

7.16 ESTATE FARMLANDS

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

The majority of this land has historically been in the ownership of a few land owning families who have influenced the character of the landscape by laying it out in an ordered fashion. This is a mixed farming, medium scale landscape where the medium to large sized fields are defined by hedgerows. The views are framed by tree groups associated with its planned character. These are often small, geometrically shaped plantation woodlands, possibly used in the past for shooting purposes, together with the tree features associated with large country house estates and ornamental parklands. This landscape type is similar to the Wooded Estatelands but it lacks the medieval parks and associated ancient woodland. Settlement is largely restricted to discrete clusters of dwellings and associated small estate villages.

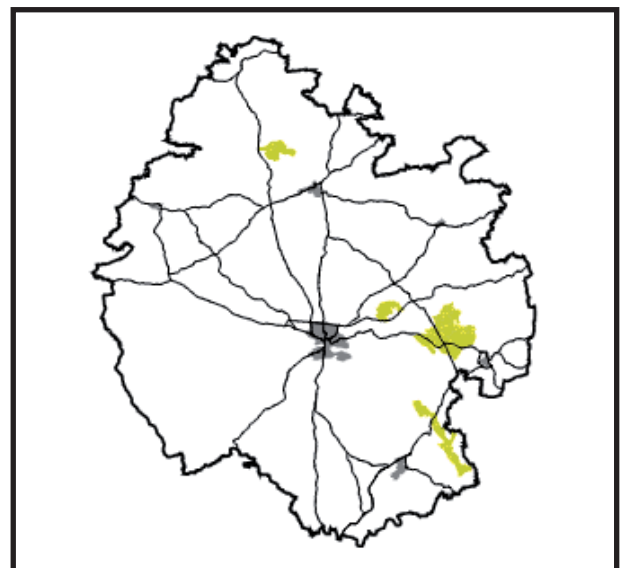
KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary

- hedgerows define the field boundaries

Secondary

- mixed farming land use
- planned woodland character
- medium-framed views
- clustered settlement pattern





FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

The tendency towards arable conversion is gradually changing the character of this Landscape Type. Hedgerow loss and deterioration are very often associated with an arable land use change, as hedgerows are no longer required for their primary function of stock containment.

The specimen tree planting associated with large country houses and ornamental parkland is generally over a century old now and inevitably in decline, although it should be borne in mind that old or veteran trees can be of considerable wildlife interest. The post war demolition of many of these houses has left relic landscapes that no longer fulfil their original function. Throughout Herefordshire, the unmistakable silhouettes of ancient cedars, redwoods, Wellingtonias and Corsican pines mark the remnants of these ornamental plantings.

Estate villages with distinctive architectural styles and detailing are a feature of this Landscape Type. However, the strongly unified character of these settlements is being increasingly compromised by modification and new development.



SETTLEMENT PATTERN

The settlement pattern is of clustered groups of dwellings, often estate villages. New development which tends towards a clustered pattern would be appropriate in these landscapes if in accordance with UDP policy. However, the siting of new development should be undertaken with extreme care in order to avoid compromising the visual integrity of distinctive estate villages.

ENCLOSURE PATTERN

This is a planned landscape with a sub-regular pattern of medium to large hedged fields. In Herefordshire, the fields tend to be smaller than in some other parts of the country.

WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

The woodland character is of a planned nature with individual geometrically shaped plantation woodlands and ornamental plantings.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

These are landscapes of limited value to wildlife but with the potential to increase their ecological interest whilst strengthening the landscape character. They can accommodate considerable new woodland planting as well as benefiting from the restoration of the parkland and ornamental tree planting.

New woodland should favour separate, geometrically shaped woods as well as increased planting along watercourses. The conservation of the hedgerow pattern is important and an associated improvement in conservation field margins would greatly benefit wildlife. New settlement should be sited with care in order to protect the integrity of the estate villages. Management emphasis is therefore concentrated on **conservation** and **enhancement**.

CONSERVATION	ENHANCEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conserve the enclosure pattern of sub-regular hedged fields 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance tree cover through further planting of small scale plantations and tree belts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conserve and restore parklands and the tree cover associated with country house estates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the establishment of wide field margins for wildfire benefit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conserve and enhance tree cover along watercourses 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conserve the integrity of estate villages 	