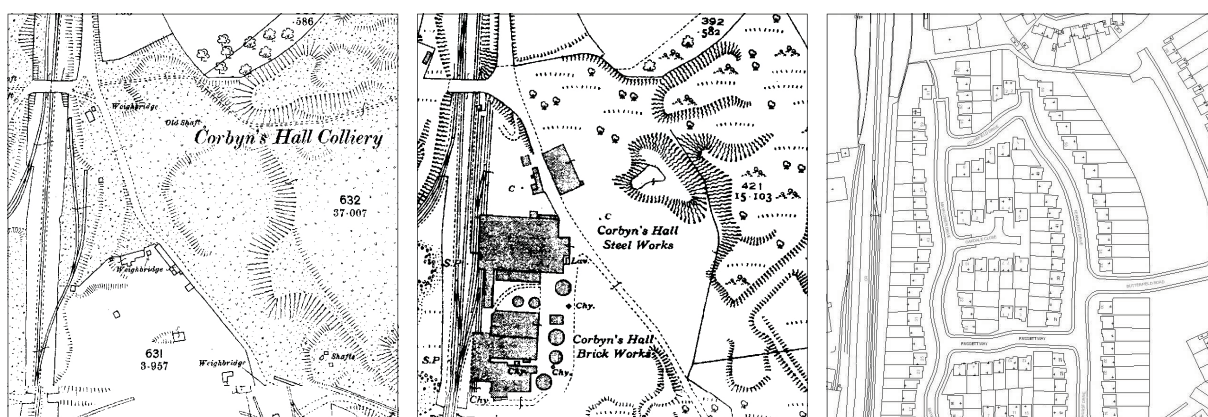


The Black Country

An Historic Landscape Characterisation

English Heritage Project Number 3638 Main

First Report
2009



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Black Country
Archaeology Service

Acknowledgements

This study has been funded by English Heritage as part of its national programme of Historic Landscape Characterisation. It was conducted by the Black Country Archaeology Service, based within Wolverhampton City Council, on behalf of the four Black Country local authorities.

The project commenced in 2004 with the appointment of Debbie Langley as Project Officer. Debbie compiled the database and undertook much of the early work on the Character Area profiles before her departure for Staffordshire County Council.

Paul Quigley succeeded Debbie in 2007 and has been responsible for the subsequent analysis of the data, for the completion of the Character Area Profiles, and for the compilation of the report. Mike Shaw, the Black Country Archaeologist, has acted as Project Manager throughout the life of the project.

We are particularly grateful to Graham Fairclough and Roger M Thomas of English Heritage who commissioned the project, and to Sue Whitehouse, Conservation Officer at Wolverhampton City Council, who provided conservation and policy advice.

Front Cover

A sequence of maps showing three phases of the same piece of landscape at Corbyn's Hall, Pensnett, in Dudley. Not untypical of the Black Country more generally, these can be characterised as (from the left) a phase of mineral extraction (1880), industry (1938) and housing (2000).

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*Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation

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The Black Country: An Historic Landscape Characterisation* Executive Summary



Anything more than a superficial glance at the modern Black Country reveals an intricate pattern of use and re-use of land, streets, buildings, and other structures. This complexity, a product of hundreds of years of recycling of physical resources to meet human demands, is easily misunderstood without the appropriate research tools.

This Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) aims to be a tool in understanding the landscape as it exists today, by placing it firmly in a context of the historical development of its constituent parts. The purpose of producing this understanding is to assist the sensitive management of the built environment in the future.

Section 1 introduces the reader to some of the more general features of the process of HLC, to the particular landscape of the Black Country, and to the way in which HLC has been applied in this case.

HLC aims to be an open, transparent process of representing the landscape, and **Section 2** lays out in some detail the way in which the record has been assembled. This includes a discussion of the sequence of maps and aerial photographs which have formed the basis of the data, together with the systems of classification used to distinguish different types of modern and past landscape.

Although a subsequent publication will present more detailed analysis of the database, Sections 3 and 4 of this report outline some ways in which the data can be interpreted. **Section 3** considers how the HLC record can be used to produce broad overviews of land use, periods of origin and surviving character. It also shows how past transformations of the area (such as the historic switch from 19th century mining to 20th century suburban residential streets) can be represented and examined by HLC data.

Section 4 analyses the data by using it to create more than 50 *Character Areas*—zones within each of which the landscape shares something in common. **Section 5** then goes on to profile the modern and historic environment within each of these Character Areas with a view to improving our understanding of the character and local distinctiveness of each location.

Following brief conclusions, a series of four **Appendices** provide the technical detail of the categories of landscape used within the data as well as a copy of the original project design.

The programme of Historic Landscape Characterisation in the Black Country is expected to continue until 2010. As mentioned above, a second report will use the data to provide a greater level of analysis of the Black Country landscape. Additionally, a number of reports have been prepared, and others proposed, to examine the data relating to particular areas or aspects of the landscape. Details of the outputs from the programme can be found at: www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/hlc.

*English Heritage Project Number 3638 MAIN.

1. Introduction

1.1 HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISATION

This study is part of a longer-term series of projects aimed at establishing a new information resource on the historic character of the English landscape. Historic Landscape Characterisation (abbreviated here to HLC), the approach which has been applied in order to create this resource, is a process which has been supported financially by English Heritage, and is based on a number of consistent principles*.

Perhaps most important of these is that the process considers every part of the landscape, creating a seamless record of the whole area under consideration. This feature of HLC distinguishes it from other processes for recording the historic landscape, such as the designation of heritage assets, which are necessarily selective. HLC is also value-free, at least in its initial phases. Put differently, HLC is a process which seeks to create a neutral description of the landscape, rather than to assign value to particular parts of it in order to support their protection over other parts.

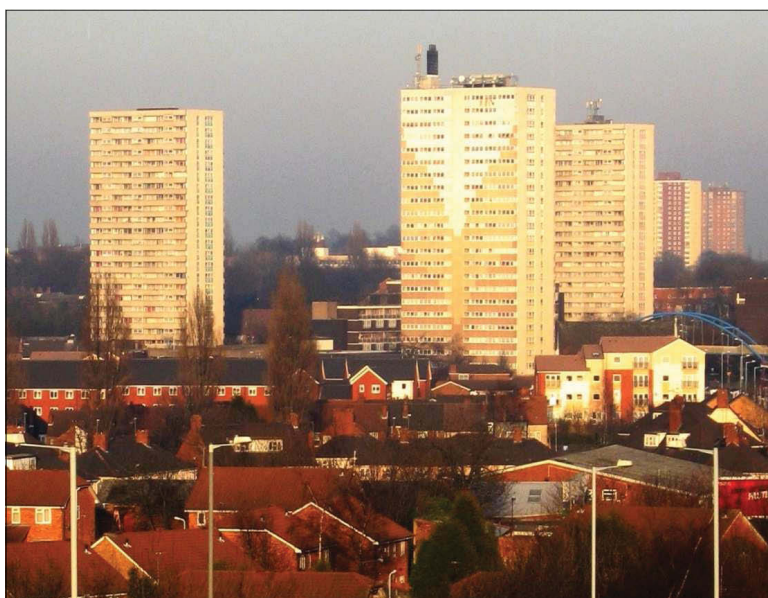
Despite this, value can be assigned in a later, more detailed phase of the use of HLC data. In this way, assessments of the value of buildings, sites or landscapes can be used with HLC data to inform impact assessments at various scales, or to measure sensitivity to development, for example.

*More information about the English Heritage programme of HLC, and links to many relevant documents (such as *Conservation Bulletin 47*, which is devoted to the topic of Characterisation) can be found at www.english-heritage.org.uk/characterisation.

**English Heritage Project Number 3638 MAIN.

In making a record of the landscape in this way, it is hoped that it will form an analytical framework which will support a better understanding of the way our local environment has developed: a framework which can, in subsequent stages of research, also be used to better assess the 'value' of all the surviving features of the historic environment.

The Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation** was one of the first to be undertaken in a heavily urbanised metropolitan area.



Two images of the Black Country: both part of the local landscape.

The relatively recent application of HLC to urban areas has meant that its use in the Black Country has necessarily involved some adaptation.

In particular, the Black Country HLC has had to face questions which may not have been confronted during the time the approach was developed and honed in generally rural environments. In this context, some have argued that the use of the term 'landscape', which perhaps creates mental images of scenic rural environments, is inappropriate in the Black Country. Instead, the terms 'townscape' or 'cityscape' have been offered as alternatives.

However, given the need to be consistent, and also that the Black Country is not entirely urban (despite the predominance of the built environment), the term landscape has been used in a generic sense to encompass all types of environment.

Indeed the *European Landscape Convention* (or ELC) supports this interpretation of the word. The ELC, put forward by the *Council of Europe* in 2000, defines landscape as 'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'. Furthermore, the Convention itself covers 'natural, rural, urban and peri-urban area... (and) concerns landscapes that might be considered outstanding as well as everyday or degraded landscapes'.

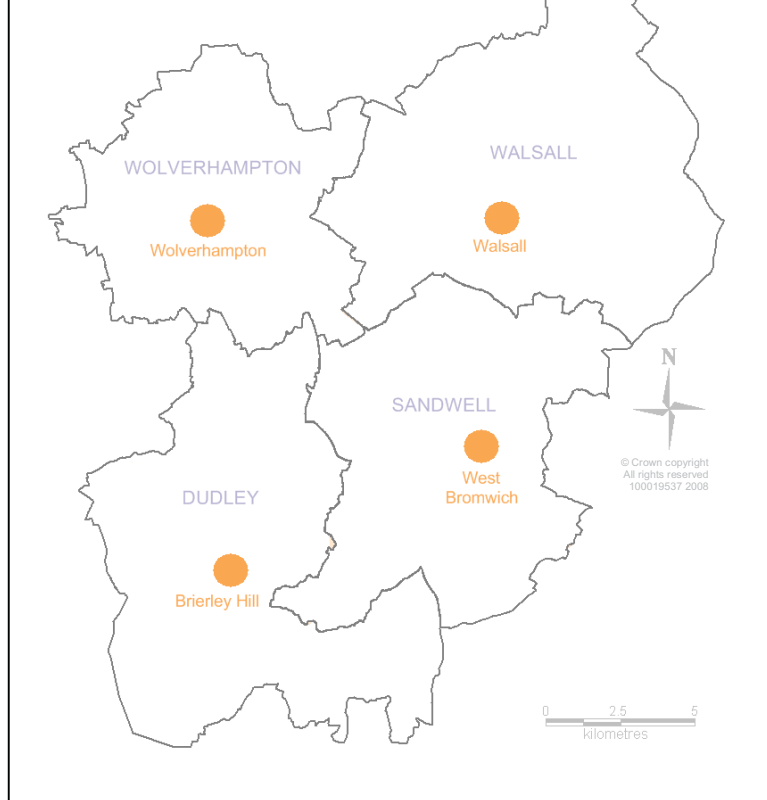
1.2 THE BLACK COUNTRY LANDSCAPE

Although the term 'Black Country' is often used mistakenly by journalists and others to describe Birmingham, or the West Midlands conurbation, the Black Country is in fact a distinct area to the west of Birmingham, roughly equal in size to it. Together,

Figure 1.1: The Black Country in the West Midlands Region



Figure 1.2: The Four Black Country Local Authorities



the Black Country and Birmingham comprise the West Midlands conurbation.

To the visitor, perhaps one of the immediately noticeable aspects of the area is its lack of a single large commercial hub at its centre, a feature which might be expected for an urban area of its size. Instead, the multiple centres of settlement set it apart from other urban centres such as its neighbour Birmingham.

In historic terms the Black Country as a distinguishable part of the region has been defined by its geology, perhaps more than other parts of the landscape of central England. More particularly, the presence of the South Staffordshire Coalfield at the centre of the area of what are now referred to as the four Black Country local authorities (Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton) is undoubtedly the most important feature in the creation of the unusual urban landscape we see today.

Indeed, although for the purposes of this study we have taken the term Black Country to be the same as the entire area within the boundaries of the four local authorities (Figure 1.2), it is worth acknowledging that, for many, the Black Country is only that area which lies immediately over the coalfield.

Whatever definition is used, the importance of the area covered by the study is perhaps illustrated by the fact that, in the 21st century, the network of industrial towns which coalesced to form the Black Country is home to a million people, and part of the largest centre of population in England outside London. As Figure 1.1 illustrates, it also lies immediately adjacent to Birmingham, the administrative centre of the West Midlands region.

1.3 CHARACTERISATION IN THE BLACK COUNTRY

Section 2 of this report outlines the procedure used to assemble the data on which the study has been based.



The former landscape of extraction which arguably defined the Black Country

However it is worth highlighting some of the characteristics of the HLC in the Black Country which distinguish it from similar previous studies in other areas.

As has been mentioned, current local government arrangements comprises four local authorities, i.e. three Metropolitan Boroughs and the city of Wolverhampton. These represent the only tier of local government, and so the Black Country is different to a two tier structure of county and districts which exists in many other areas where HLC has been carried out.

It follows that there are also four planning authorities, and each of the authorities has its own conservation functions. Sandwell and Dudley Councils have their own archaeology staff, while Walsall and Wolverhampton currently share an archaeology service.

The study differs from a small number of HLC studies in its use of geographical information systems (GIS), and it was also the first to use a module designed to input and manipulate HLC data within the ExeGesIS HBSMR system*. This has the advantage of giving the BCHLC a relatively close link to sets of other relevant data, in particular the Historic Environment Record for Walsall and Wolverhampton.

*ExeGesIS Spatial Data Management Ltd's Historic Building, Sites and Monuments Record (www.esdm.co.uk/hdsmr.asp)

2. The Methodology of Data Collection

2.1 SOURCES OF DATA

Our characterisation of the Black Country landscape is based on a desk-based examination of published sources, largely maps and aerial photographs, as summarised in Table 2.1.

The core of the analysis is based on a sequence of the Ordnance Survey's 1:2,500 maps (25 inches to approximately one mile) published from the 1880s until the 1930s. The importance of this series of maps to the HLC data is illustrated by the number of references to them in the HLC records. More than 9 out of 10 of the short descriptions written of each parcel of land refer to at least one of the four editions.

The coverage of the available digital versions of these four editions within the boundary of the Black Country is illustrated by Figure 2.1. Information available from the first two editions covers most of the Black Country with the exception of parts of southern Dudley. That from the later editions is also missing some coverage. In particular, the fourth edition, limited as it was by the outbreak of the Second World War, has the most partial coverage of all the four editions, especially in the northern half of the Black Country, i.e.

Wolverhampton and Walsall. Nevertheless, in general terms, this sequence of four maps forms the key set of building blocks for our characterisation.

In terms of information about the older periods of the landscape, little was available in historical maps before

Table 2.1: Summary of Maps and Aerial Photographs Used as Sources

Year of Publication (Survey)	Map / Photograph	Digital Coverage (within the area of the four local authorities)
1998 ¹	Dudley in 1300 by Hemmingway et. al.	See Figure 2.2
1775	William Yates' map	Staffordshire (See Figure 2.3)
1782-1799	Parish maps of Dudley etc. (see Table 2.2)	Various
1812-1838	Parish and other maps (see Table 2.3)	Various
(1814) ²	Ordnance Surveyor's drawing of Stourbridge	Between them, these four maps cover the area of the four local authorities, with the exception of the western edge of Dudley. In particular, the map of Wolverhampton covers most of the modern Black Country.
(1814) ²	Ordnance Surveyor's drawing of Bridgnorth	
(1816) ²	Ordnance Surveyor's drawing of Wolverhampton	
(1817) ²	Ordnance Surveyor's drawing of Sutton Coldfield	
1839-1852	Tithe maps (See Table 2.4)	Various. See Figure 2.4 for total coverage
1884-1890 ³	1:2,500 Ordnance Survey map: 1st Edition	See Figure 2.1
1902-1903 ³	1:2,500 Ordnance Survey map: 2nd Edition	See Figure 2.1
1914-1924 ³	1:2,500 Ordnance Survey map: 3rd Edition	See Figure 2.1
1937-1938 ³	1:2,500 Ordnance Survey map: 4th Edition	See Figure 2.1
2000	<i>Land-Line</i> electronic map data	Full
1999-2001	Aerial photography	Full

Notes:

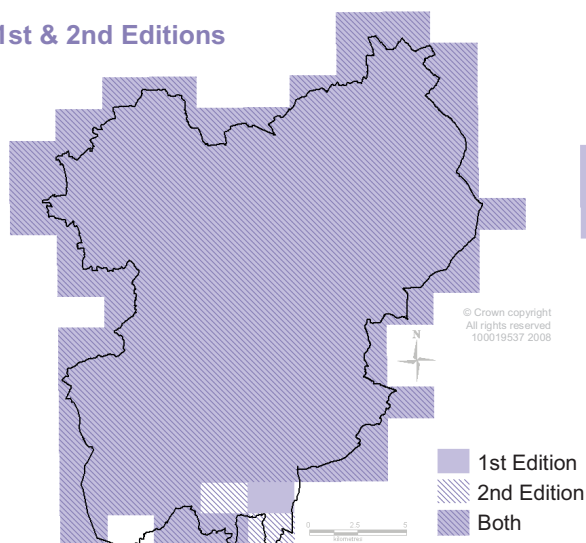
¹This is a reconstruction of the Medieval landscape.

²The Ordnance surveyors' drawings were drafted at a scale of 2 inches to 1 mile but were not published. Digital copies for the Black Country were acquired from the British Library.

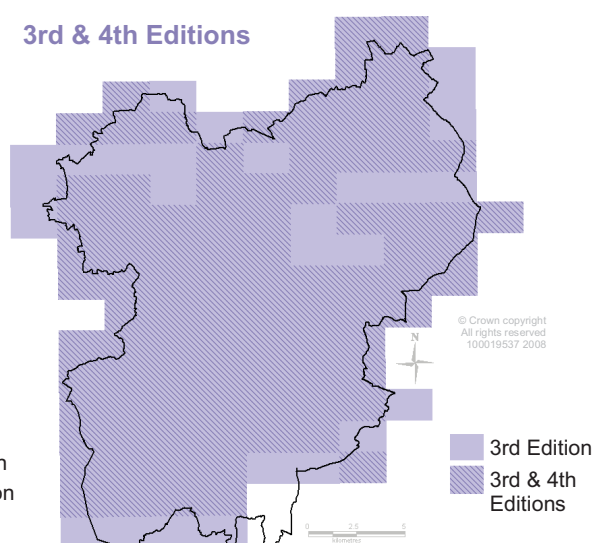
³These ranges are included as a guide: individual map tiles may have been published outside of these limits.

Figure 2.1: Coverage of the Ordnance Survey's 1:2,500 Maps of the Black Country

1st & 2nd Editions



3rd & 4th Editions



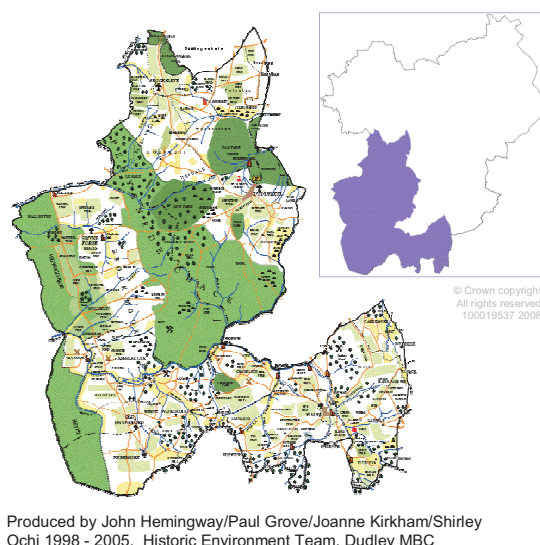
the late 18th century. Although not a contemporary survey, one valuable resource was the reconstructed medieval landscape mapped by Dudley MBC Historic Environment Team, illustrated in Figure 2.2. As might be expected, coverage of the map was restricted to the area of the modern local authority.

Among those sources with wider coverage, the oldest map used was Yates' survey of Staffordshire, published in 1775 at a scale of 1 inch to 1 mile. The south-eastern part of this map encompassed most of what is now the Black Country, shown in Figure 2.3. Other 18th century sources included parish and other local maps, the most valuable of which was perhaps for the Parish of Oldswinford in 1782. This was useful both because of its relatively wide scope, and also because it covered an area outside of Staffordshire (in modern Stourbridge, in the south-west of the Black Country) which was not generally covered by Yates' map of that county drawn in the previous decade.

For the purpose of recreating the early 19th century landscape, the most important source was the set of four unpublished surveyor's maps produced by the Ordnance Survey between 1814 and 1817 (listed in Table 2.1). In addition, several other maps from that period were used, in particular the 1822 map of Kingswinford Parish - useful as it provided information on the small part of the west of Dudley which was not covered by the 1814-1817 surveyors' drawings.

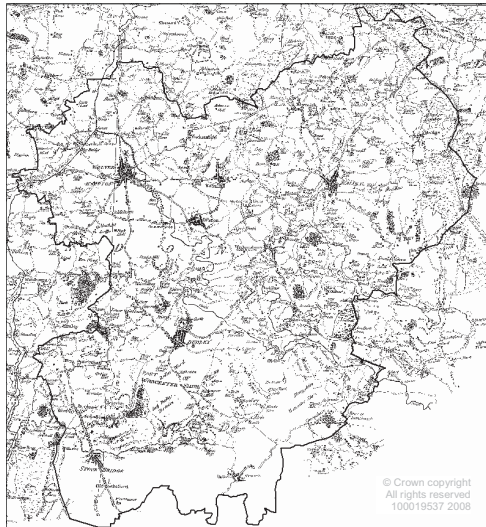
Figure 2.2: Dudley Borough Circa 1300

The map produced by Hemingway et. al. and (inset) its coverage within the Black Country



Before the start of the Ordnance Survey's 1:2,500 series in the 1880s, one other set of sources provided evidence of the development of the landscape: these were the tithe maps and awards of the period 1839 to 1851. Those used for the BCHLC are listed in Table 2.4, and the extent to which their evidence had been incorporated into the BCHLC is illustrated by Figure 2.4 which shows those records which were at least

Figure 2.3: Part of Yates' Map of Staffordshire Showing the Area of Modern Black Country



partly based on tithe maps. Tithe maps were particularly useful for areas which had undergone major change between the 1840s and 1880s, as a result of industrialisation for example.

The most modern data used was of two types: the Ordnance Survey's *Land-Line* data for 2000; and aerial photographs taken between 1999 and 2001 (the latter illustrated by Figure 2.5). It follows that all the descriptions and maps produced by the BCHLC which relate to the *modern* landscape are, in fact, representing the landscape at around the beginning of the 21st century.

The temporal distribution and coverage of sources we have outlined here obviously has implications for the data which has been generated from them. The advantages this particular set of sources brings us include a relatively detailed record of the landscape in the late 19th century and early 20th century. However there are also limitations to this range of sources.

Two in particular are perhaps worth highlighting here. The first has already been mentioned: that very few original surveys were available prior to William Yates' map of Staffordshire, published in 1775. This is perhaps significant because important early changes in the landscape, notably the growth of industry and mining, had already started by this point. The second principal disadvantage concerned the other end of the period of development recorded by the BCHLC: it was the unavailability of digitised mapping from the second

Table 2.2: Some 18th Century Sources Used by the BCHLC

Map Source	Date
Isaac Taylor's map of Wolverhampton	1750
Plan of Walsall estate of the Countess Dowager of Mountrath	1763
Oldswinford parish map	1782
Dudley parish map, including Netherton	1785
Sherriff James' map of Bilstone Liberty	1799
Amblecote parish Map	1799

half of the 20th century. This has meant that changes in the landscape between the years 1938 and 2000 may be underrepresented in the BCHLC data.

Table 2.3: Some Early 19th Century Sources Used by the BCHLC

Map Source	Date
Sherriff James' Plan of the mines of Lord Dudley and others	1812
Gilbert's map of parish of Aldridge	1817
Kingswinford parish Map.	1822
Mason's map of Walsall	1824
Sedgley parish Map	1826
The Townscape of Smethwick in the parish of Harborne	1828
Treasure's town plan of Dudley	1835
Joseph Welch's Darlaston parish Map	1835
John Wood's West Bromwich map	1837
Map of parish of Bushbury	1837
Timmis' Map of Tettenhall	1838
Beckett's Plan of Willenhall Township	1838

Table 2.4: Tithe Maps Used as Sources by the BCHLC

Tithe Map and/or Award	Date
Penn tithe map	1839
Wolverhampton tithe map & award	1840
Rushall tithe award	1840
Smethwick tithe map	1840
Pelsall tithe map	1840
Tithe map showing Walsall Wood, Shelfield, Clayhangar & Bullings Heath	1841
Lappal tithe map	1841
Aldridge with Great Barr tithe award	1841
Willenhall tithe map	1841
Illey tithe map.	1841
Wednesfield tithe map	1842
Lutley tithe map	1842
Penn tithe map	1843
Cradley tithe map	1843
Warley Salop tithe map	1844
Ridgacre tithe (tracing)	1844
Sedgley tithe map	1845
Walsall tithe map & award	1845
Rowley Regis tithe map	1845
Oldbury & Langley tithe map & award	1845
Pedmore tithe map	1845
Warley Wigorn tithe map	1845
Halesowen tithe map	1845
The Hill tithe map	1845
Rushall tithe map	1845
Wednesbury tithe map	1846
Hasbury tithe map	1846
Hawn tithe map.	1846
Cakemore tithe map	1848
Tipton tithe map	1849
Darlaston tithe map	1852

Figure 2.4: BCHLC Records Which are at Least Partly Based on Tithe Evidence

(4,901 Records out of 12,665)

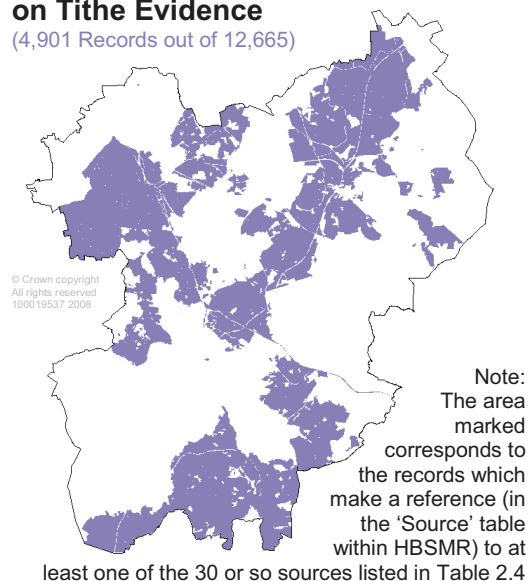


Figure 2.5: Aerial Photography

Note: Photography for Walsall was taken between 1999 and 2000, while the remainder was taken on a single date, 25th June 2001.



2.2 MODERN LAND USE

The current, most recent use of each part of the landscape is recorded in the BCHLC. In this context, land uses have been classified into broad categories (referred to here as 'Broad Types') and, within these, more specific categories of use ('HLC Types').

The first task of the project was to decide which Broad Types to use, i.e. how to divide up land use within the Black Country into a few general categories. This took into account categories which had been used by projects in other parts of the country, even though all of these except Merseyside were for largely rural areas. Nevertheless, the Broad Types used in the Black Country, detailed in Table 2.5, are generally similar to those used in previous HLC projects.

Modifications which were made to this classification included the deletion of some categories used

elsewhere which were not applicable in the Black Country (e.g. those applicable to coastal areas). There were also additions - for example the category 'extractive' was added to the Broad Types to reflect the local heritage of mining and quarrying. Table 2 lists the Black Country Broad Types and their scope notes.

The HLC Types (i.e. the narrower, more specific categories of use) were more individually tailored to the Black Country than the Broad Types. An initial list was drawn up reflecting what was known at the start of the project and additions were made during the compilation of the data as new character types were recognised.

It was recognised that, owing to the greater rate of landscape change and diversity of use in urban areas, the parcels of land associated with each BCHLC record (sometimes referred to as 'polygons', a reference to the diversity of shapes used to form the boundaries of each piece of land) would probably be

Table 2.5: Modern Land Use Categories within the Black Country HLC

Description: (Field name: <i>BroadTypeDesc</i>)	Scope: (Field name: <i>ScopeNote</i>)
Commercial	Areas which are predominantly retail/office.
Extractive	Areas of quarrying which is not linked with a specific production plant .
Field System	Areas of farm land, both arable and pasture.
Industrial	Areas where industrial activity is the predominant activity. Mining comes under extractive.
Military	Military sites.
Open Land	Areas of open land such as common and heath. Also for derelict land which had previously had industry or housing on it and for small vacant plots which appear among housing areas.
Recreational	Sites of recreation, professional sport, and large landscaped areas.
Religious	All religious buildings and for large cemeteries.
Utilities	Utility services which include reservoirs as well as water works and power stations.
Settlement	Areas of residential housing, which can include other elements such as shops or public houses as attributes where they do not cover an area large enough for their own polygon.
Public Services	Services including educational facilities, medical facilities, emergency services, government & local government, community centres.
Communications	Transport networks and services - including linear features (canals/roads) but not roads.
Woodland	Areas of woodland.



The commercial core and shopping centres in Wolverhampton: classified among the commercial types within the BCHLC

the use of a wider variety of categories of modern land use in order to reflect this.

This piecemeal type of development also meant that it was sometimes necessary to use a single HLC Type to describe a polygon which might actually contain different land uses, or features from different periods. In these cases, the dominant type, or that perceived to have the biggest impact (based on the mapping), was recorded. Other less dominant types contained within such a polygon are recorded as attributes and referred to within the description field of the database.

Commercial Types

The ten commercial categories of modern land use are listed in Table 2.6.

To reflect the differing nature of development and land use across the Black Country it was recognised that other than the commercial cores (usually the historic town or village centres), there was a need to reflect new retail locations such as the out-of-town shopping centres. Most notably, these include the Merry Hill Centre and other retail parks with large warehouse type stores (such as St John's Retail Park in Wolverhampton).

smaller, on average, than those in rural areas. Although some large housing estates, shopping centres and industrial districts have been planned and built in the Black Country, much of its development has tended to be small-scale and piecemeal, necessitating

Industrial Types

When choosing industrial types it was decided that they would be divided by sector. This was partly because it was recognised that certain areas of the



Industrial buildings in Walsall.

Table 2.6: Categories of Modern Land Use - Commercial, Industrial & Extractive

Commercial Types*

Commercial core	Public house
Other commercial site	Retail park
Market	Shopping centre
Office	Shops
Offices & shops	Superstore

Industrial Types*

Brewery or cooperage	Leather works
Brick works	Lime works
Cement works	Metal works
Chemical works	Pottery works
Clothing factory	Rope Walk/hemp factory
Depot	Scrap yard
Engineering works	Timber yard/saw mill
Enamel works	Rubber works
Garage	Vehicle factory
Glass works	Warehouse
Industrial Estate	Workshops
Japanning works	Works
Lock works	

Extractive Types*

Colliery	Disused limestone quarry
Clay quarry	Disused quarry
Disused clay quarry	Ironstone mine
Disused fireclay mine	Limestone quarry
Disused colliery	Mine

*Details of the scope of each of these categories are provided in Appendix 2.

Black Country were associated with particular industries, e.g. leather working in Walsall, lock making in Wolverhampton and Willenhall, glass-making in Dudley and Sandwell, and vehicle works in Wolverhampton. It was also recognised that metal working was prevalent across all four authorities.

However, the modern *Land-Line* mapping only records industrial buildings as 'Works', 'Depot', 'Warehouse' or 'Scrap Yard'. It was therefore decided that where a surviving industrial site was marked on an earlier map as an 'engineering works' or 'iron works' for example, then that HLC type would be used to describe the modern landscape.



Turner's Hill in Sandwell, the location of several disused quarries, classified as extractive landscape types.

The resulting twenty-five types of industry used are listed in Table 2.6.

Extractive Types

Like industrial types, categories of extractive land use (also in Table 2.6) were chosen based on our knowledge of Black Country mining and quarrying industries at the start of the project. This included collieries known to have existed in all of the four local government areas, as well as limestone and clay quarries in Dudley and Walsall in particular.

However, the term 'colliery' has not been used to describe the modern landscape: this is because the last of the collieries, a large open cast mine in Dudley, closed in the 1980s.

A decision was also taken to describe certain areas of land depicted as rough grassland on the historic Ordnance Survey maps as 'Disused Colliery' or 'Disused Quarry' where this was their former use, rather than describing them as 'rough grassland/scrub'. This was particularly the case where aspects of this former use are still recorded on the modern landline mapping.

Settlement Types

It was obvious that, in an urban area, the most frequently used Broad Type was going to be settlement. It was therefore important to include a wide range of sub-categories of housing types to reflect this. The thirty-five sub-categories used are listed in Table 2.7 (below).

After discussion with Wolverhampton City Council's Development Control team it was decided that the size of houses may be an important characteristic, and therefore the approximate extent of the average footprint of the houses in each area was recorded (as described in the scope notes in Appendix 2). For example, houses with a footprint recorded as being 'small' should be 50m² or less. On estates of houses of different sizes the most dominant was applied.

The category of 'Mixed terraces & semis' was defined as many of the large inter-war council estates were made up of these two housing types; whilst the modern housing estates of the 1980s and 1990s also tend to have a mixture of housing styles. However, some



Small semi-detached housing in Sandwell.

housing estates may have been mainly semis, with one or two terraces and these have been categorised as 'Semi detached houses'.

Types of Open Land

Among types of open land (listed in Table 2.8), the term 'ancient unenclosed pasture' was chosen to describe open heath or common land, such as that around Brownhills. This is the only HLC Type which is used for both current and previous types.

Table 2.7: Categories of Modern Land Use - Settlement*

Apartments/maisonettes	Medium terrace housing (tunnel back)
Caravan/mobile home site (permanent)	Mixed medium semis & terrace housing
Cottages	Mixed large detached & terrace housing
Country house	Mixed large terrace housing & industry
Medieval settlement core	Mixed large semis & terrace housing
Farm	Mixed medium detached & terrace housing
High rise flats	Mixed medium terrace housing & industry
High rise flats & terraces	Mixed small detached & terrace housing
Squatter settlement	Mixed small terrace housing & industry
Large detached housing	Mixed small semis & terrace housing
Mixed large semis and detached housing	Residential housing
Large semi detached housing	Small detached housing
Large terrace housing	Small terrace housing (tunnel back)
Large terrace housing (tunnel back)	Mixed small semis and detached housing
Medium detached housing	Small semi detached housing
Mixed medium semis and detached housing	Small terrace housing
Medium semi detached housing	
Medium terrace housing	

*Details of the scope of each of these categories are provided in Appendix 2.

Table 2.8: Categories of Modern Land Use - Open Land, Fields, & Woodland

Types of Open Land*

Ancient unenclosed pasture
Derelict land
Marsh
Rough grassland/scrub
Vacant plot

Types of Field System*

Irregular enclosure	Piecemeal enclosure
Other enclosed fields	Planned enclosure
Paddocks & closes	Squatter enclosures

Types of Woodland*

Deciduous woodland	Orchard
Mixed woodland	Plantation

*Details of the scope of each of these categories are provided in Appendix 2.



The Birmingham Canal at Coseley, Dudley.

The term 'derelict land' was only used where the waste land which was depicted on the modern *Land-Line* mapping and/or aerial photography had obviously been the site of a building. Where it was formerly

collieries or quarries, which have been tidied away and left to go for grass and scrub the HLC Type used was 'rough grassland/scrub'. 'Rough grassland/scrub' was also used if there was no obvious use for the land and which may once have been 'ancient unenclosed pasture', but where this could not be proved.



Derelict land in Ettingshall, Wolverhampton: classified as a type of open land within the BCHLC.

Types of Field System

The categorisation of fields was originally based on whether they were regular or irregular. However, early in the project it was decided that these terms were not reflecting past land use in an understandable way. Therefore the categorisation ultimately chosen (see Table 2.8) was that used by Staffordshire County Council's HLC project, although using fewer categories as very few field systems survive in the Black Country.

Types of Woodland

It was decided to divide woodland into the four categories outlined in Table 2.8. However, owing to the fact that much of the woodland in the Black Country no longer survives, there were in the event no records of the modern landscape logged within the categories of 'orchard' and 'plantation'.

Table 2.9: Categories of Modern Land Use - Communications, Recreation & Public Services

Communications Types*

Bus/coach Station	Railway (Used)
Canal (Disused)	Road roundabout
Canal (Used)	Railway sidings
Car park	Service Station
Railway (disused)	

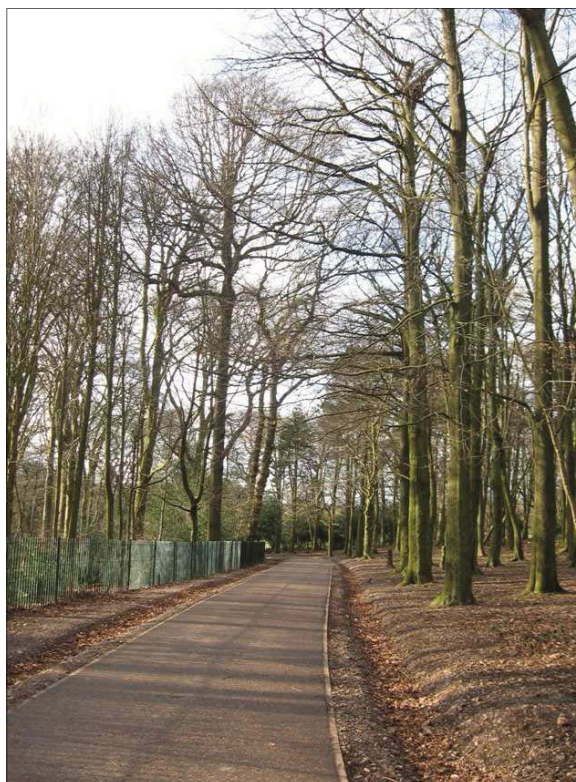
Recreational Types*

Allotments	Private parkland
Cinema complex	Public park
Country Park/nature reserve	Racecourse
Golf course	Sports ground
Leisure centre	Stadium
Castle	Theatre
Open air museum	Zoo
Public open space	

Public Services Types*

Art gallery	Medical facility
Community Centre	Museum
Court Building	Public building
Emergency services building	School
Higher Education facility	Town hall
Library	
Local government/Government offices	

*Details of the scope of each of these categories are provided in Appendix 2.



A public park in Smethwick, Sandwell.

junctions and other very large roundabouts often associated with the dual carriageways such as the Black Country Route.

Recreational Types

Recreational types are detailed in Table 2.9. Three categories were defined for unique sites: 'Castle' for Dudley Castle; 'Open air museum' for the Black Country Museum (other museums can be found under the Broad Type of 'public services'); and 'Zoo' for Dudley Zoo with its specific architectural style.

'Country Park/nature reserve' was chosen to describe modern features, although in some case they may retain features of degraded formal landscapes. An example of this is Northcote Farm and Country Park which had previously been private parkland.

Public Services Types

It was decided to group together some of the HLC types originally conceived in this category, resulting in the list in Table 2.9. Originally 'emergency services building' had been split into 'Police Station', 'Fire Station' and 'Ambulance Station'. Similarly 'Higher Education Facility' had been split into 'College' and

Types of Communication Features

Linear communications features have not usually been included in HLC data, but it was felt that the railways and canals contributed considerably to the character of the Black Country, as they had made it possible to exploit the natural resources in an area of the country without navigable rivers. They were therefore included as a separate category within the Broad Type of communications (Table 2.9).

Although roads themselves were not recorded, other features logged during the course of the project included car parks which, in the Black Country, are frequently extensive, particularly around Wolverhampton and Dudley, and often replace earlier settlement.

The idea for an HLC type of 'road roundabout' was taken from Staffordshire, and it includes the motorway



Part of the campus of the University of Wolverhampton.



Mount Pleasant Methodist Church, Dudley.

'University', which meant that adult education facilities were not easy to place. However, 'School' was kept as a separate category due to the sheer number of these complexes across the sub-region.

Utilities Types

The Broad Type of 'Utilities' was created at the beginning of the project after it was realised that some sites were large enough to justify its creation. The HLC Types within this group are listed in Table 2.10.

Military Types

Although a Broad Type for military sites was created within the database, there were ultimately very few military sites to be found in the Black Country, other than Territorial Army centres. The only categories of military type used is therefore Territorial Army Centre (see Table 2.10).

Religious Types

It was decided to divide 'religious' HLC Types by the faith groups using them because it is often the case that, where these buildings are purpose built, they

have their own style and characteristics. The HLC type 'cemetery' was also included under this category.

Table 2.10: Categories of Modern Land Use - Utilities, Military & Religious

Utilities Types*

Gas works	Sewage works/water works
Power station	Sub station
Reservoir	Telephone Exchange

Military Types*

Territorial Army centre

Religious Types*

Anglican church	Non conformist church
Cemetery	Roman Catholic church
Hindu temple	Sikh temple
Monastery/nunnery	Jewish synagogue
Islamic mosque	Temple

*Details of the scope of each of these categories are provided in Appendix 2.

2.3 PERIOD OF ORIGIN (OF MODERN LAND USE)

The ranges used to define period of origin for current, modern land uses (i.e. 'HLC Type') are broad, and they were largely defined by the years in which the principal source maps were surveyed. The major exception to this is the case of housing built in the second half of the 20th century, as explained below.

Period of Origin of Settlement

It was felt that, in order to get a better understanding of the development of the Black Country in the period after WW2, the housing estates originating during that time needed to be associated with relatively narrow periods of origin. However, this was made more difficult by the unavailability of digital Ordnance Survey maps for the period between 1950 and 1990 owing to copyright restrictions and cost implications.

The period ranges relating to housing built after the 4th Edition Ordnance Survey map (i.e. the mid to late 20th century) are therefore based on modern aerial photography and professional judgement.

For the second half of the 20th century, two periods of origin were very commonly used: 1960 to 1980, and

1980 to 2000. This was because housing from these periods was fairly easy to identify from its architectural style. Obviously there will be some inaccuracies as a result of this approach: some estates will straddle the limits of these periods, for example, and others may have a style which is older or newer than their actual date of construction.

In many parts of the Black Country, especially along the older route ways and in the historic centres, the development has been very piecemeal, taking place over at least a century. In areas where houses are of a variety of ages, either the most dominant period is recorded in the database or, where no dominant period is obvious, the earliest visible period.

The date ranges used for land previously occupied by housing is discussed below, although they generally follow the similar patterns as for current land use.

2.4 PAST LAND USES

The narrow categories used to describe previous, past land uses are roughly equivalent to those used for the modern landscape discussed in Section 2.2, although there may be some cases where a category of past land use does not have an corresponding description

Table 2.11: Period Ranges within the Black Country HLC

Description:	Scope:
Medieval	follows the standard Sites & Monuments Record period found with the HBSMR database, i.e. 1066 to 1539.
Unknown - 1750	where the HLC Type is present on Yates' map or is known to have existed before 1750 from entries in the Sites & Monuments Record
1751 - 1820	where the HLC Type is present on the 1814-17 Ordnance Survey surveyors' drawings or Parish maps or other maps pre dating 1820. Otherwise where known from entries in the Sites & Monuments Record
1821 - 1880	where the HLC Type is present on the first edition Ordnance Survey map; but may have been earlier. If this is the case this should be made clear in the Description field.
1881 – 1900	where the HLC Type first appears on the second edition Ordnance Survey map
1901 – 1910	where the HLC Type first appears on the third edition Ordnance Survey map
1911 – 1930	where the HLC Type first appears on the fourth edition Ordnance Survey map
1931 – 2000	where the HLC Type is shown on the modern landline mapping, except for Broad Type 'Settlement' which is further sub-divided (see Table 2.12 opposite)

Table 2.12: Period Ranges for Settlement within the Black Country HLC

Description:	Scope:
1931 – 1950	used where the fourth edition Ordnance Survey map is missing for housing estates that were probably inter-war or immediate post-war in date
1951 – 1960	mainly estates of semis which were not obviously inter-war or immediate post-war or 1960s/70s.
1961 – 1980	Often on the edges of the main settlement area, or replacing earlier cottages/terraces. Not always red brick and some detached houses are gable end on to the street.
1981 – 2000	Mostly built on estates of cul-de-sacs. The 1990s houses are most obvious and just look newly built on the modern aerial photographs.

in the record of the modern landscape. For example, records have been made of Pre-1931 military airfields but, since none survive in the Black Country, this category does not have a modern equivalent among modern land uses.

In terms of their coding within the data record, categories of past land use differ from their modern equivalents in that their codes all have a date prefix. This is in order to enable the data to be queried. The period ranges used for past land uses are effectively as shown in Table 2.11, although they use the corresponding descriptions detailed in Table 2.13.

The scope of each of the codes used to describe past land uses is detailed in Appendix 3.

The data held on the previous uses of any individual location took account of the fact that the geography of 'polygons' on which the Black Country HLC was based reflected the modern landscape, and not what had existed previously. So, for example, a modern surviving area of inter war semi-detached housing which had been built partly upon terraces and partly upon an iron works could not, within the data, be divided to reflect the two previous types.

At the beginning of the data collection process this was resolved by recording multiple contemporary previous land uses. However, later in the process, only the most dominant land use was recorded for each period.

Table 2.13: Periods Used to Record Past Land Uses

Description:	Scope:
Circa 1750/Pre 1750	Unknown to 1750
Circa 1800/Pre 1800	1751 – 1820
Pre 1881	1821 – 1880
Pre 1901	1881 – 1900
Pre 1911	1901 – 1910
Pre 1931	1911 - 1930

2.5 OTHER RECORDED ATTRIBUTES

In this context 'attributes' refer to characteristics of the landscape recorded in the HLC which do not necessarily describe the use to which the land is put or the period of origin of the built environment. Instead, this category of data is more commonly used to describe the *form* of the landscape features in each area.

The structure of the attributes data was defined before the creation of landscape areas or 'polygons' began, and the aim was to allow other relevant information about the landscape to be included. In

the event, only a few of the broad categories of land use had recorded attributes associated with them.

Table 2.14 lists the eleven attributes which were recorded, together with their associated land use category, and it shows that the attributes recorded were overwhelmingly used to describe different types of settlement. At the end of the data collection process the attribute labelled 'Council' was added for all records within the dataset in order to make it easier to separate data for each local authority area.

Appendix 4 outlines more detail of the information collected under the heading of Attributes.

Table 2.14: Attributes of the Landscape Recorded in the BCHLC

(For full details see Appendix 4)

Land Use(s) (broadly defined) to which this attribute applies	Name of Attribute	Description
All	Council	The modern local authority in which this area is situated
Field System; Recreational	Field System type	What evidence exists of previous field types, in particular medieval ridge & furrow
Religious	Ancillary religious bldgs	Whether buildings such as a cemetery lodge, crematorium, meeting hall etc. are included
Utilities	Reservoir type	Whether the utility is a reservoir and, if so, whether it is covered or open
Recreational	Sports ground type	The type of sports or leisure activity or activities for which the ground appears to have been used
Recreational	Water body type	The type of water body, e.g. natural or ornamental, lake, canal etc.
Settlement	Components of housing areas	Whether an area of settlement includes facilities such as a community centre, pub, school, shop or surgery.
Settlement	Front of housing	Whether a front garden is present
Settlement	Rear of housing	The type and size of garden or yard present at the rear of the properties
Settlement	Size of housing plots	The size of plots within the area, defined by one of six categories.
Settlement	Street pattern type	The form of the streets within the residential area and whether they are contemporary with the housing
Settlement	Type of housing estate	Whether the settlement is part of a housing estate and whether it is known to be privately or Council built

3. Analysis of the Black Country Landscape

3.1 DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO ANALYSIS

The possibilities for analysing and interpreting a dataset as large and complex as that of the BCHLC are clearly numerous, and it is not our intention to catalogue them all here.

However, in this brief section we hope to illustrate some of the lines of enquiry which analysis of the dataset might inform. A further report on the Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation, due before the end of 2009, will explore this area further.

Clearly, much of the premise of assembling the HLC data is that it can be used (perhaps in a way which is not possible with other datasets) to easily associate parts of the landscape which have a similar character, where character can be defined in a number of different ways. The allocation of each part of the landscape to one of a small number of pre-defined

Table 3.1: Modern Land Use

Modern Land Use (in descending order of area)	Area (km ²)	% of total
Settlement	169	47%
Industrial	40	11%
Field System	36	10%
Recreational	35	10%
Open Land	21	6%
Public Services	18	5%
Communications	11	3%
Commercial	9	3%
Woodland	5	1%
Other ¹	12	3%
Total	356	100%

¹Including land used for religious purposes, extractive industries, utilities, and by the military.

Figure 3.1: The Black Country Landscape by Modern Land Use

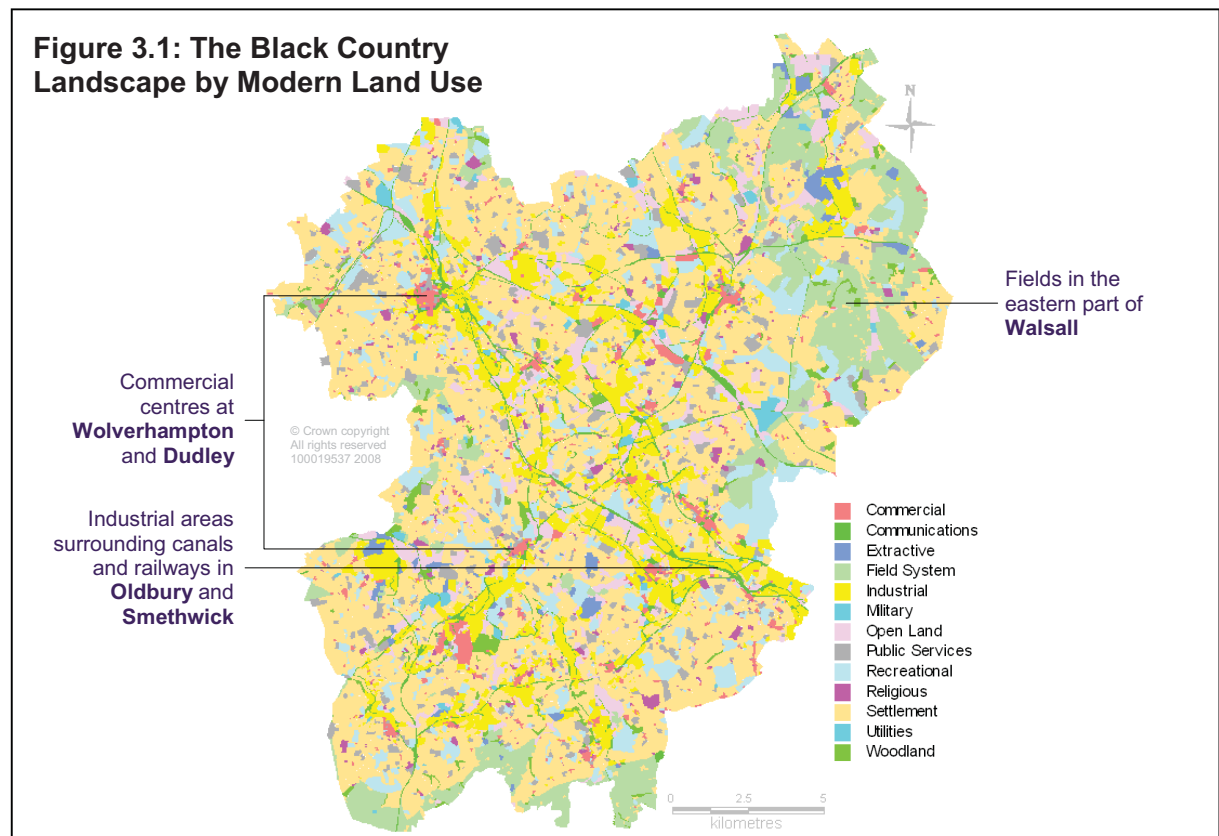
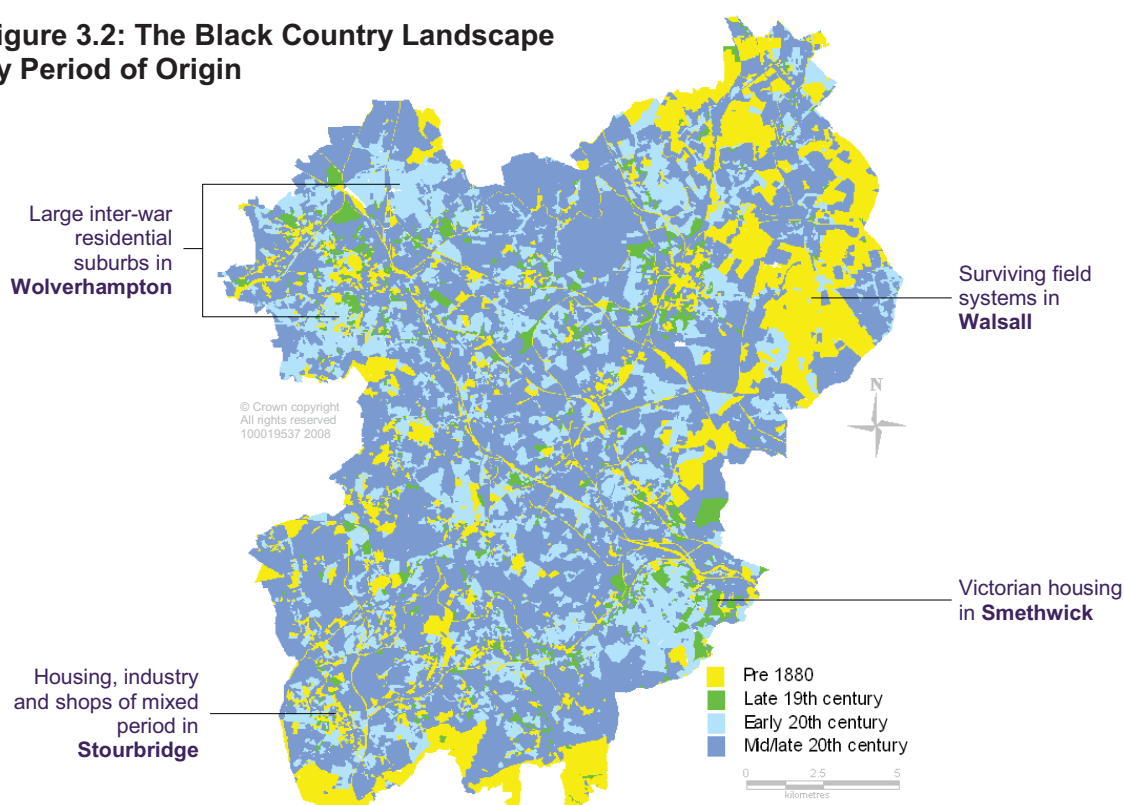


Figure 3.2: The Black Country Landscape by Period of Origin



categories of modern land use (i.e. 'broad type') is an example of this type of association.

A second process which is possible is the analysis of the change which has taken place, in particular through the examination of the sequence of phases which the landscape has undergone. This might be carried out in order to illustrate the history of a specific location (through its changing land use, for example) or to make comparisons across a wider geography.

3.2 THE ASSOCIATION OF PARTS OF THE LANDSCAPE BY THEIR CHARACTER

The Black Country As A Whole

Among a number of possible outputs, the association of landscape with common features allows us to produce maps of the whole area of the Black Country highlighting a number of different aspects of its landscape. Figure 3.1, for example, shows the area divided between the thirteen broad categories of land use adopted by the BCHLC. This, together with the corresponding area totals (in Table 3.1), shows the extent of the land taken by housing in the Black Country at the start of the 21st century (represented by the beige colour in Figure 3.1).

Table 3.2: Period of Origin of the Surviving Landscape

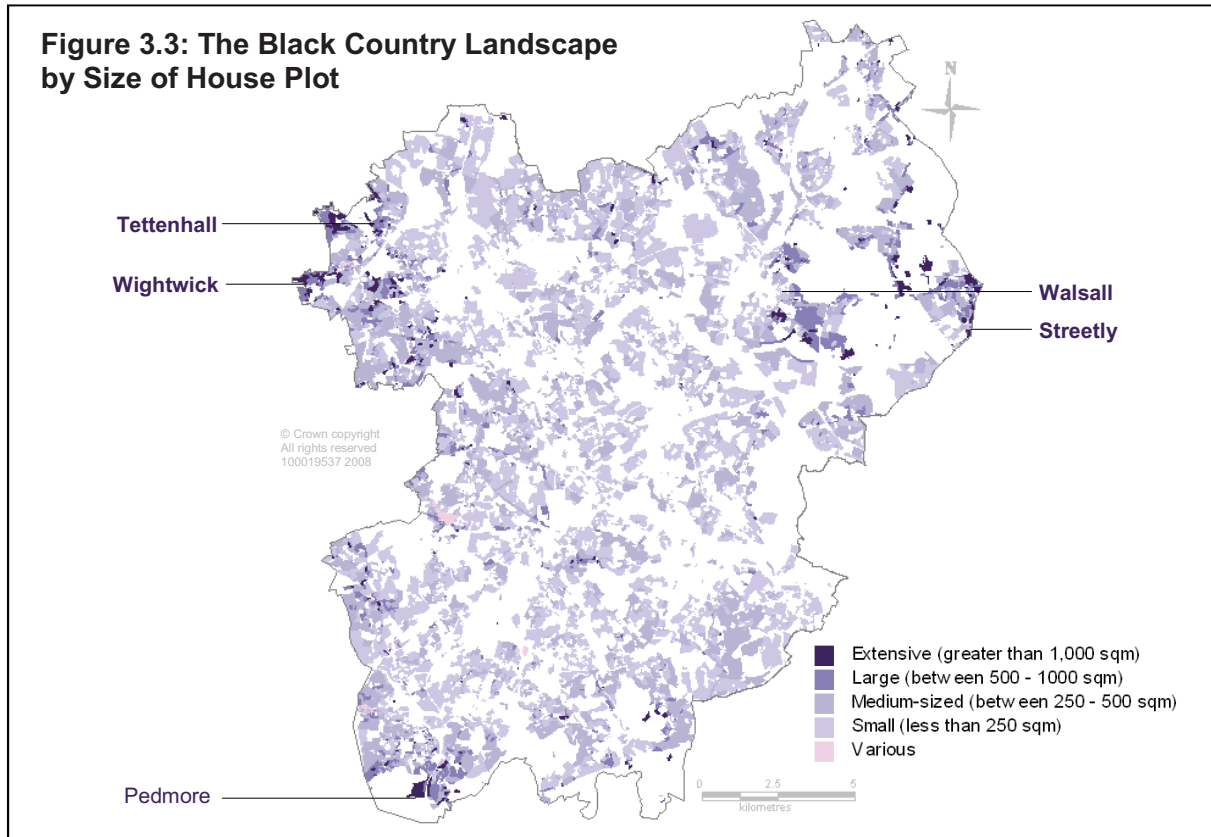
Period of Origin	Total Area in Sq Km	% of Black Country
Pre 1880	69	19%
Late 19 th century	15	4%
Early 20 th century	75	21%
Mid/late 20 th century	197	55%
Total	356	100%

Source: Black Country HLC

Similarly, Figure 3.2 shows the modern landscape by four categories of period of origin. These categories are generally organised around the survey years of three sets of historical maps (i.e. 1880, 1900, and 1938), and Table 3.2 shows the total area of the landscape which originates between each of these survey points.

*These areas are referred to as predominantly 20th century, as they do contain within them small areas of older landscape

Figure 3.3: The Black Country Landscape by Size of House Plot



Each part of this map which is coloured blue indicates a part of the surviving landscape which is predominantly* 20th century in its origin (dark blue corresponds to landscape created after 1938, light blue from the period 1900 - 1938). The extent of the blue areas, which cover three quarters of the map, starts to create an illustration of the full impact which the modern age has had on character of the sub-region.

In addition to making connections between those areas of the modern landscape which have the same use or period of origin, we can also consider what type of landscape exists in terms of a set of predefined 'attributes'. Many of these attributes describe the form of the buildings, streets, etc. which occupy each area. This record of landscape form which is contained within the BCHLC is perhaps at its most detailed in the case of the sub-set of records accounted for by housing (or 'settlement' as it is referred to in the data).

Figure 3.3, for example, illustrates the distribution of housing by the size of the plot of land allocated to each property. It shows that, in large parts of the centre of the Black Country, houses have been commonly built in plots of less than 250 square metres

(i.e. equivalent to an area 5 metres wide and 50 metres long, for example).

However, despite this general case, there are relatively small areas of the landscape where the dominant pattern is of houses with at least four times as much land. These locations - such as in Tettenhall (Wolverhampton), Pedmore (Dudley), and Streetly (Walsall) - are often on the edge of the Metropolitan area bordering the more rural counties of Staffordshire or Worcestershire.

More generally, this type of analysis - i.e. the examination of the position of each part of the modern Black Country within a range of a particular landscape attribute - is one which could be repeated for a number of different characteristics. However, it is clearly also only a small step from this approach to one which enables the selection and separate mapping of those parts of the landscape which share a particular characteristic.

Separating a Single Type of Landscape

An example of this approach, i.e. looking at individual elements within the landscape, is shown in Figure 3.4. This specific example identifies all the parts of the Black Country which were being used for clay quarrying at the end of the 20th century, as recorded

by the BCHLC. It shows that this particular type of extraction was located around three centres, i.e. Brownhills, Aldridge and Pensnett, and that, on these sites, quarrying had started from the 19th century onwards.

As relatively modern sites of clay extraction, these particular locations are unlikely to appear in any list of areas or buildings designated for their architectural or historical significance. However, more generally, the approach of using the BCHLC to identify landscape features of a particular type will, on occasion, have an advantage over using records of designations in that it may be a more extensive record.

However, using the BCHLC in this way contains the possible disadvantage that the relatively large size of the parcels of land on which the records are based (i.e. the 'polygons') might disguise an isolated feature which happens to be situated among others of a different type.

Taking our example of clay quarries - a small quarry in a larger area of derelict land might be recorded as a 'derelict land' polygon, thus making the quarry invisible to any interrogation of the data.

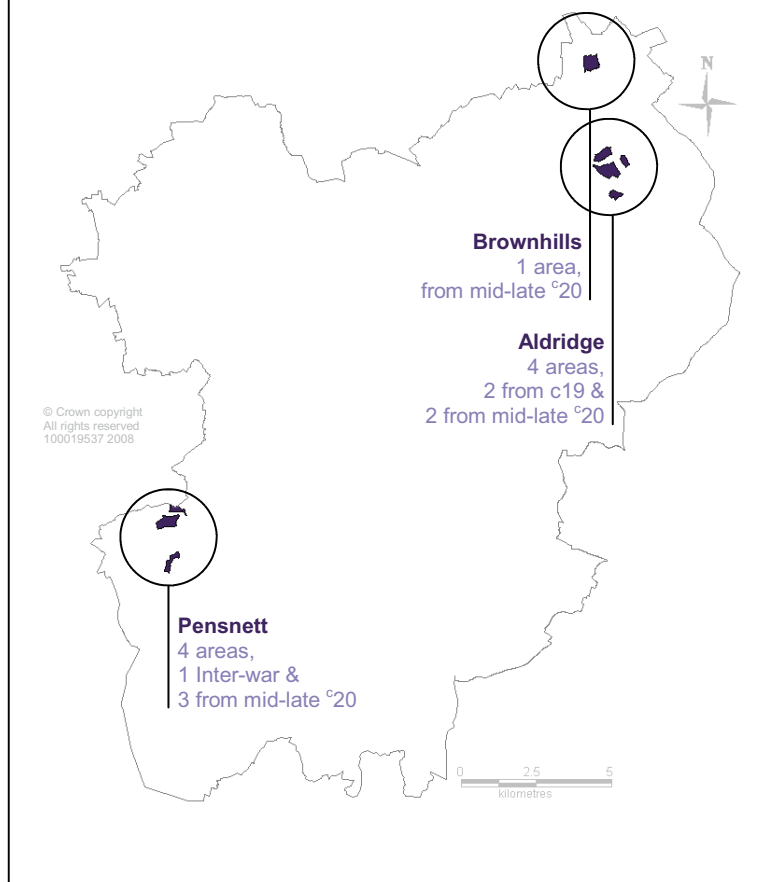
Querying the data in order to separate sets of similar features is clearly also restricted (in general) to those features which have been given a separate classification code, i.e. these which are listed in the appendices to this report.

Despite these disadvantages, this is still a useful approach, providing a consistent estimate of the distribution of a set of features in a way which may not be available elsewhere.

Adjoining Areas of Similar Character

An alternative way of selecting specific landscape types in order to show how they are distributed across the Black Country is to try to link together those areas which are both similar and situated next to each other. Character Area profiles. In this way boundaries can be drawn around adjoining areas of similar character - for

Figure 3.4: Areas of Clay Quarrying in the Black Country



example, parts of the landscape which comprise largely interwar residential suburbs, areas of post-war industrial estates, or Victorian commercial centres.

In the Black Country, this approach generated a set of 51 broad 'Character Areas', as described in Section 4 of this report. These boundaries are based as far as possible on the comparison of the individual pieces of landscape used to create the record which the BCHLC represents. Thus each Character Area was in general assembled, or 'built up', from smaller areas of land within the dataset.

Previous Uses of the Modern Landscape

These maps and tables quantifying how land is used and the age of surviving structures relates, in general, to the landscape we can see today. However, one of the key features of Historic Landscape Characterisation is its ability to peel back the layers of the built (and managed) environment to reveal the story of its previous development.

The previous phases of use of the Black Country landscape is a subject which will be explored in the second report of the BCHLC. However, it is possible at this stage to say something in broad terms about the record of previous landscapes held within the BCHLC.

We know for example that, in total, 25,495 records of previous landscapes have been made during the compilation of the BCHLC dataset. Given that there are 12,665 separate parcels of land in the record of the modern landscape, this means that, on average, about two earlier phases have been recorded for each part of the Black Country.

Not surprisingly, the largest number of previous land uses related to the former agricultural landscape of the area. In terms of the number of records, more than half of previous uses are accounted for by fields, woodland or open land (including commons). In addition, earlier phases of housing, as well as (characteristically) mineral extraction, feature strongly in the record of the local landscape's earlier phases.

3.3 RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LANDSCAPE PHASES

The BCHLC defines the geographic limits of the features it records in terms of their modern, 21st century boundaries. While it also records past uses of any specified piece of land occupied by a feature or site, it does not record the previous locations of any boundaries between them.

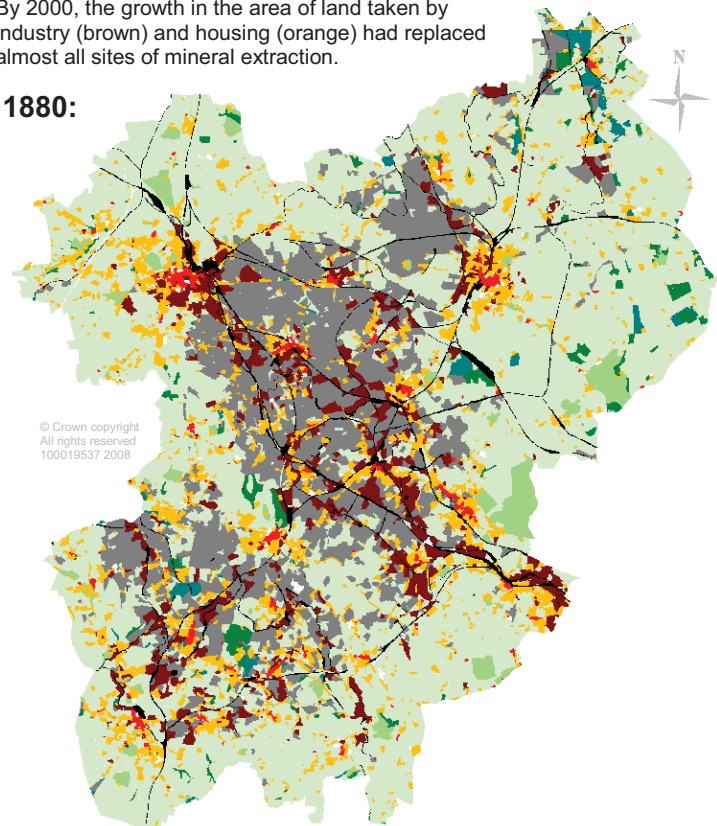
One implication of this approach is that, as soon as our mapping departs from the modern era in an attempt to represent past, disappeared landscapes, some inaccuracy is

Figure 3.5: The End of Mining in the Black Country

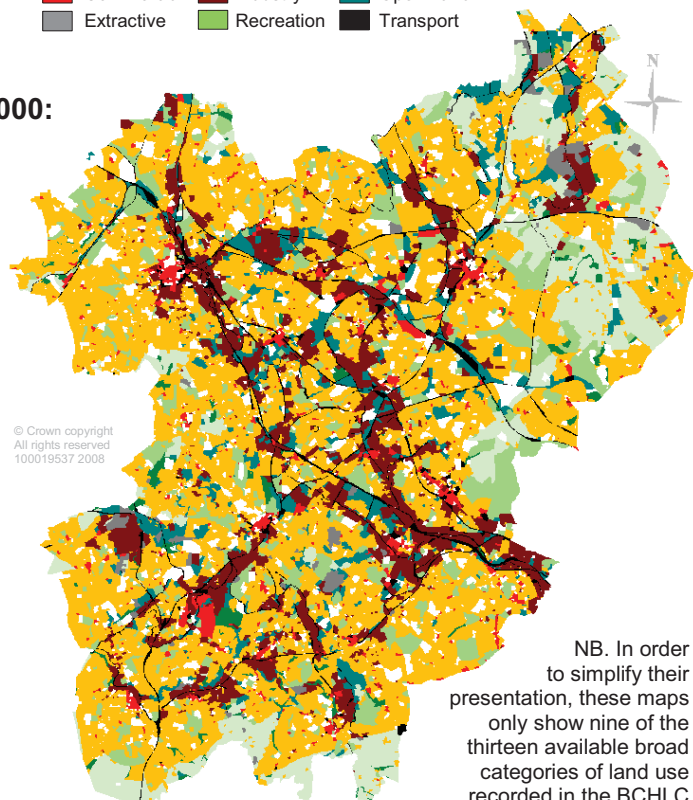
The grey areas in the centre of the 1880 map represent the sites of collieries, clay pits, and other mines and quarries.

By 2000, the growth in the area of land taken by industry (brown) and housing (orange) had replaced almost all sites of mineral extraction.

1880:



2000:



NB. In order to simplify their presentation, these maps only show nine of the thirteen available broad categories of land use recorded in the BCHLC

introduced into the representation of the boundaries between areas of different character.

However, at a general level it is nevertheless possible to represent the broad changes which have taken place in the sub-region in a way which no other single dataset can.

Figure 3.5 is one example of the way that change in the landscape can be represented. Perhaps the defining historical phase of the Black Country was the exploitation of coal and other minerals in the 18th and 19th centuries (indeed, evidence suggests that the name 'Black Country' was first used to describe the landscape in this period). But the maps in Figure 3.6 illustrate the way in which mining and quarrying land was replaced with housing and industry in the period after 1880 (the maps show the difference between that year and 2000, but actually, the change had really taken place by a point much earlier in the 20th century).

Without discussing what these particular maps reveal in any detail here, they serve to indicate the possibilities for analysis of landscape change using the BCHLC. Our second report will explore these possibilities, looking at the nature of change (i.e. what have been common changes of land use, for example), the first period of development of each part of the area, as well as some of the most recent changes. It will also use the BCHLC to try to measure the rate of change as well as the durability of landscape features.

3.4 COMBINATIONS OF ANALYTICAL APPROACHES

In this section, we have considered ways in which the data held by the BCHLC might be analysed, including the linking of areas of similar character (i.e. land use, period of origin, and form) in the modern landscape, mapping the distribution of single types of features, and the creation of boundaries around adjoining areas of similar character. We have also considered previous uses of the land, as well as the representation of landscape change.



Clearly, any number of these approaches can be combined to achieve objectives which are not properly served by one. An example of this has been the creation of a landscape 'character framework' for those parts of the Black Country which are likely to change most in the coming decades (i.e. the Regeneration Corridors).

A Local Character Framework

A Character Framework for the Black Country Regeneration Corridors was written in 2008 and uses analysis of the BCHLC to discover what it is about the landscape of the Corridors which is distinctive in Black Country terms. In order to provide a basis for a discussion about the preservation of character and distinctiveness, it creates a typology (i.e. a classification) of the landscape consisting of twelve common elements, illustrated by Figure 3.6, which appear in the area.

4. Defining Character Areas Based on the BCHLC Data

4.1 SUMMARY OF THE PROCESS

The data collection phase of the BCHLC divided the Black Country into over 12,000 records, each of which describes the present and past land use of the individual parcel of land associated with that record.

At this point there was a desire to use the data to make wider generalisations about the physical environment through the creation of larger 'Character Areas' based on what had been recorded about the landscape.

These would assist in the presentation and understanding of the distinctive characteristics of the modern landscape in different parts of the Black Country.

As we have seen, the BCHLC data can be used to analyse and describe the character and landscape of the Black Country in an almost infinite number of ways. One would be to divide the Black Country into its administrative regions – the wards, neighbourhoods, or parliamentary constituencies for example – within each local authority area. Another would be to produce descriptions for defined areas of major change (now being done for some areas using BCHLC data in separate projects).

These are valid and useful approaches, but they do not use the data itself to create the character Area boundaries. In our case, it was therefore decided to let the data 'speak for itself' by dividing the Black Country up into areas of similar modern land use. These areas often cut across traditional divisions such as ward

boundaries etc. (although it was decided not to allow Character Area boundaries to cut across City and Borough boundaries).

It was also a guiding principle that the process should be undertaken in an objective and transparent a manner as could be achieved. Character Area boundaries have therefore been generated initially through a partially automated simplification of the BCHLC record. Specifically, the process relies on:

- clustering adjacent parcels of land of **similar modern use** into larger areas;
- drawing draft boundaries around these larger areas of modern land use;
- modifying and improving boundaries by analysing the '**performance**' of individual areas in representing landscape character;
- modifying boundaries to take into account **local government boundaries** and the **period of origin** of the surviving landscape.

Although the process adopted has generally been consistently applied across the Black Country, slightly different assumptions have been used in two different sections of the project area. This is described in more detail below.

4.2 SIMPLIFYING SETTLEMENT AREAS

Our starting point for the process is based on the fact, established by the BCHLC record, that land taken by

Table 4.1: Settlement-related Polygons within the Black Country HLC

Broad Type	Number of Polygons	Total Area in Sq Km	% of Black Country Accounted for by Broad Type
Settlement	7,490	168.7	47.4%
Recreational (settlement-related*)	474	15.1	4.3%
Public Services	754	18.4	5.2%
Religious	340	4.4	1.2%
Total	9,058	207	58.1%

*See Table 4.2

Source: Black Country HLC

Table 4.2: The Selection of Recreational Records to Associate with Settlement Areas

HLC Type	Number of Polygons	Total Area (hectares)	Average Area (hectares)	Associated with Adjacent Settlement?*
Sports ground	221	941	4	Yes
Public open space	126	355	3	Yes
Allotments	97	156	2	Yes
Public park	81	647	8	-
Golf course	20	653	33	-
Leisure centre	19	42	2	Yes
Country Park/nature reserve	14	336	24	-
Cinema complex	7	17	2	Yes
Stadium	5	28	6	-
Private parkland	5	115	23	-
Theatre	4	3	1	Yes
Country Park	4	103	26	-
Castle	1	3	3	-
Nature Reserve	1	12	12	-
Open air museum	1	12	12	-
Zoo	1	12	12	-
Racecourse	1	39	39	-
Total	608	3473	6	-

*HLC types which were considered as being connected to the immediately adjacent housing. These were, in general, those which either had an average area smaller than about 0.05 sq km or which were relatively numerous. Conversely, those recreational types which consisted of larger, fewer polygons were generally kept separate.

Source: Black Country HLC

housing (recorded as 'settlement') accounts for the largest area of any of our broad categories of land use. Table 3.1 in the previous Section of this report showed that 47% of the area of the Black Country is taken by these residential locations.

Before boundaries were drawn around them, these areas of housing were first combined with some of the smaller categories of land use most directly related to settlement. These included areas used for recreation (or at least that part of recreational land deemed to be directly related to settlement), public services, and religious buildings and land. These additions, detailed in Tables 4.1 and 4.2, combined with settlement areas themselves, account for 58% - almost three fifths - of the project area.

The shape of these areas of settlement and settlement-related land was simplified by removing both those small areas of other land use within

settlement areas (i.e. erasing 'gaps') and also those settlement-related areas isolated within areas of other land use (i.e. erasing 'islands').

The technique used to achieve this was the application of a function within the GIS* application *MapInfo Professional v7.5* which enables a map layer to be 'cleaned' of selected objects. The process is illustrated in Figure 4.1, which shows the area before and after 'cleaning'. In this case, it resulted in a notional settlement-related area, seen in Figure 4.1 (ii), which was smaller (by 11%) than the original (and real) area.

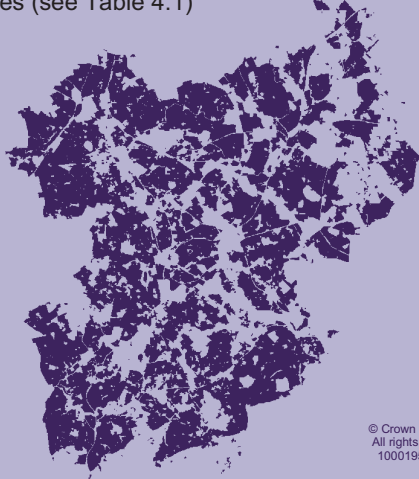
4.3 DRAFTING CHARACTER AREA BOUNDARIES IN DUDLEY

As already mentioned, the approach to defining Character Area boundaries has been applied slightly differently in two parts of the Black Country. The difference was principally in the average size of the Character Areas which have been defined.

*Geographic Information System

Figure 4.1: Simplification of the Settlement & Related Polygons

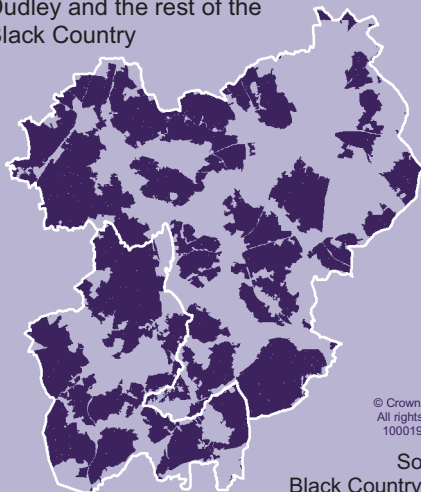
(i) Land occupied by settlement-related land uses (see Table 4.1)



(ii) the same area simplified



(iii) ... showing the boundary between Dudley and the rest of the Black Country



Source:
Black Country HLC

In the case of most of the Black Country, the aim was to produce Character Areas of about 6 square kilometres each, a size which would have led to about 60 areas being defined for the whole project area.

However, in the case of the area covered by the Metropolitan Borough of Dudley, in the south west of the Black Country (i.e. the area illustrated in Figure 4.1 (iii)), there was a desire to more closely match the scale of the areas produced by an earlier characterisation study. This study, reported in 2000, defined eight Character Areas based on a combination of the natural landscape (principally geology and topography) and socio-economic landscape (the latter being defined as *'the evolution of land use and demographics over time, broadly identifying a time series of the Borough's growth over centuries'*). These eight Character Areas are shown in Figure 4.3.

In order to try to relate to the scale of the areas produced in 2000, the process here sought to create 10 Character Areas for Dudley, rather than the 15 which might have been produced had the objective of 6 kilometre squared Character Areas been applied across the whole project area.

With this in mind, a set of Character Area boundaries were drawn for Dudley. These were based on the areas of settlement defined in Figure 4.1 with the addition of similarly identified areas of industry and communications (e.g. canals & railways). These first draft Character Areas for Dudley are shown in Figure 4.3.

Testing for Success

Before we finalised these boundaries it was necessary to consider in hypothetical terms, what would make one set of boundaries more successful than another set of boundaries drawn differently within the same landscape.

As a general point, it could be argued that the success of a system of Character Areas might be measured by the extent to which each Character Area boundary captures the distinctive feature or features of an individual part of the landscape. For any particular criterion (e.g. modern land use, period of origin, or previous use) this can also be quantified by measuring the extent to which a single category of a classification dominates a Character Area.

Figure 4.4 illustrates an example of this process applied to a classification by modern land use. We can see that in Figure 4.4 (i), in the case of 5 of the 9 Character Areas we have created for Dudley, the most

Figure 4.2: Character Areas Generated by the Dudley Borough Landscape & Townscape Character Study in 2000

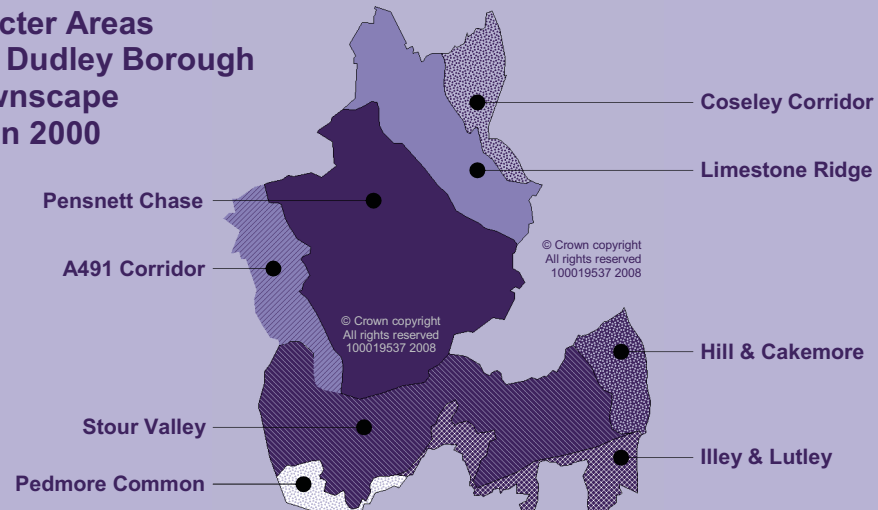


Figure 4.3: First Draft Character Areas for Dudley

Source: Black Country HLC

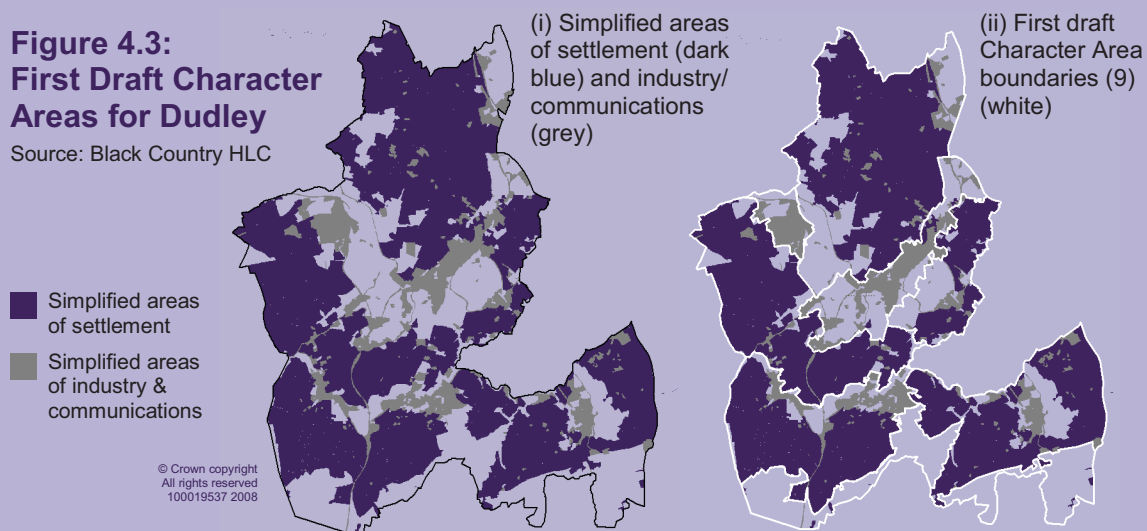
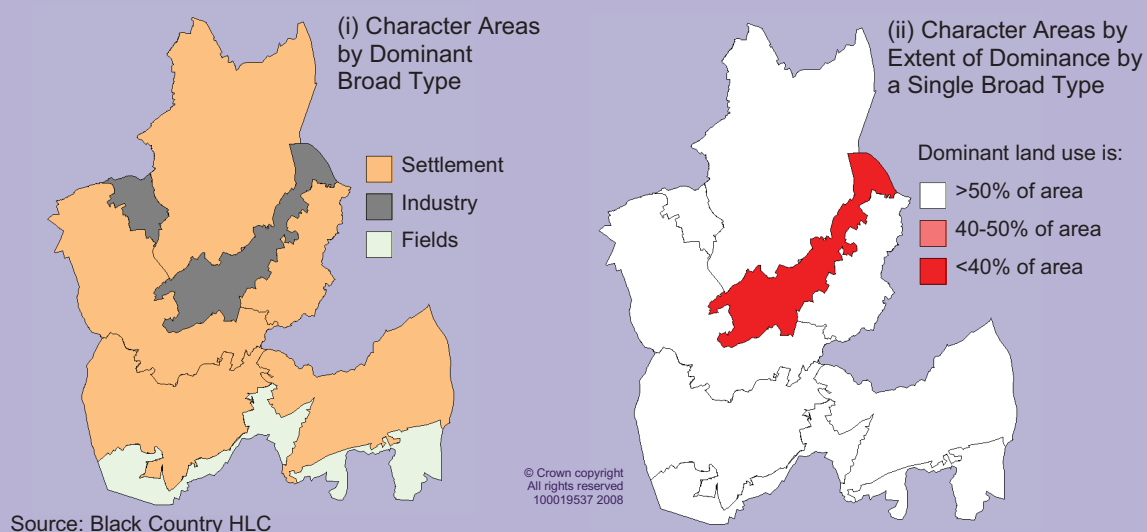


Figure 4.4: Test of the First Draft Character Areas in Dudley



Source: Black Country HLC

Figure 4.5: An Ariel View of Two Draft Character Areas in Dudley



First draft Character Area boundaries (see Figure 4.4)

These two industrial districts (visible from the large 'white blocks' of post-war industrial buildings) lie within two of our draft Character Areas.

However, the one to the north-west is more characteristic of the Area which encompasses it. The district to the south-east, although similar in size and form, lies within a Character Area of more mixed use.

As the red colour given to this second area in Figure 4.4 (opposite page) demonstrates, it is therefore more difficult to characterise this area as having a single land use.

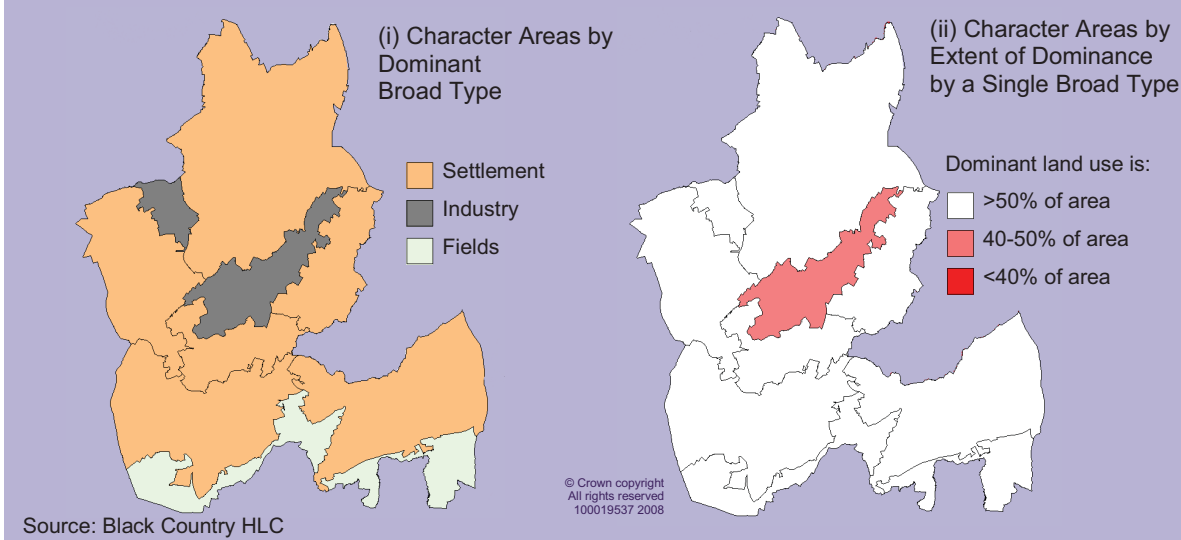
Photography copyright: The GeoInformation Group, 2001

common broad category of land use is settlement (these are sand coloured on the map). For two more the most common type is industry (shown in grey), and a further two have field systems (shown in green) as their most common land use.

However, this only tells us which is the single most common modern land use. If we want to know to what extent these land uses dominate the landscape within each Character Area, we need to consider Figure 4.4

(ii). This shows Character Areas (shown in white) in which a single land use accounts for more than 50% of the area, as well as one Character Area (shown in red) in which the single most dominant land use accounts for less than 40% of the area. This Character Area in particular is the subject of amendment and improvement during the redrafting process.

Figure 4.6: Second Draft Character Areas for Dudley



Second Draft Character Areas for Dudley

Modifications to the Character Areas to produce the second draft boundaries for Dudley largely consisted of changes to the 'industrial' Character Area in the centre of the Borough. These changes reduced the Character Area's size and focussed its boundaries more closely around the central area of industry highlighted in Figure 4.5 (above).

The differences between Figures 4.4 and 4.6 (below) illustrate these changes. Figure 4.6 (ii) in particular (in the bottom right of this page) shows that the re-draft of the boundaries defined areas which are, in all cases, accounted for by a single category of land use occupying at least 40% of its area.

This also had the incidental effect of leaving the 'Coseley Corridor' area, defined by the earlier study (illustrated by Figure 4.2), situated entirely within one of the new Character Area boundaries.

4.4 DRAFTING CHARACTER AREA BOUNDARIES FOR SANDWELL, WALSALL & WOLVERHAMPTON

The approach to defining Character Area boundaries in the remainder of the Black Country outside of Dudley has used the same process, albeit with the objective of defining areas with a slightly smaller average size.

As in Dudley, its starting point was the simplified representation of settlement areas illustrated in Figure 4.1. Figure 4.7 (ii) below shows the first draft set of Character Area boundaries.

This process actually created 24 areas. It had previously been thought that around 45 Character Areas in total would be an appropriate final number (i.e. an average of 15 for each of the four Black Country districts), and so this interim total of 24 appeared to be acceptable – taking into account that further divisions would need to be created in order to account for modern local authorities and differing periods of origin (see below).

When these first draft boundaries were tested for their success in representing land use, as in section 4.4 (above), the result was as illustrated in Figure 4.8. This seemed to show one area, shown in red - to the west of Walsall town centre, in which the largest single category of land use was settlement, but in which settlement accounted for less than 40% of its area. More generally, the analysis also showed that quite a large proportion of the three local authorities was represented by Character Areas which did not have a single category of land use accounting for more than 50% of their respective areas. Both of these results were issues addressed in the creation of a second draft set of Character Area boundaries.

Figure 4.7: First Draft Character Areas for Sandwell, Walsall & Wolverhampton

Source: Black Country HLC

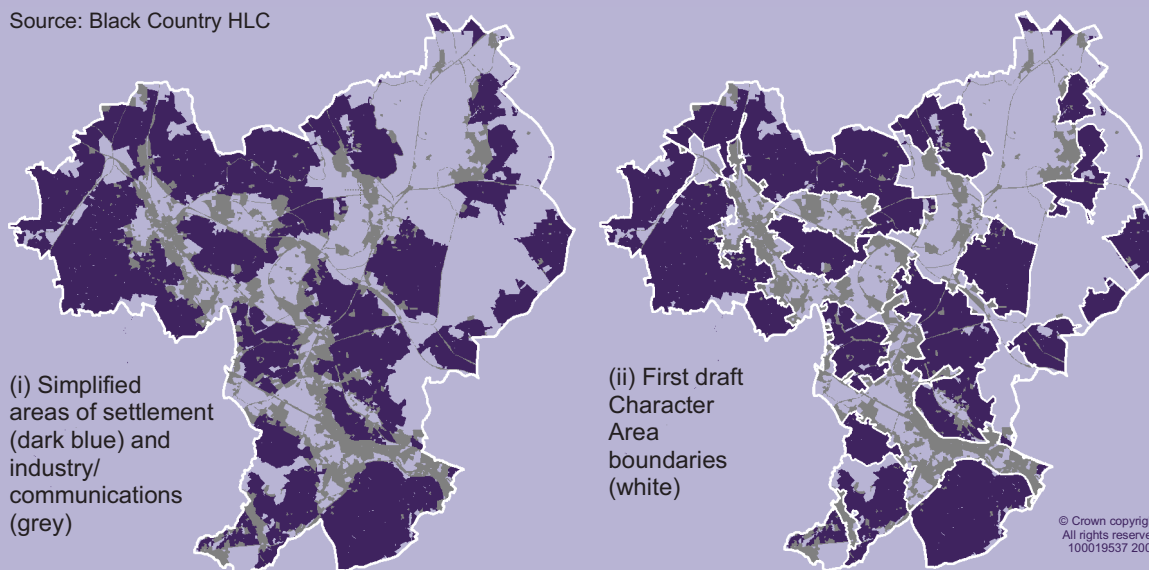
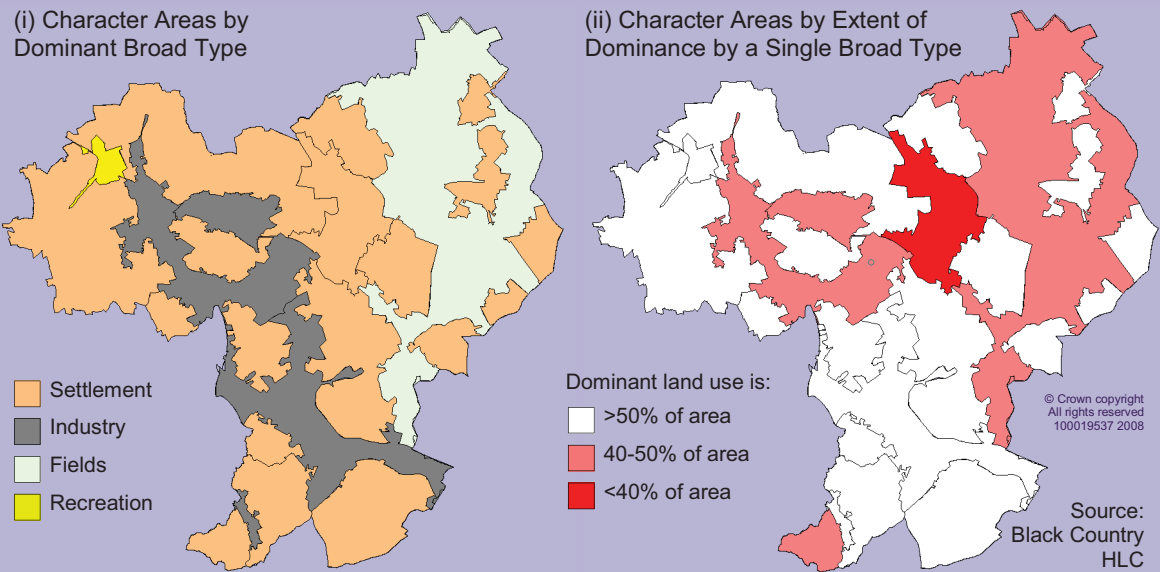


Figure 4.8: Test of the First Draft Character Areas in Sandwell, Walsall & Wolverhampton



After modifications to improve the coincidence between the boundaries and clusters of single categories of land use, the boundaries appeared as shown in Figure 4.9 (i). In number, they had been increased from 24 to 27.

The demonstration that, by our defined measure, these boundaries were an improvement on the previous version is illustrated in Figure 9 (ii). When compared to Figure 4.8 (ii) (immediately above it on

the opposite page) it shows the removal of 'red' areas (i.e. those with a dominant land use accounting for less than 40%) as well as fewer 'pink' areas (i.e. those with a dominant land use accounting for less than 50%).

4.5: ADDING ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES

In addition to representing the key features of an area, one of the other prerequisites of the definition of our

Figure 4.9: Second Draft Character Areas in Sandwell, Walsall & Wolverhampton

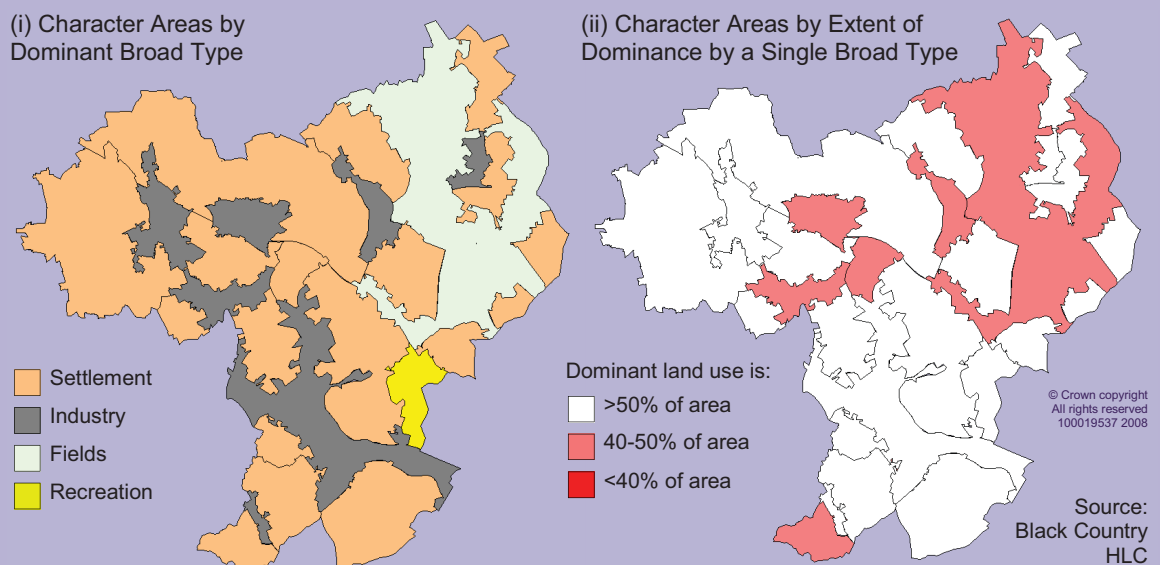
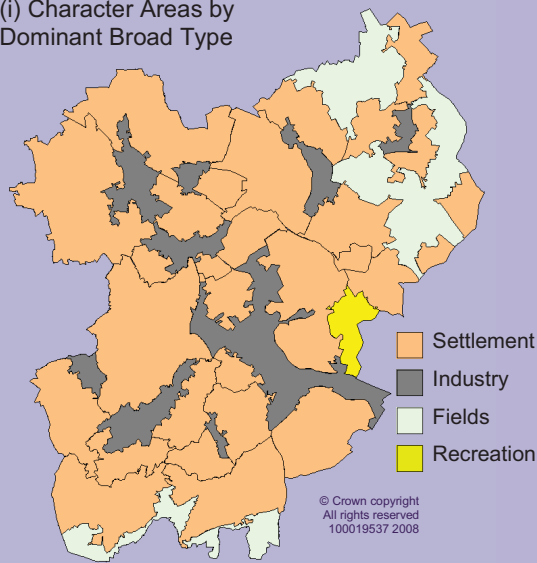


Figure 4.10: Draft Character Areas, Fitted to Local Authority Boundaries

(i) Character Areas by Dominant Broad Type



(ii) Character Areas by Extent of Dominance by a Single Broad Type

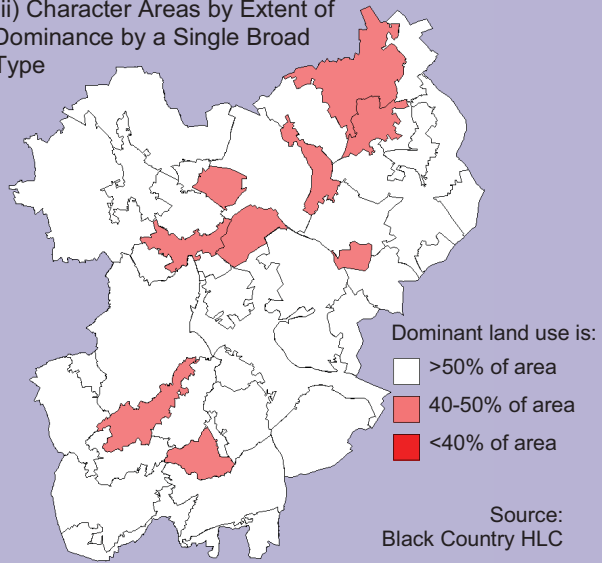
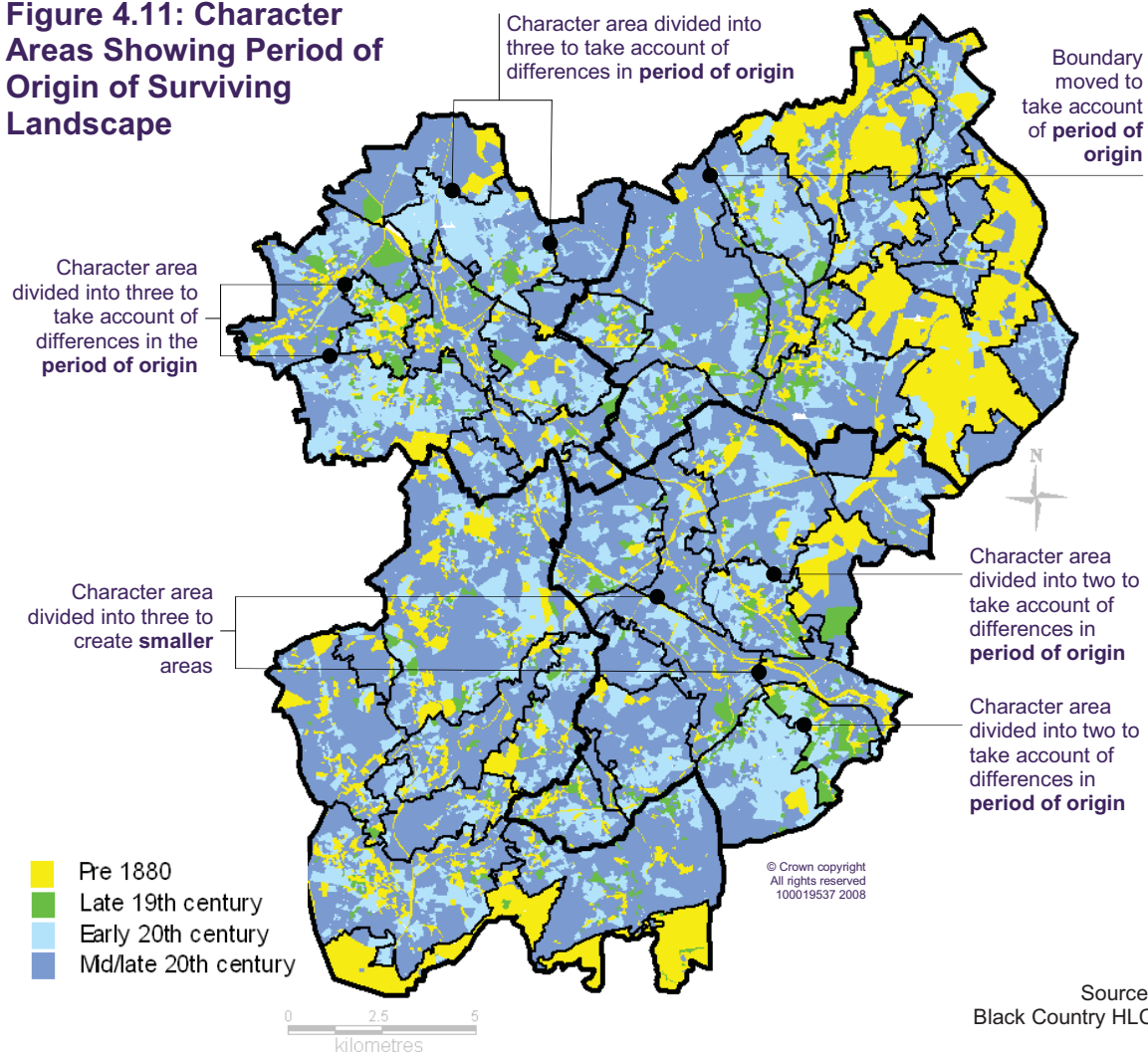


Figure 4.11: Character Areas Showing Period of Origin of Surviving Landscape



Character Areas was that they should be coterminous with the boundaries of the four Black Country authorities of Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton. The next stage of the process sought to address this question.

It was hoped that this would involve little more than dividing some of the Character Areas created in the second draft. However, in the event, the irregular nature of the district boundaries and the need to maintain the effectiveness of Character Areas on either side of them caused some redrafting.

The incorporation of administrative boundaries, together with some redrafting to further improve the performance of the areas, increased the total number of Character Areas (including those within Dudley) from 37 to 43, as shown in Figure 4.10. As with the creation of the previous draft, the area covered by less 'successful' Character Areas was again reduced.

4.6 ACCOUNTING FOR THE PERIOD OF THE SURVIVING LANDSCAPE

It was always an objective that the Character Areas should not only reflect modern land uses but also the periods from which the landscape dates.

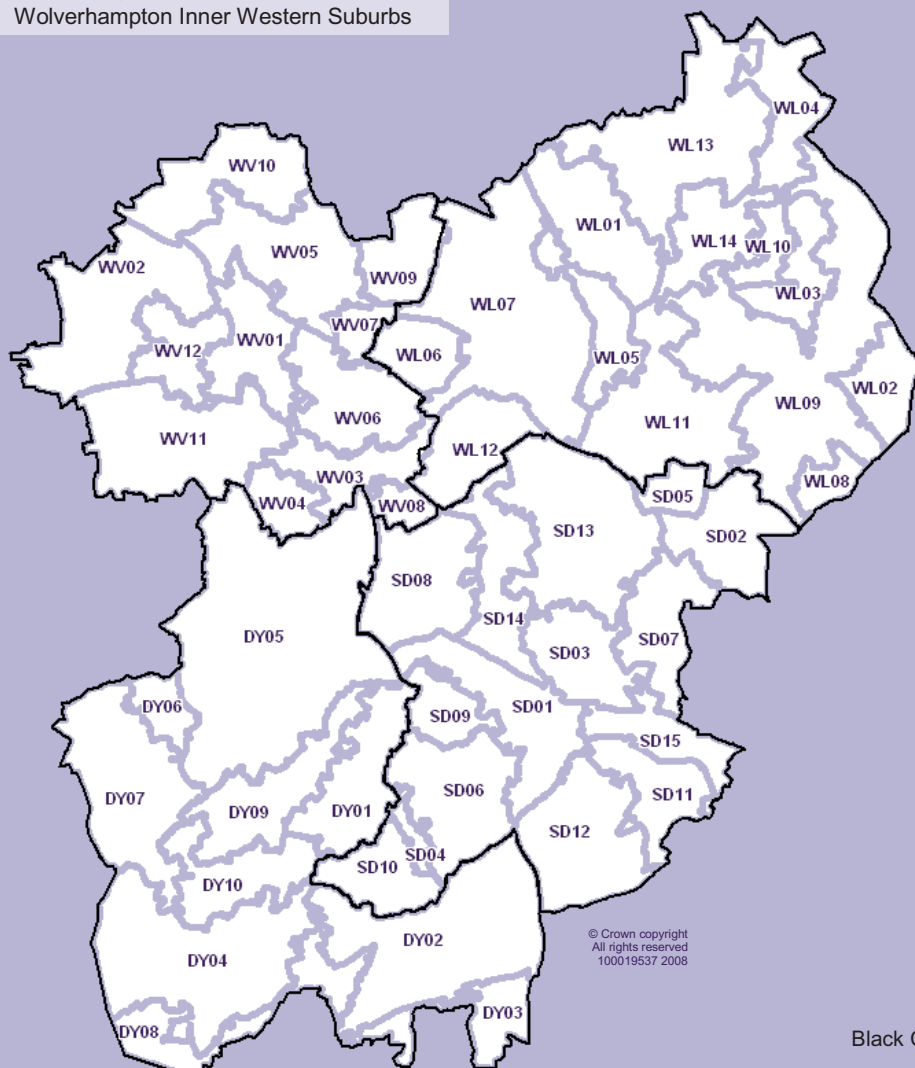
Figure 4.11 shows the third draft Character Areas further subdivided to take account of period of origin, as well as other concerns which came out of consultations with individual local authorities. Boundaries are shown superimposed on a sub-division of the Black Country landscape into four broad periods of origin, as previously introduced in Section 3.2 of this report.

These final amendments created an additional 8 areas, bringing the total number for the project area to 51, shown in Figure 4.12 overleaf. In local authority terms, these were distributed in the following way: 10 in Dudley; 15 in Sandwell; 14 in Walsall; and 12 in Wolverhampton. Appendix 1 contains short descriptions of the areas summarising their modern and historic character.

Figure 4.12: Character Area Names

Walsall	WL01	Bloxwich & Blakenhall Heath
	WL02	Streetly
	WL03	Aldridge East
	WL04	Brownhills & Walsall Wood
	WL05	Walsall Town Centre & Industrial Districts
	WL06	Willenhall
	WL07	Bentley
	WL08	Pheasey
	WL09	Barr Beacon & Aldridge Fields
	WL10	Aldridge West
	WL11	South East Walsall
	WL12	Darlaston
	WL13	Pelsall
	WL14	Rushall & Shelfield
Wolverhampton	WV01	Wolverhampton City Centre & Industrial Districts
	WV02	Wolverhampton Outer Western Suburbs
	WV03	South Bilston & Ettingshall
	WV04	Ettingshall Park & Lanesfield
	WV05	Bushbury & Wednesfield North
	WV06	North Bilston, Portobello & Moseley
	WV07	Wednesfield South
	WV08	Bradley
	WV09	Ashmore Park
	WV10	Pendeford, Fordhouses & Moseley
	WV11	Blakenhall, Bradmore & Penn
	WV12	Wolverhampton Inner Western Suburbs

Dudley	DY01	Netherton
	DY02	Halesowen
	DY03	Hayley Fields & Illey
	DY04	Stourbridge
	DY05	Dudley North
	DY06	Pensnett North
	DY07	Kingswinford
	DY08	Pedmore & Lutley
	DY09	Brierley Hill
	DY10	Quarry Bank
Sandwell	SD01	Tipton Green, Oldbury & Langley
	SD02	Newton, Hamstead & Great Barr
	SD03	West Bromwich
	SD04	Old Hill
	SD05	Yew Tree
	SD06	Rowley Regis & Blackheath
	SD07	Sandwell Valley
	SD08	Tipton & Princes End
	SD09	Tividale
	SD10	Cradley Heath
	SD11	Central Smethwick and Cape Hill
	SD12	Warley
	SD13	Wednesbury & Hill Top
	SD14	Great Bridge
	SD15	North Smethwick



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Source:
Black Country HLC

Section 5: Historic Character Area Profiles

5.1 THE CHARACTER AREA PROFILES

As we have seen in section 4.1, the Character Areas created here are intended to be a way of assisting the presentation and understanding of BCHLC data. They do this in the first instance by dividing the study area—the Black Country—into 51 areas, the landscape of each of which shares, in broad terms, something in common.

The profiles on the following pages look at each Character Area in turn. They are particularly intended to be a contribution towards understanding the **character** and **local distinctiveness** of the Black Country landscapes.

The BCHLC is a database of essentially fine-grained, ‘hard’ information—details of individual dates, types of land use, plot sizes etc.—all organised into pre-defined categories. The Character Area Profiles describe the landscape in a slightly different way. They use the BCHLC data, but organise it in an overview and within a less strictly defined set of ideas. These ideas are generally connected with the aim of being able to convey a sense of place, a written sketch of *what a place is like*. The Profiles make reference to some individual features (both present and past), but try to look at the broader patterns, the context for these features.

So why is this important? Ideas of character and local distinctiveness have a significance in the current national planning policy, both for the purpose of selecting sites and/or structures for conservation but also to inform the design of new development.

In the case of conservation, guidance on planning and the historic environment has asserted the value of the distinctiveness of wider landscapes, beyond the protection through designation of individual sites or buildings:

‘The whole of the landscape, to varying degrees and in different ways, is an archaeological and historic artefact, the product of complex historic processes and past land-use... Much of its value lies in its complexity, regional diversity and local distinctiveness, qualities which a national register cannot adequately reflect.’ (PPG15, 1994)

Similarly, on the question of new development, guidance often encourages the reinforcement of local distinctiveness, *‘features which contribute to its special character and sense of place’*.*

Before we can conserve or even pay attention to the local distinctiveness of an area, we need to be able to understand it. It is to this aim that these Profiles are directed.

*By Design - Urban Design in the Planning System: Towards Better Practice’, Commission for Architecture & the Built Environment, Department of the Environment, Transport & the Regions, 2000.

Character Area Profile	Page
Dudley	
DY01 Netherton	45
DY02 Halesowen	47
DY03 Hayley Fields & Illey	49
DY04 Stourbridge	51
DY05 Dudley North	53
DY06 Pensnett North	55
DY07 Kingswinford	57
DY08 Pedmore & Lutley	59
DY09 Brierley Hill	61
DY10 Quarry Bank	63
Sandwell	
SD01 Tipton Green, Oldbury & Langley	65
SD02 Newton, Hamstead & Great Barr	67
SD03 West Bromwich	69
SD04 Old Hill	71
SD05 Yew Tree	73
SD06 Rowley Regis & Blackheath	75
SD07 Sandwell Valley	77
SD08 Tipton & Princes End	79
SD09 Tividale	81
SD10 Cradley Heath	83
SD11 Central Smethwick and Cape Hill	85
SD12 Warley	87
SD13 Wednesbury & Hill Top	89
SD14 Great Bridge	91
SD15 North Smethwick	93
Walsall	
WL01 Bloxwich & Blakenhall Heath	95
WL02 Streetly	97
WL03 Aldridge East	99
WL04 Brownhills & Walsall Wood	101
WL05 Walsall Town Centre and Industrial Districts	103
WL06 Willenhall	105
WL07 Bentley	107
WL08 Pheasey	109
WL09 Barr Beacon & Aldridge Fields	111
WL10 Aldridge West	113
WL11 South East Walsall	115
WL12 Darlaston	117
WL13 Pelsall	119
WL14 Rushall & Shelfield	121
Wolverhampton	
WV01 Wolverhampton City Centre & Industrial Districts	123
WV02 Wolverhampton Outer Western Suburbs	125
WV03 South Bilston & Ettingshall	127
WV04 Ettingshall Park & Lanesfield	129
WV05 Bushbury & Wednesfield North	131
WV06 North Bilston, Portobello & Moseley	133
WV07 Wednesfield South	135
WV08 Bradley	137
WV09 Ashmore Park	139
WV10 Pendeford, Fordhouses & Moseley	141
WV11 Blakenhall, Bradmore & Penn	143
WV12 Wolverhampton Inner Western Suburbs	145

Netherton Character Area (DY01)

SUMMARY:

This is generally a residential part of modern Dudley, although also encompassing recreational and wooded areas, together with industry straddling the canal in its south. The eastern boundary of the area borders similar residential areas of Sandwell (the canal also continues into Old Hill Character Area SD04), while the western boundary is formed by the change to a more industrial area alongside the canals and dual-carriageway¹.

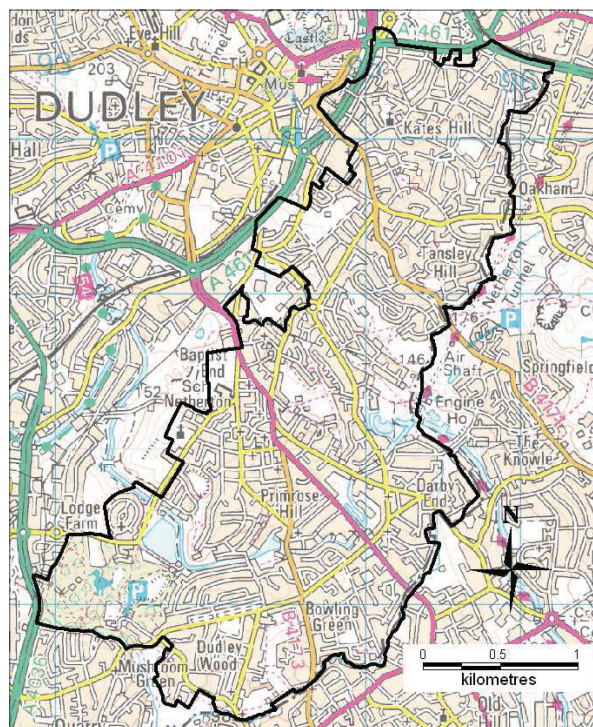
GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

This area lies over sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate and, in general, over shallow coal. The high ground in its north-east is dolerite. From this point, which is at more than 200m elevation, the land falls by around 100m over the Character Area's length, reaching its low point at its southern limit.

MODERN CHARACTER:

Despite being skirted in the north west by the dual carriageway of the Dudley Southern by-pass (1999), this area is largely made up of quieter residential streets, with the only A road through the area (Cinder Hill/Halesowen Road) running south-west from Dudley town centre - the route being one of the oldest through the area.

On the high ground in the north, the housing is in many cases a legacy of the southern expansion of Dudley and, in the north-west in particular mid-to-late Victorian terraces and villas survive. Much of the



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remainder of the north comprises large areas of inter-war semi-detached housing survive from the 20th century suburbanisation of Dudley.

In the south, housing is of perhaps more mixed origins, although it includes some large developments of semi-detached properties from the 1950s. The area's central band also includes significant post-war terraced housing dating from the 1960s and 70s.

Recreational & wooded areas include the playing fields of Netherton and Warren's Hall Parks, together with local nature reserves such as the large area of Saltwells Wood in the south west corner of the Character Area.

Netherton Arts Centre is typical of the Victorian townscape of the centre of the town. However large swathes of the surrounding area are typified by later, 20th century housing.

¹See Character Area Profile DY09 Brierley Hill.

HISTORIC CHARACTER²:

In the pre-industrial period the southern half of this area formed part of the large common of Pensnett Chase, while the northern section included the open fields which were part of the agricultural hinterland of the settlements of Netherton and Dudley (the latter being centred immediately to the north-west of the Character Area). Most of what is now the Character Area's boundary with Sandwell (i.e. its eastern edge) was also the line of Mousesweet Brook, a tributary of the River Stour running to the south.

Important changes took place in the 18th century when Pensnett Chase was enclosed, and mining was known to have developed in several locations. This included the area which is now Saltwell's Nature Reserve (in the south-west corner of the area), for example.

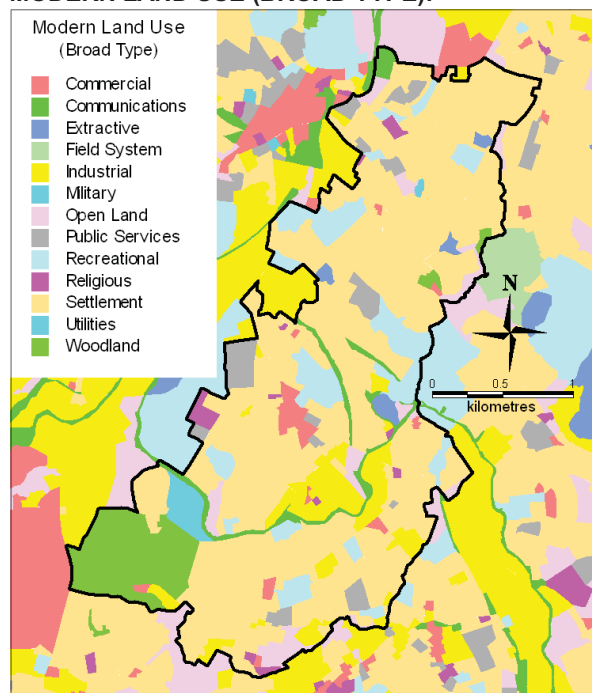
By the end of the 1830s, a canal was opened across the area linking the pre-existing canals between River Severn and north of the Black Country (in the west) and that already running to the centre of Birmingham (in the east). By this time, most of the area between the route of the canal in the south and the centre of Dudley in the north was dominated by areas of mining. Tramways were used to transport coal and other products to the new canal. Dudley and Netherton, among other local settlements, grew to service these extractive industries.

Later, further 19th century improvements in transport brought the railways in the form of the Great Western Railway Windmill End branch line, which crossed the area and linked it with the rest of the rail network at both Dudley and Old Hill. Another branch provided a goods station in the south-central part of the area, next to the then Netherton Works, producing chains and anchors (now the location of the Washington Centre). South of the canal, a network of private mineral railways also provided access to the main rail network in the west.

With the assistance of this infrastructure, the extractive industries and associated settlement grew and, by the time of the survey of the Ordnance Survey first edition in the 1880s, mining and mining towns had consumed all but small areas of the Character Area, forming the eastern part of a large area of mineral extraction covering the whole of the central part of what is now the modern Metropolitan Borough of Dudley.

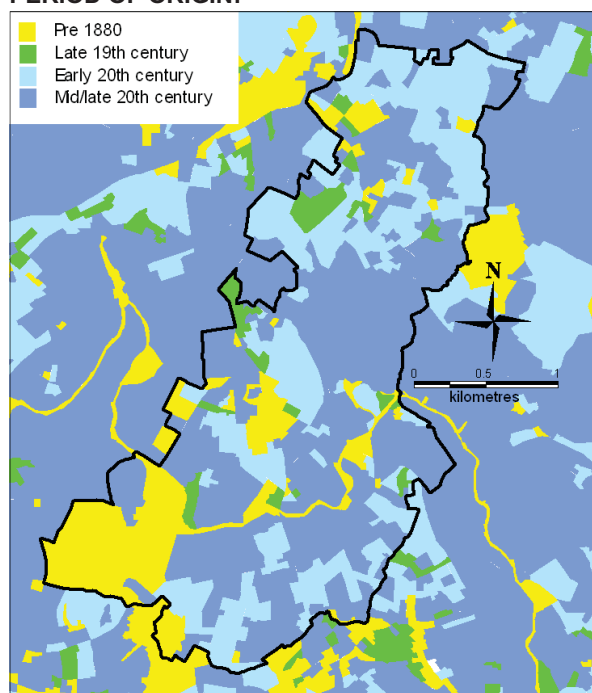
²This summary draws in part on maps researched and compiled by Dudley MBC Historic Environment Team - see <http://cmis.dudley.gov.uk/CMISWebPublic/Binary.ashx?Document=5447>.

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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However, the shrinkage of land used by mining towards the end of the 19th century and start of the 20th saw the beginning of the area's transformation. Throughout the 20th century, the use of this land for new suburban streets, as well as the continuity of older areas of housing into newer forms, contributed to the slow change from mining to the predominantly residential character of the present, as described overleaf.

Halesowen Character Area (DY02)

SUMMARY:

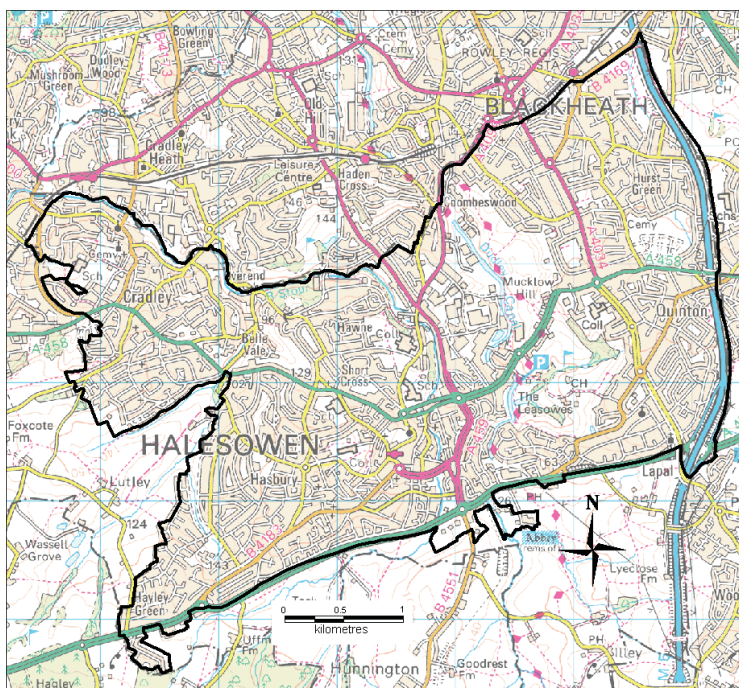
This is a large residential area incorporating the commercial centre of Halesowen. Also near the centre of the area is a significant area of industrial and recreational land, next to a section of the Dudley canal. The northern and eastern boundaries of the area border similar residential areas of Sandwell¹, while the southern boundary marks the end of the Black Country conurbation, beyond which is a more agricultural landscape².

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

This area lies over sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate and, with the exception of a small area at Coombeswood in the north, is generally off the shallow coal measures. The River Stour rises south of the area and flows north through its centre, forming the area's northern boundary as it flows west. The higher ground is split by the Stour valley into an area in the west (reaching around 220m) and in the south-west (about 150m).

MODERN CHARACTER:

For its large size, this area is an unusually modern landscape in Black Country terms - as much as three quarters of its area is mid to late 20th century development. In this sense it represents the modern expansion of the metropolitan conurbation south into previously more rural landscapes.



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The commercial centre of Halesowen lies in the south central part of the area, served by the A458 (shown in green running east-west on the map above) and the A459 (in red, running north-south). The parish church is medieval and there are a few Georgian houses of interest, but much of the modern centre of the town dates from redevelopment in the 1960s.

With the exception of Victorian and Edwardian terraces on the older streets of Cradley and Blackheath in the north-west and north-east respectively, large parts of the remainder of the area can be characterised as 20th century suburban streets lined with post-war semi-detached properties.

North-west of Halesowen town centre lies a significant industrial district alongside the last navigable section of the Dudley canal.

Part of the east-west route of the A458.
This view looks west towards Cradley.

¹The canal also continues into Character Area SD04 Old Hill.

²See Character Area Profile DY03 Hayley Fields & Illey.

HISTORIC CHARACTER²:

This area differs from many in the Black Country in that, owing largely to its geology, its landscape was not dominated by the effects of mining and quarrying in the 19th century. Instead, at a time when much of the central Black Country was transformed by burgeoning industrial towns and open-cast mining, its landscape was in general one of agriculture, small-scale settlement and industry (or at least industry which did not dominate the landscape in the same way as the open cast mining to the north). Despite this different historical background, the 20th century growth of housing around the Black Country saw the area's ultimate transformation to a suburban landscape with much in common with the rest of the conurbation.

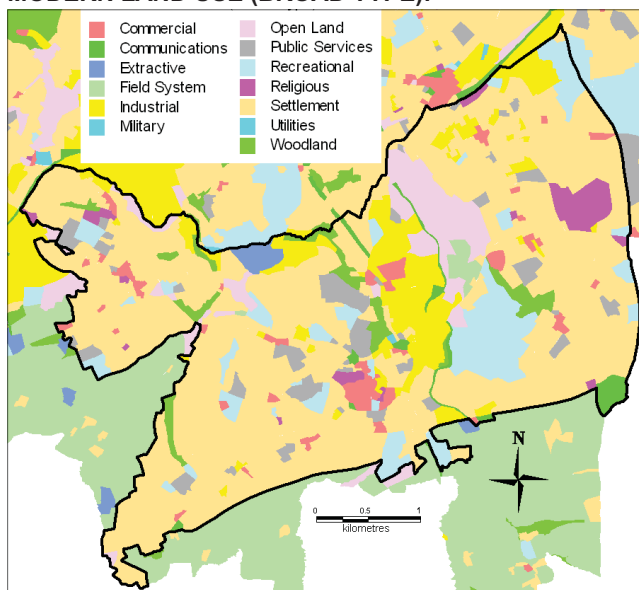
In the pre-industrial period the settlement at Halesowen was large in Black Country terms, having been an Anglo-Saxon settlement which was promoted by Halesowen Abbey in the 13th century. The town was surrounded by open fields and meadows, and the latter lined the banks of streams which still flow north through the Character Area to the Stour valley. In the early industrial period these watercourses, including the Stour itself, provided power to a string of mills and forges, and these industrial sites contributed in particular to the development of the north-west corner of the Character Area, where the Stour exits the area and is at its strongest. This area, Cradley, is also the part of this Character Area which historically has seen the largest area of colliery land.

The canals arrived in the area in the 1790s, linking Coombeswood (in the northern central part of the area) with the rest of the Black Country, as well as Birmingham (to the east) via a 2 mile tunnel. The latter was closed in the early 20th century.

The railways were late to become established in the area, and Halesowen station opened in 1878 on a now closed line between Old Hill and Longbridge. The modern industrial district of Halesowen (in the centre of the Character Area), which is broadly situated between the line of the Stour and the Dudley Canal, occupies much of the former railway land.

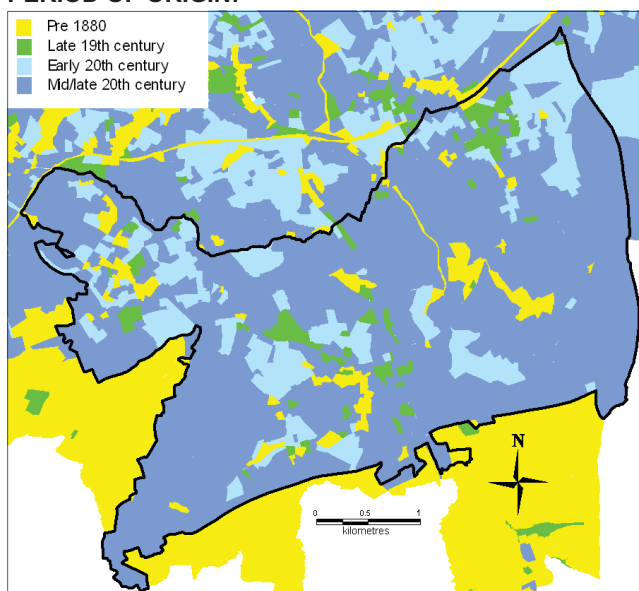
Older industrial landscapes, such as the large 19th century Coombeswood Tube Works (which existed to the north of the modern industrial district) left an area

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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of open land (shown in pink on the map of modern land use). However, since the HLC was recorded, this too has been the site of more modern industrial re-development.

Much of the extension of suburban Halesowen dates to the 1960s when the town was effectively by-passed by the new line of the A456 (the dual carriageway on the area's southern edge), which linked with the new M5 motorway. Since that time, available land between the road and the town has been used to add to the town's residential neighbourhoods.

²This summary draws in part on maps researched and compiled by Dudley MBC's Historic Environment Team.

Hayley Fields & Illey Character Area (DY03)

SUMMARY:

This is an area on the edge of the Black Country conurbation, characterised almost entirely by fields interspersed with small, scattered settlement, chiefly hamlets and farmhouses. The northern boundary of the area is formed by the change to the much more intensely residential character of Halesowen¹, while in the south the limit of the area is marked by the boundary with rural parts of Worcestershire.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

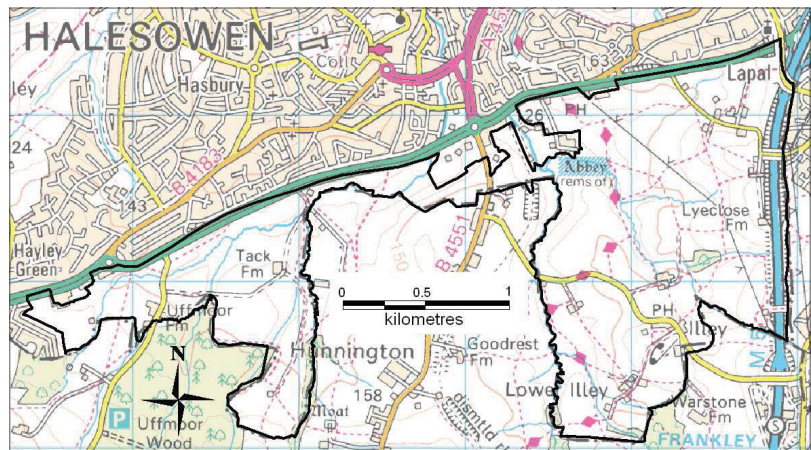
This area lies over sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate and is generally at around 150m elevation. Not far from its source in the Clent Hills to the south west, the River Stour passes through the area, entering the modern conurbation in the centre of the Character Area.

MODERN CHARACTER:

This Character Area is one of only three in the Black Country in which fields systems account for the majority of land.

Although it is the smallest of these, it is nevertheless the one most dominated by agricultural land (more than 90% of its area²).

Tributaries of the River Stour cross the area, joining the river before it exits the Character Area under the



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Hagley Road in the north. In several places these streams mark not only the limits of the area, but also the boundary between Dudley and Worcestershire.

Settlement in the area is generally accounted for by a dozen farmsteads (more than in almost any other Black Country Character Area), some of which form small hamlets (i.e. Illey, Lapal). Mapped evidence shows that almost all of these pre-date the early 19th century, although many of the buildings are more recent.

The modern landscape is also defined by two major roads, the dual carriageway of the east-west A456 and a north-south section of the M5 motorway, which converge at junction 3 of the M5 in the north-east corner of the area. Both were opened in the 1960s, and while the A456 Halesowen by-pass (Manor Road) provides the principal route of access to the area, it also serves to divide the area from conurbation to the north.



The River Stour as it approaches the Hagley Road in the centre of the Character Area.

¹See Character Area Profile *DY02 Halesowen*.

²As recorded in 2000.

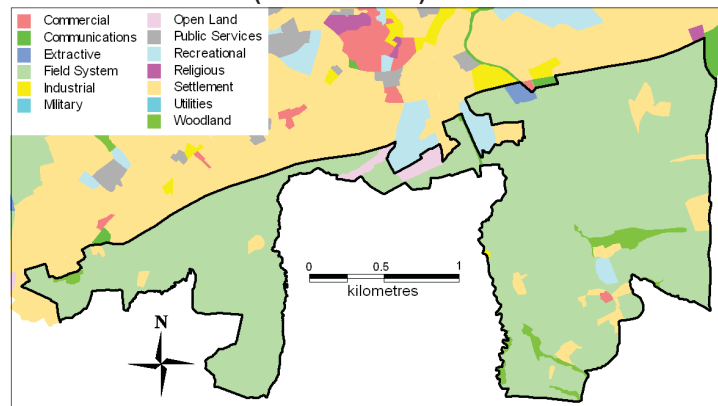
HISTORIC CHARACTER:

In the medieval period the east of the area was, for 300 years, within the near vicinity of St Mary's Abbey (the remains of the buildings themselves are immediately outside the northern central boundary of the Character Area). There is evidence that the establishment of the Abbey in this location in the early 13th century was influenced by the proximity of the watercourses flowing north towards Halesowen. These were used, for example, to feed the nearby system of fish ponds which, although now dry, have left their mark on the modern fields (this area is, in fact, possibly the best surviving remains of such a system in the Black Country) .

The creation of granges in the area was also part of the Abbey's efforts to develop its supply of agricultural goods. As the modern landscape is still largely field systems, many of these also retain evidence of medieval ridge and furrow.

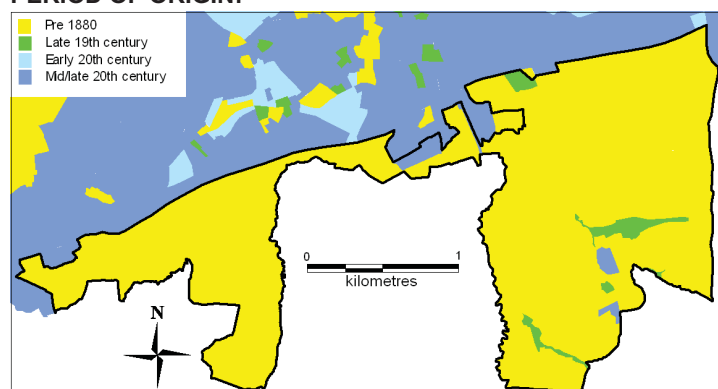
The area did not have an industrial phase but, despite this, important pieces of transport infrastructure crossed the area in the 18th and 19th centuries. The Dudley No.2 Canal ran through the north-east corner of the area and, from 1798 when the Lapal Tunnel opened, provided a southern link between the Black Country and Birmingham. Where the canal crossed under Manor Lane (now incorporated into the route of the A456 dual carriageway) the area's sole colliery lay on its banks. The Lapal Tunnel closed in 1953 and the remaining navigable section of the canal also now comes to an end before it reaches the Character Area.

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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A now disused railway line ran north-south across the Character Area at its narrowest point. It previously linked Halesowen with the rest of the Black Country in the north and the Birmingham suburb of Longbridge in the south-east, and was operational between the late 19th century and post war 20th century.



Illey Mill, located on one of the watercourses which, in several places, form the Character Area's common boundary with Worcestershire. There is evidence of a mill at this location from at least the medieval period.

Stourbridge Character Area (DY04)

SUMMARY:

This is a large area in the south-west corner of the Black Country, having the commercial centre of Stourbridge at its centre and, in its north-east, the industrial town of Lye. Although predominantly residential, the northern edge of the area runs along the valley of the river Stour, and encompasses important industrial areas along its banks. The southern and western boundaries mark the end of the Black Country conurbation, beyond which is a more agricultural landscape¹.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

The area lies over sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate with pebble beds in its west and the southern end of the coalfield accessible in its north-east. It is some of the lowest lying land in the Black Country, reaching about 70m in its north-west. The River Stour, which drains most of Dudley and south-west Sandwell, flows east to west along the northern boundary of the area.

MODERN CHARACTER:

In many ways this area is characterised by mixed use and mixed origins. As well as being one of the largest residential areas covered by any of our Character Areas (nearly two-thirds of its area² is covered by housing),

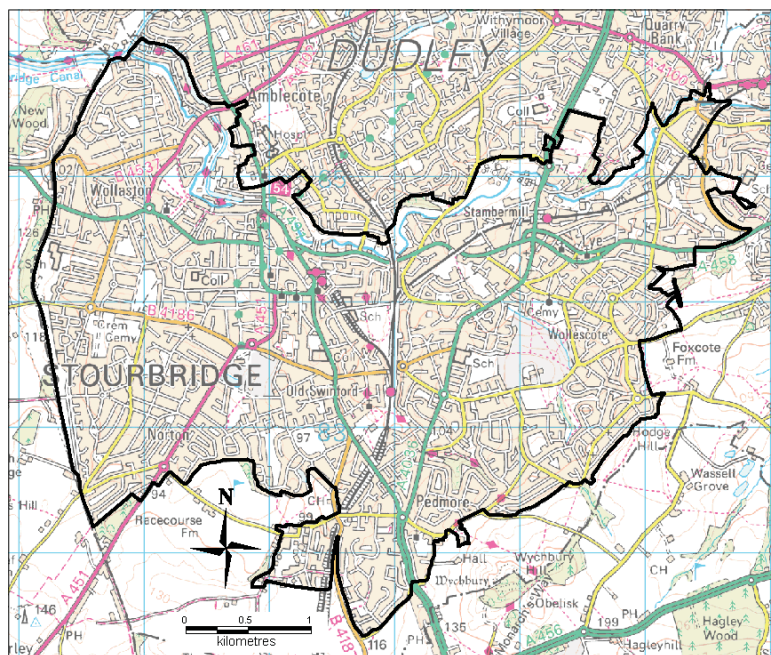
its boundaries also encompass the largest area of industry in Dudley outside of an 'industrial' Character Area.

The map of modern land use (overleaf) shows the way these different uses are distributed: a band of industrial

and open land follows the river valley across the north, and the centres of Stourbridge and Lye are situated just south of this. South of these centres again lie the residential suburbs.

The map of the period of origin of these suburbs also shows, in general, an east-west distribution. Around the town centres some small 19th century terraces remain, surrounded largely by inter-war development. Meanwhile the southern half of the Character Area was most recently developed, and contains particularly large areas of late 20th century detached properties (only two other Character Areas in the Black Country have more)

Two large inter-war recreational areas are also important features of the area: Mary Stevens Park, Stourbridge, and Stevens Park, Wollescote.



Flats built on the site of a 19th century clay pit near to Stourbridge Junction station.

¹See Character Area Profile *DY08 Pedmore & Lutley*.

²As recorded in 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

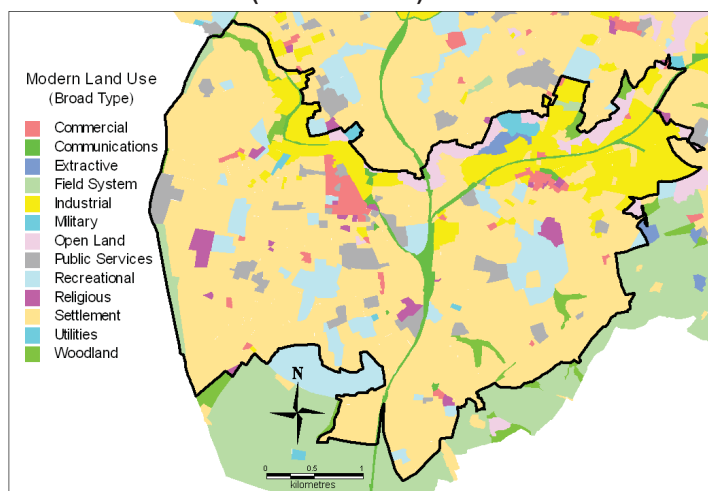
Although the commercial centre of what is now Stourbridge is by far the most important in the modern Character Area (as shown by the area of red in the north central part of the adjacent map), the town here developed at a relatively late point, only receiving a grant of a market and fair for example at the end of the 15th century. Before this point, the settlements to the south, i.e. Old Swinford and Pedmore (located to the west of and south-west of what is now Stourbridge Junction Station) were probably at least as important.

More generally, in Black Country terms this area's particular importance is that it included within its boundaries one of the larger watercourses flowing through the area. In an age when water was vital source of industrial power, the River Stour supported the location of a string of mills and forges along its banks. Stourbridge itself grew on the south bank of the river, at the point at which it was crossed by the important road route to Wolverhampton (now the A491).

Although there was a failed attempt to make the Stour itself navigable in the 17th century in order to provide access to the region's mineral wealth, it was not until a hundred years later that a canal was cut making possible the longer-term transportation of coal, iron and other goods out of the Black country to the river Severn. It was the beginning of the 19th century before a branch of the canal was opened into the centre of the town of Stourbridge.

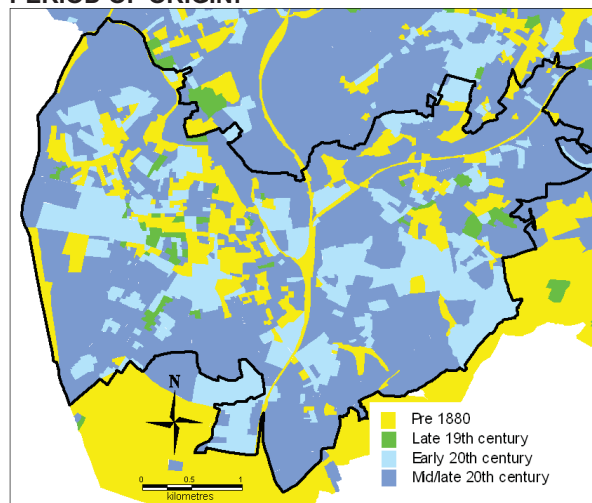
At this time both Stourbridge and Lye, being located next to the canal and/or river, had both usurped the more agricultural settlements as centres of trade and industry. Lye also had the advantage of being situated over the shallow coal of the South Staffordshire coalfield and, in the 19th century, the landscape of the north-east of the Character Area featured several collieries, as well as clay extraction and associated brickworks. Lye also had the advantage of being more conveniently situated for the new railway network which arrived in the second half of the century. Lye station was opened in 1863 while Stourbridge Town came later, in 1879 (even though a station had existed earlier at Stourbridge Junction).

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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The 20th century expansion of suburban housing over previously agricultural land in the south of the area took place in parallel with the replacement of much of the built environment of the Stour Valley in the north and north west – the townscape which had facilitated the area's early industrial development. In the north-east, for example, new industrial sites replaced collieries, while around the centres of Stourbridge and Lye, areas of 19th century housing were replaced with new homes, often in the form of post-war high density properties (terraces, flats or maisonettes).

Dudley North Character Area (DY05)

SUMMARY:

Predominantly residential, this very large area includes the suburbs immediately to the north of the commercial centre of Dudley (at its south-eastern edge), as well as those surrounding the centres of Coseley and Sedgley in its north. The northern limit of the area is defined by local authority boundaries between Dudley and Staffordshire, Wolverhampton and Sandwell. In the south, the area runs as far as more industrial areas in Pensnett and Brierley Hill¹.

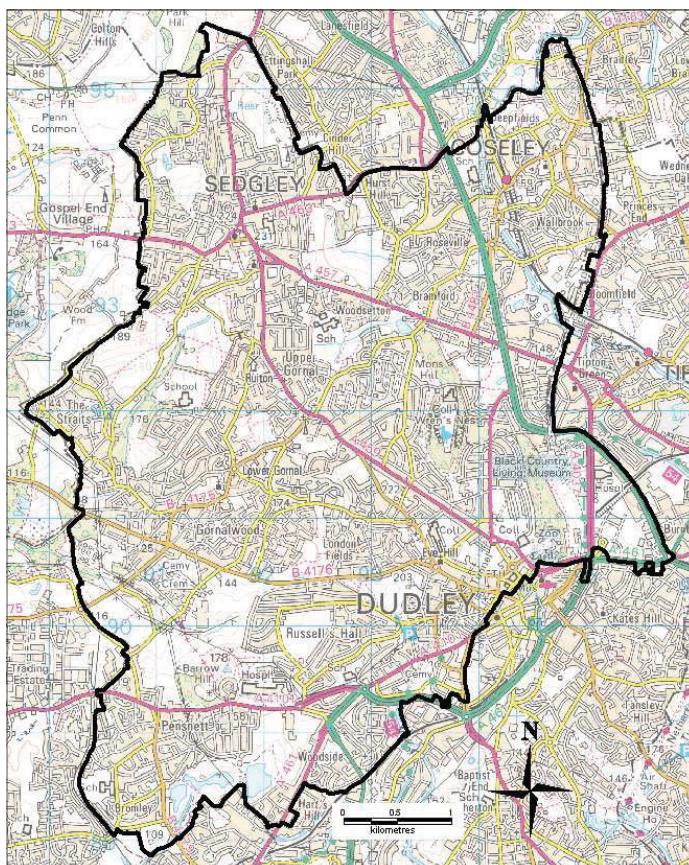
GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

This area encompasses the point where the long shallow coalfield under the Black Country is interrupted by a high limestone ridge. Within the area, the ridge runs from Sedgley in the north-west to Dudley town centre in its south-east. Elsewhere, coal is accessible, and the lower land in the far south-west and north-east sits over sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate. Isolated areas of dolerite exist, particularly in the south.

MODERN CHARACTER:

The largest of any of our character areas, its size is really a result of the continuity of 20th century development, particularly housing, across its landscape.

While most of the landscape has been developed since the second world war, there are also some significant areas of housing from the inter-war period, notably the two large estates which flank the *Wren's Nest* promontory near the centre of the area.



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Below: Dudley Zoo, in the east of the area, was built in the late 1930s at the same time the town's new suburbs.



¹See Character Area profiles DY06 and DY09 respectively.

²Dudley Borough Landscape & Townscape Character Study, Dudley MBC, 2000.

Meanwhile some of the Black Country's most recent housing is also present nearby at *Milking Bank*.

This area encompasses the largest expanse of open rough grassland in the Black Country - a relatively high proportion of the area (notwithstanding recent development in places such as *Castlegate Way*, at its eastern point). More official recreational areas include *Wren's Nest* itself, *Sedgley Golf Centre* (in the west) and the *Black Country Living Museum* (in the east).

The area's only canals and railways run through the lower ground, off the ridge, in the east and north east, and it is here - in what has been referred to elsewhere as '*Coseley corner*'² - that most of the surviving industrial sites are situated.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

In the medieval period the Character Area would have encompassed a large section of the main road from Wolverhampton (running diagonally through the area on the same line as the high ground of the limestone ridge). The route passed through the settlement at Sedgley (in the area's north-west) on its way to the town of Dudley itself, which grew up at the foot of the castle nearby. Along with Walsall and Wolverhampton, Dudley was one of the Black Country's largest medieval settlements.

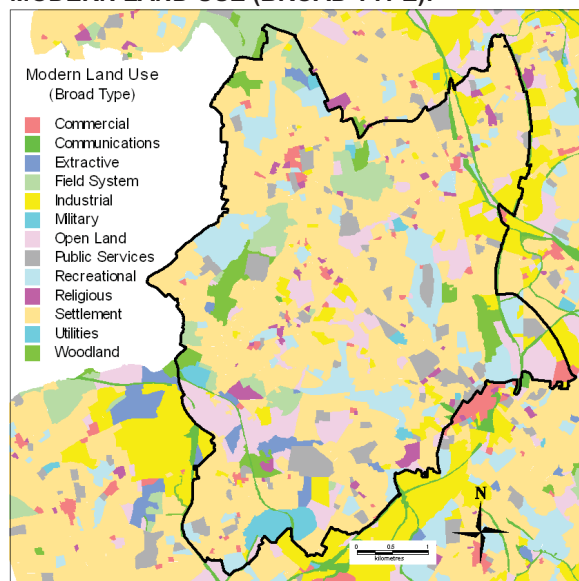
At the same time, the south and west of the area would have been part of *Pensnett Chase*, a large area of common land which defined the historic character of much of what is now the modern Borough.

By the time of the region's early industrialisation, coal mining featured heavily in the lower parts of the area - particularly to the west of Dudley town centre. Already, by the time of Ogilby's 17th century map of the road into Dudley from the west, several coal pits lay alongside it. Possibly owing to the early exploitation of coal by squatters on common land on this road at Gornal Wood, the street pattern is particularly dense and irregular, as illustrated by the maps below.

While the line of the first Birmingham to Wolverhampton canal (1770) only skirted the north-east of the area, the newer, straighter route (1837) cut through the hill at Coseley via a long tunnel. Railways were also laid through the lower lying land in the south-west and north-east. In Coseley, the presence of accessible minerals and good transport infrastructure supported the development of the mining and industry typical of that part of the area in the 19th century.

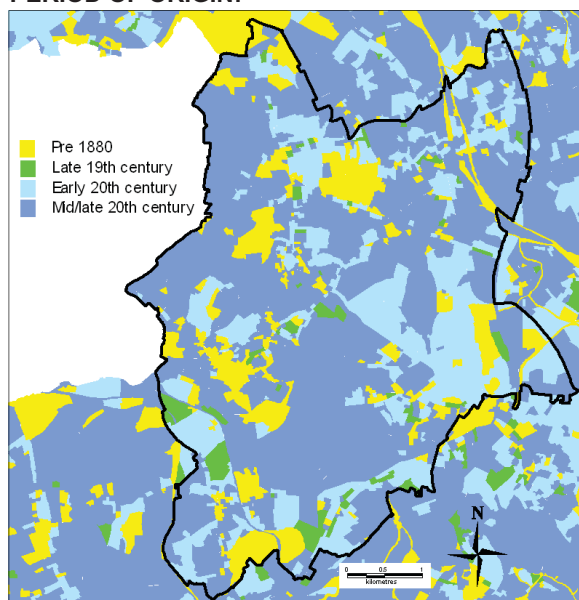
As late as WW1 much of the Character Area was still either agricultural or covered with large colliery sites. However, large scale 20th century suburbanisation started after the war, and included some of the largest housing developments of the period in the Black Country at *The Priory* and *Wren's Nest*. These were planned around a geometric street pattern between the

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



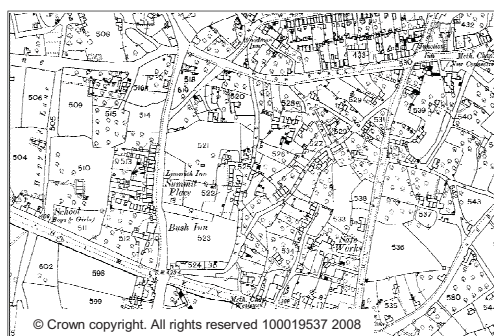
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PERIOD OF ORIGIN:

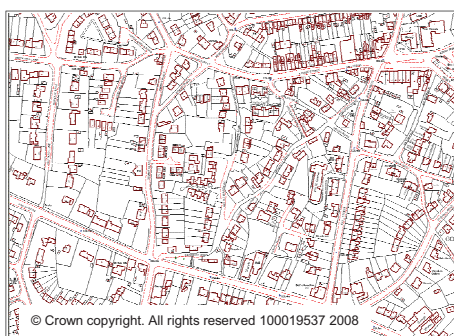


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newly laid out long straight routes of the Birmingham New Road (1927) and *Broadway*, the latter providing a new route out of Dudley to the north-west.



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The settlement of Gornal Wood (in the south-west of the area) has a long-standing and possibly unique street layout. The maps show the area in 1880 (left) and 2000 (right).

Pensnett North Character Area (DY06)

SUMMARY:

An area of industry on the edge of the Black Country, this area is unusual in that the majority its industry is accounted for by a single trading estate – one of the largest planned industrial estates in the country. The area is flanked by largely residential areas¹, while the north of the area, which includes the largest area of extractive industries in Dudley, borders rural Staffordshire.

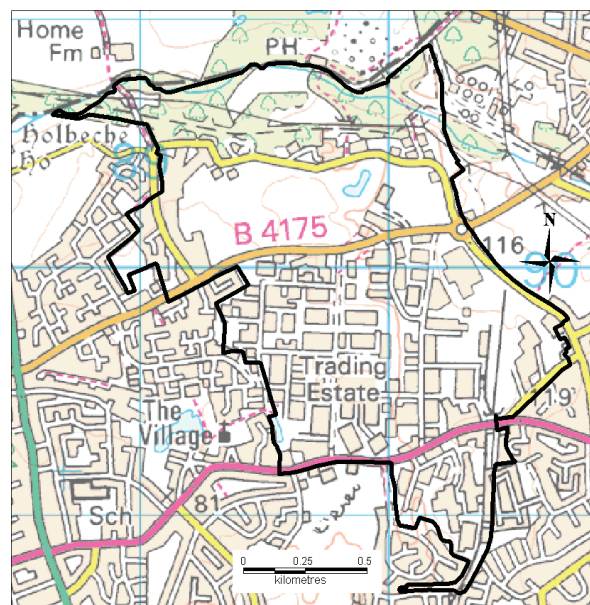
GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

This small area of low lying land (for the most part below 100m) is generally over sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate with some shallow coal in its east.

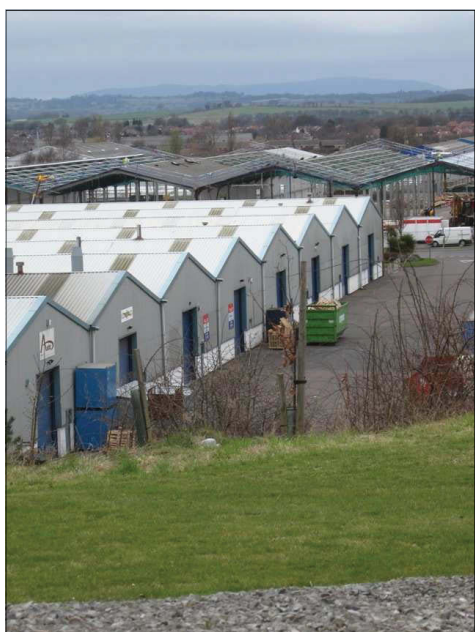
MODERN CHARACTER:

This is a predominantly industrial area and, unlike most other parts of the Black Country, contains almost no housing. In one sense at least, it is the most modern Character Area in Dudley, with three quarters of its landscape originating in the period since 1938.

The industry in the area is dominated by the *Pensnett Trading Estate*, which occupies 70 hectares - most of the area between two principle east-west routes through the area, the B4175 and A4101. An area of former extractive industry which became available after the WW2, the Estate is the location of nearly 200 firms and is characterised by plots laid out on a grid of straight avenues, the longest of which is half a mile. Although there are certainly similar industrial estates elsewhere, the scale of this single planned site is not repeated anywhere else in the Black Country.



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A view of part of Pensnett Estate in 2008, looking west towards rural south Staffordshire.

Despite this large individual transformation of the landscape away from extraction, clay quarrying in particular remains an important part of the landscape, occupying most of the northern half of the area. This area is the largest of its type in the southern half of the Black Country.

The legacy of mining is also famously illustrated by the subsidence which created the *Crooked House* pub, on the area's northern boundary.

Today, the industry in the area is serviced via the two roads already mentioned, but the modern landscape still retains evidence of the canals and railways which once moved goods and materials to and from the area (see overleaf). On the south-eastern edge of the area, and in its north, the curve of what was a branch of the *Great Western Railway* is still evident on the map of modern land use (see over).

¹See Character Area Profiles *DY05 Dudley North* and *DY07 Kingswinford*.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

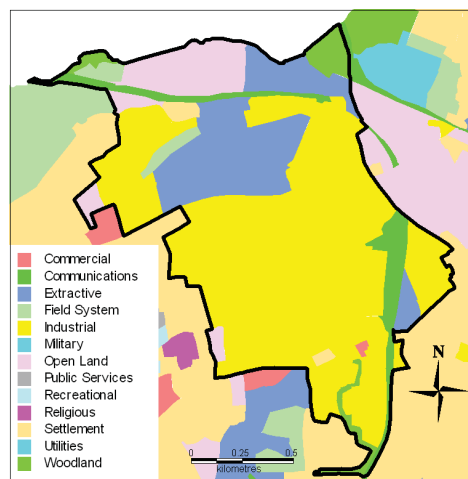
In the pre industrial period, this area lay between the settlement of Kingswinford, just to its south-west, and the edge of Pensnett Chase at its eastern edge. Although most of the settlement lay outside its boundaries, the area took in several open fields which surrounded Kingswinford. With the exception of one or two farmsteads and a country houses, now disappeared, the area has never itself been an area of settlement.

In Black Country terms, the area was relatively late to become involved in large scale mining and iron-working. However, by the first third of the 19th century, the industrial activity which would define the area's later character had got underway in its south-east, with evidence of collieries and furnaces being shown on the Ordnance Survey map of the 1830s. With this industrialisation, the 19th century brought a range of different solutions to the challenge of transporting goods in and out of the area (shown in the schematic map of Pensnett Trading Estate at the bottom of this page). Most visible in 1835 was the private inclined rail line which descended several miles from the south-east of the area to join the Staffordshire & Worcestershire canal in the west.

Although the huge Shut End iron works dominated the landscape of the late 19th century, by the end of the Victorian period the site had become disused, making way for the later *Stourbridge Refractories Company* to occupy the same location.

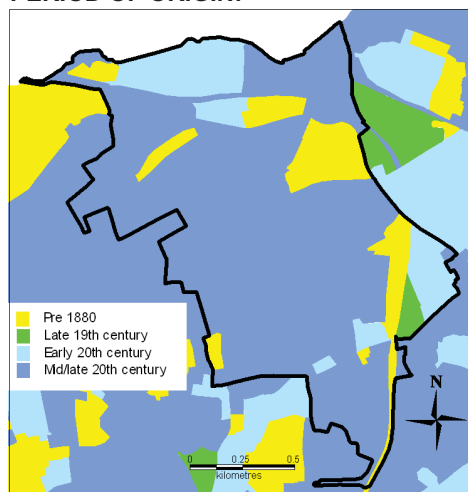
Among the products of the Stourbridge Refractories Company were firebricks (used in lining furnaces, kilns, etc.). More generally, the production of bricks and tiles has been a tradition in the area since at least the early 1800s. Although still part of the area's character today, in the immediate pre-war period the brick and tile industry accounted for all the large manufacturers in the area. What is now the source of *Ketley Bricks* and *Dreadnought Tiles* (on the area's eastern point) is not only a long-standing location of tile production, but possibly the oldest manufacturing facility still in operation in the Black Country.

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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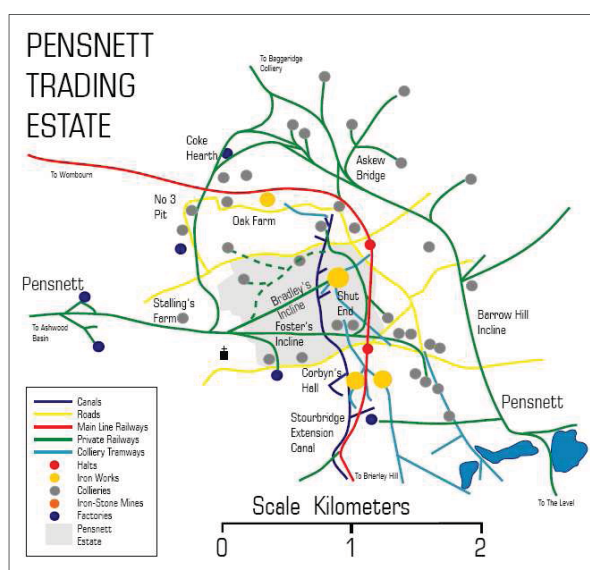
PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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This building, now a security block at an entrance to the Pensnett Estate, appears to be a survivor from an earlier phase in the landscape.



The complexity of 19th century transport links in and around what is now Pensnett Trading Estate are illustrated by this map, produced by Ian Grant for www.lostlabours.co.uk.

Kingswinford Character Area (DY07)

SUMMARY:

This is a residential district (more than two thirds of its area is accounted for by housing¹) at the edge of the conurbation and includes the small commercial centre of Kingswinford. In the south of the area are a number of important industrial units which together comprise the Stourbridge glass quarter. The northern and western limits of the Character Area are formed by the shared boundary with rural Staffordshire, at its southern edge is the valley of the river Stour, while in the east are more industrial areas of Pensnett and Brierley Hill².

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

This area generally lies over sandstone and mudstone, and is off the shallow coal seams which lie elsewhere beneath the Black Country. It is some of the lowest lying land in the Black Country, particularly in the south where the land sinks to below 70m in the valley of the River Stour, the area's southern boundary.

MODERN CHARACTER:

While much of the area comprises modern, post-war residential suburbs, these are built around a more historic 'spine' of the north-south A491 (shown in green, running the length of the area on the adjacent map), a longstanding road route between the towns of Wolverhampton and Stourbridge.

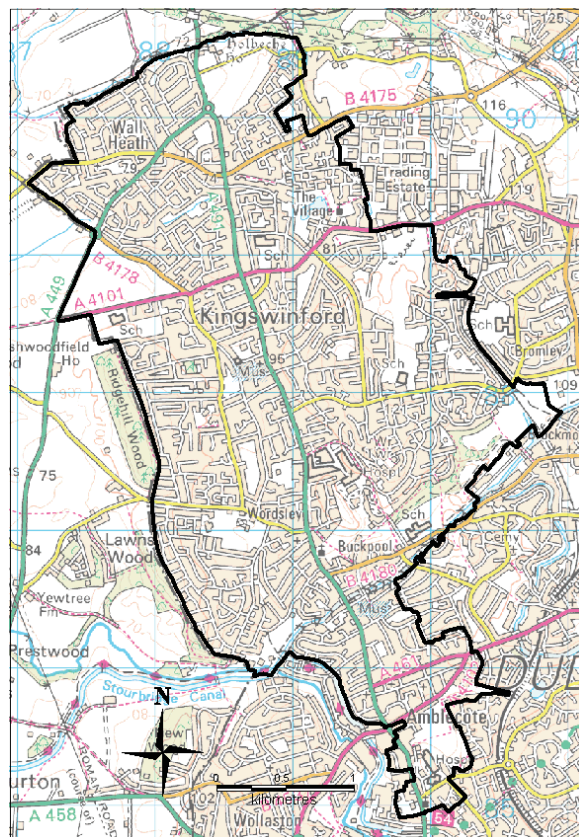
In the north, the commercial centre of Kingswinford lies on this route, while in the south, an area of mixed commercial, industrial and residential use (as well as mixed period of origin) clustered around it forms the glass quarter of Stourbridge. This area is unusual in its concentration of glass-making traditions, but also in the proximity to

each other of industrial and housing units

when, elsewhere in Black Country, these divisions have often been rationalised to create larger areas of either residential or industrial use.

The rest of the area largely comprises streets lined with semis and detached housing built in the second half of the 20th century on former agricultural land (with one exception, it is the Black Country Character Area with the largest area of 1960s and 1970s semi-detached housing). Within these suburbs, are also a number of important public services built or expanded in the post-war period, including schools and a large hospital site in the south.

A statue at the junction of two A roads on the southern edge of the area marks the 'Crystal Mile', the centre of the glass industry on the route between Stourbridge (in the south) and Wordsley in the centre of the Character Area.



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¹As recorded in 2000.

²See Character Area Profiles DY06 Pensnett North and DY09 Brierley Hill respectively.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

The historic character of this area is distinctive in Black Country terms in so far as it retained large areas of agricultural land long after other areas of the sub region were turned over to mining and quarrying, to industry, or to housing. For a large part of the 20th century - and as late as the Second World War - active field systems were commonplace (in the 21st century only two significant areas remain).

In most of the area, particularly in the east, these field systems were the result of piecemeal or irregular enclosure of land in the years prior to 1750. However, along its western edge the area had been part of *Ashwood Hays* in the medieval period, a large swathe of unenclosed common land. In this part, the fields were laid out later, in a more regular way, as part of planned enclosures around 1800.

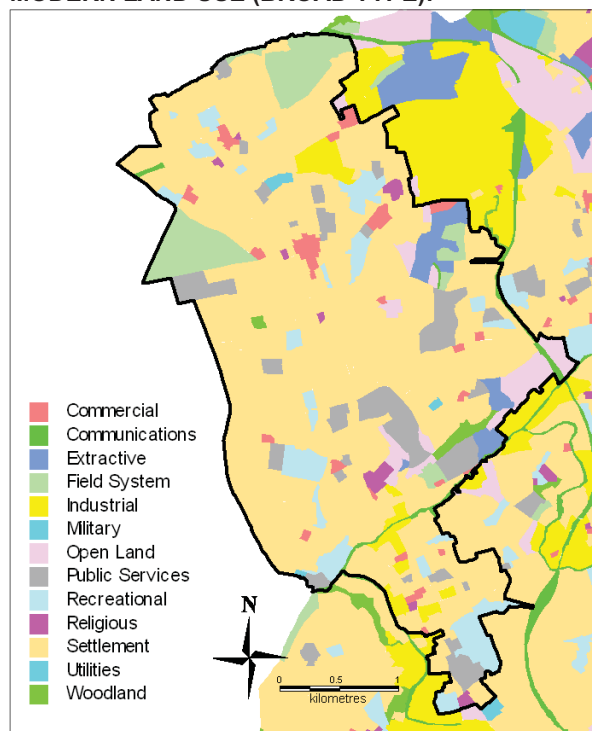
The unusually late use of the area for agricultural purposes does not imply, however, that the area had no experience of extraction or of industry.

Particularly in the east of the area, coal mining and clay quarrying has left its mark (the dark blue areas on the adjacent map indicate either active or disused extractive sites). In the north west, an area of industrial units was constructed in the 20th century next to a disused railway line - sharing similarities in its character with the planned post-war industrial areas nearby in Pensnett North Character Area (DY06).

The industry of the south of the area, i.e. the Glass Quarter along the A491, is of a generally different type however. As indicated overleaf, some of this character comes from the location of small, longstanding industrial units in what has been, and remains, a predominantly residential area. In this sense, 20th century 'zoning' to separate of housing and industry has not taken effect in the way it has elsewhere in the Black Country.

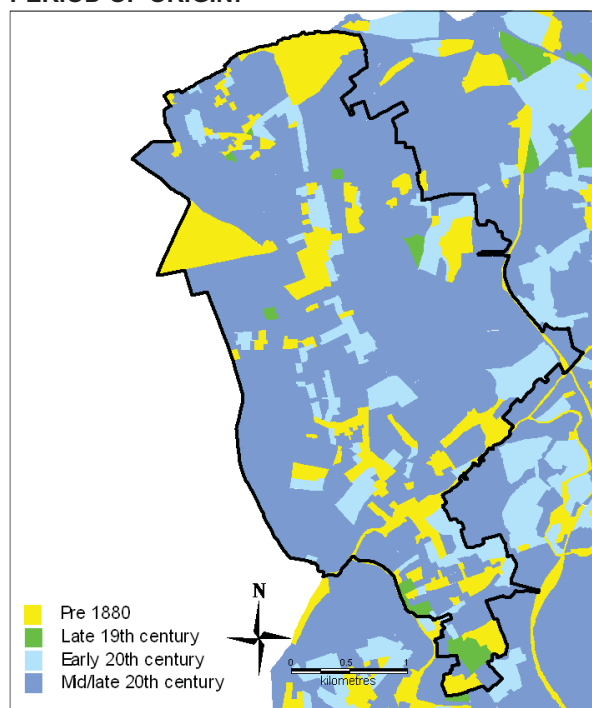
This is reflected in the data recorded in the HLC: outside of the Stourbridge Glass Quarter and neighbouring Stour valley, only the north of Cradley Heath (SD10) hosts more pre-1880 industrial sites within a largely residential district.

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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Pedmore & Lutley Character Area (DY08)

SUMMARY:

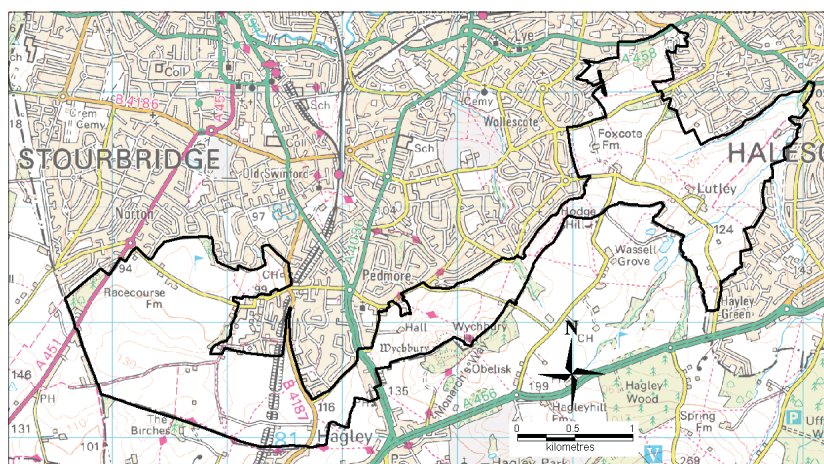
This is an area on the edge of the Black Country conurbation, characterised almost entirely by fields interspersed with small settlements. The northern boundary of the area is formed by the change to the much more intensely residential character of Stourbridge¹, while in the south the limit of the area is marked by the boundary with rural parts of Worcestershire.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

The south-western edge of the modern Black Country, this area is over red sandstone and pebble beds. It is generally low lying by Black Country standards, although Pedmore, in its centre, and the area to the east, is higher land, reaching about 180m.

MODERN CHARACTER:

On the margins between the conurbation and rural parts of Worcestershire, this Character Area is one of only three in the Black Country in which fields account for the majority of land. A narrow strip of agricultural land, it forms a rural buffer between the towns of Halesowen and Stourbridge, as well as between the latter and the Worcestershire village of Hagley to the south. Although the landscape beyond

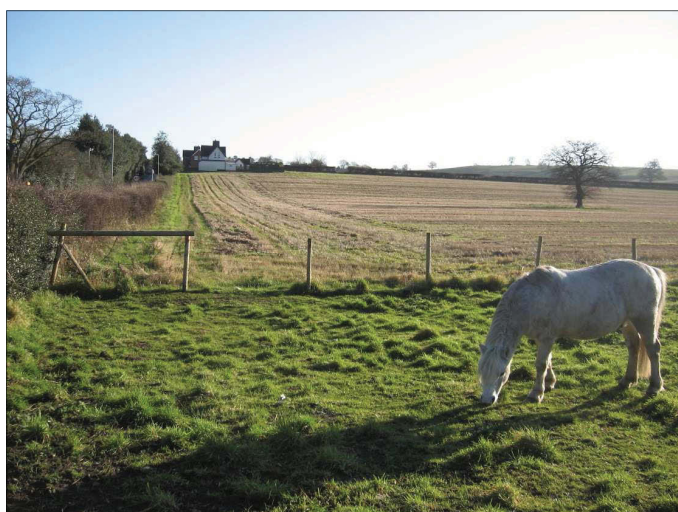


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its southern limits is generally more rural in character, the area borders a number of less agricultural parts: the village of Hagley itself, a large country club and golf course, and small areas of woodland.

The Character Area is crossed by a number of transport routes generally radiating from Stourbridge in the north. These include the railway line south towards Worcester and the dual-carriageway of the A491. With the exception of post-war housing alongside this route and the nearby Pedmore Hall, almost all of the settlement in the area is accounted for by farmsteads.

In the west, where the area meets the residential part of Halesowen, it is crossed by a tributary of the River Stour, Lutley Gutter, which also forms its boundary in places.



The landscape adjacent to *Racecourse Lane*, in the north-west corner of the Character area. This is the first agricultural land south of Stourbridge. Buildings of Racecourse Farm are visible in the background.

¹See Character Area Profile DY04 *Stourbridge*.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

The persistence of the area's rural nature has, in contrast to the rest of the Black Country, led to the survival of ancient features in the landscape - clues to its character before the medieval period. Examples of this include the remains of the iron age hillfort at Wychbury Hill, on the edge of central strip of the Character Area (the border with Worcestershire actually divides the monument). This is one of the few visible hillforts surviving within the area of the modern Black Country.

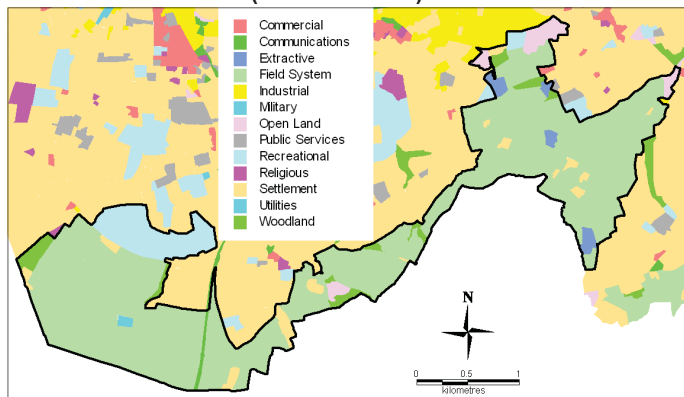
Just to the north is another site which originates in an earlier landscape, i.e. that of Pedmore Hall. Although the current hall itself is predominantly modern, its location and surroundings, with its straight, tree-lined approach and pond, probably date to at least the 17th century.

Further west, the Character Area was part of a large area of common land in the medieval period. However, the land had been parcelled into enclosed fields by the early 19th century, and their straight boundaries suggest that this enclosure was a planned rather than piecemeal process.

Little in the way of settlement ever encroached on the west of the area. However, the historic character of the east was slightly different, with the village of Lutley (previously Lower Lutley) lying at its centre. Lutley lies close to a tributary to the River Stour and to Lutley Lane, a route which follows the line of the watercourse and joins the Hagley Road in the south, the latter being turnpiked in the mid 18th century. The watercourse had powered mills along its route and one in particular, Lutley Mill, pre-dates the mid 18th century. Although no longer used for its original purpose, it has given its name to the adjacent road and a nearby 20th century pub.

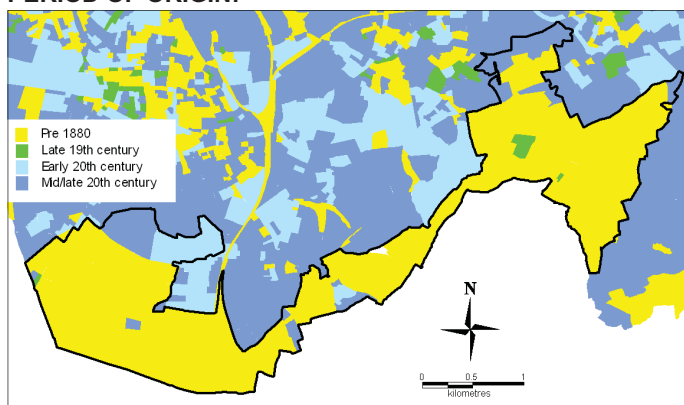
The fields in this eastern part of the Character Area had been enclosed by the 19th century, although particularly in the north, in the area of *Foxcote Farm* (marked on the map overleaf) these original divisions

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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were later removed - perhaps in the 20th century - to produce much larger areas of enclosure.

In addition to agriculture, the landscape retains evidence of extractive industries which have been carried out during different parts of its history. Although not on the scale of that in the central Black Country to the north, a number of former mines and quarries have now given way to small areas of grassland or woodland. These include Norton Covert, a former sandstone quarry in the far west of the area which is now a recreational woodland.

Recreational land also has a tradition in the area's north-west, where the site of the Stourbridge Golf club was, in an earlier phase, used for horse racing (a use still referred to by the nearby *Racecourse Lane*: see photo on previous page).

Brierley Hill Character Area (DY09)

SUMMARY:

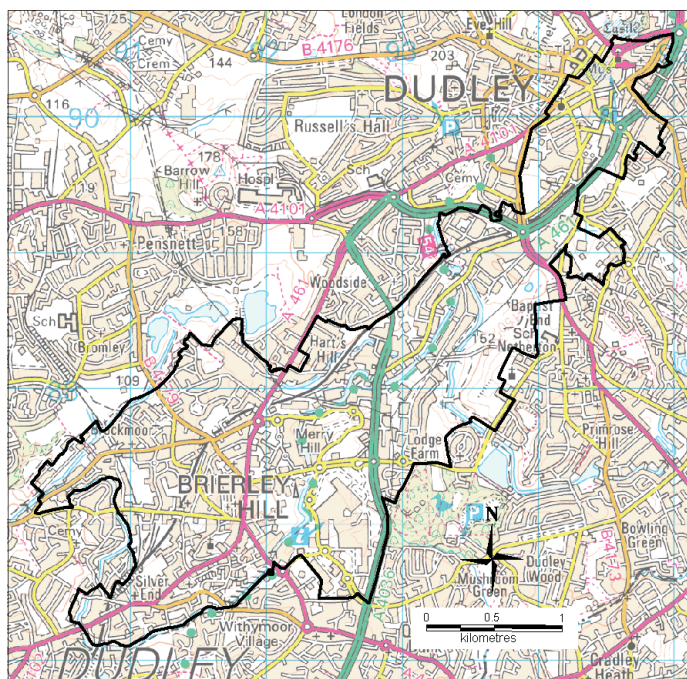
Dudley's largest industrial district¹, this area also includes more commercial land than any other part of the Black Country, encompassing the older centres of Dudley and Brierley Hill, as well as the large late 20th century retail park at Merry Hill. The character and shape of the area is also heavily influenced by the presence of an unusual density of communications infrastructure. The limits of the area are defined by the change to more residential areas beyond its boundaries.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

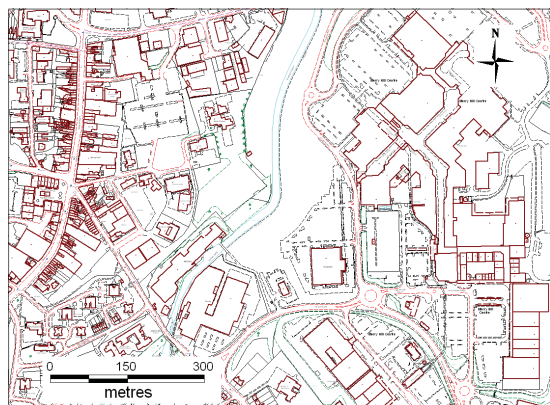
This area lies over coal measures as well as sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate. Like the area to its south¹, the land in this area falls considerably over its length from its high point of about 200m in the north-east, reaching a low point in the area's west.

MODERN CHARACTER:

The importance of this area as a commercial and retail centre expanded in the late 20th century on the opening of the *Merry Hill Shopping Centre* on former industrial land in its south. Merry Hill, combined with older centres nearby in Brierley Hill and Dudley, account for more commercial land than any other Black Country Character Area (more than the centre of Wolverhampton, and three times that of any other).



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Originally envisaged as an area of renewed industry, the construction of the vast Merry Hill shopping centre in the 1980s (shown on the right of the above plan) took advantage of relaxed public planning rules and tax incentives. However, the scale of the project challenged the economy of the older centre of Brierley Hill (on the left of the plan), Dudley town centre (in the north-east of the Character Area), as well as retail centres further afield.

In the north-east, significant parts of the surviving centre of Dudley date from the 18th century, while the core of Brierley Hill, marked in the bottom left of the map above and centred on its north-south High Street, has an essentially 19th century character. The High Street itself is made up of dense area of two and three storey largely commercial buildings.

Despite the spread of shops and offices, the area is still an important industrial centre, being one of the largest areas of industry in the Black Country, and the most extensive in Dudley. Many of the remaining industrial sites have historical connections to the canals and railways which run through it. However, the core of the industry comprise estates of large, regular units which were planned in the second half of the 20th century.

The character of the north-east of the area has been influenced by the opening at the end of the 20th century of the dual carriageway of Dudley Southern by-pass.

¹As recorded in 2000.

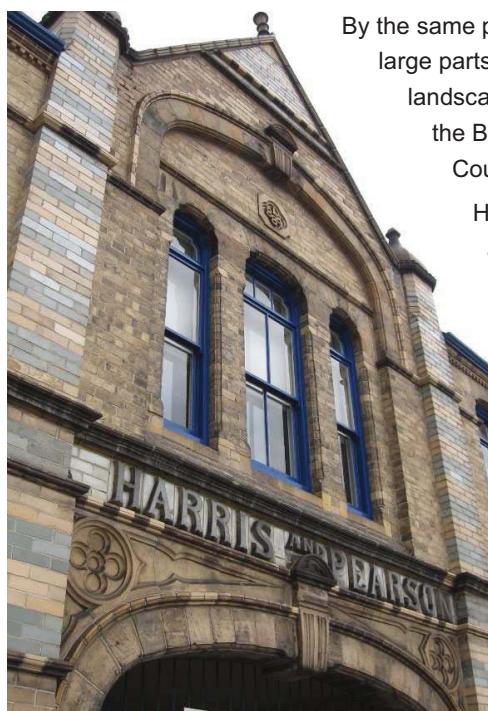
HISTORIC CHARACTER:

The Character Area has included important commercial and retail functions since the medieval period, when Dudley (in the far north of the Character Area) was one of the Black Country's few towns.

Dudley was laid out at the foot of the nearby Castle, probably in the early 13th century. The other historic centre, Brierley Hill (to the south west), is a product of the later industrial age. While Yates' 1775 map, for example, shows the main Dudley to Stourbridge road, i.e. the modern Brierley Hill High Street, it marks no development on it where the commercial centre lies today.

In the medieval period most of the area, save for its northern part, lay within *Pensnett Chase*, a large area of common land. This remained the case into the 18th century, although the Chase by then hosted both coal mines and plantations to supply wood for the smelting of iron.

By 1779, the Dudley canal had been cut through the area, creating a large loop around the high ground on Brierley Hill High Street, and providing access to the River Severn in the west and, in 1792, to the northern Black Country via the Dudley Tunnel. Along the canalside were brickworks, glassworks, and iron furnaces. The 19th century saw the laying of a railway along the length of the Character Area which, before its closure in the 1960s, served industrial sidings and 5 passenger stations within it - a measure of local activity in the period.



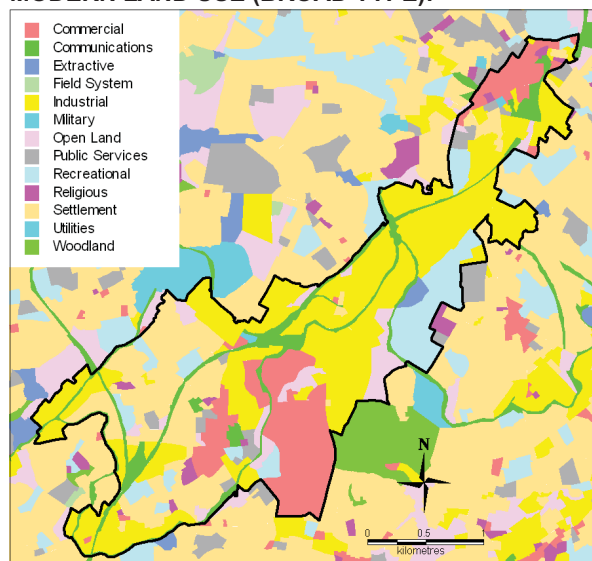
By the same period, large parts of the landscape, like the Black

Country more generally, had become dominated by collieries.

However, by the 20th century the area was undergoing another large scale shift in its land use, and the inter-war years in particular saw a reconstruction of several sites which had become available through the decline of coal extraction. In the central part of the area these became the location for planned industrial districts (referred to under Modern Character overleaf) while, in the west they were generally used for housing developments.

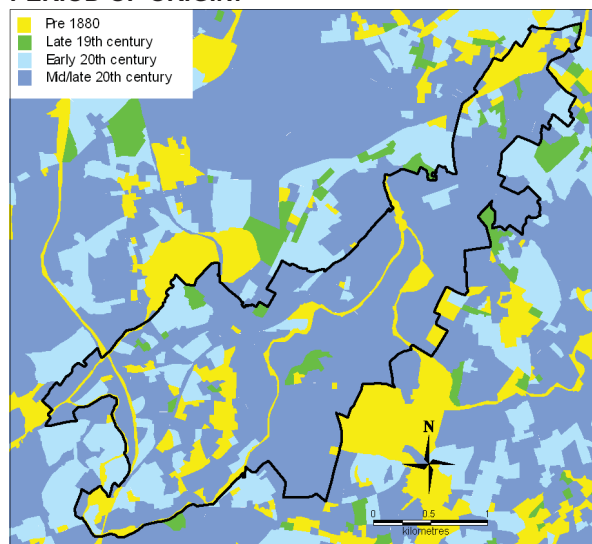
The former office building of the Harris and Pearson brickworks stands on Brettell Lane in the far south west of the Character Area, within the loop of the canal. The building was built in 1888 and, although it went out of use in the late 20th century, it has recently been restored by the *West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust*. The site at Brettell lane is one of several brickworks which have existed in the area.

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Quarry Bank Character Area (DY10)

SUMMARY:

This is a largely residential area, including the small commercial centre of Quarry Bank in its east. Unusually dominated by residential streets, the area contains a small amount of recreational and open land, and few industrial sites, unlike the more industrial districts which lie beyond its northern and southern limits.

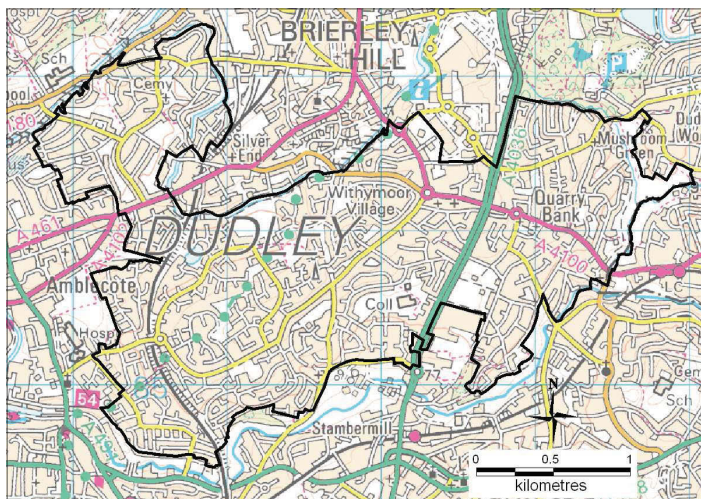
GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

This area is generally over shallow coal. A ridge of higher ground at its centre (reaching about 130m) descends to the valleys at its edges, including the valley of the River Stour which forms the area's southern boundary.

MODERN CHARACTER:

This area is overwhelmingly residential: it is the most dense area of housing in Dudley and, for their size, only three other Character Areas in the Black Country contain more residential neighbourhoods.

The housing itself is also, in general, relatively recent in its construction, much of it built in the last thirty years on land which had previously been used for extractive industries. One particular development, crossed by a north-south rail line, accounts for a large parts of the south-west of the Character Area. This is, in fact, the largest area of housing built since the mid seventies in the Black



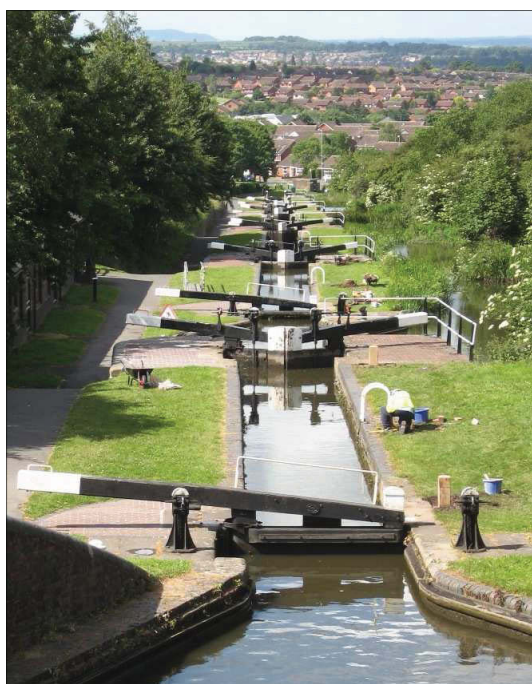
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Country, and one of the last great instances of recycling of mining and quarrying land.

As can be seen from the map of the area's period of origin (overleaf), the eastern half of the Character Area is generally older, centred around the east-west route of the A4100 Quarry Bank *High Street* (shown in red on the map above) and the intersecting north-south *New Street* (in yellow).

Other than housing, recreational and open land is significant. Three large areas of park and public open space were created from former mining land - much of it contemporary with the development of late 20th century housing mentioned above. Open land marks the eastern edge of the area at *Mousesweet Brook*.

One of the largest roads in this part of the Black Country, the A4036 *Thorns Road*, connects the area with Merry Hill and Dudley to the north. It was converted to a dual carriageway in the mid 20th century.



Canals, rivers and streams form several stretches of the boundaries of this largely residential area. Here, a sequence of nine locks on the Dudley Canal lies on the edge of the Character Area and divides it from the commercial and industrial areas of Brierley Hill to the north. Housing within the Character Area can be seen in the distance.

HISTORIC CHARACTER¹:

Although the south-west of the area is today a relatively modern landscape, it is this part of the area - rather than Quarry Bank in the east - which was host to some of the oldest recorded settlement in the area. In the late 18th century, for example, Yates' 1775 map showed the only road on to the ridge in the centre of the area came up from Stourbridge, outside of the area's south west boundary. Buildings are shown lining this road, which appeared to run towards an area of early coal pits in the north-east. Since Yates' survey, the road and its buildings have disappeared under the late 20th century housing estate which now occupies the area.

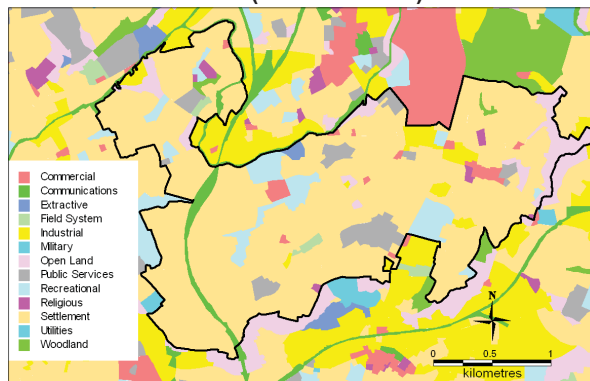
In the medieval period, all of the eastern half of the area lay within *Pensnett Chase*, an area of common ground covering most of the central area of what is now the Metropolitan Borough of Dudley. It was within this part of the Character Area that the early coal extraction is recorded, around the centre of what is now the settlement of Quarry Bank.

Quarry Bank itself grew in the 19th century over this landscape. Much of the rest of the Character Area, particularly in its north and west, was taken by collieries, clay pits and brickworks. But in the east housing, pubs, schools, and small factories sprang up around the High Street. Although Quarry Bank itself did not have a railway station, perhaps important in its development was the fact that its main street led down to the ironworks of *Cradley Forge* (just outside the south-east corner of the Character Area) and the nearby industrial areas on the Stour Valley. From the 1860s these areas were served by the Stourbridge Railway (now part of the *Jewellery Line* out of Birmingham Snow Hill).

The early 20th century saw new suburbs created around the core of Quarry Bank, with inter-war streets extending to the north and south, over what had been fields and woodland. Land occupied by the nearby Thorns colliery was converted to recreational use as Steven's Park.

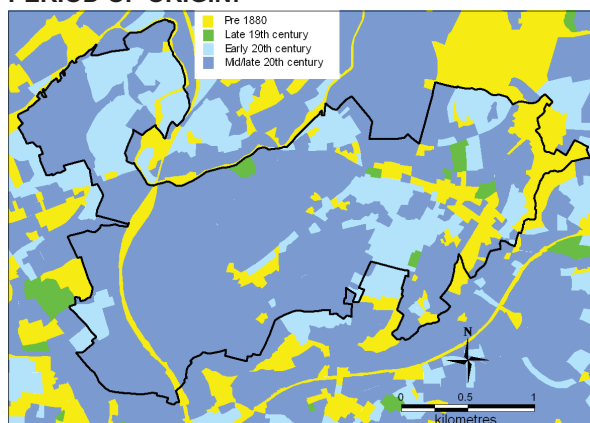
Suburbanisation in the early and mid 20th century, which also transformed large parts of remaining open land in the Black Country, also saw the creation of the modern character of the 'peninsular' of housing in the Character Area's north-west. This low-lying area on the banks of *Audnam Brook*, previously brick works

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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and collieries in an otherwise agricultural area, was laid out with new housing estates.

In the late 20th and early 21st century, the development of Quarry Bank High Street as a local commercial and retail centre has been influenced by the proximity of the vast Merry Hill Shopping Centre, immediately outside the Character Area to the north².

¹This summary draws in part on maps researched and compiled by Dudley MBC Historic Environment Team.

²See DY09 *Brierley Hill* Character Area Profile.

Tipton Green, Oldbury & Langley Character Area (SD01)

SUMMARY:

This is an industrial area with a landscape largely the result of post-1938 development. In this sense it is not unusual in the Black Country, but it is a very large area of its type. Although the land here has a mixture of uses (settlement, open land, transport), it contains a larger area of industrial sites than any other Black Country Character Area. Particularly to the south, it borders more residential areas, although similar industrial landscapes exist to the east and north¹.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

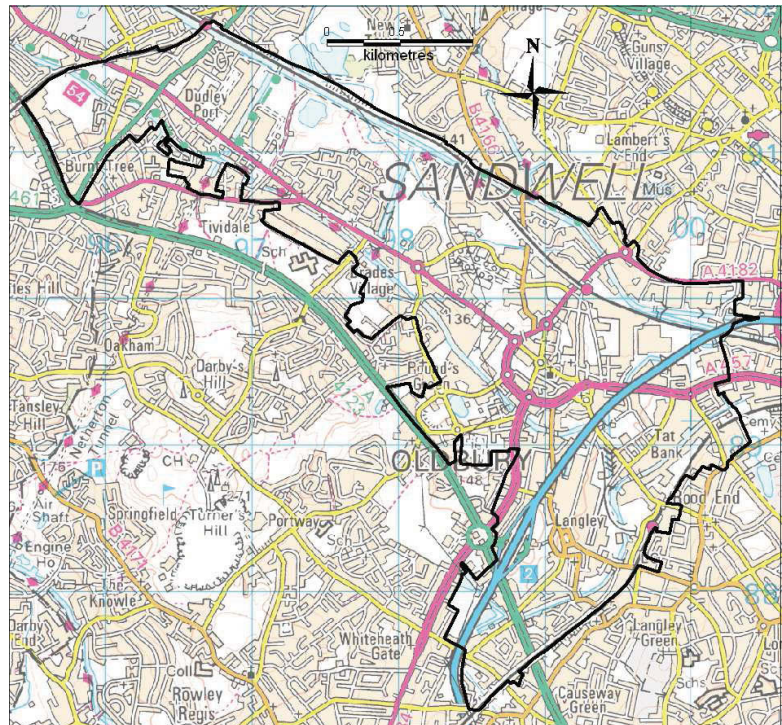
In general, the area lies over sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate, although shallow coal is accessible from the centre of the area. The area includes part of the of Tame valley which created the low lying position it has relative to most of the surrounding landscape.

MODERN CHARACTER:

The presence of large areas of industry in this Character Area, including both large individual sites like the multi-national *Rhodia* (in its south) as well as estates of smaller units, is in part a result of its position straddling communications routes, both historical and modern. These routes include the two main canal routes between Birmingham and Wolverhampton, two railway lines (and three stations), and the M5 motorway (junction 2 of which is in the south of the area).

Significant areas of housing also exist between the canals, railways and industrial sites. These include the older settlements of Langley and Tat Bank (in the south-east), Oldbury and Brades Village (in its centre) and Dudley Port (in the north-west) but, in addition, more recent housing expansion from the last 30 years, most notably at Temple Way alongside the route of the A457 heading north-west from Oldbury towards Dudley Port.

Open land is also a feature of the area, in particular between the old and 'new' lines of the Birmingham to Wolverhampton canal. This area - much of it rough grassland - is in part a legacy of clay and coal extraction in the area. In the 21st century, this land has hosted some new development — notably, in 2006, the Shri Venkateswara (Balaji) Temple, said to be the largest Hindu Temple in Europe.



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This industrial site on Bromford Lane in the north-east of the area came into use in the mid to late 20th century and was built on the site of allotments next to a railway line.

¹See the *North Smethwick* and *Great Bridge* Character Area profiles.

HISTORIC CHARACTER²:

The settlement of Oldbury, on a hill in the centre of the area, has a name originating from the Anglo-Saxons who called it 'Old Burh' (ancient settlement) — suggesting it had existed long before their arrival.

As for the wider area, many would argue that the lines of the Birmingham canal have done much to define its limits (although its valley position was probably a pre-condition to their construction). The original, southerly, line of the Birmingham to Wolverhampton canal opened in 1770, forming a particularly circuitous route around Oldbury to avoid the high ground at the town's centre. Nearly seventy years later, in 1838, the *Island Line* opened a more direct, northerly route between Smethwick (in the east) and Tipton Factory Junction (in the west), bypassing Oldbury. On this route, Dudley Port junction derives its name from being the town's nearest convenient loading-point.

The Titford branch, which runs to the southern extremity of the Character Area, was opened in 1837. It linked the canals to Titford pools, which were meant to act as a reservoir to supply water to the system.

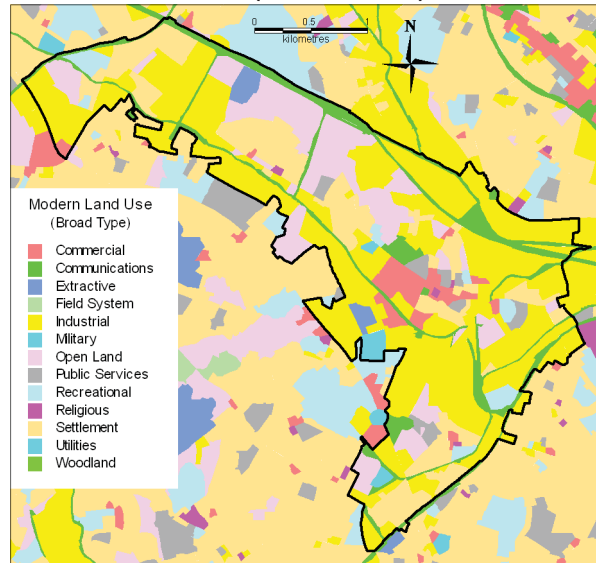
Like other parts of the Black Country, the area was rich in limestone, coal and ironstone, much in demand by the industries of Birmingham. This justified the investment in the canals, and went on to influence the area's transformation from rural to predominantly industrial. Attracted by a cheap and efficient transport system, industrialists established their factories, mainly metalworking, alongside the canals; many of them having their own basins and wharves.

The railways arrived in the middle of the 19th century, with stations at Dudley Port and Oldbury (the station is now known as *Sandwell & Dudley*). They also brought manufacturing: one of the largest employers in the area at the time was the *Oldbury Railway Carriage and Wagon Works*, established in 1854 in the east of the area.

At this time, the landscape of the Character Area was dominated by collieries, brick works and associated clay pits. These occupied swathes of land in between the canals and settlements mentioned above.

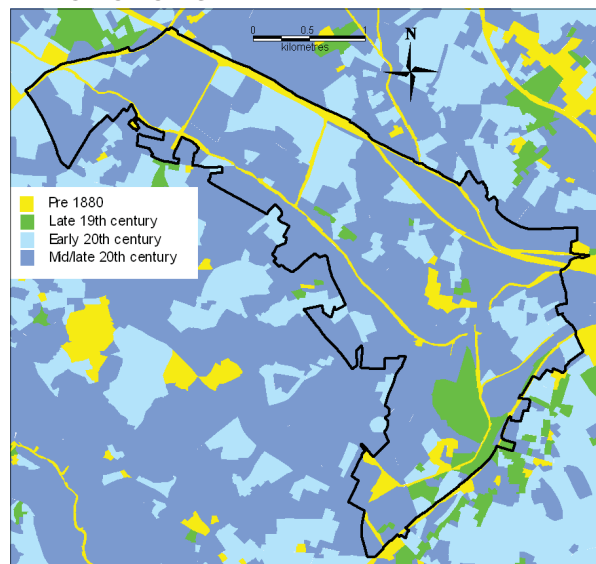
In addition to extractive industries, chemical processing has also been important to the area. For the majority of its history, the large canalside chemical processing plant now owned by *Rhodia* in the south of the Character Area was the concern of *Albright & Wilson*. Established in the area in the middle of the

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19th century, it became a large influence on the landscape and the lives of local people both at work and at play (two of the local parks in Langley were provided by the company).

The 20th century has seen the transformation of both the settlements and industrial mining infrastructure which would have been familiar in the previous century. Oldbury in particular saw the terraced streets at its centre replaced by local government buildings (the administrative centre of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council) and a large hypermarket. Meanwhile, many of the larger industrial and extractive sites were replaced by smaller industrial units on several industrial estates. The former sites of Conegre colliery (in the west) and the *Oldbury Railway Carriage and Wagon Works*, are examples of this trend.

²This summary draws in part on work previously published in Sandwell MBC's ward profiles (1996).

Newton, Hamstead & Great Barr Character Area (SD02)

SUMMARY:

This is largely a residential area comprising almost exclusively 20th century housing and, in this respect at least, it is not uncommon in its character within the modern Black Country. However, the area also includes significant areas of fields which continue to the north beyond the modern Sandwell boundary¹. The junction of the M5 and M6 motorways is at the area's western edge and the area is crossed by several other wide roads.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

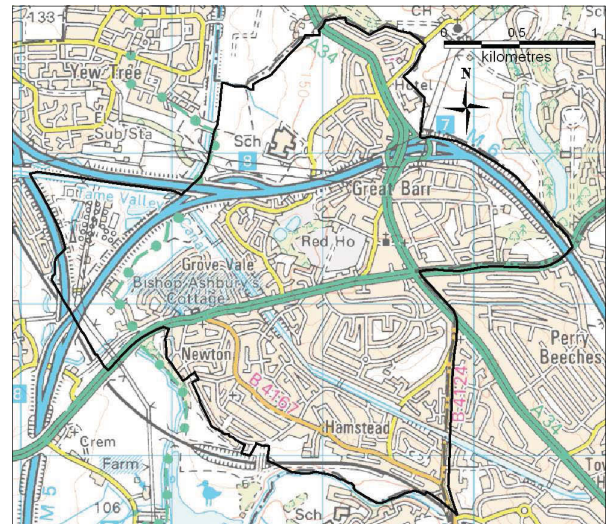
The area generally lies over sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate, and coal measures are only accessible at depth. The south-west of the area is in the valley of the River Tame while, within a short distance, the land rises by about 60m to its high point in the north-east at Great Barr (about 170m).

MODERN CHARACTER:

This residential area borders the city of Birmingham and functions in many ways as a suburb of the city.

Housing, which represented just over half of the area in 2000, is of generally lower density than in many parts of the Black Country. Around Great Barr, for example, there is a ring of inter-war semi-detached and detached housing, centred roughly around the wide junction of two large roads: the A34 north out of Birmingham and the east-west A4041 Newton Road. The junction, in the east of the area and visible on the adjacent map, includes a small retail centre and is known as Scott Arms after a landmark pub.

North of the A4041, which bisects the area, is also characterised by low density similar housing, albeit from a later period. It includes suburban properties from the second half of the 20th century, with a



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concentration of detached houses surrounding the inter-war Red House Park (in the centre of the area).

The housing in the southern part of the area is generally of a different character, with more small semis and terraces. The character of this area is also influenced by the former presence of one of the last collieries in the Black Country at Hamstead, on the southern edge of the area, which closed in 1965. Served by the Tame Valley Canal and the former route of the *London Midland & Scottish Railway* (both of which remain part of the modern landscape), the colliery also has contemporaries among the nearby surviving housing, such as the short inter-war terraces on James Road and Holland Road.

The large water reclamation works which occupies the western part of the area alongside the River Tame and the canal was established in the inter-war years, and thus predates the slip roads of the junction of the M5 and M6 motorways which was built in the late 1960s.

The oldest landscapes in the area are those of the remaining fields in its north-west, which continue beyond its boundary towards Barr Beacon, in Walsall¹.



Inter-war housing arranged in short terraces on Spouthouse Lane, Hamstead, in the south-east of the area, seen from the aqueduct carrying the Tame Valley Canal.

¹See *Barr Beacon & Aldridge Fields* Character Area profile.

HISTORIC CHARACTER²:

Until well into the 20th century this area consisted largely of agricultural land. It was only in the period between the wars that residential development began to spread.

The Tame Valley Canal had been one of the later canals to be built in the Black Country, being opened in 1844. It connects the Walsall Canal in the east to the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal in the west. The hill at Great Barr necessitated the excavation of a deep cutting for the canal where a bridge takes Newton Road over it, whereas only a kilometre away an aqueduct is needed to carry the canal over Spouthouse Lane (see photo over page).

The area's only colliery was at Hamstead and, after the earlier shallow, open workings elsewhere in the Black Country, it was a late attempt to extract the remaining coal from some depth: sinkings began in 1875 and only reached the coal five years later at a depth of more than half a kilometre.

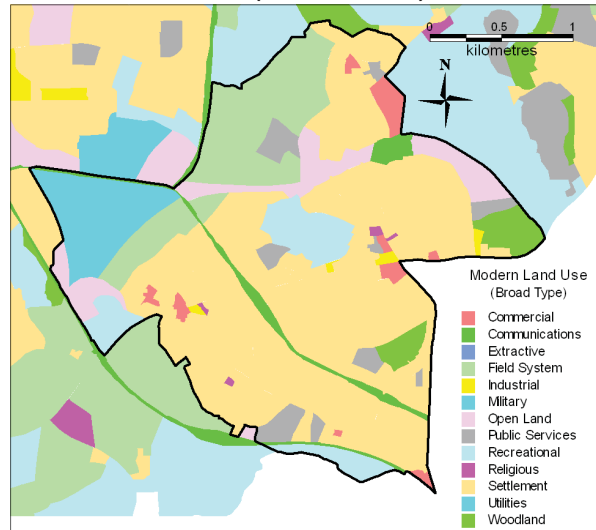
Before the discovery of coal there, Hamstead was only a small hamlet. However, in the early 1880s when the colliery began commercial extraction the population increased dramatically. Miners and their families converged on the area from other mining areas in the country, including South Wales and the north-east of England. Hamstead Village was thus born to serve the colliery, and the two were inter-dependent until the colliery closed. It was the last colliery to be operational within what is now Sandwell, closing in 1965.

The main Birmingham to Walsall Road runs through the eastern part of the ward with a major junction at the Scott Arms where it crosses the Newton Road. The roads themselves are on ancient routes but the Scott Arms was originally an 18th century coaching inn: which flourished because of its position at the road junction. The Georgian building was demolished in 1966 and replaced by a modern brick one, set well back from the road to accommodate the busy junction. The inn has given its name to both the road junction and the nearby shopping centre.

In more recent times motorways have also made their mark: the M6 runs through the area with two junctions, one with the Birmingham to Walsall road and the other with the M5. Both motorways were opened in 1970.

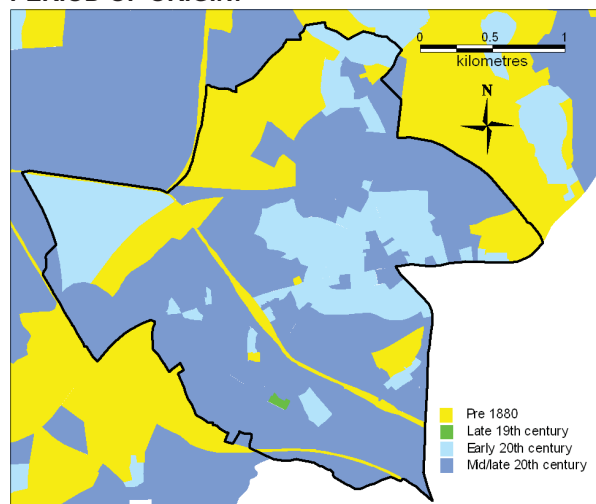
The east of the area is land previously belonging to Great Barr Hall (the home of the Scott family, after

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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whom the Scott Arms public house was named). At the turn of the 20th century, the hall and grounds were taken over by the Walsall and West Bromwich Guardians. Some of what was the park has now been covered with housing, and most of the remainder, including the Hall itself, now lies in Walsall. The Red House, in a public park in the centre of the Character Area, is another of Great Barr's big houses. Owned by a succession of local industrialists, it had a number of uses before it was closed in the 1920s. The adjacent park was opened to the public in 1929, during the residential development of the wider area.

²This summary draws in part on work previously published in Sandwell MBC's ward profiles (1996).

West Bromwich Character Area (SD03)

SUMMARY:

This area comprises West Bromwich town centre, an important location for shops and offices in the east of the Black Country, together with its surrounding, largely residential area. It also includes some industrial sites situated to the south. The area is bounded by more intensely industrial areas to its south and west, by generally more modern housing to its north, and by the recreational areas of the Sandwell Valley to the east.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

The centre of this area represents a high point (about 170m), and the land falls away gently on all sides. In general, the area lies over sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate, although coal is accessible in its north-west.

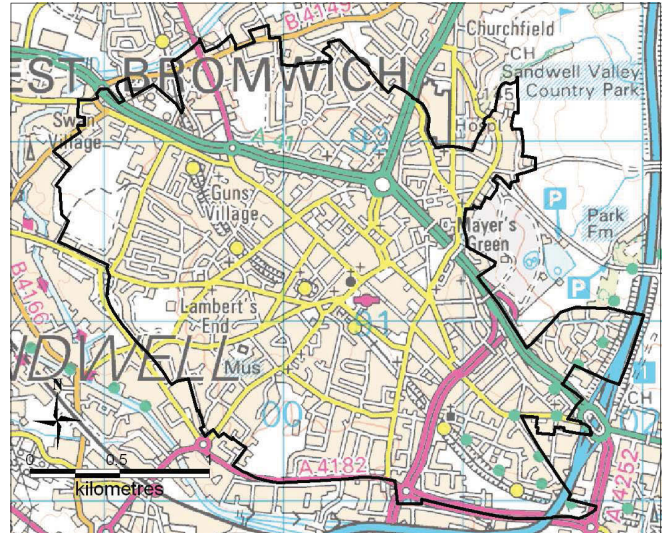
MODERN CHARACTER:

The residential character is formed by streets and houses of a number of different types. Rapid expansion in the 19th century (see over) is reflected in the surviving areas of Victorian terraces to the west of the centre, between Dartmouth Street /Lodge Road, and in its east, between the town centre and the M5 motorway.

Added to these, two large areas of later, inter-war housing comprise small semi-detached houses or short terraces: the 'Hamblets estate' in the west of the area,



West House (in the centre of the Character Area) was itself an example of 20th century re-development but now is in an area of further change. The foreground is on the former site of Victorian public baths.



which was built on former colliery land, and the housing built on fields in the north of the area at Lyndon. The last part of the area to see the transformation from green space to settlement was that now occupied by the Sandwell Valley estate of detached properties next to the M5.

The town's wider industrial character is also represented inside the area in a district of factories and depots south of the town centre (between Lyng Lane and Trinity Way).

The centre of West Bromwich has been transformed since the early 1970s, with the construction of the indoor shopping facilities at *The Sandwell Centre*, the Ringway, and the pedestrianisation of a section of the High Street. While the thoroughfare of the Street (running north-west to south-east through the centre of the Character Area) has often struggled to retain its importance since the town's heyday, it still hosts a number of important buildings and continues to change its character - the ambitious and controversial arts complex 'The Public' being a recent example of this.

Perhaps an important legacy of this change has been communications infrastructure. The Black Country Spine Road (built in the 1990s) skirts the town centre to join the M5 at Junction 1 (built in the 1960s), while public transport has also seen changes: a new bus station and opening of the Midland Metro line through the town in 1999.

¹As recorded in 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER²:

Among Black Country towns, West Bromwich was late to develop. Prior to the 19th century, what is now the centre of the town was little more than an area of barren heath land crossed by the Birmingham to Wolverhampton turnpike road (part of the Holyhead Road, and the route of the modern High Street).

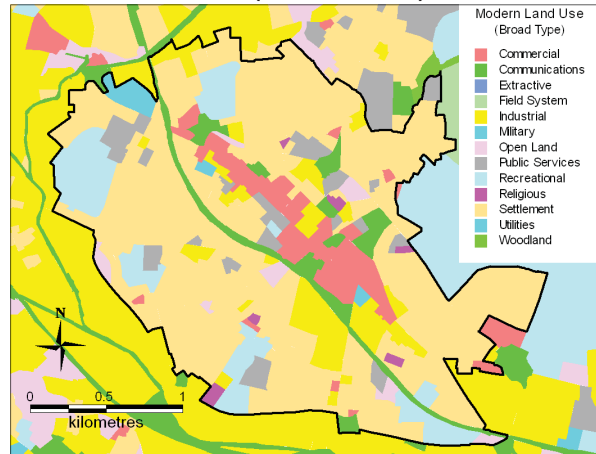
In these times, the old village of West Bromwich lay some way to the north of its present location: maps of 1775 and 1830 mark the site of the modern town as 'Bromwich Heath'. But with the enclosure of 1804, the town as we know it today had begun to develop. Improvements to the Holyhead Road in the 1820s produced the broad High Street, a prominent feature of the modern town and, as the town grew, its centre shifted from the old village to the area around the site of the modern Sandwell Centre.

The south eastern section of the High Street developed rapidly as the town's commercial area and, by 1840, an open market was being held - a tradition which has continued into the present. The north-western section of the High Street was built up later: the Town Hall for example was opened in 1875. Since the end of the 19th century the main feature of Carters Green, at the north-western end of the High Street, has been the large red-brick clock tower, erected as a tribute to a local Alderman.

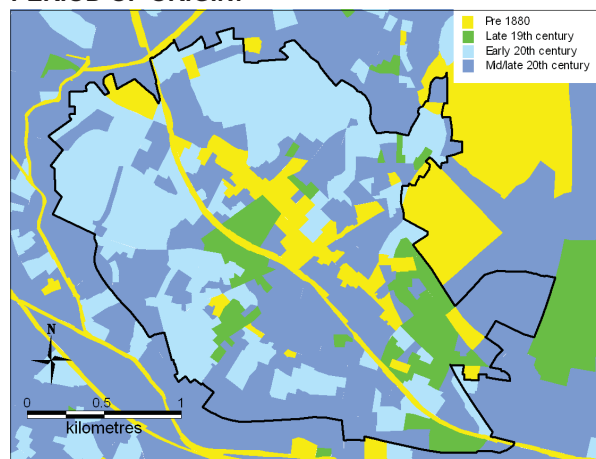
Key to the town's 19th century development and expansion was the presence nearby of iron, coal, and marl for brick making. By the early part of the century a number of collieries existed in the west of the Character Area, where today there is housing, parks and schools. Several ironworks were also situated just outside the southern and western edge of the area, along the route of the local canals. By the later part of the century, clay pits and brickworks were evident within the area, notably the 'Victoria Bluebrick and Tile Works', situated on what is now the site of Greets Green playing fields (accessible from Claypit Lane).

Immigration to the area was substantial in the 19th and early 20th centuries as factories sprang up and employment prospects were good. At a time when commuting for individuals was not easy, people tended to live close to their place of work and the area became much more residential as well as being commercial and industrial. Later, as the extractive industries declined, the space was used for housing, and this function came to predominate.

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



The route of the Midland Metro which bisects the Character Area, for the most part in a deep cutting, was originally that of the Birmingham, Wolverhampton and Dudley Railway, which opened in 1854. It had a station very close to the town centre, off Paradise Street - now the location of West Bromwich Central Metro stop. The line began to decline in use in the 1960s, closed in the early 1970s, and reopened as the Metro in 1999.

In the second half of the 20th century, the town experienced economic decline, appearing as one of the most deprived parts of the Midlands by the time of the 2001 census - a position which has caused it to be the target of public regeneration initiatives such as New Deal for Communities (1999) and Housing Market Renewal (2004).

²This summary draws in part on work previously published in Sandwell MBC's ward profiles (1996).

Old Hill Character Area (SD04)

SUMMARY:

This is one of the smallest Character Areas in the Black Country: it is predominantly an industrial district and is surrounded by large residential areas. In part, its modern character of 20th century industrial units is a result of its position between the Dudley No.2 canal, which forms much of its eastern edge, and the now dismantled railway on its western edge, which previously ran from the centre of Dudley in the north to Old Hill Station in the south.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

This area lies over sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate. Its length runs along the side of a larger limestone ridge crossing the Black Country in a north-west to south-east orientation. Steep slopes run from the lower ground to the west of the area to the higher points of the ridge in the east.

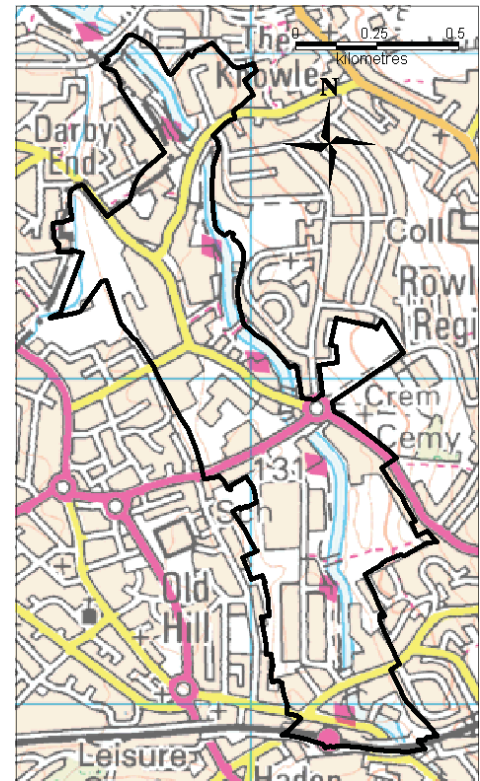
MODERN CHARACTER:

Almost all of the landscape of this predominantly industrial Character Area originates after the point at which the 4th edition Ordnance Survey map was drawn in 1938. Other than the canal which runs along the area's eastern side, only a few features survive from before this time: an industrial estate (south of the roundabout and cemetery marked on the adjacent map) appears to incorporate buildings from a former chain works, two pub buildings originate from at least as early as the 19th century, and a small area of open land in north-west of area remain from when it was part of an agricultural area.

The southern part of the area (i.e. south of Garratt's Lane - the A



Old Hill Station, at the southern end of the Character Area.



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by two large industrial areas built on former colliery land

(including the Waterfall Lane Trading Estate). In the northern half, the industrial units are generally smaller, although they share the same history as the location of collieries and include substantial industrial estates (such as Unisant trading estate and Sapcote industrial estate).

¹As recorded in 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

The area itself never appears to have been a centre for settlement, and in early maps (such as Yates' map of Staffordshire in 1775) the few features which appear include roads on the line of the modern Garratt's Lane and Powke Lane (the route running south-east to north-west through the area).

The character of the area as a location for mining and industrial production was reinforced at the end of the 18th century by the opening of the Dudley No.2 Canal in 1797. Via tunnels to the west and south, the canal linked the area to Birmingham and the rest of the Black Country coalfield.

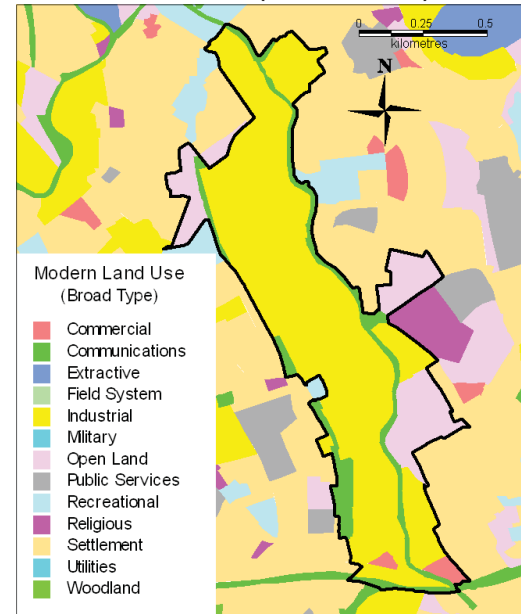
The rail line between Dudley and Old Hill (sometimes known as the 'Bumble Hole Line'), although now closed, has effectively defined the western boundary of the Character Area. For a hundred years between 1868 and 1968 it ran the three miles between the two towns servicing a number of neighbourhoods with small stations along its route.

By the time of the Ordnance Survey 1st Edition map in 1880, most of the Character Area was occupied by collieries (principally Hyatt's Colliery, Gawn Colliery, Old Hill Colliery, Fly Colliery, Old Lion Colliery and Haden Hill Colliery) and, to a much lesser degree, industrial sites (for example Birmingham Pottery, Old Hill Iron Works, and the Lion Works making iron tubes).

However, half a century later, in the 1930s, we see the coal pits lying closed, many of them not having been re-opened after the 1926 General Strike as a result of flooding. The iron works also suffered a decline, although industries such as drop forging continued to employ local people on the 20th century industrial estates in the area which replaced the collieries.

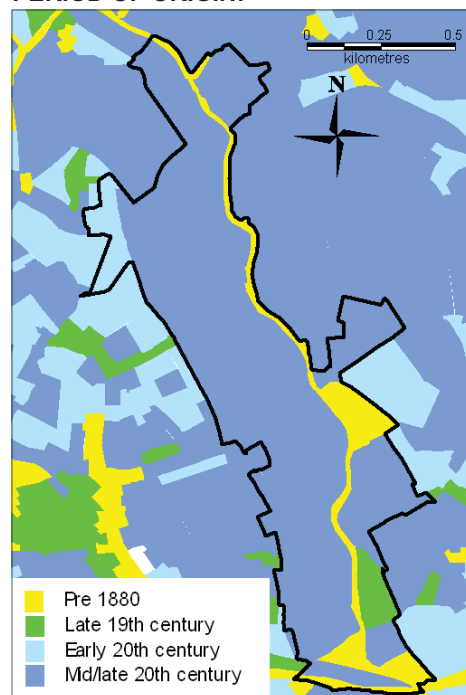
In addition to the collieries and ironworks, several brick and tile works have existed in the area. Other ceramics were also important: Royal Doulton Potteries for many years had a factory (formerly Birmingham Pottery) situated in the far north-east of the Character Area. It closed in 1979.

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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Yew Tree Character Area (SD05)

SUMMARY:

This is a largely residential area dominated by housing from the period after 1938, and including large areas of mixed semi-detached and terraced housing. The neighbourhood is divided from other areas of similar housing immediately to its north by the boundary between Sandwell and Walsall¹. At its southern and eastern edges are the routes of the Tame Valley and Rushall canals (1840s) and M6 motorway (1970) at its junction with the M5.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

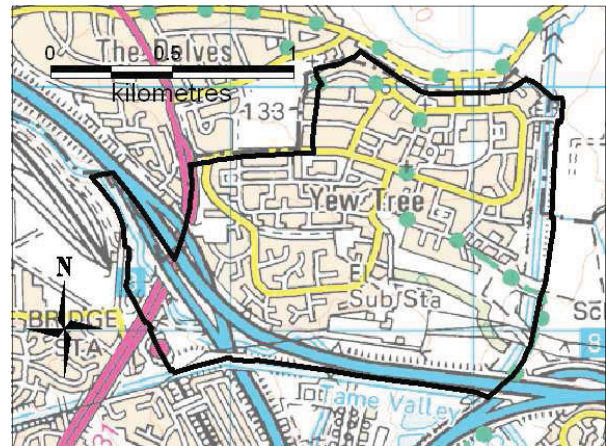
Unusually in Sandwell, this area lies over limestone and mudstone which continues north into Walsall. It is relatively low lying, being situated in the valley of the river Tame.

MODERN CHARACTER:

The landscape of this area is essentially a post-war residential suburb and, with the exception of the canals and railways, almost no part of the built environment originates before the time the 4th Edition Ordnance Survey map was drawn in 1938.

The character of the area was to a large extent defined in the 1950s & 1960s when the then local authority - West Bromwich County Borough Council - chose it as a location of a large public housing estate. Yew Tree Estate is possible the largest single surviving area of mixed mid 20th century semi-detached and terraced housing in Sandwell.

However, this character has been added to and altered by substantial private house building in the period since the early 1990s. This, combined with changes in ownership, meant that by the end of the 20th century owner-occupied properties outnumbered Council housing.



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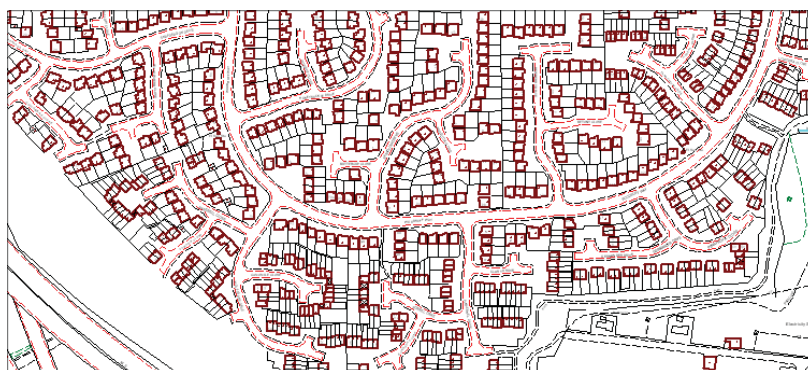
The late 20th century housing generally comprises medium-sized detached properties laid out around cul-de-sacs (see figure below). This type of development is relatively uncommon in Sandwell.

The Electricity sub station in the south-west, in terms of area the largest in the Black Country², is also part of the mid 20th century development of the area.

Some of the last canals to be built in the Black Country skirt the area's southern and eastern boundaries, while the railway line from Birmingham to Walsall together with its station at Tame Bridge, lie in the west. The

development of road infrastructure has seen the south of the Character Area dominated by the junction of the M5 and M6 motorways.

These barriers which encompass the southern edges of the area reinforce the local population's connection with the centre of Walsall, some 3km to the north-west, rather than West Bromwich which is 5km to the south.



The pattern of late 20th century cul-de-sacs and housing radiating from the arc of Woodruff way in the south-west of the Character Area.

¹See *South Walsall* Character Area Profile.

²As recorded in 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER³:

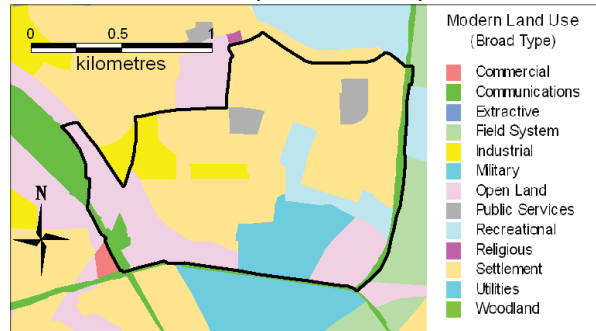
Until well into the 20th century this area was composed almost entirely of agricultural land, much of it worked from Delves Farm and Yew Tree Farm, previously located in the north of the area.

Residential development only began to cover the landscape during the period after the First World War.

Public housing played an important part in this development and significant in this was the fact that the administration of the area underwent a major change in 1931. Previously, the area had been part of The Delves, itself administered from Wednesbury (the centre of which is 3km to the west). Under the Wednesbury Corporation Act, the larger part of The Delves was transferred to Walsall and the remainder passed to West Bromwich. It was on this latter part that the Yew Tree Estate was subsequently built.

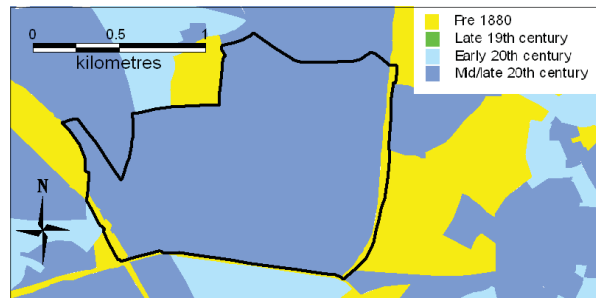
The Tame Valley Canal, on the southern edge of the area, was opened in 1844 and, as such was one of the last Black Country canals. It is elevated on an embankment for much of its route here, and an aqueduct carries it across the River Tame itself. Unusually in the Black Country, in the south-west corner of the character area the canal aqueduct crosses a railway line - another indication of the lateness of its construction since most other canals preceded the advent of the railways. Three years after the construction of the Tame Valley Canal an extension to the waterway was built - the Rushall Canal - from the south-east point of the character area. This linked it with the Walsall Canal to the north.

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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Built in 1837, the route of the Grand Junction Railway runs along the western edge of the area. Tame Bridge Parkway Station was opened on this line in 1990 to serve new housing built on the site of the former Tame Bridge industrial estate. Apart from this estate, there has historically been very little industrial activity in the area.

³This summary draws in part on work previously published in Sandwell MBC's ward profiles (1996).

Rowley Regis & Blackheath Character Area (SD06)

SUMMARY:

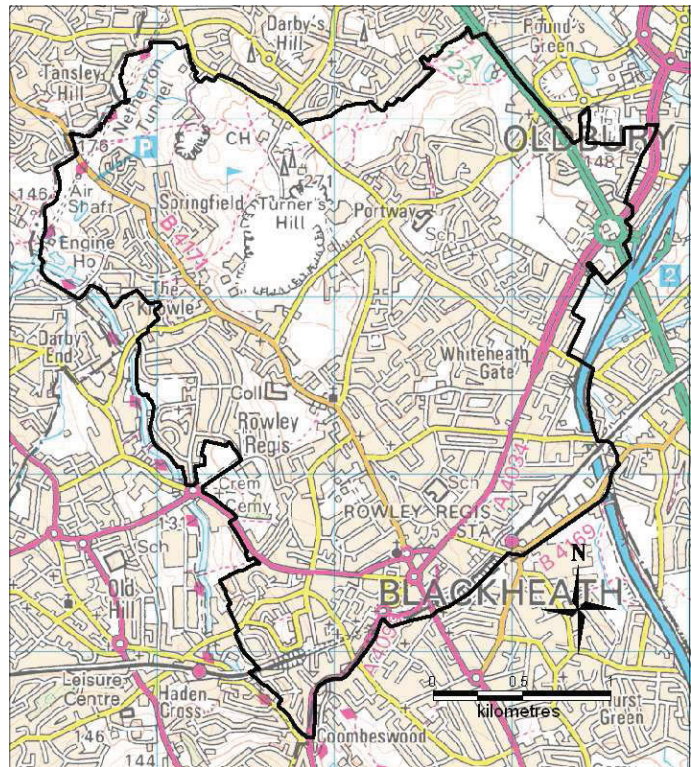
This area combines 20th century housing with large units of open and recreational land. It includes *Turner's Hill*, the highest point in the Black Country, which dominates the surrounding area. Housing dates largely from immediately before and after WW2 when large networks of streets and housing were laid out. Industrial areas lie beyond its eastern and western limits, while more areas of housing lie to the north-east and south in Dudley.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

The centre and north of the area lies over dolerite and the remainder over sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate. The area is generally high ground, peaking at *Turner's Hill* in the north which, at 270m, is the highest point in the Black Country and has particularly wide views over areas to the south and east.

MODERN CHARACTER:

The Character Area comprises a mixture of housing types, with the older (pre-WW2) housing generally located in the south and more recent construction further north. Two particularly large areas of housing and associated streets survive: immediately north of the A4034 (see adjacent map) lie the legacy of 1930s expansion of the settlement of Blackheath: while at the western edge of the area, Brickhouse is the location of a large municipal estate.



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Views of *Turner's Hill* (here seen from the south-east) dominate the south and east of the Character Area.

The land used for recreational purposes is generally in the north, and includes a 20th century country park and nature reserve, an interwar golf course, and, in the east, playing fields laid over brickworks and colliery land. In addition, substantial areas of grassland and woodland flank *Turner's Hill*.

Despite the predominance of housing, recreational areas and open land, there are also some 20th century industrial sites in the southern part of the area, while the higher ground in the north shows the legacy of the continuing tradition of quarrying.

The south and east of the area are generally well-served by roads and, to a lesser extent, railways. The M5 skirts the area (with junction 2 just outside it), crossed by the dual-carriageway of the Birmingham to Wolverhampton Road. Rowley Regis station links the area to other locations between Birmingham and Worcester. Although the area was not the location of canals, underneath its north western edge lies the last canal tunnel to be built in Britain, opened in 1858.

HISTORIC CHARACTER²:

Prior to the industrial revolution this area was primarily agricultural, but the presence of coal and 'Rowley rag', a volcanic dolerite stone useful in producing road surfaces, ensured that it rapidly became an area of industrial activity.

The oldest settlement in the area, Rowley Regis (in the centre of the area), has always comprised a collection of scattered settlements rather than a single nucleus.

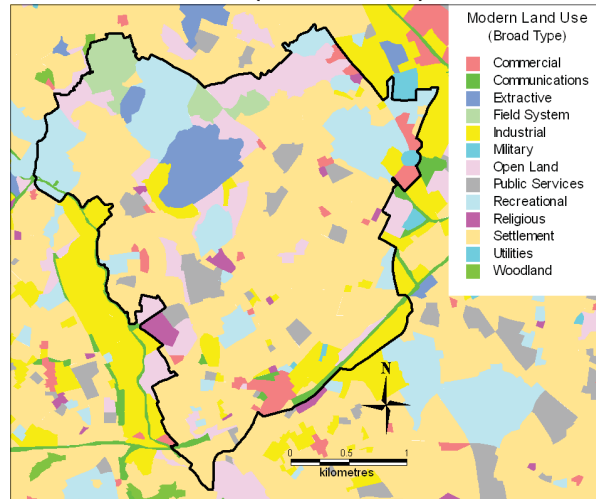
The development of Blackheath, further south, was a later product of industrial expansion. Indeed, Blackheath as a township, did not exist until 1841. However, builders had not been slow to capitalise on the 'coal boom' which had begun in the 18th century. Before this, the area had more commonly been known as 'Bleak Heath' and was mainly uninspiring heath land or farmsteads. However, it was transformed almost overnight as pit winding gear loomed on every horizon. Local collieries included Springfield and Warrens Hall (both in the north-west of the area), the latter having now become the site of a park and conservation area.

In addition to coal and ironstone mining, by 1850 Blackheath housed a range of new trades and, with these, came the need for housing for the workers. This led to a rapid rise of terraced accommodation and demand for brick making, where supply could hardly keep up with the demand. The already booming population was added to when coal miners were recruited from Wales to work local pits.

Some of the streets built to house local mining communities no longer exist in the modern landscape. Tory Street, for example, was a purpose-built collier community in the far south-west of the area, next to the railway line. However, it was demolished and replaced by a council estate in the 1930s (the location of Grange Road).

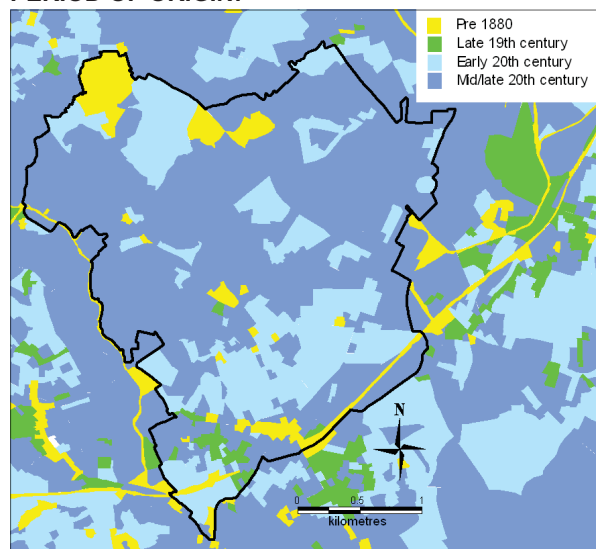
Quarrying of dolerite took place from the 17th century at least, but it increased in the early 19th century when the use of Rowley Rag for metalling roads came into its own. From then on, the number of quarries in the area rose dramatically and this contributed to the rapid change in the landscape.

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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The Rowley area has been known for two other industries: nail making and the manufacture of Jews harps, the former having been an important local industry since medieval times

Like many other parts of the Black Country, the Character Area experienced an dramatic increase in house building in the years between the wars, and much of this survives in its southern part.

²This summary draws in part on work previously published in Sandwell MBC's ward profiles (1996).

Sandwell Valley Character Area (SD07)

SUMMARY:

This area is unique in the Black Country in that it is dominated by recreational land, chiefly Sandwell Valley Country Park, which comprises more than half of its area¹ - with most of the remainder accounted for by agricultural land. The eastern edge forms the Boundary with the city of Birmingham, although at this point the open land continues. On all other sides, the Character Area is surrounded by residential areas, except in its far south where it adjoins the industrial districts of North Smethwick.

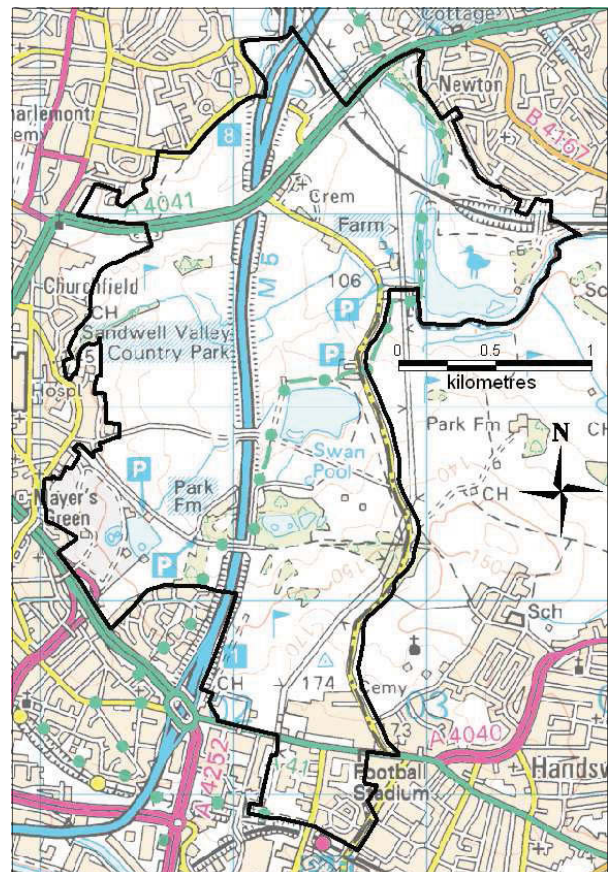
GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

The area lies almost entirely over sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate. The valley of the River Tame, which flows through its northern part, is some of the lowest land in the Black Country. It's southern part is higher ground rising to the location of *The Hawthorns* football stadium in its south, famously the highest in the football league.

MODERN CHARACTER:

The Sandwell Valley is unusual as a large area of green space which has survived at the centre of the West Midlands conurbation. More than two million people live within 20km of the Character Area, and the recreational facilities contained within it are used both by local populations and by those who travel further.

Sandwell Valley Country Park itself occupies large parts of the east of the area and straddles the M5 motorway. It includes two bodies of water: Swan Pool (in the centre of the area); and Forge Mill Lake (next to the River Tame in the north-east). Two further large areas of recreational land are given to golf courses: Sandwell Park in the south-east and



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Since the late 1960s, one of the busiest sections of the M5 motorway has crossed the centre of Sandwell Valley, the single largest recreational area within the Black Country.

Dartmouth in the north-west, south of the dual carriageway of the A4041 Newton Road. King George Playing Fields and Dartmouth Park stand between the Country Park and the centre of West Bromwich in the south-west.

The Stadium of West Bromwich Albion Football Club is in the far south, across the A41 Birmingham Road. It celebrated its centenary in 2000, and access was improved by the opening of the nearby Metro station the year before.

The oldest surviving parts of the modern Character Area are the agricultural areas in the north and west.

¹As recorded in 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER²:

The estate which became the Sandwell Valley was owned by the Earls of Dartmouth from the early 18th century. Sandwell Hall (demolished in 1928) was built by the first earl on the site of the 12th century Benedictine priory close to the Sand Well, a natural spring from which the district takes its name. The 4th earl moved away from West Bromwich in 1853, leaving the hall to be used for a variety of purposes until its destruction in the 20th century .

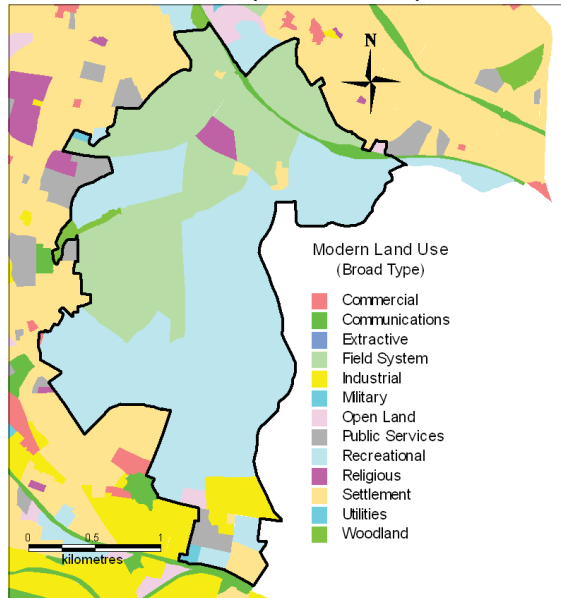
Dartmouth Park originates in a decision in 1877 by the Earl of Dartmouth to lease part of his estate to the town of West Bromwich for use as a public park. The freehold of the park was transferred to the Local Authority in 1919, and was used as a First World War memorial.

In the late 20th century, Sandwell Park Farm was restored as a working farm using 19th century farming methods.



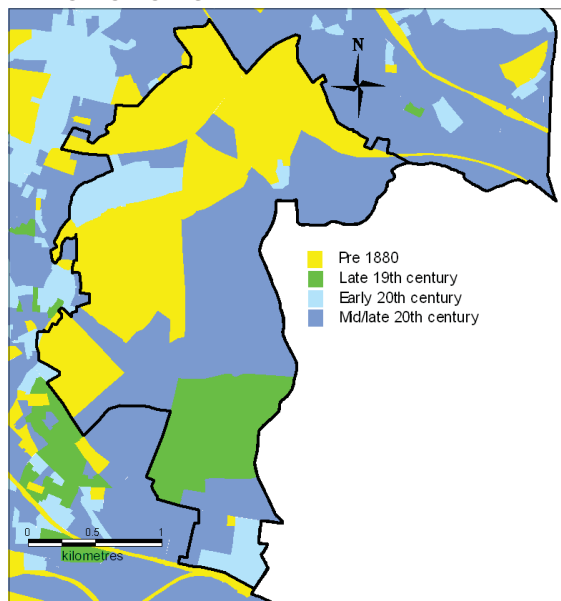
The early 19th century buildings of Sandwell Park Farm, now restored, include a visitor centre, and exhibition and meeting space.

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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²This summary draws in part on work previously published in Sandwell MBC's ward profiles (1996).

Tipton & Princes End Character Area (SD08)

SUMMARY:

Situated at the centre of the Black Country, this is an area of 20th century housing (accounting for about half of its area¹) together with significant industry, canals and railways. Historically, the area has been host to more mileage of canals, and at a greater density, than any other Black Country Character Area. Today, the extent of the area is defined by the Sandwell boundary on three sides and, in its east and south-east, it borders areas of more industrial character.

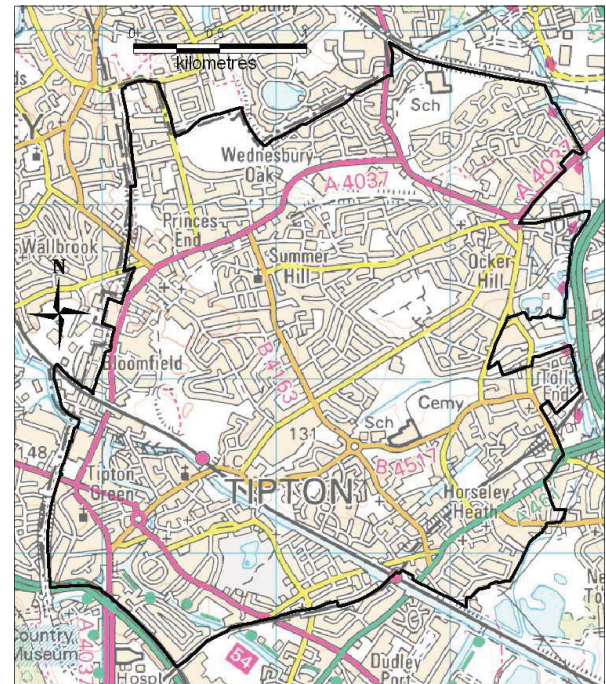
GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

This area lies on sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate, although coal is also accessible in several parts. The area is positioned between a higher ridge of land to its south and west, and lower ground in the Tame valley to the north and east.

MODERN CHARACTER:

This is an area which is largely residential and includes two small retail centres at Princes End in the north-west and Tipton in the south. The latter has been the area's principal shopping area for 200 years, although it has recently lost out in this respect to the retail park just outside the eastern edge of the Character Area.

As elsewhere in the Black Country, many of the surviving residential landscapes are based on inter-war housing built on colliery land. Examples here include the large Tibbington estate in the centre of the area, as well as areas of streets around Ocker Hill in the north-east. These examples sit alongside large areas of semi-detached and terraced properties from the immediate post-war period. The later part of the



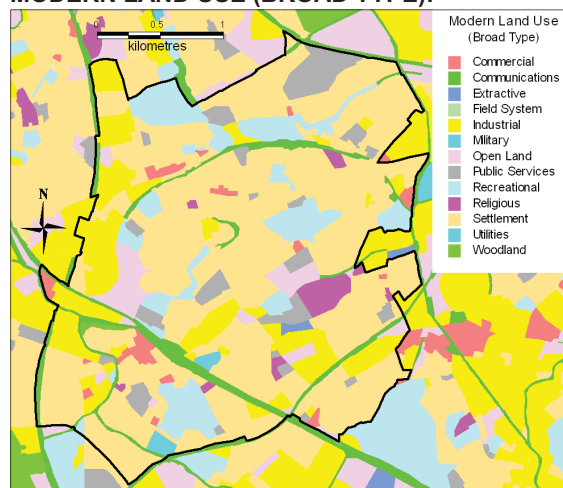
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20th century has also made its contribution in the streets laid out either side of what was the Gospel Oak branch of the Walsall canal in the north of the area, for example.

For a predominantly residential district, the Character Area retains a sizeable section of commercial and trade premises, in particular along its western edge. The factories and warehouses in this area give the A4037 Bloomfield Road an industrial character, before it continues north as Princes End High Street. Particularly in the south of the Character Area, remnants of a previously more extensive network of canals and railways, together with some surviving Victorian terraces, give the modern landscape an 'older' feel than the housing estates further north.

In recent decades Tipton has contained some of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the region, attracting regeneration initiatives such as Tipton City Challenge scheme in the 1990s.

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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¹As recorded in 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

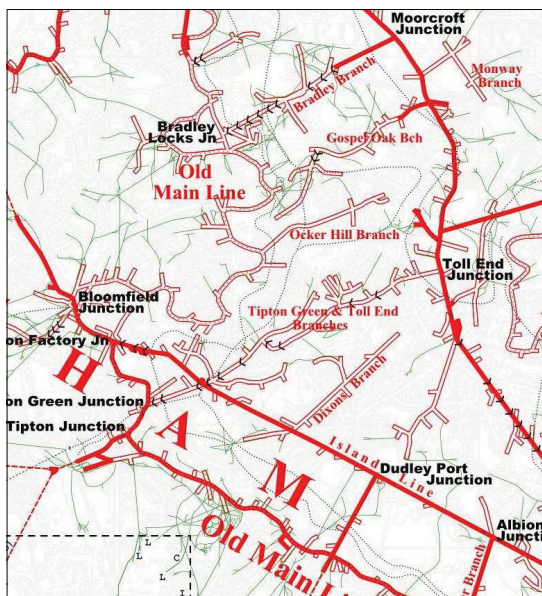
The area owes its transformation from a rural environment (the name Tipton Green originates from a clearing in a wooded landscape) to the development of local coal and iron industries.

Although mining in Tipton dates from the 13th century, it was the industrial development of the 18th and 19th centuries which accelerated the extraction of coal, ironstone and limestone in the area.

Amongst 19th century industries, the iron trade predominated, and the largest producer in the Black Country was the Bloomfield Ironworks (on the western edge of the Character Area), founded in 1830 and surviving until 1906. Gospel Oak Iron Works at Princes End was in existence by 1811, while Moat Foundry was established in 1877 and specialised in builders' ironwork and oven grates. Other iron works included the Wednesbury Oak Works, in the north, which specialised in producing high quality pig-iron.

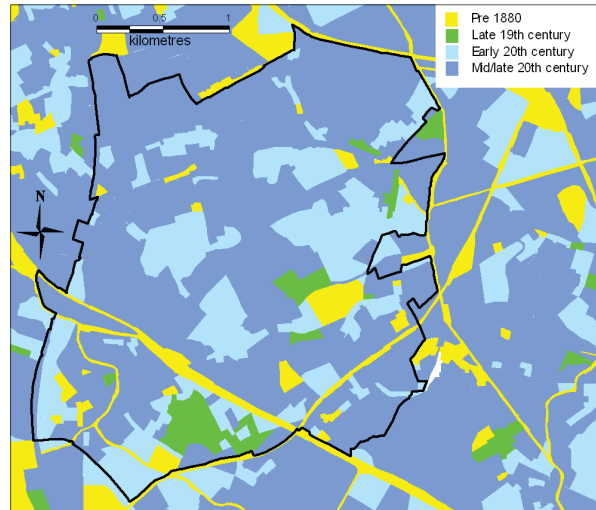
Aside from iron, other industries were also important. A soap and chemical works, known as 'The Factory' was established at Tipton around 1783 and, on the area's southern edge, the 'Model Sausage Factory'

Below: Part of Richard Dean's map of the present and former canal network, originally drawn in 1989 (this sample is taken from the 2008 edition). The density of canals, greater in Tipton than in any other part of the region, illustrates how the town acquired the name 'the Venice of the Midlands' (surviving canals are shown in solid red, while routes now closed are drawn as open lines). Reproduced with permission from the Historical Map of the Birmingham Canals by Richard Dean (www.cartographics.co.uk/page3.htm).



²This summary draws in part on work previously published in Sandwell MBC's ward profiles (1996).

PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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was a well-known landmark until as late as the 1960s (it is now the site of the Boscobel housing estate).

Many local firms survived for a surprisingly long period, despite economic upheavals. The *Horseley Bridge & Engineering Company*, established in 1792 in the south-west of the area, continued into the 20th century as a trading unit of *NEI Thompson*, making water tanks. The company's earlier products included elegant iron canal bridges, such as Smethwick's Galton Bridge. In the late 20th century the land previously occupied by the works was used for housing.

The original line of the Birmingham Canal had opened in 1770, conveying coal from Tipton to Birmingham. Sixteen years later the Walsall canal opened to the north, and the network of man-made waterways which developed between these routes (including the new route of the Birmingham to Wolverhampton canal) was so extensive that it earned Tipton the title 'the Venice of the Midlands'.

Railways arrived in 1852, with a number of stations in the area and connections to Wolverhampton, Dudley and Birmingham. Only two of these stations survived into the 21st century.

The 20th century saw the decline of Tipton's traditional heavy industries; by the time of the 1902 Ordnance Survey map there was much evidence of old coal shafts which had long-since ceased production. The slag heaps were flattened and the old shafts either filled in or remained waterlogged. The reclaimed land provided either open space for recreation or was covered in street after street of either municipal or private housing, giving the area its modern residential character.

Tividale Character Area (SD09)

SUMMARY:

This is an area of housing, the majority being semis or detached houses from mid 20th century, largely built after the Birmingham New Road (shown in green on the map below) was laid out between the wars. It is one of the most residential of the Sandwell Character Areas, with housing covering more than 70% of its area¹. At its western edge is the boundary between Sandwell and Dudley, in the north-east lie industrial areas, while immediately south are areas of open and recreational

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

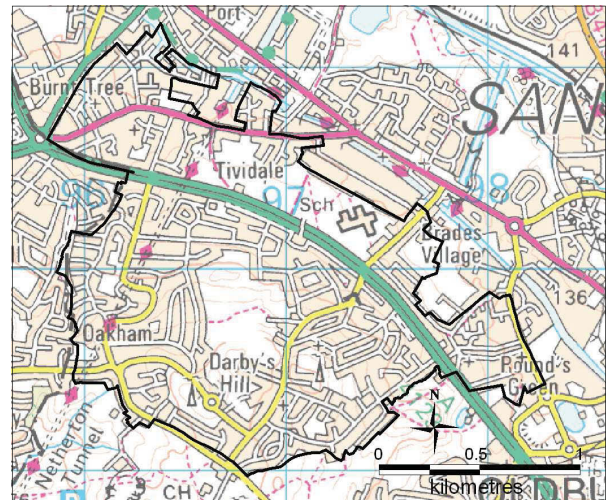
The south of the area lies over dolerite, while the north is on sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate. The slope of the land generally falls from its high point on its southern edge down to the line of the canal in the north-east.

MODERN CHARACTER:

The landscape of this area is dominated by Darby's Hill in its south.

The oldest surviving houses in the area are in small areas of Victorian and Edwardian terraces, including those which front the A4033 (shown in red on the adjacent map). Inter-war developments of semi-detached homes overlook or front the wide, dual carriageway of the New Birmingham Road which was

opened in 1927 (and is shown in green). However, the most common housing type in the area is the small semi-detached house built in the years following WW2. With this, a large school was built between the dual-



carriageway and the Birmingham canal (now *Tividale Community Arts College*).

More modern housing developments include those on the south bank of the Birmingham canal (see picture), as well as those lining the streets on the southern and western edges of the area. Many of the latter are larger, detached properties and, although situated in Sandwell, have a close relationship with the centre of Dudley nearby in the west.

The large areas of open land in the centre of the area (as well as that immediately outside it to the south) are the legacy of extensive quarrying.



A view looking south on to the 1990s *Tividale Quays* development at Monins Avenue at the northern point of the area. These flats, semis and detached homes are part of a modern transformation of the south bank of the Birmingham Canal from industrial to residential use. The large canal basin which forms the centre of the development was extended from an earlier spur serving a 19th century iron and galvanising works. In the background, the post-war housing on the side of Darby's Hill is visible.

¹As recorded in 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER²:

In the early industrial age, a map of 1775 showed the settlement of Tividale located on the main road between Oldbury in the east and Dudley in the west (what is now the route of the modern A4033 passing through the north of the Character Area). Darby's Hill and the track from the hill heading west to Dudley were the only other features within the area which merited inclusion at that time.

Partly as a result of its difficult topography, the canals and railways built through the Black Country in the 18th and 19th centuries largely bypassed the Character Area in favour of more northerly routes. As a result, the area was not served by passenger railways and, although the original route of the Birmingham to Wolverhampton canal skirts the area's northern edge, the only canal which crosses it does so via a deep tunnel more than 2.5km long (built in 1858), therefore giving little benefit to the area. The Netherton Tunnel was the last canal tunnel to be built in the country and was also the widest, having a towpath on each side, and a total width of more than 8 metres.

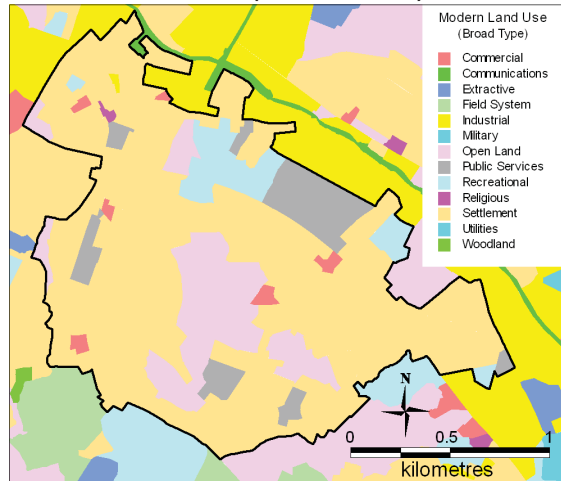
Although service to the area by passenger railways was poor, for a period in the late 19th and early 20th centuries Tividale was at the centre of a network of electric trams serving the Black Country (which ran along the route of the A4033). The site of the tram depot has since been covered by housing, but examples of the vehicles can still be seen at the nearby Black Country Museum.

The slope of the land and its distance from canals and railways meant that the area was not a good location for manufacturing industry. Instead, its development before the 1930s largely took place as a result of its mineral wealth. In the last two centuries of the millennium the area was severely scarred by stone quarries, marl pits and coal mines: scars which have only become less visible since the late 20th century.

In common with the geology of the Character Area to the immediate south³, the area lies over a stone known as 'Rowley Rag' which is very hard and particularly suited to road building. Quarrying began in the area on a commercial basis in the early part of the 19th century, but the number of quarries quickly grew. The extraction of Rowley Rag in the area continued until the second half of the 20th century.

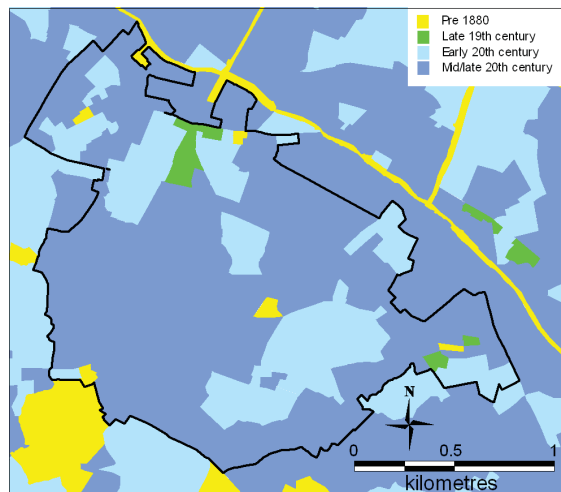
The mining of coal was a more short-lived activity in the Tividale area. While Grace Mary Colliery (in the south-east of the area) was operating by 1842, operations only

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really began in earnest when the more accessible parts of the Black Country Coalfield were becoming exhausted in later in the 19th century.

This is because extracting coal in Tividale was a more difficult proposition owing to the depth of the seams. This can be gauged from the necessity at Lye Cross Colliery (in the south of the area), of digging through nearly 200 feet of rock before reaching the thick coal at a depth of over 600 feet. At other collieries shafts were sunk even deeper before coal was reached. Many of the collieries ceased production before the end of the century and all but one had gone by 1920.

One distinctive feature of the landscape, due to the elevated location of the mines and quarries and the distance to the nearest canal, was the construction of several light railways with gravity inclined planes. These crossed the area and took the products of mining and quarrying down to the wharfs on the Birmingham canal to the north.

²This summary draws in part on work previously published in Sandwell MBC's ward profiles (1996).

³See SD06 *Rowley Regis & Blackheath* Character Area.

Cradley Heath Character Area (SD10)

SUMMARY:

While almost half of this area comprises housing¹, it is one of the most mixed in terms of its modern use, including (especially in its west) significant industrial land and (in its south) recreation. The housing is also unusually mixed in terms of its period and density, ranging from 19th century terraces to late 20th century detached properties. The area overall is defined on three sides by the boundary between Sandwell and Dudley, and in the east by the adjacent industrial area.

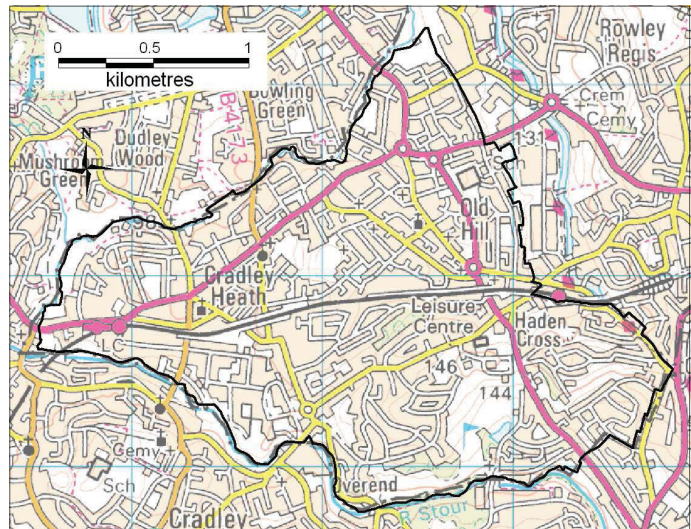
GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

This area lies over sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate. The only part of Sandwell which lies south of the high limestone ridge crossing the Black Country, it is generally low lying, with the course of the River Stour at its southern boundary.

MODERN CHARACTER:

This is an area of generally mixed character, with both residential neighbourhoods and, particularly in its west, important commercial and industrial districts.

Housing in the area comprises a number of different types. In the northern half (i.e. north of the railway line visible on the adjacent map), in and around the centres of Cradley Heath and Old Hill, Victorian terraces sit alongside the post-war high density housing, such as that in the image below. In the south, character is defined much more by inter-war streets with large areas of semi-detached homes from the same period.



The railway line running east-west through the area links Birmingham in the north-east to Worcestershire in the south-west and includes stations at Old Hill (in the east of the Character Area) and Cradley Heath (in the west). The latter station fronts on to the A4100, the principal road through the area and the High Street of Cradley Heath itself.

The industry within the Character Area includes collections of post war units, an example being *Portersfield Industrial Estate* south of Cradley Heath, which was laid out next to the river on the site of the former Stour colliery. However, there are also the survivors from previous phases of industry, such as the works at the end of Bank Street (on the northern edge of the area), which originate in the late 19th century/early 20th century.

The main areas of recreational land in the modern Character Area are laid out around the two large houses in the south (Haden Hill House and Corngreaves Hall - see *Historic Character* overleaf). These encompass a cricket ground, golf course, public park and bowling greens.

An area comprising both industrial and residential properties, modern Cradley Heath also contains examples of a range of housing types. This high density late 20th century neighbourhood in the centre of the area was built on former colliery land.

¹As recorded in 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

The River Stour is not only the southern boundary of the Character Area (as well as of Sandwell), but has also had a particular significance during the Industrial Revolution. At that time, this local river is said to have boasted more water-powered installations that could be found on a similar length of any English watercourse.

Cradley Heath was also the location of important technological changes and was, for example, the venue for 17th century experiments to smelt iron using coal as an alternative to charcoal. This was important at a time when forests were disappearing at a rapid rate and the Black Country's coal was an easily-accessed alternative. There were also plenty of local examples of collieries including Black Waggon, Stour, Silverthorne, Saltwells, Bearmore, Timbertree, Granville & Gorsty Hill, and Riddings.

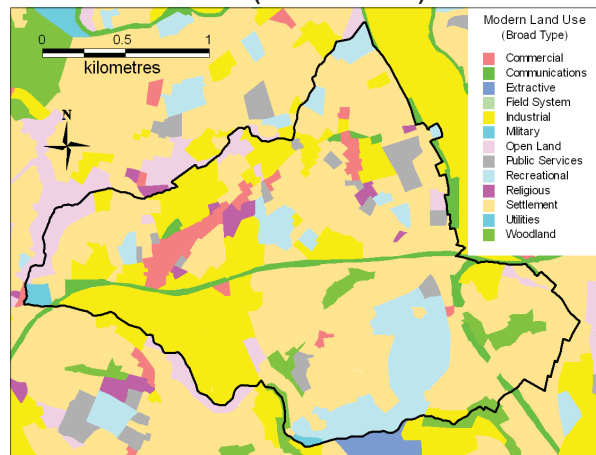
The Character Area, together with the adjoining area to the east³, also has a long tradition of chain and anchor making. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries Cradley Heath and Old Hill formed part of a network of chain-making townships in the Black Country. Chains were often produced in small workshops alongside chain-makers' cottages, and the living and working conditions endured by men, women and children was famously grim. This in turn led to a successful strike in 1910 to force local employers to pay new nationally laid down wage rates.

The other prominent local trade connected was nail-making. The sheer range of size and length of nails delayed the mechanisation of their production and ensured that a domestic cottage industry endured after others had been replaced.

Cradley Heath's 19th century skyline was dominated by the vast Corngreaves Works in the south-west of the Character Area, once the largest industrial iron complex in the Black Country. The site had its own railway network with over 20 sidings for loading and unloading. Depression in the Staffordshire iron trade resulted in the collapse of the company before the start of the 20th century and the site is now the Corngreaves Trading Estate.

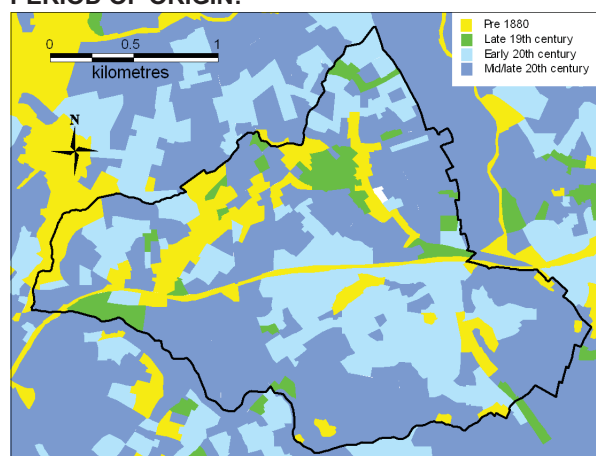
Local industrialists of the 19th century often had houses near to the works they owned and two large

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properties in the Character Area, Haden Hill House and Corngreaves Hall (now owned by the local authority), are examples of this.

Meanwhile, the development of housing for ordinary people took place in several phases of expansion. By the start of the 20th century, the result of Victorian development could be seen in the large number of terraced streets radiating off the older routes crossing the area (in particular what is now the A4100, and the route of the modern A459 which crosses it). Further phases in the 20th century saw the transformation of the southern part of the Character Area from mining and agriculture to a new residential area.

²This summary draws in part on work previously published in Sandwell MBC's ward profiles (1996).

³See SD04 *Old Hill* Character Area Profile.

Central Smethwick & Cape Hill Character Area (SD11)

SUMMARY:

This residential area is unusual in the Black Country in that it maintains much of its Victorian character, despite its subsequent development (only one other area is similar in this respect¹). Alongside the remaining 19th century and Edwardian housing, there is more area of pre-1900 parks, allotments and cemeteries than in any other Character Area in the Black Country. To its east is Birmingham, while newer housing lies to the south, and the industrial areas of Smethwick to its north.

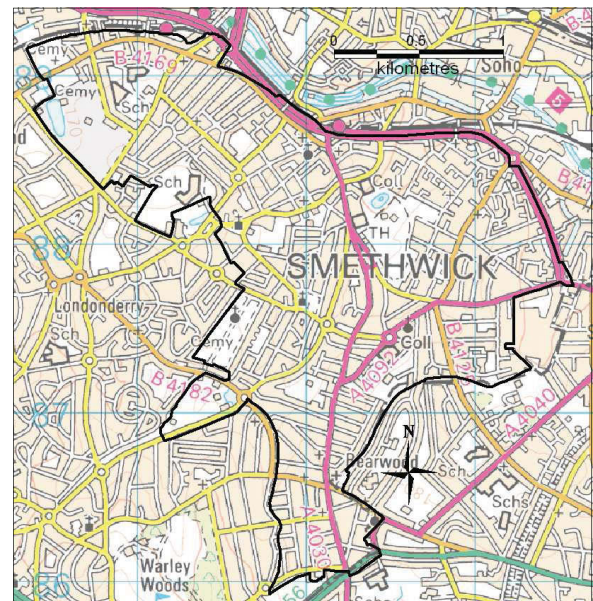
GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

This area lies over sandstone, with mudstone and conglomerate in its west. For the Black Country it is relatively high ground (between 150m and 180m). Thimblemill Brook runs to lower ground in the north.

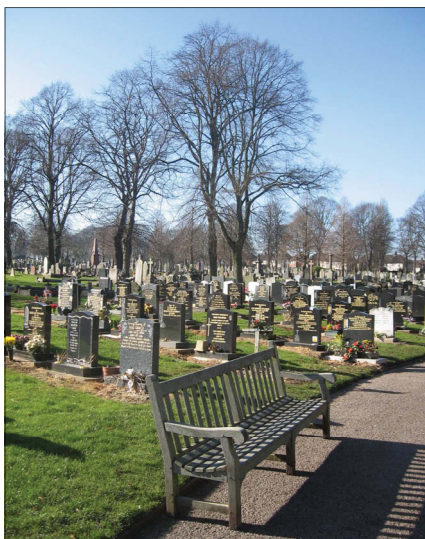
MODERN CHARACTER:

This is a largely residential area and a landscape generally defined in the Victorian period. It contains more pre-1910 terraced housing than any other Black Country Character Area and, even where houses have been demolished and replaced, the characteristic grid iron street pattern which was favoured at the time largely remains. With the exception of the south, these streets have recently formed part of an area of high economic deprivation and the effects of deprivation has been included the condition of local housing.

Within this general model of Victorian settlement, 20th



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Uplands Cemetery, on the western edge of the area, was opened in 1890. It is one of a number of open spaces within the Character Area which were laid out during the Victorian transformation of the area from agriculture to residential land.

century development is also now well represented. Housing survives from the inter-war years, for example, in the large area of small semis in the area's north-west (east of West Smethwick Park) and in the neighbourhood of semis and short terraces to the east of Uplands cemetery. In addition, several landmark buildings in the southern part of the area date from the 1930s.

Much of the north-western part of the Character Area now has a more modern, late 20th century character, having been rebuilt after the demolition of the first wave of terraced streets.

In Black Country terms, the area is the residential neighbourhood closest to the centre of Birmingham, 2½ miles to its east, and it sits between two important radial routes out of the city centre - the A457 in the north and Hagley Road in the south (both on the line of earlier turnpiked routes). On its northern edge, the area is served by railway stations on lines from Birmingham to the west.

Commercial areas are generally organised along the streets which form the main A roads (shown in red on the map above) although, added to this pattern, is a large redeveloped retail park on Cape Hill in the east of the area. The shopping streets have a distinctive character brought about in part by shops which serve local communities originating in South Asia, the Caribbean and Eastern Europe.

¹See *Wolverhampton Inner Western Suburbs* Character Area Profile.

HISTORIC CHARACTER²:

In Black Country terms, the historical character of Smethwick is distinguished in that it is 'off the coal' and it was therefore not directly affected by the development of mining in the way that several other Black Country towns were. Instead, the driver of Smethwick's development was the transport corridor to the north, which moved goods on canals and railways between Birmingham and the Black Country proper (i.e. towns over more accessible coal). This attracted industry on a huge scale, caused the expansion of the local population, and prompted the rapid construction of housing over previously agricultural land.

In the early 19th century, Smethwick as a settlement was centred on Bearwood Hill in the south, where a turnpike road out of Birmingham crossed the road from Harborne in the south. In fact, before 1842 Smethwick was part of the parish of Harborne (now in modern Birmingham). An early corn mill in the south of the Character Area was converted to making thimbles and, by 1775, was known by this activity. The Thimble Mill pool still survives today and the mill itself has given its name to several features in the modern residential landscape.

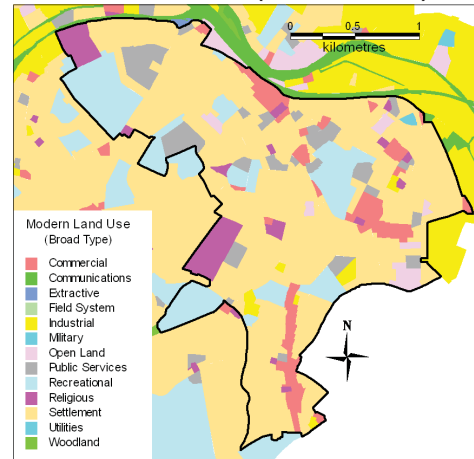
With the building of the canals, the town centre moved to the northern edge of the Character Area, to the present High Street. The rapid population expansion in this northern part in the early 19th century necessitated a new church to serve the local population, and Holy Trinity was built. By the late 19th century new streets and estates of houses had been laid out, with some remaining farm land turned into allotments, cemeteries and parks.



Large parts of Cape Hill (in the east of the area) and Bearwood (in the south) retain the Victorian tunnel-back housing which played a major part in the town's expansion.

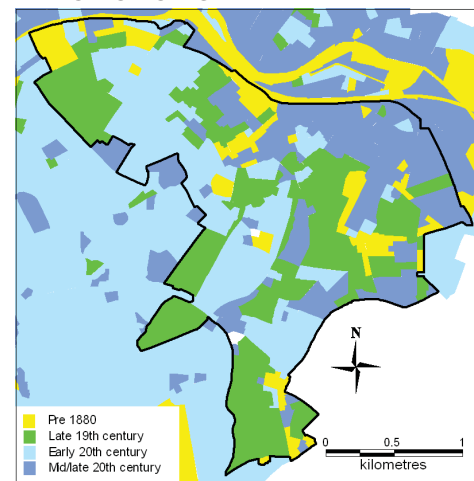
²This summary draws in part on work previously published in Sandwell MBC's ward profiles (1996).

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The industry outside the northern edge of the character area continued to be

highly influential. For example, the most important factor in the development of West Smethwick (the far north-west of the area) was the presence nearby of Chance Brothers' glass works.

In fact, the wealth of Victorian Smethwick was such that many of the public facilities in the area (particularly the parks and schools) originated as donations from factory-owners. Examples of these being the schools created by the Chance family, and the park donated by the brewery owner Harry Mitchell.

Among those coming to work in Smethwick industries in the second half of the 20th century, were many bringing religions which were not served by local facilities. This caused the conversion of several local buildings: the largest being that of the Congregational Chapel on the High Street to a Sikh Gurdwara. On its opening in 1961 it was said to be the largest in Europe.

The unusual character of the modern High Street where it forms the Character Area's northern edge is partly a result of the decision in the 1980s to demolish one side of it to make way for a dual-carriageway. The A457 Tollhouse Way is now one of the busiest stretches of A road in Sandwell, but the High Street has undoubtedly suffered.

Warley Character Area (SD12)

SUMMARY:

This residential Character Area is one of only three large areas of early 20th century suburbs in the Black Country. In many ways it represents the advance of suburban housing in a southerly direction, being bordered by older settlement to the north and containing more recent development in its south (continuing into Dudley¹). The modern boundaries with Birmingham and Dudley lie to its south, and the industrial areas of Oldbury and Langley to its north-west.

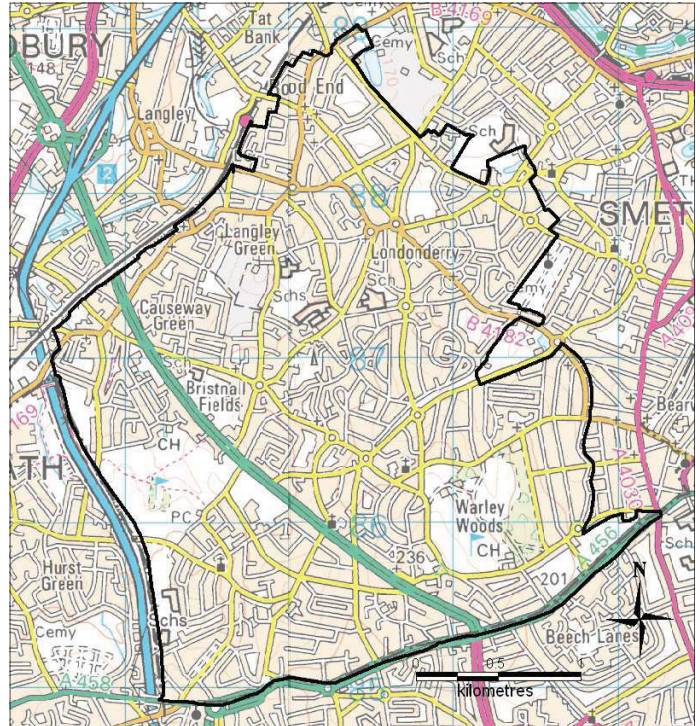
GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

This area lies over sandstone and mudstone. At 180m to 220m, it is higher than much of the land around it, making it an obstacle for the canals, railways and major roads which, until 1927, skirted around it. Thimblemill Brook flows north through the area.

MODERN CHARACTER:

This is one of the largest single residential areas in the Black Country and probably contains the most 1930s housing of any Character Area outside Wolverhampton. This type of accommodation fills large swathes of the northern and central parts of the area and comprises in large measure small semi-detached properties, often built on geometrically laid out streets or crescents.

The oldest housing in the area is generally strung out along the roads between the settlements of Rood End, Langley Green and Causeway Green, on the area's north-western edge. Causeway Green is also the point at which the a principal road route between Wolverhampton and Birmingham (built between the wars) enters the area to cross it in a north-west to south-east direction. This



One of the largest areas of inter-war housing in the Black Country, typified by small semi-detached properties on curved streets and best exemplified by The Oval, seen here, in the east of the Character Area.

route also marks a boundary in terms of the period of the landscape: north of this line, the landscape largely originates from the period before 1938, south of this line it is, with the exception of Brandhall Golf Course, more modern.

Another golf course can be found within the boundaries of Warley Woods public park in the south-west of the area. Warley Woods themselves are, in the absence of canals and railways within the area, one of the oldest features in the landscape, originating as a private park in the 18th century.

The south of the area is bounded by two important roads: the A456 Hagley Road and, since the late 1960s, by the M5 in the west—which also forms the boundary with Dudley. The Jewellery line provides a passenger rail station at Langley Green, just outside the area in its north-west.

¹See *Dudley Character Area Profiles*.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

Although densely urbanised today, this area was almost entirely agricultural until the time it was surveyed for the Ordnance Survey's 3rd edition map of the area in the late 1920s.

Within the earlier rural landscape, small settlements existed along the north-western edge of the area, as well as in the hamlets of Bristnall Fields and Warley Salop in its centre. Meanwhile, on the area's eastern edge, Bearwood's Edwardian streets had expanded to meet the current boundary of Warley Woods.

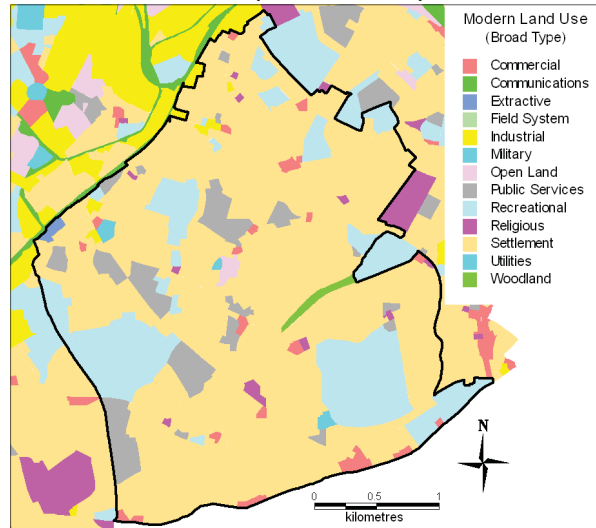
The area has a complex administrative history. The now disappeared name of Warley Salop, a settlement in the centre of the Character Area (on what is now the junction of George Road and Hill Top Road) was, as its name implies, a detached part of Shropshire, while its counterpart, Warley Wigorn, was similarly in Worcestershire. A tree known as Three Shires Oak (cut down in 1904), stood at what is the eastern edge of the Character Area where Staffordshire once met the other two counties (appropriately, on the junction of Wigorn Road and Three Shires Oak Road).

The inter-war years saw the area's transformation to the suburban landscape we see today, starting with the opening of the Wolverhampton Road (A4123) in 1927. This broad dual carriageway cutting across previous routes symbolised optimistic ideas of a future based on the car. But even its construction, which used colliery waste in its foundations, and employed many unemployed Black Country miners as labour, paid reference to the area's past.

The following decade saw an unprecedented expansion in housing into the agricultural land north of the Wolverhampton Road. Alongside the road itself, as well as several side roads leading off it, private houses were constructed, but much of the north of the area was given over to the local authority semis and short terraced housing typical of the period. This served to differentiate it from the Edwardian terraces and earlier detached properties around Warley woods in the east, more frequently used by the local middle classes.

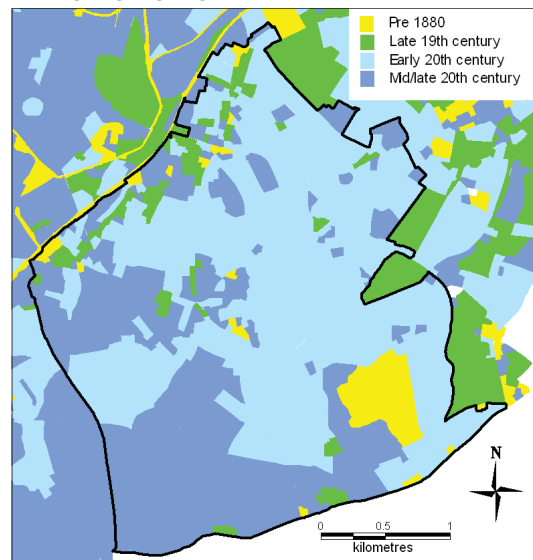
Although there was some small earlier settlement at Brandhall in the south (there is a reference to it as the Manor House of Warley Wigorn as early as 1444 and, more recently, the golf course was created from farmland in 1908), the first development of the area to the south-west of the Wolverhampton Road mostly took place in the 1950s and 1960s. At this time, several thousand council

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houses, flats and bungalows were built by the local authority (then Oldbury Council). The area was further enhanced by facilities such as a new primary school in the 1950s, a Baptist church in 1963, a clinic in 1969, and a new youth centre built onto the existing Perryfields High School in 1970. In the centre of the housing estate, there is a shopping precinct, as a community centre (1966) and the public library (1961). Some of the high-rise flats in Brandhall have now been demolished and replaced with low rise homes built by housing associations.

Wednesbury & Hill Top Character Area (SD13)

SUMMARY:

This is one of the largest residential areas in the Black Country (three-fifths of its area is accounted for by housing¹) and it includes the important commercial area of Wednesbury. The boundary with Walsall is in its north, at its eastern edge are motorways, and industrial districts lie to the west. The housing in the area is, in general, more recent than that of the West Bromwich Character Area to the south.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

The majority of the area lies over coal (perhaps to a greater extent than in any other Sandwell Character Area), while in the south-west the underlying geology is sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate. The north-eastern edge of the area follows the valley of the River Tame, and the land rises from there to high points at Wednesbury (in the north-west), Hill Top (in the south-west) and Charlemont (in the south-east). The Oldbury Arm of the Tame flows south-west to north-east across the area.

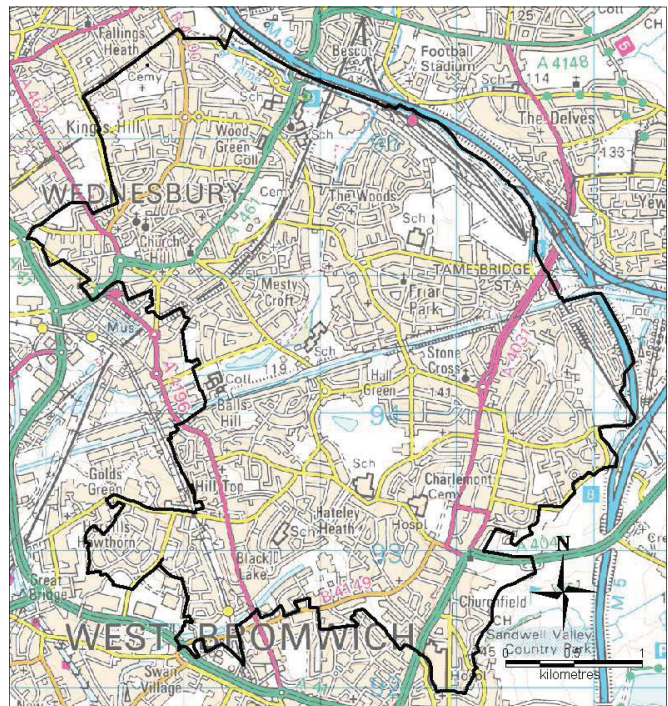
MODERN CHARACTER:

This is a largely residential area, although much of the earliest housing (at Wednesbury and Hill Top) has been replaced. The vast majority of area is occupied by 20th century properties, many of them built on Council estates. Examples of this include Friar Park (in the east of the area) with its large plan of small, inter-war terraces and, on the opposite side of the area, the 1950s semis and terraces at Harvills Hawthorn.

Schools, hospitals and cemeteries form an important part of the landscape. Many, like Heath Lane cemetery and Sandwell General Hospital were built to serve the town of West Bromwich, immediately to the south.



Wednesbury market place, in the north-west of the Character Area, reflects the town's earlier prosperity as a centre of coal mining and industry.



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The Tame Valley in the north-east has always been a transport corridor and, since 1847, the rail route between Birmingham and Walsall. Passenger stations are included at Tame Bridge and Bescot, and the freight facility at Bescot sidings is one of the largest in the region. Since 1970, the Tame Valley has also been the route of the M6, and Junction 6 lies on the northern edge of the Character Area. The creation of a car-based retail park to the west of Junction 9 (including *IKEA*, just outside the area), has had an important influence on this part of the landscape.

In the 21st century, the west of the area has benefited from the re-establishment of a disused rail corridor represented by the opening of the Midland Metro, with stops at Black Lake and two serving Wednesbury town centre. This has re-opened an important link with the cities of Birmingham and Wolverhampton.

¹As recorded in 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER²:

The town of Wednesbury has Saxon origins and the parish church is first mentioned in 1210. High Bullen, the route of the modern A461 marked in green on the map overleaf, appears to have been the centre of the medieval settlement. The Character Area also includes the original centre of West Bromwich at Churchfields in the area's far south east: modern West Bromwich is now centred to the south.

Like many others in the Black Country, the area has a tradition of mining and iron working. A large area of collieries was situated immediately west of the area: it was this source of coal which was the destination of the first canals in the area in the late 18th century (the canal still forms the area's south-western boundary).

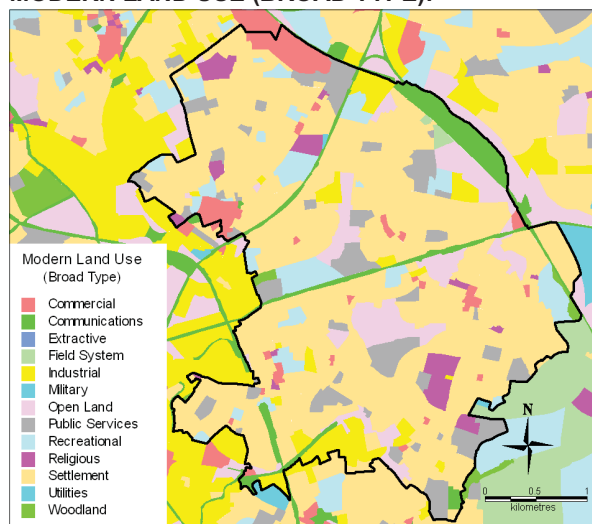
Later, in the 19th century, the effects of coal mining could be found covering several parts of the landscape within the area which, aside from the settlements of Wednesbury and Hill Top, had until then been largely agricultural. The Tame Valley canal, which runs east-west in a straight line across the Character Area, was a relatively late addition to the network (in 1844) to provide an alternative route between the Black Country coalfields and Birmingham. In the following decade the railway lines also crossed the area, ultimately contributing to the canals' decline in use.

The industry which developed was generally located in the areas along the western and southern edges of the area. But the story of coal mining and ironworking industries exploiting a previously agricultural landscape is not one which distinguishes this area from its neighbours. It is rather the widespread replacement of the previous landscape with housing developments, particularly from the end of the 1930s onwards, which has given the area its modern character.

These large housing developments were made possible by the fact that substantial areas of fields and woodland still existed in the Character Area in the early 20th century, as well as the fact that it had been collieries (and their spoil heaps) rather than industry which had predominated in the Character Area during the 19th century. When the latter were removed (some as late as the 1950s), the possibility opened up for large-scale housing construction on them, in addition to that which had been possible on previously farmed and wooded areas.

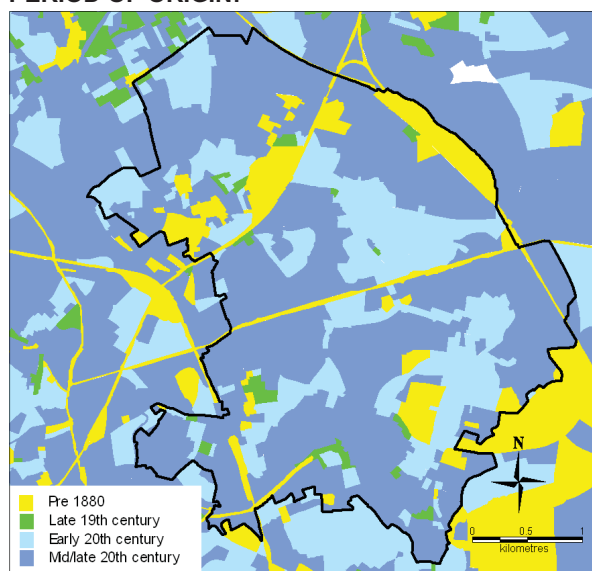
The housing which was built to serve the growing Black Country population was mixed between private and public sponsorship. However, a large contribution

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was made by construction under the aegis of the local authorities of the day (since absorbed into Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council). Large council estates were built at Wood Green (on fields, in the north of the area), Friar Park (on fields, in the east), and Harvills Hawthorn (on rough grassland, in the south-west) for example.

The expansion of the population of Wednesbury and West Bromwich also led to the expansion of services such as schools, hospitals and cemeteries. In the 1930s the workhouse in the far south of the area became Hallam Hospital (now Sandwell General), while the cemetery at Heath Lane (a little to the north) became one of the largest in the Black Country.

²This summary draws in part on work previously published in Sandwell MBC's ward profiles (1996).

Great Bridge Character Area (SD14)

SUMMARY:

This Character Area, together with those to its south¹ form the single largest area of industrial land in the Black Country. Defined by its position along a river valley running over the South Staffordshire coalfield, it has been used as a route by canals, railways and, most recently the Black Country New Road. Bounded by residential areas to its east and west, and by Walsall in its north, it includes the commercial centre of Great Bridge.

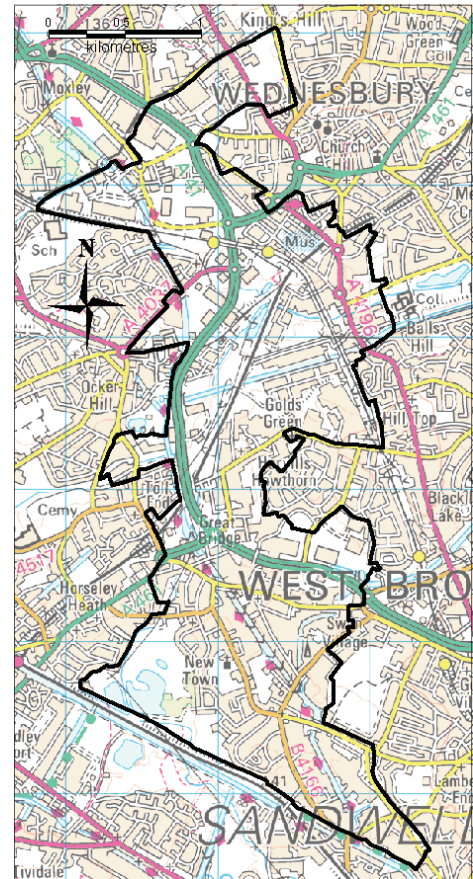
GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

The north of the area lies over coal, while the south is over sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate. The area sits in the valley of the River Tame (Oldbury Arm) which enters the area in its south and exits in its north-west.

MODERN CHARACTER:

More than half of this area is currently industrial, and the majority of these industrial sites have been developed in the mid to late 20th century². The oldest industrial sites, dating from before WW2, are scattered along the eastern side of the area, often alongside the lines of canals, past and present. The landscape still retains some of the 18th and 19th century transport infrastructure in the shape of the Walsall Canal (1786) and the Tame Valley Canal (1844) but its disused railway lines have relied on the Midlands Metro to breath new life into them.

Most of the housing in the area is in Great Bridge in the south-west, in a wedge of land between canals. It has included substantial post-WW2 high density development, in particular purpose built and high-rise flats. Nearby, the old commercial centre of Great



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Typifying the area's role as a communication corridor, the Metro line from Birmingham to Wolverhampton follows the route of the former Great Western Railway through the north of the Character Area. Opened at the very end of the 20th century, it includes stops servicing Wednesbury town centre and the new Black Country New Road.

¹See *Tipton Green, Oldbury & Langley Character Area Profile*.

²As recorded in 2000.

Bridge on one side of the canal has now been dwarfed by the site of a 24-hour Asda on the other.

Recreational land is represented in the south-west of the area in the shape of a significant park and nature reserve, established in the 20th century on the site of earlier brickworks and collieries.

The Black Country New Road has had a huge influence on the recent life of the area. Like much of the land next to it, the large electricity sub-station (previously a colliery in the area's centre) has been redeveloped for industrial use since the HLC was recorded in 2000. Significant among this development, and a measure of the accessibility of nearby motorways, has been the growth of new 'logistics' sites.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

This area's modern landscape of dual-carriageways, giant industrial sheds and hypermarkets, conceals some of the earliest exploitation of the mineral wealth of the Black Country.

Coal extraction shaped much of the northern part of the area's first non-agricultural uses while, in the south, clay pits and brickworks performed a similar function. Ironworks were also feature of the area, both north and south.

Some of the first coal mines in the area were sunk at Ball's Hill (on the area's eastern edge) as early as 1707, but it was 100 years later, during the first half of the 19th century, and after the arrival of the canals, that the majority of mines were opened.

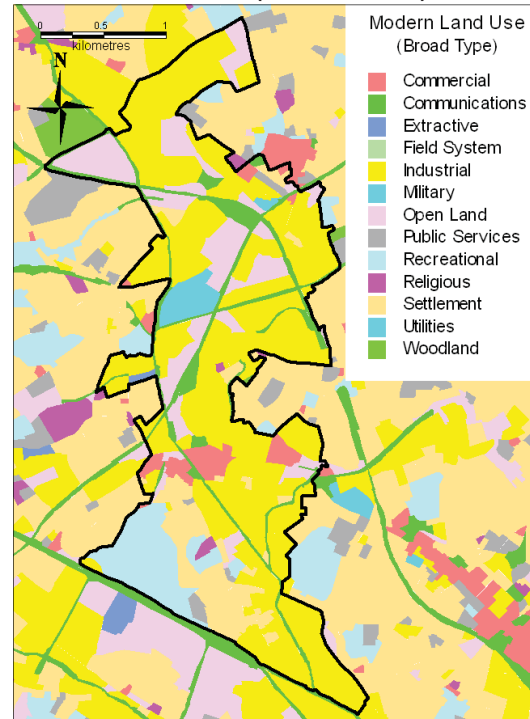
The canals first came to the area in its south-east, when the need to transport coal to manufacturing centres brought about the opening of the Balls Hill Branch of the Birmingham to Wolverhampton Canal in 1769. This route, now closed, ran up the eastern side of the area to connect Hill Top with the canals to Birmingham in the south.

Sixteen years later, another branch, this one still surviving, was cut from the same south-east location to run up the western side of the Tame Valley to the towns further north, in particular to Darlaston and Walsall. The Tame Valley Canal which joins this route near the centre of the Character Area was a latecomer, opened in 1844 to provide an alternative route between the Black Country and Birmingham.

The first railway through the area was opened between Walsall and Dudley in 1850, running across the area from Wednesbury towards the south-west. Four years later, it was crossed at Wednesbury by a line between Birmingham and Wolverhampton (there were separate stations). The latter line forms the current route of the Midland Metro, although it is anticipated that the Wednesbury-Dudley line will re-open as a further connecting Metro line.

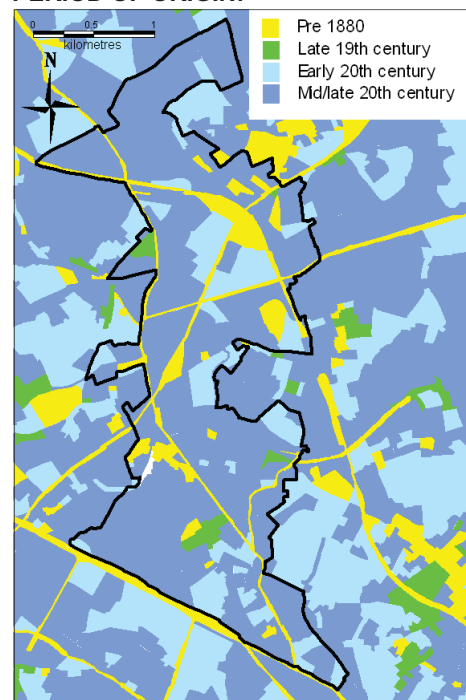
By the end of the 19th century the extractive industries were in decline, making way for the 20th century development which, for the most part, characterised the area at the time of the recording of the HLC.

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North Smethwick Character Area (SD15)

SUMMARY:

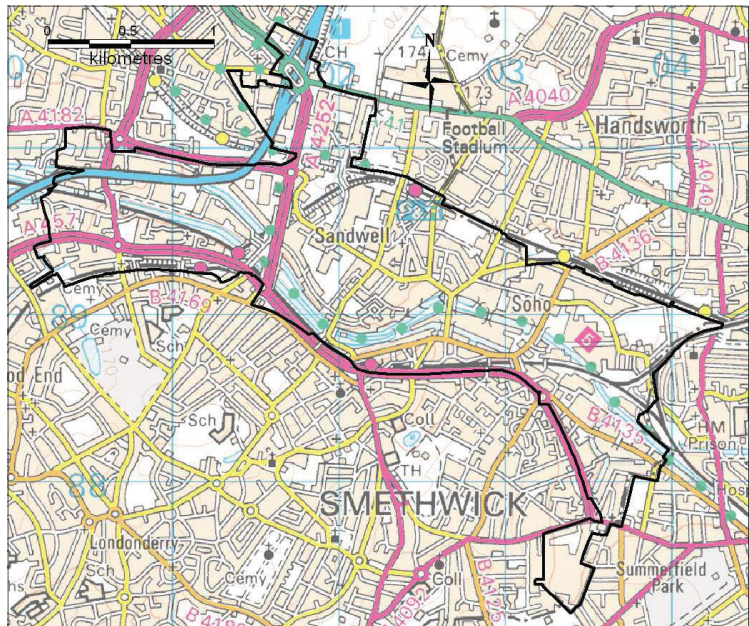
One of the largest areas of industrial land in the Black Country¹, its character has been formed by the transport corridors (canal, rail, road and, most recently, metro) running east-west through the area from the centre of Birmingham (only 3km to its east) to the Black Country coalfields, Wolverhampton and beyond. The large industrial corridor continues beyond the Character Area to the west², while to the south lies the residential part of modern Smethwick.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

The west of the area lies over sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate, while the east is over red sandstone and pebble beds. Crucially, the area contains a low point of a north-south ridge running between Birmingham and the Black Country coalfields.

MODERN CHARACTER:

This is an area dominated by industry, most of it the result of post-war development. In addition, canals, railways and major roads have also left an important legacy, defining the way the landscape is used, but also in creating barriers within it. This latter point is illustrated by the housing in the centre of the area (Brasshouse Lane and roads off) which is separated from the centre of Smethwick by two canals, a dual carriageway and the West Coast



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The 'new' wider, straighter canal route between Birmingham and the Black Country coalfields, shown at its junction with the older route (in the centre of the Character Area), preceded the expansion of Smethwick as a location for industry.

mainline railway.

Although the factories and depots in the area include some important reminders of the large employers of Smethwick's early industrial canalside development (such as the remains of Chance's glassworks in the west, and the Soho Foundry in the east), much of the modern landscape (at least a fifth of the industrial land) is given over to trading estates of smaller units.

The manufacturing tradition also continues alongside other industries. In the north, large logistics and distributive concerns have made use of the access to junction 1 of the M5 while, in the east, scrap and wholesale merchants are part of the local mix of trades.

As a long-established industrial area, north Smethwick's older sites are continually subject to change. Since the data for the HLC was collected in 2000, the large brewery site, which survived as an outcrop of industry on the area's far south-west, has since made way for a large housing development.

¹As recorded in 2000.

²See SD01 *Tipton Green, Oldbury & Langley* Character Area profile.

HISTORIC CHARACTER³:

The landscape of north Smethwick was largely defined in the second half of the 18th century, as it became the link between Birmingham and the Black Country.

In 1760, what is now the east-west dual-carriageway of the A457 (see map overleaf) was turnpiked (the surviving toll-house giving its name to the modern road and shopping centre) and, in 1769, the first canal was built along a similar route, using numerous locks to cross the Smethwick ridge. These developments were important in that they started to attract industry to what was then an agricultural environment.

Early industrial sites included the Soho Foundry (now *Avery-Berkel Ltd*), built in 1795, and the glassworks in West Smethwick which was established in 1814. However, it was not until a wider and straighter replacement canal was built in 1827 (excavating through the ridge and dispensing with the need for so many locks) that the industrialisation of the area expanded to eventually dominate its character.

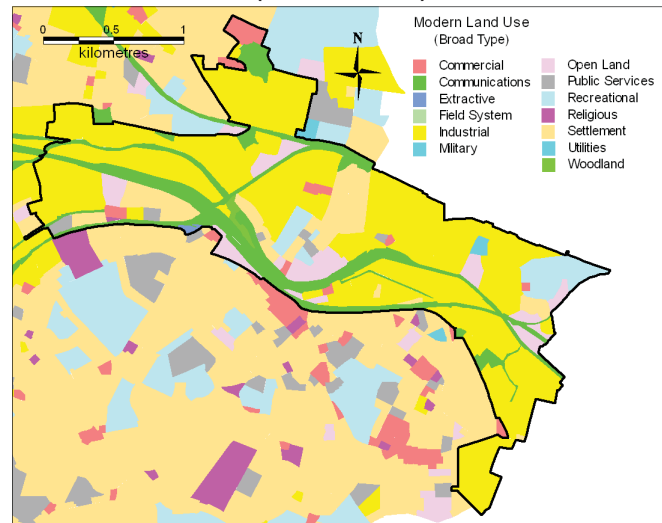
By the time of the Ordnance Survey First Edition map of the 1880s, industry had taken over much of the east of the area. The north was meanwhile still largely agricultural, although one of the last Black Country collieries to be opened, Sandwell Park, was situated in the fork of a railway junction (close to what is now The Hawthorns station).

At this point in its development, much of the newly expanded residential and commercial centre of Victorian Smethwick was within the boundary of the Character Area. These streets (including Rolfe Street) started to change to industrial uses in the 20th century, as the centre of Smethwick was pushed south of the railway.

The railways had arrived in the mid 19th century, and their routes have done much to define our Character Area, forming large parts of its northern and southern boundaries. In the 1990s, line and station closures were in some way reversed by the opening of the 'Jewellery Line' (1995) with new stations at Smethwick Galton Bridge and The Hawthorns, together with line 1 of the Midland Metro (1999).

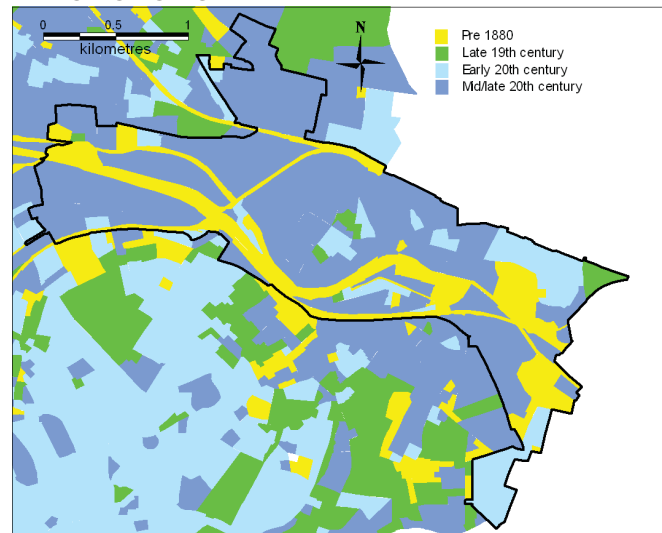
The railways also influenced the development of industry from the 19th century. *The Birmingham Railway Carriage & Wagon Co. Ltd*, for example, was

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established in the north of the area in the 1860s and remained a feature of the area until 1963. It became a nationally prominent manufacturer of rolling stock, and is now the location of an industrial estate.

Other 19th century manufacturing sites have played an important role in the town's development. *Fox, Henderson & Co.* opened in the south-east of the area in the 1840s. Although the firm itself closed in 1856, its site was then occupied by one of the predecessors of *GKN*, in its day one of the town's largest manufacturing employers. Later (in 1878), *Mitchell's & Butlers' Cape Hill Brewery* opened a site at Cape Hill which expanded to occupy 90 acres by 1914.

³This summary draws in part on work previously published in Sandwell MBC's ward profiles (1996).

Bloxwich & Blakenhall Heath Character Area (WL01)

SUMMARY:

This area is dominated by settlement (73% of its area¹) and the majority of its landscape (54%) originates before 1930. It includes the historic town of Bloxwich and is bounded to the north and east by field systems, and to the west and south by more modern settlement and industrial sites. From the late 19th century Walsall (south of the area) expanded north until there was a continuous belt of housing between the centres of Walsall and Bloxwich.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

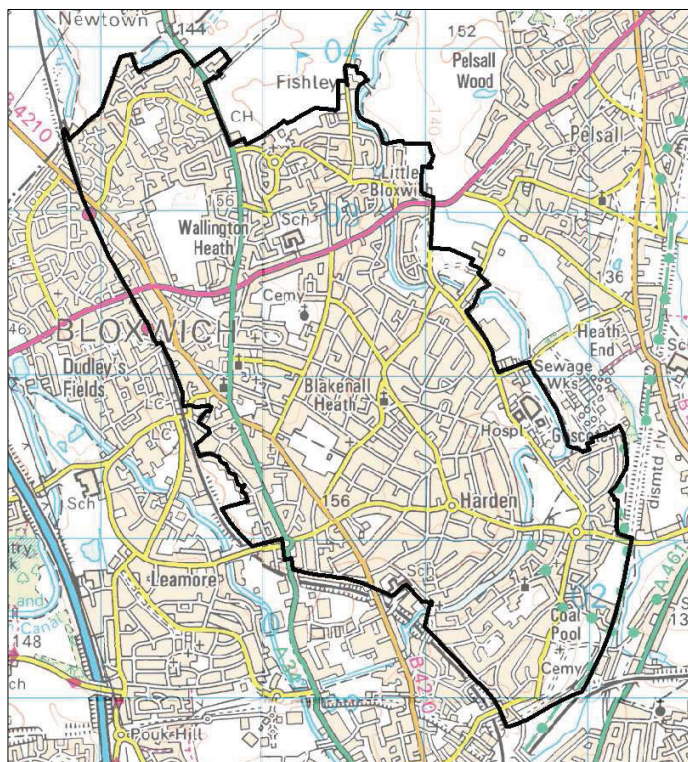
The majority of the area lies over coal measures. The highest point (at around 165m) is just north of the centre of the area and slopes down from here on all sides: to the south-east, to the west towards the M6 motorway, and to the east towards a tributary of Ford Brook (which itself runs to the south of the area).

MODERN CHARACTER:

This is an area dominated by housing from the period before 1930. The oldest part of Bloxwich, the area's largest historic settlement, runs in a north-south direction on its western side. This is also the commercial core of Bloxwich, and has probably been so since at least the 19th century, with some buildings surviving from that period.

Around the centre of Bloxwich are its earliest suburbs, which include medium sized 19th century terraces to the east, located around a modern industrial estate, which in turn has been built upon the site of 19th century terraces. The 19th century terraces are also interspersed with 20th century housing dating from the inter war period to the late 20th century. To the west of the High Street, beyond the late 20th century apartments are further small 19th century terraces. Bloxwich Park was established in the 19th century to the north of the town and this area in particular retains the character of an early Victorian suburb, the only additional housing being a number of late 20th century apartments.

The remaining 19th and early 20th century terraces lie towards the south towards Walsall. This development saw Bloxwich expand considerably towards the once small settlement of Leamore in the south, which was



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itself substantially developed between the wars. Like Leamore, Wallington Heath in the north originated as a small hamlet but was subsumed within an interwar housing estate.

To the north of present-day Bloxwich is a considerable expanse of late 20th century housing estates, which have been developed right up to the boundary with Staffordshire. Forming the centre of these estates is a superstore and public house. Housing of a similar period also forms the character of the area in the east of the area, around the older settlement of Little Bloxwich.

¹This figure and others relating to the proportion of land in the Character Area are based on data for the year 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

The town of Bloxwich was mentioned in the Domesday Book as a woodland within Wednesbury manor. It may originally have been relatively dispersed and based around a series of greens. Of these, The Green survives to the north of the town centre (on the junction of the A41 and A4124) and was landscaped as a public park in 1890. To the south, Elmore Green is host to the church. Further out were open fields.

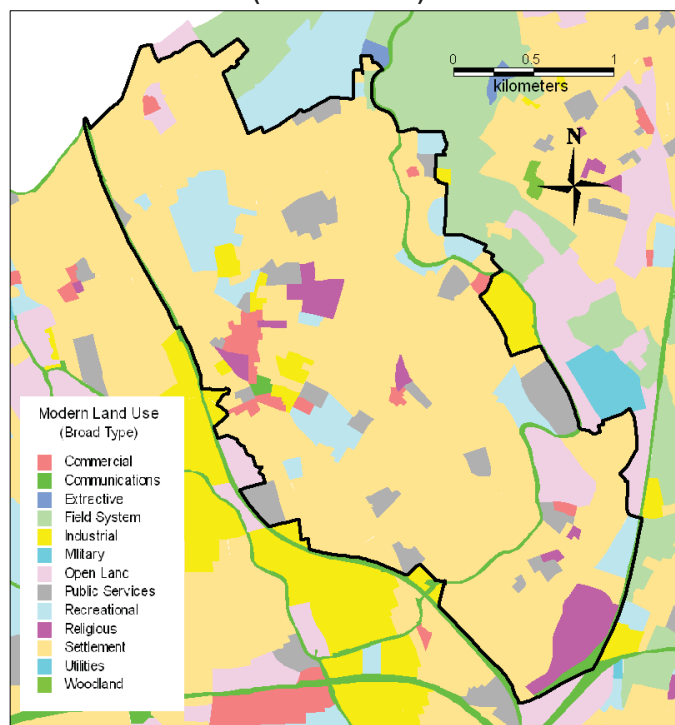
On a small area of high ground in the south of the area, a settlement at Harden is believed to have existed by the late 13th century. It was small and dispersed with its own field system.

On the north-eastern edge of the area, Little Bloxwich is first mentioned in the early 14th century. By the late 19th century the settlement consisted mainly of cottages and a school, and it remained a small hamlet until the middle of the 20th century. Also recorded in the early 14th century was Blakenall Heath, located in the centre of the area (to the east of Bloxwich itself). It was described as a heath in 1544, and this may have attracted squatter settlement: houses were certainly present by 1763. By the 19th century Blakenall Heath comprised a central church with cottages to the north and terraces to the south.

North of the modern A4124, settlement existed at Wallington Heath by the second half of the 18th century, but by the 19th century it was still small. The place name suggests that this area had previously been common land.

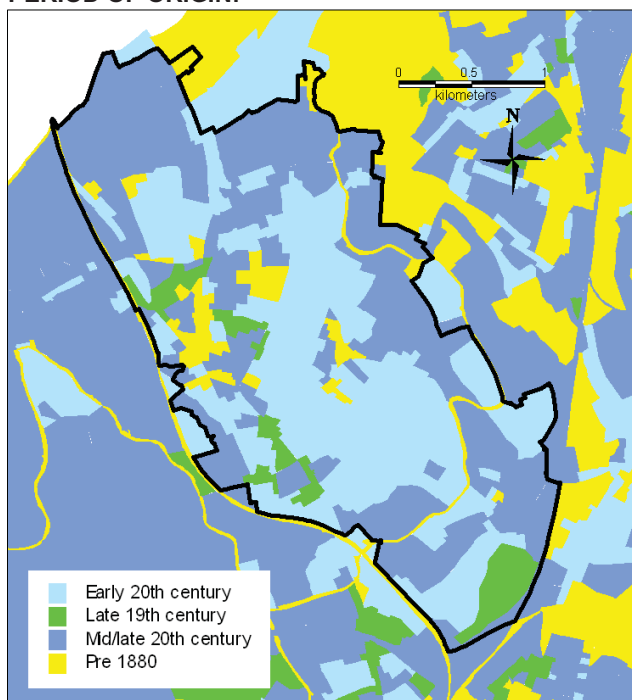
Small collieries existed inside the area and immediately to the east of it (for example at Fishley, Yieldfields and Goscote), and the presence of coal shows in place names such as Coal Pool, a former 19th century settlement in the south of the area now the location of a large housing estate. However, the main coal extraction in the district occurred to the west and south-west of Bloxwich and by the late 19th century the mines were already largely disused.

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Streetly Character Area (WL02)

SUMMARY:

This area is dominated by settlement (81% of its area¹) and is largely (74%) of mid to late 20th century origin. It is bounded to the east by the city of Birmingham and, in particular, the Water Orton and Walsall railway line and Sutton Park which lies beyond it. Separated from the rest of Walsall by Barr Beacon, the area has close ties to the Park and to Sutton Coldfield.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

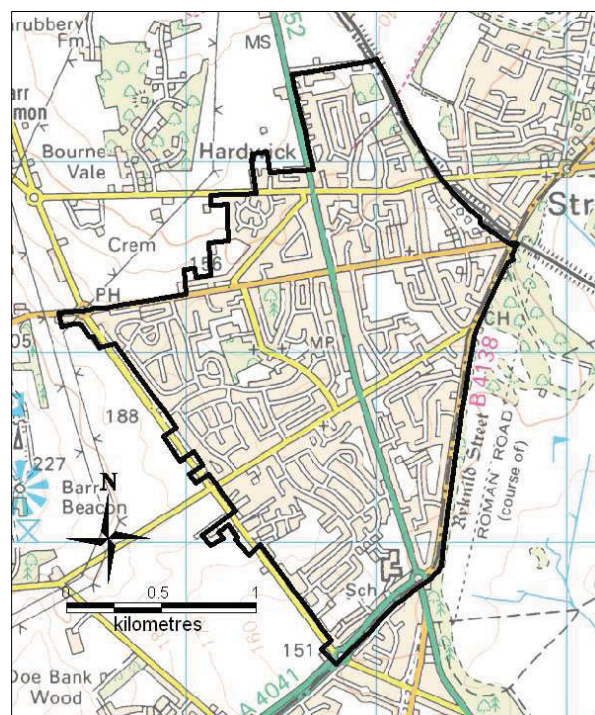
This area lies largely upon soft sandstone with some small pockets of sand and gravel. The elevation of the land falls from about 180m at the western edge (close to the high point of Barr Beacon, outside of the area) and it reaches a low point of around 150m at its eastern side.

MODERN CHARACTER:

This area is dominated by 20th century housing. Within it, some of the earliest and largest surviving houses (mainly dating to the early part of the 20th century) face Sutton Park, lying immediately to the south-east. The inter-war and immediate post-war housing, mainly medium in size, also radiates out from Sutton Park or is strung out along the main routes through the area (Chester Road and Foley Road) rather than being clustered in estates. These roads are long and straight reflecting parliamentary enclosure of this part of Sutton Chase.

From the 1950s, more houses appeared and new roads were built, creating small estates upon the former farmland. Most of the houses built in the 1960s/70s in the east of the area are on short cul de sacs or similar, representing infill between estates. The larger estates of this date were built in the west where the last of the farmland remained.

The Character Area contains a small number of surviving residential properties from the period before



the 20th century, located at its western edge. On the other side, while Sutton Park (itself outside the area) is host to a golf club, the club house of which (on Thornhill Road and within the area) is also among the oldest buildings in the area.

¹This figure and others relating to the proportion of land in the Character Area are based on data for the year 2000.

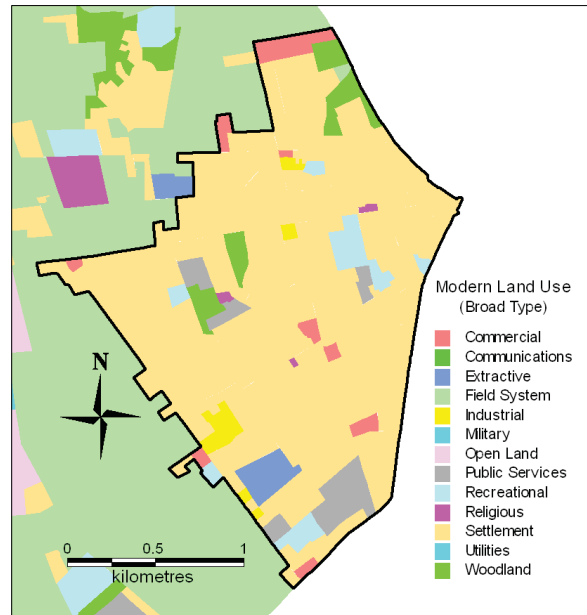
HISTORIC CHARACTER:

Until it was enclosed in the 18th/19th century this area had mainly formed part of Sutton Chase, a large medieval hunting forest. There is little by way of known medieval settlement, the possible exception being Little Hardwick (in the north), where a farm is known to have existed in the late 18th/early 19th century, but which is mentioned in documents as early as the 15th century.

Near Hardwick was an area of open fields which may have been part of the fields of Aldridge, which lie immediately to the north, or may have been part of a separate estate based upon Hardwick. Once the heath had been enclosed in the 18th and 19th centuries, several other farms appeared throughout the area as well as a few cottages along the Chester Road, Aldridge Road and Queslett Road East, presumably to house the farm workers.

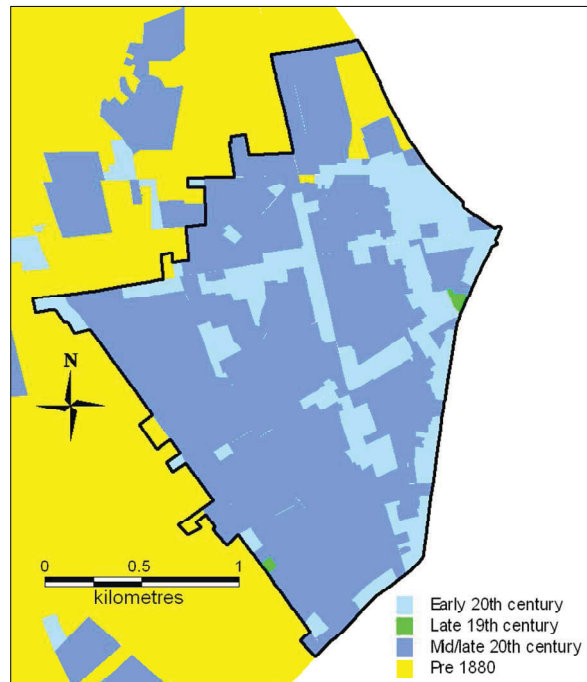
In the inter-war period there had been a steelworks and a quarry in the area, but both have since gone.

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Aldridge East Character Area (WL03)

SUMMARY:

This part of Aldridge is dominated by settlement (74% of its area¹) and is overwhelmingly (78%) of mid to late 20th century origin. It is bounded in the north-west by an area of industrial sites (see Aldridge West Character Area profile), and on all other sides by field systems of earlier origin.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

The area lies over a mixed geology of sandstone, mudstone, conglomerate and limestone. From the south, the land drops from a high point of 200m to around 156m at the railway line, from where it rises again gently up to the north at around 170m. Additionally, a ridge runs north-south through the area, with land falling away either side.

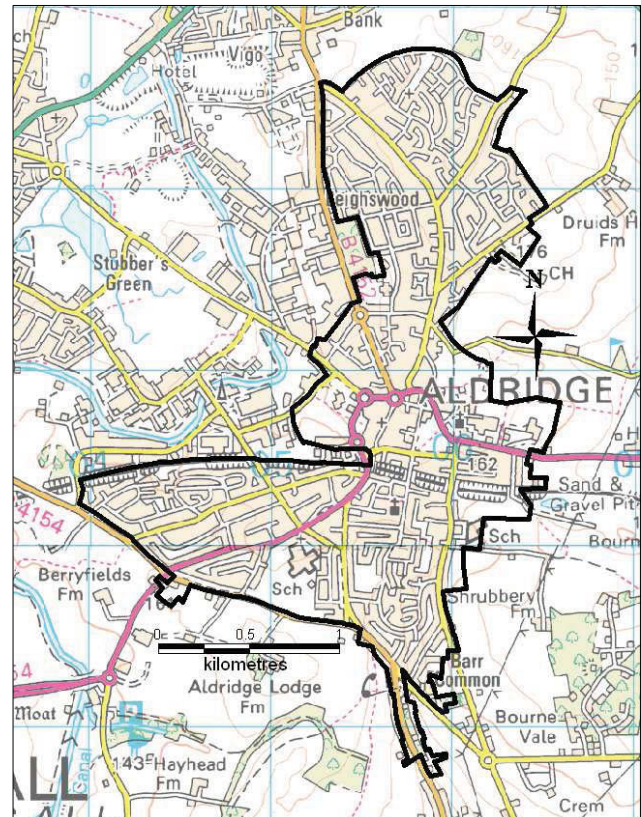
MODERN CHARACTER:

This area represents the residential part of the historic town of Aldridge, including its village green and medieval church (seen here just north of the main modern route through the town, the A454, running east-west). Twentieth century development, which characterises the present-day town, includes a significant retail centre.

Until the First World War, settlement at Aldridge was limited, and few older houses survive in its centre. Those that do are to be found mainly around the church. These are generally large houses dating from the 18th and early 19th centuries, although they are typically no longer inhabited as single dwellings.

Some of the housing around Aldridge centre dates from the late 19th and early 20th century, but the remainder were built in the inter war and immediate post war period, including a few 1960s/70s estates.

The other 20th century housing estates in the area do not appear to immediately relate to the original settlement at Aldridge, but rather to Pool Green (in the south-west of the area) and Druid's Heath (in the north-east), for example.



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The early houses at Pool Green appear to have been largely demolished in the 1960s/70s when St Mary's Way estate was built, although Forge Lane survives from an earlier period (on the southern side of the A454).

However, when these were still standing, two 1940s/50s estates were built to the north and south of them with inter-war housing to the west. Further west, a few early 20th century terraces survive surrounded by inter-war, post-war and 1960s/70s development.

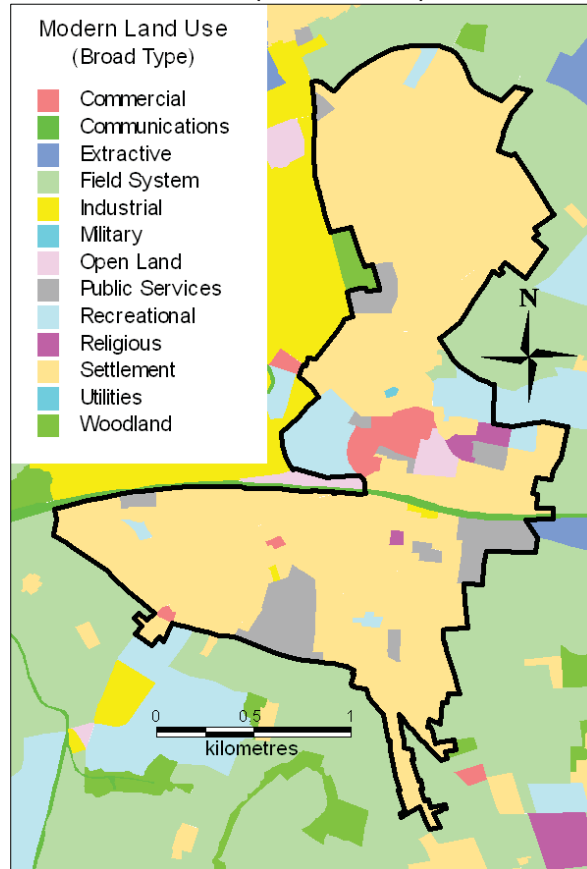
¹This figure and others relating to the proportion of land in the Character Area are based on data for the year 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

Aldridge is believed to have been a Royal Manor in the pre Conquest period and was mentioned in Domesday Book. A church had appeared by about 1200 (parts of the current building are 14th century). A medieval cruck-framed building on the High Street was recorded prior to its demolition in the 1960s and, within the area of The Croft (the current village green), earthworks suggest a medieval settlement existed in the area. To the north-west and south were the village's open fields, and beyond was common land (Druid Heath to the north and Barr Common to the south). The only other known medieval settlement in this area is Coppy Hall, in the north; again demolished in the 1960s.

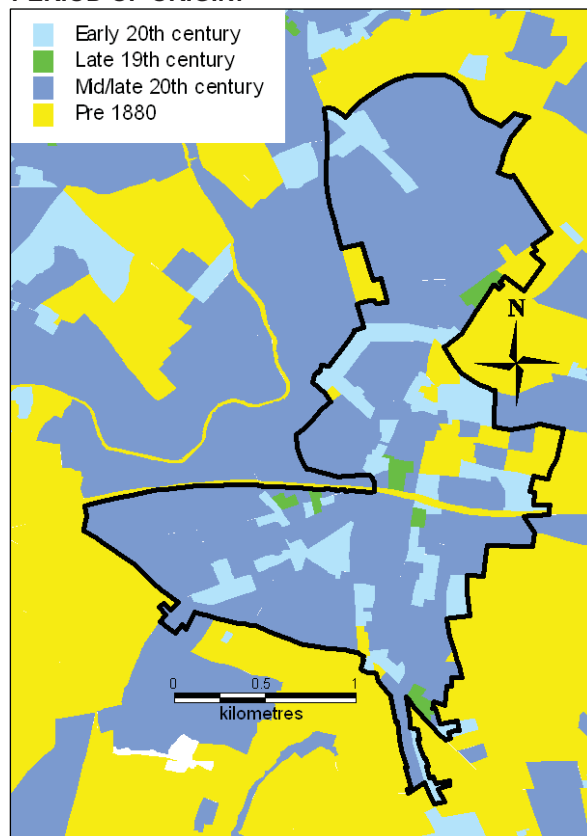
By the mid 18th century, farms and other dispersed settlements were established in the surrounding area and, in the late 18th century, both commons were enclosed by an Act of Parliament. The latter had been the most important change to take place in the landscape until the inter-war period, when housing began to be built in great numbers. Before this, only smaller developments had taken place on the former common.

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Brownhills & Walsall Wood Character Area (WL04)

SUMMARY:

This area is dominated by settlement (50% of its area¹), although field systems are also important. These fields contribute to the fact that half of the landscape in this area originates before 1930. To the North and West the area ends at the Borough boundary, while open land and extractive sites outside of area are important in forming its limits to the East and South.

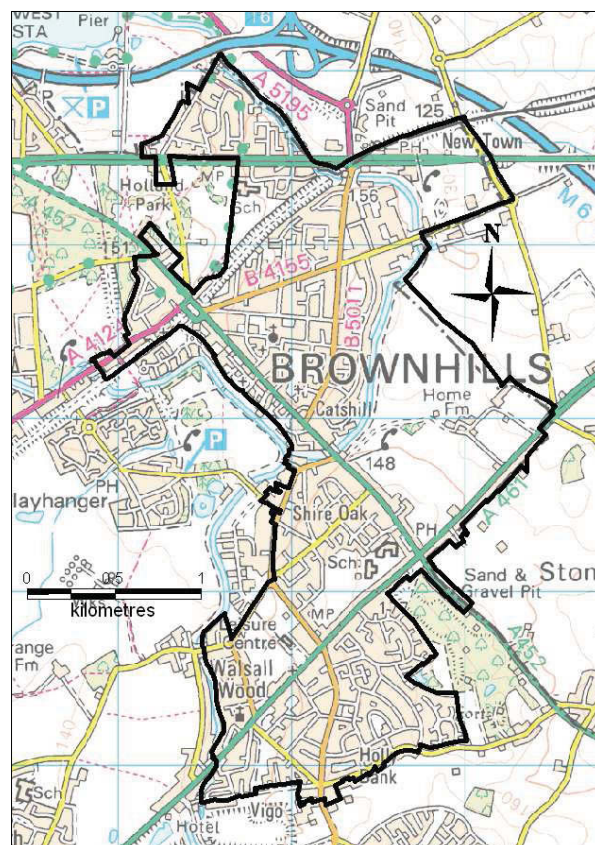
GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

The area generally lies just to the East of the coal measures, largely on sandstone, mudstone, and conglomerate. The areas of settlement are generally on the highest ground, especially in the south-east where it reaches a high point for the area of about 170m. The fields to the north-east fall away to less than 130m.

MODERN CHARACTER:

This area is dominated by two settlements: the small town of Brownhills to the north; and the more dispersed area of Walsall Wood to the south. Both were established on major routes: the roads from London to Chester (running south-east to north-west) and from Walsall to Lichfield (running south-west to north-east) respectively.

The modern settlement of Brownhills is dominated by housing estates, with a commercial core along the High Street (a continuation of Chester Road) comprising late 19th and 20th century buildings. Brownhills Common just beyond the area in the north-west was previously heath land heavily mined for coal. Most of Brownhills had been heath until the mid 19th century when the land began to be enclosed. The straight boundaries typical of parliamentary enclosure can still be seen - a pattern also reflected in the road system East of the High Street. In the late 19th century this area had planned new town. However the plans failed to materialise, and the building plots were eventually developed over a much longer time scale, and were not finally completed until the mid 20th century. The majority of the remainder of the houses originate from this time. To the north is a clay quarry, and beyond that is an area of industry mainly made up of large modern units and an industrial estate.



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The earliest surviving houses in Walsall Wood itself are cottages dating to the 19th century; while there are also medium-sized late 19th century semi-detached and detached houses in several surrounding areas. More typical of Walsall Wood are the estates of small houses which mostly date to the inter war and post war periods. In the centre of these estates is an area of 1960s/70s houses. The most recent housing has been built to the furthest east, comprising two large estates of medium-sized detached houses.

Immediately north-west of Lichfield Road is a large school, beyond which are further housing estates mainly dating to the mid 20th century. To the west of the school is a sports ground known as Oak Park, which had been established in the inter-war period.

¹This figure and others relating to the proportion of land in the Character Area are based on data for the year 2000.

Large and medium semi-detached and detached houses of 19th/20th century date line the Lichfield Road heading east towards Staffordshire. To the north-east of this road a field system survives, along with a small, probably 19th century, country house known as Sandhills and an associated farm. The field system was probably the enclosed after an 1876 Act of Parliament.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

There is little surviving evidence for medieval settlement within the area. A number of roads, including the Pelsall Road and Coppice Lane/Engine Lane may date to at least the medieval period. Part of Ogley Hay manor also falls within this area: Ogley Hay is mentioned in a charter of AD994 as belonging to the monastery at Wolverhampton, and it is also referred to in Domesday Book.

Walsall Wood is mentioned in about 1200. The whole area was within Cannock Forest, which had probably been founded in the 11th century as a hunting forest. The majority of the area was dominated by heath and woodland, although there would have been some early settlement. The documentary sources first refer to squatter settlement in about 1600.

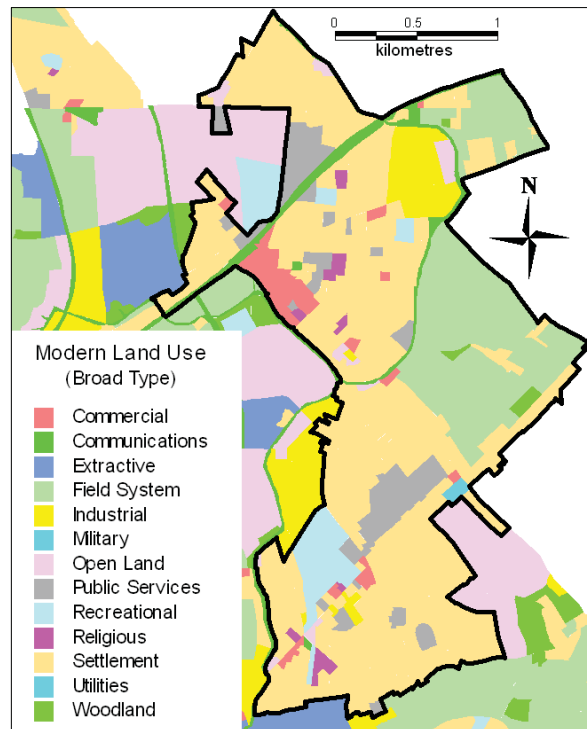
By the 18th century, settlement had become established at Walsall Wood along the Lichfield Road and at Catshill on the Chester Road, immediately south of the area later to become Brownhills. These may all have originated as unofficial settlement in wooded and heathland areas ('squatter settlement').

By the early 19th century the Wyrley & Essington canal had been constructed through the area and a major change also occurred in the late 19th century, when the heath to the east of the area was enclosed. This has survived as farm land.

The town of Brownhills is interesting as a completely new settlement established from around the middle of the 19th century, and based on the exploitation of the adjacent coal seams to the north-east and the opening of the railway.

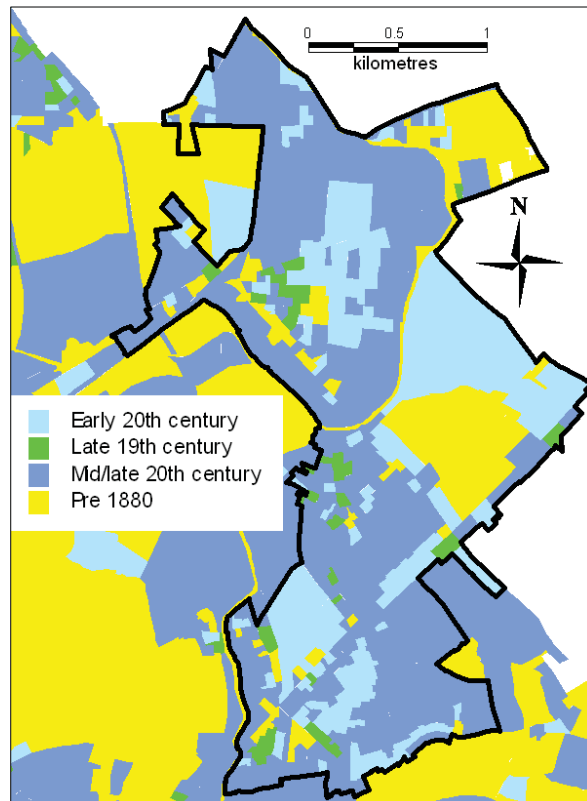
Cottages dominated Walsall Wood in the late 19th century, and areas of heath also survive to the South and east of the main settlement. To the north was Walsall Wood Colliery which opened in 1871 and closed in the 20th century. The presence of the colliery helped stimulate the growth of settlement here also at the end of the 19th century.

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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West Central Walsall Character Area (WL05)

SUMMARY:

This area is dominated by industrial sites (49% of its area¹), although settlement and commercial uses are also important. It is largely (61%) of mid/late 20th century origin but includes the generally older commercial centre of Walsall, together with the main industrial parts of both Walsall and Bloxwich. The area is largely surrounded by areas of settlement, and is also generally bounded by the railway line in the East and canal in the West.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

In its northern part the area lies over coal, and is crossed east-west by the Bentley Faults. In the south, the geology is largely limestone. The land forms a shallow slope from its highest point (158m) at its northern tip in Bloxwich, down to its opposite extremity (115m) about 5km to the south. To the South East, beyond the line of the railway, the land rises again to a high point (Walsall High Street) of about 147m.

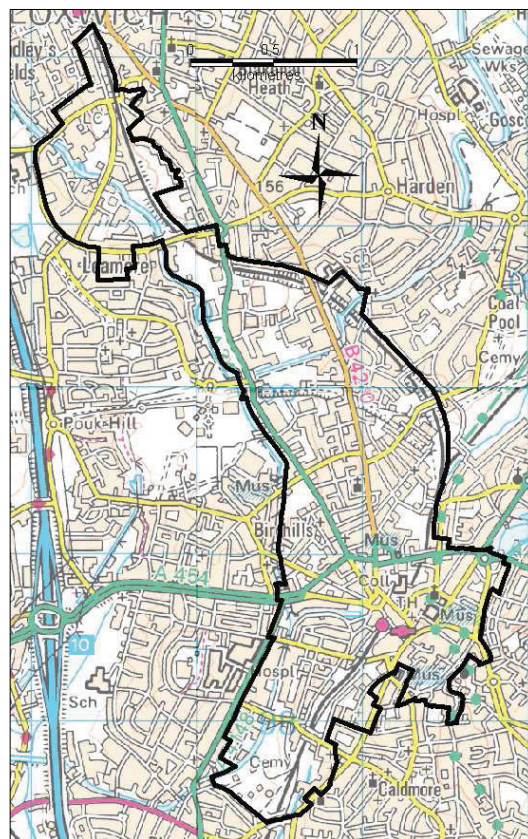
MODERN CHARACTER:

This particular Character Area accounts for almost a quarter (23%) of the industrial land in the Borough of Walsall, as well as its largest commercial centre. The surviving landscape dates largely from the 20th century, although the centre of Walsall also contains the largest concentration of buildings in the Borough from before 1880.

The industrial parts of the Character Area, some of whose buildings date to the 19th and early 20th century, include the Rolling Mill Industrial Estate in the South, the sites bounded by Green Lane/Bloxwich Road in the centre of the area, and the zones either side of the Wyrley & Essington Canal in the North. Much of this area has its origins as industrial land in the extractive industries of the 19th century and before, in particular coal mining and brick making.

The area also includes Walsall's Leather Quarter where a leather industry survives, now predominantly producing saddles. The surviving buildings date from the mid 19th century onwards.

The Commercial Centre of Walsall is in the south-east of the Character Area with its shops, offices and civic buildings. Although of earlier origin, is largely made up today of post medieval or modern buildings. The shops, public houses and offices in this area belong to a variety of periods, the earliest of which date to the mid/late 18th century and include a shopping arcade dating to 1895-7 as well as late 20th century purpose built shops. To the north is an area of civic buildings



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including the current Town Hall, dating to 1902-05, a court building of 1831 and the mid/late 20th century civic centre.

Despite its industrial and commercial character, some areas of housing do exist within the boundary of the Character Area. These are largely of late 19th or early 20th century origin, and are clustered round Stafford Street /Bloxwich Road (and particularly to the east of this route) as it leaves Walsall to the north.

¹This figure and others relating to the proportion of land in the Character Area are based on data for the year 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

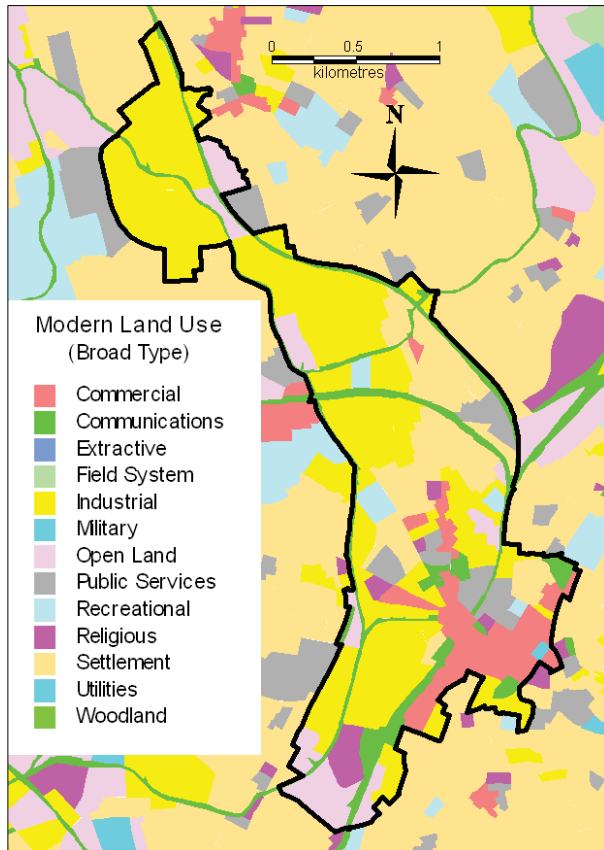
There was a settlement at Walsall by the mid 12th century when it was granted to Herbert Le Rous by Henry II. Surprisingly, it is not mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086. This does not necessarily mean that it was not in existence by this time; its entry may have been subsumed within that of an adjoining area, or it may have been left out as it was part of the crown lands. The likely location of the earliest settlement is on the limestone hill occupied by St Matthew's church (the church itself being just outside of the Character Area).

The High Street which runs off from the hill to the north-west looks like a deliberately planned extension, as it is wide enough to be used as a market street and lined by burgages – properties with a narrow street frontage but running back for some distance at right angles to the street frontage. Such a deliberate design is likely to have been the work of Herbert le Rous after he was granted the settlement in 1159 (or of one of his descendants). A right to hold a weekly market at Walsall (on Monday) was granted in 1220 and it is likely that this planned extension was in existence by or soon after this date.

Industry was a major part of the town's economy from an early period. Certainly by the mid 15th century the manufacture of metal goods was prevalent particularly those associated with horse furniture (bits, spurs etc.). From this developed the more famous saddle and harness making which had begun here by the later 18th century.

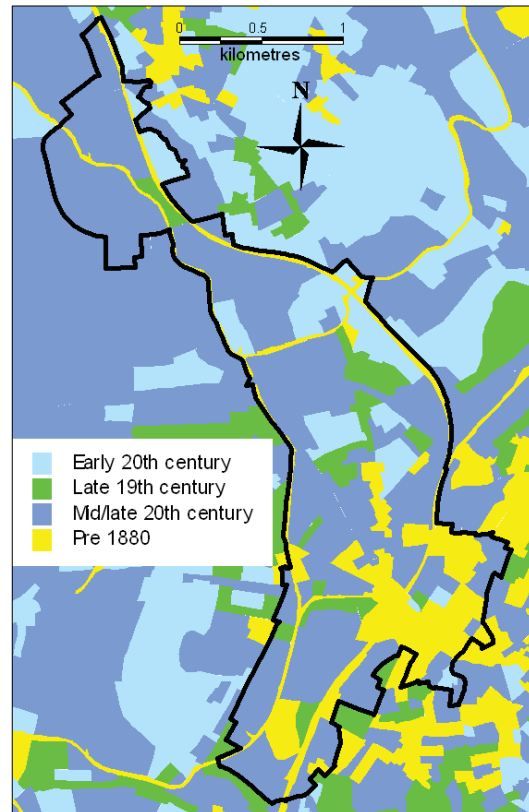
Mining and quarrying were also an important part of the area's economy from an early period. Coal and ironstone mining are first mentioned in the 14th century and limestone quarrying in the 15th century.

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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Willenhall Character Area (WL06)

SUMMARY:

This area contains an important historical settlement and almost half its land is still given to housing¹. The townscape is mostly of mid/late 20th century origin, but with large areas of older buildings. It includes the residential and commercial centre of Willenhall, together with significant industrial sites, the latter being important in defining the landscape's character. The area is demarcated by the Walsall borough boundary to the south/west, and areas of more modern origin to the north and east.

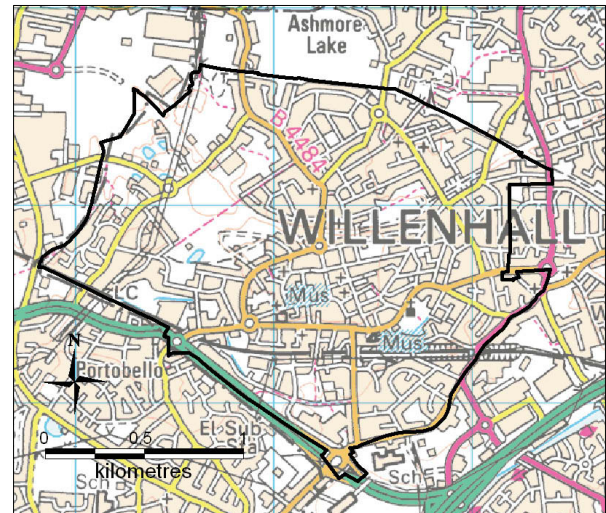
GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

This area lies on coal measures, which here include large areas of sandstone. Overlain are deposits of till (boulder clay), glacial material and alluvium, which line the sides of the Somerford brook, running through the south eastern side of the area, and flowing into the Tame in the south. The land is reasonably flat varying between 135m and 125m (along the line of the brook).

MODERN CHARACTER:

This area contains the historic industrial town of Willenhall, which has been a centre for lock making since at least the 17th century. The settlement itself dates to the medieval when it was concentrated around the market place and adjoining streets. Many buildings in the area date to the 18th and 19th centuries.

Industrial sites virtually encircle the town centre. The majority of the industrial buildings are of mid/late 20th century date, although there are several inter-war and 19th century buildings. Metal working is still carried out within this industrial zone, as it has been within the whole area since at least the 19th century.



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Market Place, Willenhall

Several of the houses nearest to the town centre date to the 19th century, particularly to the north, but also to the south and west. These houses are mainly mid/late 19th century terraces. Around Walsall Road/New Road (which runs parallel to the railway to its north) are two small areas of large Victorian semi-detached and detached houses, which appear to be the only examples in Willenhall.

The majority of the 20th century housing estates are composed of small properties and they radiate out from the original town, its industrial core, and the earlier 19th century residential areas. These estates are mainly of inter-war and immediate post-war origin, built originally within industrial areas or with industry nearby. However, several industrial areas have themselves been redeveloped in the late 20th century as housing. Residential areas also include several schools, mainly of mid/late 20th century date.

To the north-east of the town is a large recreational area made up of the Memorial Park and a large playing field. The park dates to the 1920s, whilst the playing field was established in the mid/late 20th century. Both were laid out on the site of a 19th century colliery, and beyond these recreational areas is some rough grassland, which had also once been colliery land.

¹This figure and others relating to the proportion of land in the Character Area are based on data for the year 2000.

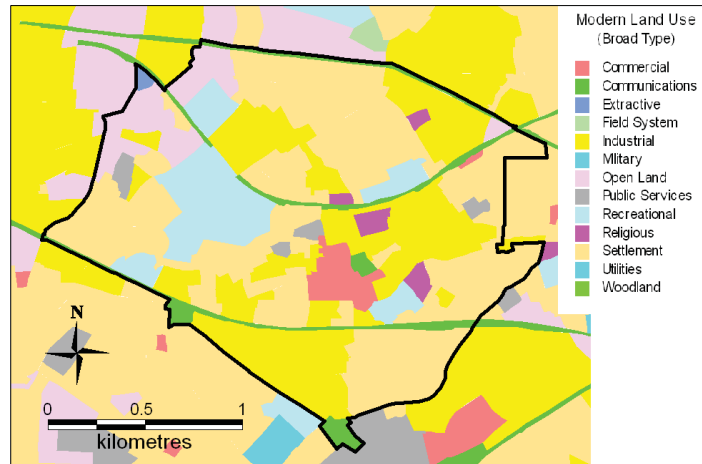
HISTORIC CHARACTER:

Willenhall is first recorded in a charter of AD994 and is also mentioned in Domesday Book (1086). The medieval settlement is likely to have centred on Market Place, and the adjoining Stafford Street, Wolverhampton Street and Walsall Street. To the north there was a large moated site, but this completely disappeared by the 20th century. The current 19th century church is south-east of the main town on Walsall Street, and this is likely to have also been the site of the original medieval church which is known to have existed by 1298.

Willenhall was surrounded by open fields in the medieval period, which were probably progressively enclosed in the late medieval and post medieval period. It remained largely rural until the 19th century.

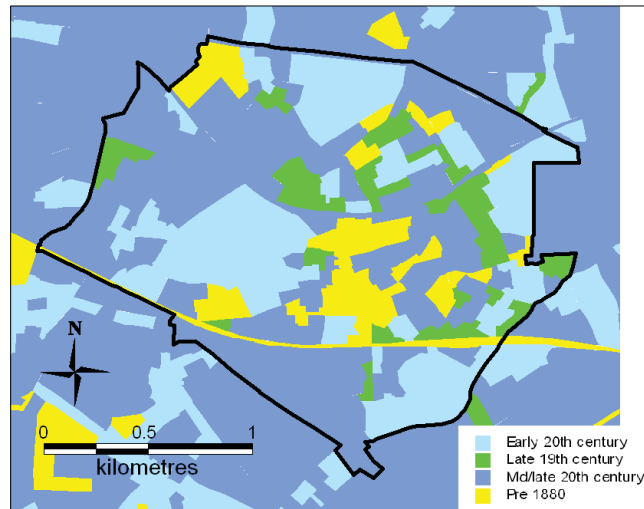
Willenhall was already renowned as a lock making centre by the later 16th century and this industry continues to survive today.

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Bentley Character Area (WL07)

SUMMARY:

This large Character Area is dominated by settlement (54% of its area¹) and its landscape is some of the most modern in the Black Country: development after 1930 accounts for almost four fifths (78%) of the area. In addition to housing, land given to recreation and public services forms an important part of the area's character. It extends to the Borough Boundary, to adjacent areas of generally older settlement, and (in the East) to neighbouring industrial districts.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

The area lies almost wholly over the coalfield. Also present is sandstone and a small outcrop of (extensively quarried) dolerite at Pouk Hill (north-east of Junction 10 of the M6). The land slopes gently down from its high point in the north-west (166m) to 116m in the south-east.

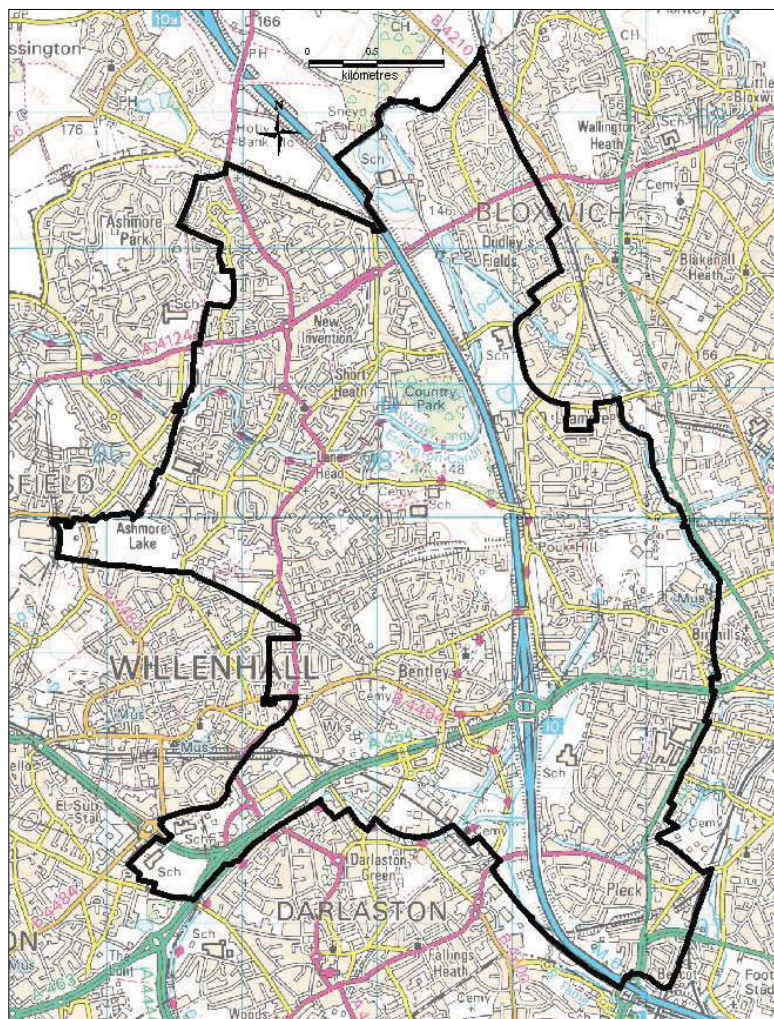
MODERN CHARACTER:

This area is dominated by areas of modern housing - originally distinct settlements which had, by the 1970s, become almost continuous. Some of these areas had formed the suburbs of Willenhall (in the south-west), Bloxwich (north-east), and Walsall (south-east). Other housing was built around the smaller, older settlements of Short Heath, Lane Head, New Invention, Bentley and Bescot.

Few houses survive from before 1900. Of those that do, large clusters include the 19th century terraces in Bescot and the Birchills area of Walsall (in the far south-east). Elsewhere, the mid 19th century Bentley House stands largely isolated in more modern development (just west of the motorway junction) while, further north-west, some 18th and 19th century cottages, terraces and semi-detached houses remain in historic settlements.

What remains of pre-war 20th century housing, mostly inter-war semis, is largely in the south-east of the area, in the neighbourhood surrounding two hospitals.

A large part of the housing in the northern half of the area in particular originates from the second half of the



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20th century. The estates located east of the M6 and north of Pouk Hill, for example, were probably built in the 1950s, before the motorway arrived. Much of the remaining housing in the north-west of the area is later – built in the period between 1960 and 2000.

There are a number of important recreational areas within the Character Area, several of which are situated along the line of the M6, running north-south through the area. The largest of these is Rough Wood Country Park which was established in the mid/late 20th century

¹This figure and others relating to the proportion of land in the Character Area are based on data for the year 2000.

having previously formed part of Bentley Heath and Bentley Coppice. It was heavily mined for coal during the 19th century. There are other areas of park and open land along the M6 corridor many of which were formerly fields and collieries. The most significant park in the area away from the M6 is the 19th century Reeds Wood Park on its eastern edge.

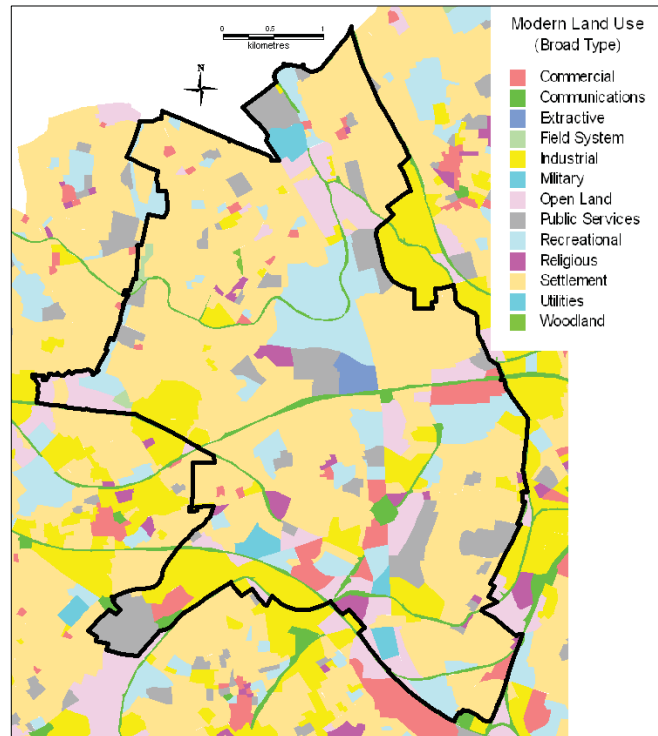
HISTORIC CHARACTER:

There is little evidence of medieval settlement in this area, with the exception of Bescot and Bentley. Bescot, in the south west, was mentioned in Domesday and was the site of a medieval moated house. A mill mentioned in 13th century documents is presumed to have been on the site of the later Bentley Mill to the very south of the Character Area. The 11th century Bentley Manor, on a small piece of raised ground north west of the modern Junction 10 of the M6, later became the site of Bentley Hall.

Two areas of common (part of Cannock Forest), at Bentley and Sneyd, may date back to the medieval period. Evidence exists that there were medieval open fields to the west and east of Bentley Hall, and also around Bentley Mill. A medieval deer park may have existed to the north of the Hall. The location of a settlement of Bentley is more difficult to trace, although one has been implied in medieval documents. In the 19th century, settlement around Bentley was very dispersed, with farms and cottages mainly lying around the Wolverhampton Road south of the Hall and this pattern and location may have been similar in the medieval period. The only other medieval evidence is of open fields to the north west (which may have been associated with a moat, now within Wolverhampton).

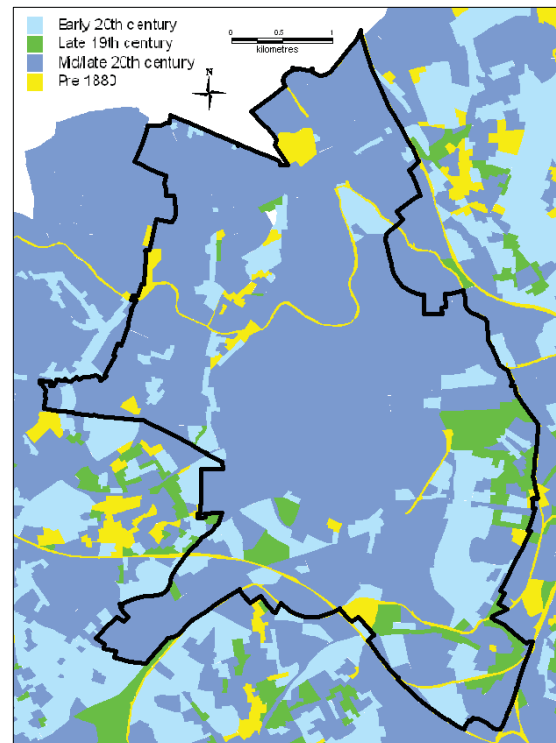
To the north lies the settlement of New Invention, whose name (from at least the 17th century) may refer to an early engine house, although this is uncertain. Later 18th century settlement included Short Heath and Lane Head. Other settlement sites were generally farms, the area being still dominated by agriculture, with some woodland. Accessible coal transformed the area's landscape so that, by the late 19th century, it was dominated by mining. Bentley Hall was surrounded by active collieries and, to the north, collieries were worked around Short Heath and New Invention. The hamlets of Lane Head, New Invention and Short Heath probably expanded to house the mine workers and their families, although there was less expansion around Bentley itself.

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By the early 20th century most of the collieries had closed with the exception of one south of Bentley Hall and another north of Lane Head. By WW2 all the collieries had also closed and Bentley Hall itself had to be demolished due to mining subsidence.

Pheasey Character Area (WL08)

SUMMARY:

This small area is dominated by settlement (71% of its area¹) and reflects one of the most modern areas of housing in Walsall: 85% of the area originates after 1930. It is on the boundary between Walsall and Birmingham (to the South East) and surrounded on other sides by older field systems and recreational areas.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

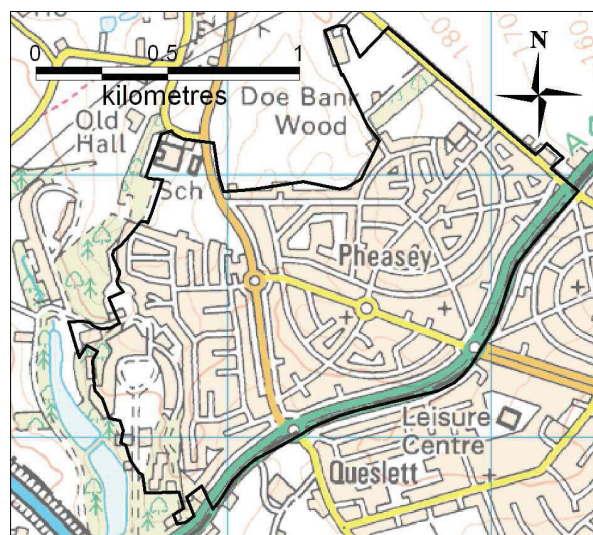
The geology of the area is essentially sandstone. There is an area of glacial till to the North around Doe Bank Wood. The land falls from almost 200m in the North, where it adjoins Barr Beacon, to about 135m in the South.

MODERN CHARACTER:

This area is dominated by large inter-war and post-war housing estates with a distinctive rounded and oval street pattern. Associated services include four schools, two public houses, a sports ground and two churches. The housing estates are made up of small semi-detached, detached, and terraced houses. One small area of small 1960s/70s terraces and apartments appear within the centre of the area.

Housing in Pheasey is of a similar design to that to the south of the area, at Queslett and Kingstanding in Birmingham.

The oldest feature within this landscape is a small wood known as Doe Bank Wood which divides the houses from an associated sports ground. The wood was in existence by the 19th century.



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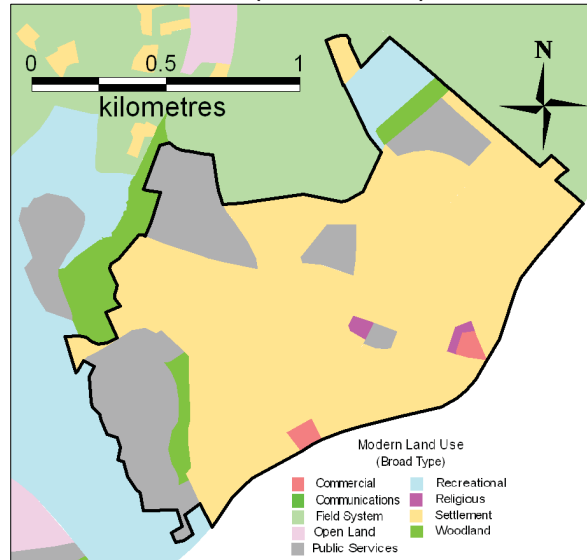
¹This figure and others relating to the proportion of land in the Character Area are based on data for the year 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

Until the Second World War, this Character Area was dominated by field systems which surrounded Pheasey Farm (now demolished) and the eastern, developed, portion of Great Barr Park. This included Great Barr Hall and Barr Hall Farm, as well as St Margaret's Hospital which was built in the park in the early 20th century. The undeveloped portion of the park lies in an adjacent Character Area (Barr Beacon and Aldridge Fields).

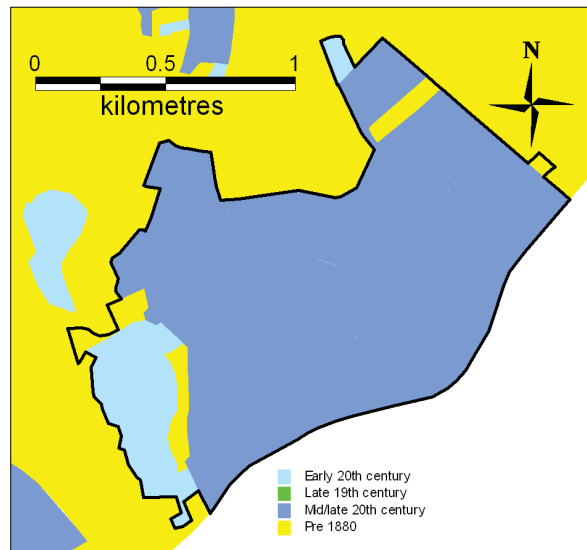
In the mid 20th century most of the streets in the area were laid out and housing constructed alongside them. These were largely, in and around the pre-existing routes of Doe Bank Lane, Queslett Road (the area's north-eastern and south-eastern boundary respectively), and Beacon Road, which heads north out of the area to Barr Beacon.

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Barr Beacon & Aldridge Fields Character Area (WL09)

SUMMARY:

This area is the most rural landscape in Walsall, with field systems covering more than two thirds of its surface (although recreational land is also important). Four fifths (80%)¹ of the area dates to before 1900. It is bounded on almost all sides by settle-ment, and in the north-east and south-east by the boundaries with Staffordshire and Birmingham respectively.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

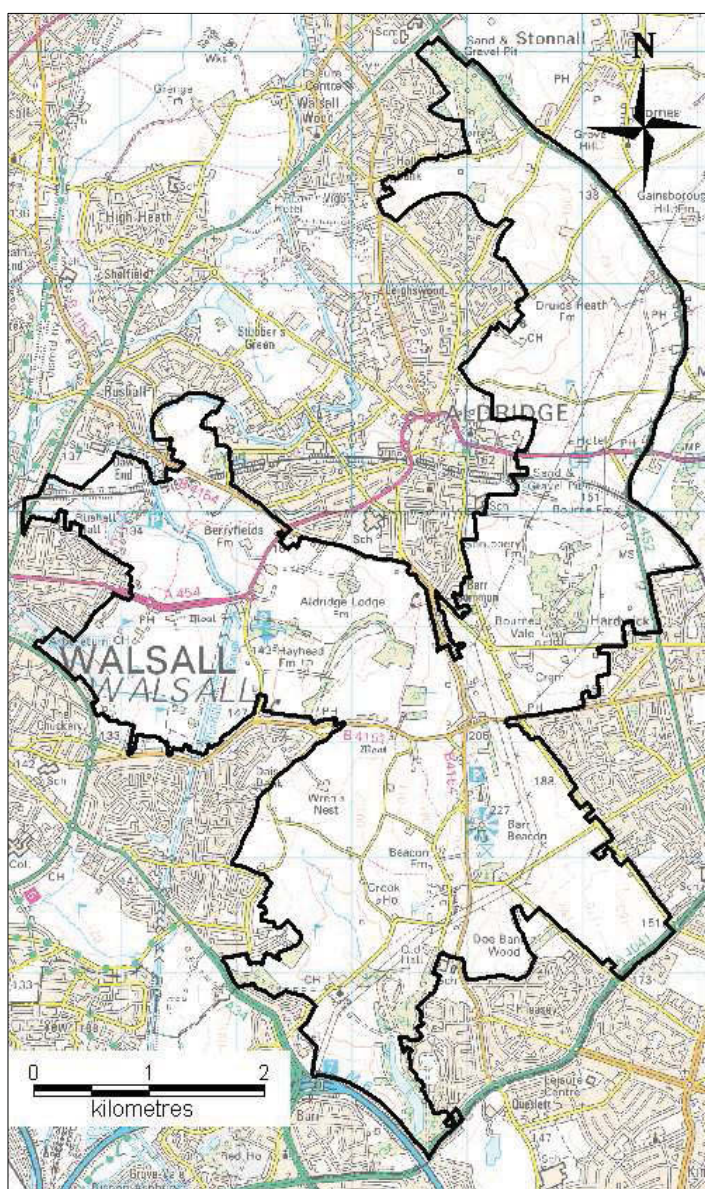
The area has a mixed geology. In the west it lies on mudstone and limestone, in its central part on sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate, and east of Barr Beacon, on sandstone. In the west, Rushall Hall lies on coal measures.

A ridge runs north-south through the centre of the area rising to 227m at Barr Beacon, the highest point in Walsall. The low point of around 124m is on the A452 Chester Road which forms the area's north-eastern boundary. Streams flow off the ridge in the east (Bourne Vale), the west (near Rushall Hall and Walsall Arboretum), and the south (through Great Barr Park).

MODERN CHARACTER:

Unusually for the Black Country, this area is characterised mainly by agricultural land and dispersed farms. Important recreational land also makes up the area and, in the central part, there are two small areas of housing, parcels of woodland, and a surviving area of ancient heath at Barr Beacon.

Farmland in the area is almost entirely enclosed field systems. It is likely that the earliest of these were created in the late medieval and early post medieval periods through the piecemeal enclosure of the open fields which once covered most of this area. Ridge and furrow earthworks survive; a legacy of how medieval open fields were ploughed. However, some of these fields have been subject to boundary loss, especially during the 20th century. To the east lie field systems enclosed during the late 18th/early 19th century, which exhibit straight roads and boundaries typical of parliamentary enclosure.



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Like the fields systems, the associated farms date from many different periods. The earliest have medieval origins, although the oldest surviving farm buildings date to around the early 18th century. Others have been rebuilt between the 18th and 20th centuries but have much earlier origins.

¹This figure and others relating to the proportion of land in the Character Area are based on data for the year 2000.

Three of Walsall's five golf courses are located in the area, at Druid's Heath in the north, in the West adjacent to Walsall Arboretum, and at Great Barr in the south. All were laid out in the 20th century, but the oldest recreational area is Great Barr Park in the very south of the area. This covers over 100 hectares and is an English Heritage registered park and garden (grade II). There had been an earlier park here, but in c.1797 it was redesigned by Humphrey Repton, and much of this layout survives.

Two small clusters of housing lie in the centre of the area. One is a distinctive estate of large houses in woodland at Bourne Vale, dating to the inter/post war period. It was built on the site of a landscaped park belonging to Bourne Vale House. The other is a number of detached houses from a similar period located on the Longwood and Erdington Roads south of Aldridge.

Also south of Aldridge, small areas of woodland survive – originating from at least the 18th or 19th centuries. Some of these are areas of former limestone quarrying. A further survival is the heath land at Barr Beacon, which is the only area of what had once formed part of Cannock Forest to survive the planned enclosures of the 18th/19th century.

In addition to the evidence of former extractive industries, modern sand extraction still continues east of Aldridge.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

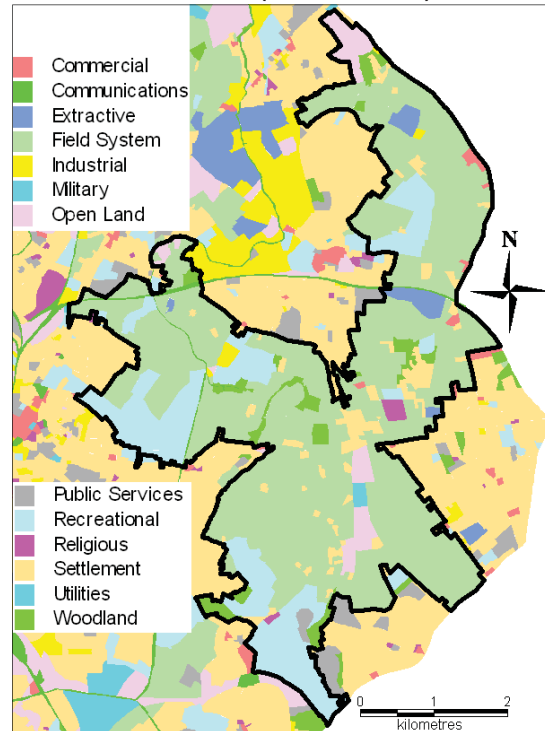
In the medieval period much of this area was open fields; those to the north were associated with Walsall, Aldridge, Rushall and Stonnall (in Staffordshire), those to the south to Great Barr. In the central area there were several medieval moats, and is evidence that trackways and roads throughout the area are medieval in origin. There were churches established at Rushall and Great Barr and probably small associated settlements too. Rushall is mentioned in the Domesday Survey (1086) and, by the 14th century, there was a fortified manor house on the site. Great Barr is first mentioned in a charter of 957AD. Two large areas of common land (at Aldridge Heath and Stonnall) may have dated to at least the medieval period. However by 1820 both had been enclosed by Acts of Parliament.

By the mid/late 18th century there were two country houses in the area: Great Barr Hall and Aldridge Lodge. The latter was demolished in 1956 and woodland has grown on it, although remains of the gardens may survive.

The surviving field systems were enclosed either piecemeal in the late medieval/early Post medieval period out of the open fields, or were enclosed out of Aldridge Heath.

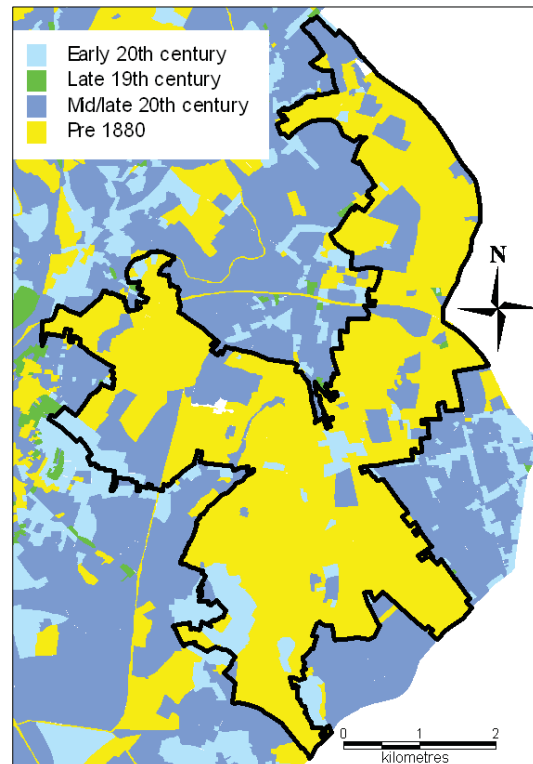
Later developments within this area include an airfield, known as Walsall Airport, which was developed in 1934 and closed in 1956.

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Aldridge West Character Area (WL10)

SUMMARY:

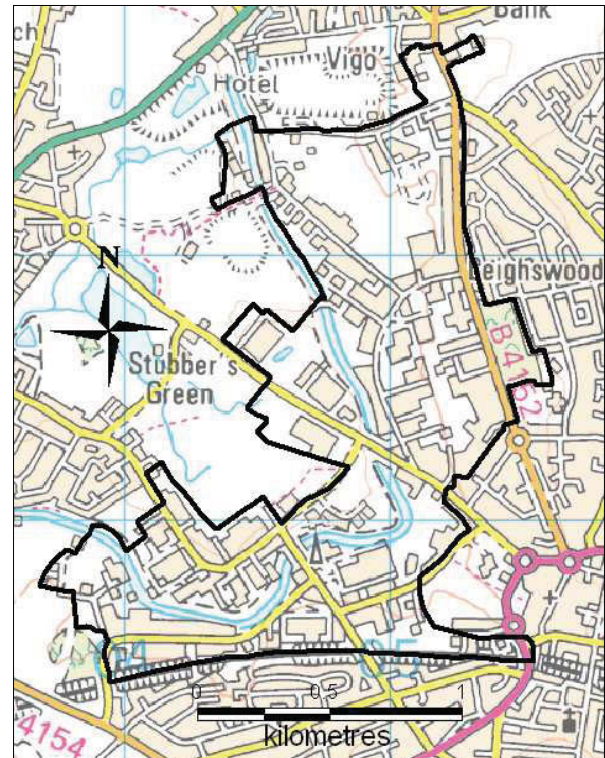
This area is dominated by industrial sites (84% of its area¹), and is overwhelmingly (86%) of mid/late 20th century origin. It is bounded by the residential districts of Aldridge in the east and south (generally on the other side of the railway and Northgate, the road leaving Aldridge to the North), and by areas of extraction in the north-west. The Daw End branch of the Rushall Canal runs through the area.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

This area lies on sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate, with a small area of mudstone and limestone in its south western corner. The land slopes down gently from the higher, residential parts of Aldridge in the east and south – its highest point is 156m in the east and its lowest 132m at its western edge.

MODERN CHARACTER:

This area forms the industrial part of Aldridge. The majority of the buildings date to the mid/late 20th century and include several large warehouses, depots and factories. There are also three brick works and an associated clay quarry: the latter may date to the 19th century and may represent one of the oldest surviving features of the area. Brick making has been characteristic of this area, reflected in the street name Brickyard Road, for example, which runs through the northern part of the area. While extractive industries have featured more prominently in the area's past (see below), its modern character is of much more mixed industrial use.



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¹This figure and others relating to the proportion of land in the Character Area are based on data for the year 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

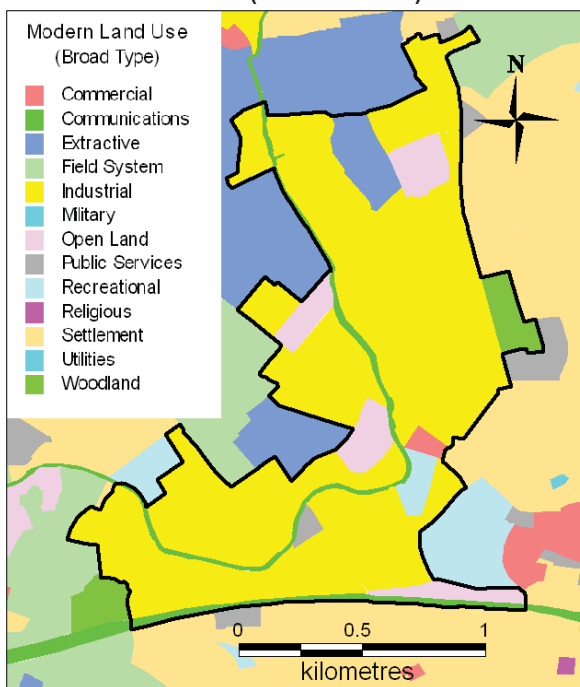
Clay has been extracted from this area since at least the 19th century and by the later part of this century there were large brickworks in this area. By this date coal was also being extracted most notably at the Leighswood Colliery, in the northern part of the Character Area, but two other small collieries also existed nearby. All of the collieries had ceased operation by the inter-war period and the sites were developed as industrial estates and units.

Even in the later 19th century, however, agriculture dominated. A few of the field systems had formed part of open fields in the medieval period; the majority of these fell within the township of Aldridge.

An area of open fields lay south of Walsall Wood adjacent to a small area of heath land. The heath was enclosed by an Act of Parliament, its straight and regular boundaries being typical of parliamentary enclosure.

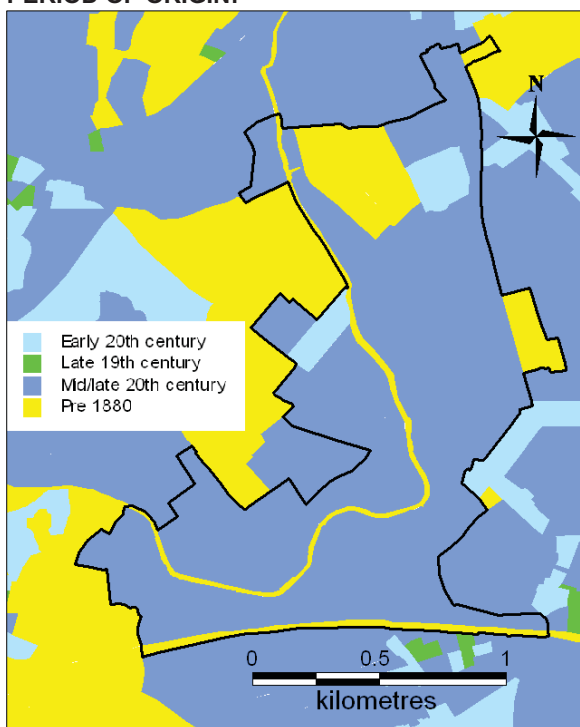
The only known medieval settlement in this area is a moated site located at the site of the modern Leighswood Industrial Estate. By the time of the later 19th century there were several small areas of cottages, including Stubber's Green. One lay just south of Walsall Wood and may have been an early extension of that settlement. Others lay close to collieries and clay workings and had presumably developed to house workers there.

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South East Walsall Character Area (WL11)

SUMMARY:

This area is dominated by settlement and is largely of mid to late 20th century origin. It comprises the residential centre of Walsall, together with more suburban areas to the South and West and North. It is distinguished from its neighbouring Character Areas by the dominance of commercial and industrial land to the West, fields systems to the North East, and the boundary with Sandwell to the South.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

This area lies over coal measures at its western end and, towards the east, on mudstone and siltstone. Deposits of till (boulder clay), glacial material and alluvium are present along the channel of Ford Brook in the south-west.

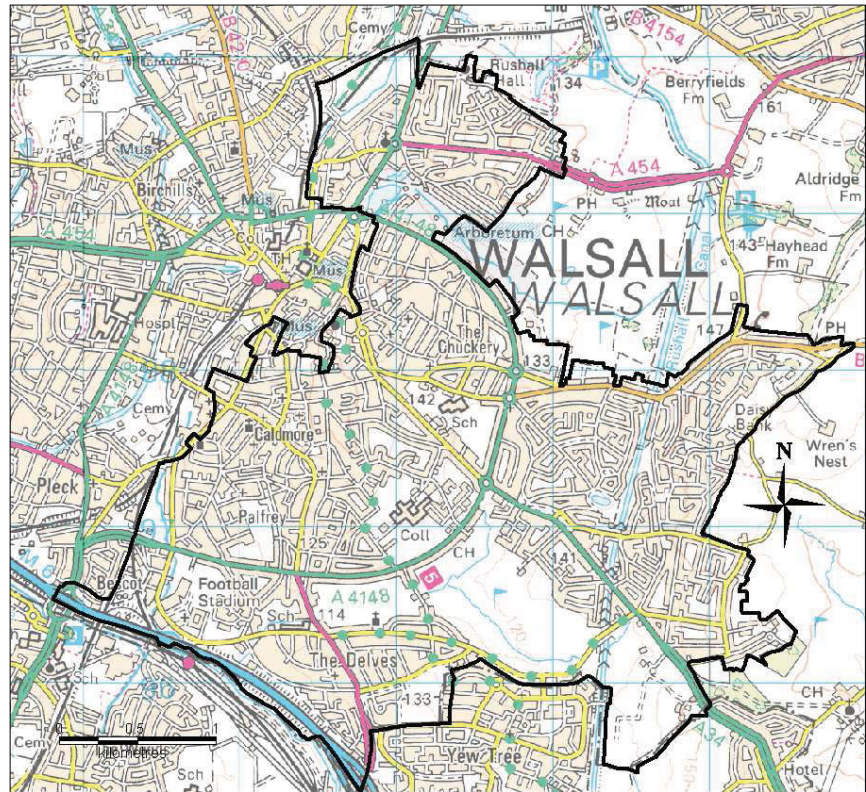
The land slopes from around 160m at its eastern end down to around 115m along the brook.

MODERN CHARACTER:

This area comprises the residential part of central Walsall, and its southern, eastern, and northern suburbs. It is dominated by medium sized semi-detached and detached housing.

The houses built during the inter-war and post war periods are mainly close to Walsall town centre, with two large estates of 1960s/70s houses further out. Late 20th century houses have also been built on small, dispersed plots amongst the older houses, and represent either infill or the redevelopment of sites. The area also includes associated services such as schools, but also a university campus.

In the eastern half there are several estates of large inter-war and post-war houses. In this part, the oldest surviving properties are on or near the Birmingham Road, which heads south-east to north-west through its centre. However, the expansion in housing from the 1950s onwards has left them as an island of earlier 20th century character.



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In its south-east, the area contains substantial open and recreational land, largely laid out in the 20th century and, in the centre of this is Walsall golf course. At The Delves, the area of housing in the south, a small area of ancient common land survives and has been surrounded by inter and post war small houses with a school and two religious buildings, probably of a similar date. The school had been built upon earlier cottages and, in turn, the cottages had presumably been the original focus for the expansion of settlement in this area.

The M6 skirts the southern part of the area. Along its line are modern industrial sites, a new football stadium and a modern retail park, all located to take advantage of the proximity of Junction 9 of the motorway.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

In the medieval period this area was dominated by open fields and a small settlement or manor house at The Delves. There was also a large deer park to the west of Great Barr, although its actual extent is unknown.

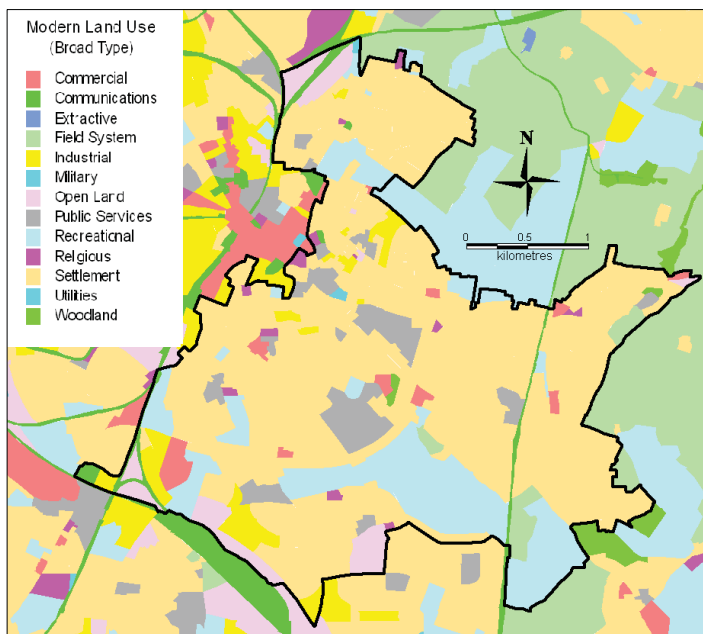
By the mid 18th century a mill had been established at New Mills, in the south-west of the area, and a country house had been built near The Delves. However, the landscape was still mainly agricultural in nature during this period. The deer park had been enclosed for agriculture.

By the late 18th/early 19th century, woodland had been established in the south-east of the area near Great Barr, and this survived until the inter war period. Two more country houses were established: Park Hall (next to the modern line of the Rushall canal, itself cut in the 19th century) and Gorway House, in the centre of the area.

By the late 19th century there were seven farms, and three country houses with small landscape parks. A large sewage farm was established to the south and survived into the mid 20th century. Small areas of large semi-detached and detached housing had been built; along the Birmingham Road medium sized houses had been built and this area expanded in the early 20th century.

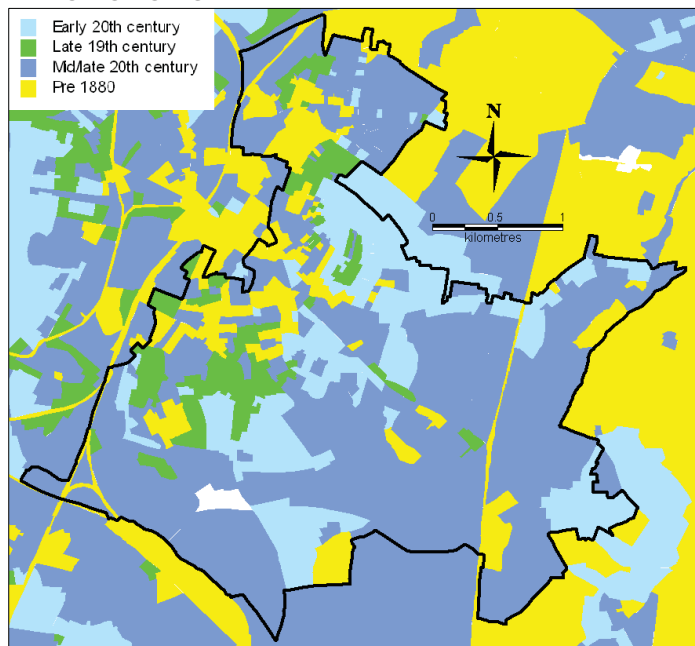
By the early 20th century two areas of allotments, near Cricket Close and to the rear of Lord Street, had been established. Gorway Road cricket ground also dates to the early 20th century, although the original pavilion has not survived.

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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Darlaston Character Area (WL12)

SUMMARY:

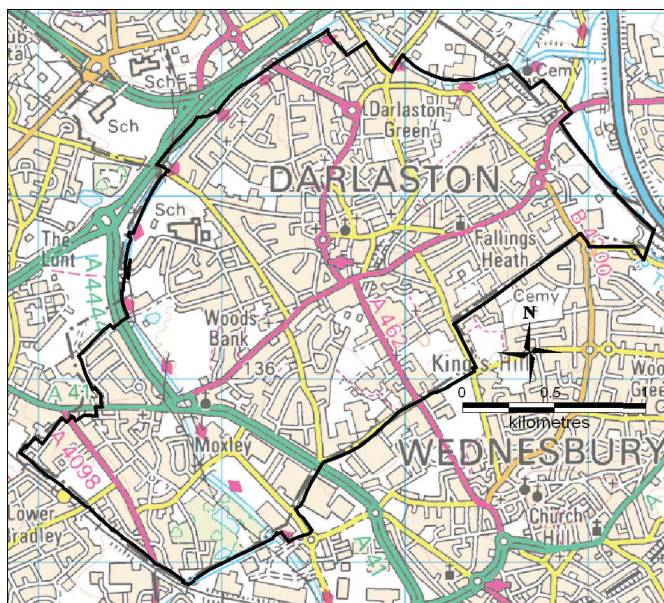
This area is dominated by settlement (49% of its area¹), although this is mixed with industrial and other land. Although most of the townscape originates after 1930, there are several older districts included. The area encompasses the residential and commercial centres at Darlaston and Moxley, as well as industrial sites to the east of these. It is bounded on three sides by the Borough boundary and in the north by canals, railways and more recent settlement.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

The area lies over coal, with superficial deposits of sandy till and gravel. To the north-east, alluvium lines the Tame valley. The centre marks the highest point of the area, at around 140m. The ground falls away to below 115m to the north-east by the River Tame and to around 120m along the curve of the canal in the west.

MODERN CHARACTER:

This area is dominated by the historic industrial town of Darlaston whose origins are medieval. The town centre is an area of shops and small businesses, where the earliest known buildings date to the 19th century. The medieval street plan probably survives within the modern town.



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The bend of the Walsall Canal at Moxley, in the south of the area. The industrial buildings on the left were demolished in 2008.

Also nearby is Victoria Park, established around 1902.

Darlaston appears to have developed in three distinct areas: the present town centre (in the centre of the area) with its medieval origins, and Catherine Cross (to the west) and Darlaston Green (to the north) both in existence by 1750.

The town is surrounded by housing and industrial sites. To the west, near Catherine's Cross, is an area of early 20th century semi-detached and terraced housing; while in the east is an area of late 19th century terraces and detached houses with other smaller properties of a similar date located even further east. To the north, around Darlaston Green, is an area of late 19th century terraces within more recent housing.

The later suburbs developed in the mid 20th century, and comprise predominately small semi-detached and terraced houses. A few 1960s/70s properties lie within areas of older housing. Late 20th century housing is concentrated to the north-west; including one estate which has been built upon the site of the large inter-war Victoria Iron Works.

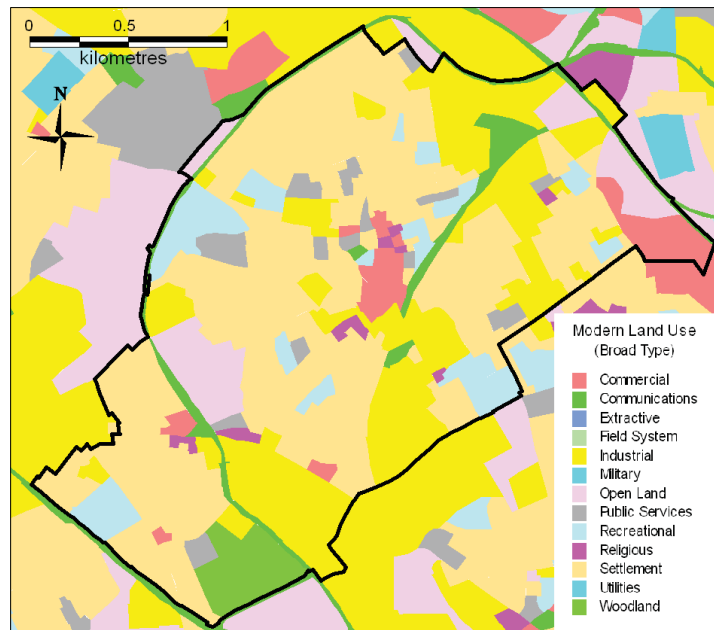
¹This figure and others relating to the proportion of land in the Character Area are based on data for the year 2000.

The original settlement at Moxley in the south-east provides a focus for the housing expansion of the mid 20th century. There are two large mid 20th century housing estates there dominated by small semi-detached and terraced housing, as well as an estate of inter-war date further west.

Industrial buildings are mainly mid/late 20th century in date, although they occupy the sites of earlier industrial complexes. A few industrial buildings do survive from the inter-war period, and one or two from the early 20th century.

Within Darlaston there are several schools and community centres, as well as recreational sites. The public parks in the area were established in the late 19th century or the first half of the 20th.

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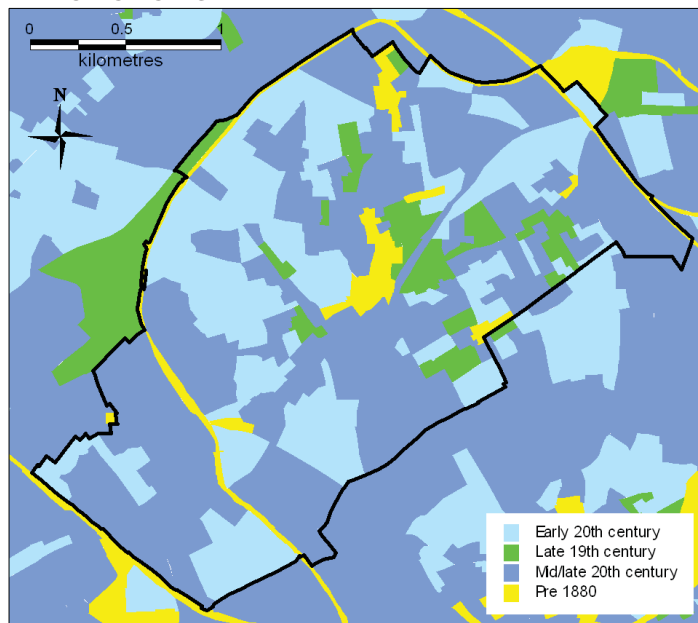
HISTORIC CHARACTER:

Darlaston is first mentioned in the late 12th century when it formed its own manor, and the original settlement is likely to have been around St Lawrence's Church.

The medieval settlement had more of the character of a village, with no evidence of an official market, though there is likely to have been small-scale industry in the surrounding area, and possibly some unofficial market activity. In the medieval period and probably through much of the post medieval period the town was surrounded by open field agriculture. The place names Cock Heath and Fallings Heath suggest there was common land in the south and east.

Coal was probably mined on the heaths from the medieval period onwards. By the beginning of the 19th century, collieries were beginning to have a major impact, particularly to the west and south-west around Moxley and near Bradley.

PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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Pelsall Character Area (WL13)

SUMMARY:

This area is dominated by field systems (41% of its area¹), although open land and settlement are also important. Unusually within the Black Country, most of the landscape (58%) originates from before 1900. The northern limit of the area forms the boundary with (rural) Staffordshire, while its other sides abut more densely settled or industrialised districts.

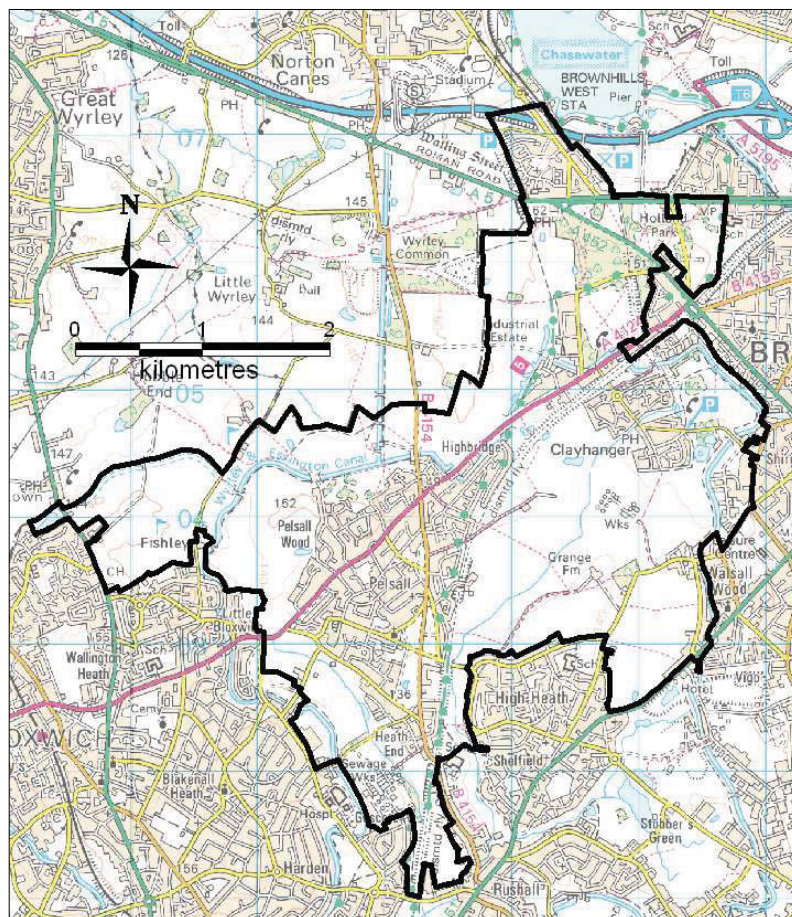
GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

For the most part, the area lies over the eastern edge of the South Staffordshire coalfield. The highest point (158m) is in the north (near the line of the modern M6 Toll motorway) while, in the south-east, the land falls to around 125m. The A4124 Lichfield Road reaches another high point of around 150m as it passes through the settlement of Pelsall in the centre of the area.

MODERN CHARACTER:

This area is characterised by field systems, open land, and dispersed settlements. The largest settlement, Pelsall, occupies the centre of the area and has a large central common. The oldest surviving houses are still to be found around the common and mainly date to the early 19th century.

The 20th century estates which surround the historic settlement of Pelsall are mainly of small and medium-sized houses, with the inter-war and 1950s houses dominating in the west and north, and large 1960s/70s estates mainly lying to the east and south of the common. One of these later estates was built on the site of a former colliery.



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¹This figure and others relating to the proportion of land in the Character Area are based on data for the year 2000.

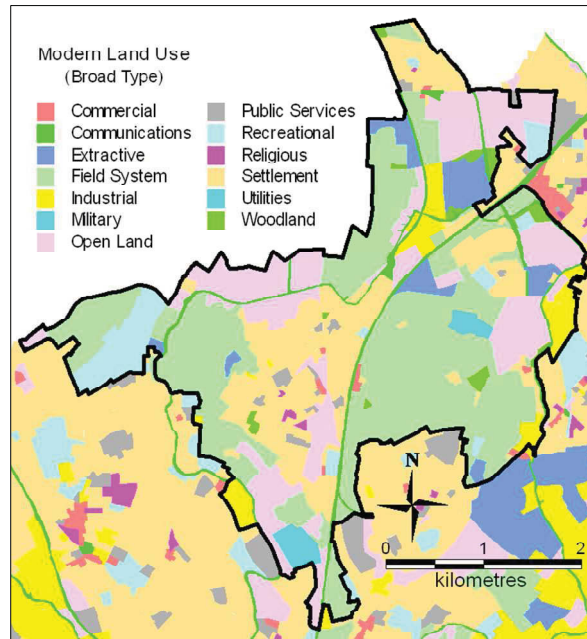
HISTORIC CHARACTER:

First mentioned in a charter of AD994 granting land to the church at Wolverhampton, the settlement of Pelsall remained part of Wolverhampton parish until the 19th century. The earliest settlement is likely to have been around Pelsall Hall (replaced by the present church in the 19th century). The settlement pattern, however, appears to have been relatively dispersed, with houses set on the edge of a series of greens.

Medieval Pelsall was surrounded by open fields, which were progressively enclosed in the late medieval and post medieval periods. The Common is likely to have existed in the medieval period (and there is evidence of it having been ploughed at that time), although its original extent is not known.

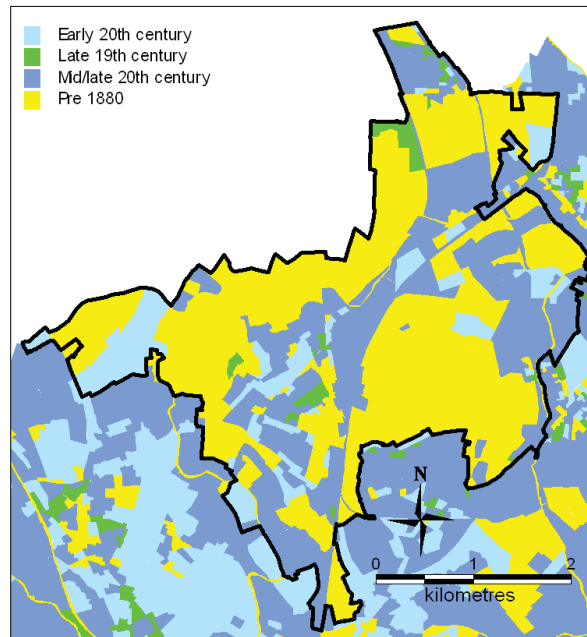
Several parts of the area have been used for extraction of coal in the 19th and early 20th centuries, although most collieries were disused by 1900. Several railway lines crossed the eastern half of the area (including the South Staffordshire line, the Norton branch line, and Walsall Wood extension), but all went out of use by the mid 20th century.

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Rushall & Shelfield Character Area (WL14)

SUMMARY:

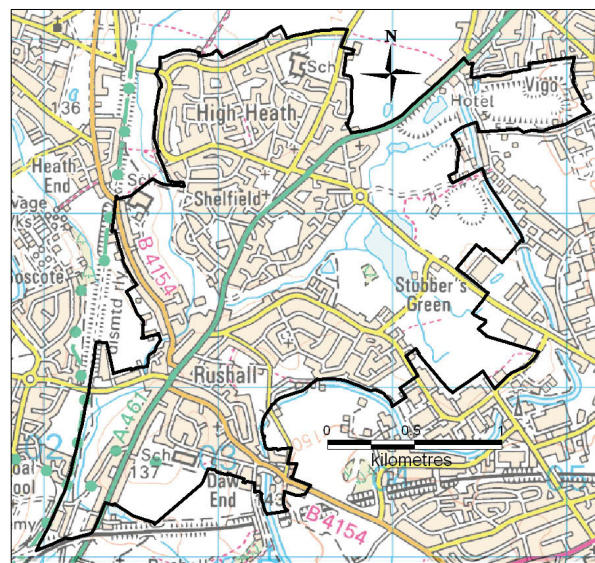
This area is dominated by settlement (46% of its area¹) although land given to extractive industries is also important. The landscape, which is largely (59%) of mid to late 20th century origin, is surrounded by field systems to the north and south, and an industrial district to its west.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

This area lies over the eastern edge of the South Staffordshire coalfield. In its north-east, sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate are present. Alluvium lines the sides of the Ford Brook which runs north-south down the western side of the area (with a tributary which runs to meet it from Stubber's Green to the east). The area is fairly flat lying at around 140m, except where it falls down to around 120m in the valley of the Ford Brook and its tributary.

MODERN CHARACTER:

This area forms the industrial part of Aldridge. The majority of the buildings date to the mid/late 20th century and include several large warehouses, depots and factories. There are also three brick works and an associated clay quarry: the latter may date to the 19th century and may represent one of the oldest surviving features of the area. Brick making has been characteristic of this area, reflected in the street name Brickyard Road, for example, which runs through the



northern part of the area. While extractive industries have featured more prominently in the area's past (see below), its modern character is of much more mixed industrial use.

¹This figure and others relating to the proportion of land in the Character Area are based on data for the year 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

The earliest settlement in the area, Shelfield, is mentioned in Domesday Book and is referred to as a hamlet in 1276. By the 18th century it was a dispersed settlement with houses clustered in several distinct areas, one of which retains a possible village green. The earliest surviving houses date to the late 19th and early 20th century. Other early settlement includes School Farm, whose origins may be early Post Medieval. Shelfield's 20th century inter-war expansion occurred mainly along Mill Road, the main east-west route through the settlement. The remainder of the area along the main north-south route, the Lichfield Road, was redeveloped in the 1960s/70s. Large estates of this date were also built to the north of the area towards High Heath.

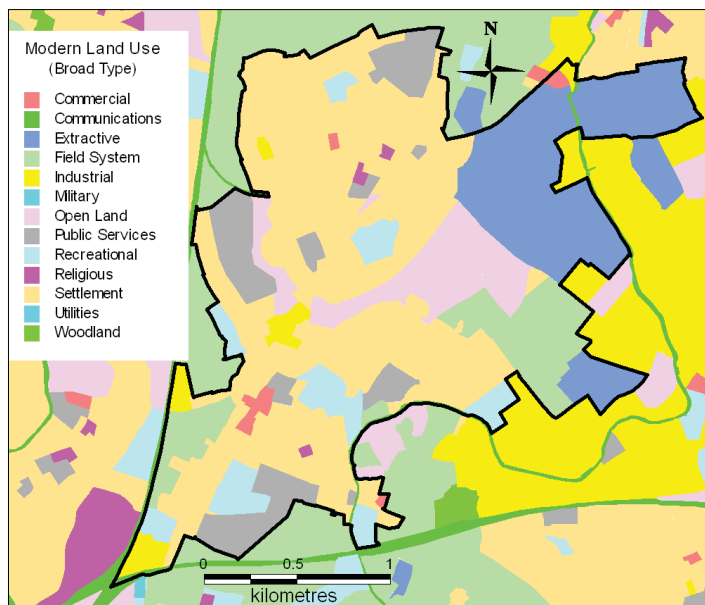
The Lichfield Road, clearly important to the development of the Character Area, was turnpiked in 1766, though it may originate in the 13th century. It was an important part of Rushall's development; although the date of origin of the settlement which was recorded in 1775 on the Lichfield Road is unknown (it is, for example, some distance from the medieval parish church next to Rushall Hall, which is actually just south of the Character Area). The oldest parts of Rushall are still to be found along the road.

Twentieth century expansion of Rushall included four inter-war estates of small semi-detached houses. Rushall's largest expansion however, was to the north east, towards Shelfield, curving around the northern bank of the Daw End Branch canal. Housing here was mainly built in the 1950s on what were fields.

Settlement at Daw End appeared by the 18th century and consisted of a farm and cottages, probably associated with limestone quarries. The settlement expanded in the late 19th/early 20th century, mainly built on the fields to the north. Some redevelopment also took place in the inter-war period, with cottages being replaced by semi-detached houses.

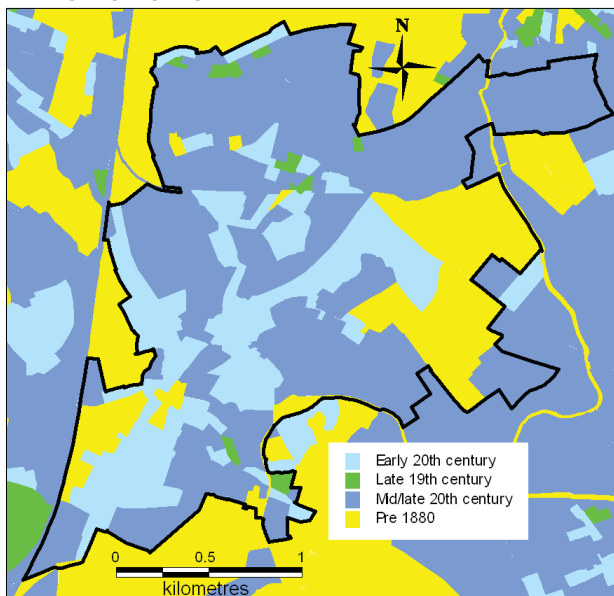
High Heath had originally been common heath land, probably since the medieval period, and settlement may not have existed here until the 16th century: the

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first mention of it was in 1576 when a cottage is described as encroaching on the common. The heath was enclosed around the turn of the 19th century through Act of Parliament, when settlement became firmly established. An early 19th century map shows a concentration of houses in the far north-west of the Character Area: later in the 19th century more houses were added, and several survive today.

Wolverhampton City Centre & Industrial Districts Character Area (WV01)

SUMMARY:

This area represents the commercial and industrial core of the city of Wolverhampton, and almost half¹ of its area is given to industrial purposes, the majority of which is currently the result of mid to late 20th century development. In the south-west of the Character Area, the commercial centre of the city is serviced by the convergence of roads, railways and canals. The Character Area as a whole is largely surrounded by residential suburbs.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

In general, the area lies over mudstone and sandstone, although in its south-east (in Monmore Green), there are coal measures present. The centre of Wolverhampton, in the south-west of the Character Area, is on a promontory (about 160m above sea level) overlooking the areas to the north, east and west (the land rises to the south of the city centre).

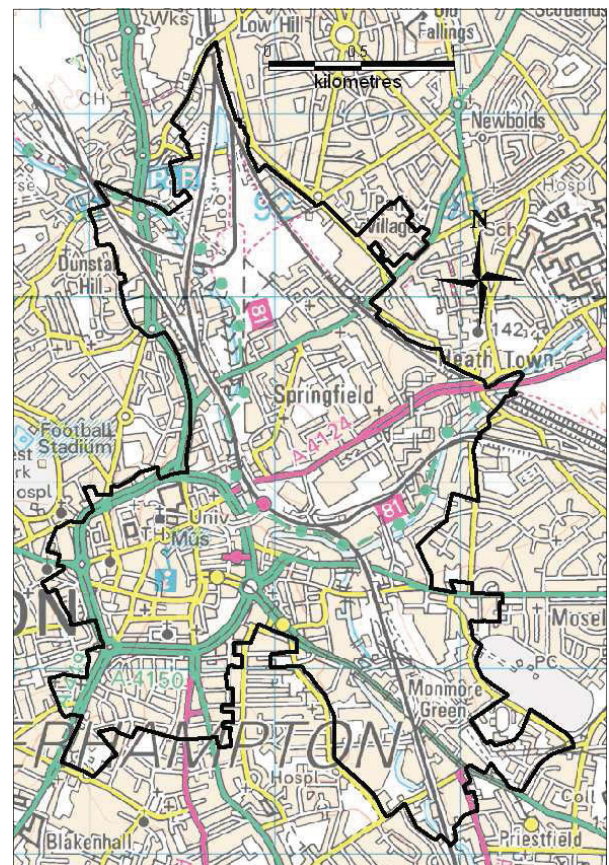
MODERN CHARACTER:

The largest part of this area is mid to late 20th century industry, and it contains a third of all Wolverhampton's industrial land. Much is situated next to the network of canals and railways (including, since 1999, the Midland



Older commercial properties dating from the 18th & 19th centuries are the legacy of a period of the city's development which included the growth associated with the coming of the canals & railways and the associated industry and trade. These buildings now sit alongside, or are overshadowed by, the large late 20th century indoor shopping centres, the Mander and Wulfrun centres: the former can be seen in the background of this image.

¹As recorded in 2000.



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Metro) which converge on the eastern edge of the central commercial district. These connect the city to a national network of rail and waterways.

In addition to these canal and railside industries, the area includes a smaller industrial district just to the south of the city centre between the radial roads out towards Dudley and Penn.

The convergence of major roads forms one of the defining characteristics of the area. In particular, the Wolverhampton ring road fences in the retail and commercial part of the city centre, in some ways separating it from surrounding residential and industrial areas. A substantial amount of land is also incorporated within its roundabouts and associated car

parks. The accessibility of major roads is made use of by some of the largest industrial units in the area, such as the Royal Mail's distribution centre east of the ring road, built on a former railway goods depot and sidings.

Within the ring road, the city retains elements of its medieval planned layout, with its church located on the highest point, and its main street (Dudley Street) running south from this point. These streets at its historic core, together with the planned Georgian suburb around St John's church on what is now the southern part of the ring road, still host many of the buildings dating from the expansion at the time of the arrival of the canals and railways. Alongside these, the city centre is today dominated by later 20th century shopping centres, and this area within the ring road is among the largest retail, commercial and cultural centres in the Black Country. As such, it provides services for a substantial part of the surrounding region.

Those neighbourhoods of residential properties which exist in the Character Area are in its north-east, flanking the radial route of the A4124 Wednesfield Road, and are sandwiched between industrial sites. They contain housing from a range of periods, including late 19th century terraces and some modern development.

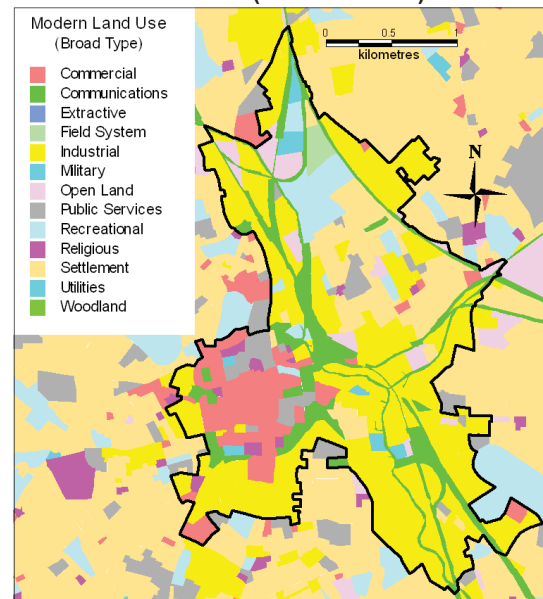
HISTORIC CHARACTER:

Settlement at Wolverhampton was established at least as long ago as the 10th century (a monastery, or Minster church, is believed to have been where St Peter's church is today). The remains of a cross, probably Saxon, stand in St. Peter's church grounds as evidence of these early origins.

The town's early economy was based on the wool trade, which had become established by the 15th century. Lock making, for which the town became famous later, began by the 17th century and, by the mid 18th century, metal working came to dominate economic activity in the area. This developed to include a motor industry and rail locomotive manufacture.

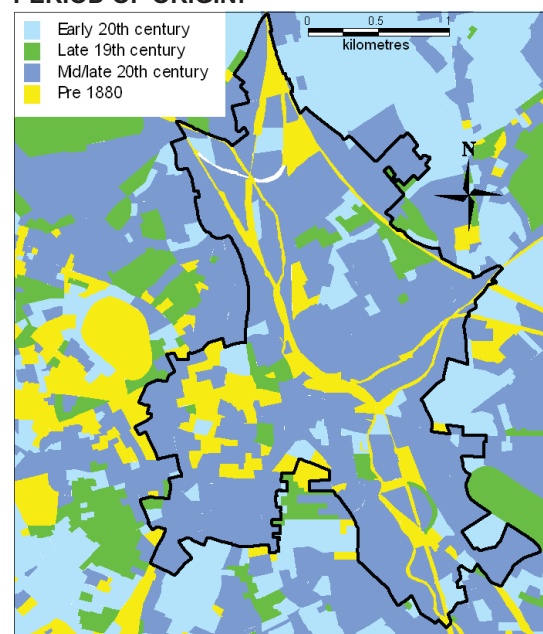
Until the 18th century, the area of the modern industrial corridor running north-south to the east of the city centre had been an agricultural landscape. However, in the 1760s, a canal was commissioned to connect Birmingham to the Black Country and, beyond, to link to the Staffordshire & Worcestershire canal north of the town. This new canal ran north-south through the length of the Character Area and remains today. Some thirty years later, the Wyrley and Essington canal was also built to connect Wolverhampton to the coalfield to its east. These canals, together with the railways (including Wolverhampton High and Low Level stations) which were built in the middle of the 19th century, assisted further industrial development on areas of earlier fields. This development included, for

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example, the Springfield brewery, and engineering works at Heath Town, both of which had small residential areas associated with them. Reflecting its geology, the south of the Character Area was host to a number of collieries and ironworks.

The 1875 Artisans Dwellings Act formed the basis of the clearance of residential areas near the centre of the town, making way for grand, often public buildings: a process which continued into the 20th century. The Ring Road around the commercial centre of the town was constructed in stages between the 1960s and 1980s.

Wolverhampton Outer Western Suburbs Character Area (WV02)

SUMMARY:

This area is dominated by 20th century residential neighbourhoods and forms the outer suburbs of the city of Wolverhampton. Its western edge forms the boundary with Staffordshire, while outside its south-eastern limits are the older residential suburbs of the city. Almost three-fifths¹ of land in the Character Area is residential, although it also contains more land given to recreational purposes than any other part of Wolverhampton.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

This area lies entirely over red sandstone and pebble beds and is some distance from the coalfields typical of other parts of the Black Country. Much of the area is on relatively low land, but Tettenhall (generally the area north-west of the B4161 on the adjacent map) sits on a higher escarpment.

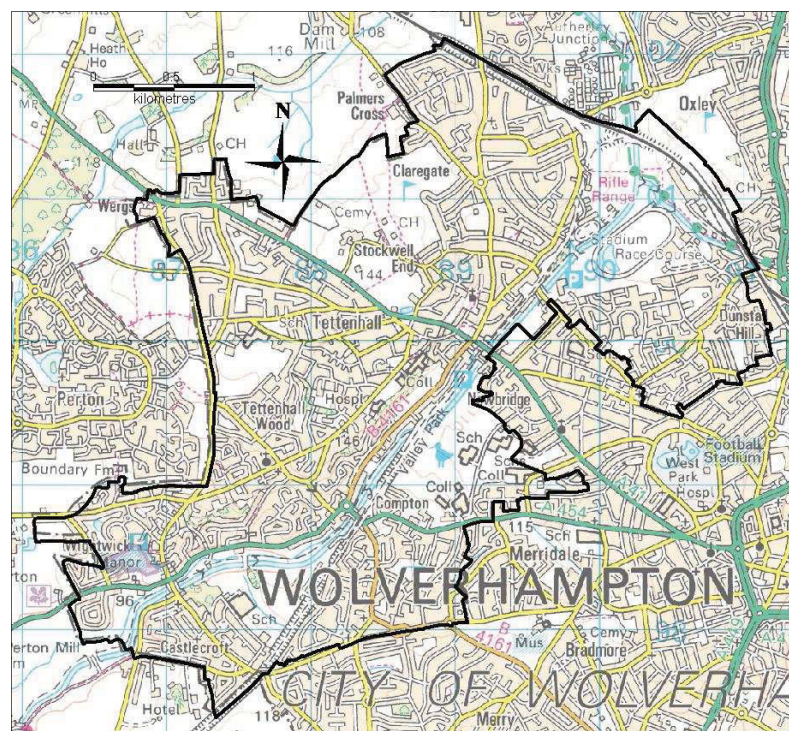
The area is bisected from north-east to south-west by the valley of the Smestow Brook and another significant watercourse, the river Penk, skirts the north-western edge of the area.

MODERN CHARACTER:

This area comprises largely middle class residential suburbs (housing accounts for four fifths of its area¹), most of which is as a result of 20th century growth. The older residential buildings (surviving from the period before 1900) are clustered around the historic core of Tettenhall (in the centre of the area) and either side of the route from there to the south-west (the modern Wood Road/Mount Road).

The most northerly part of the area (i.e. north of the modern A41 radial / west of the canal) is substantially a result of development in the first half of the 20th century. It is typified by small semi-detached housing and lies next to a golf course.

A disused railway line and canal cross the area in the valley of the Smestow Brook, now the location of a nature reserve. Two areas of mid to late 20th century housing lie to the south-east of these divisions (they are distinguished from settlement in the adjacent Character Area —*Wolverhampton*



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A view from Tettenhall across the lower land between the suburb and Wolverhampton City Centre

Inner Western Suburbs— by their generally later date).

The most southerly of these, to the south-east of the canal bridge at Compton, consists substantially of detached and semi-detached houses built in the 1960s and 70s. north, the area south of Dunstall Race Course consists of housing of more mixed type and origin, but including substantial areas developed in the period since 1970.

¹As recorded in 2000.

In addition to the golf course and race course already mentioned, substantial recreational facilities in and around this area include two further golf courses just outside its boundary, a park and nature reserve (in the south-central part of the area), and a large leisure centre in its north.

Although this area in some ways represents the western extremity of the Black Country conurbation, there are nevertheless residential areas (Perton and Codsall) in Staffordshire, just beyond the boundary of the modern metropolitan area.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

Tettenhall was first mentioned in an Anglo Saxon chronicle of AD910 when a battle is said to have occurred nearby. Two manors are mentioned in Domesday and are later known as *Tettenhall Clericorum*, owned by the Collegiate church, and *Tettenhall Regis*, owned by the Crown. Documentary evidence suggests that a Minster church existed in Tettenhall during the Anglo Saxon period, and that it was probably located upon the site of the present-day parish church.

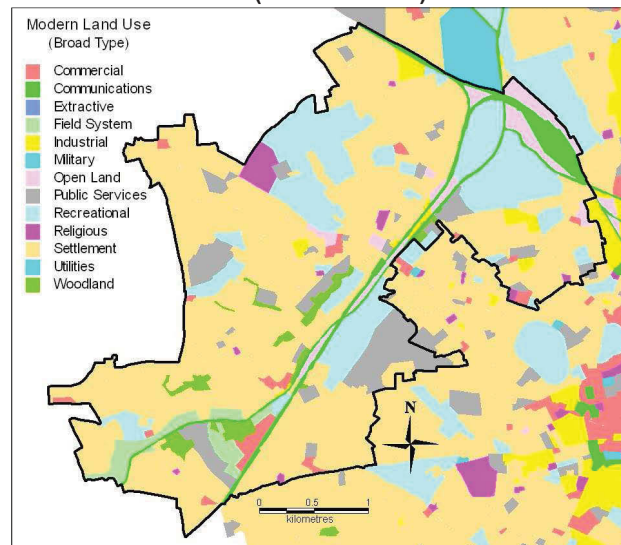
The settlement at Tettenhall was probably a fairly large sprawling one in the medieval period, arranged around two large greens: one focused around the church below the escarpment; and one on the escarpment itself. The open fields of Tettenhall spread out to the west and north, while mills and associated ponds were strung along the valley of Smestow Brook in the south-east.

Other medieval settlement took place at Wightwick (south-west of Tettenhall), Compton (south), Wergs (west) and Aldersley (north), all of which belonged to one of the two Tettenhall manors. Open fields probably also existed, although now to an unknown extent, around Wightwick Manor. Compton's open fields extended southwards from the village.

In the 19th century the historic route between Lower and Upper Green at Tettenhall was altered. The original route follows the current Old Hill, where some of the oldest surviving properties are located, but in the early 19th century the road was straightened by making a deep cutting through the escarpment to create the present Tettenhall Road, as part of improvements to the London to Holyhead Road.

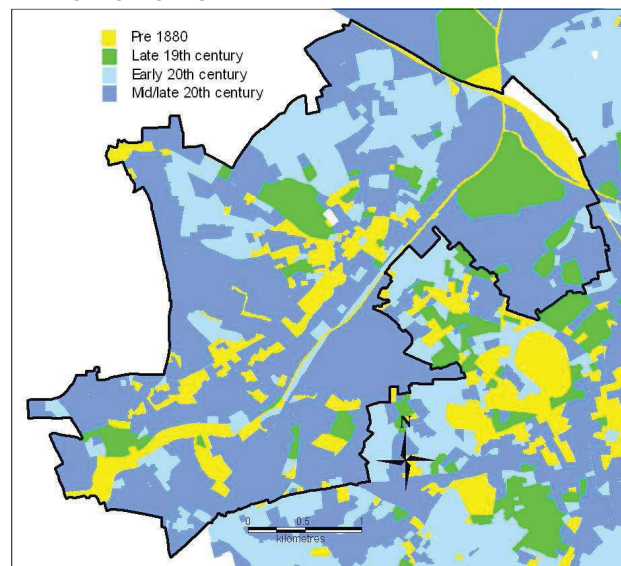
The heath land which existed at Tettenhall Wood until the early 19th century had probably been there

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since the medieval period. Once the heath was enclosed, however, the development of houses soon took over. These mainly comprised cottages, semis and detached houses, some of which still survive.

A distinctive feature of the settlement in this area has been large houses such as Wightwick Manor, Compton Hall, Tettenhall Towers and Wrottesley Hall. Some of these houses and/or their grounds have been re-developed but in most cases there are at least remnants in the modern landscape. The farmhouses which were a feature of the agricultural landscape surrounding the settlements have not generally survived into the area's suburban phase.

South Bilston & Ettingshall Character Area (WV03)

SUMMARY:

This area is dominated by industrial sites, almost all of them developed in the 20th century. It includes the commercial centre of Bilston, and more open land than in any other Wolverhampton Character Area — accounting for a quarter of its area¹. Crossed by numerous major roads, railways and canals, the area also includes some small residential enclaves. Nevertheless, the industrial nature of the Character Area distinguishes it from the residential districts which surround it.

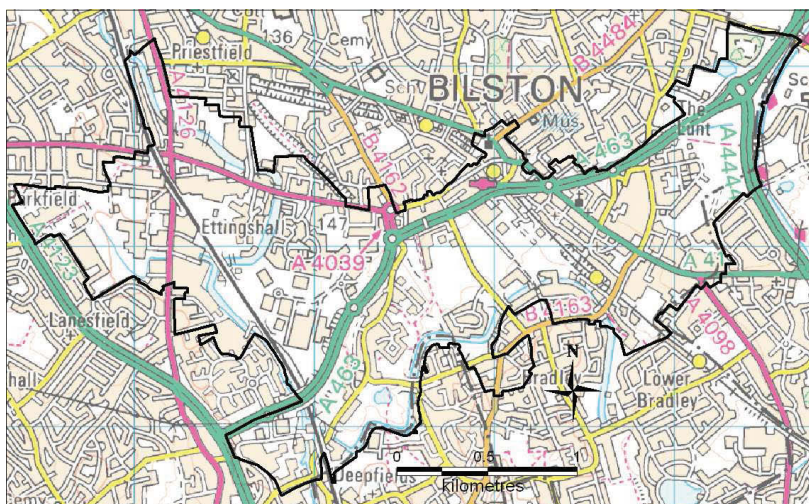
GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

The area lies entirely on the South Staffordshire Coalfield. This Character Area, together with the area immediately to its north (see *North Bilston, Portobello & Moseley*), represent a relatively low lying area of land (generally below 150m), overlooked by neighbourhoods to the west and south.

MODERN CHARACTER:

The modern character of this area is shaped by its industry, open land, and transport infrastructure.

It contains a quarter of all industrial land in the city of Wolverhampton, which is spread throughout the Character Area —from Ettingshall in the west to Bilston in the east, and includes a number of 20th century depots and engineering and other factories. Even the open land which typifies its modern map is a legacy of an industrial past, being almost all previously used by collieries, factories or railways.



Westgrove House, on the junction on two A-roads in the north-west of the area.

The existing road system in the area is dominated by the dual-carriageway of the A463 or 'Black Country Route'. Since 1995 it has connected Bilston with the main Birmingham/Wolverhampton road in the west and the M6 in the east. The area is also crossed north-south by two rail lines: the West Coast Mainline and the Midland Metro, with its stop at Bilston. Canals form the eastern and southern boundaries of the area and it is also crossed by the main navigable waterway between Wolverhampton and Birmingham.

The commercial core of Bilston is clustered around a high street running east-west and local rail and bus stations. Most of the buildings originate before 1880, but have been added to by 20th century retail developments to its south and west.

Characteristic of the area are small, largely isolated residential areas. While some of these consist of small semi-detached and terraced properties originating before 1930, the majority were built later in the 20th century on former industrial sites.

The area is currently undergoing enormous change as 40 hectares of land to the south of Bilston town centre have been earmarked for development as Bilston Urban Village, currently the largest regeneration project in the Black Country.

¹As recorded in 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

Settlement had been established at Bilston by the medieval period, which was situated at a crossing point of Darlaston Brook and where a chapel of ease had probably been built by the beginning of the 12th century.

Medieval Bilston was surrounded by open fields and it continued to rely on agriculture until the late 18th/early 19th century. However, other industries were also being carried out in the area during the medieval and early post-medieval period. This included coal mining, first mentioned in the 14th century, metal working in the 16th and 17th centuries, and enamelling by the early 18th century.

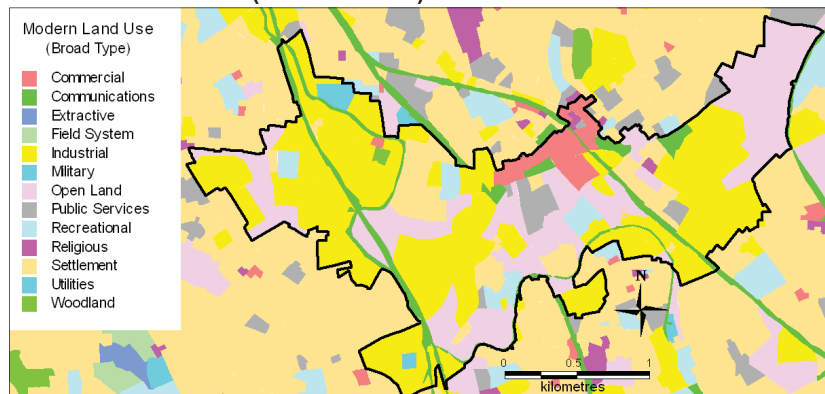
By the 19th century the extraction of coal and iron ore in this area expanded considerably as new ways of processing iron ore were developed. The increase in larger scale industry during this period also began to have a dramatic impact on the landscape.

Around Bilston, collieries were located to the west, south-west and east of the town, which itself expanded to include a new development called New Town, along Oxford Road, which was built in 1809.

By the later 19th century field systems had all but disappeared as the collieries, stone quarries, metal works (such as the one at Spring Vale, illustrated in the adjacent photo) and housing grew across the area. The collieries in particular were expansive, with scattered cottages found throughout them. In 1873, for example, Bilston was described as being 'surrounded on all sides by ironworks, collieries, iron foundries, and coal mines... beneath the curtain of black smoke which forms the normal canopy'¹.

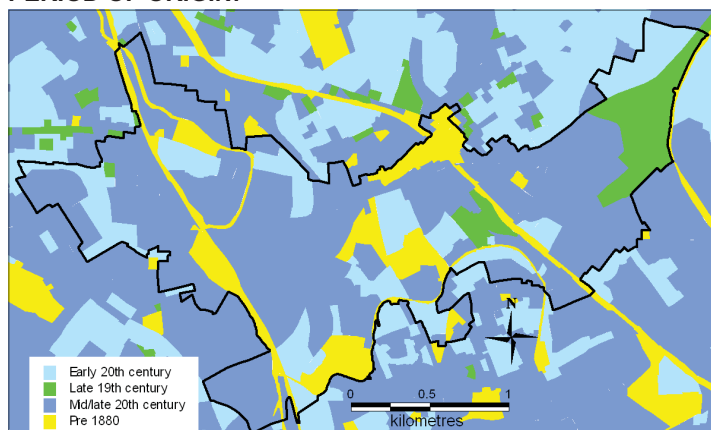
By the beginning of the 20th century coal extraction in this area was already in decline and, over the course of the following decades, much of the land used for this purpose had been recycled for other industrial or residential development.

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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Bilston Steel Works at Spring Vale, which dominated the centre of the centre of the Character Area, shown here in 1920¹. In 2000, the area shown in this photograph was open derelict land.

¹www.wolverhamptonarchives.dial.pipex.com/local_industry_3.htm.

Ettingshall Park & Lanesfield Character Area (WV04)

SUMMARY:

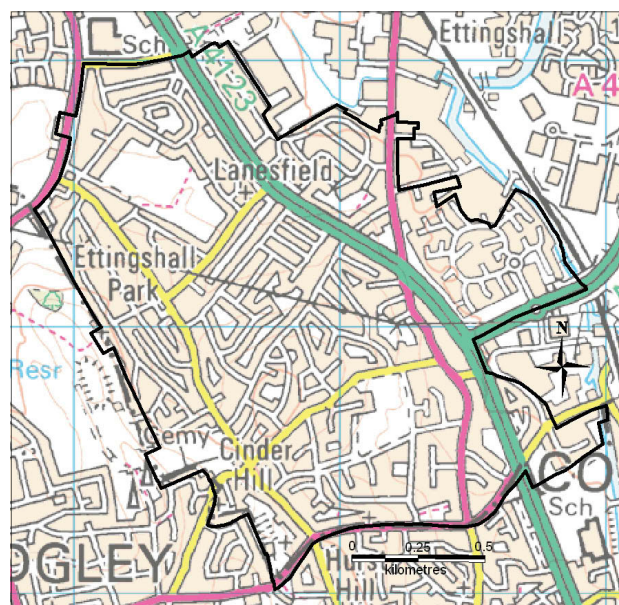
This small Wolverhampton Character Area is overwhelmingly residential (i.e. more than four-fifths of its area¹), and this aspect of its character distinguishes it from industrial districts located immediately to its north and east, alongside a canal and railway. However, it is in some senses a continuation of residential areas to the south, which are on the other side of the local government boundary with Dudley. The dominant housing type is mid 20th century detached, much of which was built on former coal mines or agricultural land.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

The area lies over the South Staffordshire Coalfield which is particularly near the surface in its north and east. The area is on relatively high ground and, in its south eastern corner (shown on the adjacent map as Cinder Hill), it reaches the highest point in Wolverhampton at around 230m as it rises towards Sedgley Beacon (itself within Dudley).

MODERN CHARACTER:

This area is characterised by 20th century housing, largely built on former collieries or agricultural land. It is now one of the Black Country Character Areas most dominated by residential land, more so than any other in Wolverhampton for example, and it has almost no industrial sites within its boundaries. The extent of recreational and open land in the area is near to average for the conurbation and, additionally, it has open fields nearby in the west and south.



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Mid 20th century housing is typical of that built on the hillside rising from Birmingham New Road in the east to Sedgley Beacon in the west. The area shown here (Stretton Place, in the south-central part of the Character Area) had previously been the site of collieries.

Among the phases of development evident in the modern built environment are three important ones in the 20th century. In the inter-war period the Birmingham New Road (the current A4123) was cut to run north-south through the area, and much of the development along it to-day is from that period (as can be seen from the map overleaf). Secondly, housing from the immediate post war period, and in particular small and medium-sized semi-detached housing from the 1950s, is the dominant type in the area — and even more so in the area to the west of the Birmingham New Road. Thirdly, the late 20th century saw the construction of residential streets on former colliery land to the east of the Birmingham New Road, and these exhibit a different character to previous construction, with more detached properties and curved streets and cul-de-sacs.

¹As recorded in 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

The main landscape feature in this area during the medieval period was a deer park, which had been established by 1293 and was probably located in the area around the site of Ettingshall Park Farm in the north-west of the area, although its actual extent is unknown. The area also contains evidence of medieval open fields. Although the manor of Ettingshall is mentioned in Domesday Book and other medieval documents, the precise location and nature of settlement at this time is unknown.

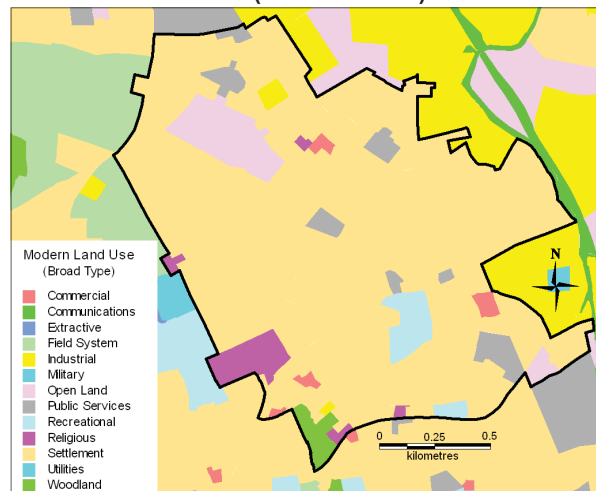
By the mid 18th century the main focus of settlement was to the south of the area around Cinder Hill, as well as to the south-west, along the line of the modern Shaw Road and Ettingshall Road/Rookery Roads, some of the first cut through the area.

At the start of the 19th century agriculture still dominated the area, but collieries had started to appear nearby. By 1890, the whole of the low lying land on the northern and western sides of the area was dominated by collieries (including Ettingshall Park colliery, Ettingshall colliery, Spring Vale colliery and Rookery colliery). Clay was also being extracted in a small way in parts of the area.

Settlement was however confined largely to Cinder Hill and Hurst Hill, the latter being situated along what is now the A463 and not only the southern limit of the Character Area, but also the modern boundary between Wolverhampton and Dudley.

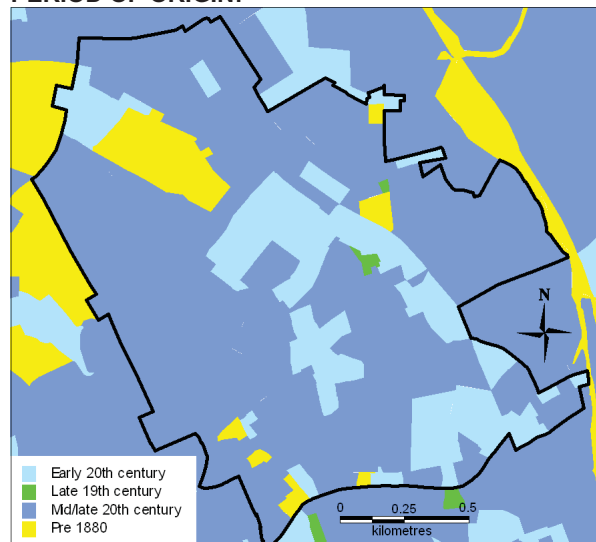
At the time the collieries were active, much of the higher ground in the south-west of the area remained as fields. It stayed largely agricultural until the mid 20th century when it was developed for housing. The mid 20th century also saw the collieries falling into disuse—a decline which had already started by the late 19th century.

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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Fallings Park & Wednesfield North Character Area (WV05)

SUMMARY:

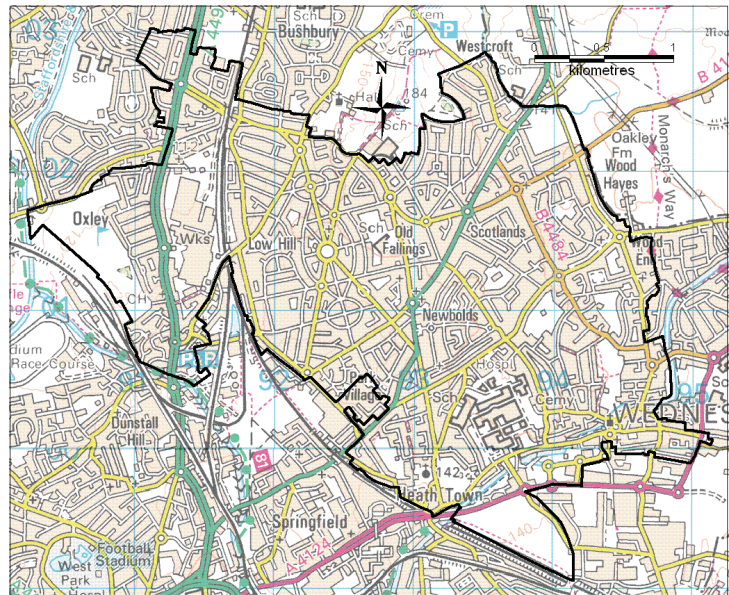
This area includes the north-eastern residential suburbs of Wolverhampton: almost two thirds¹ of its area is taken by housing, the majority of which originates in the first three decades of the 20th century. This character of mainly pre-Second World War housing is not only unusual in the Black Country (only 3 out of 56 Character Areas are of this type), but it distinguishes the area from more industrial districts to the south, and suburbs of later origin to its north and west.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

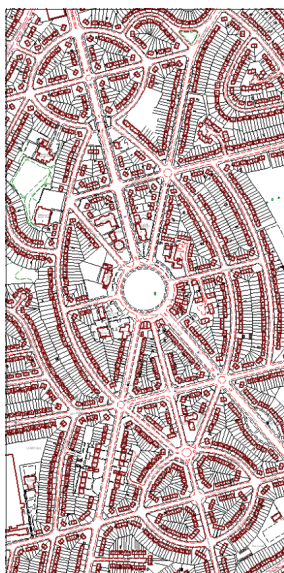
Most of the area lie over either mudstone & sandstone or dolerite. Coal measures exist in its far south-east. The Character Area includes a piece of high ground which peaks at Bushbury Hill (about 179m) in its north. The land in the west of the area (beyond the line of the modern railway running north-south) is significantly lower.

MODERN CHARACTER:

The majority of the early 20th century housing which typifies this area is located in two large estates between the railway line in the west and the Wolverhampton to Cannock Road in the east (the latter road divides the area south-west to north-east).



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The distinctive street pattern of the inter-war housing at Fallings Park Estate (Source: *Land-Line*)

The largest of these, Fallings Park Estate, was completed between the wars on agricultural land and around what was for Wolverhampton an unusual geometric street pattern (shown left). This is the largest single area of mixed inter-war semi-detached and terraced housing in the Black Country. A smaller area of similar properties was built to the immediate north-east alongside the Cannock Road.

The most southerly part of the Character Area has a generally older and more mixed character than these estates. In particular, the presence of the Wyrley and Essington Canal, the historic

centre of Wednesfield, the line of the historic route between Wednesfield and Wolverhampton, sites of disused collieries, and a large general hospital (originating as a 19th century workhouse) all contribute to this more complex set of origins and land uses.

Similarly, beyond the railway in the west of the Character Area, the housing (here laid out in a more traditional grid of streets) is located between a golf course and the site of a (previously much larger) tyre factory although, like the housing itself, the golf course and factory were constructed in the early 20th century.

The tyre factory and other industrial sites on the other side of the railway in some ways represent a continuation of industrial land extending to the south².

¹As recorded in 2000.

²See *Wolverhampton City Centre & Industrial Districts Character Area Profile*.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

In the late 19th century this area was still largely agricultural, although at this time the exploitation of the local coalfield was evident in the distinctive landscape of its south-east corner. Settlement in the area was sparse and clustered around farms, manors, or along the few roads leading to the centre of Wolverhampton to its south-west. The largest settlement within its boundaries was in the south-east of the area at Wednesfield, mentioned in the Domesday survey 800 years earlier as Wodnesfelde.

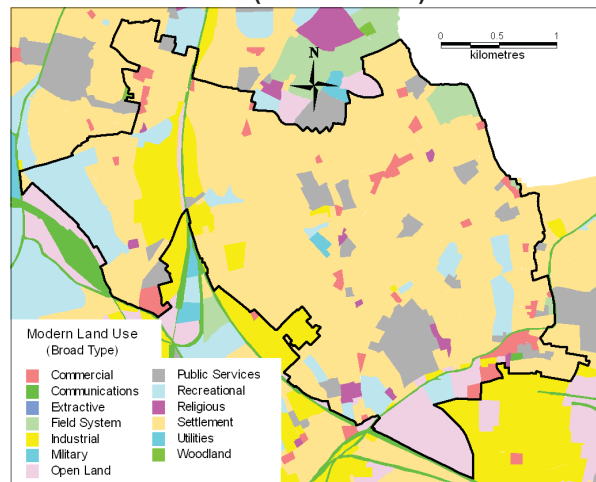
The Wyrley & Essington canal which runs through the centre of Wednesfield had been built in the late 18th century to link Wolverhampton to the coalfield to its east. A further canal, since abandoned, joined the Wyrley & Essington at New Cross, and linked the network with Bentley in the south-east.

The success and expansion of Wednesfield in the 19th century has been attributed to its access to the canals, in contrast to the areas to the north of it which did not see substantial settlement until the advent of new 20th century suburbs.

1837 saw the arrival of the railways with the opening of the line which now runs north-south through the area and skirts its southern boundary. This linked the area with the cities of Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester, and there were previously local stations on the line at Heath Town (in the south of the area) and Bushbury (near its centre).

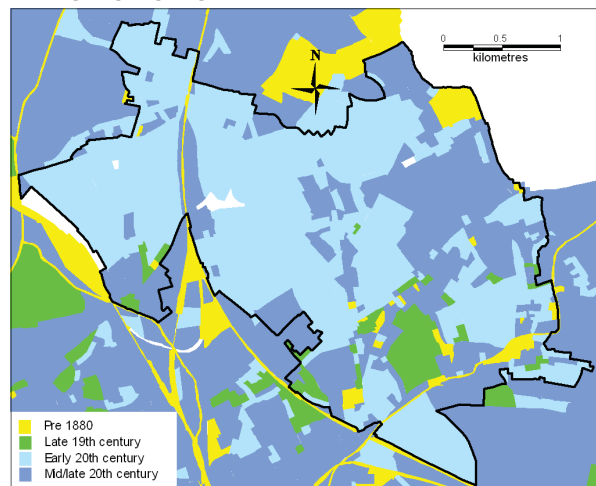
By the early 20th century, settlement had started to expand, particularly in the industrial south-east of the area (the workhouse at New Cross was in the centre of this neighbourhood). However, it was the northern agricultural part of the area which hosted the massive expansion of housing and schools in the first half of the 20th century, providing new residential suburbs for Wolverhampton and creating so much of the area's modern character. At the same time, the largest industrial site in the area, the Goodyear Tyre & Rubber Company was opened.

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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North Bilston, Portobello & Moseley Character Area (WV06)

SUMMARY:

This area is generally residential — with more than two-thirds¹ of its area accounted for by housing. However it is nevertheless situated in the core of the Black Country, being largely built on former colliery land, and now surrounded by industrial areas on three sides. Like much of the Black Country, the modern landscape of the Character Area is overwhelmingly of mid to late 20th century origin.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

The area lies entirely on the South Staffordshire Coalfield. This Character Area, together with the area immediately to its south (see *South Bilston & Ettingshall*), represent a relatively low lying area of land (generally below 150m), overlooked by neighbourhoods to the west and north.

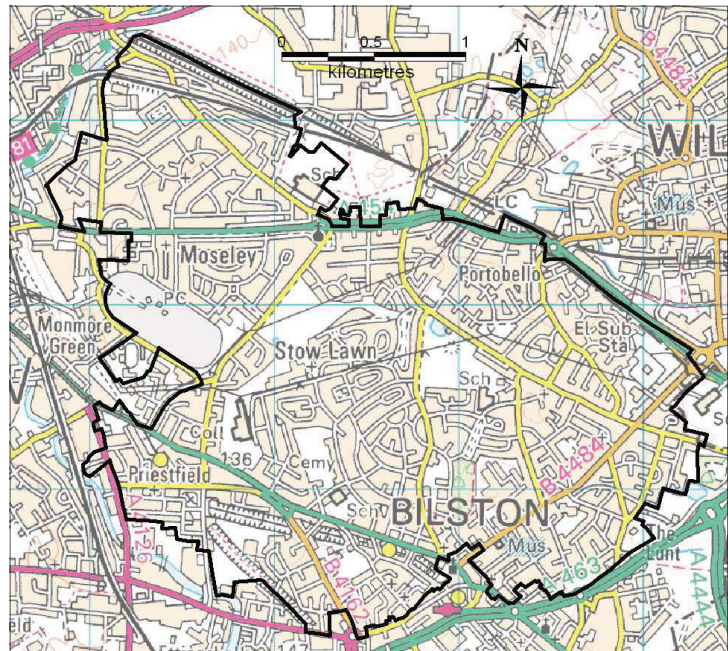
MODERN CHARACTER:

This area is dominated by mid to late 20th century housing and open land, the latter being the visible remnants of 19th century coal mining carried out extensively across the area. In fact, this area contains more housing built on former mining land than any other Black Country Character Area.

Very few houses survive from before 1920: largely because few existed, the area having been dominated by collieries and the areas of waste generated by them. The open land surviving from this earlier time potentially preserves remnants of this previous phase.

After 1920, housing developed from two different centres: the estates to the south represent the northern expansion of Bilston from when the town had its own council (1894 to 1966); further north, housing represents the furthest reaches of Wolverhampton's eastern suburbs, which first followed the Willenhall Road (the modern A454 which runs in an east-west direction across the north of the area), and then radiated out to the north and south of the road.

Housing from the 1960s onwards is less in evidence, although there are a few neighbourhoods scattered across the area. Small clusters of high rise flats, for example, are strung along its southern edge where it borders the industrial part of Bilston. In addition, three late 20th century estates fall within the Character Area, the largest being the one which abuts the Walsall



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border in the north-east, and which consists of small semi-detached and detached properties. The other two, comprising small semis and terraces, are located off Stow Heath Lane, in the centre of the area.

The open land already mentioned includes Stowlawn Wood in the centre of the area. In addition, recreational facilities include East Park (opened in the west of the area in 1896), and Hickman Park (opened in the south in 1911). The greyhound racing stadium adjacent to East Park is later and was built in the inter-war period. Another open area is Bilston Cemetery, in the south, which had been established in the 1850s. Alongside the generally modern housing, there are several schools and a college campus which serve the local population. Most of these facilities were built in the middle or later 20th century.

The railways and, more recently the Midland Metro have played an important part in shaping the modern character of settlements like Portobello and Bilston. Two Metro stations now serve the south of the area, linking it to Birmingham and Wolverhampton.

¹As recorded in 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

In the medieval period, much of this area was agricultural and included a section of Bilston's medieval open fields. Other open fields lay to the north and may have been associated with settlement outside of this area. Only two areas of probable Medieval settlement have been suggested, including a moat located off Stow Heath Lane and possible settlement around Moseley Hole Farm, in the centre of the area.

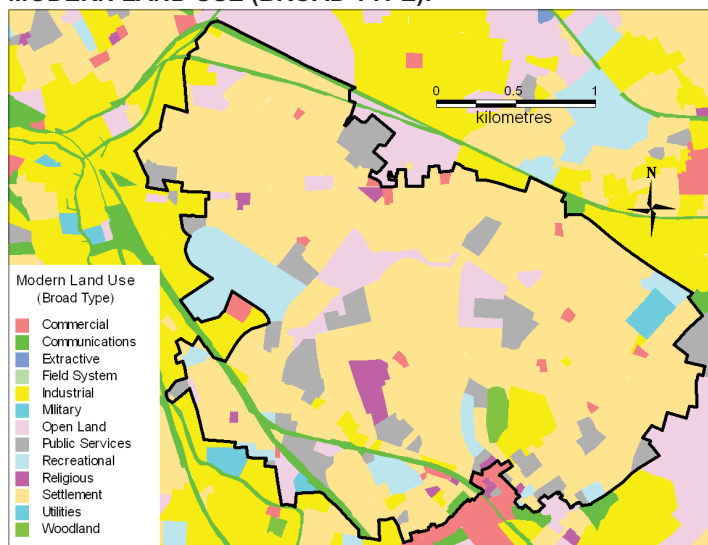
Part of the area may have formed part of Stow Heath: a heath of unknown date and extent, but which may have existed until coal mining began in earnest in the late 18th and early 19th century. The extent of coal extraction in the area was huge, but by the late 19th century most collieries were disused, although associated cottages and squatter settlements still dotted the wastelands. In this period two brickworks were established north of Willenhall Road, one of which survived until at least the inter-war period until it disappeared under new housing.

Settlement had been established at Portobello and Moseley on the Willenhall Road and both mainly consisting of terraces and dating largely to the 19th century, although both may have had earlier roots.

The character of coal mining wastes and scattered small settlements continued until the inter war period when modern house building began to increase.

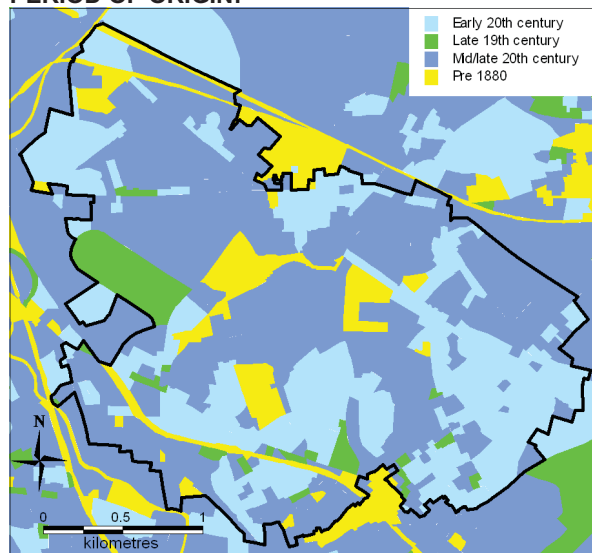
Overall, the late development of the area for residential purposes, at least partly explained by its use for coal extraction, may have also been partly a result of the land's earlier marshy nature and vulnerability to flooding.

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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A photograph of Portobello High Street in 1959 showing, in the right of the picture, 1930s housing of the type which contributed to the transformation of the area from coal extraction to residential. This location is now the line of the modern A454 on the northern edge of the area².

²www.localhistory.scit.wlv.ac.uk

Wednesfield South Character Area (WV07)

SUMMARY:

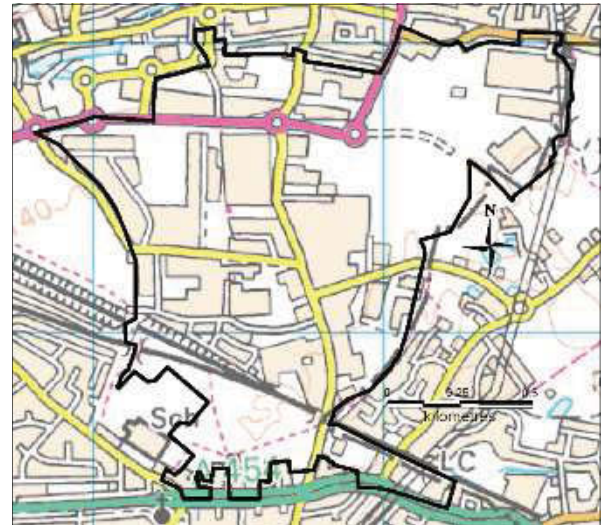
This area is generally industrial — with three-fifths of its area accounted for by factories, workshops and warehouses, and a further fifth by open land¹. Among the twelve Character Areas in Wolverhampton at least, this is one of the least diverse in terms of its modern use, with only three different types of land use accounting for nearly all of the area. The eastern edge of the area forms the boundary between Wolverhampton and Walsall, and on the other three sides it is bordered by areas of more residential character.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

The area lies over coal measures and, in its northern part, dolerite. It is generally flat land between 130m and 140m above sea level. The original course of the river Tame crossed the area in its south-east.

MODERN CHARACTER:

This area is dominated by large industrial districts and open land, almost all of which date from the period since the middle of the 20th century, and make up what is not only a relatively modern landscape, but also a fast-changing one. For example, according to the HLC¹, the oldest built structure in the area in 2000 was a late 18th century foundry in its north-west.



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Small industrial units, such as those shown here on Phoenix Road, are characteristic of the central and southern parts of the Character Area. Phoenix Road was built in the mid to late 20th century on a field next to the (now backfilled) Birmingham Canal Neachells Branch.

Subsequently, however, this foundry has been demolished. Similarly, some of the open land (particularly in the east) has since been redeveloped.

The landscape nevertheless includes several industrial estates, including the Planetary Industrial Estate in the west, the Strawberry Lane, 'Tractor Spares', and Middleton industrial estates in the south, and the Satellite Industrial Park and Neachells Lane Industrial Estate in its centre. Many of these host small industrial units, but the Character Area more generally does include some much larger facilities, such as the Corus site in the far east of the area (see the photograph over the page).

In the south the area is crossed by a modern railway (which includes the junction of two lines). This forms a barrier between industrial areas north of these lines and what is the oldest part of the landscape, the open land south of the railway. This probably was created as a result of the closure of the colliery on the same site in the 19th century. The northern part of the Character Area was also once crossed by rail lines and canals, and the pattern of modern property boundaries still in part reflects this earlier landscape.

¹As recorded in 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

In the medieval period we know that settlement existed at moated sites at March End (in the north-east of the area) and at Neachells (in the central south-east). By the post-medieval period the latter at least had developed into small hamlets. The area remained primarily agricultural until the 19th century.

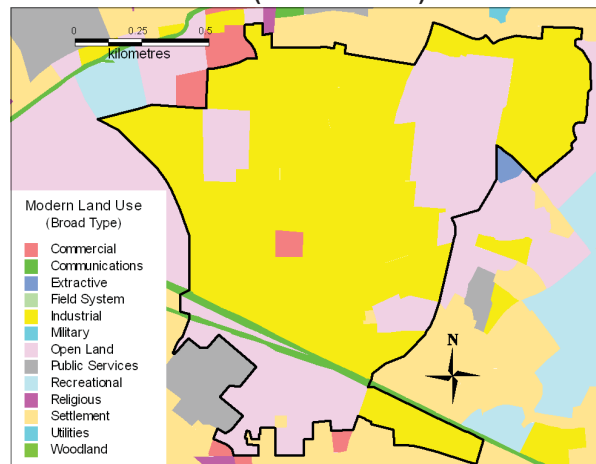
Before this point much of the industry within Wednesfield had taken place in a domestic context and consisted mainly of key and trap making. However, by the late 19th century large scale industry was beginning to appear just south of the town, in the north of our Character Area.

Meanwhile, in the south and most of the rest of the area large scale coal mining had come to dominate, together with an infrastructure of trackways, canals and railways. This landscape was also particularly visible outside the area to the south-east, in the direction of Willenhall. However, even by the later 19th century some of these collieries had already ceased operation and by the early 20th century coal mining had completely disappeared from the area, leaving large units of land available for new uses.

The 20th century saw the replacement of agricultural and colliery land with industry. Before 1938 this replacement was largely confined to the north of the area, nearest to the centre of Wednesfield and around what was Wednesfield railway station (at what is now the junction of Neachells Lane and Wednesfield Way). However, by the end of the century it had extended to cover not only the previous colliery land, but also land which had been made available by closing railways (including the station) and filling of canals.

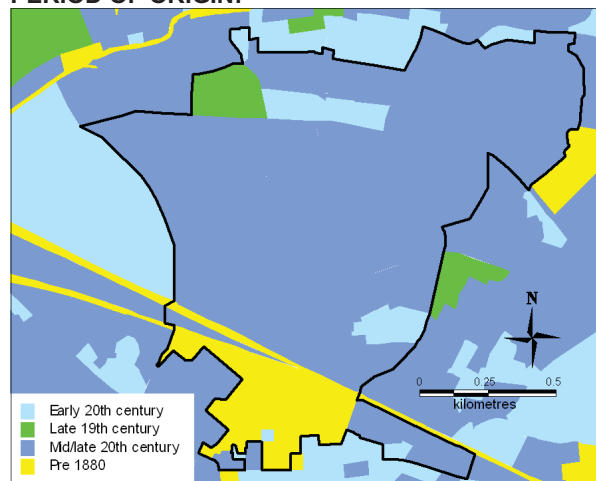
The landscape reflects a change which had taken place at this point to an economy which was reliant on the new road systems to service the industry. These not only expanded and enhanced the few routes through the area which had existed in the 19th century, but also created new access to the industrial sites, often including large roundabouts at the road junctions which have become characteristic of the area.

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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In terms of area, the largest industrial unit in the area is Corus, on Steelpark Way, in the east of the area. The headquarters of Corus Distribution and Building Systems, the facility was first built on fields in the second half of the 20th century.

Bradley Character Area (WV08)

SUMMARY:

This small area is typified by mid to late 20th century housing, which makes up three-fifths of its area¹. Although the area adjoins industrial land to the north, its character of modern settlement is continued in the landscape to the south: it exists as a separate area partly as a result of having local authority boundaries on three sides. These boundaries themselves coincide with the lines of former or current railways and canals.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

The area lies mainly over coal measures for most of its area, although sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate are present in its south. The eastern side of the area (shown as Lower Bradley on the adjacent map), at around 130m, is overlooked by the land to the west (Upper Bradley) which peaks at around 160m (at Batman's Hill).

MODERN CHARACTER:

This area is generally made up of 20th century housing based on what was originally the medieval settlement of Bradley. Houses are generally small, and date to the inter-war and post-war periods. There are also small estates of 1960s or 1970s housing, as well as three areas built later in the century. As well as these, there are also substantial areas of mid-to-late 20th century apartments and maisonettes. Despite the antiquity of this area, Bradley today contains very few old buildings.

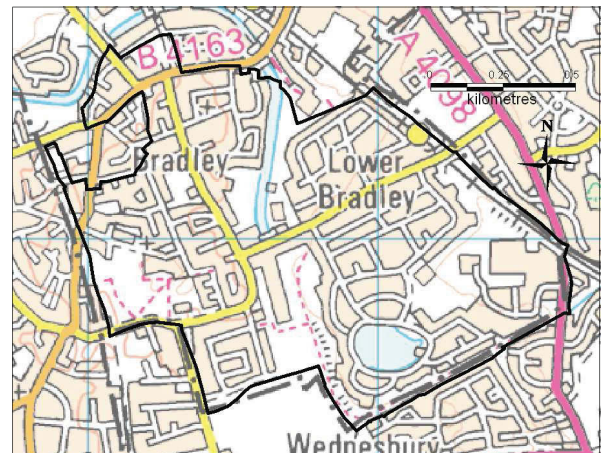
A small number of industrial sites survive in the area from the early 20th century and before. In the east of the area one factory remains from the period before 1930, when it was erected on land previously used by Bradley colliery. In the centre of the area, an industrial facility built later in the 20th century superseded earlier industry on the same site (previously adjacent to the main line canal).

Although at the time of the HLC¹ the largest area of open space was in the east of the area, most of this has since been used as land for new streets and housing (including Constantine Way). Nevertheless, at the time of writing, open space still exists in the area in several locations: along the line (or former lines) of canals; in a small public park in the north-west of the area (Coronation Park on Wilkinson Avenue); and on Batman's Hill in the south-west (including Hall Green Cemetery).

The canal, which still influences the character of the northern part of the area in particular, is part of a previously more extensive route (see *Historic Character* below), much of which is still preserved in the shape of recreational parts of the neighbourhood. Meanwhile, the former railway line, which forms the north-western boundary of the Character Area, is now the line of the Midland Metro from Birmingham to Wolverhampton: a stop at Bradley Lane serves the local neighbourhood.



Inter-war housing, seen here backing on to the now by-passed route of the main line canal between Birmingham and Wolverhampton.



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¹As recorded in 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

Bradley is mentioned in the Domesday Book in 1086, and we know that two moats are located in the area at the beginning of the 12th century, although the extent of settlement here at that time is not known with any certainty. The fact that there is no modern centre to Bradley is an indication that settlement here may have always been dispersed.

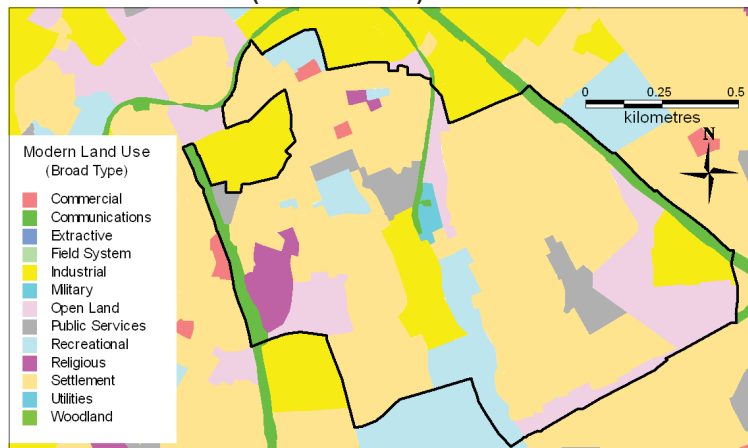
A few open fields may have existed around the moated site at Upper Bradley, and the area was to continue to rely on agriculture until the early 19th

century. However, industries had already become established during the medieval and early post-medieval period. This included coal mining, first mentioned in the 14th century, metal working in the 16th and 17th century and enamelling by the early 18th century.

Bradley is most famed for its involvement in the industrial revolution when the first coke-fired blast furnace in the Black Country opened here sometime between 1766 and 1770 at the former Wilkinson Iron Works (now the site of a primary school). This type of blast furnace made possible the large scale iron trade in the Black Country. It was also the first time a steam engine was used for purposes other than pumping water. The name 'Wilkinson' has since been used to name streets and other public facilities in the Character Area.

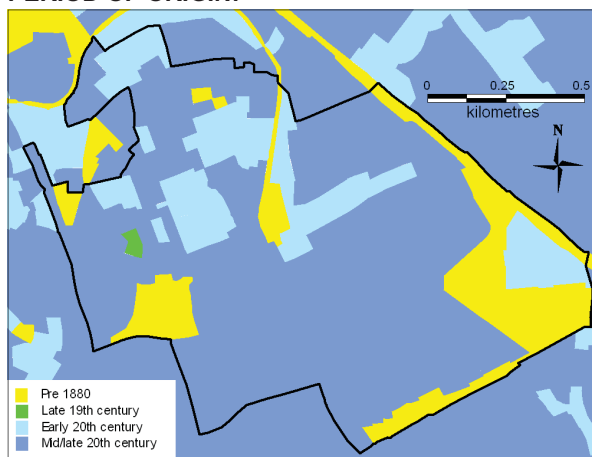
During this period settlement probably expanded considerably in the Bradley area as the iron and coal industries expanded. John Wilkinson, the owner of the furnace, certainly had had homes built for his workers and, by the time his estate was sold in 1836, there were at least 120 of these. Housing was dominated by terraces, which could be found in among the metal works and collieries.

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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Although the first canal route between Birmingham and Wolverhampton was built through Bradley (running north-south through the centre of the area), it was later bypassed by a straighter, more direct route of the Birmingham Mainline to the west, outside of the area.

Ashmore Park Character Area (WV09)

SUMMARY:

This area is overwhelmingly residential (housing occupies three-quarters of its area¹), and also represents a landscape created in the immediate post-war 20th century. In many ways, these are characteristics shared by the area to the east (see *Bentley Character Area Profile*), over the boundary between Wolverhampton and Walsall. The area can otherwise be distinguished from the areas to the south which are industrial in character, and from the older housing to the west.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

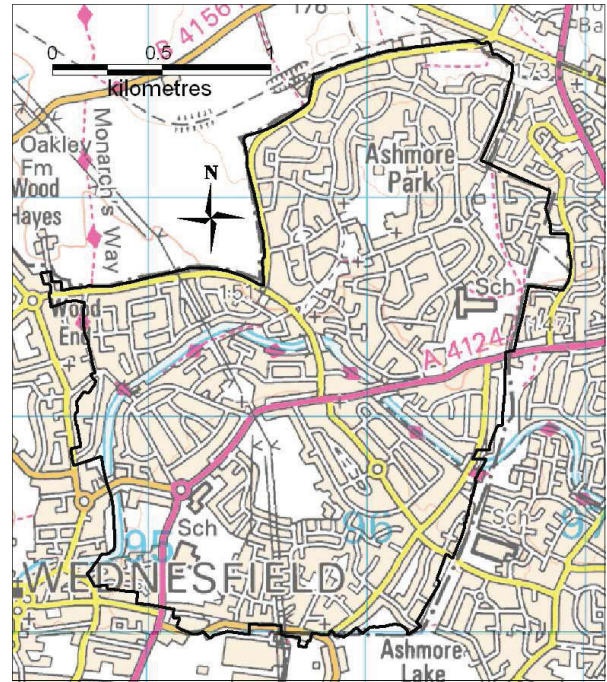
The area lies over coal measures and, in its south-west, dolerite. The north-east of the area is, for the Black Country Boroughs, relatively high ground (around 170m at the area's northern edge) and descends in the south to around 135m.

MODERN CHARACTER:

This area is dominated by housing interspersed with large school sites and recreational areas.

The housing is overwhelmingly of post-war date, and the vast majority of it originates in the period between 1945 and 1974. The development at Ashmore Park itself, in the northern part of the area, was built in the 1950s and comprises small semi-detached, detached and terraced houses with several areas of apartment blocks. The housing in the southern part of the area represents the earlier expansion of Wednesfield's northern suburbs.

The Character Area includes significant zones of land recorded as being used for public services and



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The Wyrley and Essington canal, seen here in the south-west of the area, was built to service collieries, but adds character to this now overwhelmingly residential area.

recreational purposes. The public services in this case are all primary and secondary schools with playing fields, or youth and community centres. Like the local housing, they were generally built in the mid to late 20th century on what were fields. Areas of recreational green space were created at a similar time from earlier field systems or, in the case of Ashmore Park itself, on land previously used by collieries.

¹As recorded in 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

The area has largely comprised field systems throughout most of its mapped history, and only in the last sixty years has it become predominantly residential.

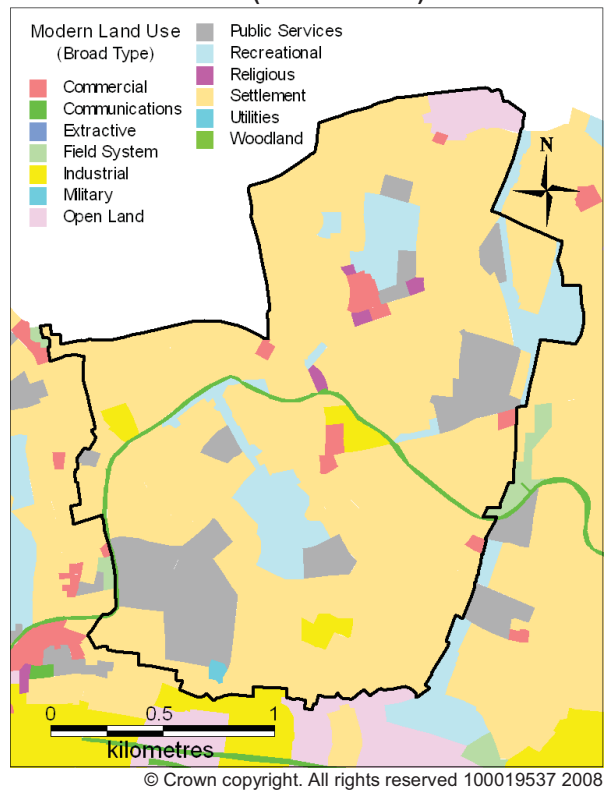
In the medieval period open fields were present in the area, such as around Ashmore Park itself, where a medieval moat survives as an earthwork in front of a shopping centre² (the shopping centre is visible as a red commercial area in the north of the adjacent Modern Land Use map). Another moated site developed into Perry Hall, now no longer standing, on the eastern edge of the area.

In addition to the remains of the Ashmore Park moat, one of the other visible features surviving from previous phases of the landscape is the Wyrley and Essington canal, which crosses the middle of the area in an east-west orientation. Built in the late 18th century to link Wolverhampton to the coalfield to its east, it provided access to collieries within the area at Perry Hall and Ashmore Park. The Ashmore Park collieries, which were some distance north of the canal, were reached via a long straight trackway which connected with the canal in the middle of the area. The collieries survived until the early 20th century, but the area was not given over to whole scale coal mining in the way in which areas further south were: even in the early 20th century farming still dominated the landscape.

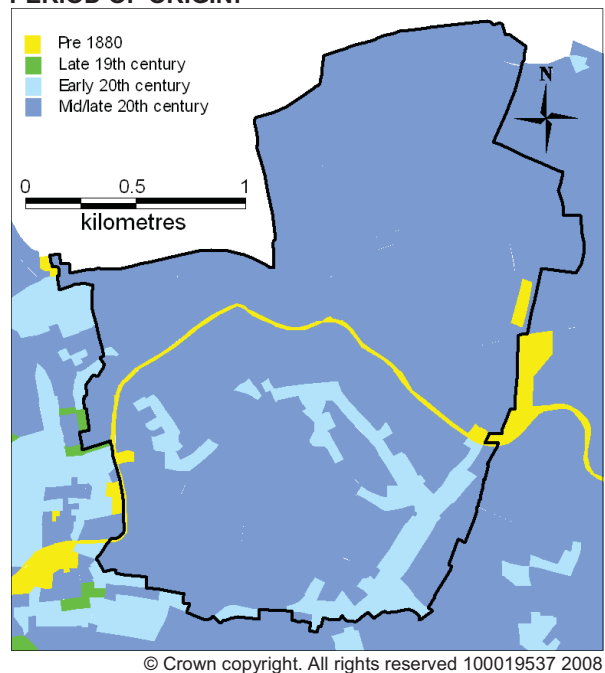
Before the replacement of this agricultural landscape during the 1950s housing expansion, settlement comprised scattered farms and small strings of inter-war semi-detached houses along some of the most important roads (these can be seen in light blue on the Period of Origin map).

The post-war construction boom included the Ashmore Park council estate (the northern part of the Character Area) together with the street network and other associated facilities laid out at the same time.

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



²www.localhistory.scit.wlv.ac.uk/listed/localist/ashmore.htm

Pendeford, Fordhouses & Bushbury Character Area (WV10)

SUMMARY:

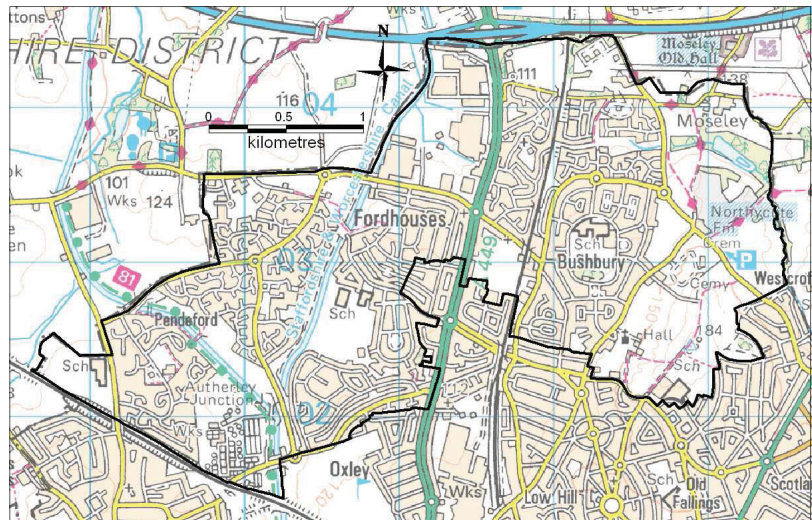
This area is one of relatively new housing: housing accounts for half of the land¹ and almost all of it was constructed in the second half of the 20th century. The area also contains important sites of industry, public services and recreational facilities, which also all date to the period after 1938. It is the most recently developed suburb of the city of Wolverhampton, as well as its most northerly part.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

The area is situated over red sandstone and pebble beds. It lies around 110m altitude for a large part of its area, and represents some of the lowest lying land in the northern Black Country. The land peaks at Bushbury Hill (about 180m), in the south-east. In the north-east of the area, Waterhead Brook flows out into Staffordshire.

MODERN CHARACTER:

This area contains some of the most recently developed residential areas in the Black Country, in particular the area to the west of the A449 Stafford Road (shown on the map above in green, running north-south through the area) was first used for housing only in the period since 1974. The housing estates of Dovecotes and Pendeford (the furthest west) are almost exclusively made up of largely small 1980s properties, built to accommodate people probably employed in



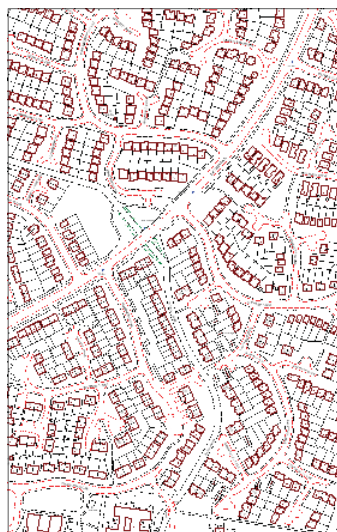
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Wolverhampton. Nearby public services include several schools a community centre and library, which are located to the east and west of the housing.

Some of the oldest districts in the Character Area are those along the line of the Stafford Road, which is the principal road north out of Wolverhampton and now links it to the M54 in the north. This area, Fordhouses, also contains substantial areas of small, mid 20th century semi-detached housing. The modern housing in Bushbury (in the east of the area) is mainly made up of more recent semi-detached and detached housing dating to the 1980s.

Substantial recreational land falls within the Character Area, including public open space and sports grounds alongside canals and railways, a public park (on Bushbury Hill), and a country park and nature reserve at Northcote on its eastern edge.

Most of the industrial sites in the area are in its north, to the east of the Staffordshire & Worcestershire canal. However, unlike many of the canalside industrial districts in the Black Country, the use of these sites for industry originates in the 20th century, before which the area was largely agricultural. The location of the industry here was more probably determined by its proximity to the Stafford Road and, since it opened to traffic in 1983, the M54.



Twisting crescents leading to fanning cul-de-sacs characterise the street pattern of the 1980s housing built between the Staffordshire & Worcestershire and Shropshire Union canals.

¹As recorded in 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

Before the late 19th century, this area mainly comprised fields, some of which were medieval. In Pendeford, to the west, these were most likely associated with settlement to the north at Pendeford Farm or Pendeford Hall, beyond what is now the city boundary.

Barnhurst Farm, in the far west, was probably the site of a medieval homestead. Although it has since been almost entirely replaced, its 17th century dovecote survives and has given its name to the area of surrounding modern housing. The farm was bought by the Corporation in 1867 for a (surviving) sewage works. The farm building itself appears to have been the only domestic dwelling in the area until the late 20th century.

Pendeford Aerodrome was opened in 1938 on the area between the Shropshire Union canal and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire canal. It closed in the 1970s leaving the land a prime location for a typical mixed 1980s housing estate.

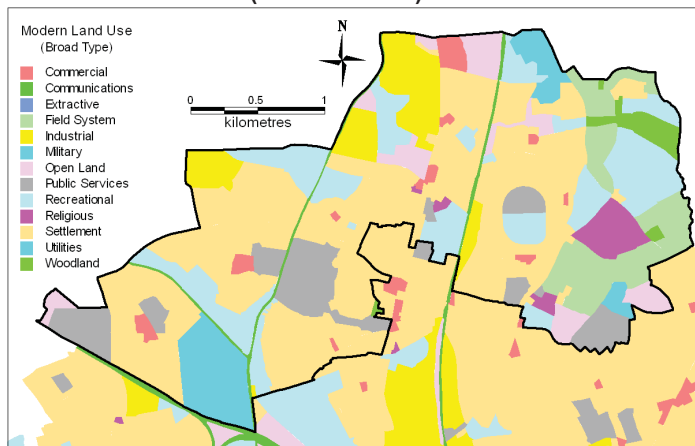
Some of the oldest surviving features in this very modern landscape are the canals and railways. The Staffordshire and Worcestershire canal, which marks a division between Pendeford/Barnhurst in the west and other areas to the east, was built around 1770. The Shropshire Union canal, which joins it on the area's southern boundary, was opened in the 1830s. The railway, which became part of the London Midland and Scottish network, was built in the middle of the 19th century.



Pendeford airfield, which opened in 1938 and closed in the 1970s, had the effect of preserving open land which was used for housing in the 1980s. The location of the airfield buildings, shown here, is now the site of Pendeford Business Park on the very north-western edge of Wolverhampton².

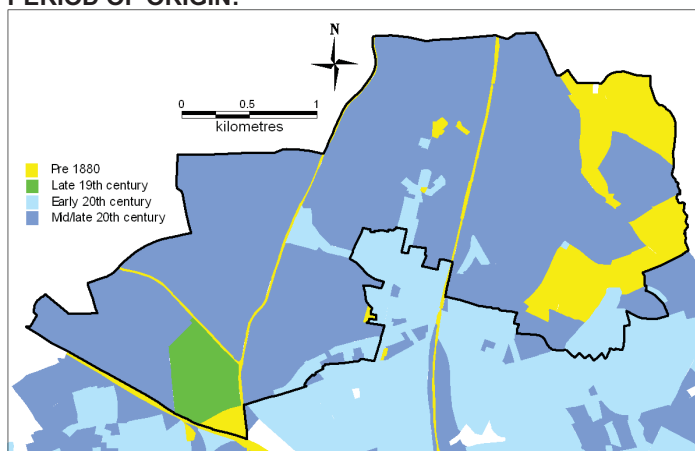
²www.localhistory.scit.wlv.ac.uk

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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In the east of the area, the modern landscape nevertheless includes more older features, for example Northcote Farm Country Park on the area's eastern edge. Although this was laid out in the 20th century, it retains the form of the early 19th century landscaped park, and also includes surviving 17th and 18th century cottages, farms and country houses.

To the north of the what is now Northcote Farm Country Park, two country houses and their parklands dominated the landscape. These were Moseley Hall, just outside the Character Area in Staffordshire (marked on the map on page 1), which was built in the 18th century, and the early 19th century Moseley Court which is now demolished. A large fishpond survives which once separated the land belonging to the two houses, the pond itself beginning its life as one of a string of mill pools along Waterhead Brook.

The area to the south of the pool and brook, effectively a 'green wedge' into the city of Wolverhampton, also includes one of the largest cemeteries in the Black Country, built on former farmland in the 1950s.

Blakenhall, Bradmore & Penn Character Area (WV11)

SUMMARY:

Unusually for what is a large area of the Black Country, this suburban section of Wolverhampton is dominated by housing from the early, pre-war part of the 20th century; only two of the other 50 or so Character Areas can also be typified in this way. The area can be distinguished from commercial and industrial areas to its north and east. In the west and south the area shares a border with Staffordshire.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

In its east the area lies over coal, but the majority is over red sand-stone and pebble beds or mud-stone. A ridge runs north-south through the middle of the area, peaking at around 180m, while in the west especially the land falls away - to less than 120m at the Staffordshire border.

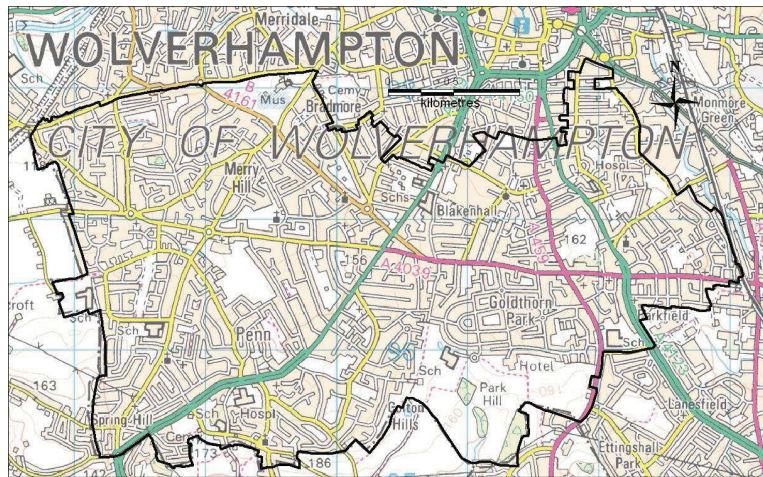
MODERN CHARACTER:

This area represents a large part of suburban Wolverhampton, the centre of which is to the north. Three quarters of the land¹ is taken by housing, which comprises largely small and medium-sized semi-detached and detached properties from the inter-war period, although particularly in the north and west there are also significant areas of terraces.

The legacy of the large early 20th century expansion of the city includes the area around Merry Hill, in the west. This is typified by large areas of small semis built on former fields. The south-west of the area, to the north of the historic settlement of Upper Penn, also includes large areas of similar housing.

The historic settlement of Penn itself (or Upper Penn as it was known), which straddles the main road out of the city to the south-west (the Penn Road - shown in the map above in green), has a more mixed character and retains older properties including Penn Hall (now a school), a pub, almshouses, and church. Two surviving farms and farmland across the border in Staffordshire add to Penn's continuing village feel.

East of Penn Road the inter-war housing continues into Goldthorn Park, a large area of medium-sized semis and detached housing, although its private origins contrast with the municipal estates in the west. To the north, in Blakenhall, the area's largest industrial area is situated, some of which survives from the early 20th century.



Inter-war semis in the north-west of the Character Area

In the south-central part of the area, against the boundary shared with Dudley, and on top of the ridge referred to above, there is an important green space (Park Hill). This is the largest area of field system/ woodland in any single Wolverhampton Character Area and one of the few surviving green belt areas inside the city. Other important recreational zones add to character of the area. These include larger areas such as Bantock Park on Finchfield Road (the latter forms part of the area's northern boundary), Windsor Avenue playing fields in the west, and Phoenix Park in the east. However, it is perhaps the dispersed nature of the recreational land here (there are 15 other sites) which is distinctive.

¹As recorded in 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

One of the oldest known settlements in this area is Upper Penn, in whose churchyard is the base of a Saxon cross. Penn is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, and there are references to a trackway known as Penn Way in the 10th century - possibly along the line of the existing Penn Road.

By the medieval period the area had developed vast open fields, some of which possibly belonged to Lower Penn to the south west (in modern Staffordshire). While there is little recorded settlement in the area at the time, by the mid 18th century there were many scattered farms and cottages, and it is likely that some may have had medieval origins.

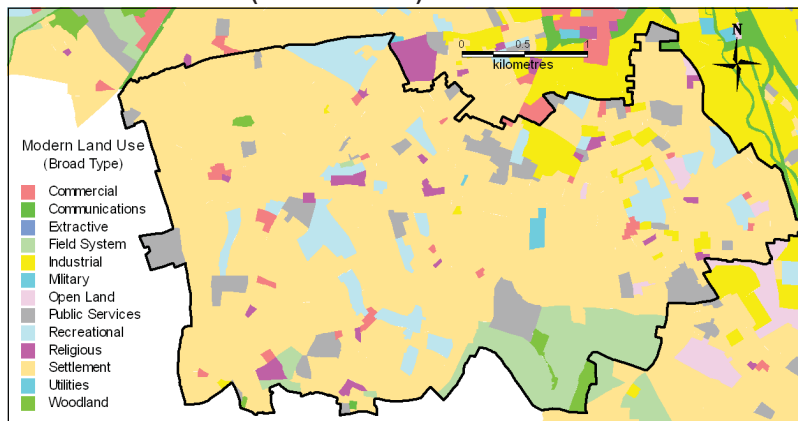
In addition to the north-south routes of the Penn Road and Dudley Road (the modern A459), the main east-west route through the Character Area (including the modern Goldthorn Hill) has probably existed for some time as it appears on Yates' map of 1775.

Overall, by the late 19th century the area was still overwhelmingly agricultural, and Upper Penn was a dispersed settlement surrounded by fields. The largest areas of housing at that time however were Penn Fields (on the Penn Road, closer to Wolverhampton) and Blakenhall (on the Dudley Road, just south of the modern Wolverhampton city centre). Despite demolitions, these two areas, together with Upper Penn are the location of most of the buildings in the area with an origin before 1900.



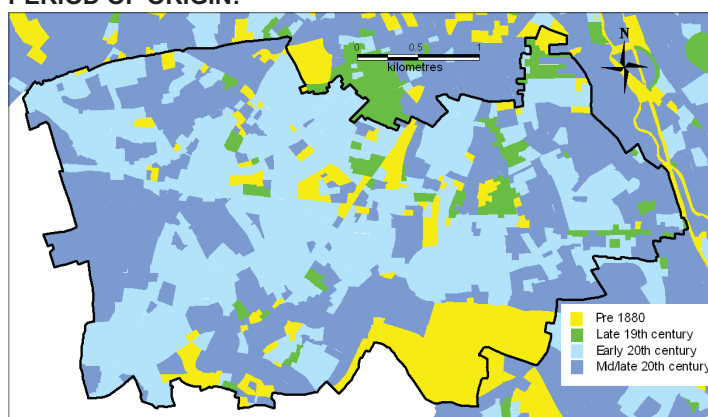
The Penn Road, heading south-west out of Wolverhampton, has been important to the development of the Character Area. Shown here is the former toll gate, located in the centre of the Character Area at the junction with Coalway Lane².

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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PERIOD OF ORIGIN:



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At least until the mid 19th century, Blakenhall existed as a distinct settlement, and contained several streets of terraced housing. However, by 1900 it had merged with Wolverhampton in a corridor of development along the Dudley Road. Later in the 20th century much of the terraced housing was replaced by high-rise. The car industry, which has also contributed to Blakenhall's character (it hosted the former Sunbeam factory), was in part based on skills developed in the japanning and tin plate industries.

The particular line of the Dudley Road represented a division within the Character Area in the 19th century. The area to the west was generally still field systems, while that to the east was dominated by mining and its effects. Cockshutts, Rough Hills and Sedgley Park collieries were among the operations which transformed this part of the landscape.

However, this division is much less visible today: the story of the area since the start of the 20th century has meant that both fields and colliery land have been consumed by the growth of suburban housing. At the same time, the modern Birmingham New Road was cut through what had previously been colliery land to form a route from Wolverhampton to the south-east.

²www.localhistory.scit.wlv.ac.uk

Wolverhampton Inner Western Suburbs Character Area (WV12)

SUMMARY:

The landscape in this area is unusual in the modern Black Country in that it contains large numbers of residential properties originating from before the 20th century (only one of the other 57 areas is comparable in this respect¹). The largest single recreational element of the area, West Park, is a significant part of what remains of the Victorian townscape.

GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY:

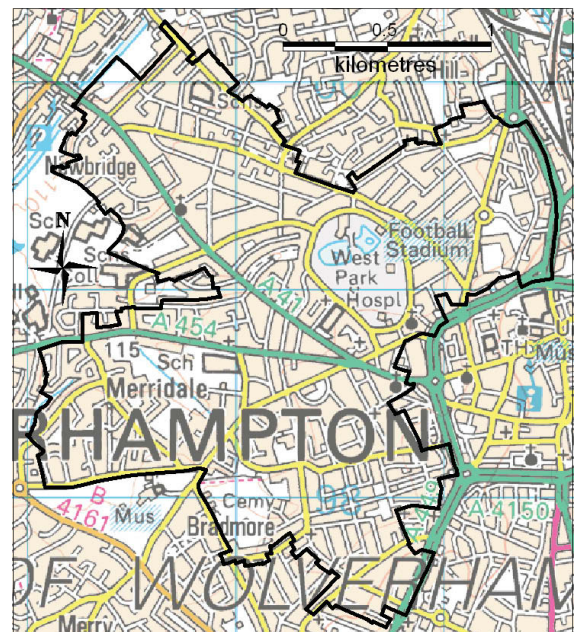
The area lies almost entirely over red sandstone and pebble beds. It is generally at between 130-140m altitude, with the lower land in the north-west.

MODERN CHARACTER:

This area contains some of the oldest surviving neighbourhoods in the Black Country. It is overwhelmingly residential - almost three quarters of its area is housing² and even land given to recreation and public services (e.g. schools) is closely associated.

The oldest surviving areas of housing include two large clusters of pre-1880 development - in the centre of the area around the junction of the Tettenhall and Compton Roads (shown as the A41 and A454 on the adjacent map), and in the north-west around Newhampton Road West. These include terraced housing of a range of sizes, together with some large semi-detached and detached properties. Between these two areas are two unusual streets of villa-type houses (Parkdale East & West) distinctively located either side of a green space.

Later 19th century neighbourhoods also remain (particularly in the far south of the area and north-west of West Park) including terraces and small semi-detached



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housing. The area in general contains a significant proportion of the Black Country's Victorian terraces.

The early 20th century saw significant infill around West Park, and the western edges of the Character Area were also developed: areas of large detached and semi-detached housing which still survive. In the more working class parts there are also high rise flats which had replaced the 19th century terraces by the 1970s: an attempt to change one form of intensive development for another.

Recreational facilities provide both local amenities and attractions to visitors: the Victorian West Park; Wolverhampton Wanderers' 20th century stadium in the east; and the inter-war sports ground at Merridale in the west. The open space represented by the cemetery in the south (also at Merridale) also adds to the area's character.

Educational facilities are also an important part of the area's character, and in addition to several primary and secondary schools, the area also includes, on its eastern edge, part of Wolverhampton University.



The main road out of Wolverhampton to the west, shown here at Chapel Ash, on the eastern edge of the Character Area. These shops are, by period of origin, typical of large parts of the area which retain elements of their Victorian character. They now form part of a Conservation Area.

¹See *Central Smethwick & Cape Hill* Character Area profile.

²As recorded in 2000.

HISTORIC CHARACTER:

Historically this area was made up of field systems and dispersed settlement, including the western open fields of the medieval settlement of Wolverhampton.

The western side of the town was always the most desirable area to live in, for those who could afford it. Not only did the prevailing westerly winds mean the area was relatively free of industrial pollution (which was the case for many English towns), but also this part of the city did not have the coal and iron industries which characterised the eastern side.

Housing began to be built along the main arteries out of the town to the west (the Tettenhall, Compton, Merridale, and Finchfield Roads) from at least the 18th century, forming Wolverhampton's first major suburbs. These routes continued to have importance, especially because, unlike other parts of the Black Country, the area has never contained the routes of canals or railways.

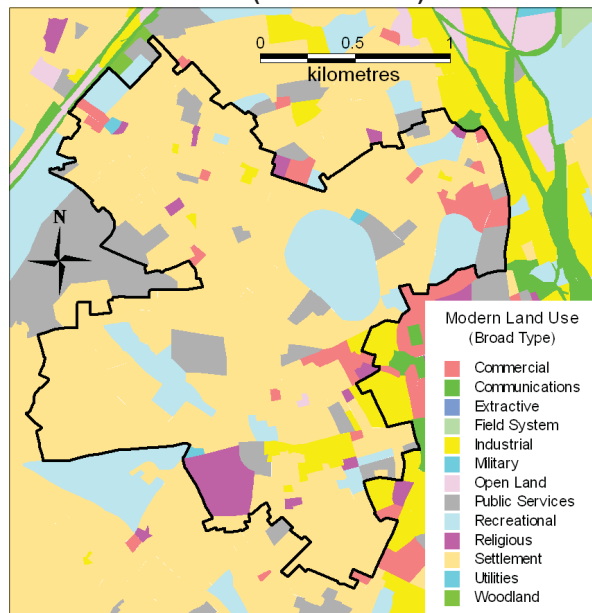
West Park was laid out on the town racecourse (and preserving some of its shape) between these radial roads and was opened in 1881. In the years which followed housing filled in the area around the park, along the lines of the streets and property boundaries which often radiated out from the park and its perimeter road (Park Road).

At the time the Park was opened, substantial areas of field systems still existed within the Character Area, particularly in its south and west. However in the late 19th and early 20th century these were largely given over to housing. Notable areas of remaining open land included Merridale sports fields and neighbouring allotments, and the cemetery nearby. The location of the sports fields and allotments is probably explained by the presence of Graiseley Brook flowing through this part of the area, while the cemetery was laid out before the area was reached by the westward expansion of the town.

For the most part, the neighbourhoods within the area have only experienced one phase of housing. However, in the 20th century the need for land increased, and part of the response included the replacement of the first phase of construction. This is particularly evident on the eastern edge of the area where high rise flats and large retail development replaced earlier terraced streets.

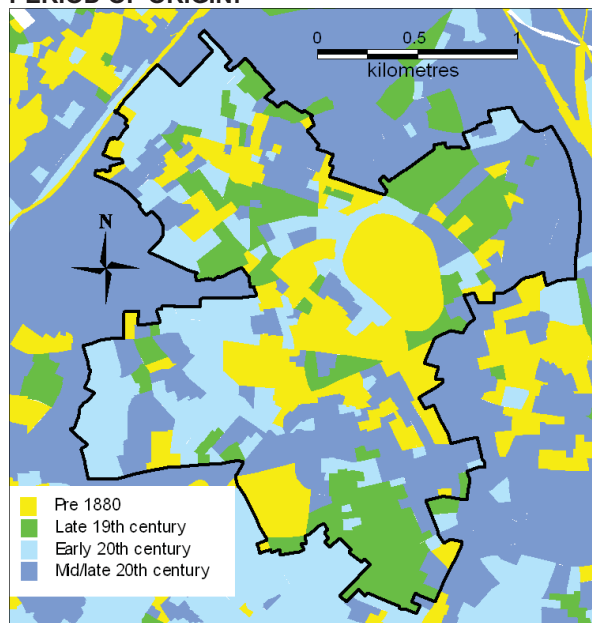
In general, the area has always been agricultural, residential, or recreational. However, there have also

MODERN LAND USE (BROAD TYPE):



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been some industries which have made an impact on the landscape. Brick making was present in the south-west, before this area also became residential, and this legacy survives in local place names (Great Brickkiln Street, for example). Brewing was also an important industry on the area's western side.

Section 6: Conclusions

This report has outlined how the method of Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) has been applied to the area of the Black Country local authorities. The process has resulted in a unique database record of the geography and history of the area: a record which has potential uses in a number of different arenas.

In creating this record, and in using it to re-examine the present and past of the Black Country, we are naturally brought to a position where we can draw conclusions about both the nature of this particular landscape as well as the application of HLC to it. This discussion will be the subject of future reports and we will confine ourselves to a few brief comments here.

The Black Country's reputation is as an industrial area with a history of mining. However, the HLC has shown that the local landscape in the 21st century is in fact primarily suburban —large clusters of 20th

century residential streets and estates organised around (and in some instances dominating the surviving character of) older settlement cores.

Although the area is essentially a *built* landscape (perhaps more so than for any other HLC hitherto carried out in England), there are shown to be more 'green' areas than perhaps many would have expected in an ostensibly urban area. These are in most cases survivors of the rapid suburbanisation of the 20th century, and a reminder of the 19th century and earlier when the exploitation of coal and other minerals was carried out in a largely agricultural context.

The overview made possible by the HLC also serves to emphasise the common history of the area now divided between the four local authorities. Each one contains landscapes with other stories, but all share some part of the legacy of the historic upheaval in the 18th and 19th centuries caused by the scramble to make use of the extraordinary mineral wealth of the area.

Whilst the Black Country HLC will perhaps find its most useful applications within the field of planning policy, it will also be of interest to a wider group of landscape students (in the broadest sense of the word). These will hopefully include ecologists, historians, geographers, archaeologists, geologists, architects, conservation officers, and anyone with an interest in the sensitive regeneration of the social and physical environments.

Finally it is worth emphasising that the Black Country HLC is a public resource, and that it has been assembled from information which is largely in the public domain. Anyone interested in using it should make contact using the details on the back of this report.



Walsall's St Paul's Bus Station was rebuilt at the start of the 21st century and provides public transport links around the region

Appendix 1: Categories of Modern Land Use

Table A2: Commercial

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Commercial core	For town centres - mixed use offices & shops. Refers to historic centres especially. Can include a certain amount of settlement - both historic and more recent.
Other commercial site	For unknown commercial buildings or large restaurants/hotels etc.
Market	For market areas, both indoor and outdoor.
Office	For large office complexes that are identifiable as not being within a mixed use area.
Offices & shops	For mixed use area outside of the town centres.
Public house	For large public houses with car parks. Smaller public houses will be included under a more dominant type e.g. Industrial estate or housing type.
Retail park	For large warehouse type shops selling products such as large furniture, white goods, together with car parks.
Shopping centre	For shopping centres with many small units, usually selling clothing, gifts etc. Mainly out of town.
Shops	Possibly to be used when not part of a housing estate, or where they are large enough to be identifiable.
Superstore	For large single stores - e.g.. supermarkets and their car parks.

Table A3: Extractive

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Colliery	For coal mining areas including those areas which have been affected by the colliery and appear as rough grassland on the maps.
Clay quarry	Where clay is quarried. If associated with a particular brick works put under Broad Type 'Industrial' HLC Type 'Brick Works'
Disused clay quarry	For clay quarries marked as 'old' or 'disused'
Disused fireclay mine	For fireclay mines marked 'Old' or 'Disused'
Disused colliery	On the modern landline mapping - old shafts or disused colliery marked.
Disused limestone quarry	For former quarries marked on modern map, which are not marked as something else e.g.. public park or nature reserve. Confirmed quarries on previous maps.
Disused quarry	For former quarries marked on modern map, which are not marked as something else e.g.. public park or nature reserve. Confirmed quarries on previous maps.
Ironstone mine	For areas of ironstone mining.
Limestone quarry	Where limestone is quarried. If production areas are associated put under Broad Type 'Industrial' HLC Type 'Lime Works'.
Mine	Use for non specific mines
Quarry	For areas of quarrying where what is being extracted is not known.

Table A4: Industrial

Description: (<i>BroadTypeDesc</i>)	Scope: (<i>ScopeNote</i>)
Brewery or cooperage	Use for large brewery sites and/or cooperages.
Brick works	Use for every site where bricks are made; to include clay pits if associated with a brick yard or brick works.
Cement works	Use for all cement working sites; to include the quarry if associated.
Chemical works	For chemical works including soap works.
Clothing factory	For factories where clothes are made, this may include hats. Also use where textiles are being manufactured.
Depot	For sites marked as 'Depot' on the modern landline mapping.
Engineering works	Use for engineering works (including light and electrical engineering sites).
Enamel works	Use for sites specifically termed 'Enamel Works'.
Garage	This definition includes car show rooms as well as for repairs.
Glass works	For all glass working sites including crystal and for eye glasses etc.
Industrial Estate	For sites of small units of light industry. Also use for sites described as 'Business Park' and 'Trading Estate'.
Lock works	Only use for lock making sites, both workshops & factories.
Leather works	For all site of leather working - including shoe factories, saddlery makers and tanneries.
Metal works	For all sites working and producing metal - except specific local industries: lock works and vehicle factory which have their own types.
Scrap yard	Only use for sites stated as 'scrap yard'.
Timber yard/saw mill	For areas where dominant type are timber yards and/or saw mills.
Warehouse	For areas marked as 'Warehouse'
Workshops	For areas of small industrial sites where the industry is unknown.
Works	For large industrial sites where no specific industry indicated. Also use for sites described as 'Factory'.

Note:

Six other categories were included in the original classification of industry but, within which, there were ultimately no occurrences recorded in the modern landscape of the project area. These were: japanning works; lime works; pottery works; rope walk/hemp factory; rubber works; and vehicle factory.

Table A5: Settlement

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Apartments/maisonettes	Not more than three or four storeys, to include maisonettes.
Caravan/mobile home site (permanent)	For mobile homes/park homes/caravans that are permanently sited and lived in.
Cottages	Small buildings - sometimes singular, sometimes in a row. They are smallish buildings of irregular shape.
Country house	For large rural/semi rural sites usually with parkland &/or home farm.
Medieval settlement core	For know settlements of Medieval date - the most likely area of surviving Medieval settlement (e.g.. High Streets, survival of narrow plots etc.)
Farm	Use only for the farm house & farm buildings.
High rise flats	For housing type of four or more storeys.
High rise flats & terraces	For areas of mixed development on the land line mapping.
Squatter settlement	Historically, detached or small rows of houses dispersed between fields or small paddocks with little trackways connecting them, or with paddocks on the collieries - off the main routes. NB. When used for current maps - the paddocks have often been in filled with houses, but still laid out in an irregular way. Some of the older houses have been redeveloped - but the overall layout is still discernable. Often considered to be 'squatter settlement'
Large detached housing	Large houses having a footprint outline of approximately 100sqm. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses. Detached housing dominates.
Mixed large semis and detached housing	Large houses having a footprint of approximately 100sqm. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses.
Large semi detached housing	Large houses having a footprint of approximately 100sqm. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses. Where semi detached houses dominate.
Large terrace housing	Large houses having a footprint of approximately 100sqm. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses. Where terraces dominate.
Large terrace housing (tunnel back)	Large houses having a footprint of approximately 100sqm. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses. (Tunnel back = where has rear extension integral to original house). Where tunnel back terraces dominate.
Medium detached housing	Mediums sized houses having a footprint of approximately 50m to 100sqm. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses. Detached housing dominates.
Mixed medium semis and detached housing	Mediums sized houses having a footprint of approximately 50 to 100sqm. This can only be a rough average across a block.
Medium semi detached housing	Mediums sized houses having a footprint of approximately 50m to 100sqm. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses. Where semi detached houses dominate.
Medium terrace housing	A row of three or more houses of mediums size having a footprint of approximately 50m to 100sqm. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses. Where terraces dominate.

Table A6: Settlement (continued)

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Medium terrace housing (tunnel back)	A row of three or more houses of mediums size having a footprint of approximately 50 to 100sqm. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses. (Tunnel back = where has rear extension integral to original house). Where tunnel back terraces dominate.
Mixed medium semis & terrace housing	Mediums sized houses having a footprint of approximately 50 to 100sqm. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses.
Mixed large detached & terrace housing	Large houses having a footprint outline of approximately 100sqm. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses.
Mixed large terrace housing & industry	Where industry is small workshops. Large houses having a footprint outline of approximately 100sqm. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses.
Mixed large semis & terrace housing	Large houses having a footprint outline of approximately 100sqm. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses.
Mixed medium detached & terrace housing	Mediums sized houses having a footprint of approximately 50m to 100sqm. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses.
Mixed medium terrace housing & industry	Where industry is small workshops. Mediums sized houses having a footprint of approximately 50 to 100sqm. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses.
Mixed small detached & terrace housing	Small sized houses having a footprint of approximately 50sqm or less. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses.
Mixed small terrace housing & industry	Where industry is small workshops. Small sized houses having a footprint of approximately 50sqm or less. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses.
Mixed small semis & terrace housing	Small sized houses having a footprint of approximately 50sqm or less. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses.
Residential housing	To be used for residential homes which can be either for homes for the elderly or for student accommodation.
Small detached housing	Small sized houses having a footprint of approximately 50sqm or less. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses. Detached housing dominates.
Small terrace housing (tunnel back)	A row of three or more houses of small size having a footprint of approximately 50sqm or less. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses. (Tunnel back = where has rear extension integral to original house). Where tunnel back terraces dominate.
Mixed small semis and detached housing	Small sized houses having a footprint of approximately 50sqm or less. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses.
Small semi detached housing	Small sized houses having a footprint of approximately 50sqm or less. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses. Where semi detached houses dominate.
Small terrace housing	A row of three or more houses of small size having a footprint of approximately 50sqm or less. This can only be a rough average across a block of houses. Where terraces dominate.

Table A7: Open Land

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Ancient unenclosed	Ancient heath land/common/moorland from place name evidence/historical
Derelict land	For land that had once had buildings on it or where the map does not indicate what the land use is/was or where aerial photography shows no vegetation.
Marsh	For areas indicated as marsh land - on the modern mapping
Rough grassland/scrub	For land 'rough pasture' shown on modern maps & aerial photography. Rough pasture is largely grassland with some bushes.
Vacant plot	For small plots of land within settlement/industrial areas that are not defined as anything else. Only to be used if cannot fit comfortably into any other HLC type.

Table A8: Field System

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Irregular enclosure	For other fields systems which do not fit the planned or piecemeal enclosures, but does include assarting & enclosure of waste at an unknown period, but probably pre 1750.
Other enclosed fields	For assumed field systems which cannot be identified as anything else - especially where they have been built upon at an early period a possible date for enclosure.
Paddocks & closes	Small fields closely associated with settlement.
Piecemeal enclosure	Field systems with at least two reverse S curves or dog legs and/or ridge & furrow (unless obviously planned enclosure) which indicate enclosed strip fields. This term will also include Staffordshire's term of 'Re-organised piecemeal enclosure'.
Planned enclosure	Fields which are regular with straight boundaries - appearance of being laid out as a piece by a surveyor. On the whole post 1750 (some may be slightly earlier).
Squatter enclosures	Small piecemeal fields associated with squatter settlement often in areas of collieries or former common land.

Table A9: Woodland

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Deciduous woodland	Largely deciduous - may have a few coniferous trees, but not dominant and not plantation.
Mixed woodland	A mix of both deciduous and coniferous trees.
Orchard	For areas marked as orchards on the maps.
Plantation	Planned wood usually of coniferous trees - planted to generate income.

Table A10: Utilities

Description: (<i>BroadTypeDesc</i>)	Scope: (<i>ScopeNote</i>)
Gas works	For areas of gas works
Power station	For power stations - either electrical or gas
Reservoir	Both for water supply & canals.
Sewage works/water works	For areas on the maps described as sewage works, filter beds, water works or pumping stations.
Sub station	For electricity sub stations - but only where they are very large.
Telephone Exchange	For large telephone exchanges.

Table A11: Communications

Description: (<i>BroadTypeDesc</i>)	Scope: (<i>ScopeNote</i>)
Bus/coach Station	For large bus and coach stations.
Canal (Disused)	For the line of former canals.
Car park	For car parks including multi storey car parks, that are not associated with particular buildings/sites.
Canal (Used)	For the lines of canals and branch canals - wharfs and basins will only be recorded if obviously still part of the canal network.
Railway (disused)	For lines of disused canals.
Railway (Used)	For the lines of current railways.
Road roundabout	For very large road roundabouts only
Railway sidings	For areas of large railway sidings.
Service Station	Services associated with motorways and other main trunk roads, usually comprising restaurant and garage - sometimes hotel/motel.

Table A12: Recreational

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Allotments	For larger allotment areas within settlement areas.
Cinema complex	For large cinema complexes and their car parks.
Country Park/nature reserve	For large areas of parkland open to the public which are not formally planned, but naturalistic and usually do not have sports fields. Include nature reserves as country parks are often about nature conservation.
Golf course	For landscaped areas designated as a golf course.
Leisure centre	For sports carried out within a building; to include the area of the car park where applicable.
Castle	Dudley Castle
Open air museum	Usually for museums of buildings - Black Country Museum.
Public open space	For small areas of land accessible to the public - usually landscaped or for a specific purpose e.g.. Memorial park. If accessible, but not landscaped use 'Rough grassland/scrub'.
Private parkland	For parkland associated with country houses.
Public park	For larger areas of land which may include an ornamental lake, flower beds, tennis courts and play areas. Also includes land termed 'Recreation area', but not for those termed country parks which are less formally landscaped
Racecourse	For horse racing that is not confined within a stadium.
Sports ground	Where one or more sports may be played; also includes land defined as 'Playing Field'
Stadium	A stadium where sport is played professionally.
Theatre	For buildings marked as theatres
Zoo	Dudley Zoo.

Table A13: Military

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Territorial Army Centre	For sites of Territorial Army activity

Table A14: Public Services

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Art gallery	For art galleries
Community Centre	For all kinds of gathering places - eg. Meeting hall etc.
Court Building	For Crown Courts and Magistrates Courts
Emergency services building	For police stations, fire station ambulance stations - where free standing and in own grounds.
Higher Education facility	For universities & college campuses - also adult education facilities.
Library	For libraries
Local government/Government offices	For all local government & central government offices including civic centres.
Medical facility	Includes large sites like hospitals down to small sites like health centres.
Museum	For museums
Public building	For non-specific public buildings
School	Use for schools and any associated playing fields.
Town hall	For Town Halls

Table A15: Religious

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Anglican church	For churches of Anglican denomination.
Cemetery	For cemeteries as separate to churchyards which come under the church.
Hindu temple	For Hindu temples - where known
Monastery/ nunnery	Use for monasteries and other similar buildings.
Islamic mosque	For all mosques.
Non conformist church	For churches of non-conformist denomination.
Roman Catholic church	For churches of Roman Catholic denomination
Sikh temple	For Sikh temples - where known.
Jewish synagogue	For Jewish synagogues
Temple	For buildings marked Temple - where the religion is not known.

Appendix 2: Categories of Past Land Use

Table A2: Commercial

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Pre 1881 market	Includes both market halls, market places, cattle markets etc shown on the first edition OS map
Pre 1881 commercial core	For town centres - mixed use offices & shops. Refers to historic centres especially. The buildings in these areas will be of various dates. On the first edition OS map
Pre 1881 shops	For areas away from the main commercial core where shops may have been present. Areas of many public houses and post offices? On the first edition OS Map
Pre 1881 public house	For the major component or very large in a polygon - not for corner Public Houses on the first edition OS map
Pre 1901 public house	For the major component or very large in a polygon - not for corner Public Houses on the second edition OS map
Pre 1911 public house	For the major component or very large in a polygon - not for corner Public Houses on the third edition OS map
Pre 1931 public house	For the major component or very large in a polygon - not for corner Public Houses on the fourth edition OS Map
Pre 1881 plant nursery	For plant nurseries covering large areas on the first edition OS map - for orchards see under woodland
Pre 1901 plant nursery	For plant nurseries covering large areas on the second edition OS map - for orchards see under woodland.
Pre 1911 plant nursery	For plant nurseries covering large areas on the third edition OS map - for orchards see under woodland.
Pre 1931 plant nursery	For plant nurseries covering large areas on the fourth edition OS map - for orchards see under woodland.
Pre 1911 dairy	A dairy marked on the third edition OS map

Table A3: Extractive

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Pre 1881 colliery	For coal mining areas appearing on the first edition OS and associated rough grassland.
Pre 1901 colliery	For coal mining areas first appearing on the second edition OS and associated rough grassland.
Pre 1911 colliery	For coal mining areas first appearing on the third edition OS and associated rough grassland.
Pre 1931 colliery	For coal mining areas first appearing on the third edition OS and associated rough grassland.
Pre 1881 disused colliery	Disused on the first edition OS or marked as 'Old Shafts' and associated rough grassland. Old shafts may refer to quite early bell shafts or very small scale coal mining - these can appear with areas of field systems.
Pre 1901 disused colliery	First shown as disused on the second edition OS and associated rough grassland.
Pre 1911 disused colliery	First shown as disused on the third edition OS and associated rough grassland.
Pre 1931 disused colliery	First shown as disused on the fourth edition OS and associated rough grassland.
Pre 1881 ironstone mine	For areas of ironstone mining appearing on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 ironstone mine	For areas of ironstone mining first appearing on the second edition OS.
Pre 1911 ironstone mine	For areas of ironstone mining first appearing on the third edition OS.
Pre 1881 disused ironstone mine	For ironstone mines marked as 'Old' or 'Disused' on the first edition OS map
Pre 1901 disused ironstone mine	For ironstone mines marked as 'Old' or 'Disused' on the second edition OS map
Pre 1931 disused ironstone mine	For ironstone mines marked as 'Old' or 'Disused' on the fourth edition OS map
Pre 1881 fireclay mine	Use for fireclay mine appearing on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 fireclay mine	Use for fireclay mine appearing on the second edition OS.
Pre 1881 disused fireclay mine	For fireclay mines marked 'Old' or 'Disused' on the first edition OS map
Pre 1901 disused fireclay mine	For fireclay mines marked 'Old' or 'Disused' on the second edition OS map
Pre 1911 disused fireclay mine	For fireclay mines marked 'Old' or 'Disused' on the third edition OS map
Pre 1931 disused fireclay mine	For fireclay mines marked 'Old' or 'Disused' on the fourth edition OS map
Pre 1881 quarry	For areas of quarrying where what is being extracted is not known appearing on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 quarry	For areas of quarrying where what is being extracted is not known first appearing on the second edition OS.
Pre 1911 quarry	For areas of quarrying where what is being extracted is not known first appearing on the third edition OS.
Pre 1931 quarry	For areas of quarrying where what is being extracted is not known first appearing on the fourth edition OS.
Pre 1881 disused quarry	Marked as disused on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 disused quarry	Marked as disused on the second edition OS.
Pre 1911 disused quarry	Marked as disused on the third edition OS.
Pre 1931 disused quarry.	Marked as disused on the fourth edition OS.
Pre 1881 clay quarry	For clay quarries appearing on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 clay quarry	For clay quarries first appearing on the second edition OS.
Pre 1911 clay quarry	For clay quarries first appearing on the third edition OS.
Pre 1931 clay quarry	For clay quarries first appearing on the fourth edition OS.

Table A3: Extractive (continued)

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Pre 1881 disused clay quarry	For clay quarries marked as 'old' or 'disused' on the first edition OS map
Pre 1901 disused clay quarry	For clay quarries marked as 'old' or 'disused' on the second edition OS map
Pre 1911 disused clay quarry	For clay quarries marked as 'old' or 'disused' on the third edition OS map
Pre 1931 disused clay quarry	For clay quarries marked as 'old' or 'disused' on the fourth edition OS map
Pre 1881 limestone quarry/mines	For limestone quarries marked on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 limestone quarry/mines	For limestone quarries first marked on the second edition OS.
Pre 1911 limestone quarry/mines	For limestone quarries first marked on the third edition OS.
Pre 1931 limestone quarry/mines	For limestone quarries first marked on the fourth edition OS.
Pre 1881 disused limestone quarry	Marked as disused on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 disused limestone quarry	Marked as disused on the second edition OS.
Mid 20th century open cast mine	Mainly from aerial photographs (largely around Dudley)
Circa 1800 coal mining	Where it can be identified on earlier mapping (including Yates' and the 2" OS map)
Circa 1800 quarrying	Where it can be identified on earlier mapping (including Yates' and the 2" OS map)

Table A15: Religious

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Pre 1881 cemetery	For cemeteries as separate to churchyards which come under the
Pre1931 Roman Catholic	For Roman Catholic Churches marked on the fourth edition OS map
Pre 1881 Anglican church	For churches of Anglican denomination on the first edition OS map
Pre 1901 Anglican Church	For churches of Anglican denomination on the second edition OS map
Pre 1911 Anglican Church	For churches of Anglican denomination on the third edition OS map
Pre 1881 non conformist church	For churches of non-conformist denomination appearing on the first
Pre 1901 non conformist church	For churches of non-conformist denomination first appearing on the second edition OS map.
Pre 1911 non conformist church	For churches of non-conformist denomination first appearing on the third edition OS map.
Pre 1931 Non conformist Church	For churches of non-conformist denomination appearing on the fourth edition OS map.

Table A4: Industrial

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Pre 1881 metal works	For all sites working and producing metal appearing on the first edition OS - except specific local industries: lock works and vehicle factory which have their
Pre 1901 metal works	For all sites working and producing metal first appearing on the second edition OS- except specific local industries: lock works and vehicle factory which have their own types.
Pre 1911 metal works	For all sites working and producing metal first appearing on the third edition OS - except specific local industries: lock works and vehicle factory which have their own types.
Pre 1931 metal works	For all sites working and producing metal first appearing on the fourth edition OS- except specific local industries: lock works and vehicle factory which have their own types.
Pre 1881 lock works	Only use for lock making sites, both workshops & factories appearing on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 lock works	Only use for lock making sites, both workshops & factories first appearing on the second edition OS.
Pre 1911 lock works	Only use for lock making sites, both workshops & factories first appearing on the third edition OS.
Pre 1931 lock works	Only use for lock making sites, both workshops & factories first appearing on the fourth edition OS.
Pre 1881 vehicle works	Use for all site where vehicles are made both motorised and non. E.g.. Include bicycle factories and coach works appearing on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 vehicle works	Use for all site where vehicles are made both motorised and non. E.g.. Include bicycle factories and coach works first appearing on the second edition OS.
Pre 1911 vehicle works	Use for all site where vehicles are made both motorised and non. E.g.. Include bicycle factories and coach works first appearing on the third edition OS.
Pre 1931 vehicle works	Use for all site where vehicles are made both motorised and non. E.g.. Include bicycle factories and coach works first appearing on the third edition OS.
Pre 1881 engineering works	Use for engineering works (including light and electrical engineering sites) appearing on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 engineering works	Use for engineering works (including light and electrical engineering sites) first appearing on the second edition OS.
Pre 1911 engineering works	Use for engineering works (including light and electrical engineering sites) first appearing on the third edition OS.
Pre 1931 engineering works	Use for engineering works (including light and electrical engineering sites) first appearing on the fourth edition OS.
Pre 1881 japanning works	Only use for sites of japanning (also for sites that are joint japanning and tin ware) appearing on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 japanning works	Only use for sites of japanning (also for sites that are joint japanning and tin ware) first appearing on the second edition OS.

Table A4: Industrial (continued)

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Pre 1911 japanning works	Only use for sites of japanning (also for sites that are joint japanning and tin ware) first appearing on the third edition OS.
Pre 1931 japanning works	Only use for sites of japanning (also for sites that are joint japanning and tin ware) first appearing on the fourth edition OS.
Pre 1881 enamel works	Use for sites specifically termed 'Enamel Works' appearing on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 enamel works	Use for sites specifically termed 'Enamel Works' first appearing on the second edition OS.
Pre 1911 enamel works	Use for sites specifically termed 'Enamel Works' first appearing on the third edition OS.
Pre 1931 enamel works	Use for sites specifically termed 'Enamel Works' first appearing on the fourth edition OS.
Pre 1881 chemical works	For chemical works including soap works appearing on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 chemical works	For chemical works including soap works first appearing on the second edition OS.
Pre 1911 chemical works	For chemical works including soap works first appearing on the third edition OS.
Pre 1931 chemical works	For chemical works including soap works first appearing on the fourth edition OS.
Pre 1881 lime works	For all lime working sites including lime kilns and associated quarries appearing on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 lime works	For all lime working sites including lime kilns and associated quarries first appearing on the second edition OS.
Pre 1911 lime works	For all lime working sites including lime kilns and associated quarries first appearing on the third edition OS.
Pre 1931 lime works	For all lime working sites including lime kilns and associated quarries first appearing on the fourth edition OS.
Pre 1881 disused limeworks	Lime works or lime kilns marked as disused or old on the first edition OS map.
Pre 1881 brick works	Use for every site where bricks are made; to include clay pits if associated with a brick yard or brick works appearing on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 brick works	Use for every site where bricks are made; to include clay pits if associated with a brick yard or brick works first appearing on the second edition OS.
Pre 1911 brick works	Use for every site where bricks are made; to include clay pits if associated with a brick yard or brick works first appearing on the third edition OS.
Pre 1931 brick works	Use for every site where bricks are made; to include clay pits if associated with a brick yard or brick works first appearing on the fourth edition OS.
Pre 1881 disused brick works	A brick works marked as disused on the first edition OS map.
Pre 1881 pottery	Use for every site where pottery is made appearing on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 pottery	Use for every site where pottery is made first appearing on the second edition OS.

Table A4: Industrial (continued)

Description: (<i>BroadTypeDesc</i>)	Scope: (<i>ScopeNote</i>)
Pre 1911 pottery	Use for every site where pottery is made first appearing on the third edition OS
Pre 1931 pottery	Use for every site where pottery is made first appearing on the fourth edition OS.
Pre 1881 cement works/ concrete works	Use for all cement working sites; to include the quarry if associated appearing on the first edition OS
Pre 1901 cement works/ concrete works	Use for all cement working sites; to include the quarry if associated appearing on the second edition OS
Pre 1931 cement works/ concrete works	Use for all cement working sites; to include the quarry if associated first appearing on the fourth edition OS.
Pre 1881 glass works	For all glass working sites including crystal and for eye glasses etc appearing on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 glass works	For all glass working sites including crystal and for eye glasses etc first appearing on the second edition OS.
Pre 1911 glass works	For all glass working sites including crystal and for eye glasses etc first appearing on the third edition OS.
Pre 1931 glass works	For all glass working sites including crystal and for eye glasses etc first appearing on the fourth edition OS.
Pre 1881 brewery/cooperage	Use for large brewery sites and/or cooperages appearing on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 brewery/cooperage	Use for large brewery sites and/or cooperages first appearing on the second edition OS.
Pre 1911 brewery/cooperage	Use for large brewery sites and/or cooperages first appearing on the third edition OS.
Pre 1931 brewery/cooperage	Use for large brewery sites and/or cooperages first appearing on the fourth edition OS.
Pre 1881 rope walk/hemp factory	For rope and hemp making sites appearing on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 rope walk/hemp factory	For rope and hemp making sites first appearing on the second edition OS.
Pre 1911 rope walk/hemp factory	For rope and hemp making sites first appearing on the third edition OS.
Pre 1931 rope walk/hemp factory	For rope and hemp making sites first appearing on the fourth edition OS.
Pre 1881 clothing factory	For factories where clothes are made, this may include hats appearing on the first edition OS. Also use where textiles are being manufactured.
Pre 1901 clothing factory	For factories where clothes are made, this may include hats first appearing on the second edition OS. Also use where textiles are being manufactured.
Pre 1911 clothing factory	For factories where clothes are made, this may include hats first appearing on the third edition OS. Also use where textiles are being manufactured.
Pre 1931 clothing factory	For factories where clothes are made, this may include hats first appearing on the fourth edition OS. Also use where textiles are being manufactured.

Table A4: Industrial (continued)

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Pre 1881 leather works	Includes production of the leather and manufacture of products (include boot & shoe factories) appearing on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 leather works	For all site of leather working - including shoe factories, saddlery makers and tanneries first appearing on the second edition OS.
Pre 1911 leather works	For all site of leather working - including shoe factories, saddlery makers and tanneries first appearing on the third edition OS.
Pre 1931 leather works	For all site of leather working - including shoe factories, saddlery makers and tanneries first appearing on the fourth edition OS.
Pre 1881 timber yard/saw mill	For timber yards/saw mills appearing on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 timber yard/saw mill	For timber yards/saw mills first appearing on the second edition OS.
Pre 1911 timber yard/saw mill	For timber yards/saw mills first appearing on the third edition OS.
Pre 1931 timber yard/saw mill	For timber yards/saw mills first appearing on the fourth edition OS.
Pre 1881 warehouse	For where warehouse(s) are marked on the first edition OS map.
Pre 1911 warehouse	For where warehouse(s) are marked on the third edition OS map.
Pre 1931 warehouse	For where warehouse(s) are marked on the fourth edition OS map.
Pre 1881 works	For large industrial sites where no specific industry indicated appearing on the first edition OS. Also use for sites describe 'Factory'.
Pre 1901 works	For large industrial sites where no specific industry indicated first appearing on the second edition OS. Also use for sites describe 'Factory'.
Pre 1911 works	For large industrial sites where no specific industry indicated first appearing on the third edition OS. Also use for sites describe 'Factory'.
Pre 1931 works	For large industrial sites where no specific industry indicated first appearing on the fourth edition OS. Also use for sites describe 'Factory'.
Pre 1881 workshops	For areas of small industrial sites where the industry is unknown appearing on the first edition OS.
Pre 1901 workshops	For areas of small industrial sites where the industry is unknown first appearing on the second edition OS.
Pre 1911 workshops	For areas of small industrial sites where the industry is unknown first appearing on the third edition OS.
Pre 1931 workshops	For areas of small industrial sites where the industry is unknown first appearing on the fourth edition OS.
Pre 1881 depot	For depots (including tramway depots) which are marked on the first edition OS map
Pre 1931 depot	For depots (including tramway depots) which first appear on the fourth edition OS map
Circa 1750 industry	For sites marked on Yates' which may indicate industrial activity - on this map they are mostly watermills/windmills.
Circa 1800 industry	For sites which may indicate industrial activity on the 2" OS maps of 1814 & 1816 and any pre 1820 parish maps used, or where indicated by SMR records. Large buildings often next to canals.

Table A5: Settlement

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Pre 1881 terrace housing	Where a row of three or more houses appear on the first edition OS map.
Pre 1901 terrace housing	Where a row of three or more houses first appears on the second edition OS
Pre 1911 terrace housing	Where a row of three or more houses first appears on the third edition OS
Pre 1931 terrace housing	Where a row of three or more houses first appears on the fourth edition OS
Pre 1881 terrace housing (tunnel back)	Where a row of tunnel back terraces appear on the first edition OS map.
Pre 1901 terrace housing (tunnel back)	Where a row of tunnel back terraces first appear on the second edition OS map.
Pre 1911 terrace housing (tunnel back)	Where a row of tunnel back terraces first appear on the third edition OS map.
Pre 1881 terrace housing (courtyard)	For areas of courtyard housing.
Pre 1881 terrace housing (back to backs)	For areas of housing where back to backs dominate.
Pre 1881 semi detached housing	For areas of mainly semi detached housing that no longer exists but first appears on the first edition OS map.
Pre 1901 semi detached housing	For areas of mainly semi detached housing that no longer exists but first appears on the second edition OS map.
Pre 1911 semi detached housing	For areas of mainly semi detached housing that no longer exists but first appears on the third edition OS map.
Pre 1931 semi detached housing	For areas of mainly semi detached housing that no longer exists but first appears on the fourth edition OS map.
Pre 1881 detached housing	For areas of mainly detached housing that no longer exists but appears on the first edition OS map.
Pre 1901 detached housing	For areas of mainly detached housing that no longer exists but first appears on the second edition OS map.
Pre 1911 detached housing	For areas of mainly detached housing that no longer exists but first appears on the third edition OS map.
Pre 1931 detached housing	For areas of mainly detached housing that no longer exists but first appears on the fourth edition OS map.
Pre 1881 mixed semi & detached housing	Where an area of mixed semi detached and detached houses that appear on the first edition OS map.
Pre 1901 mixed semi & detached housing	Where an area of mixed semi detached and detached houses first appear on the second edition OS map
Pre 1911 mixed semi & detached housing	For areas of semis and detached houses that no longer exist and first appear on the third edition OS map.
Pre 1931 mixed semi & detached housing	For areas of semis and detached houses that no longer exist and first appear on the fourth edition OS map.

Table A5: Settlement (continued)

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Pre 1881 farm	Farms appearing on the first edition.
Pre 1901 farm	For farms that first appear on the second edition OS map.
Pre 1881 squatter settlement	Squatter settlement that is depicted on the first edition, but where no settlement is marked on either Yates' 1775 map or on the 1816 OS map.
Pre 1901 squatter settlement	Squatter settlement that is depicted on the first edition.
Pre 1881 country house	For large rural/semi rural sites usually with parkland &/or home farm.
Pre 1881 cottages (singular)	For cottages that are detached from one another. Cottage to be defined as not a regular row of buildings, must appear on first edition at very least.
Pre 1881 cottages (terrace)	For cottages that are in a row of three or more buildings. Cottage to be defined as not a regular row of buildings, must appear on first edition at very least.
Medieval dispersed settlement	Where moats and other Medieval buildings are indicated on either the mapping or on the SMR
Circa 1750 dispersed settlement	Where small settlements are depicted as present on at least the Yates' map and where indicated as of this age on the SMR.
Circa 1800 dispersed settlement	For quick checks against the 1817 2" OS map for built up areas shown on it. Only applies to the Previous Type to show where dispersed settlement occurs.
Medieval settlement core	For known settlements of Medieval date - the most likely area of surviving Medieval settlement (e.g.. High Streets, survival of narrow plots etc.)
Circa 1750 settlement core	For areas of settlement that may not have existed in the Medieval period.
Circa 1800 settlement core	For areas of settlement that have probably expanded since 1750 (for quick checks against Yates and the 1816 OS map.
Circa 1750 squatter settlement	Historically, detached or small rows of houses dispersed between fields or small paddocks with little trackways connecting them or with paddocks on the collieries - off the main routes. That is known historically &/or depicted on C18 county maps.
Circa 1800 squatter settlement	For squatter settlement shown on the first edition OS map, but where no settlement marked on the C18 OS map.

Table A13: Military

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Pre 1931 military airfield	For areas known to be military airfields - 4th edition mapping will probably be missing for these areas.
Pre 1881 rifle range	A rifle range and targets marked on the first edition OS map.

Table A7: Open Land

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Pre 1881 marsh	Marked as 'marsh' on the first edition OS - following Oliver, R (1993) Ordnance Survey Maps: a concise guide for historians. P.162
Pre 1901 marsh	Marked as 'marsh' for the first time on the second edition OS - following Oliver, R (1993) Ordnance Survey Maps: a concise guide for historians. P.162
Pre 1911 marsh	Marked as 'marsh' for the first time on the third edition OS - following Oliver, R (1993) Ordnance Survey Maps: a concise guide for historians. P.162
Pre 1881 rough grassland/scrub	For rough pasture shown on the first edition OS map - following Oliver, R (1993) Ordnance Survey Maps: a concise guide for historians. P.162. Where collieries are active below the surface or heathland?
Pre 1901 rough grassland/scrub	For rough pasture shown on the second edition OS map - following Oliver, R (1993) Ordnance Survey Maps: a concise guide for historians. P.162 Where collieries are active below the surface or heathland?
Pre 1911 rough grassland/scrub	For rough pasture shown on the third edition OS map - following Oliver, R (1993) Ordnance Survey Maps: a concise guide for historians. P.162 Where collieries are active below the surface or heathland?
Pre 1931 rough grassland/scrub	Taken to be rough pasture shown on the third edition OS map - following Oliver, R (1993) Ordnance Survey Maps: a concise guide for historians. P.162 Where collieries are active below the surface or heathland?
Pre 1881 derelict land	For land that was once building land or where the map does not indicate what the land use is/was on first edition OS map.
Pre 1901 derelict land	For land that was once building land or where the map does not indicate what the land use is/was on second edition OS map.
Pre 1911 derelict land	For land that was once building land or where the map does not indicate what the land use is/was on third edition OS map.
Pre 1931 derelict land	For land that was once building land or where the map does not indicate what the land use is/was on fourth edition OS map.
Pre 1881 vacant plot	For small plots of land within settlement/industrial areas that are not defined as anything else on first edition OS map. Only to be used if cannot fit comfortably into any other HLC type.
Pre 1901 vacant plot	For small plots of land within settlement/industrial areas that are not defined as anything else on second edition OS map. Only to be used if cannot fit comfortably into any other HLC type.
Pre 1911 vacant plot	For small plots of land within settlement/industrial areas that are not defined as anything else on third edition OS map. Only to be used if cannot fit comfortably into any other HLC type.
Pre 1931 vacant plot	For small plots of land within settlement/industrial areas that are not defined as anything else on fourth edition OS map. Only to be used if cannot fit comfortably into any other HLC type.
Ancient unenclosed pasture	Ancient heathland/common/moorland from place name evidence/historical reference & historic maps.
Pre 1881 osier bed	Where marked on the first edition OS map.

Table A8: Field System

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Circa 1800 planned enclosure	Use for previous types only. Fields which are regular with straight boundaries - appearance of being laid out as a piece by a surveyor. On the whole post 1750 (some may be slightly earlier).
Pre 1901 planned enclosure	Planned enclosure of regular fields with straight boundaries first depicted on the second edition OS.
Pre 1750 piecemeal enclosure	Use for previous types only. Field systems with at least two reverse S curves or dog legs and/or ridge & furrow (unless obviously planned enclosure) which indicate enclosed strip fields.
Pre 1750 irregular enclosure	Use for previous types only. For other fields systems which do not fit the planned or piecemeal enclosures, but does include assarting & enclosure of waste at an unknown period, but probably pre 1750.
Other enclosed fields	For assumed field systems which cannot be identified as anything else - especially where they have been built upon at an early period a possible
Medieval strip fields	Used as a previous type only - evidence that the fields were cultivated in the Medieval period; at least two reverse S curves or dog legs and/or ridge and
Pre 1881 paddocks & closes	For previous types only. Small fields closely associated with settlement; use for squatter enclosure where there are no buildings present and for areas of uncertainty (e.g.. where not confident that the term 'allotments' fits.
Pre 1901 paddocks & closes	Small fields closely associated with settlement; use for squatter enclosure where there are no buildings present and for areas of uncertainty (e.g.. where not confident that the term 'allotments' fits.
Circa 1750 paddocks & closes	Paddocks and closes known from the pre 1750 period.
Circa 1800 paddocks & closes	For previous types only. Small fields closely associated with settlement; use for squatter enclosure where there are no buildings present and for areas of uncertainty (e.g.. where not confident that the term 'allotments' fits.
Pre 1881 allotment gardens	For areas of very small regular fields (usually orchard trees are indicated) that lie on the edge of settlements on the first edition OS map as market
Circa 1750 allotment gardens	For areas of very small regular fields (usually orchard trees are indicated) that lie on the edge of settlements in the pre 1750 period as market gardens. Areas of allotment gardens which may have been farmed
Circa 1800 allotment gardens	For areas of very small regular fields (usually orchard trees are indicated) that lie on the edge of settlements in the pre 1750 period as market gardens. Areas of allotment gardens which may have been farmed
Circa 1750 squatter enclosures	For such enclosures marked on earlier historic maps - to be specified/ justified in text fields
Circa 1800 squatter enclosures	For such enclosures marked on earlier historic maps - to be specified/ justified in text fields
Pre 1881 squatter enclosures	Squatter enclosure identified with squatter cottages on the first edition OS Map

Table A9: Woodland

Description: (<i>BroadTypeDesc</i>)	Scope: (<i>ScopeNote</i>)
Pre 1881 deciduous woodland	Deciduous woodland that is shown on the first edition OS map.
Pre 1901 deciduous woodland	Deciduous woodland that first appears on the second editions OS.
Pre 1931 deciduous woodland	Deciduous woodland that first appears on the fourth editions OS.
Pre 1881 plantation	Of deliberately planted woodland - mainly coniferous shown on the first edition OS map
Pre 1881 mixed woodland	Mixed woodland depicted on the first edition OS map.
Pre 1911 mixed woodland	Mixed woodland depicted on the third edition OS map.
Pre 1931 mixed woodland	Mixed woodland depicted on the fourth edition OS map.
Pre 1881 orchard	For areas marked as orchards on the maps on the first edition OS map.
Pre 1901 orchard	For areas marked as orchards on the maps on the 2nd edition OS map.
Pre 1911 orchard	For areas marked as orchards on the maps on the third edition OS map.
Ancient woodland	Areas of known ancient woodland - often survives only as a place name and where documentary evidence suggest woodland in the Medieval or earlier periods.
Circa 1750 woodland	For woodland marked on Yates' map - to be used as previous type only.
Circa 1800 woodland	For woodland marked on the 1816 OS draft maps or other early map which will be specified in the description fields of relevant records - to be used as a previous type only.

Table A10: Utilities

Description: (<i>BroadTypeDesc</i>)	Scope: (<i>ScopeNote</i>)
Pre 1881 reservoir	Both for water supply & canals shown on the first edition OS map
Pre 1881 disused reservoir	For areas marked as disused reservoir or dry reservoir on the first edition OS map
Circa 1750 reservoir/mill pond	Reservoirs or mill ponds marked on Yates' map
Pre 1881 sewage/water works	For areas on the maps described as sewage works or filter beds.
Pre 1901 sewage/water works	For areas on the maps described as sewage works or filter beds.
Pre 1911 sewage/water works	For areas on the maps described as sewage works or filter beds.
Pre 1931 sewage/water works	For areas on the maps described as sewage works or filter beds and other water treatment plants.
Pre 1881 gas works	For areas of gas works shown on the first edition OS map
Pre 1901 power station	For power stations - either electrical or gas - first shown on the second edition OS map
Pre 1931 power station	For power stations - either electrical or gas - first shown on the fourth edition OS map

Table A11: Communications

Description: (<i>BroadTypeDesc</i>)	Scope: (<i>ScopeNote</i>)
Pre 1881 canal	A canal that is no longer visible on the ground.
Pre 1881 railway	For railways that are only marked on the historic maps - but are no longer obvious on the modern mapping.
Pre 1901 railway	
Pre 1911 railway	
Pre 1881 railway sidings	For areas of large railway sidings.
Pre 1901 railway sidings.	
Pre 1911 railway sidings.	
Pre 1931 railway sidings	
Pre 1931 car park	

Table A12: Recreational

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Pre 1881 allotments	For larger allotment areas marked on the first edition OS Map
Pre 1901 allotments	For larger allotment areas marked on the second edition OS map
Pre 1911 allotments	For larger allotment areas marked on the third edition OS Map
Pre 1931 allotments	For larger allotment areas marked on the fourth edition OS map
Pre 1911 golf course	For areas marked as a golf course on the third edition OS map
Pre 1931 golf course	For areas marked as a golf course on the fourth edition OS map
Pre 1881 private parkland	For parkland associated with country houses on the first edition OS map
Pre 1901 private parkland	For parkland associated with country houses on the second edition OS map
Circa 1750 private parkland	Parkland indicated on Yates' map of 1775
Circa 1800 private parkland.	Parkland indicated on the 2" OS maps and any other early map as indicated in the description fields for relevant records
Pre 1881 public park	For larger areas of land which may include an ornamental lake, flower beds, tennis courts and play areas. Also includes land termed 'Recreation area'
Pre 1901 public park	For larger areas of land which may include an ornamental lake, flower beds, tennis courts and play areas. Also includes land termed 'Recreation area'
Pre 1911 public park	For larger areas of land which may include an ornamental lake, flower beds, tennis courts and play areas. Also includes land termed 'Recreation area'
Pre 1931 public park	For larger areas of land which may include an ornamental lake, flower beds, tennis courts and play areas. Also includes land termed 'Recreation area'
Pre 1881 race course	For racecourses marked on the first edition OS map
Pre 1901 racecourse	For racecourses marked on the second edition OS map
Pre 1881 sports ground	Where one or more sports may be played for eg. tennis courts, bowling green; also includes land defined as 'Playing Field'
Pre 1901 sports ground	Where one or more sports may be played for eg. tennis courts, bowling green; also includes land defined as 'Playing Field'
Pre 1911 sports ground	Where one or more sports may be played for eg. tennis courts, bowling green; also includes land defined as 'Playing Field'
Pre 1931 sports ground	Where one or more sports may be played for eg. tennis courts, bowling green; also includes land defined as 'Playing Field'
Pre 1911 cinema	For cinemas appearing on the third edition OS map.
Pre 1931 cinema	For cinemas first appearing on the fourth edition OS map.
Pre 1881 theatre	For theatre's on the first edition OS map.
Pre 1901 theatre	For theatre's on the second edition OS map.
Medieval deer park	For land used historically as deer park - from SMR entries

Table A14: Public Services

Description: (BroadTypeDesc)	Scope: (ScopeNote)
Pre 1881 school	Use for schools and any associated playing fields on the first edition OS map
Pre 1901 school	Use for schools and any associated playing fields on the second edition OS
Pre 1911 school	Use for schools and any associated playing fields on the third edition OS map
Pre 1931 school	Use for schools and any associated playing fields on the fourth edition OS map
Pre 1901 High Education Facility	For universities & college campuses - also adult education facilities - on the second edition OS map
Pre 1911 Higher Education Facility	For universities & college campuses - also adult education facilities - on the third edition OS map
Pre 1881 hospital	For buildings marked 'hospital' on the first edition OS map
Pre 1901 hospital	For buildings marked 'hospital' on the second edition OS map
Pre 1911 hospital	For buildings marked 'hospital' on the third edition OS map
Pre 1931 medical facility	A medical facility includes hospitals, clinics, medical centres etc on the fourth edition OS map
Pre 1881 town hall	For Town Halls marked on the first edition OS map
Pre 1881 public building	For non-specific public buildings on the first edition OS map
Pre 1911 public building	For non-specific public buildings on the third edition OS map
Pre 1881 emergency services building	For police stations, fire station ambulance stations - where free standing and in own grounds on the first edition OS map.
Pre 1901 emergency services building	For police stations, fire station ambulance stations - where free standing and in own grounds - on the second edition OS map
Pre 1911 emergency services building	For police stations, fire station ambulance stations - where free standing and in own grounds - on the third edition OS map
Pre 1931 emergency services building	For police stations, fire station ambulance stations - where free standing and in own grounds - on the fourth edition OS map.
Pre 1881 workhouse/ almshouses	For buildings marked on the historic OS maps as 'Workhouse'
Pre 1901 workhouse/ almshouses	For buildings marked on the historic OS maps as 'Workhouse'
Pre 1911 workhouse/ almshouses	For buildings marked on the historic OS maps as 'Workhouse'
Pre 1881 community hall	For all kinds of gathering places - e.g. Meeting hall etc. marked on the first edition OS map.
Pre 1911 community hall	For all kinds of gathering places - e.g. Meeting hall etc. marked on the third edition OS map.
Pre 1931 community hall	For all kinds of gathering places - e.g. Meeting hall etc. first appearing on the fourth edition OS map.
Pre 1881 library	For libraries marked on the first edition OS map
Pre 1881 court building	For courts appearing on the first edition OS map.

Appendix 3: Attributes

Table A16: Attributes - All

Attribute	Value	Scope
Council	Dudley	
	Sandwell	
	Walsall	
	Wolverhampton	

Table A17: Attributes - Field System or Recreational

Attribute	Value	Scope
Field System type	No evidence	Where there is no evidence of previous field types.
	Other evidence	For other evidence - detailed within the Previous Types.
	Ridge & furrow	Where ridge and furrow is visible on aerial photographs.

Table A18: Attributes - Religious Only

Attribute	Value	Scope
Ancillary religious bldgs	Cemetery lodge	Where the polygon includes a cemetery lodge
	Crematorium	Where the polygon includes a crematorium
	Meeting hall	Where the polygon includes a meeting hall
	Mortuary chapel	Where the polygon includes one or more mortuary chapels
	None present	Where no other buildings are present within the polygon other than that described as the HLC type.
	Religious leader's house	Where the polygon includes a vicarage, presbytery etc.
	Sunday School	Where the polygon includes a Sunday school

Table A19: Attributes - Utilities Only

Attribute	Value	Scope
Reservoir type	Covered	For reservoir
	Not applicable	For areas that aren't marked as reservoirs.
	Open	For Reservoir

Table A20: Attributes - Recreational Only

Attribute	Value	Scope
Sports ground type	Bowling green	Sports grounds where bowling greens are marked or where goals are shown on aerial photography
	Cricket pitches	Sports grounds where cricket pitches are marked or where goals are shown on aerial photography
	Football pitch	Sports grounds where football/rugby pitches are marked or where goals are shown on aerial photography
	Football Stadium	For stadiums where football is played professionally.
	Greyhound racing	For stadiums where greyhound racing takes place.
	Horse racing	For stadiums where horse racing or other racing involving horses takes place e.g.. trotting races.
	Mixed sporting activities	To indicate many sporting activities, or where there are more than four sports being carried out on a Sports Ground.
	None	Not to be used with HLC types 'Sports Ground' or 'Stadium'.
	Not applicable	For sites where no sites are applicable e.g. private parkland.
	Not specified	For sports grounds where the sporting activity is not stated on the map or obvious from aerial photography.
	Other	For other sports.
	Play ground	For areas marked as play grounds.
	Play ground	For areas of housing containing play grounds.
	Running track	For running tracks.
Water body type	Swimming	For swimming baths
	Tennis court	To be used on sport grounds and public parks where tennis courts are marked.
	Natural lake	Where not deliberately created for a landscaped area, but will include area that are flooded quarries etc.
	Natural watercourse	Used for natural occurring rivers and streams
	None	Where no water exists.
	Not applicable	sites like bowling greens when it is not applicable.
	Ornamental canal	To be used in areas of parkland - not for transportation canals.
	Ornamental lake	Where part of a landscaped area e.g. In a public or private park
	Other	water bodies not otherwise covered
	Paddling pool	For children's paddling areas
	Pond	Small area of water, which may be natural or created.

Table A21: Attributes - Settlement Only

Attribute	Value	Scope
Components of housing areas	Community centre	Use for community use halls in settlement areas
	None	Where no amenities are present or known.
	Not applicable	Where components aren't applicable e.g.. where the settlement HLC type is farm or country house.
	Public house	Where areas of settlement include public houses.
	School	Where are covered by school is too small for an individual polygon.
	Shops	Where areas of settlement include shops
	Surgey	For doctor's or dentist's surgeries within housing areas.
Front of housing	Communal front area	Where properties are in a courtyard or cul de sac and share front area (usually paved as a parking area).
	Front garden	Each property has land at the front of it, this includes drives to garages. To indicate presence/absence. If absence use 'No front garden'
	No front garden	Where houses open straight onto the road with no front garden (particularly terraces).
	Not applicable	Where housing is flats, apartments or large detached properties.
	Various	For large areas of housing estates where the property size and plot are similar but there is a variety of housing types and layout.
	Communal rear land	For the rear of properties, notably terraces, which were historically not divided into individual gardens or yards.
	Extensive gardens	Very large gardens either to the rear of surrounding large detached houses.
	Large garden	Where garden is double the length or greater than the house.
	Medium garden	Where a garden is not quite double the length of the house but is bigger than the house plot.
	Mixed large and medium gardens	A mixture of large and medium sized gardens across an area.
	Mixed small and medium garden	Over a large estate with houses sited on different parts of a plot which may create a variety small or medium rear gardens.
	Mixed yard & communal area	Where a small area is marked as belonging to a terrace house but the remainder of the land is not divided.
	Mixed yard & garden	Where a yard and a garden are marked as separate from one another to the rear of terraces.

Table A22: Attributes - Settlement Only (Continued)

Attribute	Value	Scope
Rear of housing	Not applicable	For types of housing where there is no rear land e.g.. for high rise flats or apartments.
	Rear yard with no outbuildings	Especially for areas of terrace housing.
	Rear yard with outbuilding/ extension	Use for terraces where the majority have large outbuildings or rear extension.
	Small garden	Where garden is only as big as the house itself, or just slightly larger.
Size of housing plots	Extensive sized house plots	Being very approximately greater than 1,000m squared. Can only be a very approximate guide across an area of houses.
	Large sized house plots	Being very approximately 500m to 1,000 squared. Can only be a very approximate guide across an area of houses. To be taken from front of property to rear and the width, where no front given taken from front of house.
	Medium sized house plots	Being very approximately 250m to 500m squared. Can only be a very approximate guide across an area of houses. To be taken from front of property to rear and the width, where no front given taken from front of house.
	Not applicable	For example - apartments, high rise flats.
	Small sized house plots	Being very approximately less than 250m squared. Can only be a very approximate guide across an area of houses.
	Various	For areas of irregular housing - which by its nature takes a variety of properties of differing sizes and plots, as well as age.

Table A23: Attributes - Settlement Only (Continued)

Attribute	Value	Scope
Street pattern type	Cul de sac - contemporary with houses	A street pattern mainly made up of cul de sacs - usually with one main road with the pattern of cul de sacs off it, but not exclusively.
	Geometrical pattern - contemporary with houses	Streets laid out with circles, crescents etc. Particularly a form associated with early Council Estates.
	Irregular pattern	For a street pattern that is not made up of straight roads (usually associated with terraced housing), but is also not cul de sac or geometrical. Also use for buildings (such as high rise flats) which are not on roads.
	Isolated housing	Use for housing surrounded by farmland or industry. If within an area of housing use 'irregular pattern'. Use for one or several houses (e.g.. Farms or for cottages away from any settlement area.
	Multi headed cul de sacs contemporary with houses	For housing estates with made up of many cul de sacs
	Not applicable	Should never need to be used.
	Regular/straight pattern contemporary with houses	For a street pattern of straight roads - usually associated with terrace housing (though not exclusively) that was laid out at the same time as the houses
	Regular/straight pattern pre dates houses	For a street pattern of straight roads - usually associated with terrace housing (though not exclusively) that pre dates the houses
	Single road (main or minor) post dates 1750	Single road which appears on Yates' map
	Single road (main or minor) pre dates 1750	Single road which appears on the 2" OS map
Type of housing estate	Single road (main or minor) pre dates 1881	Single road which appears on the first edition OS map
	Single road contemporary with houses	Single road laid out at the same time as the housing along it.
	Council built	Where known
	Not applicable	E.g. for Farms or Country houses
	Not on an estate	Particularly for areas of mixed settlement or terraces
	Private built	Where known
	Unknown type of housing estate	Where obviously an estate, but pending information as to whether it is council built.

Appendix 5: Project Design

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SUMMARY

The Black Country Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation is one of the first of a new generation of landscape characterisation studies. Previous studies have generally concentrated on rural areas, while the Black Country study focuses on a heavily developed metropolitan area. Additionally it is perhaps the first study to concentrate on an area of dispersed settlement without a major settlement focus. Whereas other metropolitan studies such as Merseyside have looked at areas dominated by a single large settlement the Black Country has no such overriding focus. Its general character is of a large number of small industrial towns and villages which have in many cases coalesced to form a large urban conurbation. Wolverhampton is the largest of the settlements, a status recognised in 2000 by the granting of city status, but it has never dominated and Dudley, Walsall and West Bromwich all act as local centres for their areas. For wider services the area tends to look to Birmingham, for whom it has also traditionally acted as a supplier of raw materials.

The project is also the first to use the HLC module developed by Exegesis as part of their HBSMR package. The package is sufficiently flexible to allow for a large measure of personal design but does away with the need to design a new database for each new project. It is also fully integrated into the Sites and Monuments Record from the outset.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Current initiatives for regeneration mean that much of the Black Country will be undergoing a period of rapid change over the next decade. It is important that schemes for development and regeneration give due weight to the protection and enhancement of the historic environment, indeed that the historic environment is seen as a force for regeneration.

1.2 Characterisation and the need for spatial strategies are increasingly being recognised as the key to the protection of the Historic Environment. Both English Heritage (English Heritage 2000, 36) and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS 2001, 31) endorse Character Assessment as a tool for managing the historic environment, and the Planning Officers Society highlights Characterisation as an essential feature of Quality Outcomes in its Measurement of Performance (Planning Officers Society 2003).

1.3 The Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) for the West Midlands, published June 2004, includes a policy endorsing HLC (see 2.5.3 below).

1.4 As a result of the Secretary of State's response to the draft RPG a sub-regional study of the Black Country is being undertaken in order to inform the development of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

1.5 Over the last decade or so English Heritage has been supporting three types of characterisation survey: Historic Landscape Characterisation (largely for rural areas), Extensive Urban Survey (for smaller towns) and Urban Archaeological Databases (for major historic towns with a great wealth of archaeological deposits).

1.6 The large metropolitan areas have, however, hitherto been little studied, partly because their more recent historic character was not seen to be of such importance and partly because of the perceived difficulties in studying such widespread urban areas.

1.7 Recently, however, English Heritage has signified their interest in undertaking surveys of these metropolitan areas and a project for Merseyside began in 2003. The Black Country project commenced in April 2004 following approval of the Project Outline (Black Country Archaeological Service 2004). The Project Outline included a commitment to produce a full Project Design within the first six months of the project.

2. THE BLACK COUNTRY

2.1 Project Area

2.1.1 The area to be studied comprises around 35,600ha. It is split into four unitary authorities: Dudley (9,850ha), Sandwell (8,600ha), Walsall (10,600ha) and Wolverhampton (6,900ha) (Figure 1). The total population of the Black Country is around 1,100,900 (Dudley 305,000; Sandwell 291,100; Walsall 262,600; Wolverhampton 242,200).

2.1.2 Before the Local Government re-organisation of 1974 the Black Country was largely split between two counties: Staffordshire and Worcestershire. Between 1974 and 1986 it formed part of the short-lived West Midlands County, with the four unitary authorities being created in 1986 as Metropolitan Boroughs. Wolverhampton was granted city status in 2000.

2.1.3 The Black Country Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) is the primary record for Walsall and Wolverhampton. Dudley and Sandwell maintain their own SMRs. All of the SMRs within the Black Country use the HBSMR system developed by Exegesis, which ensures a measure of compatibility. Whereas, however, the Black Country and Sandwell SMRs use the MapInfo mapping module supplied with the HBSMR system, Dudley uses Axis GIS, this being their council standard.

2.2 Black Country Landscape & Character

2.2.1 The Black Country is crossed from NW to SE by the Sedgley – Rowley Ridge, whose peaks include Dudley Castle Hill, Sedgley Beacon and Wren's Nest Hill (Fig 2). The highest point, Turner's Hill, lies to the south east at Rowley Regis at a height of 271m. This ridge is dominated by Wenlock Limestone. Other high points within the Black Country lie to the NE around Barr Beacon.

2.2.2 The geology of the area is largely composed of carboniferous rocks of upper and middle coal measures through which older rocks appear at intervals. The worked coal field lay between Bloxwich in the north to Halesowen in the south and Kingswinford in the west to West Bromwich in the east. Most of the coalfields rest on a bed of fireclay with seams containing ironstone.

2.2.3 It is the geology of the area which contributed to the industrial growth from the 18th century onwards, which in turn precipitated the urban growth throughout

the 19th and 20th centuries. The main Black Country industries were metal working and coal mining, with a leather industry based in Walsall.

2.2.4 Prior to the 18th century the Black Country was largely an area of woodland and heath. The settlement pattern was largely dispersed although three market towns, Wolverhampton, Walsall and Dudley, date back to the medieval period. Prehistoric and Roman sites are also found within the Region.

2.3 Previous landscape work

2.3.1 The last, and perhaps only, overall scientific study of the historic character of the Black Country dates back to 1950 when it was included in the British Association for the Advancement of Science's study of Birmingham and its Region. (Kinvig et al 1950 Birmingham and its Regional Setting).

2.3.2 A characterisation study of Dudley borough was undertaken in 2000 (Dudley MBC Dudley Borough Landscape and Townscape Character Study, Redraft 11/1/00). Dudley borough was divided into eight broad character areas, each comprising a bundle of Character types. In addition they are

currently creating a series of maps reconstructing the topography of the borough at different periods.

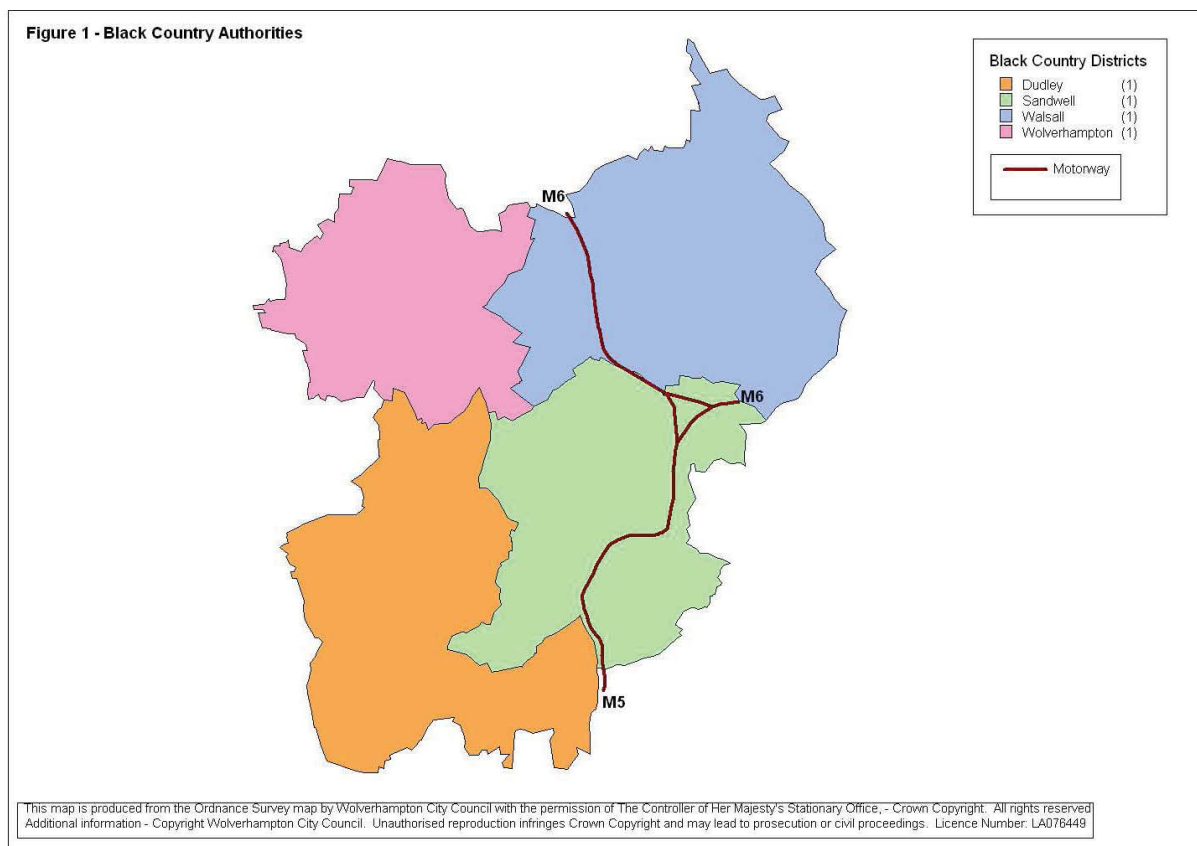
2.3.3 Sandwell MBC has also recently commissioned a number of detailed landscape character assessments and is completing a detailed characterisation of the Sandwell HMRA area.

2.4 The HLC programme

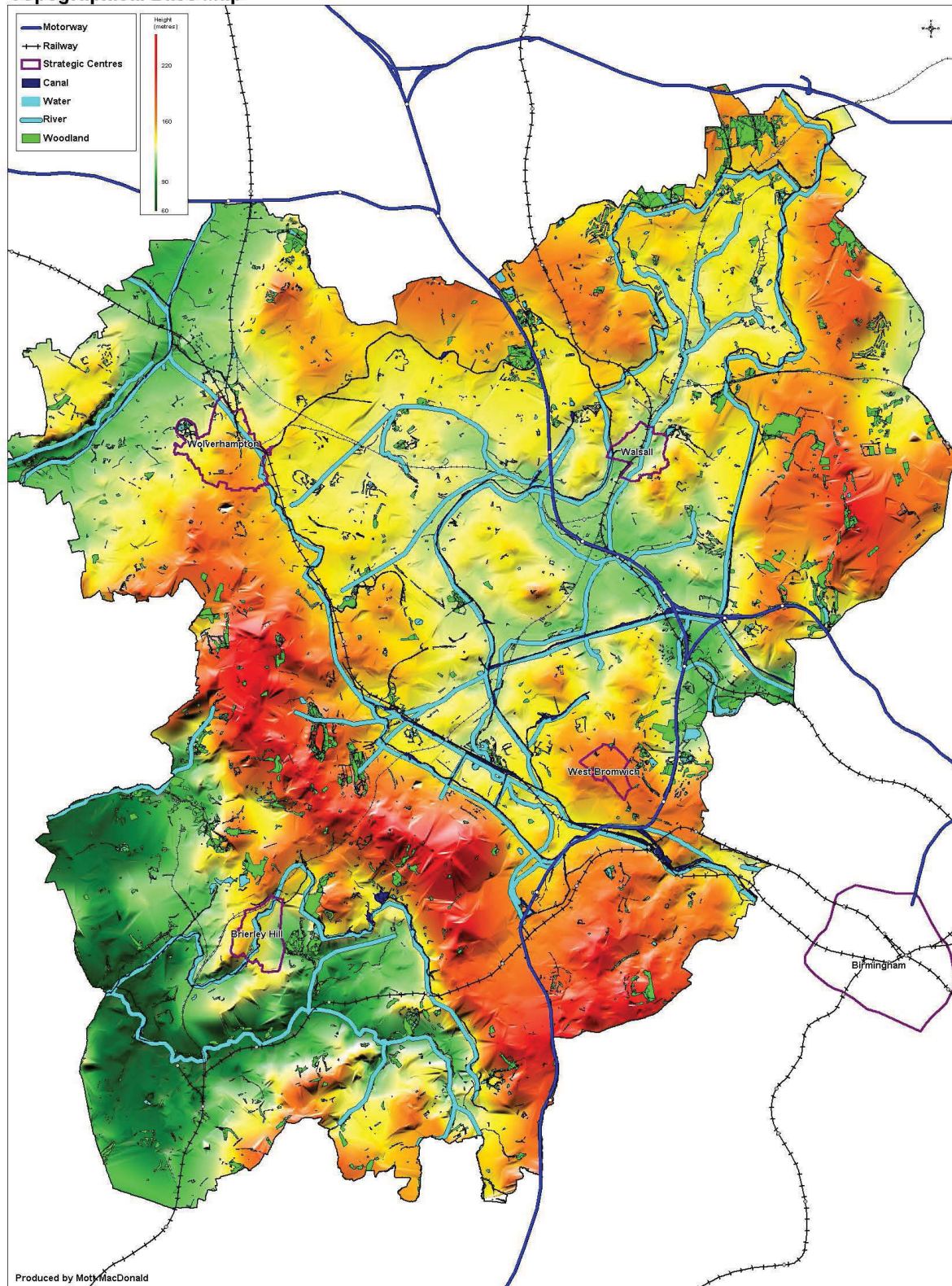
2.4.1 The Historic Landscape Characterisation programme was first developed about ten years ago, with Cornwall undertaking the first project. Currently over half of England has been covered by the HLC project. The Black Country HLC is the second project to be commenced for a metropolitan area.

2.4.2 The philosophy behind HLC is to record the present landscape and its time depth. Its aim is to manage change rather than enforce blanket preservation (Clark et al 2004, 6).

2.4.3 The methodology has become increasingly standardised but the HLC types are defined by the individual projects to reflect the distinctive nature of their own area (Clark et al 2004, 5).



Topographical Base Map



2.5 The Black Country HLC Project

2.5.1 Current initiatives for regeneration mean that much of the Black Country will be undergoing a period of rapid change over the next decade. It is important that schemes for development and regeneration give due weight to the protection and enhancement of the historic environment, indeed that the historic environment is seen as a force for regeneration.

2.5.2 The regeneration of metropolitan areas with a large number of brownfield sites is a particular current priority for the West Midlands. The Regional Planning Guidance for the area, published June 2004, envisages an urban renaissance with the creation of 'a variety of high quality, healthy, affordable and sustainable working and living environments' a particular priority (GOWM 2004 4.3a).

2.5.3 It is increasingly recognised that the retention of local character and distinctiveness is an essential part of this regeneration process. Regional Planning Guidance Policy QE1iv states that 'local authorities and other agencies in their plans, policies and proposals should...protect and enhance the distinctive character of different parts of the Region (GOWM 2004).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Overall aim

3.1.1 The overall aim of the project is to undertake a broad brush characterisation of the landscape of the Black Country using GIS and a linked database which can be interrogated on a wide variety of data, and to encourage the management of this landscape through the planning process.

3.1.2 A master copy of the full project will be retained within the Black Country Sites and Monuments Record. The Dudley and Sandwell Council Sites and monuments Records will be given copies of the data for their own areas.

3.2 Project objectives

3.2.1 The objectives of the project are:

- To produce a GIS and database of polygons using HLC types and attributes that is searchable and can be presented spatially in a variety of ways.
- To analyse and interpret the data produced.
- To use the HLC to define Character Areas for the Black Country. Around ten character areas have already been defined for Dudley by the local authority. It is envisaged that these will be used for the Black Country characterisation and a similar number of character areas will be defined for the other authority areas, in conjunction with their archaeologists and Conservation officers.
- To identify areas for more detailed investigation. A bid for funding to undertake a detailed characterisation of the All Saints and Blakenhall (ABCD) area of Wolverhampton has already been prepared. Funding is being sought largely from a New Deal for Communities grant with a smaller amount being sought from English Heritage's Capacity Building for Social Inclusion budget. It is hoped that similar studies will be undertaken for other potential regeneration areas.

3.3 Broader objectives

3.3.1 Once complete it is envisaged that the HLC shall be used:

- Within the planning process to aid decisions on applications
- As a basis for more in depth characterisation projects, particularly for regeneration.
- As an aid in Conservation Area appraisal and designations

4. METHOD STATEMENT

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The project follows the broad methodology for historic landscape characterisation developed for rural HLC projects and follows the recommendations within The Historic Landscape Characterisation Programme: Template Project Design (English Heritage 2002).

4.1.2 As in other recent HLC projects three attribute types are recorded for each area: Broad Character Types, HLC Character Types and Previous Character Types. The terms used for each character type are discussed in Section 7.1. They differ from those used for rural HLC projects and have been formulated to reflect the predominantly urban and industrial nature of the Black Country.

4.1.3 The HLC polygons record the current character of the area. Previous character type is recorded for each HLC polygon. There can be more than one previous character type for a particular HLC polygon e.g. a current housing estate may previously have been the site of a colliery, an ironworks and a squatter settlement.

4.2 Characterisation

4.2.1 The urban nature of the Black Country means that the HLC Types within the project are more detailed for Broad Types like 'Settlement' and 'Industrial' whilst being less detailed for the Broad Types like 'Field System' and 'Woodland'.

4.2.2 Under Settlement the time depth, patterns and the size of both the building footprints and the building plots are being recorded for areas of housing. By identifying the size of house footprints and their plots it will be possible to chart patterns of settlement type over urban areas. In particular it will highlight houses on large and extensive plots, which are currently under threat of development intensification.

4.2.3 The Black Country HLC is based on what is present within the modern landscape from the OS 2000 landline data; the modern aerial photography is used to double check the accuracy of the mapping in areas of ambiguity. For example some modern houses which appear to be terraces on the mapping can be seen to be semi-detached houses with attached garages on the aerial photographs.

4.2.5 Many Previous Types can be added to the database for each HLC Type. This allows detailed analysis of the database for previous land use. Overall maps, however, will only reflect part of the previous land use as only one previous land use for each area can be included on a map printout.

4.2.6 Each Broad Type and HLC Type used within the database has a scope note attached to it. These scope notes define the circumstances in which each Type or Attribute should be used.

4.2.7 The database also has the capacity to record the degree of Confidence about each HLC Type and Previous Type chosen using a drop down box and the choice of:

- Certain
- Probable
- Possible

4.3 Software

4.3.1 The HLC module within Version 3 of the HBSMR package developed by Exegesis has been adopted as the database for the Black Country HLC project. It includes a mapping module which uses MapInfo GIS.

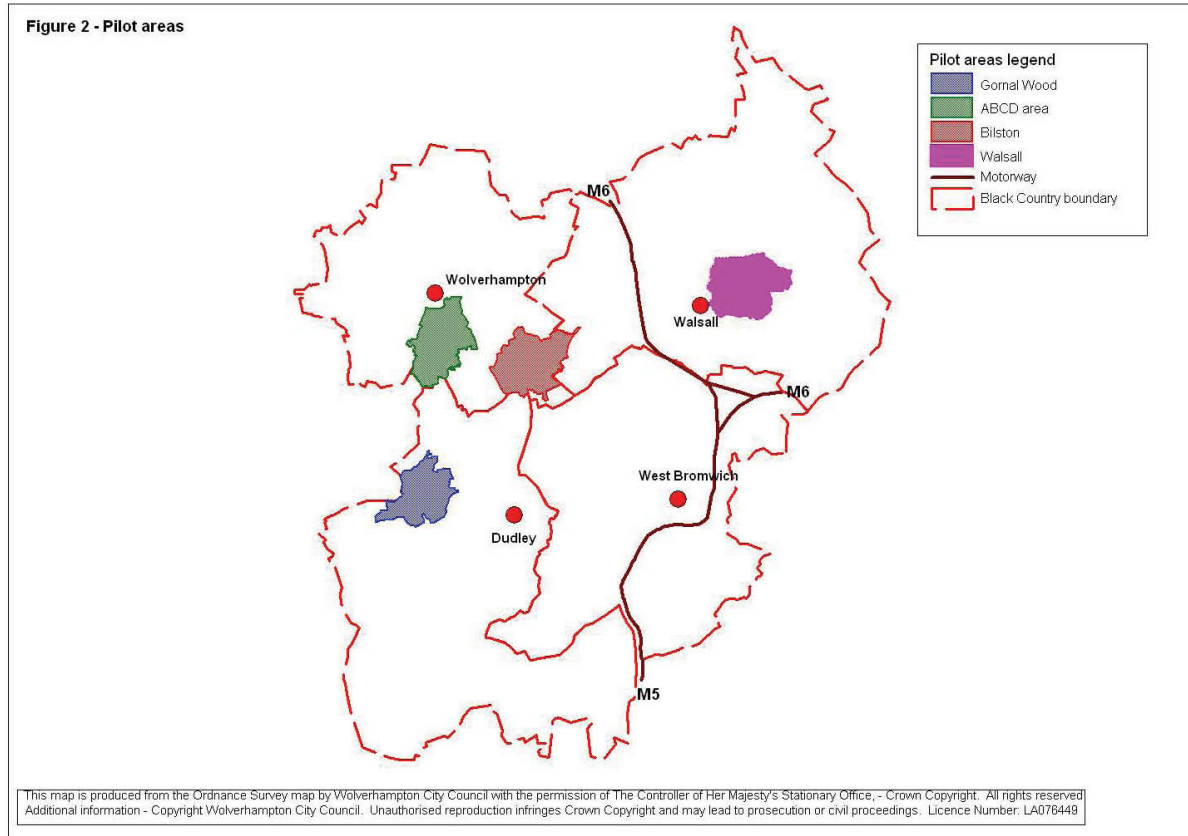
4.3.2 The HBSMR HLC module was developed using the experience of previous HLC projects, particularly Shropshire and Cheshire's HLCs, and is specifically designed for undertaking new HLC or displaying existing HLC. Hence it does away with the need to design a database and associated mapping in-house or commission such a design and yet it is sufficiently flexible to allow for a high degree of personalised design of character types and attributes.

4.3.3 It has the secondary advantage that the HLC data is integrated with the existing SMR data in a single system. Relevant SMR sites within the HLC polygons and vice-versa can be recorded automatically.

4.3.4 The database also contains scope note fields which will aid future users to understand the definitions for the Broad Types, HLC Types and Attributes.

4.3.5 There are two free text fields for each HLC type and note fields are available for each Previous Type. These fields enable details to be added concerning what is present within a polygon, both currently and in the past. They may also be used to add further information not visible on the maps, but present on aerial photography.

Figure 2 - Pilot areas



4.4 Pilot Areas

4.4.1 Three pilot areas were chosen to test the methodology and the HLC module. The three areas covered were (see Figure 2 for locations):

Wolverhampton: SO94-6/95-7;

Bilston – Industrial Town; Former Industrial Landscape – major ironworks; Canal

Walsall: SP02-04/98-00;

NE Walsall – suburban growth; rural areas; former industrial landscape

Dudley: SO90-2/90-2:

Gornal Wood – Squatter settlement in former wooded area.

4.4.2 As discussed above (3.2.1) a fourth area, All Saints and Blakenhall (ABCD) to the south of Wolverhampton, was added in order that a broad characterisation was available to form the basis of more detailed characterisation.

4.4.3 Appendix 2 contains a detailed report on each pilot area.

4.5 Digital sources

4.5.1 Five main cartographic sources will be used to create the Black Country Urban Characterisation; the 1st edition Ordnance survey maps issued between 1881 and 1900; the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey maps issued between 1901 and 1910; the 3rd edition Ordnance Survey maps issued between 1911 and 1930; the 4th edition Ordnance Survey maps issued between 1931 and 1940 (incomplete coverage across the Black Country) and the 2000 landline OS mapping. All of these maps are available digitally.

4.5.2 In addition three further maps will be consulted: Yates' map of Staffordshire of 1775 and Taylor's map of Worcestershire of 1772, both published at 1 inch: 1 mile scale and the Ordnance Surveyors drawings at 2 inch: 1 mile scale which formed the basis for the later 1 inch Ordnance survey maps. Three surveyors' drawings cover the Black Country - Wolverhampton (1816), Sutton Coldfield (1817) and Stourbridge (1814). The small scale of these maps means that they are mainly useful as a guide to the possible age of surviving woodland and the historic core of settlements.

4.5.3 Ideally the project would have used OS maps from the 1950s and 1970s. These are not, however, available in a digital format to the project and it would be too time consuming to use paper versions.

4.5.4 Each of the four Councils covered by the project has been asked to provide recent digital aerial photography covering their areas.

4.5.5 The Black Country Consortium has supplied some datasets including the boundary of the entire Black Country, ward boundaries and motorways in the region.

4.5.6 The HLC module links directly to the Black Country Sites and Monuments Record so that SMR data is directly available for use in the project. It is also possible to link a monument to its HLC polygon so that the monument record also contains details of any HLC polygons within its area.

4.6 Secondary sources

4.6.1 Other sources on the Black Country which have been consulted are given in Appendix 3. These have been used in establishing the HLC types.

4.6.2 A list of sources used during the lifetime of the project will be maintained for future reference.

4.6.3 It is hoped to obtain from each of the Councils the known areas of council housing, which will be supplied by paper maps as none of the authorities hold this information digitally. In the meantime Housing Estate Type under the Attributes is added as 'Unknown' so that a search can be done at a later stage to update the records.

4.7 Period

4.7.1 The period for each polygon is based upon which map it first appears on. For instance if an area of terrace housing is absent on the first edition, but present on the second and all following maps, the period will be input as '1901 to 1910' which reflects the period that the earliest map was published. The dates used are thus:

- 1881 to 1900 – appearing on first edition
- 1901 to 1910 – first appears on the second edition
- 1911 to 1930 – first appears on the third edition
- 1931 to 1940 – first appears on the fourth edition
- 1941 to 2000 – appears at some point between the fourth and modern landline mapping.

The period is not an absolute date of when something was built, but generally reflects approximately when that character type came into being.

4.7.2 For previous HLC types settlement is input as:

- Pre 1881 – appears on the first edition
- Pre 1901 – appears on the second edition
- Pre 1911 – appears on the third edition
- Pre 1931 – appears on the fourth edition

This enables searching to be carried out on the Previous Types by period as well as by type.

4.7.3 Previous types are also recorded for areas which are shown as historic settlement cores on Yates map of 1775 or as areas of historic settlement core or dispersed settlement on the Ordnance Surveyor's drawings of 1814-17.

4.8 Dissemination

4.8.1 Presentations during the lifetime of the project will be given to interested parties, especially the planners and conservation officers in each authority.

4.8.2 For the future the HLC sits within the same database as the SMR and can be consulted and interrogated in the same way. It is hoped to initiate a project to make the SMR, and hence the HLC also, available over the internet within the next 2-3 years.

4.8.3 Copies of the HLC for their areas will be given to Dudley and Sandwell councils for incorporation within their Sites & Monument Records.

4.9 Project reports

4.9.1 A commentary will be prepared explaining the methodology used. The HLC module already includes tables for recording metadata such as definitions of the various character types.

4.9.2 A commentary/summary report will be produced for each of the Character Areas within the four unitary authorities.

5. RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMING

5.1 Personnel

5.1.1 The characterisation is being undertaken by Debbie Langley, MA (Archaeological Heritage Management) BA (Medieval Studies and Archaeology). Debbie was formerly with the

Hampshire Historic Environment Record and has previous experience of GIS.

5.1.2 Mike Shaw is acting as Project Manager and is offering additional support and training. Mike has been the Black Country Archaeologist since 2000. He undertook the Cheshire Extensive Urban Survey between from 1997-1999 and has extensive characterisation and GIS experience.

5.2 Monitoring and stakeholder involvement

5.2.1 The project will be monitored on behalf of English Heritage by Graham Fairclough and Roger Thomas from the Characterisation Team and by Ian George, the Regional Inspector.

5.2.2 The project will be overseen by a management group comprising the Project Officer (Debbie Langley), Black Country Archaeologist (Mike Shaw), Dudley Conservation Officer/Chief Archaeologist (Pete Boland), Sandwell Borough Archaeologist (Graham Eyre-Morgan), Walsall Principal Conservation Officer (Dan Roberts), Wolverhampton Conservation Officer

Table 1: Task List

Task No.	Task	Performed by	Days ⁵	Weeks ⁵
1	Familiarisation	Debbie Langley Mike Shaw	8.24 ¹ 3	1-2
2	Consideration of methodologies used elsewhere	Debbie Langley Mike Shaw	8.24 ¹ 3	3-4
3	Definition of Project Methodology and establishment of database	Debbie Langley Mike Shaw	12.36 ¹ 4	5-7
4	Sample areas	Debbie Langley Mike Shaw	16.48 ¹ 2	8-11
5	Draft final Project Design	Debbie Langley Mike Shaw	45.32 ¹ 4	12-22
6	Prepare sample reports and output	Debbie Langley Mike Shaw	16.48 ¹ 2	23-26
7A	Characterising the Black Country using polygons – Wolverhampton ²	Debbie Langley Mike Shaw	82.4 ¹ 4	27-47 ³
7B	Characterising the Black Country using polygons – Walsall ²	Debbie Langley Mike Shaw	90.64 ¹ 4	48-70 ³
7C	Characterising the Black Country using polygons – Dudley ²	Debbie Langley Mike Shaw	90.64 ¹ 4	71-93 ³
7D	Characterising the Black Country using polygons – Sandwell ²	Debbie Langley Mike Shaw	86.52 ¹ 4	94-115 ³
8	Presentations & Meetings (including preparation of PowerPoint Presentation)	Debbie Langley Mike Shaw	16.48 ¹ 6	³
9	Defining Character Areas, Summary etc	Debbie Langley Mike Shaw	12.36 ¹ 6	116-118
10	Commentary on characterisation methodology	Debbie Langley Mike Shaw	45.32 ¹ 4	119-129
11	Archiving of data	Debbie Langley Mike Shaw	4.12 ¹ 1	130
12	Project Management	Mike Shaw	15	⁴

¹The Project Officer time has been calculated assuming 214 working days per year which translates as 4.12 working days per week

²The task list assumes that each authority area will be done in turn, commencing with Wolverhampton. The authorities have been advised, however, that if there are areas which they wish to be prioritised for characterisation, efforts will be made to accommodate this.

³Task 8 runs throughout the length of project. To reflect this a week has been added to the time taken for each of the Tasks 7A, 7B, 7C and 7D

⁴Project Management runs throughout life of project

⁵Debbie Langley's time has been calculated assuming 214 working days per year, i.e. 4.12 working days per week.

(Sue Whitehouse), Birmingham City Archaeologist (Mike Hodder) and the English Heritage Regional Inspector (Ian George).

5.2.3 Management Group meetings will be held at 4 monthly intervals in conjunction with meetings of the Black Country and Birmingham Archaeology Group.

5.2.4 Each council will also be offered the opportunity to form a working group of interested professionals from planning, regeneration, economic development. Presentations will be offered to each group and they will be invited to discuss the project for their particular area and the outcomes which they would find particularly helpful.

5.2.5 To aid this process an allowance has been made for time to prepare a standard PowerPoint presentation which can be offered to other groups as appropriate.

5.2.6 A seminar will be held after the first 18 months of the project (September/October 2005) to offer preliminary results to a wider group of stakeholders to comprise senior planning and regeneration officers within each council, the Black Country Consortium, the Regional Development Agency, interested academics and other interested parties.

5.3 Health and Safety

5.3.1 The work will be undertaken in compliance with Wolverhampton City Council's Health and safety procedures. A copy of the Council's Health and Safety Policy Statement is appended (Section 7.4)

5.4 Programme

5.4.1 The pilot studies which were undertaken as part of the first 6 months of the project have demonstrated that a period of two and half years will be necessary to complete the objectives of the project.

5.4.2 The project commenced 19 April 2004. The completion date will be 13 October 2006.

5.4.2 The staff time is allocated as in Table 1.

5.5 Costings

5.5.1 The project was originally planned to run for a period of two years. The pilot study, however, has demonstrated that a period of 2.5 years will be necessary. It is, however, possible to achieve this within the original budget estimate of £102,988 as:

Table 2: Overall Costs 2004/06

Project Offr. Apl. 2004 - Sep. 2006	£74,686
Project Mngr. Apl. 2004 - Sept 2006	£13,086
PC, monitor, software	£1,200
HBSMR licence	£1,450
Mapping module	
& MapInfo professional	£1,700
Technical support for HBSMR	
& mapping module	£1,500
Set-up/Advice/Training on HLC	
module or equivalent	£2,400
Copying of maps (digital and/or paper)	£1,800
Recruitment	£1,500
Publicity/dissemination	£1,866
Data migration	£1,800
Sub-total	£15,216
Overall Total	£102,988

- Overhead costs on salary have been reduced from 38.5% to 25%;
- The Project Officer was appointed at bottom of pay scale whereas original estimate allowed for appointment midway up pay scale;
- Project Manager involvement has been cut from 3 days per month throughout project to 3 days per month for first 6 months but 2 days per month thereafter;
- Small savings in the costs of hardware and software.

5.5.2 The overall costs are as shown in Table 2.

5.5.3 The staff costs include salary, National Insurance, superannuation and overheads of 25%. They have been calculated assuming 214 working days per year.

5.5.4 Costs broken down by financial year are as shown in Table 3.

5.6 Payment Stages and Monitoring Points

5.6.1 Suggested payment stages remain the same as previously agreed but with the moving back of the final payment to 30.10.2006.

Stage	Date	Instalment
1	On return of signed agreement	£10,000
2	30.09.2004	£23,000
3	31.05.2005	£30,000
4	13.10.2006	£39,988

Table 3: Yearly Costs 2004/06**2004/5**

Staff	Scale	Daily	Days	Cost
Project Offr.	Sp26	£133	214	£28,462
Project Mngr.	Sp37	£191	30	£5,730
Sub Total				£34,192
Non-staff				
PC, monitor, software				£1,200
HBSMR licence				£1,450
Mapping module etc				£1,700
Technical support				£500
Set up/training etc				£1,200
Copying of maps				£600
Recruitment				£1,500
Publicity etc				
Data migration				
Sub Total				£8,150
Gross total 2004/5				£42,342

2005/6

Staff	Scale	Daily	Days	Cost
Project Offr.	Sp27	141	214	£30,174
Project Mngr.	Sp38	202	24	£4,848
Sub Total				£35,022
Non-staff				
PC, monitor, software				
HBSMR licence				
Mapping module etc				
Technical support				£500
Set up/training etc				£600
Copying of maps				£600
Recruitment				
Publicity etc				£933
Data migration				
Sub Total				£2,633
Gross total 2005/6				£37,655

2006/7

Staff	Scale	Daily	Days	Cost
Project Offr.	Sp28	150	107	£16,050
Project Mngr.	Sp38	209	12	£2,508
Sub Total				£18,558
Non-staff				
PC, monitor, software				
HBSMR licence				
Mapping module etc				
Technical support				£500
Set up/training etc				£600
Copying of maps				£600
Recruitment				
Publicity etc				£933
Data migration				£1,800
Sub Total				£4,433
Gross total 2006/7				£22,991

5.6.2 Monitoring points will be tied to the payment dates. An extra monitoring point has been added in February 2006 as there is a long gap between the Stage 3 and 4 payments.

By 30th September 2004:

Achievement of Tasks 1-6

By 31st May 2005:

Achievement of Task 7A

Commencement of Task 7B

Preparation of PowerPoint presentation on the project (Part of Task 8)

By 10th January 2006:

Achievement of Tasks 7B and 7C

Holding of Stakeholders Seminar
(September/October 2005)

By 13th October 2006:

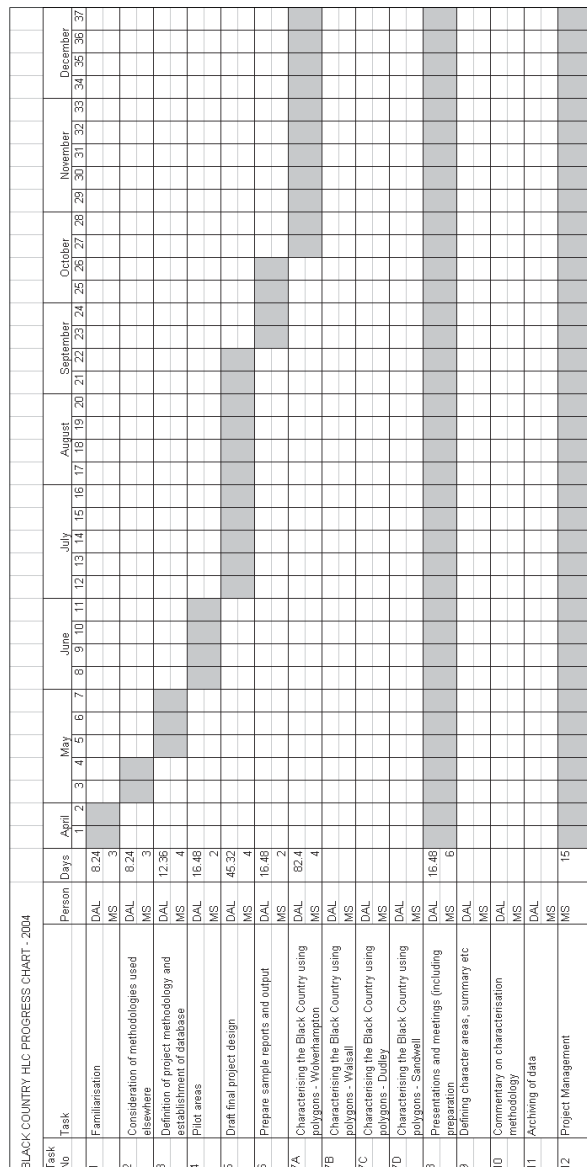
Achievement of Tasks 7D, 9, 10, 11

Completion of Project

5.7 Gantt Chart

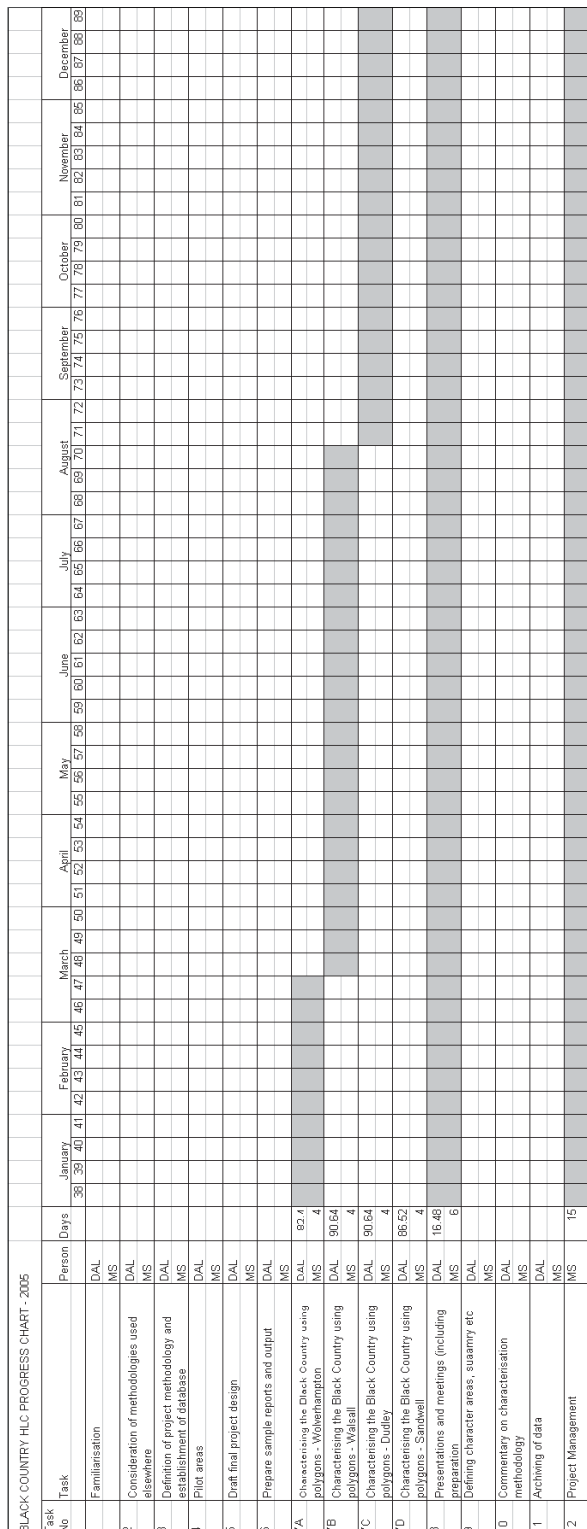
A Gantt chart showing the duration of task against the progression of time is included as Section 7.5.

2004



NB: 'DAL' refers to Debbie Langley, and 'MS' to Mike Shaw. Debbie Langley's time has been calculated assuming 214 working days per year which translates as 4.12 working days per week.

2005



2006

BLACK COUNTRY HLC PROGRESS CHART - 2006											
Task No	Task	Person	Days	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August
				90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97
1	Familiarisation	DAL									
2	Consideration of methodologies used elsewhere	MS									
3	Definition of project methodology and establishment of database	DAL									
4	Plot areas	MS									
5	Draft final project design	DAL									
6	Prepare sample reports and output	MS									
7A	Characterising the Black Country using polygons - Wolverhampton	DAL									
7B	Characterising the Black Country using polygons - Walsall	MS									
7C	Characterising the Black Country using polygons - Dudley	DAL	50.54								
7D	Characterising the Black Country using polygons - Sandwell	MS	4								
8	Presentations and meetings (including preparation)	DAL	16.48								
9	Defining character areas, summary etc	MS	6								
10	Commentary on characterisation methodology	DAL	12.36								
11	Archiving of data	MS	6								
		DAL	45.32								
		MS	4								
		DAL	4.12								
12	Project Management	MS	1								
		MS	15								

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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7. APPENDICES TO THE PROJECT DESIGN

7.1 HLC TYPES AND ATTRIBUTES

7.1.1 Introduction

The HLC is based upon a two tier system with Broad Types as the top tier, with a HLC Type being applied to each one. Both a Broad Type and HLC Type will be applied to each polygon; in addition some polygons may have attributes attached. The attributes give added information to aspects of each polygon and these in turn are searchable within the database.

7.1.2 Broad types

The Black Country HLC project has defined 13 Broad Types, reflecting the major character elements within the region (*These are as outlined in Table 2.5, although at the time of the project design, the category 'utilities' was referred to as 'services'.*)

7.1.3 HLC types

Under each Broad Type is a set of HLC types (*These are outlined in Tables 2.6 to 2.10, with the following exceptions: the categories of 'Plant nursery/garden centre', 'Maltings', 'Quarry', 'Common', 'College', 'University', 'Hospital', 'Heath Centre', 'Prison' and 'Civic centre' had initially been included but were later dropped; the categories of 'Other commercial site', 'Depot', 'Rope Walk/hemp factory', 'Disused clay quarry', 'Disused fireclay mine', 'Medieval settlement core', 'High rise flats & terraces', 'Squatter enclosures', 'Theatre', 'Zoo', 'Castle', 'Territorial Army Centre', 'Higher education facility', 'Medical facility', 'Court building' and 'Emergency services building' were later additions; the category of 'Apartments' was modified to 'Apartments/maisonettes'; the category of 'Irregular/rectilinear enclosure' was modified to 'Irregular enclosure'; and the category of 'Nature reserve' was modified to 'Nature reserve/country park'.*)

There is no limit to the amount of HLC types that can be used within the project, but to make searching simple these have been kept to a minimum as far as possible. In some instances this has led to 'lumping' of potential types for e.g. Metal Works covers all sites where metal working takes place whether smelting or the production of items.

Some of the HLC Types reflect areas where several activities may be going on, for example Commercial Core would include retail sites and offices (plus other small buildings which may not be commercial in nature) within the centre of a town. Where these buildings occur away from town centres a separate HLC type of 'Offices & shops' has been given. Similarly under the Broad Type 'Settlement' several HLC Types reflect a mixture of housing types where no one type dominates.

All of the types have scope notes connected to them within the HLC module which details when each HLC type should be used.

7.1.4 Previous Types

The Previous Types occur under a separate section within the HLC module and have been assigned their own list for types. In general all of the Current HLC types can be used within the previous fields but a different list appears which reflects the map upon which the site appears. For example terrace housing on the Previous Type list would appear as follows:

Pre 1881 Terrace housing
Pre 1901 Terrace housing
Pre 1910 Terrace housing
Pre 1931 Terrace housing.

7.1.5 Attributes

The attributes tab in the HLC module has been used to add further details to each of the polygons for certain Broad Types. These are 'Settlement', 'Field System', 'Utilities', 'Recreational' and 'Religious'.

The breakdown for the five Broad Types is, in general, as shown in Appendix 3 (scope notes within the HLC module give details as to how these attributes should be applied). (*The set of attributes which were changed most between the pilot study and the final structure were those relating to street pattern: in the case of the pilot study the categories used were 'Regular pattern – straight roads', 'Long curving road', 'Isolated housing', 'Irregular housing', 'Geometrical pattern', 'Cul de sacs', and 'Not applicable'*)

7.2 ANALYSIS OF THE BLACK COUNTRY PILOT AREAS

7.2.1 Introduction

This report forms part of the Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) project. The project required three pilot areas to be completed as part of Stage 1:

- Gornal Wood, Dudley
- Bilston, Wolverhampton
- Walsall North East

These areas were chosen as it was felt that they gave a good cross section sample of character types that would be found across the Black Country.

In addition to the three original pilot areas a fourth area, the All Saints and Blakenhall Community Development (ABCD) area on the southern edge of Wolverhampton was also characterised at this stage as funding is currently being sought for a detailed characterisation of this area and it was thought to be important to complete the broad characterisation to form the framework for the detailed work.

Three maps have been produced for each of the four areas. The first set of maps shows the Current Broad Types (Maps 1-4). The second set focuses in on the Settlement Areas breaking them down into housing types (Maps 6-9).

The final maps (Maps 11-14) show the previous types. Because it is possible to record more than one previous type for each area it is not possible to show all previous types on a single map. For a detailed analysis such as this it would be necessary to consult the database directly or to search for particular previous types individually. The present maps of previous types have been produced as a demonstration of what can be done. The industrial and extractive sites have been prioritised over other types of site.

In addition to the individual maps a smaller scale set of maps showing all four areas on a single sheet have been produced for Broad Types (Map 5), Housing Types (Map 10) and Previous Types (Map 15).

7.2.2 Gornal Wood, Dudley

Gornal Wood was chosen as an example of an area of primarily squatter settlement comprising miners and nail makers during the Post Medieval period. It had

been an area of ancient woodland through to the Post Medieval period, when assarting began to occur.

The Gornals are made up of three main settlements established at different periods. The earliest major settlement was at Ruiton, which was replaced by Lower Gornal during the medieval period. Upper Gornal appears to have been established around the 17th century.

Farming and sand quarrying was also carried out around the Gornals in the Post Medieval period along with mining (both coal and ironstone) and nail making. Mining is mentioned in documentary sources as early as the 16th century.

The Current Broad Type map (Map 1) shows the Gornal Wood pilot area to be dominated by housing. The southern edge of the main housing area is bounded by a few surviving fields and some woodland. The largest single area of woodland, however, is to be found to the north at Turner's Hill. Open land is also present, again largely on the southern edges of the main settlement. However, one ribbon of open land does occur amongst the houses alongside recreational and public service sites, creating an area largely free of buildings.

Only a few fields now survive in the pilot area whereas previously there were large areas of fields to the north and south of the areas of squatter settlement (Map 11). All of the northern fields have been developed as housing estates. The abundance of fields on the previous map indicates the importance of agriculture in this area in the past.

Only two small areas of concentrated commercial activity are present nowadays within Gornal Wood, although individual shops and public houses occur within the settlement area. Shopping is clearly mainly carried out away from the pilot area. The previous types map (Map 11) shows that the current commercial areas in Gornal Wood are survivals from an earlier period.

Little industry is found within the pilot area nowadays (Map 1). The densest concentration is located in the south west, where large scale extraction is also carried out. Only one large industrial site exists within the settlement area. Previously the area was far more heavily industrialised (Map 11). Coal mining was the dominant industry and brick working and quarrying were also important. Map 11 also demonstrates that many of these industries were already in decline by the

early 20th century. There were large areas of disused collieries, some of which are still open land.

Map 6 depicts the settlement areas in greater detail. The central area is the historic core of Gornal Wood which comprises irregular squatter-type housing. Cottages are located on the peripheries of this central area. A comparison of maps 6 and 11 show that the area of irregular housing has shrunk over time and been replaced with more regular housing estates, predominantly of semi detached houses.

There are also several fairly extensive areas of apartments suggesting a move to higher density housing within Gornal Wood, although no high rise flats are to be found within this pilot area.

7.2.3 Bilston, Wolverhampton

Bilston was chosen because of the industrial nature of the area, both currently and historically. The place name first occurs in an Anglo-Saxon charter of AD 985 and by the time of the Domesday survey in 1086 there was a small settlement here. The main medieval settlement was in the area of Church Street and High Street which is still the commercial core.

In the 16th and 17th centuries industries in the area included hand forged locks and keys. From the late 17th century onwards coal and iron mining are attested as well as quarrying for building stone. An enamelling industry was set up in Bilston from about 1720.

The project area also includes Bradley, within which was the site of John Wilkinson's original iron works of the mid-late 18th century. The area continued to be heavily industrialised and mined until the late 19th/early 20th century. Industrial sites are still common but comprise modern industrial estates rather than heavy industry.

Much of the area between Bilston and Bradley area is now open/derelict land. The Bilston Urban Village project has been set up to redevelop these areas as mixed use development.

The three maps for Bilston (Maps 2, 7 and 12) show two main settlement areas: the larger one, Bilston itself, to the north; and the smaller one, Bradley, to the south. Between these two areas currently lie industrial sites and open land. On the previous map (Map 7) this area was almost entirely industrialised, the predominant land types being metal working

(predominantly iron furnaces), collieries (largely disused) and derelict land from earlier industrial use.

There is no one dominant current Broad Type in this pilot area, but Settlement, Industry and Open Land are the most common (Map 2).

The settlement areas in Bilston mainly lie to the north and north east of the commercial area. Amongst the housing lie many public service sites and a few recreational sites. A comparison of the three maps for this area show how the settlement area has expanded in the last circa 80 years, spreading out to the north, north east and west, largely over formerly industrial areas.

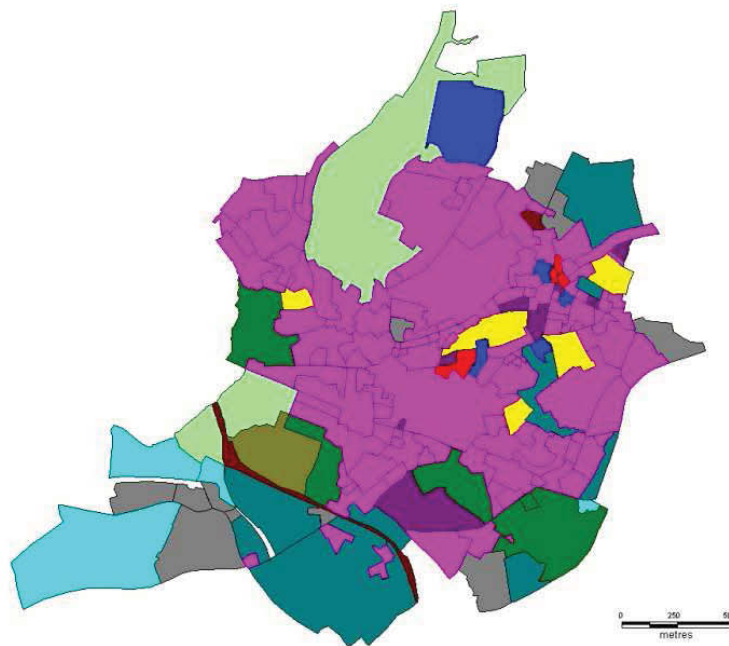
The settlement in Bradley has also expanded. Previously the housing was interspersed amongst the industrial areas and disused collieries (Map 12). Nowadays housing areas have coalesced and expanded over much of the formerly industrial area.

The current industrial sites within this pilot area are extensive. One to the south is focused around the canal loop of the Birmingham canal (old line) and represents a survival of industry from earlier periods. Other industrial areas are to be found nearer to Bilston, some occur as part of the main settlement. On the previous types map the industrial areas do not cover quite so large an area as currently (Maps 2, 7), although this is largely due to the large areas of disused collieries already showing on the previous types map. Some of the modern industrial sites are located in areas of historic industrial activity revealing a continuity of land use in these areas. Some changes, however, have occurred especially to the west of the pilot area where one former industrial site is now housing and open land, and one disused colliery has been developed as an industrial estate.

Between Bilston and Bradley, as well as to the far east of the pilot area there are currently large tracts of Open Land, largely derelict land or rough grassland. Map 12 reveals that much of this land was also largely derelict by the early 20th century. No fields are found within modern Bilston and Bradley, and there is only one area of woodland. The green space is solely made up of the open land and recreational sites. Only a very few fields are depicted on the previous map, located at the southern end of the pilot study area.

Bilston contains the main commercial sites, with only five small sites located at Bradley. The Bilston commercial area is largely the former medieval

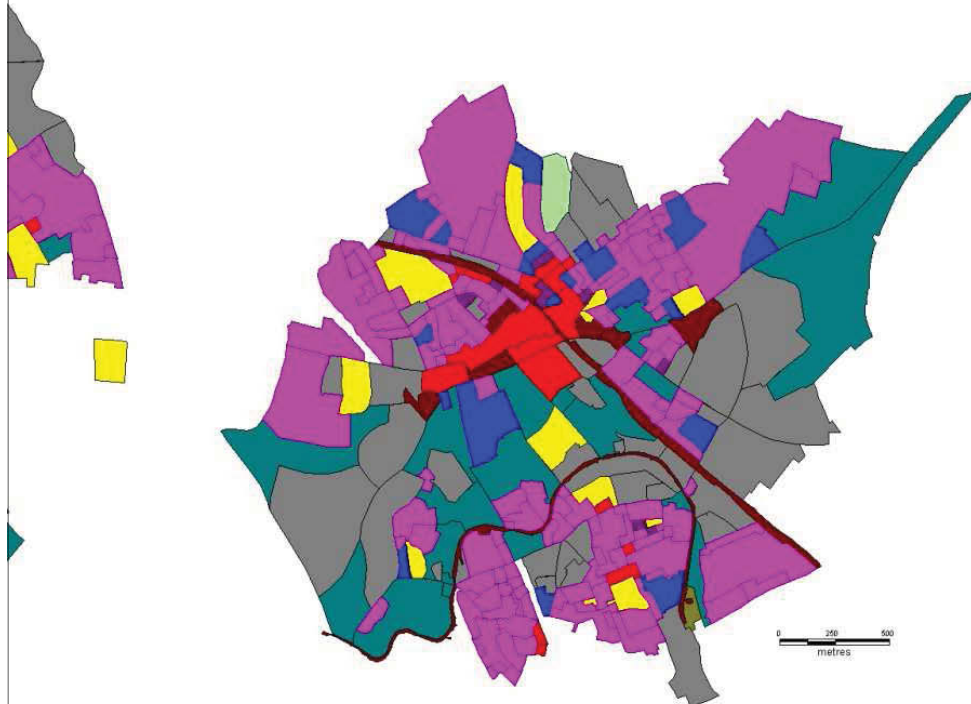
Map 1 - Current Broad Types in Gornal Wood



HLC by BroadType	
Commercial	(85)
Communications	(37)
Extractive	(10)
Field System	(54)
Industrial	(147)
Open Land	(70)
Public Services	(104)
Recreational	(75)
Religious	(45)
Settlement	(1331)
Utilities	(11)
Woodland	(33)

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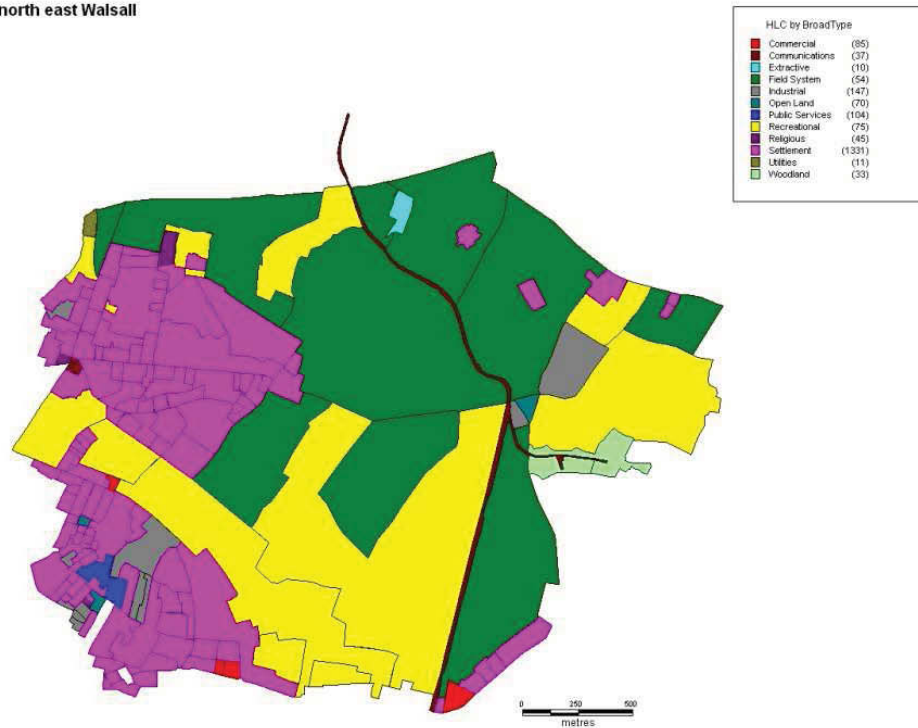
Map 2 - Current Broad Types in Bilston



HLC by BroadType	
Commercial	(85)
Communications	(37)
Extractive	(10)
Field System	(54)
Industrial	(147)
Open Land	(70)
Public Services	(104)
Recreational	(75)
Religious	(45)
Settlement	(1331)
Utilities	(11)
Woodland	(33)

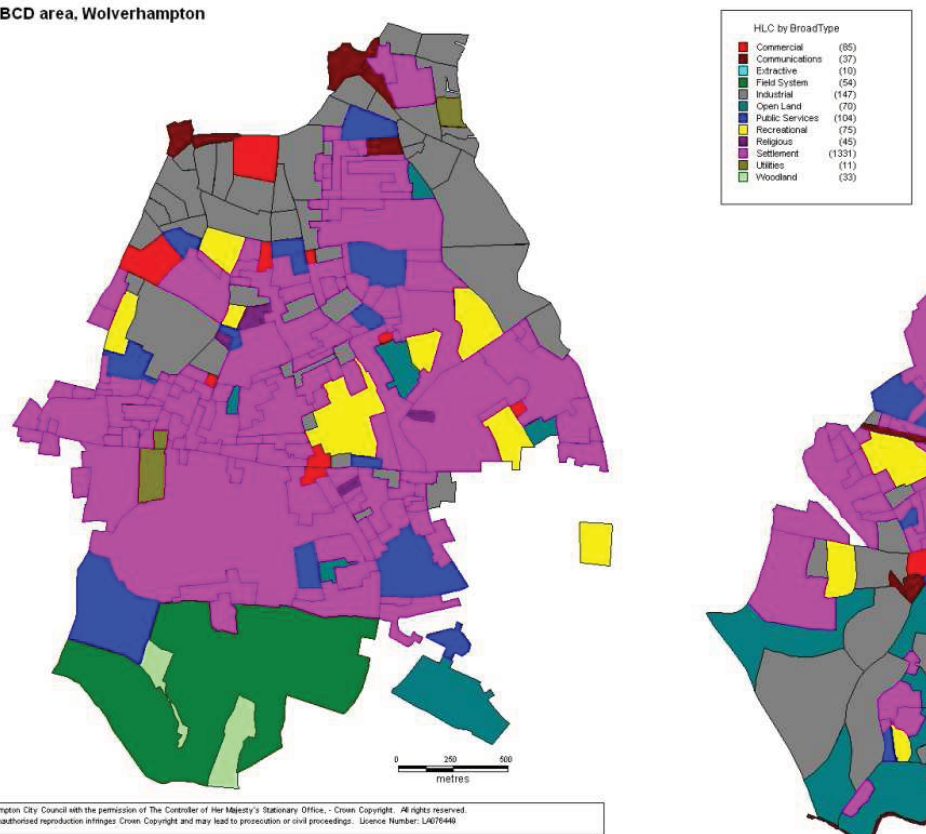
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Map 3 - Current Broad Types in north east Walsall



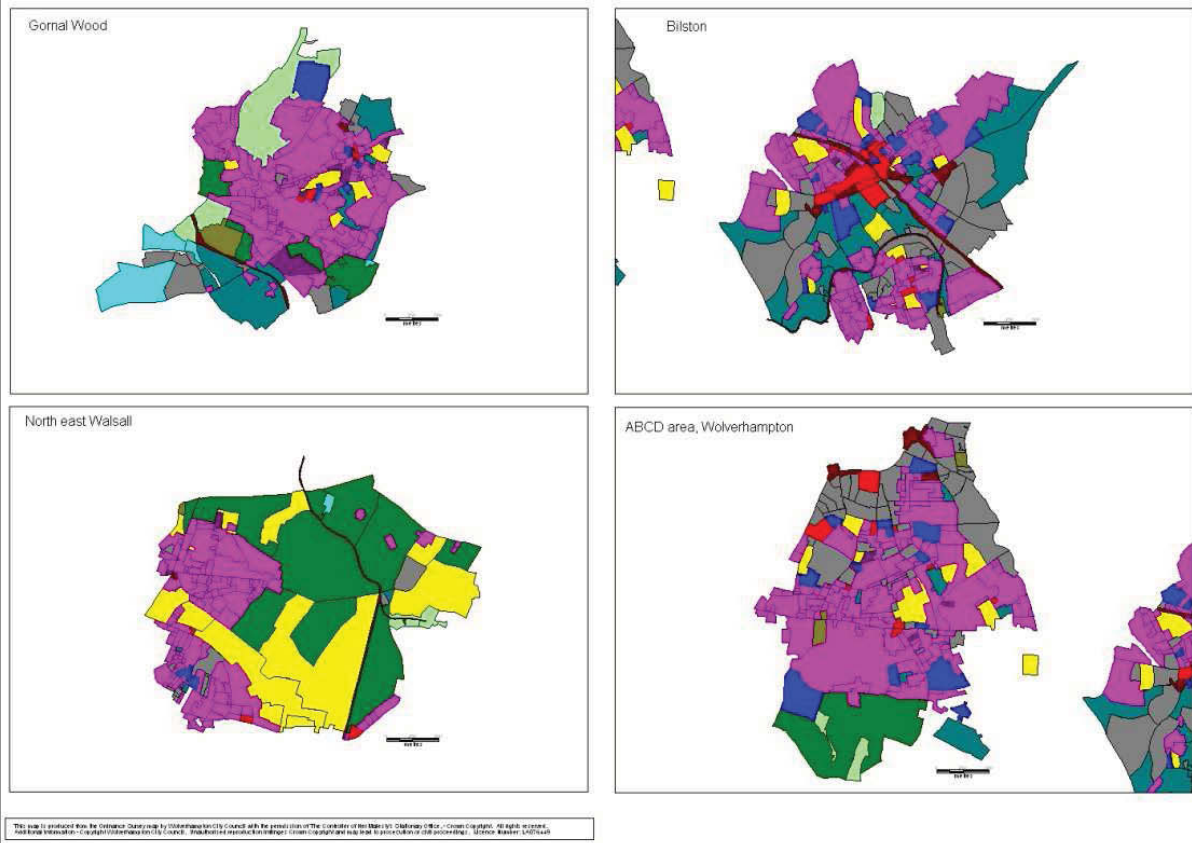
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Map 4 - Current Broad Types in ABCD area, Wolverhampton

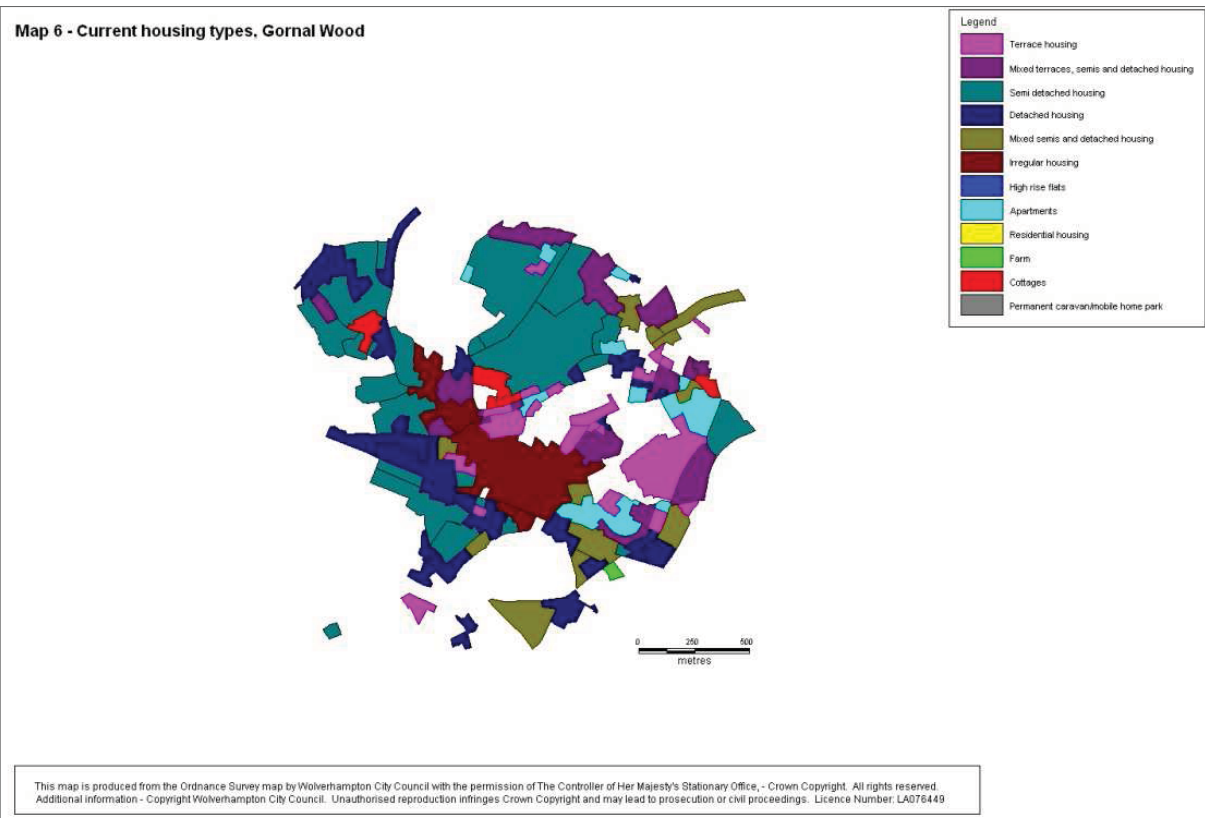


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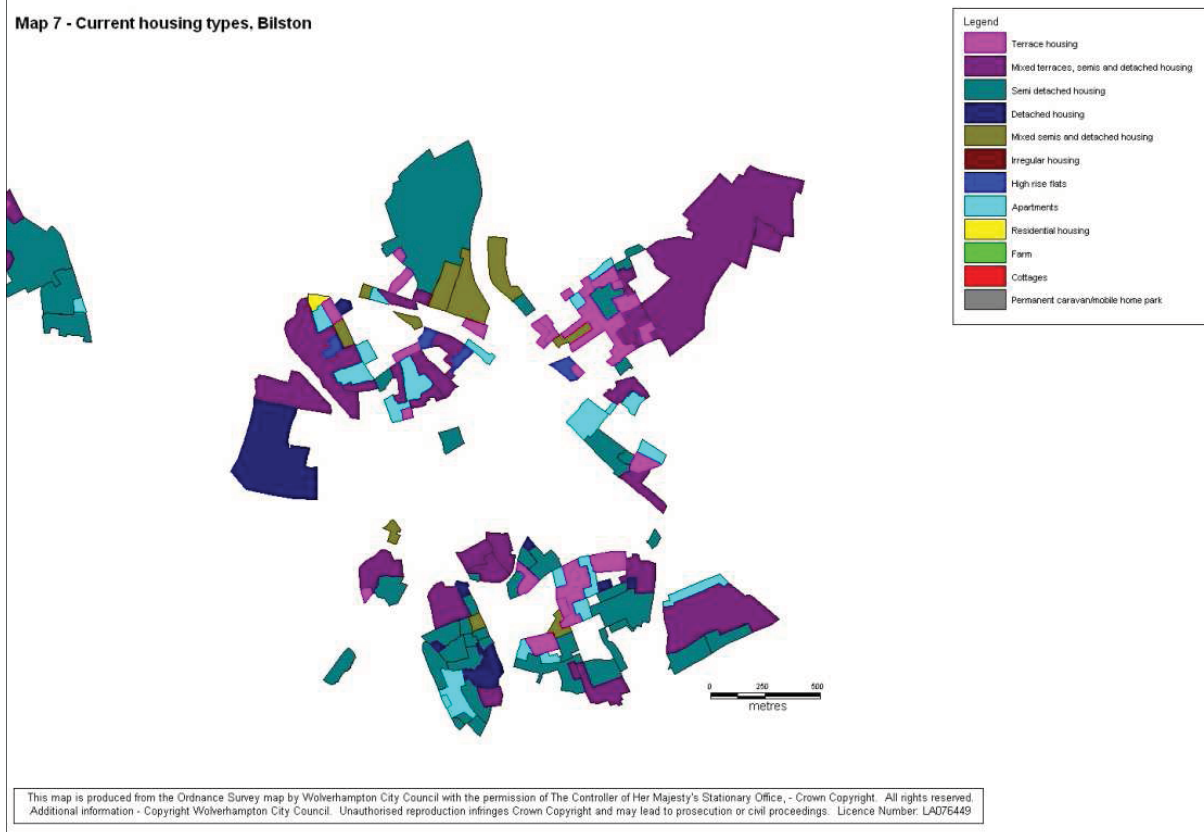
Map 5 - Current Broad Types



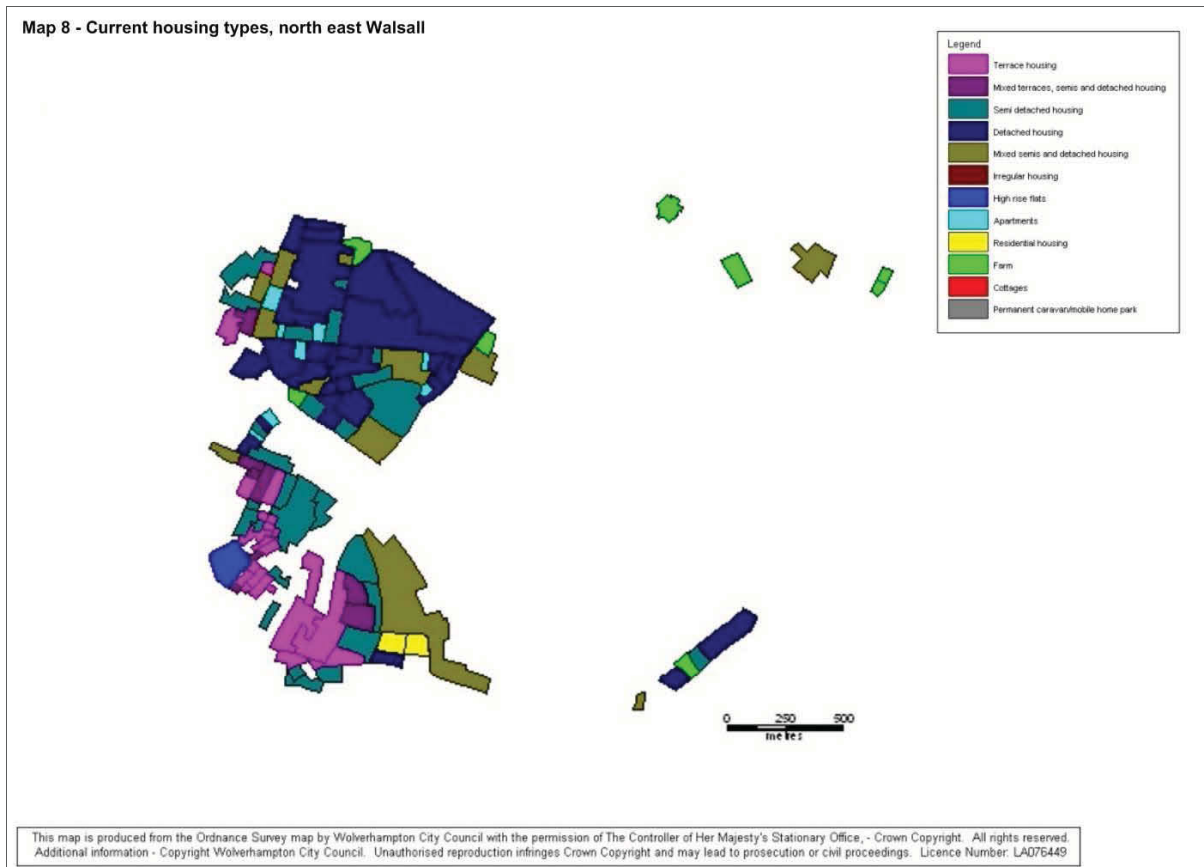
Map 6 - Current housing types, Gornal Wood



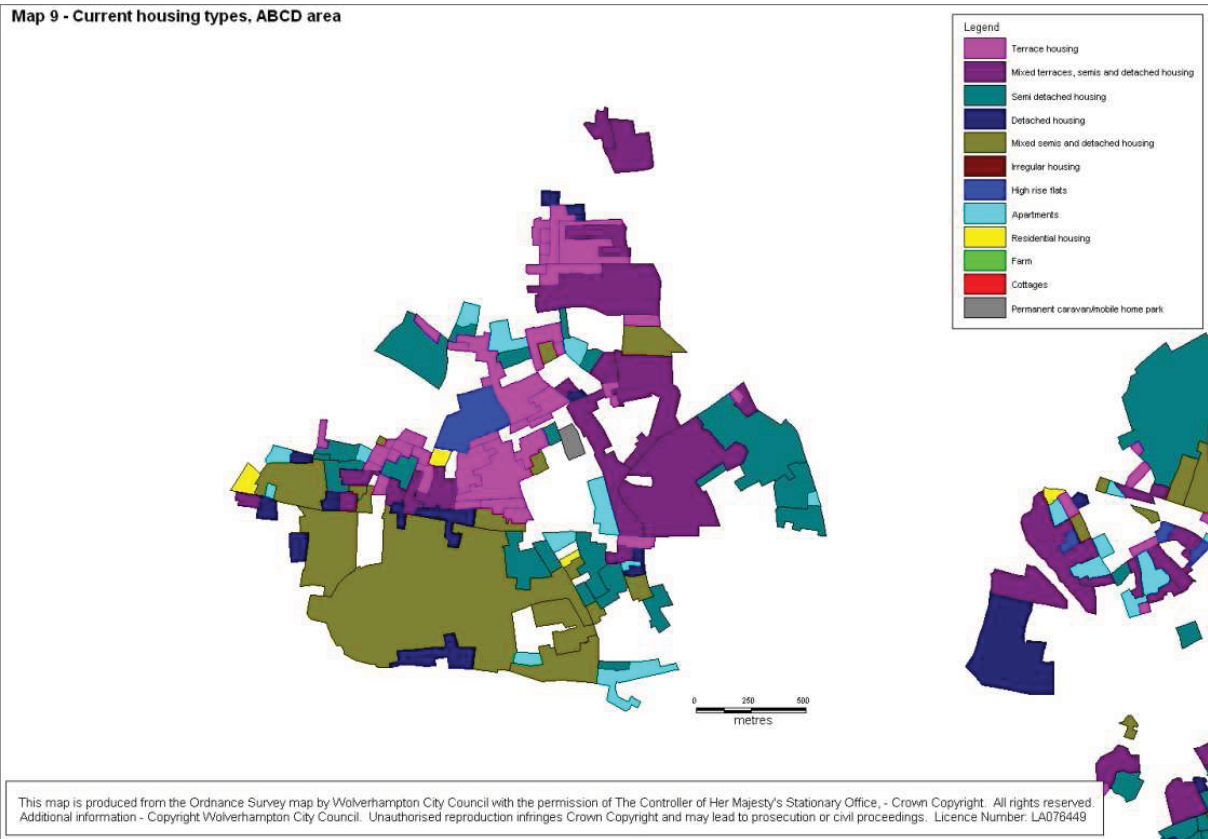
Map 7 - Current housing types, Bilston



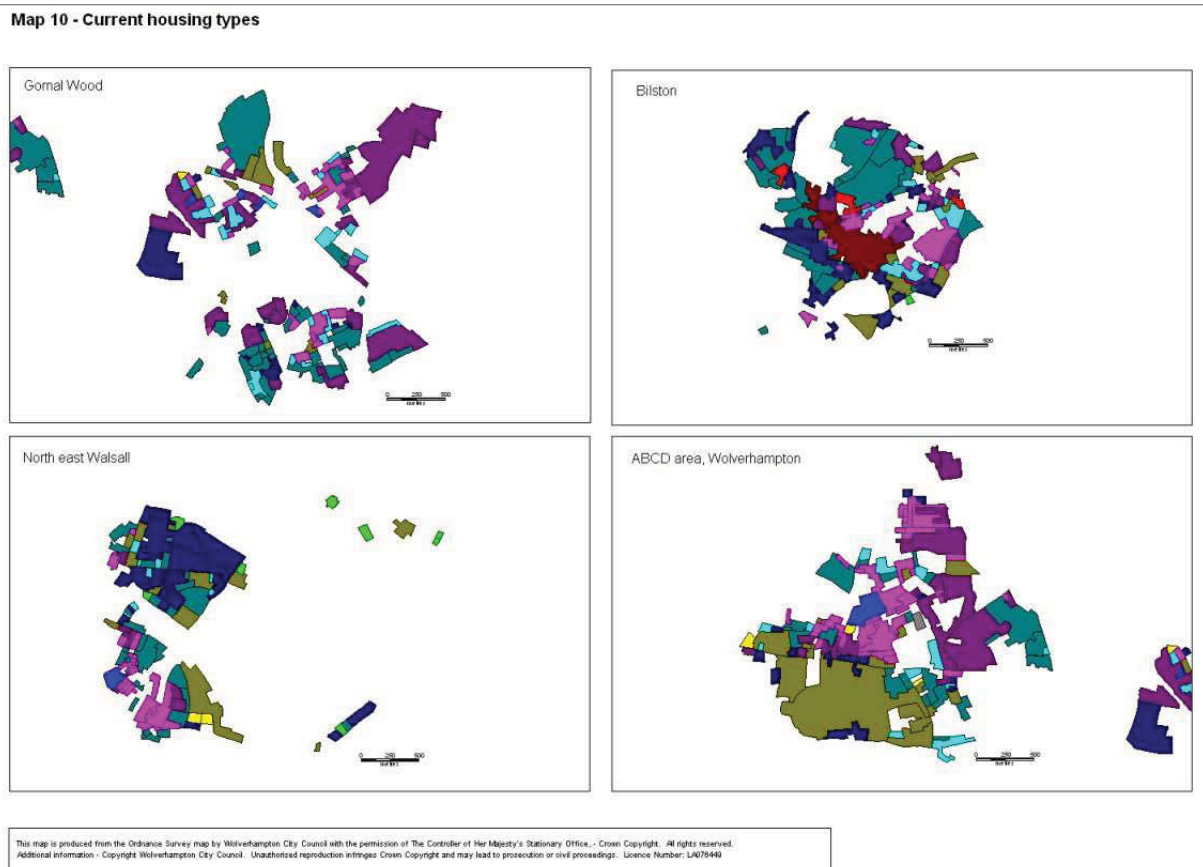
Map 8 - Current housing types, north east Walsall



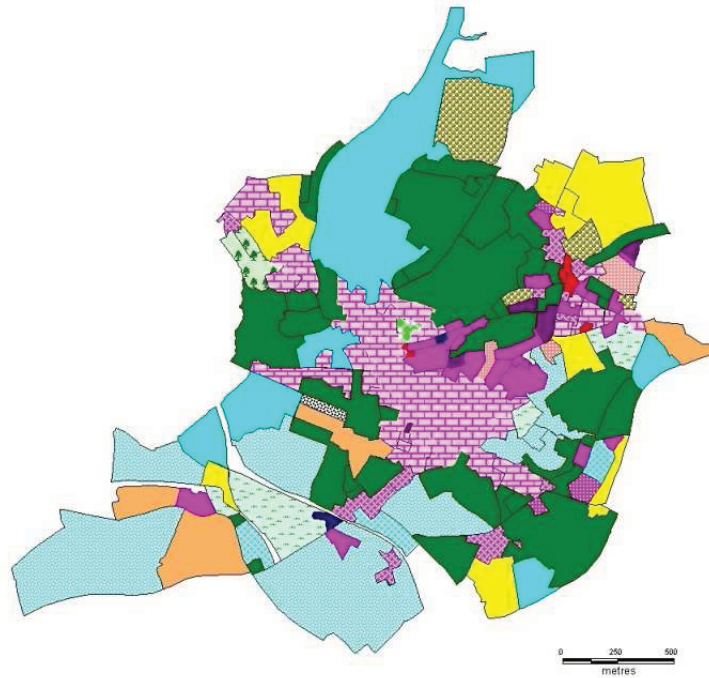
Map 9 - Current housing types, ABCD area



Map 10 - Current housing types

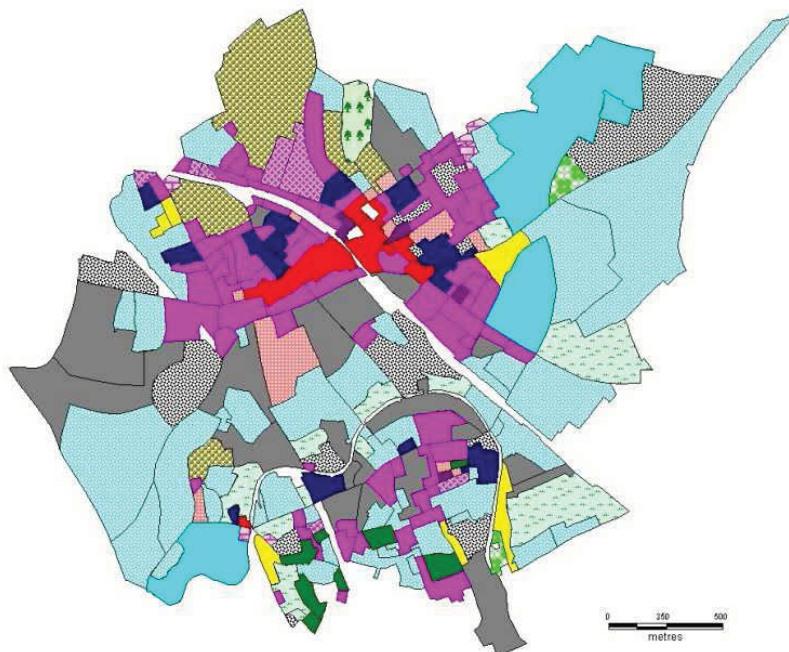


Map 11 - Previous types Gornal Wood, Dudley



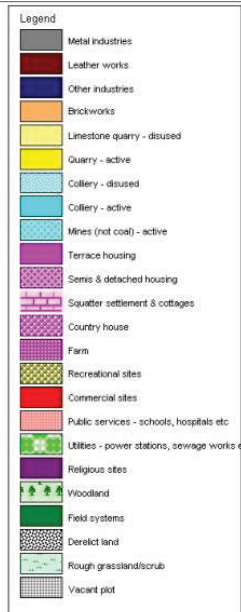
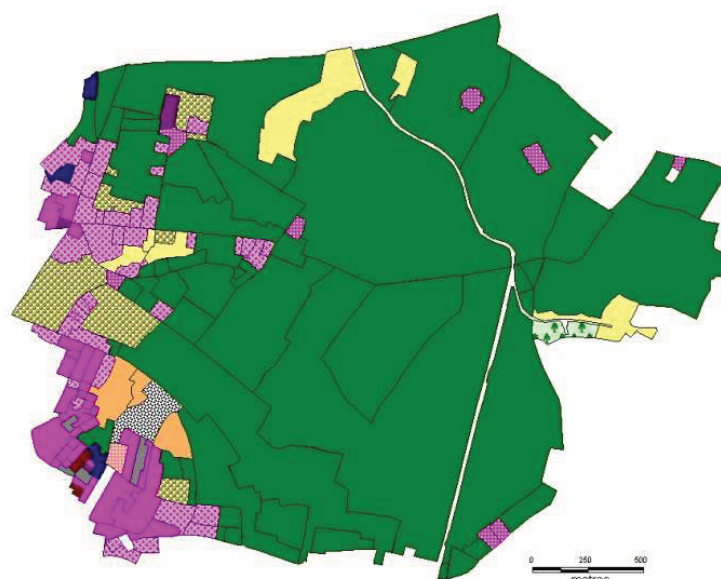
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Map 12 - Previous types, Bilston



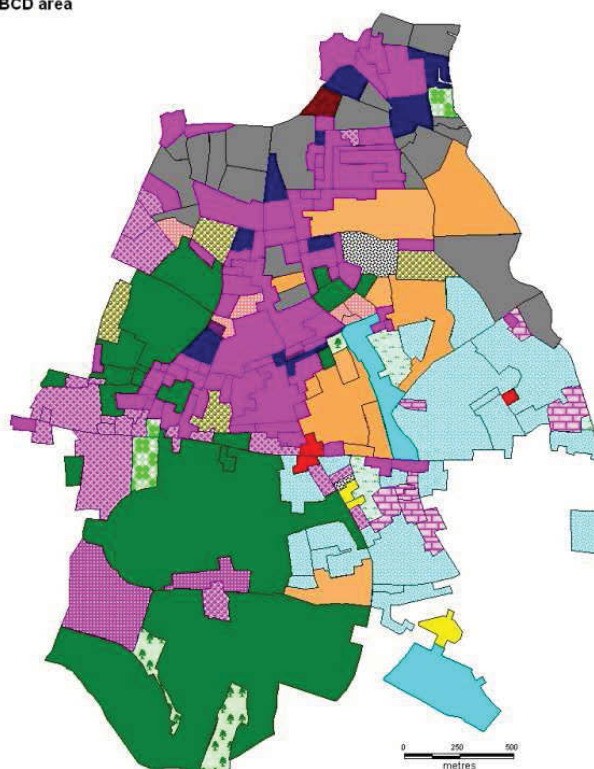
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Map 13 - Previous types north east Walsall



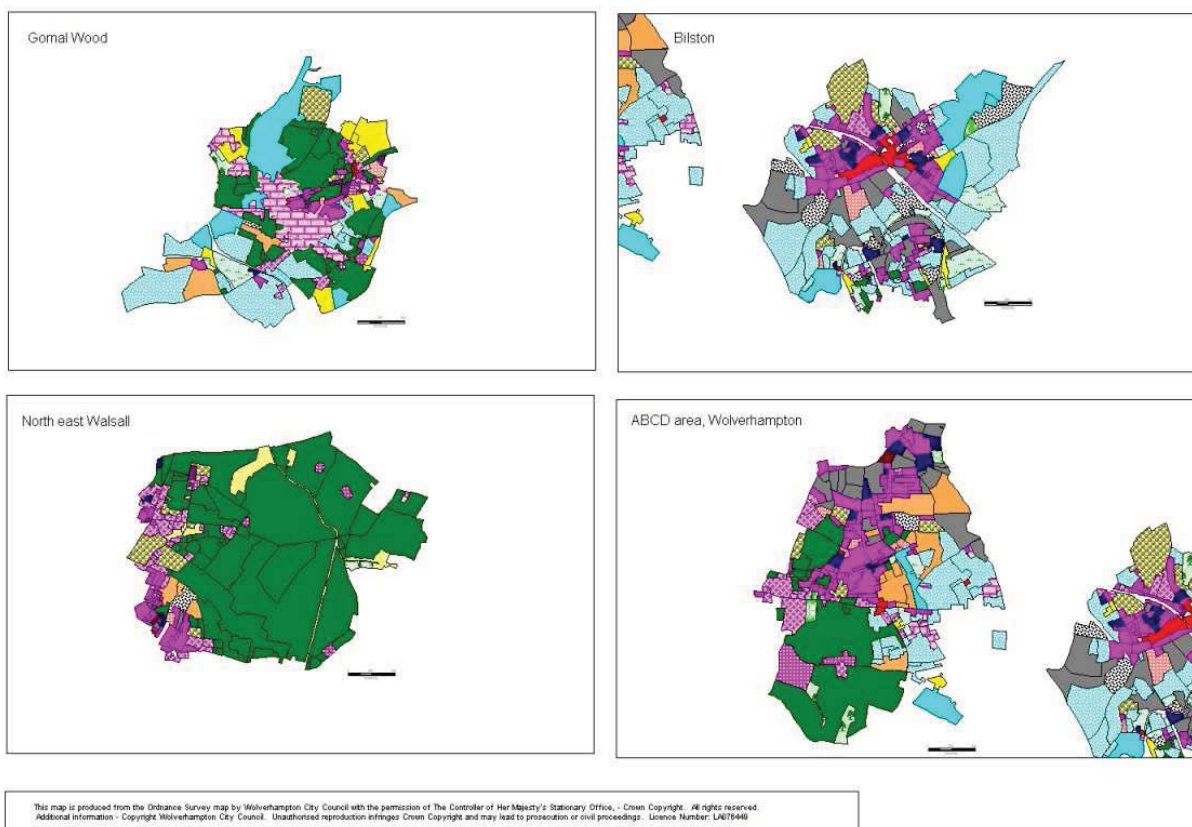
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Map 14 - Previous types, ABCD area



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Map 15 - Previous types



historic core, principally along Church Street and High Street. On the edges of the commercial area are communications sites which include car parks, road roundabouts and the metro line, giving easy access to this area. The previous types map shows that circa 80 years ago this commercial core was mainly bordered by settlement.

The main settlement areas, Bilston and Bradley, differ only slightly in the housing types found within them (Map 7). Bilston contains largely estates of mixed terraces, semis and detached houses with two large areas, one of semi detached houses and the other of detached houses. The town also contains some areas of historic terrace houses and semi detached houses to the north east. Most of the terrace housing within Bilston has been redeveloped with other types of housing, including apartments and high rise flats.

Bradley is dominated by semi detached housing with several large areas of mixed terraces, semis and detached houses. Apartments are again scattered through the settlement area, but there are no high rise flats. It appears that very few historic terraces remain in this area; most of the current housing types occur on

areas of former industry, collieries or derelict land. Some of the former housing has been redeveloped as industrial or public service sites.

7.2.4 Walsall North East

North east Walsall was chosen because it comprises a mixed suburban area and rural belt. At least three medieval moated sites fall within the pilot area and several farms with associated field systems still survive.

The area was also quarried for its limestone including quarries at Parks Pits and at Walsall Arboretum (Hatherton Lake being a flooded quarry). Both these quarries were abandoned around the middle of the 19th century.

Victoria Terrace a street of large semi detached houses also dates to around the middle of the 19th century. From this time the area around the Arboretum (which was laid out in the 1870s as a public park) was developed for housing.

Three current Broad Types dominate: Settlement, Recreational and Field Systems (Map 3). The main

settlement areas are at the west and south west of the pilot area and form part of the suburbs of Walsall, the main settlement of which lies to the south west. The two settlement areas are separated by a large recreational site, Walsall Arboretum.

The northerly settlement is dominated almost entirely by houses with only one recreational site, one religious site and one industrial site contained within it. Around 80 years ago this settlement area was much smaller with more fields. The southerly settlement area is more mixed with several industrial sites, public services and commercial areas. A similar situation is depicted upon the previous types map (Map 8), although both settlement areas were considerably smaller. Small pockets of industry occur, comprising metal works, leather works and brickworks.

Away from the south west corner field systems and recreational sites predominate (Map 3). The pockets of settlement occurring within this area represent the farms with which the field systems are associated. All of the farms are shown on the previous types map (Map 13). Their field systems were formerly more extensive, with fields having been subsequently converted into recreational areas (golf courses, sports fields and public parks) or given over to housing.

One extractive site occurs on the Broad Type map, an historically disused limestone quarry. Other disused limestone quarries are depicted on the previous types map. These have been subsequently developed as houses or recreational sites (Maps 3, 13).

The map of the housing types (Map 8) demonstrates that the northern settlement area on Map 8 is dominated by detached housing with a few semi detached houses, some of which occur upon the previous types map. There are several very small areas of apartments situated among these dominant housing types. These apartments have been built upon the sites of former large detached and semi detached houses, as the previous types map shows. This was clearly an area of largely middle class housing circa 80 years ago presumably having been attracted to this area due to its location on the fringe of Walsall and by the development of the Arboretum.

The southern settlement area also contains semi detached housing and areas of mixed semis and detached houses but the dominant housing type is terraces. These are also present on the previous types map. There is one large area of high rise flats to the very south west which had previously been an

area of terrace housing. The only apartments in this area occur nearest the Arboretum amongst the few detached houses. These have clearly been developed on the sites of older detached and semi detached houses. The southerly settlement area is clearly an area of lower class housing, particularly at its south western side closest to the centre of Walsall.

There is one isolated area of semi detached houses to the north east next to the fields and recreational sites. The other isolated housing area to the south east is dominated by detached houses. None of these houses occur circa 80 years ago when this area was completely agricultural in nature.

7.2.5 All Saints and Blakenhall, Wolverhampton (ABCD area)

Nowadays this area lies within the suburbs of Wolverhampton. It is a deprived and run-down area but there is a current regeneration initiative.

The area was separate from Wolverhampton until the early 20th century but slowly was swallowed up by the then town in a two-way process by development outwards from Wolverhampton and by development within the area.

By the time of the 1st edition Ordnance survey map (1880s) a settlement at Blakenhall was firmly established but was still separated from Wolverhampton by a narrow strip of surviving fields. To the south large houses were spread along Goldthorn Hill between Penn Road and Upper Villiers Street, presumably as a result of the middle classes moving away from the then town centre.

To the east of the ABCD area collieries covered an extensive area (principally Cockshutt colliery and Park colliery). Scattered across this area were small houses set within paddocks, the squatter settlements of the miners set up in the colliery wastelands.

Sunbeam Motors established a factory on Upper Villiers Street in the early 20th century. At this time Wolverhampton was a major centre for engineering and car manufacture.

The Current Broad Type map (Map 4) demonstrates that settlement is the dominant character type but with large areas of industrial sites to the north and fields at the extreme south

The map of previous types (Map 14) shows a more complicated situation. Fields dominate to the south,

settlement in the centre, industrial sites (particularly metal works) to the north and collieries, many disused, and squatter settlement to the south east.

Brickworks are common on the previous types map along the eastern side of the map. These sites have now been re-developed for a variety of purposes – industrial, residential and recreational.

Settlement dominates the centre of the previous types map. The western portion was historically semis or detached housing indicating that it originated as a middle class suburb away from Wolverhampton. Many of the original houses have been redeveloped for industry or public services.

The current map shows one isolated area of housing at its northern end surrounded by communications (car parks and a road roundabout) and industrial sites. This residential area was formerly more extensive with clearance taking place in the 20th century.

Nowadays green space is provided by a number of recreational sites, areas of open land – the sites of former buildings and collieries - and to the south by fields and woodland. The fields and woodland marks the present limit of the spread of Wolverhampton.

The area has a diverse mix of housing types (Map 9) with no one type being particularly dominant, although detached housing is only found in a few small areas at the southern edge of the study area. There is one large estate of mixed semis and detached housing at the south of the study area which sits in former fields and colliery land. Semi-detached housing on its own is also common, particularly on the east and west sides of the study area. Estates of a mix of terraces, semis and detached houses are the most common in the central part of the ABCD area. This central area also contains historic terrace housing as well as one large area of high rise flats. Small areas of apartments are spread throughout the study area.

7.2.6 Overall Analysis

Broad Types (Map 5)

Walsall North East has the fewest Broad Types occurring within it. As befits its edge of town status it contains the most Recreational sites and Field Systems. Recreational sites occur over much smaller, dispersed, areas in the other three areas.

No fields occur at all occur within the Bilston pilot area. Gornal Wood retains small fields in its central area,

while the ABCD area of Wolverhampton contains some at its southern edge. Like Walsall the fields in the ABCD area of Wolverhampton demarcate the edge of the town. Those in Gornal Wood, however, are survivals within a mixed area, sandwiched between Settlement, Industrial and Open Land.

Woodland occurs on all four maps. Gornal Wood still retains quite large areas of woodland, but the remainder only support small areas.

Gornal Wood contains the only active extractive sites. Bilston and the ABCD area contain the largest industrial areas, while Walsall North East contains the least.

Open land is most common in Bilston and Gornal Wood. In both cases this is largely former industrial or extractive sites.

Gornal Wood and the ABCD area contain the largest Utilities sites; a sewage works and a covered reservoir. This may be linked with the fact that both these areas are dominated by settlement.

Current Housing Types (Map 10)

All four maps show a diversity of housing types. Gornal Wood is the only area not to contain any high rise flats, and is the only one to contain irregular housing and cottage type dwellings, indicating previous squatter settlement. Apartments occur fairly equally spread on all four maps, although Walsall North East has the least.

Only Walsall North East and Gornal Wood contain any farms. Gornal Wood has one, while Walsall North East has at least six.

Terrace housing occurs on all four maps. Bilston has the least, in contrast to the situation previously, indicating large-scale 20th century clearance.

Estates of mixed semis and detached housing are most common in the ABCD area, followed by Gornal Wood and Walsall North East; Bilston has the fewest. Areas of semi detached houses are common on all four maps, but detached housing is not so evenly spread. This type of housing, largely indicative of middle class housing, is most common in Walsall North East, and least common in the ABCD area of Wolverhampton.

Estates of mixed terraces, semis and detached houses are most common in Bilston, with some large areas in both the ABCD area and Gornal Wood.

Walsall North East contains only five small areas of these, largely located to the south of the Arboretum.

Previous Types (Map 15)

This map shows the differences between the areas most clearly. The large areas of Fields in all but the extreme west of Walsall North East are striking. Much of this survives today or has been taken over for recreational use. Gornal Wood and the ABCD area also contained large areas of Fields. Around half of this survives; the remainder has been largely taken over for housing.

Bilston was the most heavily industrialised area, with significant levels of industrial development at Gornal Wood and along the eastern side of the ABCD area. All three of these areas had large areas of disused and active quarries, as well as metal industries, chiefly ironworking, and brickworks. Walsall North East contained little industry.

Gornal Wood contained large areas of squatter settlement. Although the buildings do not necessarily survive the settlement pattern still largely survives. Squatter settlement was also present around Bradley at the southern end of the Bilston and around Rough Hills in the south-east of the ABCD area.

Walsall North East was the most agricultural area of the four, but contained areas of settlement at the south west. Within this area semis and detached housing were most common to the north, while terraces dominated to the south. Gornal Wood still had rural aspects to it with fields surviving around an historic core of squatter settlement. Bilston had no Fields surviving around it. The house types at Bilston varied from Gornal Wood, being dominated by terraces, with one area of semis and detached housing to the north. Settlement at Bradley to the south was less intensive but where present was again primarily terraces. Within the ABCD area terraced housing was most common with smaller areas of semis and detached housing, mainly to the west.

General

A comparison of the maps with the geology of the area demonstrates that the landscape character types, especially for the earlier periods, are to a large extent dependent on the underlying rock structure. Hence Bilston, Gornal Wood and the south east quarter of the ABCD area lie on the coal measures

and accordingly their previous character types are dominated by collieries and by the ironworking industry.

Walsall North East lies entirely off the coal measures. Its underlying geology is largely composed of Wenlock shale with small pockets of limestone. This area has largely remained farmland, but with limestone quarries where this outcrops.

The landscape character types, particularly the housing, are not entirely dependent upon geology, however. The clearest example of this is the differing settlement pattern at Bilston, Gornal Wood and the south-east quarter of the ABCD area in Wolverhampton. As we have seen all three areas lie largely upon the coal measures. At Bilston, however, there was a long-established settlement before the development of large-scale industry. Hence the industrial workers were largely housed within the existing settlement or by expansion of the settlement core, creating a tightly nucleated settlement pattern, largely of terraced housing. The population increased threefold within the first forty years of the 19th century from 6,914 in 1801 to 20,181 in 1841. One result of this was a devastating outbreak of cholera in 1832 which killed over 700 people – around 5% of the population.

At Gornal Wood and the ABCD area there was no large existing settlement and housing was able to spread in a random fashion creating a typical squatter-type settlement pattern. Even here, however, the subsequent development of the two areas differed for the basic pattern remains at Gornal Wood while in the ABCD area it was swept away by the expansion of Wolverhampton.

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Aerial photography covering the four Black Country boroughs

7.4 WOLVERHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL HEATH AND SAFETY POLICY

For further details contact the author.



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More details of the Black Country's programme to
characterise the local historic landscape can be found at:
www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/hlc