Much Wenlock

Neighbourhood Area Design Guidelines

Final report

2024

Delivering a better world

Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by
Davide Colombo	Elliot Joddrell	Ben Castell
Consultant Urban Designer	Senior Urban Designer	Director

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Revision History

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Contents

Introduction

01

1. Introduction

The aim of this document is to help empower the local community to influence the design and character of the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Area, which comprises the Parish - including the town of Much Wenlock itself and surrounding villages - and to deliver attractive, sustainable development that meets the needs of local people.

1.1 Background

Much Wenlock Town Council has requested support through Locality to establish a design code and guidance document to influence the character and design of any new development within the neighbourhood area. With “the Neighbourhood Area” and “Much Wenlock”, this document refers to Much Wenlock town and the key settlements of Bourton, Homer, Wigwig, Farley, Wyke, Atterley, Callaughton, Stretton Westwood and Hilltop. It coincides with the Parish area.

In setting out design codes and guidance, this document aims to aims to help empower the local community to deliver attractive, sustainable development that meets the needs of local people.

Figure 01: High Street, Much Wenlock

It should be noted that the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Area Design Guidelines form an part of the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan underpinning policy.

1.2 Aims and objectives

The overarching aim of the Neighbourhood Plan is to enable the Much Wenlock community to set out design standards and policies for development in the neighbourhood area, within the context of national and local policy.

This document forms part of the evidence base for the Neighbourhood Plan on design-related issues. This document is locally specific and sets clear requirements that relate to Much Wenlock and its character areas.

Much Wenlock Parish is home to an established community with considerable green space and heritage. The overarching aim of this document is to protect and enhance Much Wenlock's urban and rural character via the following objectives:

- To ensure that the unique heritage and history of the area are preserved and passed down to the future.
- To positively influence the character and design of new development within the neighbourhood area.
- To enhance the sense of place and quality of the existing built and natural environments.
- To preserve the special character of the two Conservation Areas within the neighbourhood area.
- To ensure that development is made future proof to help mitigate against the impacts of climate change.
- To present a detailed appraisal of the area's urban and landscape character context.
- To protect and enhance green spaces, views and biodiversity within the area.
- To ensure that new development contributes through its design to enable 'a sense of community' - safe, attractive, accessible, green, enabling engagement.

Figure 02: Much Wenlock Parish Church and Guildhall.

Figure 03: Holly Grove, Sheinton Street

Figure 04: Dwellings on Barrow Street

1.3 Using this document

This document is a valuable tool for securing context-driven, high quality and landscape-led development. It will be used differently by different people in the planning and development process (see Table 01 below).

Also, it will be effective when used as part of a co-design process, actively involving key partners, to establish local preferences and expectations of design quality. Through active participation and conversation, key stakeholders can use the guide to shape the key issues and ways to adequately respond to them in future development.

This document alone will not automatically secure quality design outcomes, but it will help to prevent poor outcomes by creating a rigorous process that establishes expectations. It raises the standards and expectations for design quality.

Figure 05: Bourton

Potential users	How they will use the design guidelines
Applicants, developers, and landowners	As a guide to highlight community and Local Planning Authority expectations on design which creates a degree of certainty. They will be expected to follow this document as planning consent is sought.
Local Planning Authority	As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications. This document should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application discussions.
Town council or neighbourhood plan group	As a tool to help structure comments on planning applications, ensuring that this document is complied with.
Community groups and local residents	As a tool to promote community-backed development, to inform comments on planning applications and home-owner developments.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

Table 01: User groups and how they will use the guidance.

1.4 Planning policy and guidance

This section outlines the national and local planning policy and guidance documents that have informed this document.

1.4.1 National planning policy and guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (Revised December 2023)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) outlines the UK Government's overarching economic, environmental and social planning policies for England. It is a high-level document that attempts to make good design pivotal and to put communities at the heart of planning. The policies within the NPPF apply to the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans, and act as a framework against which decisions are made on planning applications.

The NPPF states that a key objective of the planning system is to contribute to balancing the impacts that development has on the economy, environment and community.

The parts of the NPPF which are of relevance to this document are:

- Part 2: Achieving sustainable development;
- Part 5: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
- Part 7: Ensuring the vitality of town centres;
- Part 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities;
- Part 12: Achieving well-designed places;
- Part 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; and
- Part 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Part 12 (Achieving Well-designed Places) emphasises the need to create high-quality buildings and places as fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.

It sets out several principles that planning policies and decisions will consider ensuring that new developments are well-designed and focus on quality.

The NPPF notes that "development that is not well-designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes".

This is supported by the National Design Guide, which sets out the 10 characteristics of a well-designed place.

National Design Guide (2019)

The National Design Guide (NDG) sets the 10 characteristics of a well-designed place and demonstrates what good design is in practice. The characteristics are: Context; Identity; Built Form; Movement; Nature; Public Spaces; Uses; Homes & Buildings; Resources; and, Lifespan.

This document should be used as an overarching reference for new development where topics are not covered in local guidance. The NDG characteristics were used in the initial analysis to understand local demands and challenges.

The NDG notes that a well-designed place is unlikely to be achieved by focusing only on the appearance, materials and detailing of buildings.

National Model Design Code (2021)

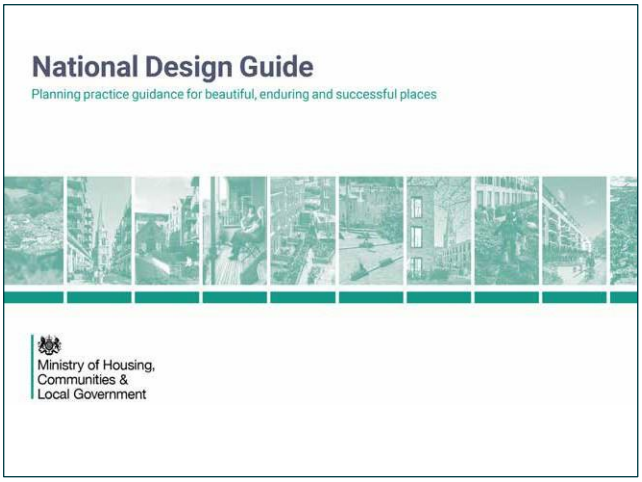
The National Model Design Code (NMDC) sets a baseline for quality and practice. It provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes and the outlining of character areas.

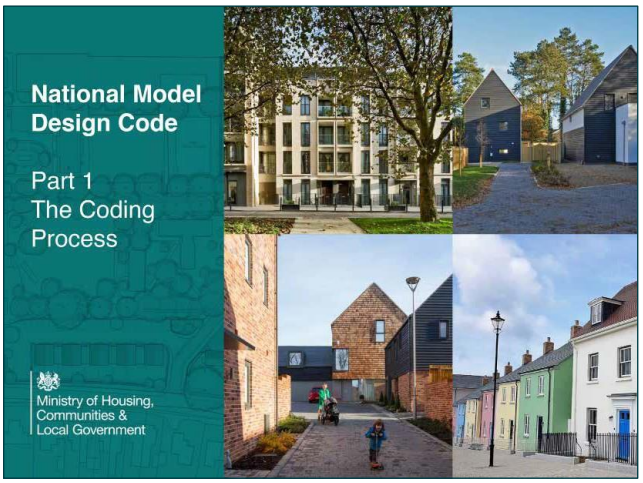
The NPPF is the foundation stone to good design and the NDG sets out the 10 characteristics of well-designed places. This is developed further by the NMDC, which creates the baseline for analysing and visioning places. Design codes help development achieve the requirements of good design and for community benefit.

Building for a Healthy Life (2020)

Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) is the new name for Building for Life, the Government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. The new name reflects the key role that the built environment has in promoting wellbeing.

The BHL toolkit sets out principles to help guide discussions on planning applications and to help local planning authorities to assess the quality of proposed schemes, as well as useful prompts and questions for planning applicants to consider during the different stages of the design process.





1.4.2 Local planning policy and guidance

The Neighbourhood Plan is required to be in conformity with the Local Plan and as such the key adopted documents and policies from the Local Plan are set out below. These are key references for developers to address alongside this document.

1.4.3 Shropshire Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy (2011)

This document was adopted by Shropshire Council in March 2011. The Core Strategy sets out the Council's vision, strategic objectives and the broad spatial strategy to guide future development and growth in Shropshire during the period to 2026. Key policies include:

Policy CS3: The Market Towns and Other Key Centres

This policy identifies Much Wenlock as a Key Centre which offers a range of services and facilities. The area is earmarked for limited development reflecting its important service and employment centre role whilst retaining its historic character.

Policy CS6: Sustainable Design and Development Principles

This policy states that development will be designed to a high quality using sustainable design principles, to achieve an inclusive and accessible environment which respects and enhances local distinctiveness and which mitigates and adapts to climate change.

Policy CS7: Communications and Transport

This policy identifies how the maintenance and improvement of integrated, accessible, attractive, safe and reliable communication and transport infrastructure and services will be achieved. This includes protecting and enhancing strategic and local cycling, footpath, bridleway networks as local transport routes and for recreation and leisure use.

Policy CS16: Tourism, Culture and Leisure

This policy commits to the delivery of high quality, sustainable tourism, and cultural and leisure development. This includes promoting connections to the natural, cultural and historic environment as well as promoting and preserving the heritage brand and values of market towns and rural areas.

Policy CS17: Environmental Networks

This policy requires development to identify, protect, enhance, expand and connect Shropshire's environmental assets, to create a multi-functional network of natural and historic resources.

Policy CS18: Sustainable Water Management

This policy requires developments to integrate measures for sustainable water management to reduce flood risk, avoid an adverse impact on water quality and quantity within Shropshire, including groundwater resources, and provide opportunities to enhance biodiversity, health and recreation.

Draft Shropshire Local Plan (2016-2038)

Shropshire Council submitted a draft Local Plan to the Secretary of State on 3rd September 2021 for independent examination.

The Local Plan is still under review and will replace the existing policies set out in the adopted Core Strategy.

The following 'emerging' policies were considered when developing this document:

Policy SP3: Climate Change

This policy, upon adoption, will outline how development in Shropshire will support the transition to a zero-carbon economy.

Policy SP5: High-Quality Design

This policy, upon adoption, will ensure that new development will deliver high quality design by ensuring the creation of better places in which to live and work, improving sustainability, supporting active and healthy lifestyles and ensuring individual and community well-being.

The policy also states that development must maintain and enhance the character, appearance and historic interests of settlements, streetscenes, groups of buildings, individual buildings and the landscape and, reinforce the hierarchy of networks and spaces

Policy SP6: Health and Wellbeing

This policy, upon adoption, will require new development to ensure the health and well-being of individuals, communities and places. This will be achieved by ensuring the quality of life and delivery of community well-being, through the use of land; type of development; the safeguarding, maintenance and improvement of community facilities and services; and by ensuring that the form, design, location and layout of new development enhances community wellbeing.

Policy DP3: Affordable Housing

This policy, upon adoption, will ensure that the affordable housing is indistinguishable from the open market housing, including by way of character, design, location and size.

Policy DP10: Tourism, Culture and Leisure

This policy, upon adoption, will place emphasis on the delivery high quality, sustainable tourism, and cultural and leisure development. Key aspects of this include promoting opportunities for accessing Shropshire's landscape and historic environment.

Policy DP11: Minimising Carbon Emissions

This policy, upon adoption, will influence development to reduce its impact on climate change through design measures including building orientation, window and door orientation, on-site energy generation, and targeting net zero carbon emissions.

Policy DP12: The Natural Environment

This policy, upon adoption, aims to avoid harm to Shropshire's natural assets and encourages their conservation, enhancement and restoration

Policy DP14: Green Infrastructure

This policy, upon adoption, requires development in Shropshire to improve and expand the green infrastructure network and form an integral part of open space provision.

Policy DP15: Open Space and Recreation

This policy, upon adoption, will state that accessible and well-maintained open space is an essential part of new development to ensure people have sufficient opportunities to play, walk and generally stay healthy.

Policy DP16: Landscaping of New Development

This policy, upon adoption, will require development proposals to provide well-designed, attractive and maintained on site landscaping unless otherwise agreed with the Council.

Policy DP17: Landscape and Visual Amenity

This policy, upon adoption, will require development proposals to respect, safeguard and where possible, restore or enhance landscape character and visual amenity in Shropshire.

Policy DP21: Flood Risk

This policy, upon adoption, will direct development to areas at least risk of flooding. Where development is permitted, the causes and impacts of flooding as well as residual flood risk, will be reduced through design measures.

Policy DP22: Sustainable Drainage Systems

This policy, upon adoption, will require developments to integrate measures for sustainable water management to reduce flood risk, avoid adverse impacts on water quality and quantity within Shropshire (including groundwater resources), and provide opportunities to enhance biodiversity, health and recreation.

Policy DP23: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

This policy, upon adoption, will provide measures to protect, conserve, sympathetically enhance and restore Shropshire's heritage assets. This includes avoiding harm or loss of significance to designated or non-designated heritage assets, including their settings.

Policy DP24: Shropshire Hills National Landscape

This policy, upon adoption, will state that great weight will be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape (NL) by limiting the scale and extent of development in the designated area.

DP28: Communications and Transport

This policy, upon adoption, commits to improving Shropshire's communications and transport networks and supporting the infrastructure and services to widen travel and transport choices and to improve connectivity and accessibility whilst moving towards reduced car dependency. A key aspect of this will be the protection, extension or improvement of footways, cycleways, public rights of way and bridleways for active travel.

Settlement Policies S13: Much Wenlock Place Plan Area

This policy, upon adoption, outlines the key focuses for development in Much Wenlock. This includes a commitment to deliver around 200 dwellings and around 2 hectares of employment development.

The policy includes a preferred residential allocation in Much Wenlock on the land adjoining the Primary School and Hunters Gate for 120 dwellings. Design guidelines are also provided in the policy.

Sustainable Design SPD (2011)

This Supplementary Planning Document provides standards and guidance for water management, energy efficiency and generation, waste management and resource efficiency. The document also provides a sustainability checklist to support development to meet the outlined requirements.

1.44 Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan (2013-2026)

The Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in July 2014. The document covers key policy areas including development design, housing mix, development in the Conservation Area, flood risk and parking.

This document also reflects on the Much Wenlock Design Statement (2000) , bringing forward key design principles relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan.

At the time of writing the Neighbourhood Plan was under review. When adopted the renewed plan's policies will replace the existing policies set out in the adopted Neighbourhood Plan.

1.5 Site visits and engagement

An inception call between AECOM and representatives of Much Wenlock Town Council was undertaken on 09 October 2023 to introduce the teams, to explore the working group's key aims and objectives and to address any initial concerns.

A site visit was then conducted on 18 October 2023 led by members of the working group. The visit commenced at Much Wenlock Town Council Offices and covered the whole neighbourhood area including the Town of Much Wenlock, surrounding settlements and the surrounding countryside.

The visit allowed AECOM to gather an extensive photographic survey and undertake a comprehensive place analysis which has formed the basis of this document. This document has resulted from a collaborative effort reflecting the priorities of the local community.

An engagement event was held in early March to allow the local community to see the emerging design guidelines and provide feedback.

Figure 06: The Corn Exchange building, which houses the Library and Town Council Office

Table 02: Design code production process

Place analysis

02

2. Place analysis

Much Wenlock is a historic market town surrounded by picturesque countryside. Its origins as a rural centre remain visible in its working farms, historic civic buildings and town square. It also has an important history associated with quarrying limestone both along The Edge and close to the town.

2.1 Context and identity

Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Area is located within the Shropshire ceremonial county in the West Midlands. The area has a strong rural vocation and it neighbours the Shropshire Hills National Landscape.

The Neighbourhood Area has a population of 2,900 according to the 2021 Census. Most of this is contained within Much Wenlock, Bourton and Homer.

High Street, Barrow Street and Wilmore Street/ Sheinton Street radiate from Much Wenlock's centre. The town's organic growth has resulted in non-uniform streets with a varied built form. The landmarks of Much Wenlock Parish church and Wenlock Priory are located close to the centre of the town.

The Neighbourhood Area is steeped in history. Many of the older buildings in the centre are built with or faced with limestone evidence of a less-than-rich agricultural heritage. Town farms by enlarge were not rebuilt in the surrounding countryside after the enclosures. These small farms continued to be operated from the town centre through to the second half of the 20th century.

The town has a strong visual aesthetic arising from its stone, brick and timber framed façades and red clay tile, slate, and stone roofs. Building styles are varied and include a mix of historic cottages, large Georgian houses, Victorian villas as well as modern housing and bungalows. A few of the buildings have gable ends facing the street. This variety of building styles creates a visually satisfying streetscape.

Figure 07: Traditional shop front, Barrow Street

Figure 08: Pound Cottage, Victoria Road

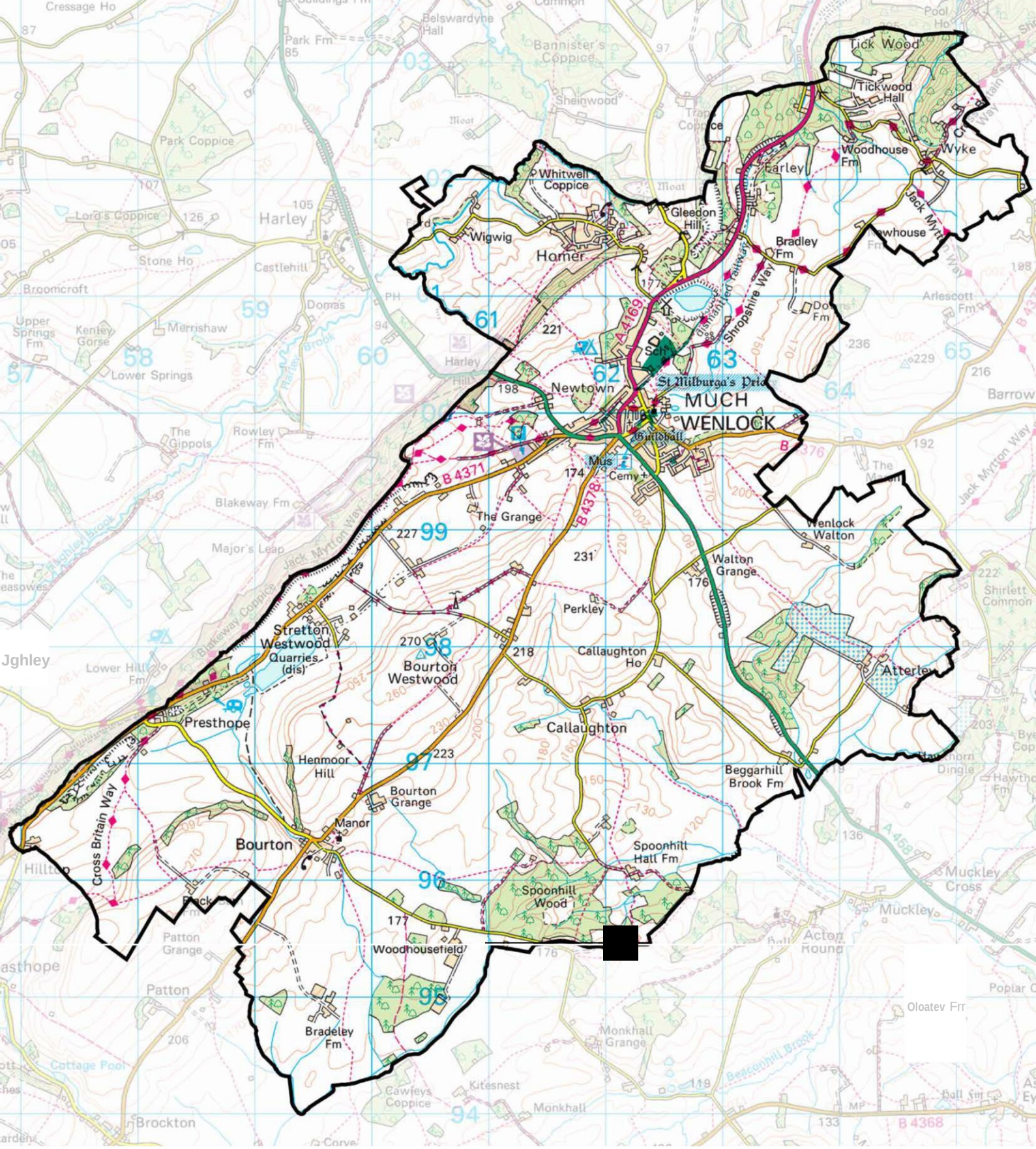


Figure 09: Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Area, which shares its boundary with the Parish

2.2 Settlement origins

Wenlock Edge is a limestone escarpment near Much Wenlock which originates from a part of a coral reef that was undersea 430 million years ago. This left a ridge just west of the Neighbourhood Area, which has resulted in a unique landscape context. Since pre-roman times, limestone quarrying covered an essential economic and social role in the history of Much Wenlock.

There is evidence of Roman occupation from the first century AD In 680 the Anglo-Saxon princess, later saint, Milburga arrived as abbess of a double monastery. Much Wenlock's role as a trading centre developed around it. Following the Norman Conquest, in 1080, Cluniac monks were granted the monastic lands and began to build their priory, and the parish church, Holy Trinity. A charter granted in 1486 by Edward IV made the town a borough, with the prior as landowner and 'first burgess'. This continued until the priory closed in 1540. Construction of the Guildhall consolidated secular authority over what was the largest English borough. For decades Much Wenlock was represented by two MPs. The Industrial Revolution developing locally shifted trade away from the town although it administrative control. The story of Much Wenlock is strongly related to the modern Olympic movement, as its founding father Dr William Penny Brookes was born in the town in 1809. Also, the first Shropshire Olympian Games were held in 1860.

Figure 11: The Guildhall

Figure 12: 19-21 Barrow Street

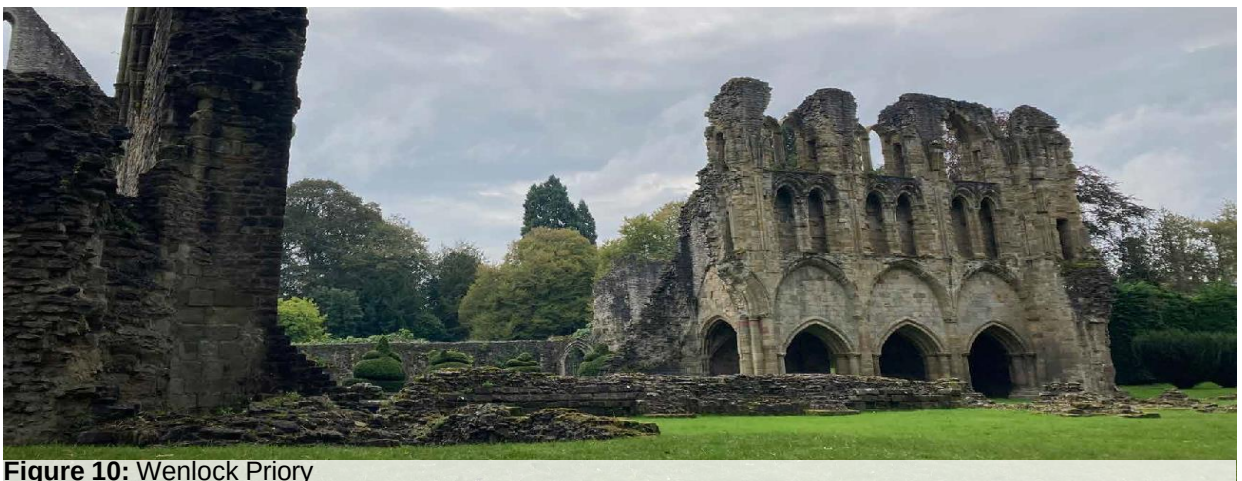


Figure 10: Wenlock Priory

In the 19th Century Much Wenlock town was arranged around the High Street, Barrow Street, The Bull Ring and Wilmore Street/Sheinton Street. Fine grain and traditional development along these routes were predominant. Wigwig and Homer are ancient hamlets located north of Much Wenlock and were still small in the 19th century. Wenlock railway was officially opened in 1862. In 1878 the Market Hall (now the town museum) was built.

After WWII Much Wenlock town expanded to the north along A4169 and to the south along Bridgnorth Road and St Mary's Road. Also, new development occurred at the hamlet of Homer. In 1962, the Much Wenlock railway station was closed. Some of the railway routes have provided footpaths as well as extensive sections of the Jack Mytton long-distance bridleway.

The limestone quarrying industry continued to be economically central until at least the 1970s, when it contributed significantly to road construction for Telford New Town. Incidentally, the grossly uneven muscle-development of young quarrymen was a trigger for the introduction of athletics by Dr Brookes.

Forester Avenue and Oakfield Park developments were built at the end of C20, while Hunters Gate development was built in the early 2000.

Figure 13: The former Much Wenlock railway station building, now a private dwelling

Figure 15: Monks Cottage, Barrow Street

Figure 14: Modern development at Hunters Gate

2.3 Settlement today

Much Wenlock town today preserves its inner compact core development along High Street, Barrow Street and Wilmore Street/ Sheinton Street. Developments generally spread out from the town centre along some key roads (Stretton Road, The Crescent and Barrow Street). There are some more recent developments to the west and to the south-east of the town centre that are less dense and have a more regular layout.

Many other settlements can be found throughout the Neighbourhood Area:

- Bourton is still predominantly included within its conservation area, preserving an informal and organic layout mostly arranged along the B4378 and the two perpendicular roads.
- Homer is currently a village with its distinct character, positioned entirely in the Shropshire Hills National Landscape. The village features '60s developments, with a predominance of detached houses and an organic layout.

Figure 17: Bridgnorth Road

Figure 18: Barrow Street

Figure 16: Detached house in Homer

Figure 19: New development off Victoria Road

2.4 Layout and built form

The adjacent map shows the relationship between built and unbuilt space in the Neighbourhood Area. The layout of buildings can highlight interesting urban patterns and help to identify different elements of character. Using this method, the Neighbourhood Area's urban spaces can be roughly divided into the following categories:

Dense and informal urban grain

The compact layout of Much Wenlock town centre creates a fine urban grain. Buildings generally face the streets with no setbacks and plots are narrow and deep. Gables often face the street contributing to the local streetscape and create a good level of enclosure.

Low-density and informal urban grain

These areas still have an informal urban grain, but less dense than Much Wenlock town centre. Homer and Bourton can be included in this category.

Formal urban grain

The 21st century development has been more linear in nature with numerous buildings built in a uniform style by single developers. Layout is generally more repetitive and regular in these more recent developments.

Standalone farms

Much Wenlock parish has vast open landscape areas that are dotted with smaller settlements and isolated farms.

Figure 20: Bull Ring

Figure 21: High Street from Gaskell corner

Figure 22: St Mary's Lane

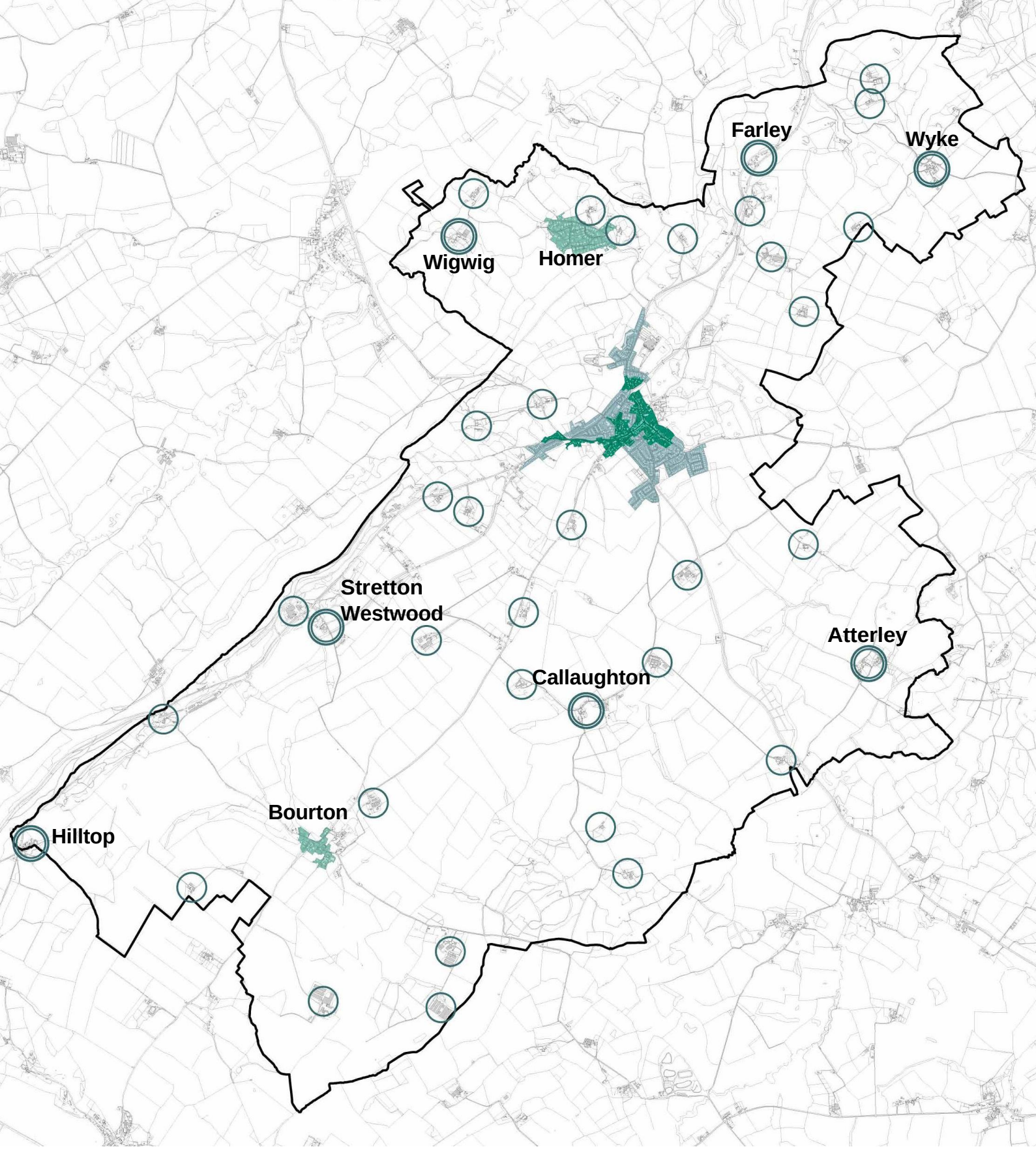


Figure 23: Settlements and farmsteads across the Neighbourhood Area

2.5 Historic assets

The Much Wenlock Conservation Area was originally designated in May 1970 and covers a large percentage of Much Wenlock town. The majority of buildings within the Conservation Area are residential, however many businesses are located at the ground floors and civic buildings can also be found. The Conservation Area contains many listed buildings, which are distributed along High Street, Barrow Street and Wilmore Street/ Sheinton Street in particular. One Scheduled monument, namely Wenlock Priory, can be found just off Bull Ring.

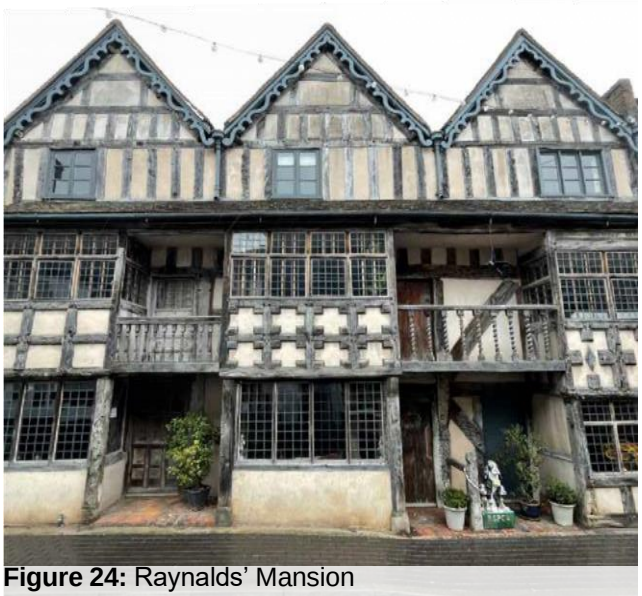


Figure 24: Raynalds' Mansion

The Bourton Conservation Area is located south-west of Much Wenlock town along the B4378. This Conservation Area was designated in October 1994 and includes six Listed Buildings. A medieval cross in the churchyard of the Holy Trinity church is also identified as a Scheduled Monument.

The parish includes 3 Grade I, 6 Grade II* and 94 Grade II Listed Buildings. In addition to the listed buildings, there are many high-quality examples of non-designated buildings such as imposing townhouses, modest cottages and terraces.

Figure 25: 47 High Street

Figure 26: Wenlock Abbey

Figure 27: Much Wenlock Conservation Area

Figure 28: Bourton Conservation Area

GRADE	HISTORIC ASSET	
Grade I Listed	CHURCH OF HOLY TRINITY WENLOCK ABBEY PRIORY OF ST MILBURGA (RUINS)	
Grade II* Listed	GUILDHALL GASKELL ARMS HOTEL 48, HIGH STREET 55 AND 56, HIGH STREET CHURCH OF HOLY TRINITY ASHFIELD HALL	
Grade II Listed	24, SHEINTON STREET 50, SHEINTON STREET 55-57, SHEINTON STREET 1, SMITHFIELD ROAD 6, WILMORE STREET THE STONE HOUSE 6, WYKE BOURTON MANOR LODGE OF BOURTON MANOR BOURTON HALL FARM HOUSE DOVECOTE AT BOURTON HALL FARM 1, BOURTON ROAD 2, BOURTON ROAD PRIORY COTTAGE THE PRIORY 7-10, BULL RING GEORGE AND DRAGON INN 5, HIGH STREET NOS. 10 AND 11, HIGH STREET 21 AND 22, HIGH STREET 41, HIGH STREET 44 AND 45, HIGH STREET 59 AND 60, HIGH STREET 61, HIGH STREET 63, HIGH STREET RAILINGS, GATE PIERS AND GATES OF MARDOL COTTAGE NO. 11 BARROW STREET 13 AND 14, BARROW STREET	22, BARROW STREET 27 AND 28, BARROW STREET RAVEN HOTEL 34, BARROW STREET OUTBUILDING AT REAR OF NUMBER 24 ST OWENS WELL 5, ST MARYS LANE ST MILBURGAS WELL 1-5, SHEINTON STREET 12, BARROW STREET 2 AND 3, WILMORE STREET 3 AND 4, HIGH STREET POST OFFICE 14, HIGH STREET 33 AND 34, HIGH STREET THE OLD VICARAGE 42 AND 43, HIGH STREET 57 AND 58, HIGH STREET CORN EXCHANGE 23, BARROW STREET THE POLICE STATION 6 AND 7, SMITHFIELD ROAD 23, HIGH STREET 47, HIGH STREET THE WOODHOUSE LODGE OF TICKWOOD HALL 16 AND 17, HIGH STREET 1, HIGH STREET 2 AND 3, VICTORIA ROAD

GRADE	HISTORIC ASSET
Grade II Listed	5, WILMORE STREET 1, WYKE 24, BARROW STREET 29, BARROW STREET 7 AND 8, BARROW STREET NOS. 5 AND 6, QUEEN STREET CHURCH HOUSE 19-21, BARROW STREET THE OLD WINDMILL TO WEST OF SHADWELL ROCK QUARRY 9, BARROW STREET 17 AND 18, BARROW STREET 25 AND 26, BARROW STREET 51-54, SHEINTON STREET 58 AND 59, SHEINTON STREET THE RED HOUSE 4, WILMORE STREET BURFORD HOUSE TICKWOOD HALL SCHOOL HOUSE PRIORY TOWER 11, BULL RING 6, HIGH STREET TALBOT INN 18-20, HIGH STREET 26-32, HIGH STREET 40, HIGH STREET FOX HOTEL 53 AND 54, HIGH STREET THE MANOR HOUSE 19, SHEINTON STREET STABLE AND CARTSHED RANGE EAST OF BRADLEY FARMHOUSE BARN IMMEDIATELY SOUTH EAST OF BRADLEY FARMHOUSE BRADLEY FARMHOUSE 24 AND 25, HIGH STREET 15 HIGH STREET 3, ST MARYS LANE BOURTON WAR MEMORIAL

Figure 29: Gaskell Arms Hotel

Figure 30: 48 High Street

Figure 31: Dovecote at Bourton Hall Farm

2.6 Landscape

Much Wenlock is fully included within the Shropshire Hills National Character Area. The area is characterised by bare-topped hills which contrast with mixed agriculture in valleys and dales. Upland and lowland heathland, wet woodland and lowland mixed deciduous woodland are the key habitats in the area. The sheep and beef cattle industry is strong in the area.

The primary landscape designation in Much Wenlock is Shropshire Hills National Landscape, which partially falls in the Neighbourhood Area to the north and borders it to the west. However, four SSSI can be found in the area, namely Wenlock Edge SSSI, Whitwell Coppice SSSI, Farley Dingle SSSI, and Tick Wood and Benthall Edge SSSI.

Views of the surrounding landscape are available from the main settlement of Much Wenlock and the routes that connect all the settlements of the Neighbourhood Area.

Much Wenlock is Shropshire Hills National Landscape

Key features of the National Landscape:

- A landscape of diversity and contrast created by varied geology, the Shropshire Hills provide a dramatic link between the Midlands and the Welsh mountains.
- Of the hills themselves, the craggy Stiperstones and Wrekin, the moorland plateau and valleys of the Long Mynd, the quarried Clee Hills, the wooded Wenlock Edge and the rolling Clun Forest all have their own character.
- Centuries of farming have shaped the landscape. 70% of the National Landscape is grazing land, and below the moorland and rough grass hilltops and commons lies a patchwork of fields rich in hedgerows and veteran trees. Ancient woodlands, wildflower meadows and orchards also survive, each habitat with its characteristic wildlife plants and invertebrates. Red grouse, skylark and dormouse are among the great variety of birds and mammals.
- The Rivers Clun, Teme and Onny, along with many smaller rivers and streams, are very unspoilt. Many are lined with alder, and home to important species such as freshwater crayfish and otter.
- A rich heritage of hillforts, castles, mottes and Offa's Dyke tell of centuries of border strife. Much of the pattern of dispersed settlement and small fields is very ancient. Stone, brick and timbered buildings combine with the industrial relics of lead mining, quarrying and charcoal burning. Off the beaten track, unspoilt and remote in the context of the West Midlands, the Shropshire Hills are a haven of tranquillity – peace and quiet, dark skies, and of high scenic and environmental quality.
- From the market towns to remote villages, strong and active communities are maintaining rural culture and traditions while adapting to changes. Opportunities for enjoyment and wellbeing are open to both locals and visitors through walks and outdoor activities which respect the area's qualities.

Wenlock Edge Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Wenlock Edge is a scarp of Silurian limestone which runs for over thirty kilometres (18.6 miles) from Craven Arms to Much Wenlock. It is a prominent and well-known feature, and is of interest for its extensive exposures of rocks of the Wenlock series (Silurian) and for the woodland, scrub and grassland that occur along the ridge. The site consists of several separate localities in the northern part of the Edge west of Much Wenlock.

Whitwell Coppice SSSI

As well as being an outstanding woodland this site has important geological exposures of Silurian age along the stream banks.

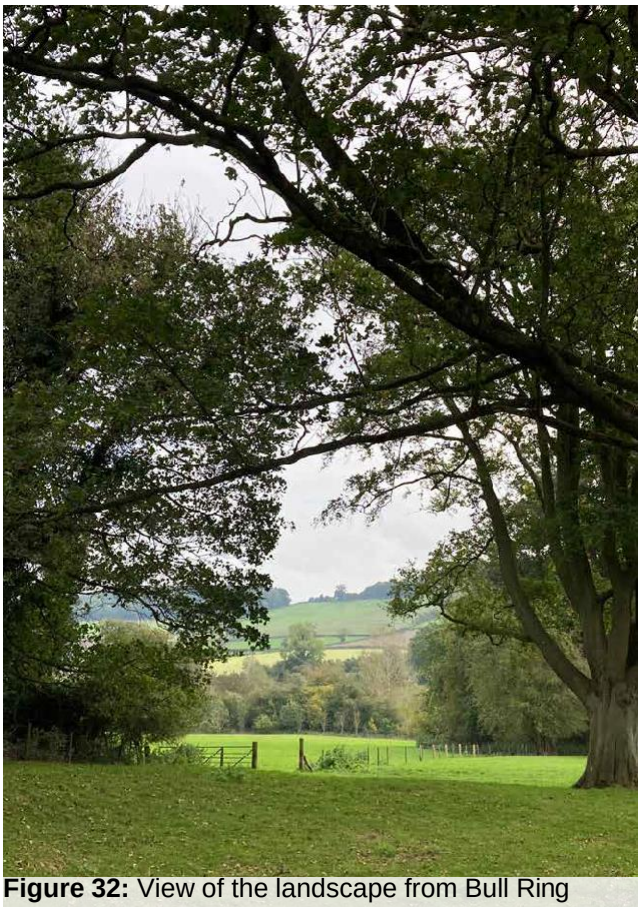


Figure 32: View of the landscape from Bull Ring

Farley Dingle SSSI

This site provides the best exposures of the Farley Member of the Wenlock Series, composed of alternating layers of shale and nodular limestone. The Farley Member represents the transition between the Coalbrookdale Formation (Wenlock Shale) and the overlying Wenlock Limestone. Farley Dingle shows the typical development of this transitional rock unit, which is thus named after it. This is the characteristic area for the Wenlock Series of rocks and this section is of outstanding importance because of the international significance of the standard sequence of Wenlock rocks which occurs here.

Tick Wood and Benthall Edge SSSI

An extensive area of ancient native mixed deciduous woodland on north and west facing scarp slopes overlooking the Severn Gorge. Most of this woodland lies on soils derived from Wenlock Limestone and Wenlock Shale of the Silurian Period, but an area at the eastern end of Benthall Edge wood is underlain by the clays and sandstones of the Coal Measures.

Figure 33: View of the landscape looking towards Callaughton from the B4378

Figure 34: View of the landscape from Bull Ring

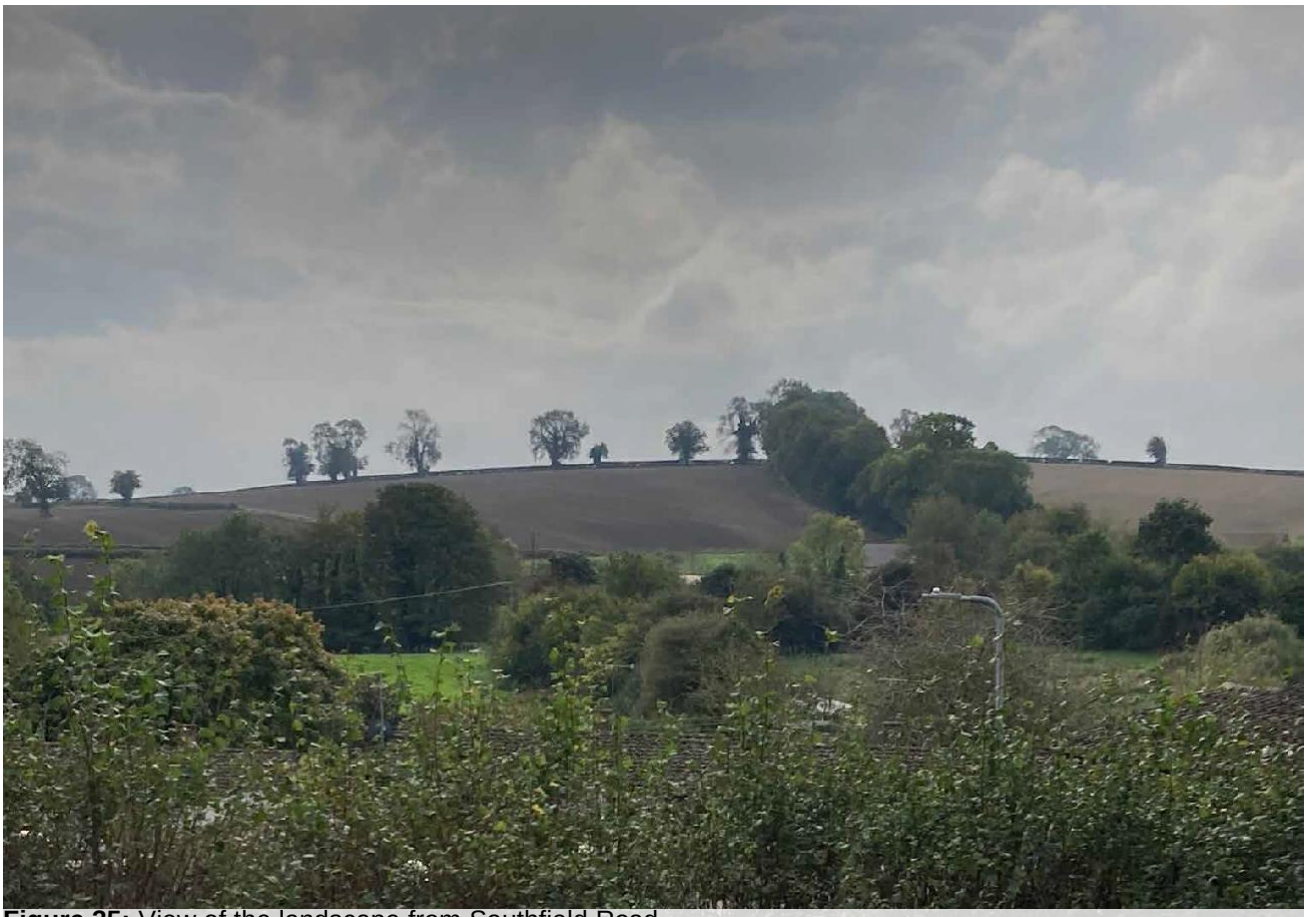


Figure 35: View of the landscape from Southfield Road

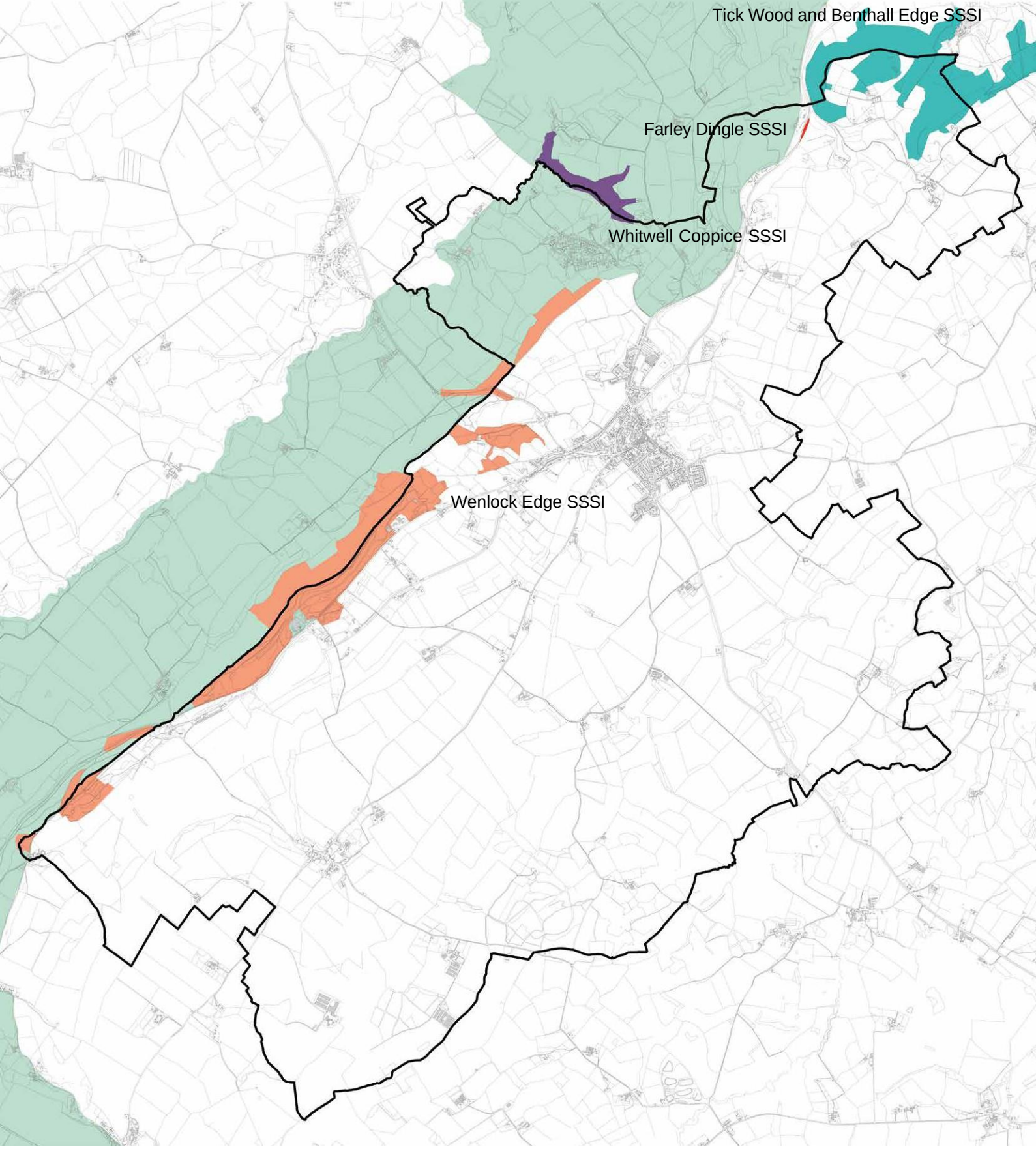


Figure 36: Landscape designations in the Neighbourhood Area

2.7 Movement networks

2.7.1 Non-vehicular Movement

The neighbourhood area has an attractive landscape setting with wooded areas and rolling hills. The area also forms part of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape. Access to these landscape features is made possible with numerous footpaths and public rights of way. This includes a number of long-distance footpaths such as the Cross Britain Way, Shropshire Way and Jack Mytton Way.

2.7.2 Vehicular Movement

Much Wenlock is located approximately 10 miles south-east of Shrewsbury and 7 miles south-west of Telford. The large village of Ironbridge is located approximately 4 miles to the north-east.

Much Wenlock is located on the A458. The A458 is a route on the UK highway network that runs from the edge of Snowdonia, in Wales, to the outskirts of Birmingham, in England. On the way it passes through Welshpool, Shrewsbury, Much Wenlock, Bridgnorth, Stourbridge and Halesowen. Victoria Road and Bridgnorth Road form part of this route within the town.

The A4169 leads to the north of the town, crossing the River Severn and provides access to Ironbridge and Telford.

The B4371, B4378 and B4376 are more minor routes comprising country lanes, connecting Much Wenlock to the surrounding landscape and settlements.

Figure 37: Sheinton Street

Figure 38: Barrow Street

Figure 39: Bridgnorth Road

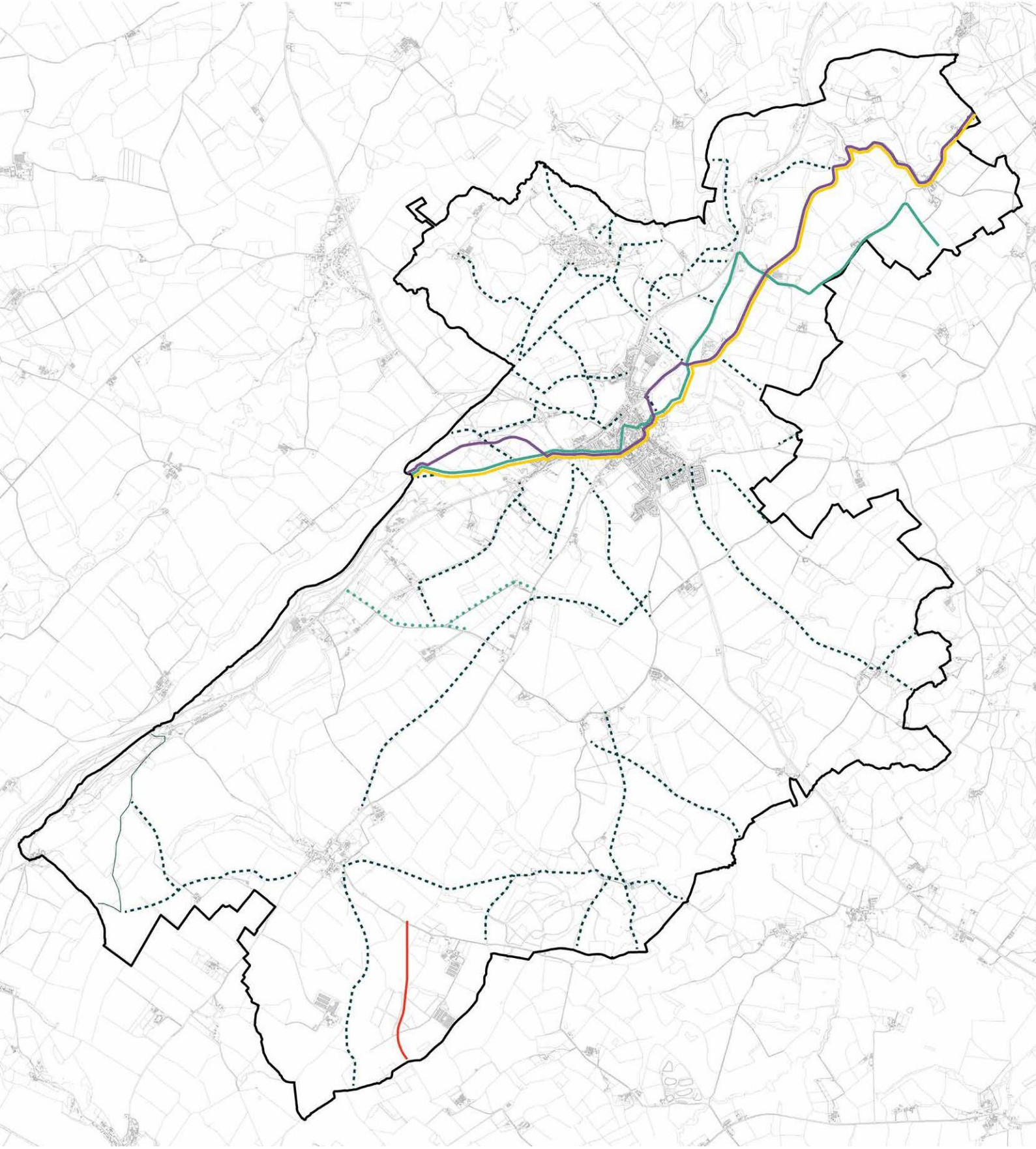


Figure 40: Much Wenlock's non-vehicular Movement Network

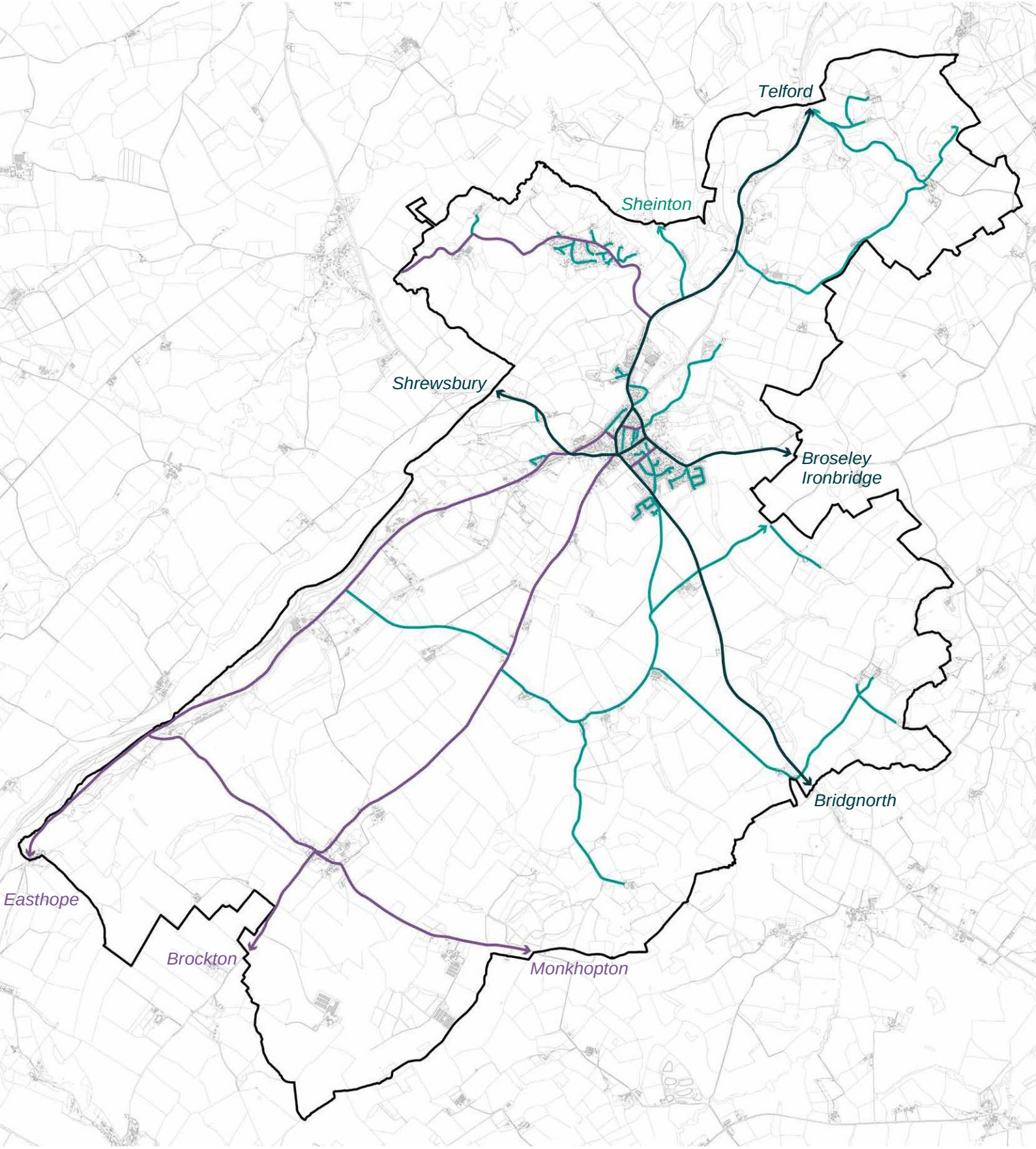


Figure 41: Much Wenlock's vehicular Movement Network

2.8 Water and Flood Risk

Much Wenlock lies to the south west of the ridge of Wenlock Edge, in a bowl surrounded by rising ground on three sides.

Surface water flooding is a major issue in the town with many of the streets affected when heavy rainfall events occur. The site allocation adjacent to Hunters Gate is an area that is particularly affected by surface water running from the higher ground across Bridgnorth Road.

Despite the commendable practice of ploughing horizontally behind residential areas, during heavy rainfall quantities of water now pour down into gardens from fields. This has impacted on the Hunters Gate development with surfaces suffering from water damage. Also, for the first time in twenty years this has affected dwellings on the south side of the Stretton road four times in the last twelve months.

After the severe flash flooding in the Cornish town of Boscastle in 2004, the Environment Agency was tasked to look at other catchments around the country that would behave in a similar manner should conditions prevail. A number of other catchments have been identified and the Shylte Brook, running through Much Wenlock, is one of them.

Figure 42: Dwellings with sand bags and flood gates on High Street

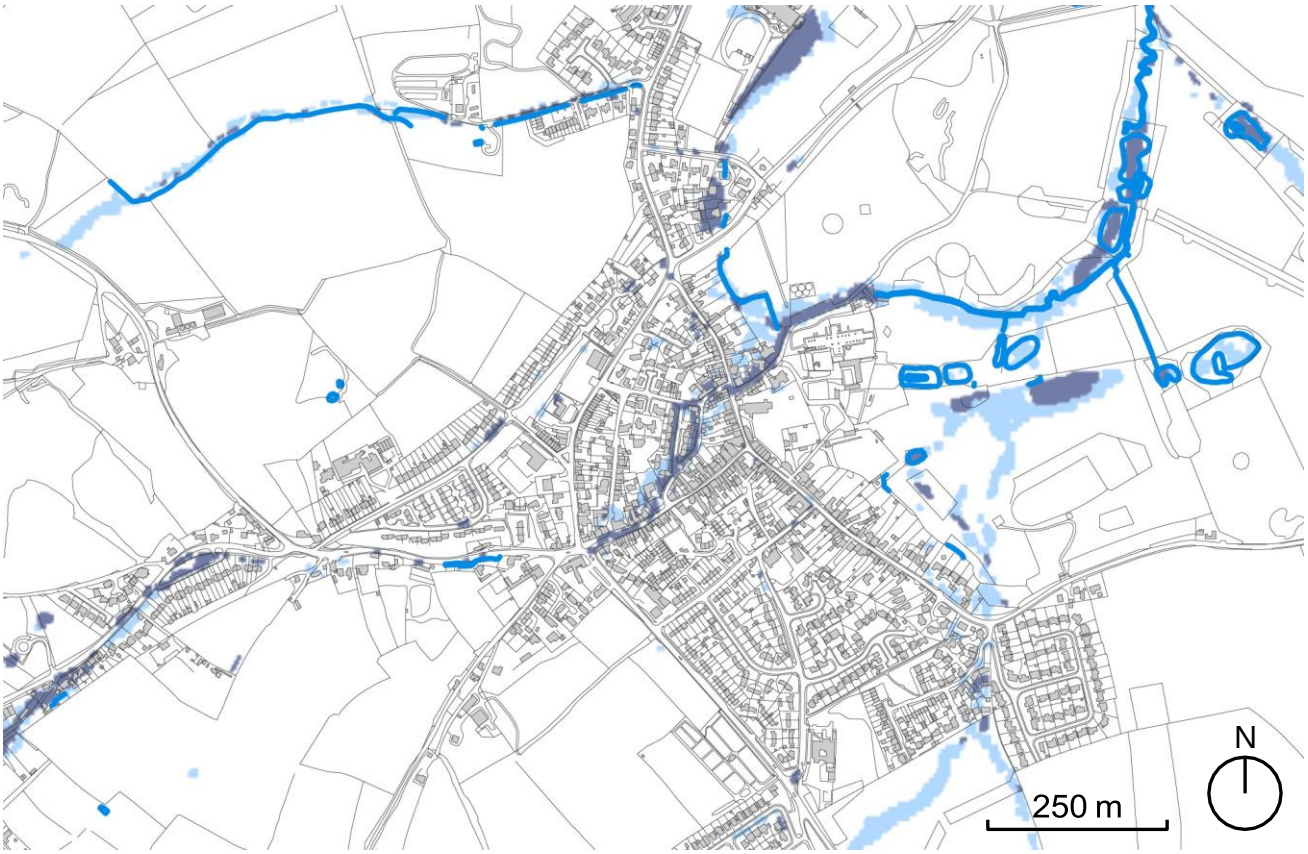


Figure 43: EA Surface Water flood risk map for Much Wenlock town

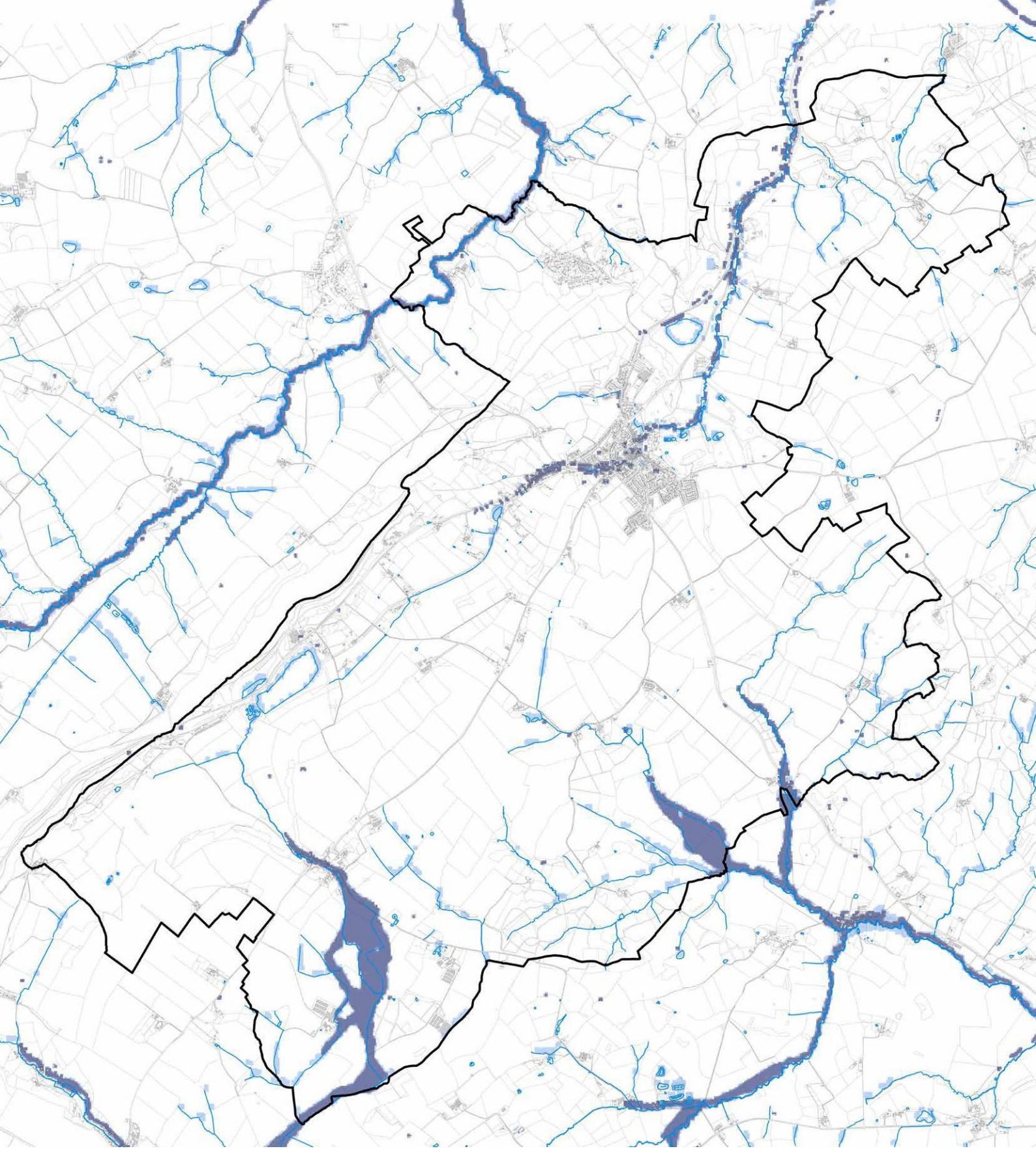


Figure 44: EA Flood from rivers Risk map for the Neighbourhood Area

2.9 Open space

Natural and informal open spaces are widely available in the Neighbourhood Area thanks to its rural character. However, formal open spaces can also be found, particularly in Much Wenlock town.

These spaces include local green spaces, such as Gaskell Recreational Ground to the north of the settlement that includes a football pitch. Next to it, a local green space called Windmill Hill surrounds the Old Windmill, a historical landmark of the Neighbourhood Area. The Church Green is another key local green space, located right in the core of the town. A series of other green spaces are found in the settlement, for example in Hunters Gate development to the south. There are also an Old Cemetery with a mortuary chapel and a New Cemetery. The Old Cemetery is an actively tended community open space.

Another key open space is the public square located at the core of the town where the Queen Victoria Diamond Jubilee Clock is located. The square offers seating for the public and is enclosed by the historic buildings of the Conservation Area.

Two allotments can be found on Southfield Road and Bridgnorth Road.

Figure 46: Gaskell Recreation Ground

Figure 47: Church Green

Figure 45: Dr Brookes memorial at Gaskell Recreation Ground

Figure 48: View of the public square at the centre of the town with the Queen Victoria Diamond Jubilee Clock

Figure 49: Key open spaces in Much Wenlock town

Character analysis

03

3. Character analysis

This section analyses the Neighbourhood Area according to a series of character areas. A study of each character area highlights examples of what makes that character area distinctive. These attributes can inform infill development and can serve as lessons (good and bad) for future developments.

3.1 Character analysis

A primary purpose of this document is to help generate sensitive and characterful design responses to existing settlements and their landscape settings.

Across the Neighbourhood Area, this includes a range of contexts including the Shropshire Hills National Landscape, wider countryside, rural hamlets, farms, and Much Wenlock's town centre.

This character analysis helps understand both the landscape setting and the detailed pattern of settlement growth that underpins the variety of character features across the Neighbourhood Area.

This analysis has been cross-checked on-site as part of this study with walking tours and photographic studies guided by local residents.

Each character area may require subtly different design detail responses regarding infill sites, regeneration or nearby growth that will be in keeping with each specific local context within the Neighbourhood Area.

Alternatively, the Neighbourhood Area may continue to acquire new layers with design approaches and concepts that are innovative and look to meet the future challenges of sustainability and biodiversity net gain. However, these responses must still seek to tie in with the landscape and townscape appeal that help give the Neighbourhood Area its distinctive character.

3.2 Character areas

The following character areas are illustrated on the map on the next page. These are defined in this study based on an analysis of the land use, layout, built form, and materials.

1 Historic Much Wenlock

This area covers Much Wenlock's conservation area and includes the historic core of the town as well as streets radiating from the centre.

2 Surrounding Settlements

These areas cover the settlements of Bourton, to the south-west of Much Wenlock town, and Homer, to its north-west.

3 Town Growth and Infill

This area comprises the development outside Much Wenlock Conservation Area but within the Town's main settlement area.

4 Farms and Countryside

This area comprises the landscape surrounding Much Wenlock and the smaller settlements of the Neighbourhood Area.

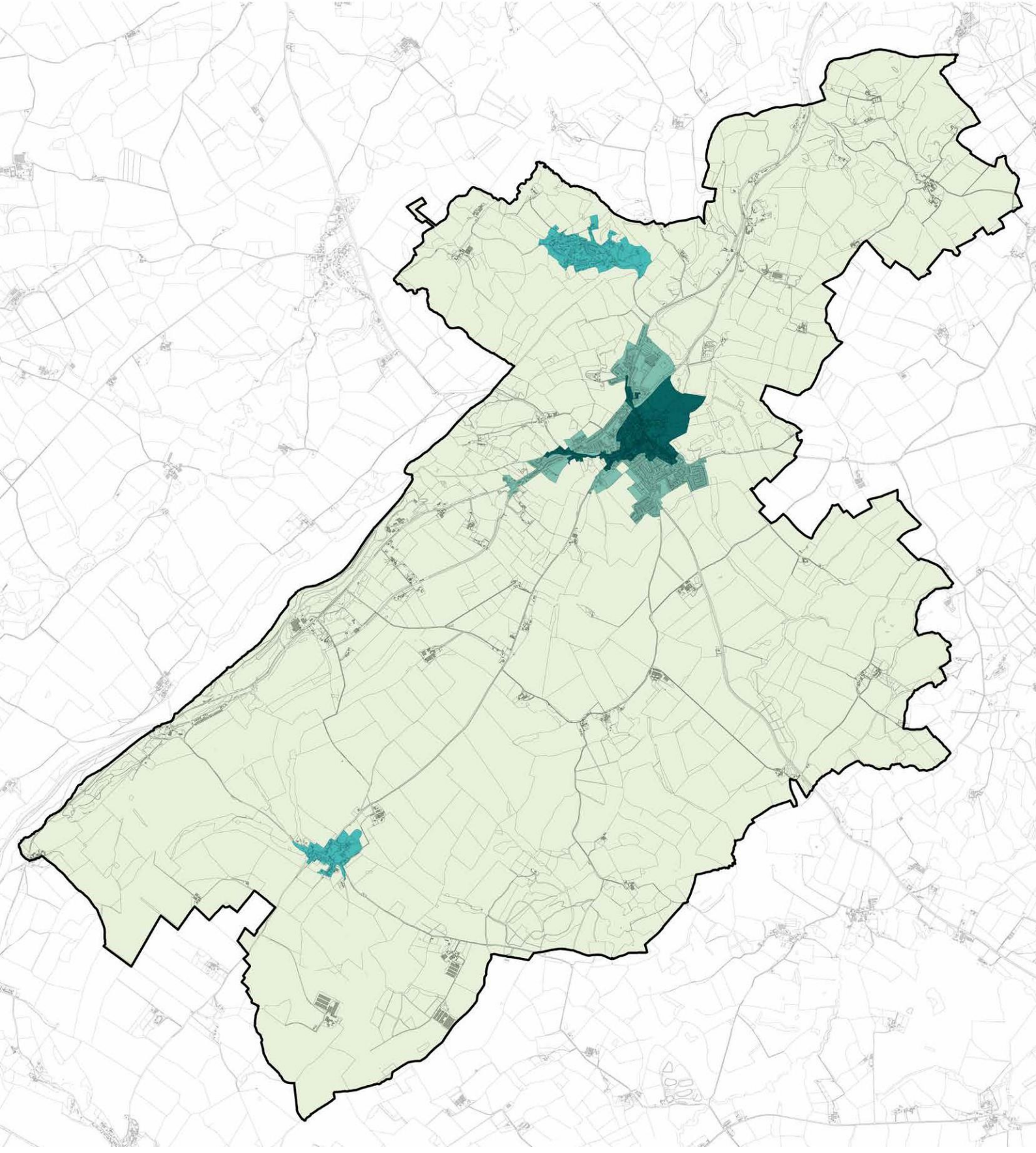


Figure 50: Character Areas within the Neighbourhood Area

1 Historic Much Wenlock

This area includes Much Wenlock's Conservation Area and contains the main retail and civic functions within the Neighbourhood Area with cafes and shops including High Street, Barrow Street and Wilmore Street as well as civic buildings such as the Corn Exchange and Guildhall. The area has a strong character dictated by the historical buildings and the traditional enclosed streetscape. This area also encompasses Wenlock Priory and its surrounding landscape.

Figure 51: Historic Much Wenlock character area

Factors	Appearance characteristics
Building types	Terraces (often joined-up to create a continuous façade); semi-detached houses; detached houses.
Building height	Dwellings range between 1 and 3.5 storeys. However, 2 and 3 storeys are the prevailing building heights.
Public realm	Pavements are located on most roads and are generally 1.5 or 2 metres wide. A public square is located at the intersection of Barrow Street and High Street, where the Queen Victoria Diamond Jubilee Clock is.
Façade	Red brick; timber; limestone; render.
Roofing	Natural slate; Rosemary tiles.
Boundary treatments	Stone walls; iron fences; hedgerows; red brick walls.
Windows	Sashes; casements (various types); bay windows; oriel windows; dormer windows.
Doorways	Doorway with no canopy; shopfront doorway; gabled doorway.
Architectural features	Lintels; architraves; gables; dentillation; chimneys; floor fascias; quoins; decorative columns and arches; roof fascias.
Parking and setbacks	Parking: on-street, on-plot (side and back of the building); garages; communal car parks. Setbacks: from 0 metres to 15 metres.

Table 03: Character features table for Historic Much Wenlock character area

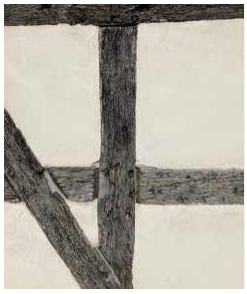
Key characteristics

Colours and materiality

Façade

Red brick

Timber



Limestone

Render

Roofing

Natural slate

Rosemary tiles

Boundary treatments

Windows

Doorways

12 Surrounding Settlements

Bourton is a historic settlement to the southwest of Much Wenlock. The built form of the hamlet comprises Bourton Manor, Holy Trinity Church, farm buildings and a small number of dwellings.

Homer was historically an area of common land called Homer Wood. The settlement developed from squatters' cottages encroaching on the common during the 17th century. During the 19th century it served as accommodation for quarrymen and farm labourers. The village expanded in the later 20th century with the construction of small cul-de-sac developments.

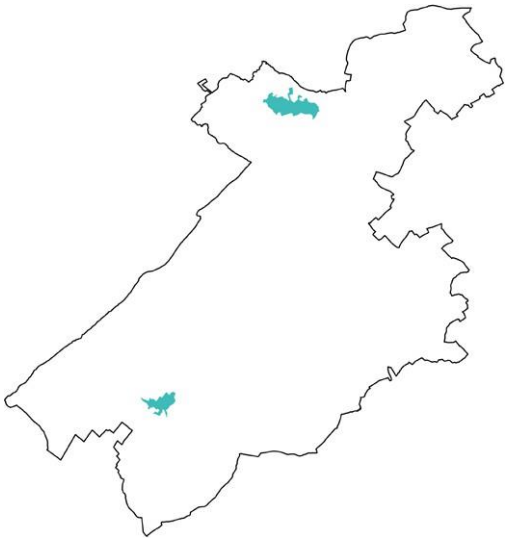


Figure 52: Surrounding Settlements character area

Factors	Appearance characteristics
Building types	Detached houses; semi-detached houses; farmhouses; farmsteads; barns.
Building height	Dwellings range between 1 and 3.5 storeys. However, 2 and 2.5 storeys are the prevailing building heights.
Public realm	Pavements are located on Vineyard Road and the Glen in Homer. The remaining roads are rural and generally have green verges.
Façade	Red brick; limestone; timber; render.
Roofing	Natural slate; concrete tiles; Rosemary tiles.
Boundary treatments	Hedgerows; timber fences; stone walls; red brick walls.
Windows	Casements (various types); bow windows; dormer windows.
Doorways	Doorway with no canopy; gabled doorway.
Architectural features	Lintels; architraves; gibbs surrounds; gables; dentillation; chimneys; quoins; decorative arches; roof fascias.
Parking and setbacks	Parking: on-plot (front and side of the building); garages. Setbacks: from 0 metres to 15 metres.

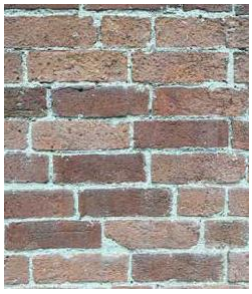
Table 04: Character features table for Surrounding Settlements character area

Key characteristics

Colours and materiality

Façade

Red brick



Limestone

Timber

Render

Roofing

Natural slate

Concrete tiles

Rosemary tiles

Boundary treatments

Windows

Doorways

3 Town Growth and Infill

These areas of more modern development include areas of social housing, small scale infill development and small urban extensions to the town. Development forms such as cul-de-sacs / estate forms as well as ribbon development along the roads at the extremities of the town are found here. The key developments in this area are Oakfield Park, Hunters Gate, Forester Avenue, Racecourse Road, Stretton Road and Station Road. Southfield Road and Havelock Crescent are examples of high quality social housing in terms both of architectural quality and domestic amenity.

Figure 53: Town Growth and Infill character area

Factors	Appearance characteristics
Building types	Detached houses; semi-detached houses; bungalows; townhouses; terraces.
Building height	Dwellings range between 1 and 3.5 storeys. However, 2 and 2.5 storeys are the prevailing building heights.
Public realm	Pavements are located on most roads, sometimes on both sides. Wide green verges are located on High Causeway, Stretton Road, Station Road, the A4169 and Swan Meadow. Two local green spaces are found at Hunters Gate and Havelock Crescent.
Façade	Red brick; timber; limestone; render.
Roofing	Natural slate; concrete tiles; Rosemary tiles.
Boundary treatments	Red brick walls; hedgerows; stone walls.
Windows	Casements (various types); bay windows; dormer windows; sashes.
Doorways	Doorway with no canopy; gabled doorway.
Architectural features	Lintels; architraves; gibbs surrounds; gables; dentillation; chimneys; roof fascias.
Parking and setbacks	Parking: on-street; on-plot (front, side and back of the building); garages; communal car parks. Setbacks: from 0 metres to 15 metres.

Table 05: Character features table for Town Growth and Infill character area

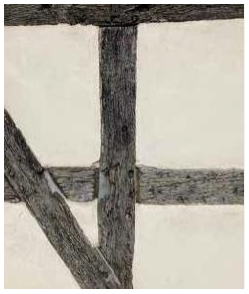
Key characteristics

Colours and materiality

Façade

Red brick

Timber



Limestone

Render

Roofing

Natural slate

Concrete tiles

Rosemary tiles

Boundary treatments

Windows

Doorways

4 Farms and Countryside

This area has a significantly rural character as it is mostly covered by landscape. The area also includes numerous country lanes leading to small clusters of buildings associated with farms. These include Wenlock Edge as well as Hilltop, Callaughton, Wyke, Wig Wig, Farley, Atterley, and Stretton Westwood, as well as other farms and buildings scattered throughout the Neighbourhood Area.

Figure 54: Farms and Countryside character area

Factors	Appearance characteristics
Building types	Detached houses; semi-detached houses; farmhouses; farmsteads; barns.
Building height	Dwellings range between 1 and 2.5 storeys. However, 2 and 2.5 storeys are the prevailing building heights.
Public realm	No pavements can be found in these settlements, however green verges are widely observed.
Façade	Red brick; limestone; render.
Roofing	Natural slate; Rosemary tiles.
Boundary treatments	Hedgerows; stone walls; timber fences.
Windows	Casements (various types); bay windows; dormer windows; sashes.
Doorways	Doorway with no canopy; gabled doorway.
Architectural features	Lintels; architraves; gibbs surrounds; gables; dentillation; chimneys; roof fascias.
Parking and setbacks	Parking: on-plot (front and side of the building); garages; communal car parks. Setbacks: from 0 metres to 35 metres.

Table 06: Character features table for Town Growth and Infill character area

Key characteristics

Colours and materiality

Façade

Red brick

Limestone

Render

Roofing

Natural slate

Rosemary tiles

Boundary treatments

Windows

Doorways

Area-wide design guidelines

04

4. Area-wide design guidelines

The design codes and guidance set out in this section prioritise the character and quality of new development, responsive design for infill development and sustainable design approaches. These design codes should be read in conjunction with the Character study in section 3.

4.1 Introduction

This section provides guidance on the design of development, setting out expectations that relevant planning applications in the neighbourhood area will be expected to address.

The guidelines developed in this section focus on new housing. However, development should not be viewed in isolation and the design and layout of rural form must respond to the wider development pattern and landscape context.

The design codes and guidance set out in this section will provide that context and direction for infill development sites and provide guidance of relevant topics such as sustainable design and climate change. Wider lessons can be inferred from these for ecology and inclusive design.

The local pattern of streets and spaces, building traditions, materials and the natural environment should all help to determine the character and identity of a development. It is important for any proposal that full account is taken of the local context and that the new design embodies the 'sense of place', both in terms of local character and distinctive features such as listed buildings.

Responding to the context means recognising existing positive design solutions or using existing cues as inspiration (see chapter 3). Proposals for a new scheme could adopt a traditional approach or a contemporary design that is innovating with purpose, whilst being in harmony with the landscape. It is acknowledged that there is not always agreement on aesthetic issues and architectural taste but using appropriate design precedents and a clear design process will give results that are less subjective and do represent good design.

Contemporary design must improve and enhance the setting and sustainability of the neighbourhood area whilst not detracting from the appearance of the landscape characteristics of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape and its habitats.

The following topics are addressed by design codes in this section:

A - Character & Quality in New Development

B - Responsive Design for Infill Development and Extensions

C - Sustainable Design & Climate Resilience

Figure 55: Limestone building in Much Wenlock town

A Character & Quality in New Development

4.2 Character & Quality in New Development

The design codes below set out how to respond to the local features defined in the previous section. These responses must help formulate and review design proposals in line with local preferences for high-quality design.

A1 - Preserve and Enhance Character Features

- Development must be respectful of local character features, that must be preserved and enhanced within the town/villages. These include:

- The use of local materials for elevations: limestone, red brick and render create the varied character of Much Wenlock
- Roofs: natural slate, Rosemary tiles, red pantiles
- Fenestration: casements and sashes with lintels and quoins are reflective of the local character. Also, timber should be preferred over UPVC
- Doorways (unsheltered / with porches). Unlisted houses and other buildings if not replacing exterior front doors like for like should consider timber or wood composite doors, not UPVC.
- Boundary treatments (low limestone and red brick walls and hedgerows)
- Quoins, dentillation, street-facing gables;

- Design of details and features must respond to the settlement in which it is sited or adjacent to (including the surrounding landscape) to enhance the positive qualities of the area; and
- Designers must consider landscape and the rural character of the villages as a key feature to be preserved and enhanced.
- Naturally coloured lime mortar is a sustainable material which can be used for new builds as well as to repair traditional buildings.Its use can reduce erosion to brick and stone.

A2 - Massing and Layout

- Development must reflect the massing and arrangement of surrounding buildings, including height, depth and setbacks;
- Development layout should respect Much Wenlock Parish Council's historic and traditional character by creating an intimate streetscape with buildings facing the road and creating a continuous façade. Hunters Gate development can be considered a positive example.

Figure 56: Hunters Gate development

Figure 57: Key set of materials to be used in new developments

A3 – Local Economy

- Promote and support local green power generation for community benefit, using sustainable methods;
- Public-facing businesses are encouraged. However they must not disrupt the distinctive rural character of the area when located in rural settlements or at the edge of the settlement;
- Small rural enterprise projects, such as local shops and craft workshops are encouraged to bring vitality to the rural settlements of the Neighbourhood Area. Co-working and flexible working spaces should also be considered;
- Improve circular walks and permissible walkways in the area to connect the different settlements, as they are an essential feature and contribute to strengthening the relationship between Much Wenlock and the numerous settlements in the Neighbourhood Area;
- Upgrade existing footpaths, pavements and crossings to enhance connections to the surrounding towns, villages and the Shropshire Hills National Landscape to create an improved network; and
- Consider the rural character of the area as a distinctive feature and strengthen the relationship with the Shropshire Hills National Landscape to promote tourism.

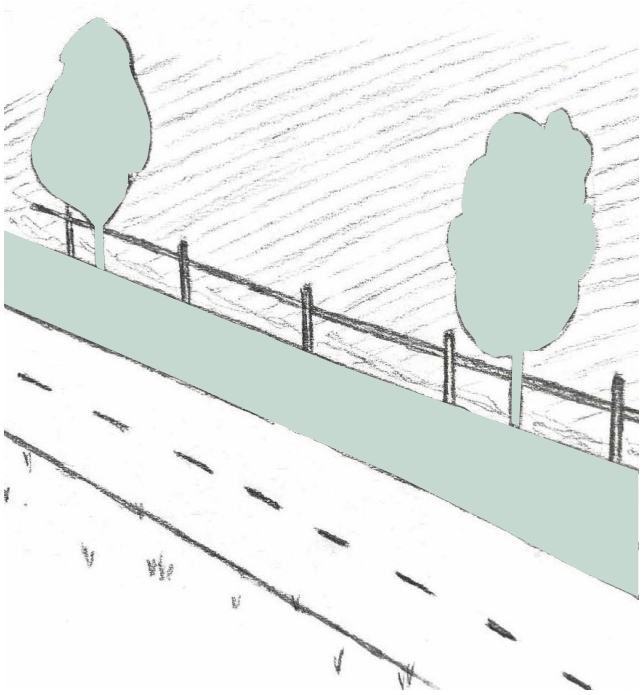


Figure 59: Footpath improvement

Figure 58: Barrow St. Cafe', Barrow Street

A4 – Car Parking

- Designers should consider different parking solutions, including:
  - On-plot car parks located at the front or side of the building;
  - Garages. Refer to local examples in the area.
- Service areas provided at the back of the building avoid visual impact on the rural character of the area. This solution should be particularly considered where car parks can have a major impact on the character of the streetscape;
- Integrate car parking sensitively within the streetscene. Where parking is required at the front of the plot it should be afforded sufficient space and utilise hedgerows to screen cars from the street. A series of unscreened car parks at the front of the building could have a detrimental impact on the streetscape;
- On-street parking, apart from visitor parking, will not be permitted. Single garages will not be considered to be a parking space. Electric vehicle charging points should be accessible for cars on driveways, garages or carports;
- Car parking spaces should comply with standards set out in the Shropshire Local Transport Plan and the respective accessibility requirements;
- Porous surface and green parking spaces (for example grass-crete) are preferable to impermeable parking spaces; and
- Garages are sometimes used for storage rather than for parking and should be set to the rear of the plot in an internal service area if possible.

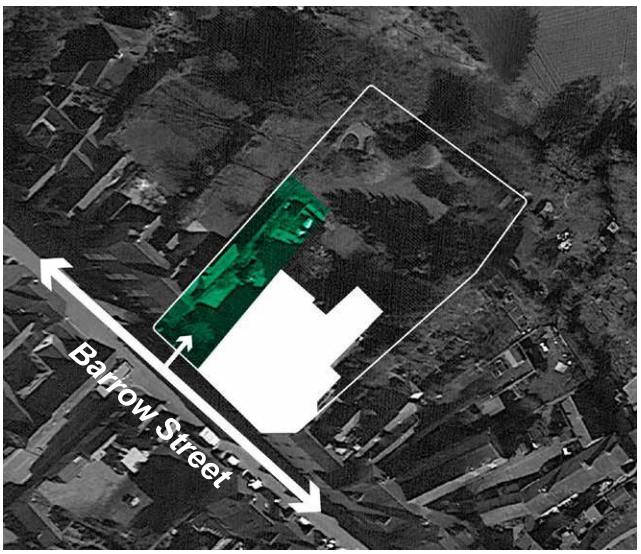


Figure 60: On-plot parking on Barrow Street

Figure 61: Garage in Sheinton Street

B Responsive Design for Infill Development and Extensions

4.3 Responsive Design for Infill Development and Extensions

Infill development is smaller scale development (Historically 1 or 2 homes within the NP area) within an existing developed context. This type of development commonly consists of three main types:

- Gap site development within a street frontage;
- Backland development; and
- Site redevelopment (for example, replacement of existing building/s).

Every future development should include environmental and social benefits, consider natural habitats, and include measures to combat climate change.

B1 – Overarching Aims

The overarching aim of these guidelines is to promote context-sensitive infill housing and extensions of a high quality. This should improve the street scene and locate new homes close to and in support of existing amenities. The following are key aims of the guidance:

- Protect residential amenities, both of new and existing occupiers;
- Contribute to the creation of distinctive and sustainable communities, places and spaces;
- Respect local vernacular architecture;
- Be of good design and encompass sustainability principles; and
- Respond to the context and character of the area.

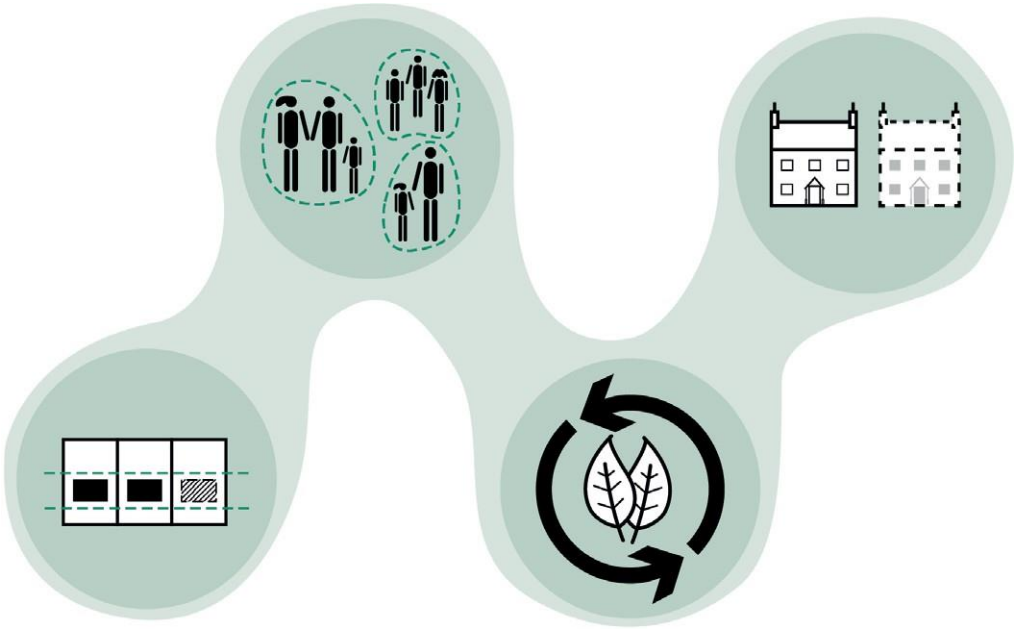


Figure 62: Infographic about Infill development overarching aims

B2 – Design Principles

The following design principles apply to infill development and extensions that may come forward via applications within the neighbourhood area:

- Artificial architectural features will not be permitted (for example, fibreglass and chimneys);
- Side extensions within the built environment will not normally be permitted but should be limited to a single-storey;
- Building scale and massing should be in keeping with the prevailing development pattern and not be overbearing on existing properties or deprive them of light, including over-looking or over-shadowing of both windows and amenity space;
- The building line should reflect the street and be set back no more than a maximum of 1.5m from adjacent buildings unless additional landscaping or tree planting is being introduced to the street scene;
- Where buildings are set back from the street a boundary should define the plot and link up to adjacent buildings / plots (for example hedgerows or low stone walls);
- Materials should reflect positive local characteristics and harmonise with adjacent buildings with matching or complementary materials. Limestone, red brick and render for elevations, and natural slate and Rosemary tiles for roofs are the predominant materials in the Neighbourhood Area and should be reflected in new development. Refer to the character study in the previous chapter;
- New and subdivided houses need off road bin storage. To facilitate this, the access to any shut/external passage should be retained when a house is subdivided.
- Building fenestration and pattern should be in keeping with the predominant buildings' character in the neighbourhood area or harmonise with adjacent buildings of positive character. Casements and sashes with lintels and quoins are recurrent in the area and new development should seek to include them. Timber should be preferred over UPVC;
- Building entrances will address the street with a main access and main fenestration. Corner buildings should address both streets with fenestration but the main entrance could be on either subject to access requirements. Unsheltered doorways or doorways with sandstone or timber porches and quoins are recurring in the Neighbourhood Area and should be reflected in new development. Refer to the character study in the previous chapter;
- Building façade design should respect the horizontal rhythm of plots and building subdivisions on the street in order to integrate and maintain visual continuity or add to the visual interest where required;

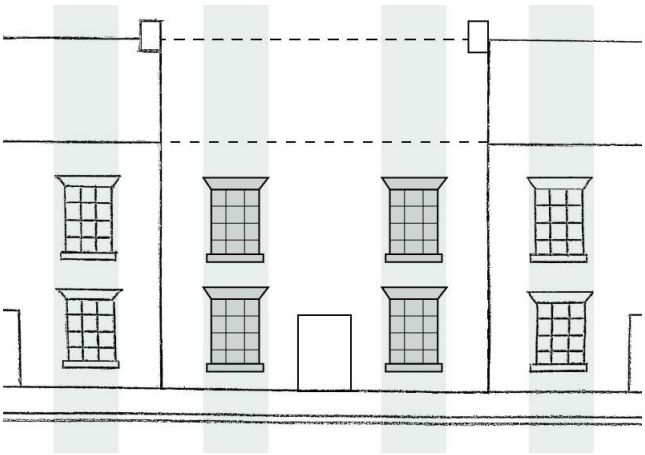


Figure 63: Good practice diagram: the window typology and fenestration pattern match the ones of neighbouring properties

- Building heights should vary between 1 - 2 storeys depending on adjacent plots. A variable eaves line and ridgeline is allowed to create interest but variation between adjacent buildings should be a maximum of 0.5 storeys in general;
- Front of plot areas and rear gardens should be of sufficient size and landscaped appropriately to fit in with prevailing planting pattern or to enhance the rural and natural character of the area;
- Rear or side plot boundaries which face public spaces must be hedgerows, stone walls or red brick walls to match adjacent plots and add to the streetscene quality. These boundary treatments should also be low to reflect the surrounding character of the area and allow natural surveillance;
- Access and storage for bins should be designed to accommodate 4 wheelie bins and be located at the rear of dwellings;
- Gaps between gables should be retained to preserve views of the surrounding countryside. Side extensions should also be limited to a single storey to presere gaps between buildings. Extensions should never result in the loss of an on-plot parking space; and
- The 25/45˚rule illustrated in Figure 62 should be used to ensure that there is no blocking of light or overbearing mass to adjoining properties when designing extensions or new dwellings.
- Access and storage for bins should be designed to accommodate 4 wheelie bins and be located at the rear of buildings. To facilitate this access to any shut/external passage should also be retained when a house is subdivided and or extended.

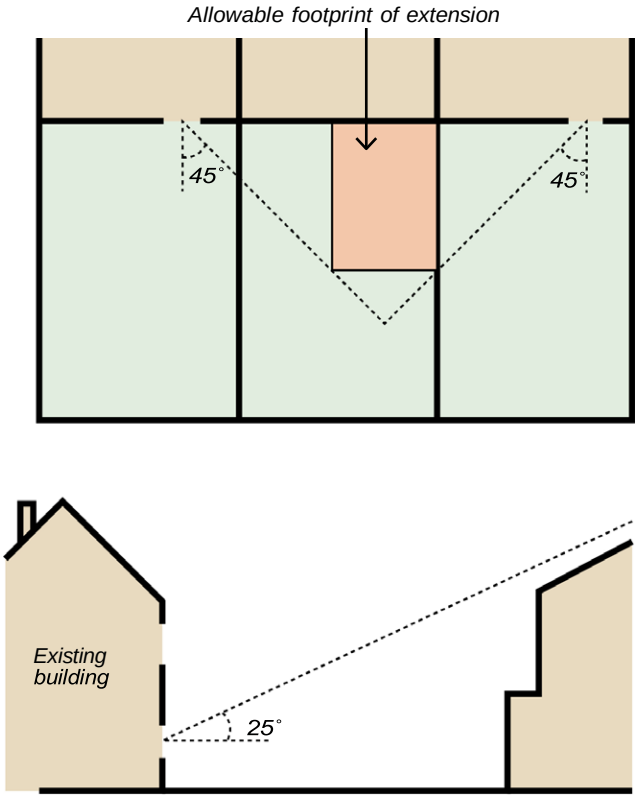


Figure 64: 25˚ / 45˚ rule

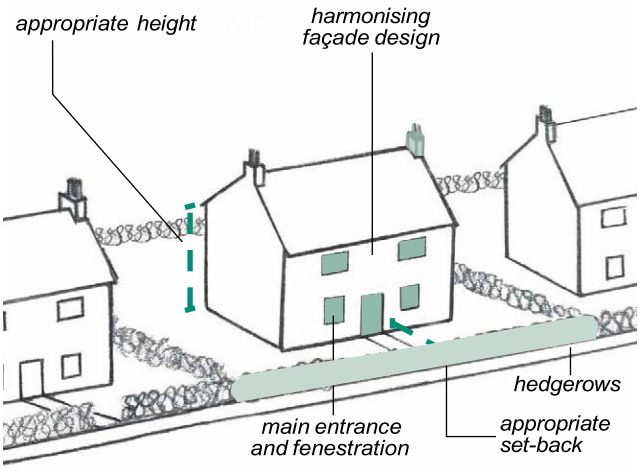


Figure 65: Positive example of infill development design

C Sustainable Design & Climate Resilience

4.4 Sustainable Design & Climate Resilience

Climate change has created the need to decrease our carbon footprint towards net-zero by providing innovative solutions to transportation (electrification) and the energy use of buildings. Sustainable design incorporates innovative practices at all scales of design to achieve less impactful development footprints, whilst future-proofing homes, settlements and natural environments. Reducing the use of limited natural resources whilst increasing the utilisation of local resources and sustainable natural resources can help to achieve this.

Figure 66: Protecting and enhancing the neighbourhood area's natural elements can combact loss of biodiversity

C1 - Resilience to Climate Change

All new development should work to moderate extremes of temperature, wind, humidity, local flooding and pollution in the neighbourhood area:

- Homes should not be sited in high-risk flood areas nor in areas at high risk of surface water flooding. New developments must demonstrate how they intend to mitigate the risk of flooding with sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). These reduce the amount and rate at which surface water reaches sewers/watercourses. Often, the most sustainable option is collecting this water for reuse, for example in a water butt or rainwater harvesting system. This has the added benefit of reducing pressure on valuable water sources;
- Ecosystems cannot adapt as fast as the climate is changing leading to loss of biodiversity. Protecting and enhancing Much Wenlock's extensive natural landscape, including woodlands and watercourses, as well as making it more accessible for pedestrians and cyclists (for example upgrading existing footpaths and cycleways or adding further seating in parks) can combat this; and
- Use street trees and planting to provide shading and cooling and moderate and improve micro-climate for streets and spaces.

C2 – Assessing Alternative Energy Sources

Key considerations in the assessment of alternative energy sources for development may include (but are not limited to):

- Optimise solar orientation of buildings. Aim to increase the number of buildings on site that are oriented within 30’ of the south (both main fenestration and roof plane) for solar gain, solar energy (solar panels) and natural daylighting;
- Ground conditions to accommodate loops for ground source heat and space for air source heat pump units;
- Links to local estates for sustainable coppicing, harvesting or recycling of biomass fuels; and
- Local wind speed and direction in Much Wenlock for micro-generation wind turbines. Consider the visual impact of the flash of rotating blades on existing properties.

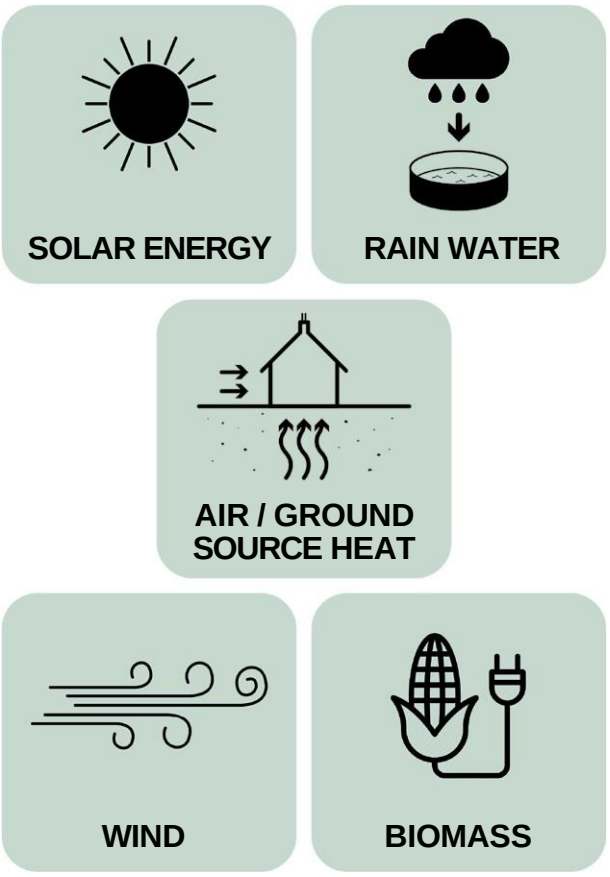


Figure 68: Key alternative natural energy sources

Figure 67: Micro-generation wind turbines can be discreetly applied on top of roofs

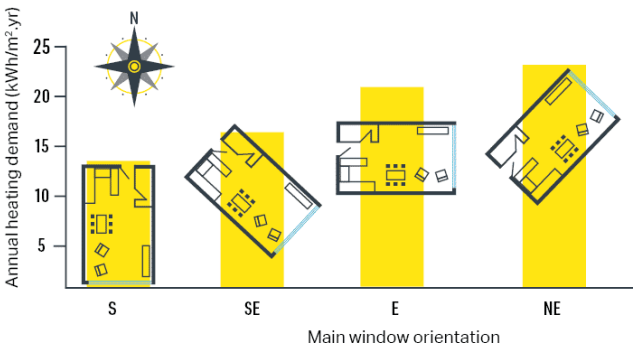


Figure 69: Building orientation influences the annual heating demand

C2 – Sustainable Drainage

The term SuDS stands for Sustainable Drainage Systems. It covers a range of approaches to managing surface water in a more sustainable way to reduce flood risk and improve water quality whilst improving amenity benefits.

- Form a 'SuDS train' of two or three different surface water management approaches;
- Integrate into development and improve amenity through early consideration in the development process and good design practices;
- SuDS are often as important in areas that are not directly in an area of flood risk themselves, as they can help reduce downstream flood risk by storing water upstream; and
- Some of the most effective SuDS are vegetated, using natural processes to slow and clean the water whilst increasing the biodiversity value of the area; and
- The location of SuDS features will respond to the topography on site.

Figure 71: Roadside SuDS

C3 – Electric Vehicle Charging

The current transition to electric vehicle technology and ownership comes with related issues that must be addressed by new development.

Design issues to address for Parking at the home:

- Convenient parking provided in internal service areas with charging points;
- Need to consider visitor parking / charging needs;
- If providing parking in service areas is not possible:
  - Potential to incorporate charging points under cover within car ports and garages;
  - Still need to integrate car parking sensitively within the streetscene. For example, parking set behind the building line or front of plot spaces lined with native hedgerow planting; and
  - Existing unallocated / on-street parking areas and feasibility of providing an on-street public vehicle charging infrastructure.

Figure 70: Home electric vehicles charging point

C4 - Energy Efficiency Measures Towards Net-Zero Carbon

By default, new development should adopt a fabric-first approach in line with the government's emerging Future Homes Standard, to attain higher standards of insulation and energy conservation.

- Reducing energy demand further by employing passive design principles for homes is desirable and can make some forms of development more acceptable to the community (window orientation, solar gain, solar shading, increased insulation, ventilation with heat recovery);
- Maximise on-site renewable energy generation (solar, ground source, air source and wind-driven); and
- Consider building form and thermal efficiency: terraces, semi-detached and detached all have different energy efficiency profiles. This must be balanced with local design preference and character considerations to ease acceptance for development.

Figure 72: Solar panels on Barrow Street

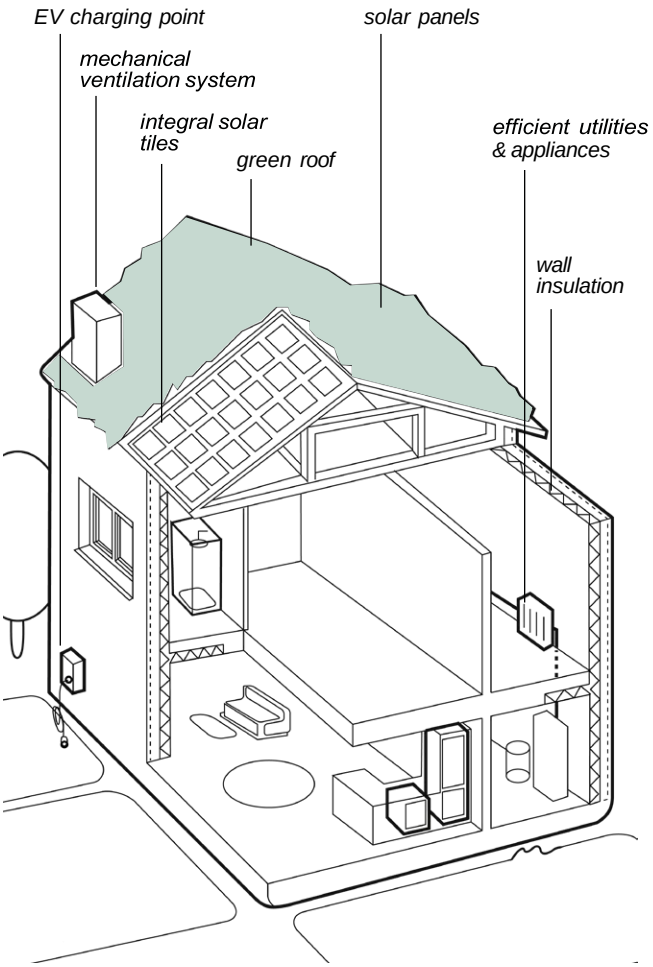


Figure 73: Cut-through diagram of an energy efficient home and its features

Figure 74: Air source heat pump housing covers the unit and harmonises with the building aesthetic

Character area-specific Design Codes

05

5. Character area-specific Design Codes

The following section explores character area-specific design codes to address these peculiar features and characteristics.

5.1 Character area-specific approach

A primary purpose of this Design Guide and Codes is to help generate sensitive and characterful design responses to the existing settlements and their landscape settings.

Therefore, this document adopts a character area-specific approach to enhance the distinctiveness of each character area within the neighbourhood area. This will avoid the progressive acquisition of standard and generic design approaches, which could result in the loss of the peculiar features of the settlements that define their distinctive character.

The following section provides specific codes to promote the preservation of the key features identified in section 3 for each character area and enforce them.

Figure 75: The Guildhall

Figure 76: Wenlock Abbey

1 Historic Much Wenlock

5.2 Historic Much Wenlock Design Codes

The design codes below set out how to respond to Historic Much Wenlock's specific characteristics and features.

Historic Much Wenlock design recommendations:

- Design should reflect and enhance the traditional and historic character of the character area by:
  - Contributing to the intimate streetscape typical of the Conservation Area, particularly on High Street, Barrow Street and Shineton Street, as well as preserving existing cobbled spaces;
  - Respecting the palette of materials traditional of the area, including limestone, red brick and render;
  - Including architectural features and fenestration that can be found on most of the buildings in the Conservation area (lintels, architraves, gables, dentillation, floor fascias, quoins, decorative columns and arches, roof fascias, Yorkshire sliding sashes, leaded lights);
  - Contributing to the mixed look of the Conservation Area, which includes a variety of different materials, roof forms and building heights (ranging between 2 and 3.5 storeys);
  - Preserving and improving existing pavements to enhance the pedestrian vocation of the area;
  - Respecting existing heritage assets of the area with sensitive offset and harmonising materials and architectural features; and
  - Including businesses that address the street with traditional shopfronts.

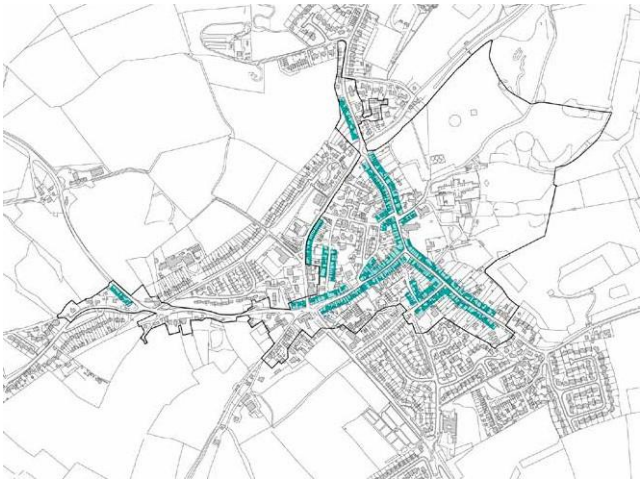


Figure 77: Enclosed streetscape in the character area

Figure 78: Traditional shop front on High Street

2 Surrounding Settlements

5.3 Bourton Design Codes

The design codes below set out how to respond to Bourton's specific characteristics and features.

Bourton design recommendations:

- Design should reflect and enhance the traditional and historic character of the village by:
  - Contributing to the tranquil and rural streetscape typical of the Conservation Area through low-rise buildings (2.5 storey limit) with space, light and views between houses;
  - Avoiding overbearing volumes that might disrupt the low-rise character of the village;
  - Respecting the palette of materials traditional of the area, including limestone, red brick and timber and natural slate and Rosemary tiles for roofs;
  - Including architectural features that can be found on most of the buildings in the Conservation area (lintels, gibbs surrounds, gables, dentillation, floor fascias, quoins Yorkshire sliding sashes). There are examples of limestone buildings with red brick quoins and detailing that could be considered as a character reference;
  - Preserving existing green verges and stone boundary walls; and
  - Being sensitive to existing listed buildings (e.g. Church of Holy Trinity)

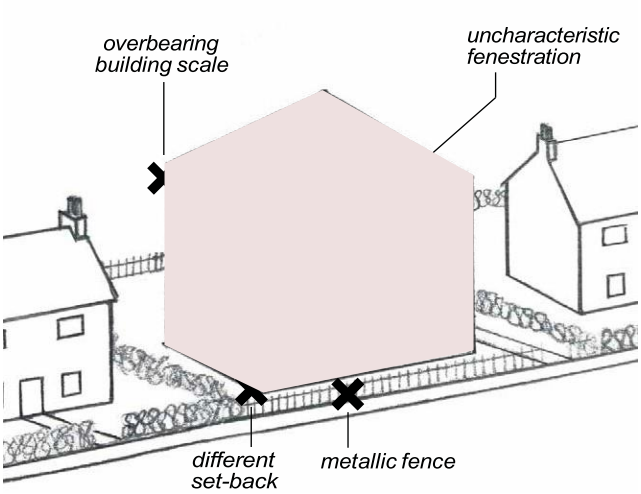


Figure 80: Unappropriate example of development with overbearing volume and unsuitable features

Figure 79: Local example of limestone building with red brick detailings

5.4 Homer Design Codes

The design codes below set out how to respond to Homer's specific characteristics and features.

Homer design recommendations:

- Design should reflect the character of the village by:
  - Reflecting typical house types (detached and semi-detached houses) and setbacks of the area;
  - Contributing to the tranquillity of the village through low-rise buildings (2.5 storey limit) with space, light and views between houses;
  - Reproducing the low-density pattern of the settlement, that allows wide gardens and distance amongst buildings;
  - Avoiding overbearing volumes that might disrupt the low-rise character of the village;
  - Respecting the palette of materials traditional of the area, including limestone, red brick and render, and natural slate and Rosemary tiles for roofs;
  - Including architectural features that can be found on most of the buildings (lintels, gables, dentillation, floor fascias, quoins);
  - Preserving existing green verges; and
  - Providing adequate pavements where suitable;

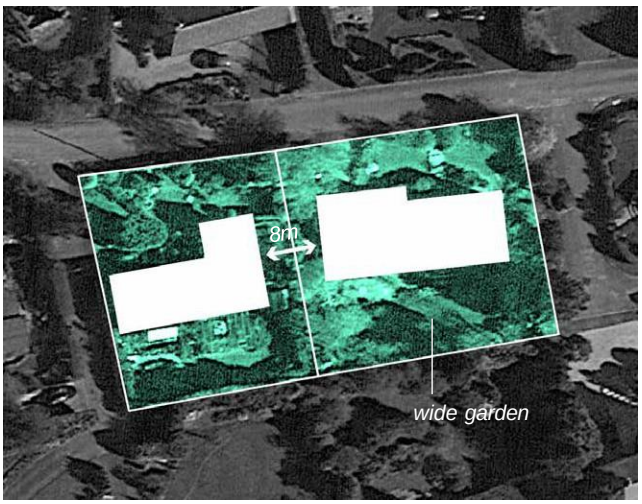


Figure 82: Properties have wide gardens that allow distance between buildings

Figure 81: Detached house on Woodside

3 Town Growth and Infill

5.5 Town Growth and Infill Design Codes

The design codes below set out how to respond to Town Growth and Infill's specific characteristics and features.

Town Growth and Infill design recommendations:

- New developments should include detached houses, semi-detached houses, bungalows, townhouses and terraces that can be found in the character area;
- Building height shouldn't exceed 3.5 storeys;
- Pavements should be provided;
- Design should aim to reflect the character of the Much Wenlock town centre, including its intimate streetscape, varied use of materials and varied roofscape;
- The character area is the edge of the town. Development should consider its impact on the surrounding landscape and avoid any detrimental effect on it through the use of sensitive materials and low-rise massing;
- New development should avoid cul-de-sacs and include pedestrian links to the surrounding developments to improve its pedestrian accessibility;
- Planting bands of trees at field margins adjacent to houses is recommended to avoid flooding into back gardens;
- New development should avoid cul-de-sacs and include pedestrian links to the surrounding developments to improve its pedestrian accessibility; and
- New development should include architectural features that can be found in the area to bring quality to the design and avoid standardised development.

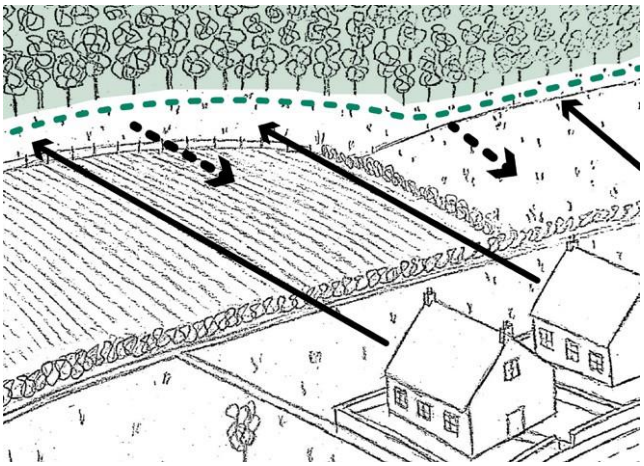


Figure 83: Development should consider any potential impact on the surrounding landscape

Figure 84: Hunters Gate has a varied roofscape and materials palette

4 Farms and Countryside

5.6 Farms and Countryside Design Codes

The design codes below set out how to respond to Farms and Countryside character area's specific characteristics and features.

Farms and Countryside design recommendations:

- Design should preserve and enhance the rural character of the area by:
  - Using local and sensitive materials such as limestone, red brick, natural slate and Rosemary tiles;
  - Considering house types that reflect the rural character of the area. These include detached houses, semi-detached houses, farmhouses, farmsteads and barns;
  - Keeping the development low-rise (2.5 storeys max), avoiding overbearing volumes that disrupt the beauty of the landscape;
  - Including architectural features and thresholds that can be found in most of the settlements of this character area (lintels, architraves, gibbs surrounds, gables, dentillation, roof fascias);
  - Preserving existing mature trees, vegetation, and existing green verges, as well as local species and habitats;
  - Preserve existing Listed Buildings (e.g Old Windmill);
  - Including new footpaths to promote the accessibility of these rural areas;
  - Considering existing vistas and long-distance views of the open landscape; and
  - Considering giving new life to former quarries found in the Neighbourhood Area. Unused quarries can be converted into natural assets such as parks and natural wildlife sites.

Figure 85: View of the natural landscape of the Neighbourhood Area from Bull Ring

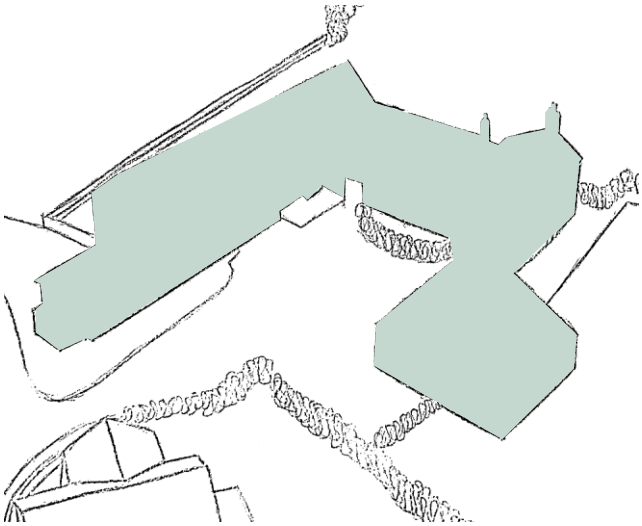


Figure 86: Farmhouses can be found in this character area and are representative of its rural and tranquil character

Policy Checklist

05

6. Design Considerations

This section sets out a general list of design considerations by topic for use as a quick reference guide in design workshops and discussions.

1

General design guidelines for new development:

- Does new development integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity to allow accessibility and connectivity?
- Is there an opportunity to reinforce or enhance the established settlement character of streets, greens, and other spaces?
- Does the proposal harmonise with and enhance the existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use?
- Does the proposal relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long-distance views?
- How can the local architecture and historic distinctiveness be reflected, respected, and reinforced?
- Have important existing features been retained and incorporated into the development?
- Have surrounding buildings been respected in terms of scale, height, form and massing?
- Are all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space well related to each other?
- Does the proposal make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours?
- Has management, maintenance and the upkeep of utilities been considered by the proposal?
- Is there an opportunity to implement passive environmental design principles (for example, site layout being optimised for beneficial solar gain, techniques to reduce energy demands and the incorporation of renewable energy sources)?
- Does the proposal adopt contextually appropriate materials and details?
- Does the proposal incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features?

2

Street grid and layout:

- Does it favour accessibility and connectivity? If not, why?
- What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern; are these reflected in the proposal?
- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?
- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

3

Local green spaces, views & character:

- What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance any identified views or views in general?
- How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?

3

Local green spaces, views & character:

- Can trees be used to provide natural shading from unwanted solar gain? i.e. deciduous trees can limit solar gains in summer, while maximising them in winter.
- Has the proposal been considered within its wider physical context?
- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?
- In rural locations, has the impact of the development on the tranquillity of the area been fully considered?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- Can any new views be created?
- Is there adequate amenity space for the development?
- Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?
- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?

3

Local green spaces, views & character:

- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?
- Is there opportunity to increase the local area biodiversity?
- Can green space be used for natural flood prevention e.g. permeable landscaping, swales etc.?
- Can water bodies be used to provide evaporative cooling?
- Is there space to consider a ground source heat pump array, either horizontal ground loop or borehole (if excavation is required)?

4

Gateway and access features:

- What is the arrival point, how is it designed?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between settlements?
- Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?
- Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

5

Buildings layout and grouping:

- What are the typical groupings of buildings?
- How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?
- Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the townscape?
- What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?
- Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?
- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?
- Subject to topography and the clustering of existing buildings, are new buildings oriented to incorporate passive solar design principles, with, for example, one of the main glazed elevations within 30° due south, whilst also minimising overheating risk?
- Can buildings with complementary energy profiles be clustered together such that a communal low carbon energy source could be used to supply multiple buildings that might require energy at different times of day or night? This is to reduce peak loads. And/or can waste heat from one building be extracted to provide cooling to that building as well as heat to another building?

6

Building line and boundary treatment:

- What are the characteristics of the building line?
- How has the building line been respected in the proposals?
- Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?

7

Building heights and roofline:

- What are the characteristics of the roofline?
- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing and scale?
- If a higher than average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?
- Will the roof structure be capable of supporting a photovoltaic or solar thermal array either now, or in the future?
- Will the inclusion of roof mounted renewable technologies be an issue from a visual or planning perspective? If so, can they be screened from view, being careful not to cause over shading?

8

Household extensions:

- Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, and does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing or overshadowing impact?
- Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?
- Do the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling?
- In case of side extensions, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a ‘terracing effect’?
- Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?
- Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?
- Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?
- Does the extension offer the opportunity to retrofit energy efficiency measures to the existing building?
- Can any materials be re-used in situ to reduce waste and embodied carbon?

9

Building materials & surface treatment:

- What is the distinctive material in the area?
- Does the proposed material harmonise with the local materials?
- Does the proposal use high-quality materials?
- Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?
- Does the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?
- Are recycled materials, or those with high recycled content proposed?
- Has the embodied carbon of the materials been considered and are there options which can reduce the embodied carbon of the design? For example, wood structures and concrete alternatives.
- Can the proposed materials be locally and/or responsibly sourced? E.g. FSC timber, or certified under BES 6001, ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems?

10

Car parking:

- What parking solutions have been considered?
- Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?
- Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?
- Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?
- Have the needs of wheelchair users been considered?
- Can electric vehicle charging points be provided?
- Can secure cycle storage be provided at an individual building level or through a central/ communal facility where appropriate?
- If covered car ports or cycle storage is included, can it incorporate roof mounted photovoltaic panels or a biodiverse roof in its design?

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