

# Malvern Wells

## Design Code

July 2021

FINAL DRAFT





## Quality information

### Prepared by

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**Isabel England**  
**Graduate Landscape Architect,**  
**AECOM**

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### Checked by

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**Clare Penny**  
**Principal Landscape Architect,**  
**AECOM**

---

### Approved by

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**Kathryn Whitmore**  
**Associate Director,**  
**AECOM**

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## Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Name	Position
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1	13.07.2021	Amendments following group comments	Clare Penny AECOM	Principal Landscape Architect
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Prepared for:

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Locality and Malvern Wells Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Group  
Prepared by: AECOM Limited

Prepared by:

---

AECOM Limited  
Midpoint  
Alencon Link  
Basingstoke  
RG21 7PP  
United Kingdom

T: 01256 310 200

[aecom.com](http://aecom.com)

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## 1. Introduction

AECOM has been commissioned to provide design support to the Malvern Wells Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Group (MWNDPWG) through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) funded Neighbourhood Planning Programme, led by Locality.

This Design Code has been produced to set the standard for the design of new development proposed in the area and inform decisions relating to the design of proposed development. It presents a summary of the key characteristics of the Malvern Wells Neighbourhood Plan Area (henceforth the 'Plan Area'), which make this a special place to live and visit. This information is then used to inform specific design codes to promote sustainable development.

The approach set out here is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which encourages local authorities to consider using design codes to help deliver high quality outcomes for new development. It is important however, that guidance strikes a balance between promoting and reinforcing local distinctiveness and allowing for innovation and originality. The NPPF suggests that 'design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics' (NPPF, 2019). The NPPF also emphasises that 'the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities' (NPPF, 2019). It is therefore important that planning policies and decisions should address the connection between people and places and how any new development will respond to and integrate successfully into the natural, built and historic environment. The *Planning for the Future* White Paper also supports the use of locally produced design codes to deliver high quality development<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future>

In addition to the NPPF, other National Planning Practice Guidance has also informed the approach taken in this Design Code in terms of content and themes, such as the *National Design Guide* (2021) and the *National Model Design Code* (2021).



The Wells House, Holywell Road

## 1.1 Objectives

The main objective of this document is to establish principles so that new development is designed and planned with regard to the existing character and context of the Plan Area. It sets out a series of design codes related to new development.

This document provides the context to the design codes set out in Chapter 4, including strategic issues identified during consultations carried out by MWNDPWG. The aspirations of the Plan Area's communities, although not always strictly design issues, need to be considered in the context of producing a design code.

This document describes the key characteristics and distinct character areas within the Plan Area, and how their form, layout and detailing gives each area a unique character. These key characteristics have informed the area-wide design codes contained in Chapter 4, as well as some specific design codes for each of the character areas.

This document is not intended to replace any existing Local Planning Policies, documents or guidance. Other documents that should be consulted when considering new development include (but are not limited to):

- *South Worcestershire Development Plan*<sup>2</sup>
- *South Worcestershire Design Guide* (2018)<sup>3</sup>
- *Malvern Wells Conservation Area Appraisal* (Draft, 2019)<sup>4</sup>
- *Emerging Malvern Wells Neighbourhood Development Plan*<sup>5</sup>
- *Malvern Wells Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment* (2019)<sup>5</sup>
- *Malvern Wells Residential Character Area Study* (Draft, 2019)<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/publications/supplementary-planning-documents/design-guide-spd>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.malvern hills.gov.uk/planning/heritage/conservation-area-appraisals>

<sup>5</sup> <https://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/myparish/ParishPlans.aspx?ParishID=51&PostCode=WR144PR&Prop=0&partner=mhc&MarriedTo=0>

<sup>6</sup> *Residential Character Area Study* (Draft, 2019) is still being completed - reference to be inserted here once available.

The Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership's Guidance<sup>7</sup> should also be consulted and followed, in particular:

- *Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan (2019-2024)*
- *Landscape Strategy and Guidelines*
- *Guidance on Building Design*
- *Guidance on how Development can Respect Landscape in Views*
- *Guidance on the Selection and Use of Colour in Development.*

Sustainable development is an essential component of addressing the climate and biodiversity emergencies, and of creating places that support communities and local business. Sustainable development is supported by both national and local policy. In order to support the design codes set out in Chapter 4, guidance on sustainable development should be consulted to inform new development. This includes (but is not limited to) BREEAM Technical Standards<sup>8</sup>, *The Future Homes Standard* consultation<sup>9</sup>, *The Future Buildings Standard* consultation<sup>10</sup>, the *Malvern Hills AONB Guidance on Building Design* and the Malvern Hills AONB guidance on *Renewable Energy Technologies (Small Scale)*<sup>11</sup>.

## 1.2 Process

In preparing this Design Code a number of steps have been followed to involve the MWNDPWG in the process and ensure their local knowledge has helped to inform the context and content of the Design Code, and to ensure the Design Code meets relevant policy standards. This included an online meeting with MWNDPWG, site visit, character assessment, preparation of draft report, revision of the document to take on board comments by MWNDPWG, review by Locality and issue of final report.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.malvern hillsaonb.org.uk/managing-the-aonb/guidance-documents/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.breeam.com/discover/technical-standards/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/the-future-homes-standard-changes-to-part-l-and-part-f-of-the-building-regulations-for-new-dwellings>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/the-future-buildings-standard>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.malvern hillsaonb.org.uk/managing-the-aonb/guidance-documents/>



## 2. Context



Figure 1 Neighbourhood Plan Area

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### 2.1 Location and area of study

The Plan Area lies on the eastern slopes of the Malvern Hills within Malvern Hills District, South Worcestershire, England. It lies to the south of the spa town of Great Malvern. The total area of the Plan Area is approximately 742 hectares and according to the 2011 census, the population was 3,196. There is one settlement area within the Plan Area; Malvern Wells, which runs from Upper Wyche in the Welland. The Plan Area is also the Parish Boundary for Malvern Wells.

The Malvern Hills are a distinctive feature in the region and are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Malvern natural spring water is collected from the Malvern Hills and its presence has shaped the history of the Plan Area since the 19th Century. The Hills' ridgeline and 'Shire Ditch' (see Section 2.3) forms the western boundary of the Plan Area and the county boundary. Beyond the built up areas, the study area mostly consists of agricultural fields, divided by hedgerows and blocks of woodland. The Three Counties Showground is a regional destination for events and is a large scale feature. Recreational facilities include St Wulstan's Local Nature Reserve and the The Worcestershire Golf Club, whilst retail and food & beverage outlets are mostly found along Wells Road (the A449). The southern edge of the Plan Area is marked by Mere Brook and the eastern edge by the B4208.

Several villages surround the Plan Area, including Little Malvern to the south, Upper Colwall to the west and Hanley Swan to the east. Immediately east of the Plan Area in the parish of Hanley Castle lies Langdale and Blackmore Woods, accessible from Blackmore Park Road. Malvern Wells lies approx. 18km south-west of Worcester city centre and 9km north east of the market town of Ledbury both accessible from the A449. 8km to the east lies the historic river town of Upton upon Severn. The M5 lies approx. 17km to the east of the Plan Area and provides a north south link from Worcester to Cheltenham and Gloucester. The closest railway stations are Great Malvern, Malvern Link and Colwall, with services to Hereford and Birmingham.

There are no National Cycle Routes in the Plan Area but there are numerous Public Rights of Way. Some of these provide access to and along the Malvern Hills.

## 2.2 Historical development

The timeline below provides a summary of the historical development of the Plan Area and the settlement of Malvern Wells. Sources used in the preparation of this timeline include the *Malvern Wells Conservation Area Appraisal* (Draft, 2019) and the *Malvern Wells Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment* (henceforth LSCA) (2019). Further information can be found in Section 3.7 of LSCA - 'Landscape History and Historic Landscape Character' (see references on page 6).

**Precambrian era:** Development of precambrian hard rock geology that is still visible in the Plan Area today.

**Iron Age:** East side of Malvern Hills less favourable for settlement, being predominantly poorly-drained brackish marshland.

**Iron Age:** A number of historic trackways are established that cross the Plan Area, including the old 'salt way' used for transporting salt from Droitwich to Wyche Cutting and Hereford beyond.

**Bronze Age:** Sections of The Shire Ditch Scheduled Monument and round barrows were constructed.

**1000s:** Following the Norman Conquest, William I established the Forest of Mécia as a royal forest and used it for deer-hunting.

**1171:** Benedictine Priory founded just south of Plan Area in Little Malvern.

**1287:** The Shire Ditch earthworks were modified and extended by Gilbert de Claire to define the boundary between his lands and those of the Bishop of Hereford.

**1622:** First record of spring water bottled in the UK was at Holy Well.

**1741:** The Wells House on Holywell Road was built to accommodate travellers and those stopping to take the waters at the Holy Well.

**1754:** Research was published about the purity and healing properties of Malvern Spring water.

**1797:** Parliamentary Acts of Enclosure allowed areas of open common land around Malvern Wells to become gradually enclosed. Malvern Common survived this enclosure.

**1817:** As recorded in a publication 'General History of Malvern' by John Chamber, there were 200 residents living in Malvern Wells in 26 cottages and several more substantial houses. Lodging and boarding houses were built to accommodate the increase in visitors coming to collect the spring water.

**1836:** Quarrying at Earnslaw began and the new Wyche Road was constructed.

**1840's:** Hydropathy was introduced and Malvern Wells became the centre of the Water Cure. Malvern Wells was considered a suburb of Great Malvern. The Lower Wyche Spout was erected in 1840 by Charles Morris to supply water to village inhabitants.

**1860's:** Arrival of the railway.

**Mid to late 19th century:** Village expanded to the east of Wells Road and south of Green Lane. A large number of dwellings and civic buildings were built and constructed from local stone, demonstrating the affluence of the area during this period. Cottages and alehouses were built to accommodate quarry and railway workers around the Wyche. Many of Malvern Wells' listed buildings relate to this period.

**1884:** The Malvern Hills Conservators were established as a body to care for and manage the Malvern Hills and Commons.

**1894:** Parish of Malvern Wells was officially established.

**Early 20th century:** Decline of the water cure in Malvern due to growing scepticism around hydropathy. Residential areas continued to expand north of Wells Road and around Malvern Common.

**1901:** Population grew to 1,559 (Smith, 1978). Notable residents included English composer Sir Edward Elgar and local architect Arthur Troyte Griffith.



**1907:** Commercial quarrying company obtained a licence to quarry on the Hills. Demand for Malvern stone increased.

**1924:** the Malvern Hills Act is passed, giving the Malvern Hills Conservators powers to prevent further quarrying by compulsory purchase and byelaws restricting and regulating existing quarrying operations.

**Early to mid 20th century:** Malvern played a valuable role during both World Wars. Army hospital camps were established at Wood Farm and Brick Barns Farm. Malvern Wells War Memorial was unveiled in 1920.

**1927:** Golf course at Wood Farm designed by golf course architect Dr. Alister MacKenzie opened and was in use until WWII when part of the site was taken over for hospital buildings. Post-WWII the golf club re-opened and is currently The Worcestershire Golf Club. Some of MacKenzie's course is believed to exist on the new golf course.

**1959:** Malvern Hills were designated as an Area of Outstanding National Beauty.

**1973:** Malvern Wells Conservation Area was first designated.

**1974:** Last working quarry on the Malvern Hills ceased (Hurle, 1992).

**Mid 20th century:** Malvern Wells and Malvern Hanley Road railway stations closed and many civic and commercial facilities were converted to dwellings.

**Mid to late 20th century:** Malvern Wells continued to grow. Infill development and housing estates built on the eastern edge of the village, most notably the Fruitlands Estate in 1971. Shift away from local building materials. Areas of higher density and uniform style.

**1997:** St Wulstan's Local Nature Reserve opened on part of the site of the former St Wulstan's psychiatric hospital, which closed in 1986.

**2000s:** Iron Age currency bars found near Wyche Road, indicating Iron Age trading

**2008:** Bottling facility for Holy Well Spring Water was re-established.



The Holy Well (Grade I listed). Well house dates to 1843.

## 2.3 Landscape, Ecology and Heritage designations

The Plan Area contains a range of statutory and non-statutory designations, some of which are shown on Figure 2. These include:

- The Malvern Wells Conservation Area. This was originally designated in 1973, reviewed the boundary significantly enlarged in 1995. A further review was undertaken between August 2018 and March 2019 that proposed to divide the Conservation Area into two. Conservation Areas are an area of “special architectural or historic interest which is desirable to preserve or enhance.”<sup>12</sup>
- 29 Grade II listings, covering 75 buildings and structures, the majority of which are gas lamps, and mostly located within the Conservation Area. These are identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal<sup>13</sup>.
- The western edge of Plan Area is marked by a medieval boundary dyke, called The Shire Ditch, which is a Scheduled Monument running along the Malvern Ridge. The Barrows Scheduled Monument is also located along the county boundary on the Malvern Hills.
- The Malvern Hills AONB. The distinctive narrow north south ridge offers panoramic views to Wales and the Cotswolds. It is an area of geological variety and ecological value with rich unimproved pastures and native woodland. AONB special qualities relevant to the Plan Area include:
  - Dramatic scenery and spectacular views arising from the juxtaposition of high and low ground.
  - A wide variety of landscape types in a relatively small area. Woodland and grassland in varying mixes are the most prevalent.
  - A distinctive combination of landscape elements that include orchards, parklands, ridgelines, ponds, quarries, hedgerows and watercourses.
  - Distinctive ‘villagescapes’, including Conservation Areas, listed buildings and local features, that define a ‘spirit of place’ in the settlements.

- Thriving and active communities with a low deprivation index that reflects the area’s prosperity and the availability of employment.
- A history of recreation and tourism that continues today, with people coming to enjoy the hills, spas and the tranquillity of the rural landscapes.
- A strong ‘spirit of place’, landscapes that have inspired and continue to inspire and which have a deep cultural narrative.
- Open access in many places over the hills and commons, providing opportunities for bracing walks with fine views.

- The Malvern Hills SSSI, one of the largest areas of semi-natural vegetation in the West Midlands, that supports a variety of habitat types.
- St Wulstan’s Local Nature Reserve, over 22 hectares rich in biodiversity.
- There is one Ancient Woodland within the Plan Area - Hornyold Wood, located in the centre of the Plan Area, adjacent to The Worcestershire Golf Club.
- There are a number of Priority Habitats within the Plan Area including:
  - Deciduous woodland across the low lying eastern edge of the Plan Area.



The Shire Ditch, Scheduled Monument along the Malvern Hills

<sup>12</sup>Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

<sup>13</sup><https://www.malvern hills.gov.uk/planning/heritage/conservation-area-appraisals>



- Lowland dry acid grassland along the Malvern Hills.
- Deciduous woodland along the western edge of the built up area of Malvern Wells along the eastern slopes of the Malvern Hills.
- Malvern Common SSSI lies mostly within Malvern, to the north of the Plan Area, although a smaller portion lies within the Malvern Wells Plan Area. It is of special interest for its species-rich neutral grassland.
- Just to the west of the Plan area lie several areas of Ancient Woodland, which are located on the western slopes of the Malvern Hills.

## 2.4 Other designations

The Plan Area is covered by a Drinking Water Safeguard Zone (Surface Water) under The Water Framework Directive (2017)<sup>14</sup>. These zones are established around public water supplies where additional pollution control measures are needed.

More designations can be seen on Figures 5a, 5b and 7 of the LSCA<sup>15</sup>.



Malvern Common, SSSI

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2017/407/contents/made>

<sup>15</sup> <https://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/myparish/ParishPlans.aspx?ParishID=51&PostCode=WR144PR&Prop=0&partner=mhc&MarriedTo=0>

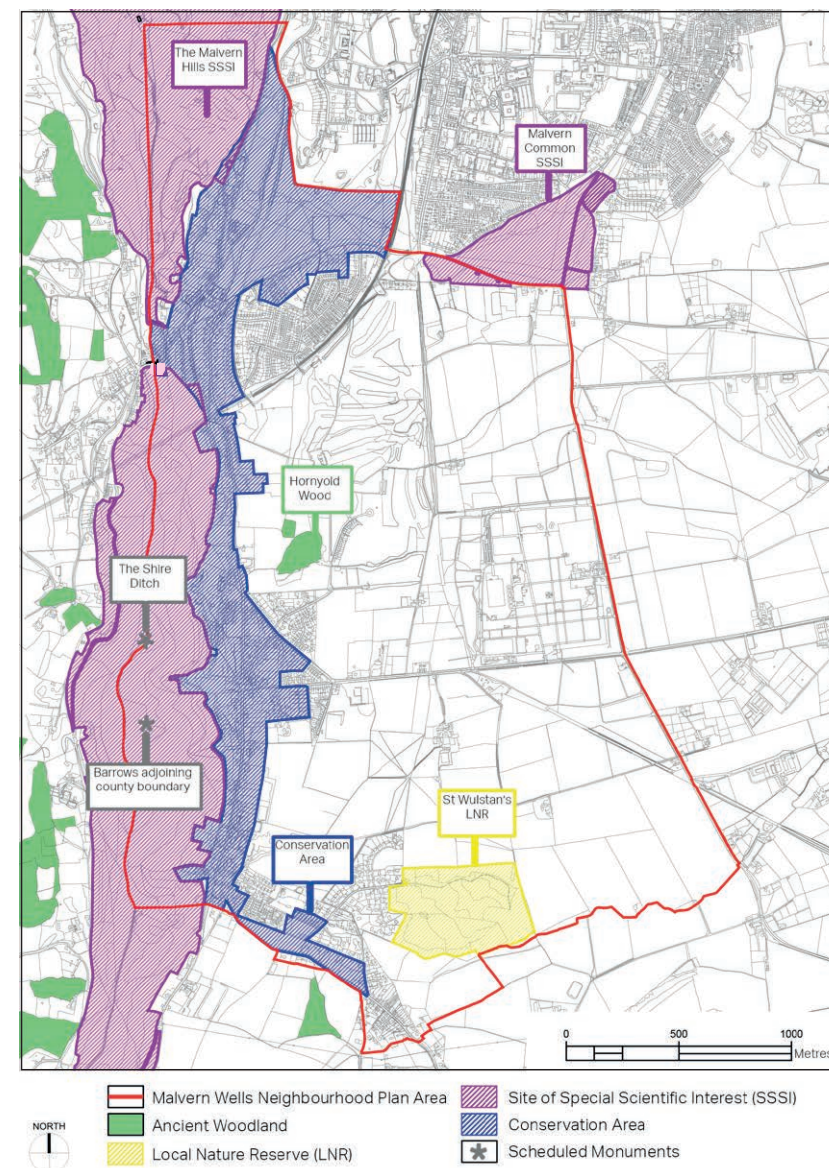


Figure 2 Landscape and Heritage Designations

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## 2.5 Strategic Issues/ Public Consultation

The MWNPWG and Malvern Wells Parish Council have carried out a number of engagement and consultation exercises with local residents to seek their views on the Neighbourhood Development Plan. A few are summarised below.

### Wells News, Summer 2017

A Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire was distributed to all households (approx. 1350) in the Plan Area. There was a very limited response to this questionnaire (19 responses) and therefore this does not provide a representative view of the resident population. One of the questions asked: What do you consider to be unique about Malvern Wells? Answers included:

- 13 mentions for its' unspoilt and rural nature
- 8 mentions for each of the AONB and Conservation Area, and the hills themselves
- 7 mentions of the views to and from the hills
- 6 mentions of the character and mix of buildings
- 4 mentions of the wells and springs
- 3 mentions of the gas lamps
- 1 mention of the association with Elgar

### 'Wells Views' Neighbourhood Plan Residents Survey, April-May 2019

Questionnaires were delivered to each household within the Plan Area (1350 in total). 132 complete questionnaires were submitted. Section 8 of the Survey asked questions relating to Design. Key questions included:

Q: What factors do you consider are most important for the design of new development (1 being least important and 5 being most important)?

The top three factors were:

1. Impact on views of and from the Hills – 84% stating it was most important
2. Include native trees, hedgerows and planting - 75% stating it was most important

3. Maintain existing rooflines and roof profiles - 66% stating it was most important  
The three that were considered least important on the least were:

1. Decorative detailing should be included - 24% stating it was most important
2. Incorporate renewable energy generation - 33% stating it was most important
3. Colours used for render and paint - 34% stating it was most important

Q: Are there any other factors that you consider are important for the design of new development?

There were 97 responses to this question and factors included:

- Access and parking (14 responses) – this also included traffic
- Affordability (4 responses) – this relates to new housing being affordable and not necessarily social
- Amenity space (6 responses) – this relates in the main to the provision of space around new development
- Brownfield and Infill (1 response)
- Design (20 responses) – this in the main relates to ensuring that new development fits in within existing development
- Employment provision (1 response) – one response states there should be employment provided at the same time as new homes
- Flooding (1 response)
- House type (4 responses)
- Infrastructure (6 responses) – this relates to ensuring there is adequate infrastructure provided with new development
- Landscape and Visual (18 responses) – this relates to the impact of development on the Hills and the character of the area
- Scale and size (17 responses) – there were number of comments on both the scale of development that should be allowed (i.e. small scale) and the size of individual buildings
- Sustainable Design (12 responses) – these related to eco-design as well as energy generation
- Wildlife and Biodiversity (2 responses)

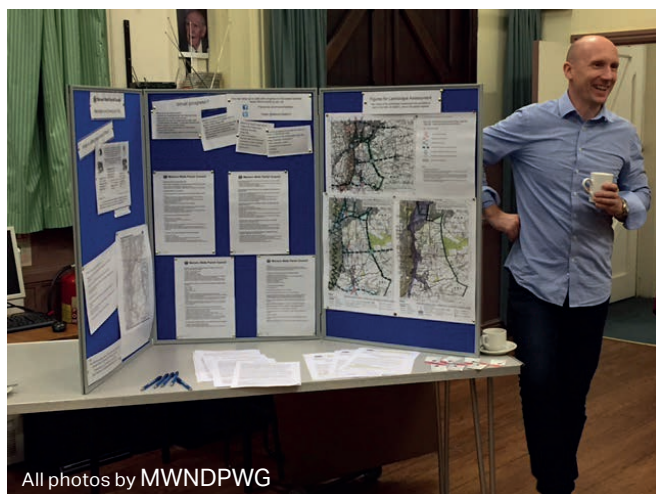


### Neighbourhood Plan informal consultation and Roadshow events, Jan - Feb 2020

Following publicity in the Parish magazine and posters in the area, six informal consultation events were arranged in three different venues in early 2020 to consider some of the draft evidence base report such as the Upper Welland NHA Study, LSCA, LGS Report and the policies and proposals within the draft NDP. These took place at:

- Methodist Hall, Upper Welland (14 January 7-8.30pm and 11 February 7-8.30pm) – this was well attended, there were presentations from some of the MWNDPWG members and the landscape consultant.
- Malvern Wells Village Hall (21 January 7.30-9pm and 18 February 7.30-9pm) – this had low attendance.
- The Wyche Institute (30 January 7-8.30pm and 27 February 7-8.30pm) – this had low attendance.

48 respondents made comments to the consultation which was extended to June and July 2020. The analysis of the comments received is ongoing.



All photos by MWNDPWG



### 3 Character Assessment

#### 3.1 Introduction

This section outlines the broad physical, historical and contextual characteristics of the Plan Area. Character assessment is a tool for identifying the patterns and individual combinations of features that make a place special and distinctive. It is used to identify recognisable patterns of elements or characteristics that make one place different from another. This Design Code focuses on the character of the main settlement, whilst also describing the rural landscape within which it sits. The features introduced in this section are later used to inform design codes.

#### 3.2 Existing character assessments and design guidance

A large body of evidence in relation to character already exists for Malvern Wells. A number of key documents are referred to throughout this Design Code and should be read alongside this document to supplement the information presented here. These include:

- *Malvern Wells Conservation Area Appraisal*, Malvern Hills District Council (MHDC) (Draft, 2019)<sup>16</sup>
- *Malvern Wells Residential Character Area Study*, Malvern Wells Parish Council (MWPC) (Draft, 2019)<sup>17</sup>
- *Malvern Wells Landscape Assessment Stage 1 Summary Report*, MWPC (Draft, 2017)<sup>18</sup>
- *Malvern Wells Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment*, MWPC (2019)<sup>18</sup> (LSCA)
- *Upper Welland Neighbourhood Heritage Area Report*, MWPC (Draft, 2019)<sup>18</sup>
- *Malvern Hills AONB Partnership: Guidance Documents (various)*<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.malvern hills.gov.uk/planning/heritage/conservation-area-appraisals>

<sup>17</sup> *Residential Character Area Study* (Draft, 2019) is still being completed - reference to be inserted here once available.

<sup>18</sup> <https://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/myparish/ParishPlans.aspx?ParishID=51&PostCode=WR144PR&Prop=0&partner=mhc&MarriedTo=0>

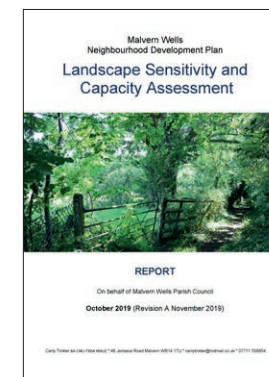
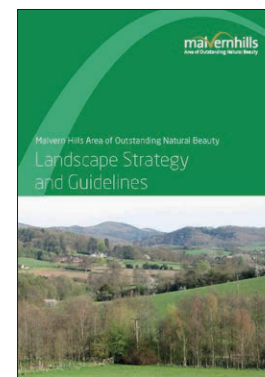
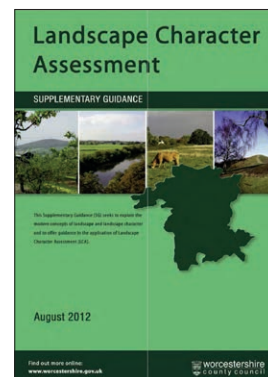
<sup>19</sup> <https://www.malvern hillsaonb.org.uk/managing-the-aonb/guidance-documents/>

- *Worcestershire County Council Landscape Character Assessment, including Supplementary Guidance, Technical Handbook and Woodland Guidelines (2010-2013)*<sup>20</sup>
- *South Worcestershire Design Guide SPD*, Malvern Hills District Council, Worcester City Council and Wychavon District Council (2018)<sup>21</sup>

Malvern Wells lies within the *Mid Worcestershire Forests* and *Malvern and Abberley Hills* Regional Character Areas identified in The Worcestershire County Council Landscape Character Assessment. The LCA also identifies Landscape Character Types, Landscape Description Units, and at a localised scale Land Cover Parcels. Malvern Wells primarily lies within the *High Hills and Slopes* and *Enclosed Commons* Landscape Character Types.

The Malvern Hills AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines also identifies Landscape Character Types. These align with the Worcestershire County LCA Landscape Character Types.

Key characteristics of these character areas are described in section 3.4 of the LSCA<sup>18</sup>, and in full in the County Landscape Character Assessment<sup>20</sup> and the Malvern Hills AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines<sup>19</sup>.



<sup>20</sup> [https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20014/planning/1006/landscape\\_character\\_assessment](https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20014/planning/1006/landscape_character_assessment)

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/publications/supplementary-planning-documents>



### 3.3 Area-wide Character Assessment

#### 3.3.1 Settlement pattern

The settlement of Malvern Wells has developed over many hundreds of years, with its origins thousands of years old, and this is reflected in its pattern and character. Due to the area's distinctive topography, Malvern Wells has evolved as a predominantly linear settlement that stretches approximately 4km from Upper and Lower Wyche in the north to Upper Welland in the south (see Figure 6 for Residential Character Areas). The settlement pattern is tighter and more compact on the higher slopes with more spacious lower density development on the lower slopes. Many buildings occupy an elevated position and the angles of slopes have influenced the road networks, as can be seen in The Wyche. Buildings are tightly packed and line the narrow roads of the hillside which criss-cross their way up towards Upper Wyche. Upper Wyche forms a key characteristic of the Plan Area and is highly distinctive in views as it is the only built form that breaches the ridge of the Malvern Hills and can be seen from long distances to the east. It is particularly distinctive at night when it is articulated by light from properties and streetlamps.

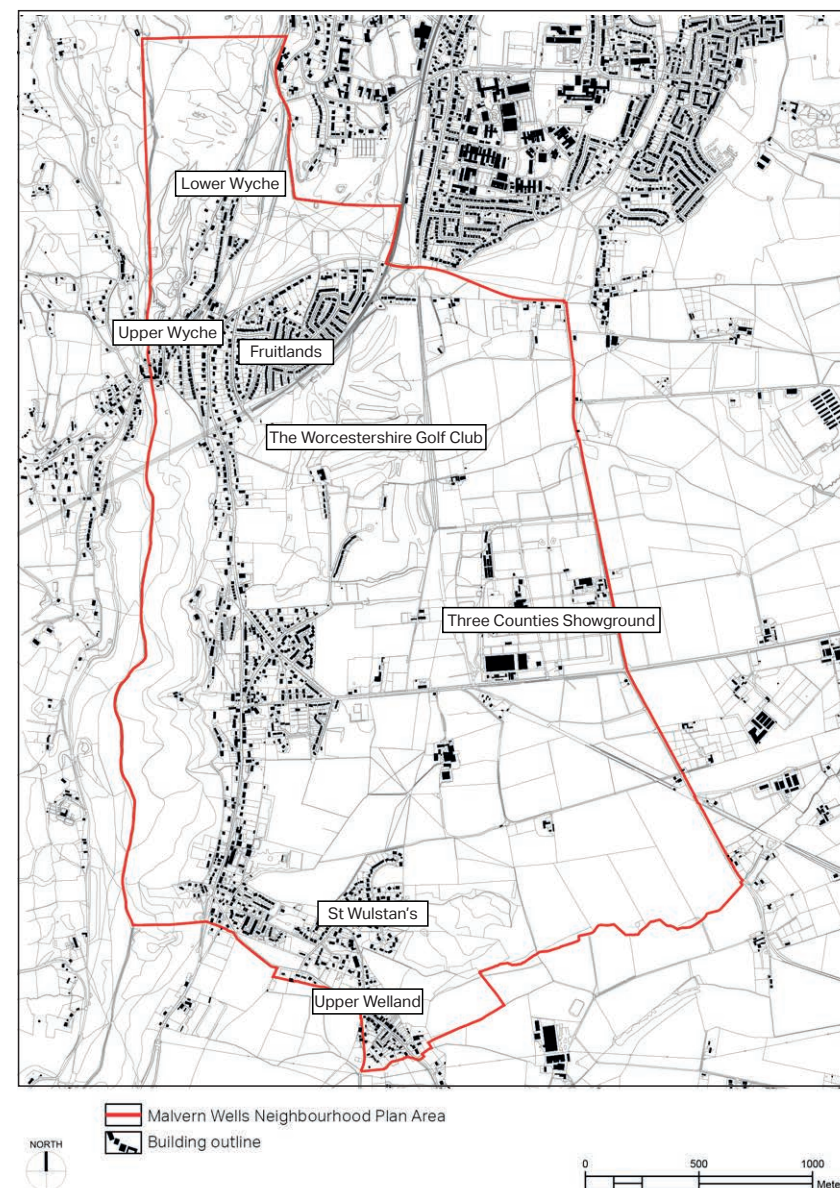
Malvern Wells retains a strong sense of identity and historic character. The intersection at Green Lane, Grundy's Lane and Wells Road contains the highest concentration of former and existing civic and commercial buildings, including the former fire station, shops, the



Properties in Upper Wyche can be seen on the Hills when viewed from the east, breaking the ridgeline in views



Shops along Wells Road



**Figure 3 Settlement Pattern**

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Village Hall, post office and the various uses at Wells Business Centre and the Wells Road Neighbourhood Centre. However, the linear nature of the settlement is a key issue in terms of accessibility to key services, as there is no village 'centre'. In addition, proximity to the larger settlements of Great Malvern and Ledbury has resulted in many services choosing to locate away from Malvern Wells, which limits access to services for those without access to a private vehicle.

In the mid to late 20th century, housing estates were built east of Wells Road which further enlarged Malvern Wells. The layout of the 1970's Fruitlands estate was likely to have been based on existing field patterns and historic tracks. Late 19th century maps show the Peachfield Road footpath which leads south eastwards across the railway to the golf course.

Other 20th Century estates include Moorlands, which is located off Hanley Road, and St Wulstan's housing estate, which was laid out on the site of the former psychiatric hospital in the 1990s.

The settlement pattern has occasionally been disrupted by infill development which does not reflect the local character or built form of its location, such as at Homestead Close off Kings Road, and Woodland Close and Wells Close off Assarts Road.

In the east of the Plan Area, built form consists mainly of scattered farmsteads. The Three Counties Showground occupies a large area of land in a visible location, with several buildings and associated structures.

The mature vegetation across the Plan Area creates a balance between built form and landscape and, as described in the draft Conservation Area Appraisal, it gives the impression of 'trees with buildings between'<sup>22</sup>, rather than a settlement punctuated by trees.



McColl's convenience store on Wells Road, the A449



Fruitlands estate viewed from the Hills, with The Worcestershire Golf Club to the east



The buildings that form The Three Counties Showground is a visual detractor from the Hills



### 3.3.2 Green Infrastructure and open space

Established trees, hedgerows, woodland and open space form a large part of Malvern Wells' green and leafy character. Residential areas are surrounded by an agricultural landscape divided by hedgerows and blocks of woodland on the western plain of the River Sever. These all form a strong green infrastructure network, which connects the built up areas of the Plan Area with the wider countryside.

Mature tree-lined avenues along entry routes into the built up areas are a key characteristic, such as those along Peachfield Road where several clumps of large mature trees historically offered those traveling in carriages a place to stop and picnic in the shade<sup>21</sup>.



Mature trees along Wells Road, Malvern Common

Key green infrastructure (GI) features include the dismantled railway line and the existing railway line, which include corridors of mature trees and other native and naturalised vegetation. Significant vegetation in the Plan Area is described in more detail in Section 3.11, and in each of the Local Landscape Character Sectors described in Section 4 of the LSCA<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> <https://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/myparish/ParishPlans.aspx?ParishID=51&PostCode=WR144PR&Prop=0&partner=mhc&MarriedTo=0>

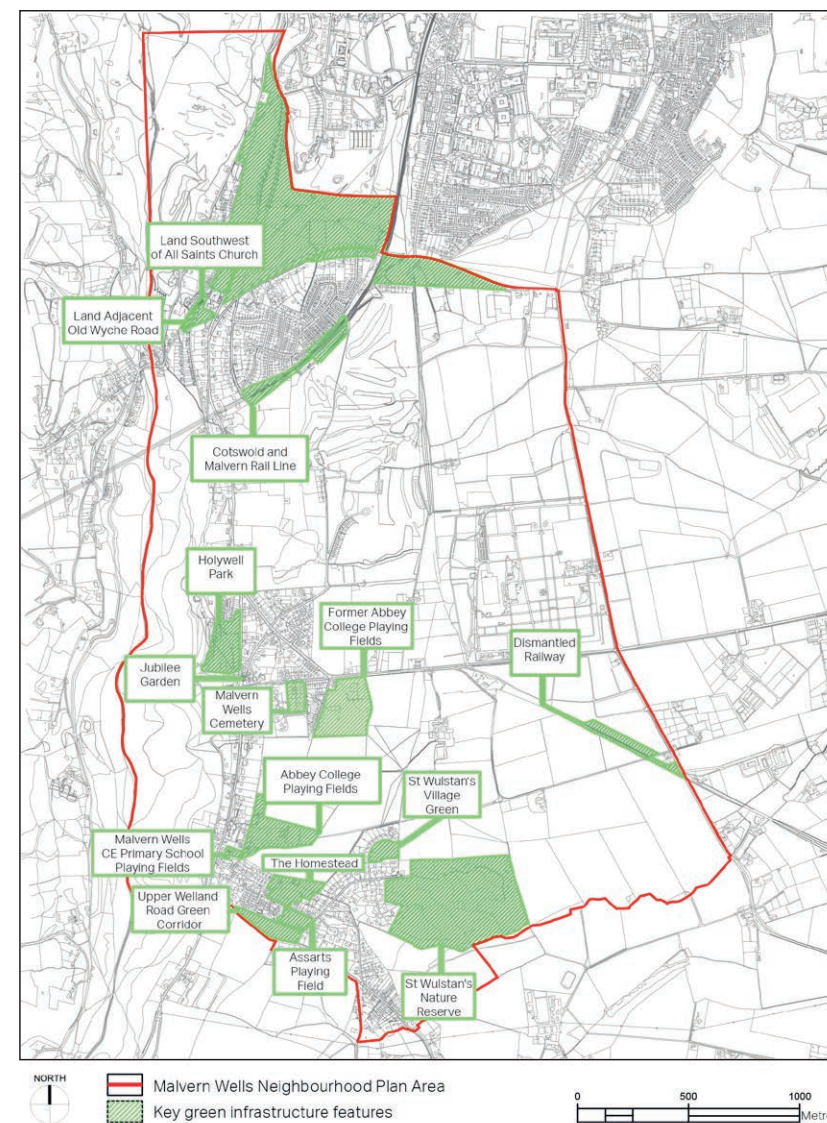


Figure 4 Green Infrastructure and Open Space

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Hornyard Wood Ancient Woodland and St Wulstan's Local Nature Reserve are important open spaces for biodiversity, as is the Malvern Hills SSSI. The large area of unenclosed common land in the north of the Plan Area provides recreational value as well as important biodiversity value, as a SSSI, along with St Wulstan's Local Nature Reserve. The Worcestershire Golf Club is less biodiverse, but offers recreational opportunities and does include areas of woodland and long grass that benefit wildlife.

Key open spaces that allow public access include Assarts Playing Field and St Wulstan's Village Green, both likely to be remnant hay meadows. Jubilee Garden on Wells Road is also publicly accessible, as is Malvern Wells Cemetery (timed access) and Malvern Common, as mentioned above.

There are a number of key green spaces in private ownership that contribute to the GI of the Plan Area, and to the setting of the built up area. These include the former Abbey College playing fields, Holywell Park and the 'green corridor' of fields at Upper Welland.

The history of quarrying in the Malvern Hills has also resulted in the creation of valuable green spaces connected by public footpaths, including Earnslaw Quarry, which can be accessed via an easy access footpath from Earnslaw Car Park. The site includes colonised vegetation and a lake, known locally as 'hidden lake'. Upper Wyche Quarry has also colonised naturally and is an important site for biodiversity. These quarry sites, along with other wooded areas along the eastern slopes of the Malvern Hills, are a defining characteristic of the Plan Area, as the slopes can be seen from a wide range of viewpoints. Mature vegetation along the slopes contributes significantly to how the settlement is perceived, even in winter, creating an harmonious balance between built form and landscape, as noted in the LSCA<sup>22</sup>.



The wooded slopes of the Hills are a prominent GI feature



Assarts Playing Field



Upper Welland 'green corridor'



### 3.3.3 Building typology



Two storey detached house, Old Wyche Road

Malvern Wells comprises a range of different building types. Building use is predominantly residential and a number of former civic or commercial buildings have been converted for domestic use, particularly along Wells Road. Two storey detached houses are the predominant building typology, although there are some three and four storey buildings in the Plan Area, notably along Wells Road.

Large villas, town houses and cottages can be seen within the Conservation Area and along key access routes. More recent housing estates to the east of Wells Road feature mainly two storey detached houses as well as some semi-detached houses, short terraces and bungalows.

The rising topography towards the Hills determines the elevation of buildings in relation to the street. Buildings located on higher ground are often accessed by steps, sloped driveways or elevated parking bays and whilst two storey buildings are the predominant typology, some use the steep topography to create additional floors at ground and lower ground level.

Dispersed farm buildings strengthen the rural character of the area. The Village Hall, post office, public houses and Wells Business Centre provide important community and business facilities.



Semi-detached houses in Lower Wyche



Modern terraced houses in Central Wells



Large detached houses, often from the Victorian era, line Wells Road



### 3.3.4 Architectural details and materials

Malvern Wells comprises a wide variety of building forms, architectural detailing and materials. Some buildings within the Conservation Area are recognised as Grade II listed and are designated due to their architectural quality and historic value. Many others are also considered to be locally important and are included on the Local List held by Malvern Hills District Council. In addition, several buildings have been put forward for local listing by the MHAONB Partnership including Wells House, St Peter's Church, Old Fire Station and The Abbey School.

Built form in the Plan Area is constructed of a range of materials. Malvern stone is more commonly found on the upper and mid-slopes of the Hills, whilst brick and render is more commonly found on the plain. Painted white brick and white render can be found in a limited number of places, such as on the large Victorian and Edwardian properties along Wells Road and Holywell Road, but white render is becoming an increasingly popular choice for new build properties. Malvern stone is commonly used for institutional buildings such as the Village Hall and The Abbey College. Malvern stone buildings are often dressed in softer stone or brick at the doors and windows, including grey/purple engineering bricks which is locally-characteristic and provides a suitable colour combination.

Sash and casement windows are the predominant window type within older housing areas. In newer developments casement and awning windows are more common. Bay windows also occasionally feature, notably on properties on Old Wyche Road.

There are also rare examples of 'Y' tracery windows along Wells Road and in Lower Wyche. Original joinery and historic glass contribute to local character, unlike uPVC windows which have replaced original timber windows in some buildings.



Old Fire Station, Grundy's Lane



The Abbey School, Wells Road



Malvern stone construction with contrasting stone on windows, Wells Road



Brick construction with contrasting stone on windows in Hanley Road



Example of sash window, 14 Wyche Road



Example of casement window, cottage on Old Wyche Road

Casement windows have replaced sash in many older buildings, often in uPVC, and can be unsympathetic



Example of uPVC replacement windows in older building, Lower Wyche Road



Example of modern casement and awning windows, Fruitlands



Example of 'Y' tracery window, Lower Wyche



Roof materials are typically Welsh slate on older buildings, particularly early 19th century properties, and red or brown tiles on 20th and 21st Century buildings. Roof detailing includes decorative scalloped tile bands, ornate ridge tiles and finials.

In the Conservation Area, detailing of dressings and quoins includes segmental arch heads, moulded stucco window dressings, hood moulds and decorative bargeboards. Porches can also be found, with examples of porticos with columns, pilasters or iron trelliswork.

### 3.3.5 Building line and boundary treatments

Building lines vary across the Plan Area. In general properties are set back from the road with boundary walls and front gardens. Domestic gardens positively contribute to the streetscape and sense of spaciousness surrounding buildings. Properties in the Upper and Lower Wyche are set within smaller plots closer to the roadside, often due to the steep topography, and in the central Wells Road area, many buildings sit on the back of the pavement. More modern housing development in the Plan Area is more open plan, often without fences/hedges marking front boundaries, such as in Fruitlands.

Malvern stone walls are the most distinctive boundary treatment, most evident along Wells Road with irregular 'cock and hen' coping. Hedges are often grown above walls or through low fences and railings. Hanley Road and Peachfield Road have strong lengths of hedges. Modern boundary treatments include red brick, breezeblock, concrete capping stones and close boarded fences. Some properties have timber or wrought iron gates with carved stone or brick gate piers.



Malvern stone wall and hedge boundary type, Upper Welland Road



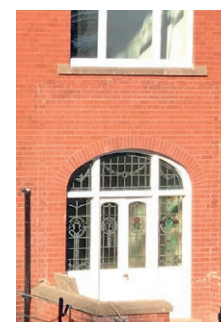
'Cock and hen' coping on traditional Malvern stone wall, Holywell Road



Welsh slate roofs on Kings Road



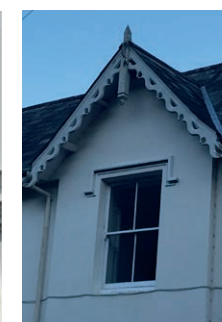
Red tile roofs on Fruitlands



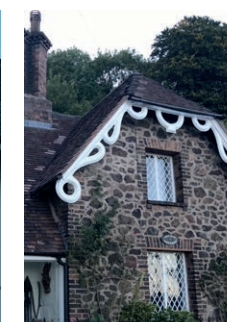
Segmental arch head, Wyche Road



Moulded stucco, Upper Welland Road



Hood mould, Wells Road



Decorative bargeboards, Holywell Road



Malvern Stone used with blue engineering bricks and softer pink stock bricks



Malvern Stone used with buff engineering bricks



Malvern Stone used with red stock bricks

### 3.3.6 Parking and utilities

Dedicated car parking is located close to green space and attractions such as Malvern Common and St Wulstan's Nature Reserve. The Malvern Hill Trust car parks, which sit close to the Hills offer parking for visitors and appear to be well used. Earnslaw Car Park off Wyche Road provides access to a network of footpaths across the Malvern Hills, as well as the redundant Earnslaw Quarry. Most residential properties have driveways for off-street parking. However, properties located along Lower Wyche Road, Old Wyche Road and parts of Wells Road have on-street parking due to their smaller plot size. Parking for amenities along Wells Road is generally limited to on street parking, which can cause congestion at busy times.

Locally distinctive Grade II listed gas lamps along Holywell Road have recently been restored, whilst newer lighting columns can be found in other locations.

### 3.3.7 Footpaths and Rights of Way

There is an extensive network of Public Rights of Way connecting residential areas to surrounding countryside and the Hills. Footpaths within housing estates provide direct access to areas of recreation, such as the footpath from Fruitlands that crosses under the railway line and through the golf course. Footpaths also cross Malvern Common up towards Great Malvern in the north.



Gas Lamp (Grade II listed), Holywell Road



Old Wyche Road, part of the old salt route

There are several mapped walking trails along the ridge of the Hills, passing through mixed woodland and by Holy Well. A network of bridleways run north/south along the Hills and in a variety of directions across the Common. The Malvern Hills and Malvern Common also benefit from 'open access' which is one of the Special Qualities of the AONB<sup>23</sup>. Bridleways also offer connections east/west from Kings Road and Assarts Lane to the B4208 and Fruitlands to the B4208. There are no National Cycle Routes.

A number of historic routes cross the Plan Area, including the old salt route to Wyche Cutting, which follows the route of Old Wyche Road on the slopes of the eastern Hills. This route, and the cutting, are believed to have been in use since the Iron Age and now form part of the Wyche Way long distance path.

### 3.3.8 Views, landmarks and gateways

Due to the varying topography of the Plan Area, there are extensive views in many directions, although views west to the Malvern Hills and east across the Severn Valley are most prominent from public locations.

The historic footpath that runs along the ridge of the Malvern Hills offers far reaching views westwards, outside of the Plan Area, and eastwards over the Severn Valley and towards Bredon Hill. Properties that sit along the Hills are visible between trees from multiple vantage points in the east of the Plan Area, especially large detached properties along and west of Wells Road, and the cluster of buildings and Upper and Lower Wyche.

A sense of place is provided by views of the Hills that are channelled by key linear routes from within housing estates, such as at Green Lane and Assarts Road. This enhances the rural character of Malvern Wells.

Several important views are identified within the Conservation Area Appraisal<sup>24</sup>, including:

- View to the south of Wells Road over Malvern Common;
- Across Malvern Common to the Wyche;
- Along Peachfield Road looking west towards the Hills and east over the Severn plain;
- From the Wyche Cutting to the east;
- Views of the buildings around the Holy Well;
- View of Jubilee Fountain including level change between Wells Road and Grundy's Lane; and
- View across Malvern Wells cemetery.

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/managing-the-aonb/guidance-documents/>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.malvernhillsgov.uk/planning/heritage/conservation-area-appraisals/> (3.37, p. 12)



Wider views to and from the Malvern Hills AONB are explored in a number of guidance documents produced by the AONB Trust, including *Guidance on Identifying and Grading Views and Viewpoints* and *Guidance on how Development can Respect Landscape in Views*<sup>25</sup>. Views to and from the AONB are internationally important, having influenced



Views east from higher ground can be as spectacular as views west from the hills



View towards properties on the Hills, with the distinctive 'spring line' marked



View across the Severn Valley from the top of Old Wyche Road

writers, artists and musicians, as noted in the LSCA (Chapter 5.2), and key views and corridors are a material consideration in planning and decision-making<sup>26</sup>. The most well-known view of the Hills is from a point due east, which reveals the summits as a continuous line of 'humps' from south to north. However, the direction of approach to the Hills can greatly change the viewer's perception of the Hills, as some summits screen others from certain directions. Vegetation also plays a major role in views, with the wooded slopes of the Hills providing a backdrop to built form, and screening views east from the hill slopes in many locations. Even in winter vegetation continues to play a role in views, due to its density.

Figure 12 of the LSCA identifies key viewpoints within and towards the Plan Area. These were assessed as 'exceptional' during the process undertaken as part of the LSCA (see Table 7 in Appendix G of the LSCA for the visual value criteria). In total, 36 viewpoints met the 'exceptional view' criteria. These included viewpoints with 360° views from the main summits along the ridgeline within the Plan Area as well as a number of others situated to the east, north and south, including:

- Worcestershire Beacon;
- Summer Hill;
- Perseverance Hill;
- Jubilee Hill;
- Pinnacle Hill;
- Black Hill;
- B4218 at Upper and Lower Wyche;
- B4209 Hanley Road (west of junction with Blackmore Park Road);
- View west along Upper Welland Road from the junction with Assarts Lane; and
- Views along Peachfield Road of Malvern Common and the Hills.

More information regarding views within, to and from the Plan Area can be found in the LSCA visual baseline (Section 5).

Another key view is of the 'spring line' from viewpoints in the east of the Plan Area. The 'spring line' encircles the Hills and is where water is forced to the surface along a fault line. This 'spring line' has influenced routes along the Hills and alignment of settlements above and below it. It is therefore possible to see this when viewing the Hills from the east (LSCA, p.19)<sup>26</sup>.

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/managing-the-aonb/guidance-documents/>

<sup>26</sup> <https://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/myparish/ParishPlans.aspx?ParishID=51&PostCode=WR144PR&Prop=0&partner=mhc&MarriedTo=0>

Due to the prevalence of 'exceptional' views in the Plan Area, the visual impact of built form is a key issue. In Upper Wyche a number of properties 'break' the skyline of the Hills when viewed from the east, but this is the exception, not the rule.

The use of glass and lighting can have a big impact upon the visibility of properties at night-time and dusk, including properties located on the hill slopes and those on the plain viewed from the ridgeline and upper and mid-slopes. Historically, windows were small in proportion to the scale of buildings, but increasingly buildings are using more glass and features such as french/sliding/bi-folds and large single panes of glass to take advantage of views from properties. These large panes of glass create reflections

and can detract from the overall setting within views. At night-time and dusk the light emerging from windows and doors, including skylights/velux has an impact upon views as well. Light is also a problem in relation to dark night skies. The AONB has produced *Guidance on Lighting*<sup>25</sup> to try and guide developers and homeowners on how to sensitively incorporate lighting in their designs, and thus preserve the dark night skies of the AONB, which enable views of stars and planets which are not visible in brightly lit areas.

Another detractor in views to, from and within the Plan Area is the nature of built form, particularly the use of colour and materials on elevations and roofs, and the orientation of roofs in relation to the Hills. As identified in the AONB *Guidance on how Development can Respect Landscape in Views*<sup>25</sup>, the siting and orientation of development is more obvious when viewed from above, and given the high ridgelines found in the Plan Area, this is a key issue. One strategy put forward by the AONB document is to consider presenting gable ends to the Hills, as gabled buildings have a less dominant roofscape than buildings presented long-side on, although a number of different viewpoints needs to be considered, else a gable end in one location, may appear as a long-side in another.

The use of colour and materials, as well as preserving and enhancing views is covered in the Design Codes section of this report (Design Codes 04, 05 and 09) but for more information on respecting views in new development, the AONB Guidance should be consulted.

Landmarks in the Plan Area include the War Memorial, the Village Hall, Worcestershire Beacon and Holy Well. A large number of springs, wells and spouts are located around the Plan Area and are key landmarks, as well as historic features. These include Jubilee Fountain, Lower Wyche Spout and Trough and Weaver's Well. A full list of springs, wells and spouts with a description and photos can be found at Appendix D of the LSCA<sup>27</sup>.

Other key landmarks are Abbey College and Malvern Wells C of E Primary School, located at the southern end of Wells Road and All Saints Church at the northern end of Wells Road.



War Memorial, Wells Road



Jubilee Fountain, Wells Road



Wyche Spout, Lower Wyche



The Plan Area includes a number of approaches and gateways, particularly into built up areas of Malvern Wells. Many approaches and gateways are historic features, associated with key routes into the built up area of Malvern Wells, such as the tree lined approach from the north along Wells Road and the Wyche cutting.

Full descriptions of approaches and gateways in the Plan Area can be found in the LSCA (section 3.16, p.101)<sup>27</sup>.



The Wyche cutting gateway

<sup>27</sup> <https://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/myparish/ParishPlans.aspx?ParishID=51&PostCode=WR144PR&Prop=0&partner=mhc&MarriedTo=0>

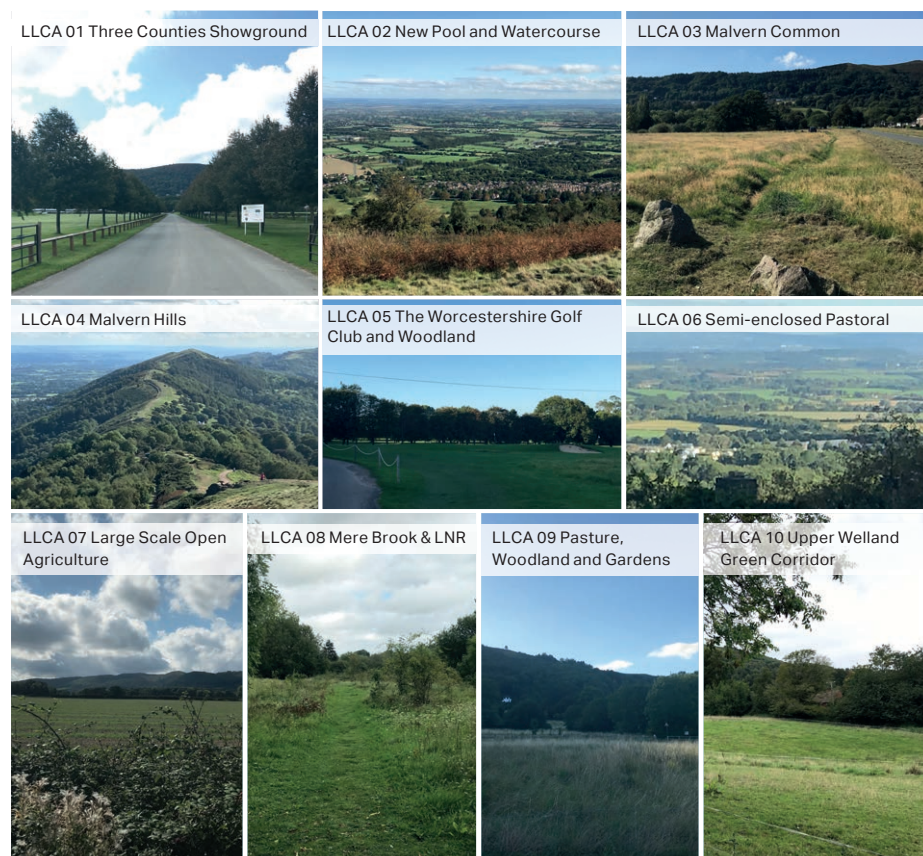


Tree lined gateway along Wells Road looking south



### 3.4 Character Areas within the Plan Area

Eight residential character areas (RCAs), which were identified in the Malvern Wells Residential Character Area Study (2019)<sup>28</sup>, are described in Chapter 3.5. These cover the built up area of Malvern Wells. In addition, ten local landscape character areas (LLCAs) have been identified within the wider Plan Area, as shown in Figure 5. Local landscape character areas have been identified through desk study and field work. Each of these character areas is described below.



<sup>28</sup> Residential Character Area Study (Draft, 2019) is still being completed - reference to be inserted here once available.

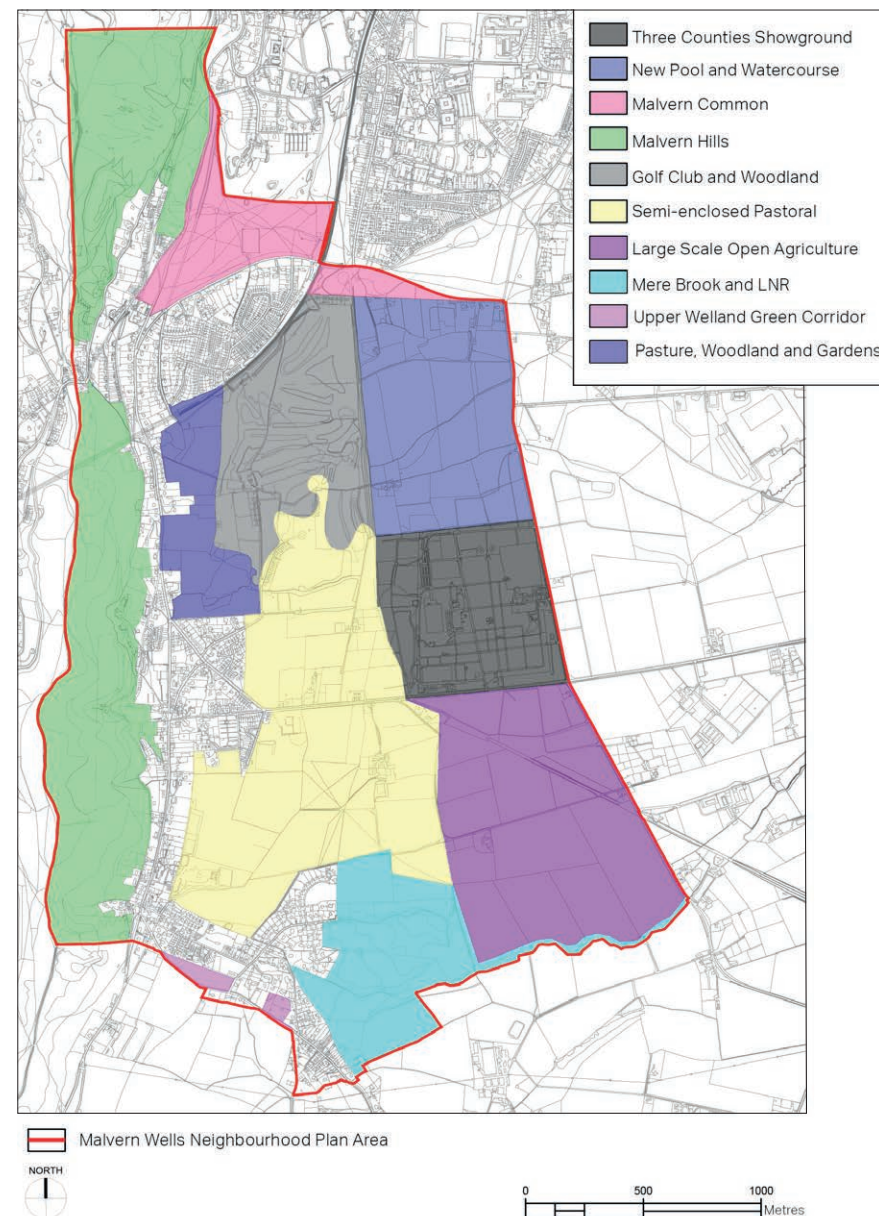


Figure 5 Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs)

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### 3.4.1 LLCA01 Three Counties Showground

- Open formal landscape, including show gardens and formal tree avenues
- The site comprises large areas of amenity grassland and large buildings/structures, some of which are temporary
- Linear tarmac access route into showground lined with trees either side in avenue style, along with low wooden rail fencing
- Mature trees, small bushes and post and wire fencing create field boundaries – this fencing helps to maintain open views to the Hills beyond and trees maintain a rural feel
- Red brick farm buildings retain farming heritage, whilst hardstanding parking provision and metal gates have a more industrial feel
- Backdrop includes views of the wooded slopes of the Hills to the west, including housing on slopes
- Areas used for temporary parking have a visual impact upon views from the Hills
- Traffic movements and other event activities also create lighting, noise and movement in the landscape, affecting local landscape character and amenity



Three Counties Showground, located to the west of the B4208

### 3.4.2 LLCA02 New Pool and Watercourse

- Lakehouse brewery
- New Pool waterbody, which is believed to have medieval origins and is a key landscape and heritage feature, seen in views from the Hills
- Agricultural fields with hedgerow field boundaries, some arable and some fallow/pasture
- Many Public Rights of Way, including bridleways, cross this character area, some of which are historic, like the Iron Age salt route from Droitwich to Hereford
- Line of large detached properties along Peachfield Road, facing the Common, whose orientation is influenced by the straight boundary line of the Common, which has appeared in records since the 10th Century

### 3.4.3 LLCA03 Malvern Common

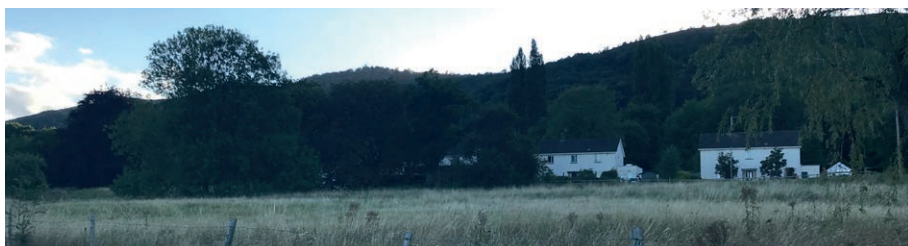
- Malvern Common is a SSSI and is open access, registered common land
- Its species rich neutral grassland and rush pasture are of special interest
- Large open uninterrupted areas of grassland and waterbodies
- Mature trees line the road and clusters of trees or lone trees are scattered throughout
- Semi-natural landscape characterised by irregular tracts of shrubby acid grassland with patches of gorse, bracken and other scrub
- Field boundary creates a visual break to the south with hedgerow and mature trees while to the north a large residential area sits along Longridge Road (outside of the Plan Area)
- Some scrub along field boundaries and localised precambrian rocky outcrops
- Views of the wooded ridge to the west and low lying land to the north and east
- Gently rolling topography that becomes more undulating along the eastern edge of the ridge
- A sense of 'wildness' strongly contrasts with the surrounding enclosed farmland.
- Dwellings located around the perimeter of the Common, often red brick (outside of the Plan Area)
- Heavily trodden paths
- Some erosion evident from car parking
- Areas of amenity grassland used for recreational activities

### 3.4.4 LLCA04 Malvern Hills

- AONB and SSSI
- Open and wooded steep sloping hillside
- Expansive views from hilltops to west and east
- Enclosed side slopes deeply vegetated with limited vehicular access
- Network of public footpaths and bridleways running north/south and across the hillside
- Some erosion evident from car parking and walkers

### 3.4.5 LLCA05 The Worcestershire Golf Club and Woodland

- Artificially undulating amenity grassland of the Golf Club (designed by Alister MacKenzie)<sup>29</sup>
- Scattered trees and clustered woodland patches of varying sizes and density create enclosure and limit views to the countryside beyond
- Malvern Hills ridgeline dominates the skyline to the west, housing can be seen on the ridge from the clubhouse
- Small pools have been created for visual interest, offering opportunities for biodiversity enhancement
- Pool Brook flows through the site
- Broadleaf woodland on gradually sloping land
- Line of detached and semi-detached houses along a spur of Peachfield Road, facing the Common, whose orientation is influenced by the straight boundary line of the Common, which has appeared in records since the 10th Century



Cottages along Woodfarm Road in LLCA05 Golf Club and Woodland

<sup>29</sup> <https://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/myparish/ParishPlans.aspx?ParishID=51&PostCode=WR144PR&Prop=0&partner=mhc&MarriedTo=0> Section 3.7

### 3.4.6 LLCA06 Semi-enclosed Pastoral

- Pastoral landscape with both regular and irregular field pattern
- Field boundaries marked by hedgerows and mature trees
- Hedgerows are fragmented, replaced with fencing in some places
- Gently sloping land
- Public footpaths and bridleways crisscross the landscape
- Large farmsteads contribute to rural character, notably Brickbarns
- Modern farm buildings and degradation of existing farmsteads has caused erosion of landscape and historic character in some places
- Institutional buildings and grounds such as Abbey House formalise the landscape in some places.

### 3.4.7 LLCA07 Large Scale Open Agriculture

- Open aspect with views across fields
- Flat topography resulting in wide ranging views of the Malvern Hills to the west
- Few trees, individual trees are large scale mature specimens
- Hedgerows are a feature, but some are fragmented
- Triangular field to north of disused railway line occasionally used by Three Counties Showground for parking and other fields have hosted festivals in the past



The Malvern Hills dominate views from many character areas, here from LLCA07 Large Scale Open Agriculture



### 3.4.8 LLCA08 Mere Brook and LNR

- Mere Brook runs through the area and is lined with mature trees, and includes a small pond offering opportunities for biodiversity enhancement
- Mature trees, improved and unimproved grassland is characteristic
- Hedgerows and scrub limit views across the area, creating an enclosed feel
- St Wulstan's Local Nature Reserve offers recreational activities within a natural setting that is very different from other natural settings within the plan area
- Cattle grazing in the fields immediately south of St Wulstan's Local Nature Reserve enhance the traditional rural character of the area
- Views of the Malvern Hills ridge can be seen to the west but it does not dominate the skyline as much as in other areas
- Comprises a diverse range of habitats which support woodland birds, butterflies, glow worms, and invertebrates (several habitats within the LLCA are designated as Priority Habitat and UK BAP sites)
- Public Rights of Way and bridleways connect this area to the open countryside to the north, south and east



Entrance to St Wulstan's Local Nature Reserve in LLCA08 Mere Brook and LNR

### 3.4.9 LLCA09 Pasture, Woodland and Gardens

- A mixture of pastoral fields with hedgerow/treed boundaries and blocks of woodland
- To the north of the area is a smallholding, which lies at the end of King Edward's Road
- Includes gardens associated with some large residential properties

### 3.4.10 LLCA10 Upper Welland Green Corridor

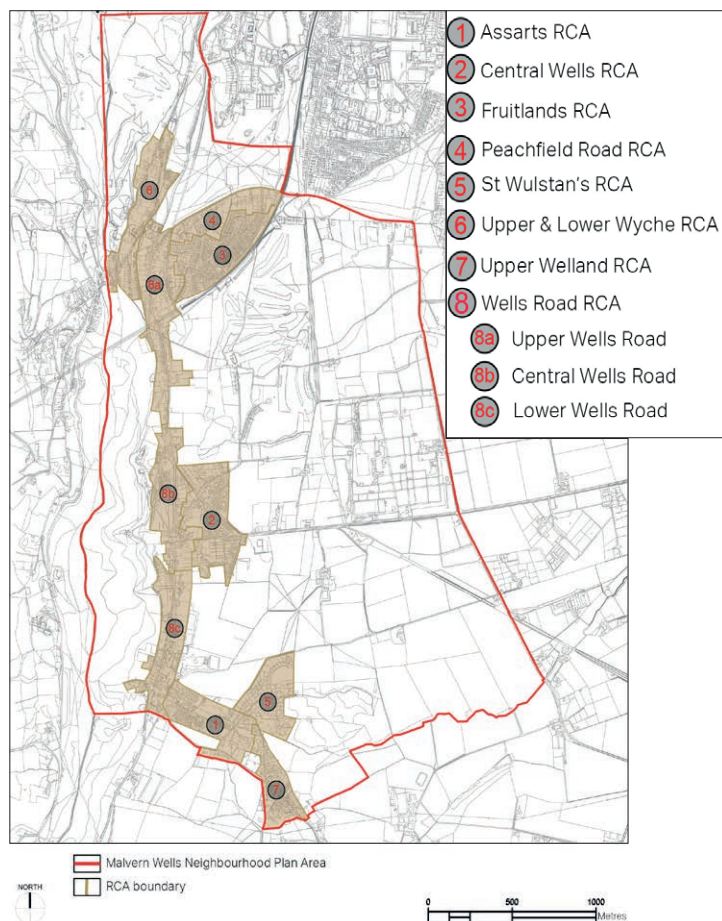
- This area comprises two parcels of land to the north of Upper Welland Road, which marks the boundary of the Plan Area in the south.
- These fields comprise a valuable green corridor on the edge of the Plan Area, linking with Assarts Road Playing Field and woodland at The Homestead, and with a network of mature trees in Upper Welland and St Wulstan's in the east and north east



Malvern Common looking west to the Worcestershire Beacon, the highest point of the Malvern Hills and the north easternmost point of the Plan Area, viewed from LLCA03 Malvern Common

### 3.5 Character Areas within the built up area of Malvern Wells

There are eight distinct character areas within the built up area of Malvern Wells, as identified in the Residential Character Area Study (2019)<sup>30</sup>. The character areas (RCAs) reflect the variety of building patterns, layout, styles and historical development within the built up areas of the Plan Area. These are summarised below. More detail can be found in the Residential Character Area Study (Draft, 2019).



**Figure 6 Residential Character Areas (RCAs)**

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#### 3.5.1 RCA01 Assarts



Assarts Playing Field



Traditional red brick cottages

Assarts RCA is centred along Assarts Road and is relatively steeply sloping from Kings Road in the west to Assarts Lane in the east. A mix of property types from different periods provide variety to the character of the RCA.

A group of traditional red brick two storey cottages with slate roofs, stone sills and brick heads are located within the Conservation Area at the eastern end of Assarts Road facing onto Assarts Playing Field, which is likely to be a remnant hay meadow and important for local biodiversity. The western end of the RCA is characterised by the steepness of Assarts Road which provides visual interest with stepped roof lines. The red brick three storey Georgian town house on the corner of Assarts Road and Kings Road is most notable. Modern infill development has separated some traditional properties from other properties of a similar era, whilst modern affordable housing developments at Heathlands, Wells and Woodlands Close has expanded the settlement southwards.

Boundary treatments include hedges, low brick walls, gates and wooden fencing. There is dense mature tree planting along front boundaries which screens many of the buildings set back off the road. Assarts Playing Field is an important green space and provides views to the Hills and surrounding countryside. A defining characteristic is The Homestead area of broadleaved woodland north of Assarts Road.

<sup>30</sup> Residential Character Area Study (Draft, 2019) is still being completed - reference to be inserted here once available.



### 3.5.2 RCA02 Central Wells



Cemetery chapel



Modern properties on Green Lane

Central Wells RCA is centred along Hanley Road and Green Lane on the lower slopes of the Hills with the western part of the RCA located within the Conservation Area.

The RCA is notable for Malvern Wells Cemetery. The cemetery's open space is important for tranquility and provides views of the Hills to the west. The chapel, which has been put forward for listing by the MHAONB Partnership, is constructed of buff decorative stone with arched windows and doorways and a steeply pitched roof. The Green Lane boundary includes a decorative entrance gate and line of mature trees which contributes to the local character.

Housing types vary from large Victorian villas constructed of Malvern stone to modern brick built bungalows. Properties at the eastern end of Green Lane are two storey semi-detached in render with slate roofs. Rothwell Road is characterised by a small open space and two storey short terraces in brick and render. There is little architectural detailing.

Housing along Hanley Road make a significant contribution to the character of the RCA with large detached properties sitting behind long stretches of hedges, which give the RCA a verdant character. The development of The Moorlands and Wood Farm Road to the north of Hanley Road expanded the settlement north, and creates



Victorian villa on Hanley Road



New house off Oaklands

a sense of two parts to the character area, one north and one south of Hanley Road. Boundary treatments vary and include low boundary brick or stone walls and hedges. Mature trees and woodland filter built development in all seasons, given the prevalence of evergreen species which is characteristic of the Victorian properties along Hanley Road. This vegetation creates 'green corridors' to surrounding areas.

Views of the Hills and the plain to the east are channeled by key linear routes. and the junction at Hanley Road and Green Lane forms a gateway to the residential area from the surrounding countryside.

1990s infill development at Oaklands has a distinctive character with large detached double fronted houses set on generous plots. These houses are constructed of red brick, with clay tile roofs and white casement windows, and porticos over front doors.

Recently a white rendered house with Cotswold stone has been constructed off Oaklands. The materials and detailing of this house, which include gable ends facing the Hills are uncharacteristic for Central Wells and more broadly for the Plan Area. Its striking white render is a key detractor in views from the Hills.

### 3.5.3 RCA03 Fruitlands



Views to the east from Fruitlands



Cattle grid gateway into Fruitlands

Fruitlands RCA is a 1970's-80's housing estate built on what were once orchards in towards the northern end of the Plan Area. The main road of Fruitlands meanders through the estate and connects with a number of residential roads. The area is bounded by the railway line to the east and south.

The estate consists of a mix of two storey detached houses and bungalows in red or buff brick with shallow pitched roofs. Some properties display bargeboards or rosemary tiles. There is a uniform design and layout with housing styles repeated throughout the RCA. Most of the properties are set back off the road with front gardens, off-street parking and occasional garages. The estate is largely open plan with no front boundary treatments.

There are limited street trees, adding to the feeling of openness within the estate. Footpaths and bridleways connect the estate to the large open space of Malvern Common in the north and The Worcestershire Golf Club in the south.

The views of the Malvern Hills from within the estate provides a sense of place. Gateways into the estate are marked by fencing and cattle grids on King Edward's Road and Peachfield Close.

Cattle grids with timber gates are key gateway features into the RCA.

### 3.5.4 RCA04 Peachfield Road



22 Peachfield Road



Malvern Common looking north west

Peachfield Road RCA is located to the south of Malvern Common which creates an open character to the RCA. A wide grass verge along the eastern section of the RCA enhances the open character further, setting back properties from the road. Part of the RCA lies within the Conservation Area.

Properties vary in design and age. They are generally large detached two storey houses and bungalows set back from the road with large front gardens. Houses along the central section of Peachfield Road have large rear gardens. Dominant materials include render and brick with slate or clay tile roofs.

South Lawn on the western end of the RCA is an infill development of 1980s red brick bungalows with panoramic views over the Severn Valley and to Bredon Hill. There is further infill development at Holly View Drive centred around the former Youth Hostel, now converted into flats with new houses in the grounds.

Entrance gates to properties are common and boundary treatments include fencing and stone walls. Mature trees line either side of Peachfield Road, which historically were used for picnicing under by people travelling in carriages. There is an extensive network of footpaths across Malvern Common, which provides an important area of recreation.



### 3.5.5 RCA05 St Wulstan's



1950s bungalows along village green



Typical 1990s properties of the area

St Wulstan's RCA is located in the south of the Plan Area, adjacent to St. Wulstan's Local Nature Reserve. It includes a 1990's housing estate built on the site of the former psychiatric hospital (previously a WWII army hospital). The RCA is relatively flat compared with other areas.

Properties are mostly 2 - 2.5 storey large detached houses set back from the road with large front gardens and integral or detached garages. Properties are constructed from brick and render and some include decorative timber on the front elevations. There are a collection of 1950s brick bungalows facing onto St Wulstan's village green, which have a unique character and provide a low rise setting for the green, which is likely to be a remnant hay meadow and is important for local biodiversity.

Boundary treatments vary between roads and include low brick walls, picket fencing and hedging. There is a pleasant street scene with well-kept front gardens and street trees.

The village green and the Local Nature Reserve are large open spaces that provide recreational and biodiversity value, as well as significant visual contribution. Footpaths provide access to the surrounding countryside and along one of Mere Brook's tributaries.

<sup>31</sup> <https://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/myparish/ParishPlans.aspx?ParishID=51&PostCode=WR144PR&Prop=0&partner=mhc&MarriedTo=0>

### 3.5.6 RCA06 Upper and Lower Wyche



Terraced houses in Lower Wyche



Commercial properties in Upper Wyche

Upper and Lower Wyche RCA lies on the upper and lower eastern slopes of the Malvern Hills in the north of the Malvern Wells Conservation Area. Upper Wyche is the only settlement on the eastern slopes of the Hills that sits above the 'spring line' and is visible from the east of the Plan Area, especially when white facades catch the morning sun<sup>31</sup>.

The area has been shaped by the history of quarrying in the Hills, which has created the varied topography and accounts for the large swathes of vegetation as a result of natural regeneration. For more information on the history of quarrying and its effect upon the Plan Area see Section 3.7.117 onwards, and for an explanation of the 'spring line' see page 19, footnote 12<sup>31</sup>.

The steep topography provides a distinctive pattern of development with many properties located on the hillside, providing extensive views eastwards over the Severn Valley and to Bredon Hill. Properties vary in type, size and design but in general have a modest scale and simple form in contrast with the grand Victorian villas found along Wells Road. Terraced cottages, semi and detached houses are constructed of Malvern stone, red brick and painted white brick, with slate roofs. Fenestration includes ground floor bay windows and small dormer pediment windows. The shallow frontages to the road provide a strong sense of enclosure, surveillance



Infill development at Hillside Close



Grassed common land at Lower Wyche

and activity. Properties commonly feature stone boundary walls.

Infill development off Old Wyche Road at Hillside Close includes three storey properties which reflect traditional built form in terms of their form and proportions, but have used a cream render that is less characteristic and is a key detractor in winter when trees have lost their leaves.

Earnslaw and Malverns Car Parks allow visitors access to the network of footpaths on the Malvern Hills. These are set within deeply vegetated areas associated with the former Earnslaw Quarry. The history of quarrying has shaped this RCA significantly, altering the topography from the late 19th century onwards and influencing the type of properties built here, which include a number of cottages for workers at the various quarries. More information on quarrying in Upper and Lower Wyche is contained within the LSCA<sup>32</sup>.

The grassed common land between the intersecting roads of Old Wyche Road and Lower Wyche Road gives the area an exposed character, allowing visibility of multiple streets along the hillside and views of the school buildings of Wyche CE Primary School to the west.

### 3.5.7 RCA07 Upper Welland



The Old Chapel, Chase Road



Silverdale & Avondale (1905), Upper Welland Rd

Upper Welland RCA is located in the south of the Plan Area with a small area west of Chase Road included in the Conservation Area.

The RCA has an historic core which includes several two storey brick and rendered short terraces and semi-detached houses with brick chimneys, stone sills, brick or stone banding and slate roofs. One of the most distinctive properties, which is now a house, is the former Hawthorn Inn with its decorative cornices, long narrow windows and rendered front elevation.

Another property of note is The Upper Welland Methodist Church, an important cultural facility constructed of decorative brick with semi-circular arches over the doorway and windows. Properties have moderate front and rear gardens with hedging as the predominant boundary treatment.

The RCA is surrounded by open countryside that provides a rural setting to the village and is accessible by public footpaths and bridleways. There are views west towards the Malvern Hills and east across the plain. A gas street lamp on the boundary of the RCA along Watery Lane is Grade II listed, as well as a non-listed lamp.

The Upper Welland Neighbourhood Heritage Area Report provides a comprehensive overview of the historical development of Upper Welland, including the proposed Upper Welland Neighbourhood Heritage Area<sup>32</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> <https://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/myparish/ParishPlans.aspx?ParishID=51&PostCode=WR144PR&Prop=0&partner=mhc&MarriedTo=0>



### 3.5.8 RCA08 Wells Road



Village Hall, Wells Road



Large semi-detached elevated houses

Wells Road RCA runs from Wyche CE Primary School in the north to the Plan Area boundary in the south. The majority of the RCA lies within the Malvern Wells Conservation Area on the eastern mid-slopes of the Malvern Hills. The RCA is split into three sub areas; upper, central and lower Wells Road (08a, 08b, 08c).

Developments on both sides of Wells Road are cut into the Hills and provide long distance views east over the Severn Valley. The upper Wells Road sub area is characterised by large detached two to three storey houses constructed of Malvern stone, with brick and corner stone detailing. Properties are generally set within large landscaped plots. Malvern stone is a common boundary treatment.

The central Wells Road sub area is characterised by more modest detached, semi-detached and terraced properties set within smaller plots closer to the roadside. Many former retail units have now been converted to houses. Wells Business Centre, Daniel's Garage, the Village Hall and Post Office provide important community and business facilities and have been put forward in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan as Neighbourhood Centres<sup>33</sup>.

The lower Wells Road sub area is characterised by larger detached houses set within varying plot sizes with hedging and Malvern stone walls as the predominant boundary treatments. Properties are sometimes hidden by vegetation. The Abbey

School College and Malvern Wells C of E Primary School, and one small retail unit are also located in the lower Wells Road sub area.

The majority of the Grade II listed buildings within the Plan Area are located along Wells Road, including the Malvern Wells War Memorial. Many of the listed gas lamps are located on Wells Road and Holywell Road. Wells Road is lined either side with mature trees, with breaks in vegetation providing views eastwards.



All Saints Malvern Wells and Wyche, upper Wells Road

<sup>33</sup> <https://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/myparish/ParishPlans.aspx?ParishID=51&PostCode=WR144PR&Prop=0&partner=mhc&MarriedTo=0>

### 3.6 Positive aspects of character - Area-wide Character

There are a number of positive aspects common to all character areas within Malvern Wells, which should be retained, reinforced and enhanced.

#### Settlement Pattern

- Linear settlement pattern along the Hills, with wider settlement areas on the Plain, such as off Hanley Road, St Wulstan's Road and Fruitlands.
- Density is tighter and more compact on the higher slopes, with lower densities on the lower slopes and the plain.
- Many buildings occupy an elevated position with extensive views.
- Layout of more modern estates based on existing field patterns.
- The mature vegetation creates a balance between built form and landscape.

#### Green Infrastructure and Open Space

- Mature trees and woodland contribute to the rural character of the village and wider Plan Area, and the wooded slopes of the Hills creates a balance between built form and landscape.
- Local open spaces, particularly Malvern Common and the Malvern Hills, contribute to the character and appearance of the area.
- Strong GI network of hedgerows, blocks of woodland and unimproved grassland across the Plan Area.
- Mature tree lined avenues along entry routes into built up areas.
- Dismantled railway offers opportunities for GI and pedestrian/cycle links.
- The Plan Area contains a large number of sites important for biodiversity (SSSIs, a Local Nature Reserve and Ancient Woodlands).
- Public Access to a number of open spaces is possible (e.g. Assarts Playing Field, St, Wulstan's Village Green and St, Wulstan's Local Nature Reserve).

#### Building Typology

- Two storey houses are the predominant building type, which enables views of the Hills and plain to the east to be maintained, and also ensures that buildings settle into the wooded landscape of the Plan Area.
- Dispersed farm buildings strengthen the rural character of the Plan Area.

#### Architectural Details and Materials

- The Plan Area contains a large number of listed buildings and structures, which contribute to its historic character, particularly in the Conservation Area.
- Malvern stone as a building material on the upper and mid-slopes of the Hills.
- Brick and render as a building material on the plain.
- Malvern stone buildings with softer stone or brick dressing on doors and windows create a strong character for the buildings of the Plan Area. Grey/purple engineering bricks are locally-characteristic and provide a suitable colour combination.

#### Building Line and Boundary Treatments

- Most residential properties are set back from the road with front gardens and planting that contributes to the verdant character of the Plan Area.
- Traditional boundary treatments are constructed of Malvern stone, often with hedges grown above or irregular 'cock and hen coping'.
- Some properties feature timber or wrought iron gates.

#### Parking and Utilities

- Due to the generally large plots and building line setbacks, most parking is on-plot, with the exception of properties in The Wyche.
- Dedicated car parks to access areas of recreation, including the Hills and Common.
- Locally distinctive Grade II listed gas lamps have recently been renovated, more in Upper Welland could be restored.

#### Footpaths and Rights of Way

- Easy access to the countryside is aided by a strong network of footpaths and bridleways.
- Several walking trails, as well as open access, along the ridge of the Hills.
- A number of historic routes remain across the Plan Area, including the old salt route.

#### Views, Landmarks and Gateways

- Long-distance views to and from the Hills and Severn Valley are a key characteristic of the Plan Area and include a number of key views to and from the AONB.
- Properties on the hillside in The Wyche create a unique character and in Upper Wyche these break the skyline - the only place on the Hills in the Plan Area.
- Landmark buildings located upon approach to built up area of Malvern Wells.
- Mature tree avenues along entrance routes emphasise the sense of arrival into built up areas, as can be seen on Green Lane, Wells Lane and Peachfield Road.



### 3.7 Positive aspects of character - Character Areas

There are a number of positive aspects specific to individual character areas, which set them apart from others, and these aspects should be retained, reinforced and enhanced.

#### Local Landscape Character Areas

##### LLCA01 Three Counties Showground

- Open formal landscape with deep agricultural connections.
- Mature trees and other vegetation, as well as post and wire fencing create field boundaries.
- Red brick agricultural buildings retain sense of farming heritage.

##### LLCA02 New Pool and Watercourse

- New Pool waterbody is key landscape and heritage feature.
- Large number of footpaths and bridleways including historic routes like the old salt route.
- Detached properties facing the Common, with strong linear boundary line.

##### LLCA03 Malvern Common

- Important area for biodiversity (SSSI).
- Open access common land is a valuable recreational asset.
- Mature trees line road or in clusters contribute significantly to landscape character.
- Views of the Hills, particular the wooded slopes.
- Dwellings predominantly red brick with slate roofs and sash windows.

##### LLCA04 Malvern Hills

- Important area for biodiversity (SSSI) and landscape beauty (AONB).
- Expansive views from hilltops to west and east.
- Enclosed side slopes deeply vegetated with limited vehicular access.
- Network of public footpaths and bridleways.

##### LLCA05 The Worcestershire Golf Club and Woodland

- Many historic aspects of golf course designed by Alister MacKenzie remain.
- Mature trees and woodland benefit biodiversity.
- Views to Malvern Hills ridgeline.
- Houses include historic two storey cottages adjacent to golf course, which enhance the historic character.

##### LLCA06 Semi-enclosed Pastoral

- Strong field boundaries marked by hedgerows and mature trees.
- Good access to public footpaths and bridleways.
- Large farmsteads contribute to rural character.
- Formal landscape associated with institutional buildings.

##### LLCA07 Large Scale Open Agriculture

- Open aspect with views across field towards Malvern Hills.

##### LLCA08 Mere Brook and LNR

- Mere Brook and small pond offer opportunities for biodiversity enhancement.
- Unimproved grassland is positive biodiverse feature.
- St Wulstan's Local Nature Reserve offer recreational opportunities.

##### LLCA09 Pasture, Woodland and Gardens

- Strong hedgerow boundaries with mature trees and blocks of woodland characterise this area.

##### LLCA10 Upper Welland Green Corridor

- Fields comprise a valuable green corridor on the edge of the Plan Area, linking with Assart Playing Field and woodland at The Homestead.
- Green Infrastructure link to mature trees in Upper Welland and St Wulstan's in the east and north east.

## Residential Character Areas

Positive aspects specific to individual RCAs are summarised below. For more detail on positive aspects of character see the Residential Character Study (Draft, 2019)<sup>34</sup>.

### RCA01 Assarts

- Assarts Playing Field provides an important recreational function and setting to traditional red brick and slate roofed cottages, and is considered to be a remnant hay meadow.
- Dense and mature tree cover and woodland.
- Steep topography that channels views of the Hills.
- Grazing land provides an important buffer and gap between the built up area and open countryside.
- Boundary treatments include hedges, low brick walls and picket fencing.
- Dense mature tree planting along front boundaries.
- Roofs are typically slate.
- Windows are both sash and casement.

### RCA02 Central Wells

- Malvern Wells Cemetery is important in terms of cultural associations and provides an area of local open space for residents.
- Mature trees form a gateway to the built up area of Malvern Wells and a setting to properties, which are set back from roads.
- Hanley Road is characterised by strong hedgerow boundaries.
- Views of the Hills are channel by key linear routes.
- Historic buildings which use traditional materials of Malvern stone, red brick and Welsh slate and have sash windows. Within modern developments casement windows are more common.

<sup>34</sup> *Residential Character Area Study* (Draft, 2019) is still being completed - reference to be inserted here once available.

### RCA03 Fruitlands

- Open front boundaries often without hedges or fences.
- View of the Hills framed between properties.
- Links to wider countryside through Public Rights of Way.
- Two storey properties contribute to the character of the area.
- Red brick and tile are the dominant materials, as are casement windows.

### RCA04 Peachfield Road

- Extensive mature tree cover along Peachfield Road and within large rear gardens.
- Views of the surrounding countryside including the Malvern Hills.
- Relationship of properties to Malvern Common.
- Properties are detached with generous plots.
- Dominant materials include render and brick with slate or clay tile roofs and sash windows.
- Strong hedgerow boundaries.



Play Area at Assarts Playing Field with houses at Heathlands Close visible behind



### RCA05 St Wulstan's

- St Wulstan's Village Green is an important open space for residents and offers opportunities to enhance biodiversity.
- Open plan frontages of many properties.
- Properties are mostly two or two and half storeys and are detached and set back from the road with large front gardens.
- A combination of brick and render with decorative timber on front elevations and tile roofs, and casement windows.
- Boundary treatments include hedges and picket fences and front gardens include trees that contribute to local character.
- Footpath links to the wider countryside, including the Local Nature Reserve.

### RCA06 Upper and Lower Wyche

- Distinctive pattern of development with single aspect roads with views from properties across the Severn Valley.
- Wooded steep slopes.
- Houses are generally modest in scale and simple in form, with grand Victorian villas found along Wells Road.
- Terraced cottages and semi-detached properties are common.
- Buildings are typically constructed of red brick, painted white brick with slate roofs, and have sash windows.
- Shallower frontages with steep steps along the road, with most boundaries marked by Malvern stone boundary walls.
- Grassed common land between Old Wyche Road and Lower Wyche Road creates a unique open character with long and short distance views.

### RCA07 Upper Welland

- Two storey brick and rendered short terraces, semi-detached and detached properties located around the historic core.
- Brick chimneys, stone sills and brick or stone banding are characteristic.
- Slate roofs and sash windows.
- The Upper Welland Methodist Church provides a focal point for the community.

- Moderate front and rear gardens with hedging as predominant front boundary treatment.
- Views west towards the Hills and east to the plain.

### RCA08 Wells Road

- Properties constructed of Malvern stone or white render with large sash windows, set in large plots behind stone boundary walls.
- Single aspect roads are common in the upper Wells Road sub area, with two and three storey large detached properties set within extensive plots.
- Development in the central Wells Road sub area is located on both sides of the road, but properties remain predominantly detached, although are more modest in size, and there are some semi-detached properties.
- Trees and dense boundary vegetation results in a verdant character where buildings nestle comfortably into the hillside.
- The Village Hall and post office provide important community and business facilities.
- Conservation Area and listed buildings/structures contribute to the historic character of the area.



'Fairview', the home of Architect Arthur Troyte Griffith, Lower Wyche

### 3.8 Issues to be addressed in design codes

The following issues have been identified that should be addressed through the planning process. These principally relate to increasing development pressure in the Plan Area:

- New developments introducing higher density housing that erodes the rural character of Malvern Wells.
- Infill development not reflecting the local character or built form of its location.
- Long and short distance important local views being affected by new development.
- Loss of locally important open space, trees and woodland.
- Fragmentation of hedgerows.
- Erosion of green spaces and verges caused by car parking and walkers.
- Lack of off-street parking along Wells Road limiting access to community facilities and causing traffic problems.
- Retaining the verdant character of the Plan Area through protection and planting of large tree species.
- Loss of architectural details that make a positive contribution to the historic character of the Plan Area or replacement of original features with poor quality substitutes (e.g. replacing timber sash windows with uPVC).
- Modern farm buildings and degradation of farmsteads affecting local character.
- New development or alterations that use inappropriate materials (neither locally sourced or responding to materials used historically within Malvern Wells).
- New development within the Conservation Area that is inconsistent with the layout, materials and detailing which contributes to its special character.
- New development in prominent locations (either on the Hills or viewed from the Hills) affecting views and character of Plan Area and AONB, particularly in respect of glazing, lighting and dark night skies.
- Loss of traditional boundary treatments, i.e. Malvern stone and the introduction of inappropriate boundary features such as fences and red brick walls.
- Loss of front gardens and on-plot parking.

- Lack of maintenance of locally distinctive features and open space.
- Erosion of distinctive gateways into the built up areas of the settlement.
- Loss, or degradation, of designated and non-designated heritage assets, including 'Malvern Water' features such as spouts, springs and wells.
- Lack of walking and cycling provision increasing reliance on cars and other motorised vehicles.
- The need to ensure separation of distinctive areas and identities (such as between Assarts and Upper Welland).



Malvern Common





MEREBROOK CLOSE  
CUL-DE-SAC



## 4. Design Codes

### 4.1 Introduction

This section provides design codes which set out expectations for new development across the Plan Area. It also highlights special qualities in individual character areas that should be taken into account when designing new development.

The design codes in this section should be applied as a starting point to all new development in the Plan Area. These codes advocate character-led design which responds to and enhances the landscape and townscape character. Reference to context does not mean to copy or use pastiche solutions. It means responding to what is around as inspiration and it could be that a contemporary solution in harmony with its surroundings is as appropriate as one utilising traditional building materials and techniques.

It is important that full account is taken of the local context and that any new development responds to and enhances the “sense of place” and meets the aspirations of people already living in that area. The aim of this section is to produce design codes that help in assessing design quality and appropriateness in new development proposals. Images have been used to reflect good examples of local design quality.

The design codes are set out as ‘Area-wide Design Principles’ and ‘Character Area Specific Design Principles’ to ensure codes are adaptable to the unique characteristics of the Plan Area. Area-wide principles apply to entire Plan Area. Where new residential development comes forward in the Local Landscape Character Areas (i.e. outside of the RCAs and the built up area of Malvern Wells) it should reflect the rural context within which it sits, taking design inspiration from traditional buildings found in design principles of the adjacent Character Area.

The design codes developed in this document focus mainly on residential development, considering the character of the immediate neighbouring buildings and the townscape and landscape of the surrounding area. The local pattern of streets and spaces, building traditions, materials and the natural environment should all help to determine the character and identity of new development, whilst recognising that new building technologies can deliver acceptable built forms and may sometimes be more relevant.

### 4.2 General Design Considerations

Below are some general design principles against which new development proposals should be evaluated. As an initial appraisal, there should be evidence that development proposals have considered and applied the following:

- Harmonise with and enhance existing character in terms of physical form, movement pattern and land use.
- Avoid uniformity of design styles and layouts, which erode rural character.
- Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long-distance views.
- Reinforce or enhance the established character of streets and other spaces.
- Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity.
- Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality.
- Reflect, respect and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness.
- Retain and incorporate important existing landscape and built form features into the development.
- Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing.
- Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details.
- Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features.
- Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other; to provide a safe, attractive and cohesive environment.
- Make enough provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation and minimisation where appropriate), energy needs, water provision and high speed broadband, without adverse impact on the street scene, local landscape character or the amenities of neighbours.
- Sensitively integrate energy efficient technologies within the scheme at the start of the design process.
- Provide adequate off street parking, preferably softened by planting, to reduce visual impact.
- Minimise urbanising features such as close-boarded fencing, footpaths alongside roads and street/security lighting.



# Design Code 01

## Pattern of development

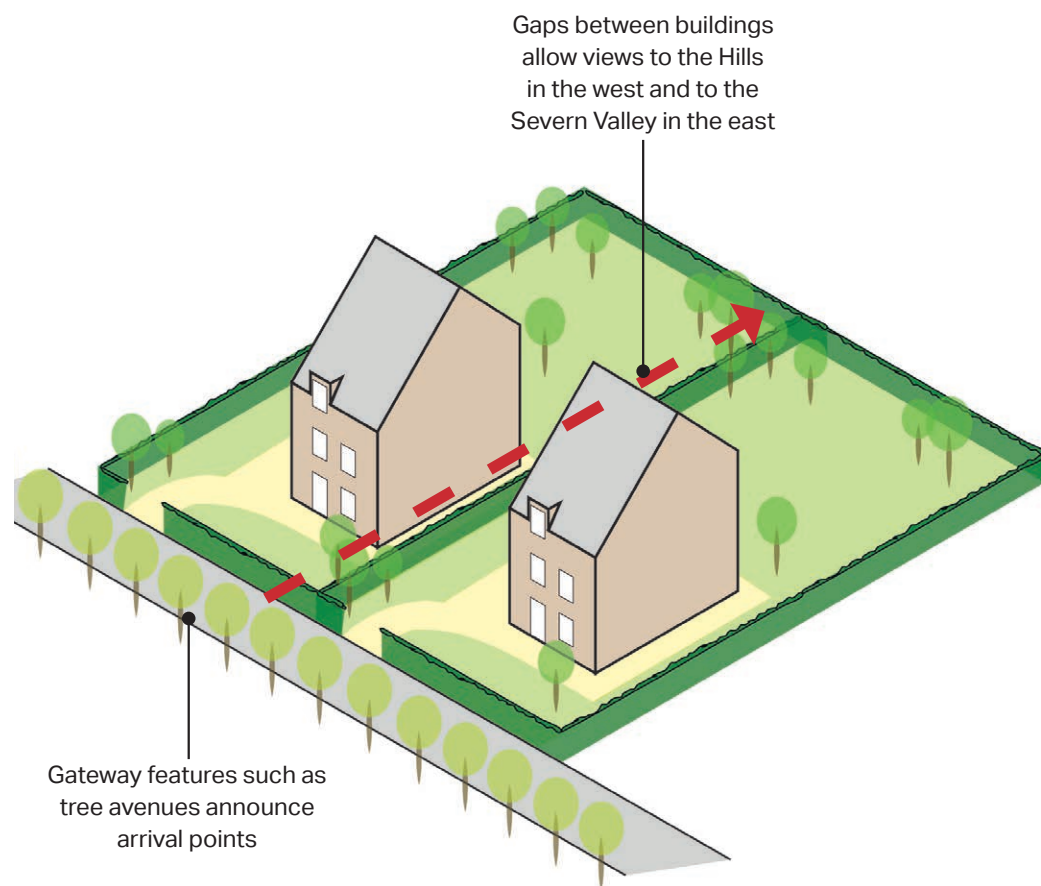


Illustration 1: Gaps between buildings

### Area-wide Design Principles

- a. Density in new development proposals should be appropriate to its location and take reference from development in the LLCA or RCA within which it sits. Where new residential development lies outside of an RCA, its density should reflect the character of the LLCA within which it sits, or in the case of larger residential developments it should reflect the density of adjacent RCAs.
- b. The layout of new developments should reflect the characteristically wide and deep plots found across the Plan Area. This offers space for large trees to establish and gaps between plots provide views to the Hills to the west and countryside to the east, which are defining features of the area.
- c. Development proposals in or adjacent to the Conservation Area should consider the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and its setting, with particular regard to the many listed buildings and structures found within the Conservation Area.
- d. New development should include strategic tree planting to ensure that any new development respects the character of 'trees with buildings between'.
- e. The layout of new development should respect existing field boundaries and hedgerows.
- f. Whilst it is tempting to fill in the gaps between buildings and estates with development, these gaps are important in the historic settlement pattern of the Plan Area, allow views to the Hills and plain, and prevent coalescence of built form<sup>35</sup>. Developments that 'fill in' these gaps should be resisted.

### Character Area Specific Design Principles

LLCA05 The Worcestershire Golf Club and Woodland

- g. The pattern of new development should respect the density and form of other developments in the character area, providing good front and back gardens to all properties and providing a framework of new and existing trees to settle new development into the wooded context.

<sup>35</sup> <https://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/myparish/ParishPlans.aspx?ParishID=51&PostCode=WR144PR&Prop=0&partner=mhc&MarriedTo=0>

LSCA, Section 8.2.1, p.170

- h. Along Peachfield Road, new development should respect the linear nature of existing built form.

#### RCA01 Assarts

- i. New development should respect the linear layout of street and housing in Assarts and resist introducing winding cul-de-sac style layouts, as these are contrary to character.

#### RCA02 Central Wells



'Trees with buildings between' on King Edward's Road



Single aspect linear housing in The Wyche follows the steep topography



Distinctive layout of housing in Fruitlands

- j. Mature trees and woodland soften the visual impact of built development and create 'green corridors' to surrounding areas. New development should respect this character.

#### RCA03 Fruitlands

- k. The pattern of development of Fruitlands is very distinctive and houses create a rhythm as they climb the lower slopes of the Hills. New development should respect this rhythm, which is closely linked to building line.

#### RCA04 Peachfield Road

- l. New developments should set houses within large plots with both front and rear gardens to reflect the prevailing character.

#### RCA05 St Wulstan's

- m. New development should respect the existing character of deep front gardens and integral or detached garages, setting parking to the side of properties.

#### RCA06 Upper and Lower Wyche

- n. The steep topography creates a distinctive pattern of development with single aspect linear housing along most streets. New developments should respond to this, avoiding developments that are more than one plot deep.
- o. Reflecting the more modest scale of buildings in this area, densities can be higher than in other character areas through the use of terraces or semi-detached properties, provided development respects the linear nature (and predominantly single aspect nature) of built form in this area.

#### RCA07 Upper Welland

- p. Development should respect the historic core of this character area, and development which extends built form into surrounding fields should be resisted.

#### RCA08 Wells Road

- q. New development should follow the linear nature of development along Wells Road, and developments that do not respect the one plot deep character should be resisted.



## Design Code 02

### Green Infrastructure and open space



Deeply wooded character of the mid-slopes at The Wyche

#### Area-wide Design Principles

- a. Mature trees and hedges contribute to the rural character of the Plan Area and these should be retained in new development and complemented with new tree planting.
- b. Historic hedgerows, Ancient and semi-natural woodlands contribute to the enclosed character of the Plan Area, and these should be retained and enhanced to ensure their long-term survival. Development that proposes to remove historic hedgerows and woodland should be resisted.
- c. New development should reflect characteristic wide and deep plot sizes, as these contribute to the network of green space.
- d. New developments should provide communal open space to ensure that sufficient space is allowed for trees and other vegetation.
- e. Materials used in the open spaces should be high-quality and respond to the character of Malvern Wells.
- f. Where locally characteristic, opportunities should be taken to create new landscape features such as orchards, ponds and semi-natural habitats. Such features reinforce landscape character and provide important habitat for wildlife.



St Wulstan's Village Green is an important open space with public access

## Character Area Specific Design Principles

### LLCA01 Three Counties Showground

- g. The overall verdant character of the showground should be preserved and enhanced, and developments that would introduce large areas of hard paving should be resisted.

### LLCA02 New Pool and Watercourse

- h. New Pool is an important landscape and historic feature, and also forms part of the Plan Area's Green and Blue Infrastructure. It should be preserved and enhanced for biodiversity.

### LLCA03 Malvern Common

- i. The Common plays a key role in the Plan Area's GI, and is a valuable open space. Its key characteristics should be preserved and enhanced, and any development resisted.

### LLCA04 Malvern Hills

- j. The Hills are the defining characteristic of the Plan Area and provide the largest area of open space. The Hills also play a key role in the Plan Area's GI and their key characteristics should be preserved and enhanced, and new development in this area should be resisted.
- k. New development (including extensions/alterations) that results in the loss of trees and vegetation along the hill slopes should be resisted.
- l. The deeply wooded character of Holywell Road should be preserved and enhanced.

### LLCA05 The Worcestershire Golf Club and Woodland

- m. The Golf Club is less diverse than some other areas, but still plays an important role for GI. Opportunities for enhancing grassland (e.g. leaving more areas as long grass/creating wildflower areas) and woodland should be explored and encouraged.
- n. Removal of existing woodland to facilitate extensions to the golf course should be resisted.

### LLCA07 Large Scale Open Agriculture

- o. The dismantled railway is a key GI feature and should be retained and enhanced, with opportunities to utilise it as a cycle/footpath route explored and funded through developer contributions.

### LLCA08 Mere Brook and LNR

- p. Mere Brook and the small pond offer opportunities for biodiversity enhancement and

this should be explored and funded through developer contributions.

- q. Existing woodland and other vegetation should be preserved to ensure that the Priority Habitats and LNR can reach their full potential, and development that threatens it should be resisted.

### LLCA09 Pasture, Woodland and Gardens

- r. New development should preserve and enhance existing and degraded field boundaries.

### LLCA10 Upper Welland Green Corridor

- s. This is an important open space and connection in the GI network of the Plan Area and therefore development in this area should be resisted.

### RCA01 Assarts

- t. Assarts Playing Field provides views to the hills, as well as a link to the history of hay meadows, and should be retained.

### RCA02 Central Wells

- u. Mature trees and woodland create 'green corridors' in this character area and should be retained and enhanced.
- v. Opportunities for new tree planting in public realm and within gardens.



Upper Welland Green Corridor, a valuable GI asset



- w. The cemetery's open space enhances a sense of openness in this RCA, and therefore any development that compromises this should be resisted.

#### RCA04 Peachfield Road

- x. Veteran trees line both sides of Peachfield Road, indicating an important period of history, and should be retained. A programme for their long-term replacement should be considered.
- y. Opportunities for new tree planting in public realm and within gardens.

#### RCA05 St Wulstan's

- z. The village green and the Local Nature Reserve offer recreational and biodiversity value, as well as a significant visual contribution. New developments should respect the setting of these green spaces.
- aa. Opportunities for new tree planting in public realm and within gardens.

#### RCA06 Upper and Lower Wyche

- ab. The grassed area between the intersecting roads should be maintained to reflect the open landscape character, allowing visibility of multiple streets along the hillside.
- ac. Development that results in the loss of trees and vegetation along the hill slopes should be resisted.

#### RCA07 Upper Welland

- ad. There are few street trees in the historic core of this area, and this represents an opportunity for new development, or for a programme of tree planting organised by the community.

#### RCA08 Wells Road

- ae. Avenues of mature trees along the Wells Road should be maintained with breaks in vegetation to retain views eastwards.



Deeply wooded character of Holywell Road

## Design Code 03

### Building typology

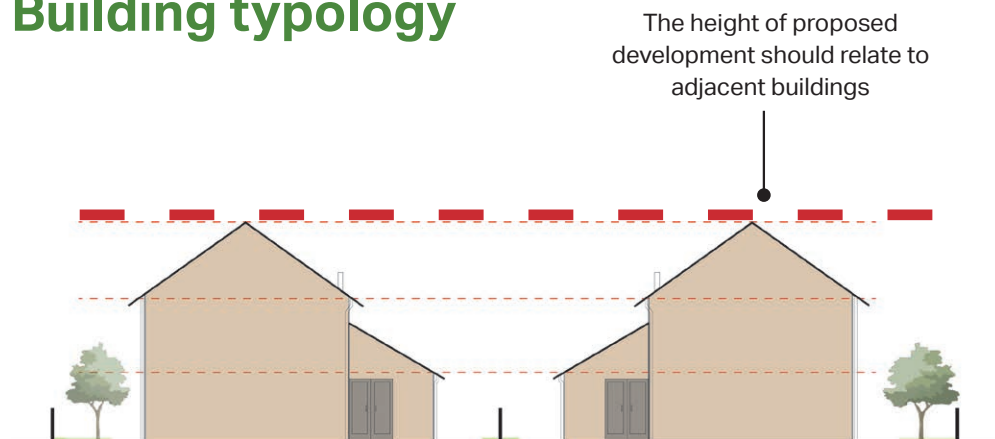


Illustration 2: Building typology and heights

#### Area-wide Design Principles

- New development should respond to the type, scale and form of existing buildings within the LLCA or RCA within which it sits. Consideration should also be given to buildings immediately adjacent to the proposal. However, just because a development site sits next to a 3 storey detached house, this may not be a characteristic building type within the overall character area and so the overall effect should be considered.
- The height of new buildings should relate to adjacent existing buildings, even if the predominant height of buildings in the LLCA or RCA is generally higher. This is to prevent overshadowing and overlooking.
- New built form should emphasise the historic and rural character of the Plan Area and complement existing buildings.
- Future development should include a mix of uses relevant to the needs of the community, utilising opportunities to convert existing unused buildings within the Plan Area (see Design Code 10 for more information on this).



Example of a strong rhythmic typology where any new development should respect the characteristics of the existing built form



Example in Lower Wyche of where a newer property fails to respond the scale, form, ridgeline, roof pitch and window proportions of the older property adjacent



## Character Area Specific Design Principles

LLCA01, LLCA06, LLCA07, and LLCA08

- i. Development in these areas should be related to agricultural operations or related enterprises, and any conversions should respect the agricultural character of existing buildings.

Character Area	Building typology	Building heights
LLCA01 Three Counties Showground	Agricultural buildings	-
LLCA02 New Pool and Watercourse	Detached in large plots	Max. 3 storeys
LLCA03 Malvern Common	-	-
LLCA04 Malvern Hills	-	-
LLCA05 Worcestershire Golf Club and Woodland	Detached/ Semi-detached houses/ Bungalows/ Cottages/ Clubhouse	Max. 2 storeys
LLCA06 Semi-enclosed Pastoral	Agricultural buildings and farmhouses	Farmhouses Max. 2 storeys
LLCA07 Large Scale Open Agriculture	Agricultural buildings and farmhouses	Farmhouses Max. 2 storeys
LLCA08 Mere Brook and LNR	Agricultural buildings and farmhouses	Farmhouses Max. 2 storeys
LLCA09 Pasture, Woodland and Gardens	Detached in large plots	Max 2.5 storeys
LLCA10 Upper Welland Green Corridor	-	-
RCA01 Assarts	Semi-detached cottages and detached houses set in generous plots	Max. 2 storeys

Table 1 Building Typology Parameters

RCA06 Upper and Lower Wyche

- i. Roofline of new buildings should be lower than existing rooflines of adjacent properties.

Character Area	Building typology	Building heights
RCA02 Central Wells	Large detached houses in large plots along Hanley Road, The Moorlands, Wood Farm Road and Oaklands/Semi-detached and terraced along Green Lane and Rothwell Road.	Max. 2 storeys, limited opportunities for 3 storeys in right location
RCA03 Fruitlands	Detached houses and bungalows	Max. 2 storeys
RCA04 Peachfield Road	Large detached houses and bungalows	Max. 2 storeys
RCA05 St Wulstan's	Large detached houses and bungalows	Max. 2 storeys
RCA06 Upper and Lower Wyche	Semi-detached and terraced cottages	Max 2 storeys, limited opportunities for 3 storeys along lower slopes
RCA07 Upper Welland	Mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced houses	Max. 2 storeys
RCA08 Wells Road	Detached in upper Wells Road/ Semi-detached in central Wells Road/Semi-detached and terraced in lower Wells Road and along Kings Road	Detached Max. 3 storeys/ Semi-detached and terraced Max. 2.5 storeys

## Design Code 04

### Architectural details and materials



Distinctive property on Holywell Road, constructed of Malvern Stone with dark red brick details and decorative bargeboards

#### Area-wide Design Principles

- Development should use similar design language, materials and detailing as other buildings within the character area within which it sits, to integrate with the surrounding area.
- Listed buildings and structures, and their setting, should be preserved and enhanced. Designated and non-designated heritage assets should also be a consideration in the siting and design of new buildings.
- New development proposals should reflect the typical roof forms for that character area and where appropriate, a high degree of articulation can reduce the mass of roofs, which minimises the visual impact of roofs when viewed from higher elevations.
- Innovative and creative material and design suggestions in new buildings and restorations should always reflect local character in their form, scale and massing.
- The use of inappropriate replacements, such as replacing timber sash windows with uPVC, should be resisted in existing buildings, and extensions should



Example of roof articulation through dormers and L shaped roof profile (Chase Road)



Example of large single plane roof with skylights that could be highly visible from higher elevations (Cambridge Close)





Modern development at Hillside Close that reflects detailing of proportions of its character area, but uses an inappropriate cream render in a highly visible location (RCA06 Upper and Lower Wyche)



Farmstead conversion does not reflect traditional form or materials, using curved roofs in reflective material and timber boarding (LLCA08 Mere Brook and LNR)



Example of extensions (right and left) to an historic house that do not match the pitch or material of the original roof, use windows of a different proportion and materials that copy, rather than complement, the original building (RCA06 Upper and Lower Wyche)

respond to the proportions of windows and doors, and use materials sensitive to the style, of the original building.

- f. Extensions within the Plan Area should be appropriate in terms of mass and scale, and should be subservient to the host building (not exceeding its height or depth). Rooflines should also be subservient and should either tie into the existing roof plane or match in terms of angle of pitch/roof style.
- g. Innovative and creative material and design suggestions in extensions that complement the host building may be appropriate, but should always reflect local character in their form, scale and massing.
- h. Conversions of existing buildings, or construction of new buildings within the setting of existing buildings, should reflect the form, scale and massing of the original building(s) and should utilise materials that reflect those found in the character area within which it sits.
- i. Given the lack of availability of Malvern Stone, new developments should aim to use alternatives that have similar properties, such as Forest of Dean stone or Herefordshire stones. Samples should be brought to site to test their appropriateness in the local context. Stones that do not have similar properties, like Cotswold stone, should be avoided.
- j. New developments should follow guidance set out in the following Malvern Hills AONB Guidance<sup>36</sup>:
  - Renewable Energy Technologies (Small Scale)
  - Guidance on how Development can Respect Landscape in Views
  - Landscape Strategy and Guidelines
  - Guidance on Building Design
  - Guidance on Selection and Use of Colour in Development
  - Guidance on Lighting
 and the Conservation Area Appraisal<sup>37</sup>.
- k. New developments should also refer to Design Codes 05 and 09 for guidance on detailing and materials in relation to selection and use of colour and preserving and enhancing views.

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/managing-the-aonb/guidance-documents/>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.malvernhills.gov.uk/planning/heritage/conservation-area-appraisals>



## Examples in the Plan Area



New build property in Upper Welland utilises chimney details, stock red brick, subservient scale and subtle timber detailing to complement a neighbouring property



Examples of poor uPVC replacement windows (Upper and Lower Wyche)



Example of quality timber double-glazed replacement windows (Upper Welland)



Houses on Homestead Close do not reflect local character, form or style, with black tudor style boarding, dark red brick and an artificially curved street layout.



Traditional terraced houses in Assarts with a high degree of articulation



Modern terraced houses in Assarts with little articulation and detailing



## Character Area Specific Design Principles

Table 2 sets out the Architectural Details and Material Parameters for each character area in the Plan Area. Additional principles are listed below:

### LLCA01 Three Counties Showground

- k. New development should be agricultural in its style and character, and should utilise characteristic materials such as red brick, clay tile and black weatherboarding.

### RCA01 Assarts

- i. Future development should consider red brick two storey cottages with slate roofs, stone sills and brick heads to maintain the character within the Conservation Area.
- j. Stepped roof lines should be considered for the new developments at the western end of Assarts Road to maintain this strong feature.

### RCA03 Fruitlands

- k. New developments should maintain the uniform housing style within this character area. Inclusion of bargeboards and rosemary tiles could be considered.

### RCA05 St Wulstan's

- l. New developments could consider decorative timber on the front elevations.

### RCA06 Upper and Lower Wyche

- m. Properties in this character area vary in type, size and design. Fenestration could include ground floor bay windows and small dormer pediment windows.

### RCA08 Wells Road

- n. New developments should be constructed of traditional material such as Malvern stone (or equivalents) with brick and corner stone detailing.



New build off Oaklands uses bright white render and Cotswold stone details, neither of which are characteristic for its location (see red brick houses in background)

Table 2 Architectural details and material parameters

Character Area	Architectural Details	Materials
LLCA01 Three Counties Showground	Casement windows, gable details, barn doors, brick arches, entrance porches	Red brick, slate and clay tile roofs, chimney stacks and black weather-boarding
LLCA02 New Pool and Watercourse	Sash and casement windows, brick and stone window details, chimney stacks	Red brick, render, clay tile roofs
LLCA03 Malvern Common	Any new development should reflect the character of adjacent character areas	
LLCA04 Malvern Hills	Any new development should reflect the character of adjacent character areas	
LLCA05 Worcestershire Golf Club and Woodland	Casement windows, entrance porches, clay tile sills, chimney stacks	Red brick and render, slate and concrete tile roofs
LLCA06 Semi-enclosed Pastoral	Any new development should reflect the character of adjacent character areas	
LLCA07 Large Scale Open Agriculture	Pitched roofs, casement and sash windows, gable details, barn doors, brick arches	Red brick, slate and clay tile roofs
LLCA08 Mere Brook and LNR	Pitched roofs, casement and sash windows, gable details, barn doors, brick arches	Red brick, slate and clay tile roofs
LLCA09 Pasture, Woodland and Gardens	Any new development should reflect the character of adjacent character areas	
LLCA10 Upper Welland Green Corridor	-	-
RCA01 Assarts	Bay windows, pediment style dormer windows, entrance porches and chimney stacks	Red brick, slate roofs, stone or dressed sills
RCA02 Central Wells	Bay windows, pediment style dormer windows, entrance porches, chimney stacks	Red brick, painted render slate roofs, stone or dressed sills

Character Area	Architectural Details	Materials
RCA03 Fruitlands	Casement windows, integral garages, entrance porches	Red brick and concrete tile roofs
RCA04 Peachfield Road	Bay windows, Sash windows, entrance porches, chimney stacks	Render with brick and stone detailing, slate or clay roof tiles
RCA05 St Wulstan's	Bay windows, pediment style dormer windows, entrance porches, chimney stacks	Red brick with rendered panels/ infill, corner detailing, clay or concrete tile roofs
RCA06 Upper and Lower Wyche	Sash windows, casement windows, dormer windows, chimney stacks, decorative bargeboards	Malvern stone (or equivalent), red brick (including painted brick), render, slate roofs, quoin or dressed sones
RCA07 Upper Welland	Sash and casement windows, stone and brick banding and sills, including painted stone	Red brick and white render, slate roofs
RCA08 Wells Road	Sash windows, 'Y' tracery windows, stone and brick sills and window details, chimney stacks, quoins, decorative bargeboards, hood moulds, segmental arches and other decorative elements	Malvern stone (or equivalent) red brick, render



# Design Code 05

## Selection and use of colour

**Developed palette**

**How to read this palette**

Identify the relevant material within the groups on the left hand side of the palette. These groups contain horizontal rows of eight colours each. It is from one of these that you will select your colour scheme.

Select one colour from the first set of three columns (labelled INTEGRATION A, B, C) within your chosen group. These colours are used to integrate prominent elevations into the landscape. Use for main walls. Integration colours can also be used for roofing if this is a prominent feature of your design.

Read across to the right on the same row. The next two colours are a neutral grey and a tinted (coloured) grey. Choose a grey to create a transition in your building frontage: e.g. between an original building and a contemporary extension, if this is needed. The neutral grey has a close tonal relationship with the selected integration colour. If you cannot find your preferred building material in the precise integration colour you have selected then use the totality of the neutral grey to help choose another colour of the same tone.

Select one colour from the second set of three columns. These are accent colours, used for details such as windows and doors etc. They are paired with the integration colours A-A, B-B, C-C. These pairings are recommended, however another accent colour from within the building material group may be preferred. These colours tend to be either lighter or more intense than the integration colours, and should be used sparingly.

	INTEGRATION			NEUTRAL TINT		CONTRAST ACCENT		
RENDER, MASONRY PAINT	A	B	C			A	B	C
	S2010-1206	S3000-1204	S2000-1306	S2000-N	S2000-T	S3000-1304	S2000-1307	S2000-1308
	S3010-1207	S2020-1408	S3020-1	S3000-N	S3000-T	S2020-R240	S2010-1407	S2500-1
	S4000-1308	S4000-1309	S4000-1307	S4000-N	S4000-T	S3000-R400	S2000-1307	S3000-1309
BRICK, STONE	S2000-1504	S4000-1304	S4000-1304	S4000-N	S4000-T	S3000-R300	S3000-1307	S2000-1504
	S3010-1504	S3000-1204	S3000-1504	S3000-N	S3000-T	S3000-1504	S2000-1207	S4000-1309
TIMBER, FIBRE CEMENT	S3000-1708	S3000-1708	S3000-1708	S3000-N	S3000-T	S3000-1708	S3000-1708	S3000-1708
	S3000-1708	S3000-1708	S3000-1708	S3000-N	S3000-T	S3000-1708	S3000-1708	S3000-1708
METAL SHEET, SLATE	S2000-1508	S2000-1508	S2000-1508	S2000-N	S2000-T	S2000-1508	S2000-1508	S2000-1508
	S2000-1508	S2000-1508	S2000-1508	S2000-N	S2000-T	S2000-1508	S2000-1508	S2000-1508

MALVERN HILLS AONB GUIDANCE ON THE SELECTION AND USE OF COLOUR IN DEVELOPMENTS

HIGH HILLS AND SLOPES AND UNENCLOSED COMMONS

Extract from AONB Guidance on the Selection and Use of Colour in Developments<sup>37</sup>

### Area-wide Design Principles

The AONB Guidance on the Selection and Use of Colour in Developments<sup>38</sup> sets out guidance aimed at integrating new buildings into the landscape. As the AONB covers the whole Plan Area, this guidance applies to all new development.

The guidance identifies three character areas within the Plan Area, which determine the 'colour palettes' for these areas. These are: Enclosed Commons, Unenclosed Commons and High Hills and Slopes.

Therefore, in terms of the use of colour in new development these character areas should be applied and the guidance followed, in addition to the area-wide design principles set out below.

- New development should respond to colour palette of both adjacent buildings and buildings within the wider character area. For example, just because a development site sits next to a white rendered house, this may not be an appropriate colour choice if the majority of buildings within the character area are composed of red brick or Malvern stone.
- The use of bright white render should be avoided on the slopes of the Hills, as it acts as a detractor in views from the east.



Examples of colour palettes within the High Hills and Slopes and Enclosed Commons character areas

<sup>38</sup> [http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/guidance\\_on\\_colour\\_use\\_screen.pdf](http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/guidance_on_colour_use_screen.pdf) p.11

# Design Code 06

## Building line and boundary treatments

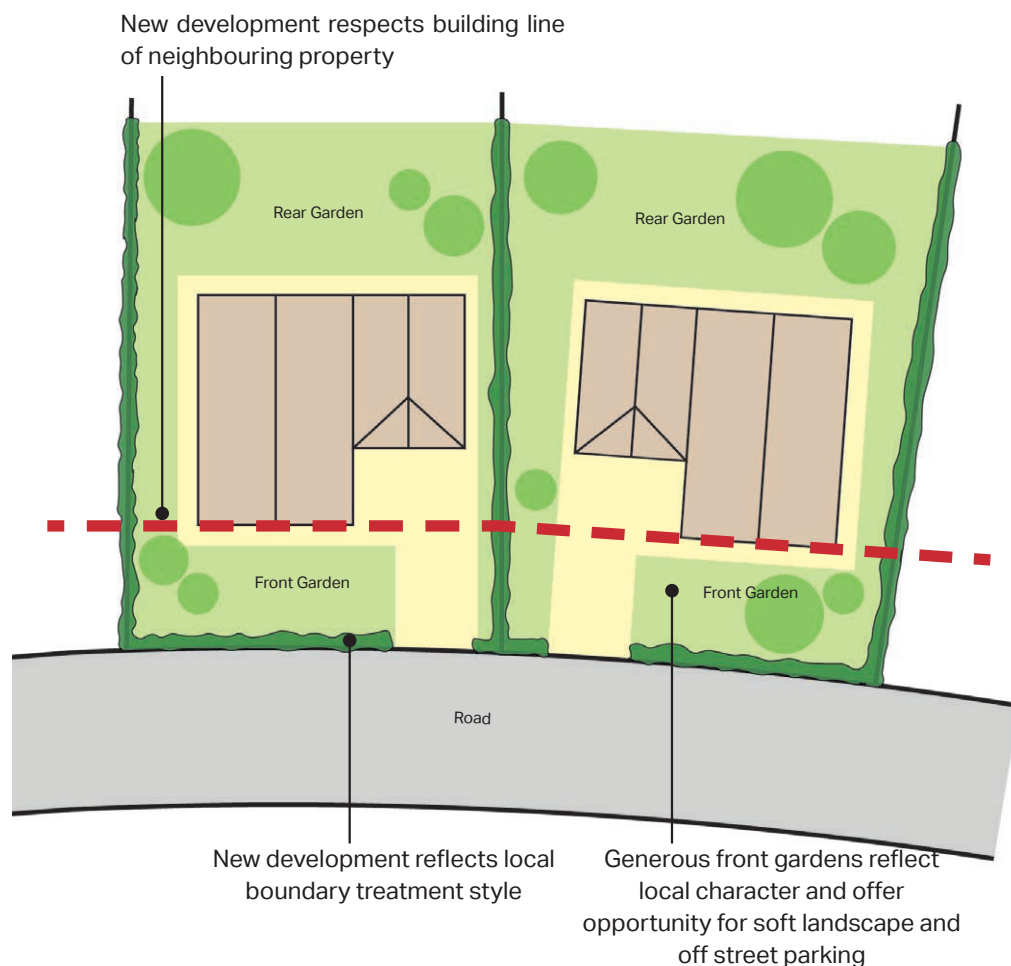


Illustration 3: Building line and boundary treatments

### Area-wide Design Principles

- New developments should be set back from the road with front gardens wherever possible. Front gardens should contribute to the streetscape and sense of spaciousness surrounding buildings.
- The materials proposed for new boundary features should respond to the character of boundary treatments in the area (see Table 3). Where Malvern stone cannot be sourced for boundary walls, alternatives such as Herefordshire stones and Forest of Dean stone could be used, or alternatively grey/purple/blue engineering bricks. Alternatively, hedges offer a suitable alternative to stone walls.
- Boundary treatments should reinforce the continuity of the building line along a street (e.g. they should be positioned to tie in with adjacent properties).
- The alignment of proposed development should reflect the building line of neighbouring buildings.
- New development should respect existing field boundaries and hedgerows, including more formal hedges in built up areas.



Large front gardens in front of houses in RCA05 St Wulstan's



Character Area	Boundary treatments
LLCA01 Three Counties Showground	Native hedgerows, post and wire fencing
LLCA02 New Pool and Watercourse	Native hedgerows
LLCA03 Malvern Common	Native hedgerows and mature trees
LLCA04 Malvern Hills	None
LLCA05 The Worcestershire Golf Club and Woodland	Low brick walls, low timber fencing, low gates, low hedges
LLCA06 Semi-enclosed Pastoral	Native hedgerows and mature trees
LLCA07 Large Scale Open Agriculture	Native hedgerows
LLCA08 Mere Brook and LNR	Native hedgerows and ditches
LLCA09 Pasture, Woodland and Gardens	Native hedgerows, non-native hedges and mature trees
LLCA10 Upper Welland Green Corridor	Native hedgerows and mature trees
RCA01 Assarts	Mature tree planting, hedges and low brick walls.
RCA02 Central Wells	Malvern stone walling with 'cock and hen' coping, low brick walls and non-native hedges.
RCA03 Fruitlands	Open boundaries to front, close boarded fencing to rear, brick walls to side boundaries fronting the street
RCA04 Peachfield Road	Malvern stone walling, native and non-native hedgerows and low brick walling.
RCA05 St Wulstan's	Low brick walls, picket fencing, hedging or open front boundaries.
RCA06 Upper and Lower Wyche	Malvern stone walls, low brick walls and native and non-native hedgerows.
RCA07 Upper Welland	Non-native hedges and low brick walls
RCA08 Wells Road	Non-native hedges and Malvern stone walls

Table 3 Building Line and Boundary Treatment Parameters

### Character Area Specific Design Principles

#### LLCA02 New Pool and Watercourse

- g. New development along Peachfield Road should respect the straight building line that exists as a result of the straight boundary line of the Common.

#### RCA03 Fruitlands

- h. New developments should be set back from the road with front gardens without any boundary treatment to maintain the open character.

#### RCA06 Upper and Lower Wyche

- i. New developments should be provided with shallow frontages to retain the strong sense of enclosure.



Malvern stone wall with regular coping in Wells Road

# Design Code 07

## Parking and utilities

### Area-wide Design Principles

- a. On street parking causes congestion and road safety issues in many areas. New development should provide dedicated on-plot parking based upon site assessment and location and, when developed, to the minimum standards set out by the Local Planning Authority. Parking should be provided either between plots, or as a rear courtyard. Parking directly in front of houses should be avoided. Parking parameters for character areas are shown in Table 4.
- b. Parking should be sensitively integrated into new developments by planting hedgerows and trees to soften its impact.
- c. Where septic tanks, treatment plants and fuel tanks have to be provided, these should be well-screened by vegetation and sensitively designed. Where possible these should be positioned in rear gardens to maintain the quality of the streetscape.

Character Area	Car Parking
RCA01 Assarts	on-plot
RCA02 Central Wells	on-plot
RCA03 Fruitlands	on-plot
RCA04 Peachfield Road	on-plot
RCA05 St Wulstan's	on-plot and garages
RCA06 Upper and Lower Wyche	on-street where on-plot not possible
RCA07 Upper Welland	on-plot
RCA08 Wells Road	on-plot

Table 4 Parking parameters

- d. Provision for charging of electric vehicles should be made in all new developments.
- e. Cycle parking should be provided in all new developments to make cycling a convenient option for residents.
- f. Cycle stores and bin stores should be integral to the built form, rather than provided in separate buildings/structures.
- g. There is street lighting in built up areas of the Plan Area, but outside of these areas street lighting is limited, which enhances its rural character. Therefore new developments should only use street lighting where absolutely necessary for road safety. Other light pollution, such as security lighting and sky lights erode dark night skies and should be resisted. The AONB's Guidance on Lighting should also be followed<sup>39</sup>.

### Character Area Specific Design Principles

#### LLCA01 Three Counties Showground

- g. Temporary parking areas should not disturb the surface of the ground to an extent that the visual impact of temporary parking creates a permanent change in the landscape (e.g. grasscrete).

#### LLCA03 Malvern Common

- g. The informal nature and surfacing of car parking at the Common should be preserved to ensure that car parking does not visually intrude upon the Common's character and views. Measures to deal with pressure from ad hoc parking should be low key and of a rural aesthetic (e.g. short timber bollards or low grass bunding).

#### LLCA04 Malvern Hills

- g. Pressure to extend existing car parks into vegetated areas should be resisted, and alternative methods of parking control used (such as limiting duration of parking stays).

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/managing-the-aonb/guidance-documents/>



# Design Code 08

## Footpaths and Rights of Way

### Area-wide Design Principles

- a. New development should provide new connections to existing public rights of way and cycle routes, to enhance the existing network.
- b. New development which looks to extinguish or divert Rights of Way should be resisted.
- c. Opportunities for new walking and cycling routes should be explored to reduce reliance on cars and other motorised vehicles.
- d. Open access, such as at Malvern Common and Malvern Hills should be preserved.
- e. Erosion of land adjacent to footpaths and bridleways should be dealt with in a low key way that reflects the rural character of the Plan Area (e.g. use of gravel, rather than tarmac, and low timber bollards).



The Worcestershire Beacon, Malvern Hills

### Character Area Specific Design Principles

#### LLCA02 New Pool and Watercourse

- f. New development should preserve and enhance existing Public Rights of Way, including ancient routes like the salt route.

#### LLCA04 Malvern Hills

- g. Access to disused quarry should be maintained as it provides a link to the history of the Hills and ensures that the natural beauty of the vegetation in these places continues to be valued by local people and visitors.

#### LLCA05 The Worcestershire Golf Club and Woodland

- h. Any attempts to restrict access to the area for the general public should be resisted.



Footpath marker along Holywell Road

# Design Code 09

## Preserving and enhancing views, landmarks and gateways

### Area-wide Design Principles

- a. The position of new development should be carefully considered in relation to important/exceptional views identified within the CAA<sup>40</sup> and in Figure 12 of the LSCA<sup>41</sup>.
- b. Whilst painted brick and white render are not a new phenomenon in Malvern Wells, they can act as detractors in views, on the Hills and the plain, and therefore the visual impact of new buildings with white finishes must be carefully considered, especially where the building would be prominently located. If the visual impact of the finish would cause harm to important or exceptional views, other materials should be considered. *Refer to Design Code 05 - Selection and use of colour.*
- c. New development should not break the ridgeline of the Hills when viewed from the east, else this would undermine the historic prominence of Upper Wyche on the ridge of the Hills.

Placeholder for image of Holywell Chapel

Holywell Chapel is a modern building with long glazed elevations

- d. New development should respect the character of 'buildings between trees', as this is a key element of views within the Plan Area.
- e. The use of large glass panes and skylights/velux in new developments should be carefully considered if the building would be prominent in important/exceptional views. This is to minimise reflection and light spill, which are both detractors in views, and to prevent light spill harming the characteristic dark night skies of the Plan Area.
- f. New developments should reduce the amount of light spill by minimising glass panes/windows/doors, using downward directional lights/bollards where lighting is necessary for safety. Security/floodlights should not be used.
- g. New developments on the plain should ensure that they do not present long rooflines to the hills, as this is a visual detractor. An alternative is to present gable ends to the Hills, as this presents a less dominant roofscape.
- h. New development should follow the guidelines on views and building design/siting/materiality set out in the following AONB documents<sup>42</sup>:
  - Guidance on Identifying and Grading Views and Viewpoints
  - Guidance on how Development can Respect Landscape in Views
  - Landscape Strategy and Guidelines
  - Guidance on Building Design

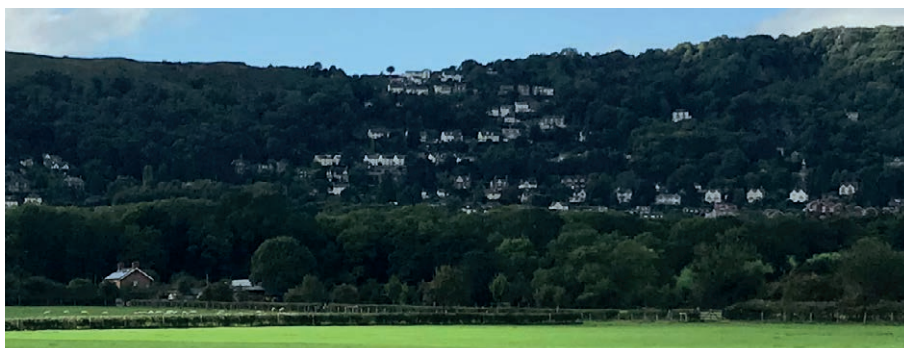
<sup>40</sup> <https://www.malvern hills.gov.uk/planning/heritage/conservation-area-appraisals>

<sup>41</sup> <https://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/myparish/ParishPlans.aspx?ParishID=51&PostCode=WR144PR&Prop=0&partner=mhc&MarriedTo=0>

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.malvern hillsaonb.org.uk/managing-the-aonb/guidance-documents/>



- i. The use of new planting as 'screening' to avoid following the design principles set out in the AONB guidance above, the LSCA, the RCA and this document is unacceptable. Likewise, camouflaging roofs through material/colour/green roof, but failing to consider the colour of elevations is unacceptable, as elevations are just as visible for the Hills as roofs. Good design is about integration, not camouflage.
- j. The setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets should be a key consideration in the design and siting of new development.
- k. Views to key landmarks within and around the Plan Area should be retained through careful siting of new development.
- l. The setting of key landmarks, such as the springs, spouts and wells associated with the heritage of Malvern water, should be a material consideration in all new development. Where new development is sited within the setting of a key landmark, provision must be made for the enhancement of its setting (such as increasing the amount of open space around it or increasing its distance from buildings). Provision of interpretation (information panels/signs about the asset's history) will also be expected.
- m. Approaches and gateways into the built up area of Malvern Wells, as identified in Section 3.16 of the LSCA<sup>43</sup>, should be retained and enhanced.



Properties breaking the skyline in Upper Wyche

<sup>43</sup> <https://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/myparish/ParishPlans.aspx?ParishID=51&PostCode=WR144PR&Prop=0&partner=mhc&MarriedTo=0>

## Character Area Specific Design Principles

### LLCA01 Three Counties Showground

- n. Avoid use of expansive flat roofs and reflective material, which have a negative visual impact in views from the Hills. Also consider the colour of elevations (see *design principle 09h*).

### LLCA02 New Pool and Watercourse

- o. New development that blocks views of New Pool from the Hills should be resisted, given the waterbody's historic importance.

### LLCA03 Malvern Common

- p. The open character and wide ranging views of and across the Common should be preserved.

### LLCA04 Malvern Hills

- q. The extensive views from the upper and mid slopes of the Hills should be preserved, and development which interrupts these views should be resisted.
- r. Views of the Malvern Hills from the plain to the east should be preserved and development which interrupts these views should be resisted.



Traditional buildings in LLCA01 Three Counties Showground present short rooflines and gable ends to the Hills

LLCA05 The Worcestershire Golf Club and Woodland

- s. Development that limits views from the Golf Club out to the surrounding countryside and Hills should be resisted.

RCA01 Assarts

- t. Existing views to the Hills from Assarts Lane Playing Field should be retained.

RCA02 Central Wells

- u. Channeled views of the Hills to the west and plain to the east along Hanley Road should be preserved and enhanced.

RCA03 Fruitlands

- v. The views of the Malvern Hills from within this character area provide a sense of place, and therefore these views should be preserved.

RCA04 Peachfield Road

- w. Views across the Common are an essential component of this character and therefore development on the northern side of Peachfield Road, which would restrict these views, should be resisted.

RCA06 Upper and Lower Wyche

- x. The open space at the junction of Old Wyche Road and Lower Wyche Road provides views east across the plain, and therefore any development on this open space should be resisted.
- y. There are many gaps between buildings along Old Wyche Road, Wyche Road, Gordon Terrace and Westminster Road that provide extensive views to the east and development that closes these gaps should be resisted.

RCA07 Upper Welland

- z. Opportunities for new tree planting to create a gateway to the built up area of Malvern Wells should be explored.

RCA08 Wells Road

- aa. Key landmarks along Wells Road, such as Jubilee Fountain and the War Memorial should be preserved and their setting enhanced.



View east along Hanley Road in RCA02 Central Wells



# Design Code 10

## Sustainability and innovation

### Area-wide Design Principles

- New development should aim to achieve high levels of sustainability in terms of energy efficiency and energy generation.
- Modern methods of construction should be explored as an option for new development, in order to achieve higher standards of energy efficiency and to reduce carbon generation in the building process.
- Consideration should be given to how any proposed energy infrastructure might affect local character or visual amenity - such as solar panels causing reflections in views from the Hills, which is a detractor.
- Consideration should be given to how people will live and work in the future and new developments should reflect this (e.g. provision of live/work units, houses that incorporate space to work from home, multi-generational families).
- Sustainable use of water should be demonstrated in all new developments, including reuse of grey water and management of wastewater/runoff on site through SuDS approaches that also benefit biodiversity and GI.
- New residential properties should consider the lifetime of future occupants to enable people to continue to live in their home as their circumstances change. This includes providing buggy/pram, cycle and wheelchair storage as an integral part of the building's design (not as a timber shelters/sheds in gardens or communal parking areas). It also means designing homes that can be accessed by those with disabilities (or could be sensitively adapted to provide such access in the future).
- AONB Guidance on the use of Renewable Energy Technologies<sup>44</sup> should be followed.

Note: also see Design Code 07 for parking and cycling provision.



<sup>44</sup> <https://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/managing-the-aonb/guidance-documents/>





Malvern Common



## 5. Deliverability

### 5.1 Delivery Agents

The Design Code will be a valuable tool for securing context-driven, high quality development in the Malvern Wells Plan Area. It will be used in different ways by different actors in the planning and development process, as summarised in the table below:

Actor	How they will use the Design Code
Applicants, developers and landowners	<p>As a guide to the community and Local Planning Authority expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty – they will be expected to follow the codes as planning consent is sought.</p> <p>Where planning applications require a Design and Access Statement, the Statement should explain how the Design Codes have been followed.</p>
Local Planning Authority	<p>As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications.</p> <p>The Design Code should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application discussions.</p>
Parish Council	As a guide when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the Design Codes are followed.
Community organisations	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

### 5.2 Deliverability

*The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 35) emphasises that a proportionate evidence base should inform plans. Based on a 'positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings' (see paragraph 15). Policies should be 'underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence. This should be adequate and proportionate, focused tightly on supporting and justifying the policies concerned, and take into account relevant market signals' (paragraph 31). Crucially planning policies 'should not undermine the deliverability of the plan' (paragraph 34).*

Neighbourhood Plans need to be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the corresponding Local Plan. Where new policy requirements are introduced (that carry costs to development) over and above Local Plan and national standards it is necessary to assess whether development will remain deliverable. The principles and codes set out in this document and within the Neighbourhood Plan's policies are aligned with national policy and non-statutory best practice on design.

The values and costs of construction between new developments and within new developments will vary based on location, situation, product type, design and finish; and the state of the market at the point of marketing the properties. The codes herein constitute place making principles and guidance to help interpret and apply the statutory policies within the Neighbourhood Plan. Good design is not an additional cost to development and good placemaking can result in uplifts in value.





Malvern Hills, looking south east from Summer Hill



## 6. Glossary

**AONB** (Area of Outstanding National Beauty) is a nationally important protected landscape.

**Arch** a curved opening.

**Awning windows** hinged on the top and open outward for the bottom.

**Balcony** a projecting gallery or walkway.

**Bargeboard** boards placed at the incline of a gable to hide the ends of the roof timbers, often decoratively treated.

**Bay** the vertical division of a building, often by windows or arches.

**Blue infrastructure** a network of water elements such as rivers, canals and ponds.

**Breeze block** light-weight building material made of concrete and ash.

**Building Line** the line formed by the frontages of buildings along a street.

**Built form** buildings and structures.

**Bungalow** typically a single-storey house.

**Casement window** a window with hinged panes.

**Cladding** an exterior covering.

**Cock and hen coping** pieces of rough-hewn stone placed at right angles on the top of stone walling to improve weather resistance.

**Column** upright structural member, usually circular in section.

**Concrete** a mixture of cement and aggregate that dries very hard, used as a building material.

**Coping stones** flat stone that forms part of a coping used to cap free-standing walls.

**Cotswold stone** yellow Oolitic limestone, quarried from the hillsides surrounding the south midlands, in the area known as the 'Cotswolds'.

**Decorative bargeboards** an ornamental board that conceals roof timber.

**Detached** a stand-alone house not joined to anything else.

**Dormer Window** breaking above the eaves at wall head or set in the roof.

**Dry Stone Walling** masonry made without mortar.

**Eaves** the part of a roof that projects beyond the wall.

**Edge** the boundary between two areas, these can be natural topographical features or man-made features.

**Enclosure** the use of buildings and structures to create a sense of defined space.

**Edwardian** pertaining to the reign of King Edward, 1901 – 1910 (or up to 1918).

**Elevation** any of the vertical faces of a building, inside or out.

**Façade** an exterior face of a building.

**Fenestration** the windows of a property.

**Framing** a structural skeleton in timber or metal.

**French Doors or Windows** full length casement windows opening like doors onto a balcony or terrace.

**Gable** the flat pointed end of a wall of a pitched roof.

**Georgian** English architectural style of c. 1700-1840.

**GI (Green Infrastructure)** A network of multi-functional green space capable of delivering a range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

**Green corridors** an area of linear habitats connecting wildlife populations.

**Hipped Roof** a roof that is pitched at the ends as well as the sides.

**Hood mould** external moulded projection from a wall.

**Infill** material used to fill spaces between the components of a framework.

**Gateway** the design of a building, site or landscape to symbolise an entrance or arrival to a specific location.

**Historic Environment Record** a record held by the local authority of known archaeological sites, historic buildings, and designed landscapes.

**Land Cover** the surface cover of the land usually expressed in terms of vegetation cover or lack of it. Related to but not the same as land use.

**Landscape** an area, as perceived by people, the character of which is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.

**Landscape Character** a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.

**Landscape Character Areas** are the unique geographical areas of a particular landscape type, each with its own individual character and identity.

**Land Use** what land is used for, based on broad categories of functional land cover, such as urban and industrial use and the different types of agriculture and forestry.

**Lintel** the beam over an opening.

**Listed Building** a listed building is one that has been placed on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. There are three categories of listed buildings in the United Kingdom:

*Grade I* buildings, which are of exceptional interest and make up 2.5% of all listed buildings in England.

*Grade II\** buildings, which are particularly important buildings of more than special interest and make up 5.5% of all listed buildings in England.

*Grade II* buildings, which are of special interest and make up 92% of all listed buildings in England.

**Local Planning Authority** is the local government body responsible for planning in a particular area.

**Malvern stone** local building material to Malvern Wells, composed of mostly igneous and metamorphic rocks from the late precambrian era.

**Mansard** four-pitch roof with a steep lower pitch and a shallower upper pitch on each side.

**Masonry** stone or brick construction.

**Medieval** the period in European history spanning c.1000–c.1500.

**Modernist** the architectural style current from c.1920 to the late 20th century.

**Mortar** a paste made of lime or cement, used in between blocks or bricks.

**Moulding** a strip with a shaped or decorated surface.

**Moulded stucco** a fine plaster used in decoration and ornamentation.

**Mullion** upright member dividing the lights of a window.

**Panelling** a decorative wooden or plaster wall covering with areas defined by mouldings.

**Parapet** the edge of a wall, projecting above roof level.

**Pastoral landscape** rural land used for grazing of cattle or sheep.

**Pediment** classical form of corniced gable used at openings as well as a termination to roof structures.

**Pilasters** a rectangular column, often projecting from a wall.

**Pitch** the slope of a roof.

**Plinth** the base course of a building, the projecting base of a wall.



**Pointing** the treatment with mortar of exposed joints in masonry or brickwork.

**Porch** a partially enclosed space in front of a door.

**Porticos** a porch leading to the entrance of a building, typically supported by columns.

**Post** a vertical timber support.

**Precambrian** is the earliest part of Earth's history starting with the planet's creation approximately 4.6 billion years ago, to the beginning of the Cambrian period, about 541 million years ago.

**Quoins** stones larger than those of which a wall is composed, or a different shape, and forming the corners of walls or door and window openings.

**Remnant hay meadow** an area of grassland once used for hay or grazing of animals.

**Render** smooth coating of cement over masonry.

**Reveal** the inward plane of a door or window opening between the edge of the external wall and the window or door frame.

**Ridge** the top edge of a roof.

**Rosemary tiles** clay plain tiles, often textured or with a distinctive front end distortion.

**Rural** relating to, or characteristic of the countryside rather than the town.

**Sash Window** a window with vertically (or occasionally horizontally) sliding wooden frames holding the glass panes.

**Segmental arch heads** type of arch with a circular arc of less than 180 degrees, often used above doorways and windows.

**Semi-detached** is a house that is joined to another house on one side.

**Setting** the context or environment in which something sits.

**Setting of a heritage asset** the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a

setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

**Soffit** the underside of an architectural structure.

**Spring Line** Malvern's springs are concentrated along the fault line where water is forced to the surface. Although its elevation varies, the line is fairly consistent. As a result, the routes along and across the Hills, and the associated settlements, have been aligned / situated to take advantage of this, and this line of routes and properties can be seen running along the Hills<sup>44</sup>.

**SSSI** (Site of Special Scientific Interest) is a conservation designation denoting an area of interest to science due to the rare species of flora or fauna it contains.

**Storey** a level or floor of a building.

**String Course** a raised horizontal moulding that visually divides storeys.

**Surround** a frame or an architrave.

**Terrace** a row of houses joined together.

**Tranquility** a state of calm and quietude associated with a peace, considered to be a significant asset of landscape.

**Tree Preservation Order (TPO)** a Tree Preservation Order is an order made by a local planning authority in England to protect specific trees, groups of trees or woodland in the interests of amenity.

**Trellis work** interlacing strips of wood or metal forming a trellis

**Tudor** the period of English history from 1485 to 1603.

**Turret** a small tower, especially one starting above ground level.

**uPVC** (unplasticised polyvinyl chloride) low maintenance building material used for window and door frames.

**Verdant** green with vegetation.

<sup>45</sup> <https://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/myparish/ParishPlans.aspx?ParishID=51&PostCode=WR144PR&Prop=0&partner=mhc&MarriedTo=0> LSCA, 3.1.31, p.19

**Veranda** open shelter or gallery around a building with a lean-to roof carried on verticals of timber or iron.

**Vernacular** the way in which ordinary buildings were built in a place, making use of local styles, techniques and materials and responding to local economic and social conditions.

**Victorian** pertaining to the reign of Queen Victoria, 1837-1901.

**Views** can be seen from an observation point to an object (s) particularly a landscape or building.

**Villa** a country house or suburban house.

**Weatherboarding** form of wall cladding composed of overlapping horizontal boards on a timber framework.

**Y-tracery windows** are windows that are divided into sections in a Y shape by stone bars or ribs of moulding.

