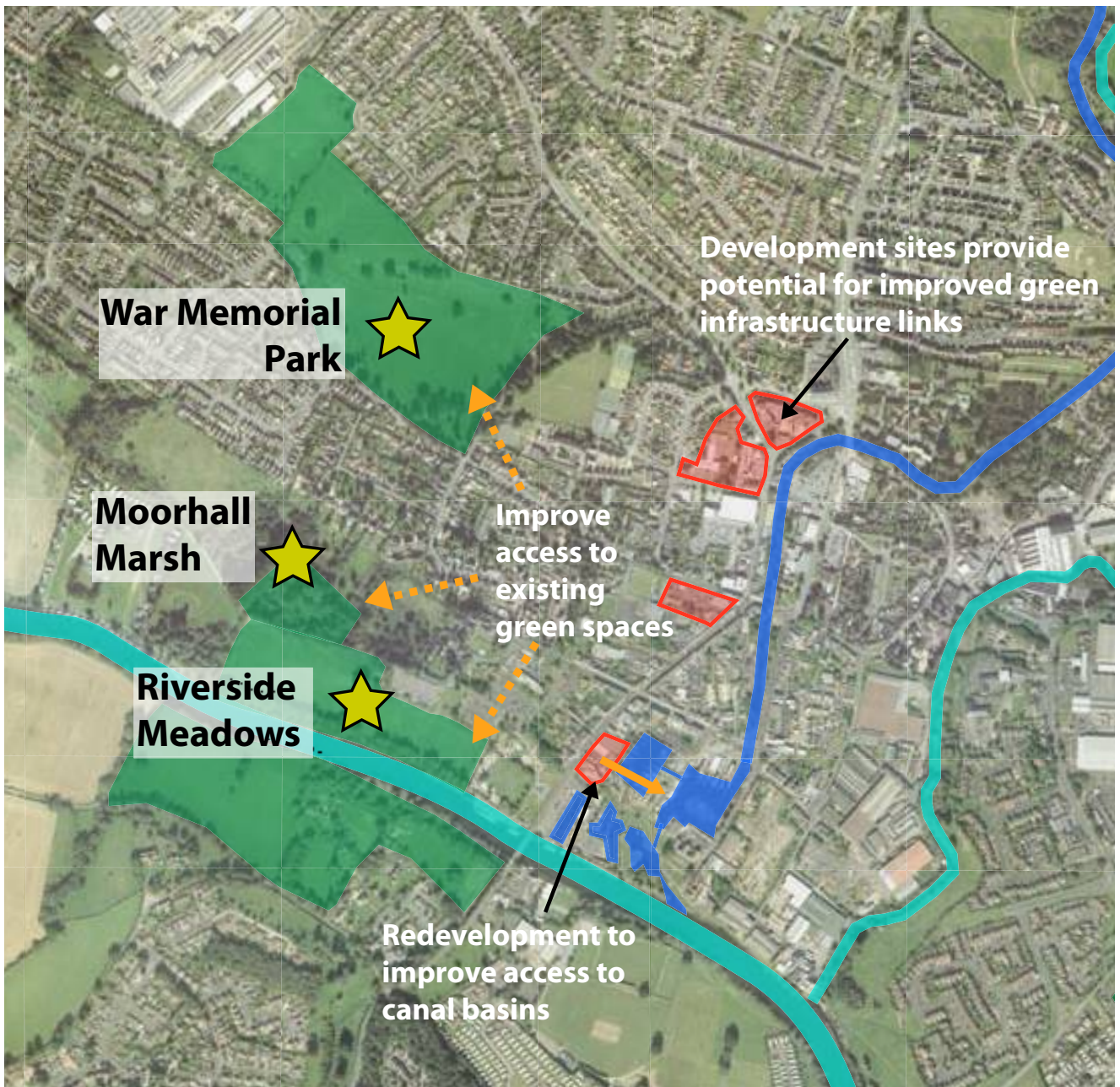
### 7.25 Within Stourport-on-Severn Town Centre:

- Generally, new development within this area must maximise access to the canal basins, the riverside meadows, Moorhall Marsh Nature Reserve and the Staffordshire &

Worcestershire Canal towpath and must enhance linkages between the sites for pedestrians, cyclists and nature.

- New development at Bridge Street Basins should open up views of, and access into, the canal basins area. This will improve access to greenspace. New development should incorporate incorporate new public space which should include elements of soft landscaping.
- The Tan Lane and County Buildings sites should incorporate green space as part of any new residential development and should also considers linkages to the nearby Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal towpath and the nearby Memorial Park.

**Stourport-on-Severn Town Centre - Green Infrastrucutre Opportunities**



### Bridge Street Basins Aerial Artist's Impression



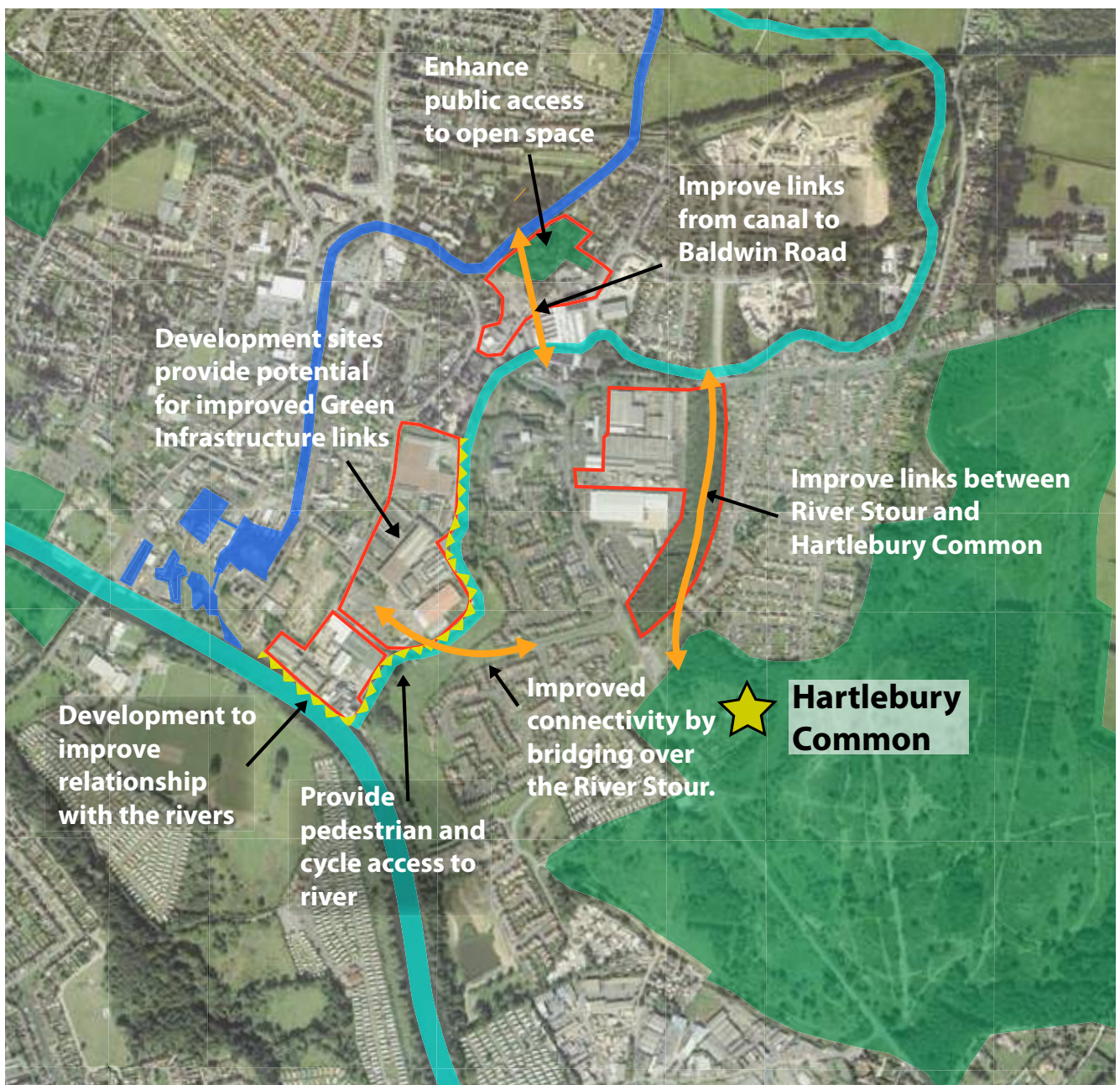
### Stourport-on-Severn - Eastern Approaches

- Generally within this area, new development should seek to enhance the Stour Valley and improve the relationship of the built environment with the River Stour and the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal. Where appropriate, new development should seek to increase the natural surveillance of these corridors.
- The Carpets of Worth site provides an opportunity to create a high-quality, primarily residential environment. New development here should safeguard and enhance the River Stour, using new open space provision to assist in mitigating against flood risk. Development should overlook this public space and the River Stour beyond and a boulevard street frontage should be provided in order to increase natural surveillance. The site should include soft landscaping measures which are appropriate and help to connect the River Stour and the canal basins.
- Redevelopment of the Cheapside site should incorporate and enhance the Rivers Severn and Stour and which both border the site and should create strong visual linkages as well as enhancing connectivity between the river corridors and the canal basins.
- Development at the Parsons Chain site should maintain and improve green infrastructure links through the site linking adjacent areas of open space and biodiversity. There is currently a tree belt along the route of the disused rail line, however, this is the route of the Stourport Relief Road and as such some of this tree cover will be lost. Development should seek to retain mature trees on the site wherever feasible and compensate for the loss where retention is not viable. Redevelopment should also incorporate green infrastructure

which links Hartlebury Common to the River Stour. Part of the site lies within flood zone 2 and green infrastructure should be fully considered in any SUDS scheme and in any proposals to mitigate against flood risk.

- The Baldwin Road site should retain, enhance and open up public access to the existing area of open space within the site. In addition, new green infrastructure links should be provided throughout the site linking to the canal corridor. Pedestrian and cycle connectivity should be increased between the canal corridor and Baldwin Road in order to increase accessibility to the green infrastructure network. New development on this site also needs to take appropriate steps to mitigate against flood risk from the River Stour and green infrastructure should be a part of any solution.

### Stourport-on-Severn Eastern Approaches - Green Infrastructure Opportunities



### Stourport-on-Severn - West

- Development at the Midland Industrial Plastics site should provide linkages to the neighbouring Memorial Park as well as providing appropriate green infrastructure on-site.
- Development at the Lucy Baldwin Hospital site will be required to incorporate pedestrian and cycle access to the adjacent Memorial Park.

#### Stourport-on-Severn West - Green Infrastructure Opportunities



### Bewdley

- Redevelopment of the Load Street site will be required to incorporate a new shared space at the heart of the area. Consideration should be given to how soft landscaping within this area can enhance Bewdley's green infrastructure network.

### Rural

- The development of the former Blakedown Nurseries site must not have a detrimental impact on the nearby Special Wildlife Site. Additionally, development should provide strong pedestrian and visual linkages to the Millennium Green open space. Consideration should

be given to how the open space and soft landscaping within the site links to adjacent open spaces and provides stepping stones for species.

- Development of the site at The Terrace, Clows Top should seek to retain existing mature trees on site.

### 7.3 Limitations of the Plan

**7.26** This Green Infrastructure Strategy has been prepared to guide the delivery of green infrastructure through new development. Therefore, it is focussed around the sites identified within the Site Allocations and Policies and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan Development Plan Documents. The strategy does not look beyond the potential development sites to consider aspirations for the wider delivery of green infrastructure within the District. However, the work being undertaken at the County level is considering the County-wide green infrastructure network and the sites and opportunities identified within this Green Infrastructure Strategy are aligned with this higher level work.

**7.27** The document is intended to be used to guide developers in meeting the requirements of the green infrastructure policies within the Adopted Core Strategy and the emerging Site Allocations and Policies and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan DPDs. The plan is not specific in how the objectives within it should be achieved which leaves scope for different interpretations of the requirements and a number of possible solutions for delivering the requirements at each of the sites.

**7.28** Wyre Forest District already has a comprehensive network of Green Infrastructure as demonstrated within the Green Infrastructure Study. This document seeks to ensure that new development connects into and enhances the existing network. The guidance set out within this document will ensure that key opportunities for green infrastructure which are presented by the redevelopment of some significant brownfield sites across the District are not missed.

## 8 Implementation

**8.1** This chapter looks at how the green infrastructure network will be delivered within the District. A number of mechanisms will need to be employed in order to achieve the delivery of the strategy.

### The Planning System

**8.2** The planning system has an important role to play in the delivery of green infrastructure. An increasing emphasis has been placed on elements such as design and sustainability within developments which are inextricably linked to green infrastructure.

**8.3** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires authorities to protect networks of green infrastructure, whilst also reinforcing the role of green infrastructure in both climate change adaptation and mitigation. The District's Adopted Core Strategy, the first LDF document to be produced, sets out a specific policy on green infrastructure which seeks to safeguard the existing network whilst enhancing it as an integral part of new developments. The policy identifies four key green infrastructure assets for the District, these are:

- The Rivers Severn and Stour and associated wetlands,
- The Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal
- The District's heathlands and grasslands
- The Wyre Forest and associated areas of high landscape and biodiversity value.

**8.4** The policy also seeks to ensure that all new developments provide open space for residents and encourages the use of roof-top gardens and green roofs.

**8.5** The Site Allocations and Policies and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan DPDs provide detailed policies on individual development sites. These documents include some green infrastructure principles but should be read in conjunction with the aspirations set out within this Strategy. The larger sites will be subject to more detailed masterplanning or site-specific SPDs which will ensure that green infrastructure is integral to new development from the outset and that where possible existing green infrastructure assets are safeguarded.

**8.6** Putting in place robust planning policies will enable the refusal of applications which do not make a positive contribution to the green infrastructure network. This process has already begun with the Adopted Core Strategy and will continue with the progression of the Site Allocations and Policies and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan Development Plan Documents.

**8.7** The Churchfields Masterplan demonstrates how the Churchfields area could develop in the future. Throughout the document opportunities are identified for the delivery and enhancement of green infrastructure. The Churchfields area is one of the District's largest development sites and the masterplanning approach has enabled the consideration of green infrastructure from the outset. Development has already started on the former Georgian Carpets site which is part of the Churchfields area and development here has a positive relationship with the canal and has made a financial contribution to enhancing Lime Kiln bridge to enable better pedestrian connectivity across the canal.



## Planning Obligations and CIL

**8.8** CABE, now encompassed by the Design Council, have demonstrated the value of open space and wider green infrastructure through a number of their publications. It is now widely recognised that a high quality green infrastructure network can have a positive effect on quality of life and economic growth within an area. Additionally, green infrastructure can contribute to improvements in a number of areas, including health and well-being, biodiversity, community safety and wider environmental sustainability.

**8.9** Green infrastructure can be delivered alongside any new or refurbished infrastructure. New development provides potential additional users of green infrastructure and can also threaten the existing network. Therefore, this justifies seeking contributions from developers towards the enhancement of the green infrastructure network, including the delivery of new green infrastructure where existing deficiencies have been identified and towards the long-term maintenance of the network.

**8.10** The District Council's Planning Obligations SPD (February 2007) seeks contributions for a number of facilities including open space, outdoor sports and recreation, maintaining and enhancing biodiversity, sustainable transport and sustainable development requirements. These interests increasingly have to compete with other interests for funding at a time when there is less money available for developer contributions. Therefore, it is important that green infrastructure attracts a high level of support.

**8.11** In April 2010, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced to provide a fairer system of funding new infrastructure as it provides developers with more certainty 'upfront' over the level of contribution which will be required, and is faster as it avoids lengthy negotiations. Local Authorities have a greater level of flexibility when spending CIL funds compared to S106 monies, although Levy funds can not be spent on rectifying existing deficiencies in infrastructure unless those deficiencies will be made exacerbated by the new development. CIL has not yet been implemented within the District, therefore, the opportunity exists to ensure that green infrastructure has a strong position within any CIL Tariff produced in the future.

**8.12** The Park Lane Public Realm Framework was prepared by Taylor Young on behalf of Wyre Forest District Council in 2006. This framework sets out how a currently underutilised space can be brought back into beneficial use as a valuable piece of public open space. The aspiration to connect the town centre to the opposite side of the canal is now firmly rooted within the emerging Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan and it is expected that development within the area will contribute to the delivery of the open space. The Framework is available from the District Council's web-site.

## Partnerships

**8.13** A number of Partnerships operate within Wyre Forest District. These address areas such as health, safety, children, older people and the economy. Promoting the importance of green infrastructure to these partnerships and influencing the projects which they deliver will assist in achieving an comprehensive, multi-functional green infrastructure network. Partnerships can aid delivery by introducing match-funding, joining-up initiatives and stimulating community action. Partnerships usually review their delivery plans on a three to five year basis and as such, it is important to ensure that green infrastructure is represented on these partnerships and that the benefits are realised and promoted.

### Community and Voluntary Sector Engagement

**8.14** The involvement of voluntary and community groups will be important in ensuring the delivery of green infrastructure. Worcestershire Wildlife Trust currently own and manage a number of sites within the District and are represented on the Worcestershire Green Infrastructure Steering Group. It will be important to engage Worcestershire Wildlife Trust in the green infrastructure projects coming forward.

**8.15** The support of the local community is extremely important in ensuring the success of green infrastructure projects and therefore their views should be sought at every stage of the project from its inception through to the long-term management of the resource. A number of Wyre Forest District's parks have established friends' groups which assist with maintaining the parks and work with Wyre Forest District Council to secure improvements to the parks. Community involvement helps to ensure that Green infrastructure functions such as community cohesion, providing connections with nature, recreational choices and improving health are delivered.

**8.16** The sustainability of community groups can be unpredictable, particularly in the longer terms. Such groups usually rely on contributions from a small number of committed individuals to maintain them. Therefore, an exit strategy should be agreed at the outset.

### Sources of Funding

**8.17** In addition to funding secured through the planning process, the following sources of funding may be able to contribute to the delivery of the green infrastructure network:

- **Heritage Lottery Fund** - The Heritage Lottery Fund uses money raised through the National Lottery to sustain and transform the Country's heritage. The Parks for People programme offers grants of between £250,000 and £5million for whole park projects that support the regeneration of existing designed urban or rural green spaces, the main purpose of which is for informal recreation and enjoyment. The Landscape Partnerships programme supports schemes that are led by partnerships of local, regional and national interests, which aim to conserve areas of distinctive landscape character throughout the UK. Both of these programmes can contribute directly towards the improvement of green infrastructure.
- **BIG Lottery Fund** - Big Lottery Fund (BIG) aims to improve the lives of people in need, with a remit covering several green infrastructure functions including the environment, education and health. Across a range of funding programmes, Big funds projects up to £1m, and can cover revenue as well as capital costs.

## A Green Infrastructure Character Areas

### Teme Valley and Wyre Forest

Strategic GI Approach:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Protect and Enhance</li> </ul>
Overarching principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Enhance stream and river corridors</li> <li>● Protect ancient countryside character</li> <li>● Protect and enhance the ancient woodland habitats of the Wyre Forest</li> <li>● Enhance and expand acid grassland habitats</li> </ul>
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Priority to protect and enhance existing site and biodiversity interest. Implementation and Delivery to be directed to existing site management and buffering as a first principle.</li> <li>● Linking of networks to be applied where practicable.</li> <li>● Restore functional stream corridors, in particular in the Wyre Forest and Laugherne Brook catchments.</li> </ul>
Historic Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Protect and enhance the diverse historic field boundary patterns and hedgerows that are associated with medieval assarting, post-medieval reorganisation and traditional orchards.</li> <li>● Buffer historic landscape features, such as earthwork boundaries, ridge and furrow, abandoned prehistoric and medieval settlement remains.</li> <li>● Protect historic water features and buffer key sites, such as moats, fishponds, millponds and leats.</li> <li>● Explore opportunities to protect below ground archaeology associated with multi-period settlements throughout the area, and particularly, adjacent to existing rural settlements.</li> </ul>
Landscape Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Protect and enhance ancient woodland cover, including replanting with mixed, native species where appropriate, respecting the characteristic tree cover pattern – discrete blocks in the Estatelands; linear, interconnecting woods along streams and dingles in the Wooded Hills and Plateau Farmlands; scattered hedgerow trees (Timbered Farmlands, Forest Smallholdings).</li> <li>● Protect and enhance the hedgerow network, respecting the characteristic enclosure pattern of each Landscape Type (organic in the dominating Timbered Farmlands and Wooded Hills; sub-regular/variable in the Wooded Estates and Forest Smallholdings) including safeguarding or replanting of hedgerow trees to address age structure and density.</li> </ul>
Blue Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reduce dependence on raised flood defences, as this is unsustainable in the long term, by taking opportunities to restore sustainable natural storage of floodwater on undeveloped floodplains.</li> <li>● Make more space for rivers through urban areas via 'blue corridors' (i.e. Restoring access for floodwater onto key strips of floodplain. This requires redevelopment to be limited to flood-compatible land-uses e.g. parkland). Some designated 'aquatic conservation' sites are in unfavourable condition (for example Teme SSSI). Activities that affect these sites must be changed to improve their condition.</li> <li>● Ensure that the run-off from all proposed development is minimised. For example, SUDS must be encouraged and targeted within planning approvals.</li> <li>● Encourage the retro-fitting of SUDS where surface water flooding is already a problem. Support ecological improvements. Examples of this include Severn &amp; Avon Wetlands Project and Natural England's three fluvial SSSIs.</li> <li>● Tackle issues of diffuse pollution in the catchment through the provision of advice to farmers under the England Catchment Sensitive Farming Delivery Initiative.</li> </ul>
Access and Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consider the proximity to and ability to integrate with the rights of way network, recreational way-marked routes and the cycle network;</li> <li>● Accommodate associated facilities necessary for the use and enjoyment of the site in a manner that is appropriate and able to integrate with the landscape character, wildlife and cultural interests.</li> <li>● Act as a greenway from town into the countryside and utilise existing canal, former railway lines, river corridors and wherever possible link with public transport routes.</li> <li>● Adopt minimum quality standards, (commensurate with its location and scale) that sites and routes should be expected to achieve will be those from the Green Flag Award Programme, and the Country Parks Accreditation Scheme, as appropriate.</li> </ul>
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Opportunities should be sought to protect, enhance and create green infrastructure that promotes sustainable movement by walking and cycling, reducing the need to travel by car by providing pleasant environments that promote sustainable transport as a means to minimise the impact of transport on the natural environment and mitigate the impacts of climate change.</li> </ul>

## Hagley Hinterland

Strategic GI Approach:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Protect and Restore</li> </ul>
Overarching principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maintain and restore habitat connectivity. Protect and restore acid grassland and wooded habitats.</li> </ul>
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Newly created GI features should aim to augment the existing resource concentrating on the main priorities for protection and creation including acid grassland and veteran tree connectivity through linking, merging and buffering existing and newly created habitats.</li> <li>● Hedgerows and small woodlands provide important connectivity through the landscape.</li> </ul>
Historic Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Protect the setting of Hagley Park, enhance and create linkages with wider historic environment green networks (hedgerows and woodland).</li> <li>● Protect historic water features and buffer key sites, such as moats, fishponds and millponds.</li> <li>● Conserve and enhance diverse multi-period historic field patterns and hedgerows.</li> </ul>
Landscape Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Enhance and protect the hedgerow field boundaries respecting the characteristic enclosure pattern of each Landscape Type (planned or semi-regular in the Estate landscapes; organic or irregular in the Timbered and Settled Farmlands).</li> <li>● Seek opportunities to protect and strengthen the woodland character and pattern (planned, discrete plantations and tree belts in the Estate landscapes; ancient, scattered hedgerow trees Settled and Timbered Farmlands, with some small woods in the latter).</li> </ul>
Blue Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Manage areas of low, moderate or high flood risk and take action where necessary to keep pace with climate change.</li> <li>● Explore opportunities to restore sustainable natural storage of floodwater on undeveloped floodplains. Make more space for rivers through urban areas via 'blue corridors' (i.e. Restoring access for floodwater onto key strips of floodplain by limiting redevelopment to flood-compatible land-uses e.g. parkland).</li> <li>● Seek ecological improvements.</li> <li>● Develop Surface Water Management Plans for the Bromsgrove, Droitwich and Kidderminster areas. Reduce the levels of nutrients and sediments entering watercourses and take actions to improve the management of water resources.</li> </ul>
Access and Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consider the proximity to and ability to integrate with the rights of way network, recreational way-marked routes and the cycle network; Accommodate associated facilities necessary for the use and enjoyment of the site in a manner that is appropriate and able to integrate with the landscape character, wildlife and cultural interests.</li> <li>● Act as a greenway from town into the countryside and utilise existing canal, former railway lines, river corridors and wherever possible link with public transport routes.</li> <li>● Adopt minimum quality standards, (commensurate with its location and scale) that sites and routes should be expected to achieve will be those from the Green Flag Award Programme, and the Country Parks Accreditation Scheme, as appropriate.</li> </ul>
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Opportunities should be sought to protect, enhance and create green infrastructure that promotes sustainable movement by walking and cycling, reducing the need to travel by car by providing pleasant environments that promote sustainable transport as a means to minimise the impact of transport on the natural environment and mitigate the impacts of climate change</li> </ul>

## Bewdley Fringe

Strategic GI Approach:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Protect and Restore</li> </ul>
Overarching principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Protect and enhance multi-functional Severn river corridor.</li> </ul>
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Newly created GI features should aim to augment the existing resource concentrating on the main priorities for protection and creation including acid grassland and veteran tree, hedge and small woodland connectivity through linking, merging and buffering existing and newly created habitats.</li> <li>● Implementation and delivery to be directed to existing site management and buffering as a first principle. Linking of networks to be applied where practicable. Restore functional stream corridors, and re-link flood plain corridors in particular wet and floodplain grassland, reedbed and wet woodland.</li> </ul>

Historic Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Protect and restore locally distinctive historic hedgerows and field boundary patterns associated with piecemeal enclosure of former woodland and heath landscapes. Protect and restore the setting of Spring Grove Park and the setting of historic farmsteads north of Catchems End.</li> <li>● Explore opportunities to restore heathland landscapes employing methods sensitive to historic asset conservation</li> </ul>
Landscape Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In these urban fringe areas, seek opportunities to restore the characteristic features of the three distinct Landscape Types that comprise this ECA - Riverside Meadows to the south, Sandstone Estatelands to the east and Principal Timbered Farmlands to the north. Where possible seek opportunities to address the characteristic (and contrasting) enclosure and tree cover patterns, particularly the hedgerows and scattered oaks in the Timbered Farmlands and linear watercourse tree belts in the Riverside Meadows. The varied (and uncharacteristic) land uses in the Sandstone Estatelands to the west, have disrupted the field boundary pattern and condition. Opportunities to address this could be sought as well as scrub/woodland management options to restore heathland character.</li> </ul>
Blue Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Manage areas of low, moderate or high flood risk and take action where necessary to keep pace with climate change.</li> <li>● Explore opportunities to restore sustainable natural storage of floodwater on undeveloped floodplains. Make more space for rivers through urban areas via 'blue corridors' (i.e. Restoring access for floodwater onto key strips of floodplain by limiting redevelopment to flood-compatible land-uses e.g. parkland). Seek ecological improvements.</li> </ul>
Access and Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consider the proximity to and ability to integrate with the rights of way network, recreational way-marked routes and the cycle network; Accommodate associated facilities necessary for the use and enjoyment of the site in a manner that is appropriate and able to integrate with the landscape character, wildlife and cultural interests.</li> <li>● Act as a greenway from town into the countryside and utilise existing canal, former railway lines, river corridors and wherever possible link with public transport routes.</li> <li>● Adopt minimum quality standards, (commensurate with its location and scale) that sites and routes should be expected to achieve will be those from the Green Flag Award Programme, and the Country Parks Accreditation Scheme, as appropriate.</li> </ul>
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Opportunities should be sought to protect, enhance and create green infrastructure that promotes sustainable movement by walking and cycling, reducing the need to travel by car by providing pleasant environments that promote sustainable transport as a means to minimise the impact of transport on the natural environment and mitigate the impacts of climate change.</li> </ul>

## Birchen Coppice

Strategic GI Approach:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Protect and Restore</li> </ul>
Overarching principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Protect and restore networks and connectivity to the wider Teme Valley and Wyre Forest landscape.</li> </ul>
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Priority to protect and enhance existing site and biodiversity interest. Implementation and delivery to be directed to existing site management and buffering as a first principle. Linking of networks to be applied where practicable. Restore functional stream corridors, and re-link flood plain corridors in particular wet and floodplain grassland, reedbed and wet woodland.</li> </ul>
Historic Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explore opportunities to restore heathland landscapes employing methods sensitive to historic asset conservation; notably: historic field boundaries and potential prehistoric artefact scatters.</li> </ul>
Landscape Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Composed entirely of the Sandstone Estatelands Landscape Type. Seek opportunities to restore the inherent tree cover pattern where possible: tree belts and/or linear watercourse tree cover would be most appropriate (given the size of this small ECA), to retain the otherwise open feel of the Estatelands. The planned, geometric pattern (field boundaries and roads) should convey a sense of visual unity.</li> </ul>
Blue Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Manage areas of low, moderate or high flood risk and take action where necessary to keep pace with climate change.</li> <li>● Explore opportunities to restore sustainable natural storage of floodwater on undeveloped floodplains. Make more space for rivers through urban areas via 'blue corridors' (i.e. Restoring access for floodwater onto key strips of floodplain by limiting redevelopment to flood-compatible land-uses e.g. parkland). Seek ecological improvements.</li> </ul>
Access and Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consider the proximity to and ability to integrate with the rights of way network, recreational way-marked routes and the cycle network; Accommodate associated facilities necessary for the use and enjoyment</li> </ul>

	<p>of the site in a manner that is appropriate and able to integrate with the landscape character, wildlife and cultural interests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Act as a greenway from town into the countryside and utilise existing canal, former railway lines, river corridors and wherever possible link with public transport routes.</li> <li>● Adopt minimum quality standards, (commensurate with its location and scale) that sites and routes should be expected to achieve will be those from the Green Flag Award Programme, and the Country Parks Accreditation Scheme, as appropriate.</li> </ul>
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Opportunities should be sought to protect, enhance and create green infrastructure that promotes sustainable movement by walking and cycling, reducing the need to travel by car by providing pleasant environments that promote sustainable transport as a means to minimise the impact of transport on the natural environment and mitigate the impacts of climate change.</li> </ul>

## Severn Valley North

Strategic GI Approach:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Protect and Enhance</li> </ul>
Overarching principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Restoration of the Severn floodplain</li> </ul>
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Links should be made with existing site management, in order to achieve site expansion and buffer the key priorities including wet woodlands and grasslands.</li> <li>● Where sites are closely associated buffering should be merged to form direct links.</li> <li>● In the case of the River Severn corridor the link is already in place but augmentation of this in the floodplain will be critical for a number of GI aspirations, in conjunction with enhancements to the blue infrastructure.</li> </ul>
Historic Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explore opportunities to protect prehistoric and Romano-British settlement on the river terraces and other sites with below ground archaeology adjacent to existing rural settlements.</li> <li>● Protect and enhance historic parkland character.</li> <li>● Enhance and create linkages with wider historic environment green networks (hedgerows, woodland and common).</li> <li>● Enhance historic hedgerow pattern to strengthen broad historic landscape character.</li> </ul>
Landscape Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Protect and enhance the composition and pattern (planned in the estate landscapes; organic in the farmland landscapes) of hedgerows through management and replanting.</li> <li>● Protect and enhance the tree cover pattern through new planting of watercourse, highway and hedgerow trees to address density and age structure; and, in the Timbered Farmlands, through creation of new woodland, with consideration for patterns of relic ancient woodland and existing woodland fragments.</li> <li>● Seek opportunities to protect and create areas of permanent pasture, particularly in the Settled Farmlands and Riverside Meadows landscapes.</li> <li>● NB This ECA also contains localised patches of Unenclosed Commons which is a (largely) unsettled, unenclosed and unwooded Landscape Type; here opportunities should be sought to retain rough grazing land use and management regimens which the support unwooded and unenclosed.</li> </ul>
Blue Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Manage areas of low, moderate or high flood risk and take action where necessary to keep pace with climate change.</li> <li>● Explore opportunities to restore sustainable natural storage of floodwater on undeveloped floodplains.</li> <li>● Make more space for rivers through urban areas via 'blue corridors' (i.e. Restoring access for floodwater onto key strips of floodplain by limiting redevelopment to flood-compatible land-uses e.g. parkland).</li> <li>● Seek ecological improvements.</li> </ul>
Access and Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consider the proximity to and ability to integrate with the rights of way network, recreational way-marked routes and the cycle network;</li> <li>● Accommodate associated facilities necessary for the use and enjoyment of the site in a manner that is appropriate and able to integrate with the landscape character, wildlife and cultural interests.</li> <li>● Act as a greenway from town into the countryside and utilise existing canal, former railway lines, river corridors and wherever possible link with public transport routes.</li> <li>● Adopt minimum quality standards, (commensurate with its location and scale) that sites and routes should be expected to achieve will be those from the Green Flag Award Programme, and the Country Parks Accreditation Scheme, as appropriate.</li> </ul>
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Opportunities should be sought to protect, enhance and create green infrastructure that promotes sustainable movement by walking and cycling, reducing the need to travel by car by providing pleasant environments that promote sustainable transport as a means to minimise the impact of transport on the natural environment and mitigate the impacts of climate change.</li> </ul>