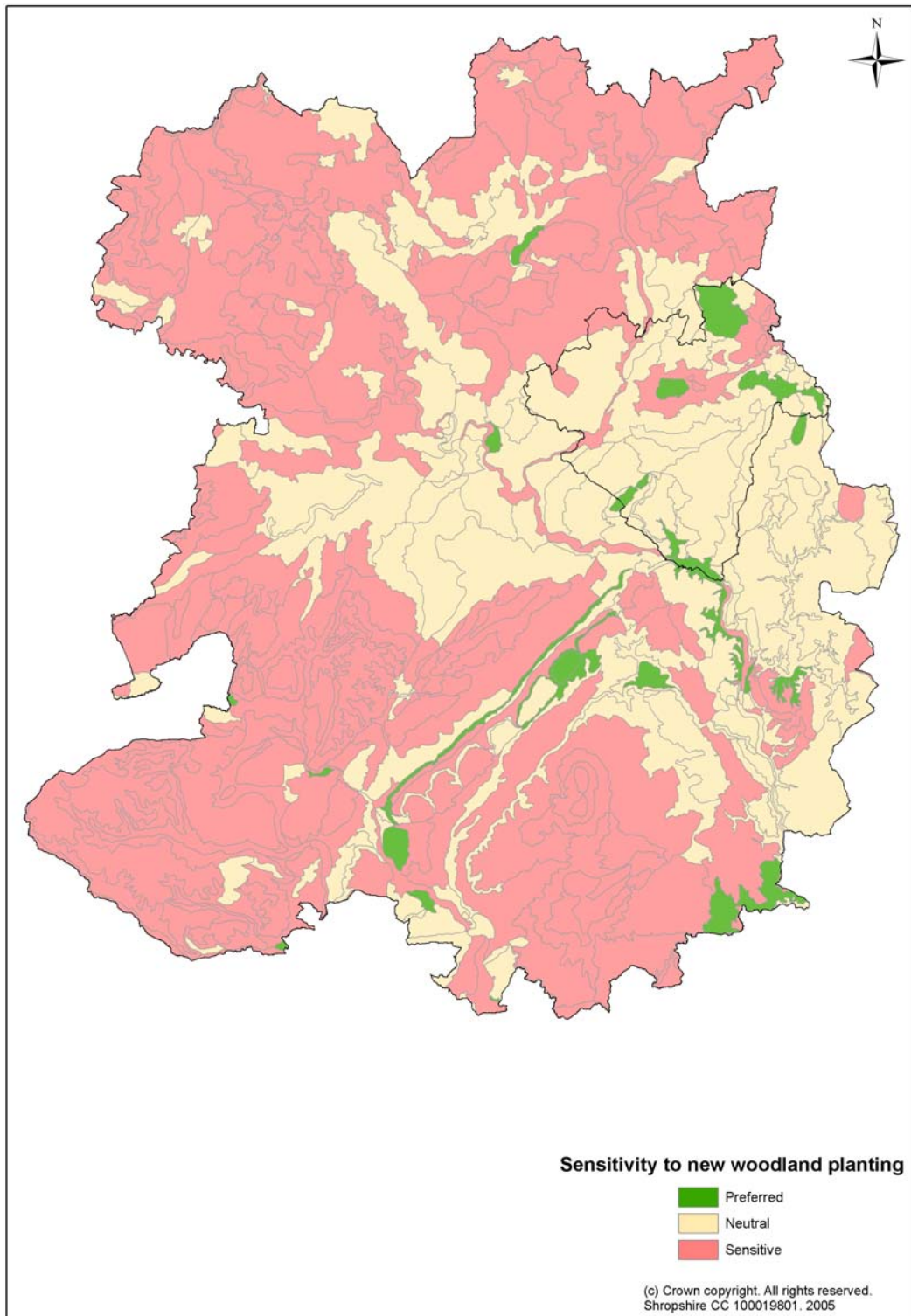# Appendix 6

Figure 1 – Historic Environment Theme Woodland Opportunities Map for Shropshire (based on HLC data).

Sensitivity to new woodland planting
- Preferred
- Neutral
- Sensitive

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<u>**West Midlands Woodland Opportunities Map: Historic Landscape Theme
for Shropshire .**
Draft Decision Rule Statement.</u>

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November 2006

The Shropshire component of the *'Woodland Opportunities Map: Cultural Heritage Classification based on approach agreed with local stakeholders.'* map is based upon the Shropshire Historic Landscape Character (HLC) assessment. It uses HLC data to determine the likely sensitivity of the historic character of the landscape to new woodland planting under Forestry Commission's English Woodland Grant Scheme. It was produced using a modified version of the methodology that was developed by Staffordshire County Council for the first version of the Woodland Opportunities Map. It does **not**, however, take into account any historic environment designations (e.g. SSSIs, NNRs, SAMs etc.).

Determining the sensitivity of HLC types.

Sensitivity weightings were assigned to each HLC type by making a judgement based upon the degree of 'time depth'[1] they exhibit, and their likely sensitivity to woodland planting (see Table 1). The key assumptions that underlie these judgements are as follows: -

- Most HLC types within the 'unimproved land' category are likely to be sensitive, except where they are the product of recent change.
- Ancient field patterns are likely to be sensitive to woodland planting; more recent ones less so. Exceptions are likely to exist, however, where a field pattern is a product of recent change.
- Woodland HLC Types are likely to be preferred, particularly recent plantations. Some site specific sensitivities may exist, however, in relation to ancient woodlands, which often contain archaeological earthworks of varying dates.
- Wetlands and floodplain fields in the 'Water and valley floor' category are likely to be sensitive. Those involving open water are unlikely to attract applications for planting schemes and are therefore neutral.
- 'Industrial' HLC types are likely to be either preferred or, in the case of those of greater historic interest, neutral.
- Sensitivities may exist for military HLC types because of their historic interest, although they originated in the 20th century. They have, therefore, been assigned to the neutral category.
- Historic parks and gardens are likely to be sensitive, whilst more recent 'ornamental, parkland and recreational' types less so.

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[1] 'Time depth' represents the visible evidence for past phases of landscape evolution.

- Because planting applications are unlikely to be forthcoming for sites occupied by residential or retail buildings the settlement HLC types are neutral.
- Older orchards are likely to be sensitive, more recent ones less so.

Table 1 Sensitivity of HLC Types to new woodland planting.

Preferred	Neutral	Sensitive
Active stone quarry	Active military instillation	Drained wetlands
Broadleaved ancient woodland	Artificial lake/ pond	Golf course
Broadleaved plantation	Disused barracks	Heathland
Broadleaved woodland with sinuous boundaries	Disused lead/ copper mine	Irregular squatter enclosure
Colliery (disused and modern opencast)	Disused ordnance depot	Large assarts with sinuous boundaries
Coniferous plantation	Former military airfield	Miscellaneous floodplain fields
Coniferous woodland with sinuous boundaries	Historic settlement core	Moorland
Disused stone quarry	Industrial complex	Moss/ raised bog
Golf course	Large irregular fields	Other common
Mixed ancient woodland	Late clearance/ assarts	Other small fields
Mixed plantation	Natural open water	Other small rectilinear fields (when NOT later than 'post-1914')
Mixed woodland with sinuous boundaries	Other gardens and recreational	Paddocks/closes (when NOT later than' post-1914')
Other plantation	Other industrial	Parks and gardens
Other unimproved ground	Other large rectilinear fields	Piecemeal enclosure
Other woodland with sinuous boundaries	Other parklands, gardens and recreational	Planned enclosure (when NOT later than' post-1914' OR Previous Attribute Group = 'Unimproved Ground' OR'Ornamental, parkland)
Other woods with sinuous boundaries	Other small rectilinear fields (when later than 'post-1914')	Pre-1880s orchard
Replanted ancient woodland	Paddocks/ closes (when later than 'post-1914')	Rectilinear squatter enclosure
Sand/ gravel quarry	Planned enclosure (when later than' post-1914' OR Previous Attribute Group not = 'Unimproved Ground' OR 'Ornamental, parkland)	Reorganised piecemeal enclosure (when NOT later than 'post-1914')
Very large post-war fields (except when Previous Attribute Group = 'Unimproved Ground').	Post 1880s settlement	Small assarts
	Post-1880s orchard	Small irregular fields (when NOT later than 'post-1914')
	Post-1880s settlement	Unimproved enclosed hill pasture
	Pre-1880s settlement	Unimproved open hill pasture
	Pre1880s settlement	Very large post-war fields
	Redeveloped pre-1880s settlement	
	Reorganised piecemeal enclosure (when NOT later than 'post-1914')	
	Reservoir	
	Small irregular fields(when later than 'post-1914['[)	
	Sports field	

Each HLC polygon was classified in this way by firstly inserting an additional field called 'WOM_Sens' into the Attributes Table into a copy of the HLC GIS shapefile. A definition query was then run against each HLC type and a numeric sensitivity code was inserted into 'WOM_Sens' field as appropriate (see Table 2).

Table 2 HLC and LDU Sensitivity Codes

Level of Sensitivity	Sensitivity Code
Sensitive	3
Neutral	2
Preferred	1

Once this exercise was completed the codes were used to produce a sensitivity legend, so that HLC sensitivity could be displayed graphically.

Assigning HLC sensitivity weightings to the Landscape Description Units

The next stage involved using the HLC Type sensitivity information to assign a sensitivity weighting to the LDUs[2]. This was done by calculating the proportion of each LDU that had been assigned to each of the HLC sensitivity categories, firstly by area and subsequently as a percentage. An additional series of fields were inserted into the LDU Attribute Table to contain each of these calculations. The percentage calculations were then used to assign an historic environment sensitivity weighting (using the same numeric coding system as before – see Table 2) to each of the LDUs using the following rules: -

Where HLC Types >50% sensitive = Sensitive
Where HLC Types >50 preferred and HLC Types <20% sensitive = Preferred
Where HLC Types >50% neutral = Neutral

Once this initial sort has been completed, those LDU that remained unclassified were assigned a sensitivity weighting using the following rules: -

Where HLC Types sensitive % > HLC Types neutral % AND HLC Types sensitive % > HLC Types preferred % = Sensitive
Where HLC Types neutral %> HLC Types sensitive % AND HLC Types neutral % > HLC Types preferred % = Neutral
HLC Types preferred % > HLC Types neutral % AND HLC Types <20% sensitive = Preferred
HLC Types preferred % > HLC Types neutral AND HLC Types >20% sensitive = Neutral

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[2] Landscape Description Units – the basic data holding unit for the Landscape Character Assessment, which represent distinct and relatively homogenous units of land.

The sensitivity weightings for the LDUs are defined[3] as follows: -

Preferred - Woodland creation will generally fit well with cultural heritage and is encouraged

Neutral - Woodland creation should generally fit well with cultural heritage but sensitivities exist

Sensitive - Woodland creation will generally **not** fit with cultural heritage and could affect it

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[3] As published in the *Guidance notes for Woodland Opportunities Map (WOM) version 1* (Forestry Commission, March 2006).