

Appendix 5

Comments on the Historic Environment in the Proposed Morda (north of Maesbrook) Wet Washland (Site 7).

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Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

There is one Scheduled Ancient Monument within the proposed Morda Wet Washland (see Fig. 1) – a 380m section of Wat's Dyke (National Monument No. 33873), which lies immediately to the east of the sewage works at Mile Oak. Wat's Dyke is a putative early medieval linear earthwork, which is held to run from Besingwerk Abbey on the Dee estuary, southwards to Maesbury. It comprises of a large ditch, up to 5m wide and 2m deep, with an accompanying bank on the eastern side.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments are protected under the under the terms of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Carrying out certain works to such sites requires permission, in the form of scheduled monuments consent, from the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. Part 2.2c of the Act, which relates to control of works affecting scheduled monuments, states that this includes "...any flooding or tipping operations on land in, on or under which there is a scheduled monument". It also applies to works that will affect the setting of a Scheduled Ancient Monument. It is, therefore, strongly recommended that advice is sort from the relevant Inspector of Ancient Monuments at English Heritage at an early stage in the proposed scheme.

Listed Buildings.

Buildings deemed to be of special architectural or historic interest are 'listed' and safeguarded under the terms of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. There are six such listed buildings within the proposed Morda Wet Washland, details of which are summarised in Table 1 below. Most of these buildings are situated along the fringes of the proposed wet washland, often within larger hamlets or farm complexes that are likely to place other restraints upon the proposed scheme (see Fig. 1). It is unlikely that implementation of the washland scheme would result in physical intervention in the fabric of these buildings, and would not therefore require Listed Building Consent. However, it would still be advisable to consult with the Conservation Officer at the relevant district council (in this case Oswestry Borough Council) in those cases where a building might be flooded, or where measures are taken to prevent flooding of a listed building.

Table 1 – Summary of listed buildings in the proposed Morda Wet Washland.

Name	National Grid Ref.	Status/ Grade	Listing ref. ¹	ER PRN no. ²
Morton Bridge	SJ 31342319	II	1574-0/7/6	19320
Barn approx. 15m north-west of The Fields	SJ 30762521	II	1602-0/6/138	19859
Ball Mill	SJ 30412652	II	1602-0/6/176	15525
Maesbury House	SJ 30372570	II	1602-0/6/185	18751
Pump and basin approx 2m south of Maesbury House	SJ 30372569	II	1602-0/6/186	17344
St. Winifred's Well	SJ 32222443	II*	1602- 0/10/222	13169

Other Archaeological Sites and Historic Buildings.

Twelve other archaeological sites are known to lie within or partially within the area of the proposed washland, details of which are summarised in Table 2. Their locations are shown in Figure 2.

Guidance that safeguards important archaeological sites that are not designated as Scheduled Ancient Monuments is given in PPG16. Two of the main principles embodied within PPG 16 are that such sites should be physically preserved *in situ*, and that their settings should not be adversely affected by development. Where archaeological sites are known to exist that will be affected by a proposed development it is expected that the developer provides an assessment of them **before** a planning application is determined. Where such an assessment demonstrates that preservation *in situ* is either not required or impractical the developer is expected to conduct an investigation that records the remains prior to their destruction.

The proposed wet washland scheme is unlikely to threaten the sites that lie within it with destruction, except in any places where flood protection measures are to be constructed. However, in some instances it is possible that seasonal flooding might have an adverse effect upon a sites level of preservation and/or upon its setting. It is, therefore, suggested that advice is sought from the Planning Archaeologist at Shropshire County Council (currently in the process of being appointed) at an early stage and, where necessary, assessments of the likely impact of flooding is undertaken.

¹ The 'List ref.' refers the volume no. of the relevant List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, followed the sequence, map and item numbers.

² The 'ER PRN no.' represents the reference number that has been assigned to the building within the Shropshire Environmental Record.

Fig. 1 – Map showing the distribution of Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Listed Buildings in relation to the proposed Morda wet washland.

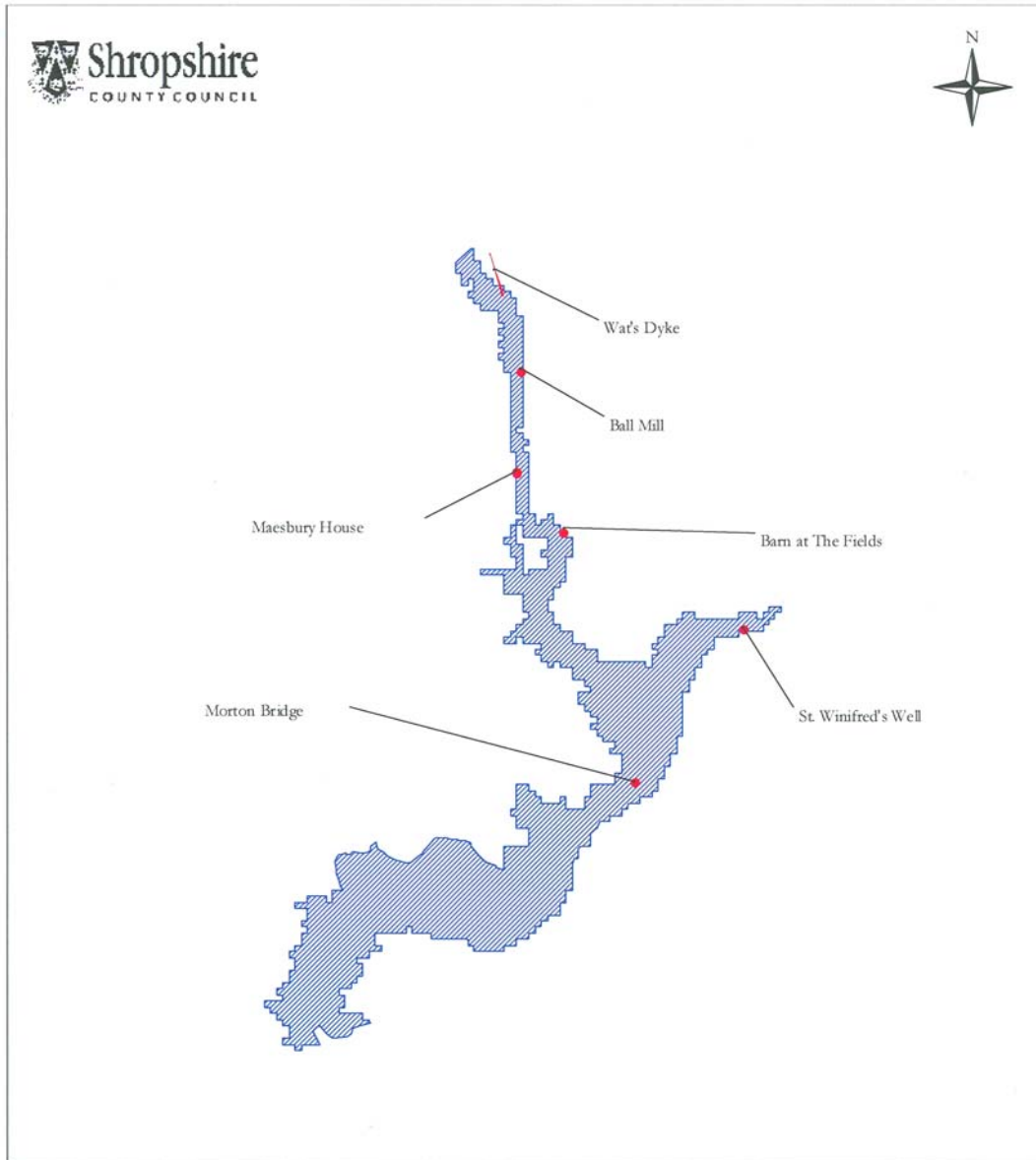
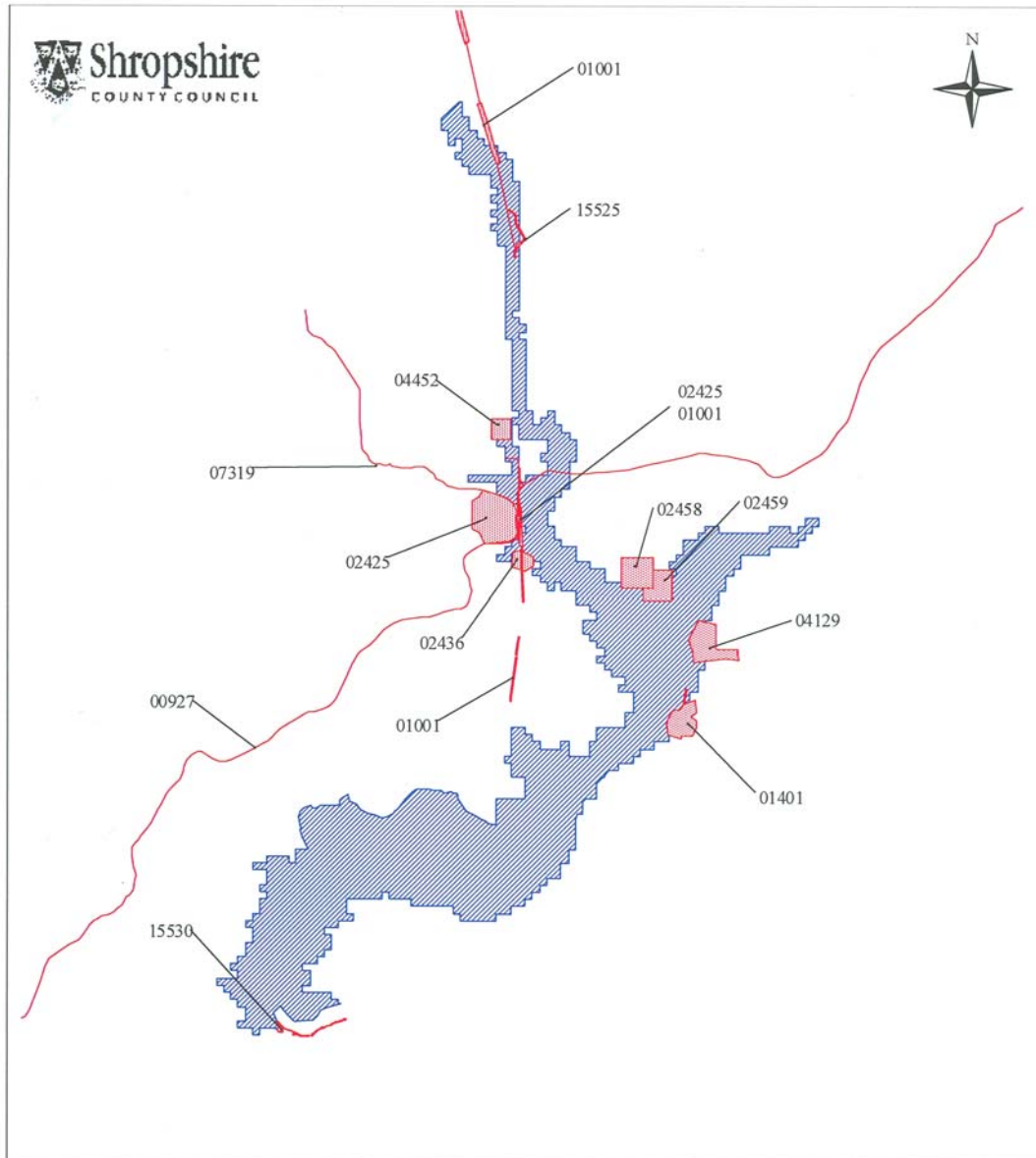


Table 2 – Summary of other archaeological sites and historic buildings in the proposed Morda Wet Washland.

ER PRN ref.	Name	Nat. Grid Ref.	Type	Period
00927	Montgomery Canal	N/A	Canal	Post Medieval (1700 AD – 1913 AD)
01001	Wat's Dyke	N/A	Dyke (Defence)/ Boundary Bank/ Frontier Defence	Migration (410 AD to 799 AD)
01401	Cropmark enclosure 0.6km NW of Osbaston	SJ 31562327	Enclosure	Early Iron Age to Roman (800 BC? To 409 AD?)
02425	Morton Farm	SJ 30262463	Ditch/ Field System	?
02436	Cropmark enclosure 400m east of Morton Farm	SJ 30452432	Polygonal Enclosure	Early Iron Age to Roman (800 BC? To 409 AD?)
02458	Cropmark enclosure 400m south-west of Lower Waen Farm	SJ 31252424	Circular Enclosure/ Ditch	Early Iron Age to Roman (800 BC? To 409 AD?)
02459	Cropmark enclosure 400m south of Lower Waen Farm	SJ 31402416	Circular Enclosure/ Ditch	Early Iron Age to Roman (800 BC? To 409 AD?)
04129	Cropmark 200m north of Maesbury Hall	SJ 31792377	Linear Feature	?
04452	Newbridge Enclosure	SJ 30452486	Oval enclosure	?
07318	Montgomery Canal (branch to mill at Maesbury Hall)	SJ 30452486	Canal	Post Medieval (1800 AD – 1913 AD)
07319	Gronwen Colliery (Morda) Trameway	SJ 28922607	Mineral Railway	Post Medieval (1800 AD – 1913 AD)
15525	Ball Mill (including mill race)	SJ 30412652	Building	N/A
15530	Llwyntidmon Mill and attached house, Llwyntidmon	SJ 28772108	Building	N/A

Fig. 2 – Map showing the distribution of other archaeological sites and historic buildings in relation to the proposed Morda wet washland.



Historic Landscape Character.

In order to assess the historic landscape character of the proposed Morda Wet Washland an additional 'buffer' of 500m was created around the edge of washland area within the GIS environment. This was then cross-referenced with the interim results of the Shropshire Historic Landscape Character Assessment (Wigley 2002). Figure 3 presents the results of this exercise. The definitions of the various different historic landscape character types are given in Table 3.

Fig. 3 – Map showing the historic landscape character of the Morda Wet Washland and the surrounding area.

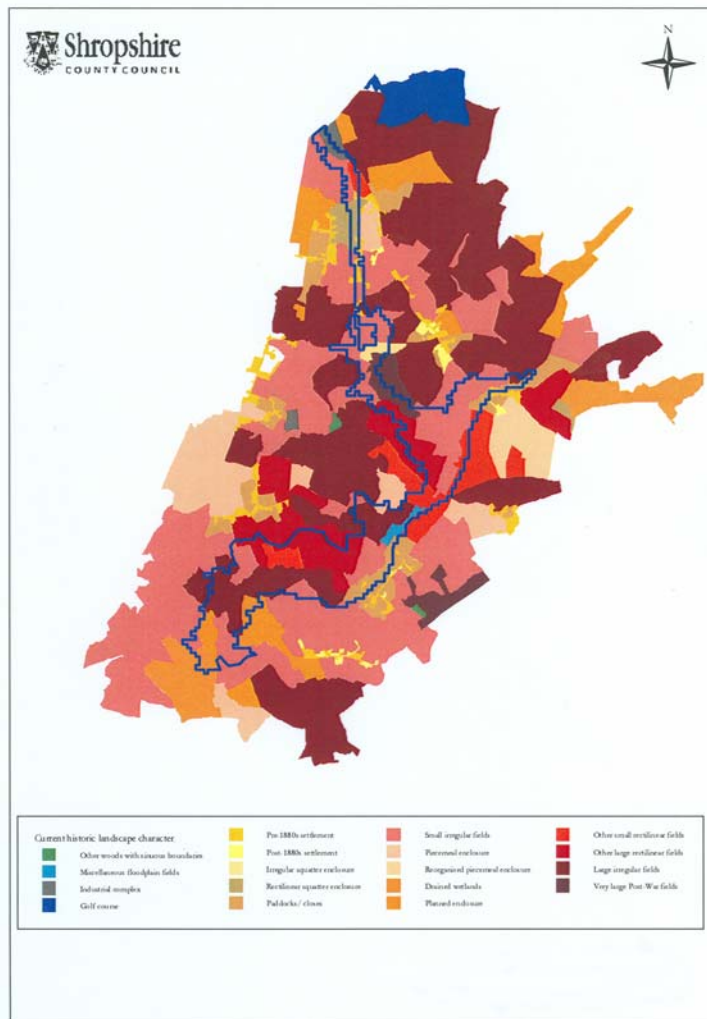


Table 3 – Definitions of the historic landscape character types in the proposed Morda Wet Washland.

Historic Landscape Character Type	Definition
Other woods with sinuous boundaries	Woods that either have no Forestry Commission composition designation (e.g. because they are < 2ha in size) OR have been identified as either having been felled or as consisting of young trees. However, the boundaries of the woods are predominantly sinuous.
Miscellaneous floodplain fields	Fields on river floodplains that do not fall into any of the more diagnostic Fieldscales categories. The fields in these locations will traditionally have been used as meadows. By the mid 17 th century the lush pastures in these areas were being used to fatten cattle (Edwards 1989). They may preserve earthwork remains of water meadows, which in Shropshire were created from the late 16 th century onwards.
Industrial complex	Modern industrial complexes. Includes industrial estates, large factories and sewage farms. Most will date to the latter half of the 20 th century.
Golf course	Modern golf courses identified as such on current maps.
Pre-1880s settlement	This category defines the extent of a settlement as marked on the 1 st ed. 6" OS map. In most cases this will effectively define the historic settlement core. However, for those settlements covered by the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey / Shrewsbury Urban Archaeological Database, this category will provide a measure of settlement growth since the period defined by the historic core (e.g. either over the course of the post-medieval and 19 th century OR over the course of the 19 th century, depending on the dates assigned by the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey to their settlement core).
Post-1880s settlement	This category defines the limit of a settlement shown on the current 1:10,000 HLCA base maps. Where other settlement categories exist, it provides a measure of settlement growth over the past 120 years (i.e. since the 1 st ed. 6" map).
Irregular squatter enclosure	Field systems principally comprising small irregular fields with sinuous or curvilinear boundaries. The overall field pattern has an unordered, 'organic', often amorphous, appearance. These areas are often associated with networks of lanes and access tracks and small cottages. In addition, they may be associated with mining, quarrying or other industrial activity. They are usually indicative of encroachment onto common land in the post-medieval or industrial periods.

Rectilinear squatter enclosure	Field systems principally comprising small rectilinear fields with straight boundaries. The overall field pattern has a more planned appearance than in areas of 'irregular squatter enclosure'. These areas are often associated with networks of lanes and access tracks and small cottages. In addition, they may be associated with mining, quarrying or other industrial activity. They are usually indicative of encroachment onto common land in the post-medieval or industrial periods.
Paddocks/closes	Small irregular fields distinguished from 'other small fields' character type by their location on the edge of settlements. In many cases these probably represent small meadows and paddocks.
Small irregular fields	Areas of small irregular fields that cannot be assigned to one of the other historic landscape character types. Includes small meadows and closes that do not occur next to settlement boundaries.
Piecemeal enclosure	Piecemeal enclosure can be defined as those fields created out of the medieval open fields by means of informal, verbal agreements between farmers who wished to consolidate their holdings (Johnston 1996). Within Shropshire this process appears to have been well under way by the late medieval period, and a number of 16 th century commentators regarded the county as largely enclosed (Kettle 1989: 84). These areas have field patterns comprised of small irregular or rectilinear fields. At least two boundaries will have 's-curve' or 'dog-leg' morphology, suggesting that they follow the boundaries of former medieval field strips.
Re-organised piecemeal enclosure	Areas of either small irregular or rectilinear fields that have lost 10 or more field boundaries since the 1 st ed. 6" map, OR areas of large irregular or rectilinear fields. In both cases there will be at least two field boundaries that exhibit 's-curve' or 'dog-leg' morphology. The field patterns in these areas result from the amalgamation of fields created through piecemeal enclosure. In most cases it can be demonstrated that this has occurred since the publication of the 1 st ed. 6" OS map.
Drained wetlands	The field patterns in these areas can be small or large, irregular or rectilinear. However, most of their boundaries will be defined by the course of drainage ditches, and some field boundaries may also follow water courses. The drainage of wetlands was underway in Shropshire by the 16 th century, after which some of these more extensive areas (e.g. the Weald Moors) began to specialise in livestock fattening (Rowley 1989). Some drained wetlands (e.g. Baggy Moor) were brought into cultivation during the later 18 th century and drainage operations and improvements continued into the 19 th and 20 th century (Leah <i>et al</i> 1998).

Planned enclosure	These areas are characterised by either small or large fields that share very straight boundaries, giving them a geometric, planned appearance. Laid out by surveyors, these field patterns result from late enclosure during the 18 th and 19 th centuries. This historic landscape character type, therefore, includes commons that were enclosed by Act of Parliament. Although this process was relatively insignificant in Shropshire when compared with other counties, it still resulted in the enclosure of approximately 25,800 ha (or 7.5% of the county) (Baugh and Hill 1989: 171).
Other small rectilinear fields	Areas of small rectilinear fields that cannot be assigned to one of the other historic landscape character types. Includes small meadows and closes that do not occur next to settlement boundaries.
Other large rectilinear fields	Areas of large rectilinear fields that have a significant number (i.e. as either predominant or secondary boundary morphology) of sinuous boundaries, and which can not be assigned to one of the other historic landscape character types. Includes some field patterns that have been created through the amalgamation of fields in the period since the publication of the 1 st ed. 6" OS map.
Large irregular fields	Areas of large irregular fields that have a significant number (i.e. either predominant or secondary boundary morphology) of sinuous boundaries, and which cannot be assigned to one of the other historic landscape character types. Includes some field patterns that have been created through the amalgamation of fields in the period since the publication of the 1 st ed. 6" OS map.
Very large Post-War fields	Very large fields (e.g. > 8.1ha and often significantly larger) created through the amalgamation of fields since the publication of the 1 st ed. 6" OS map. Almost certainly the result of Post-War agricultural 'improvements' designed to meet the requirements of intensive arable cultivation.

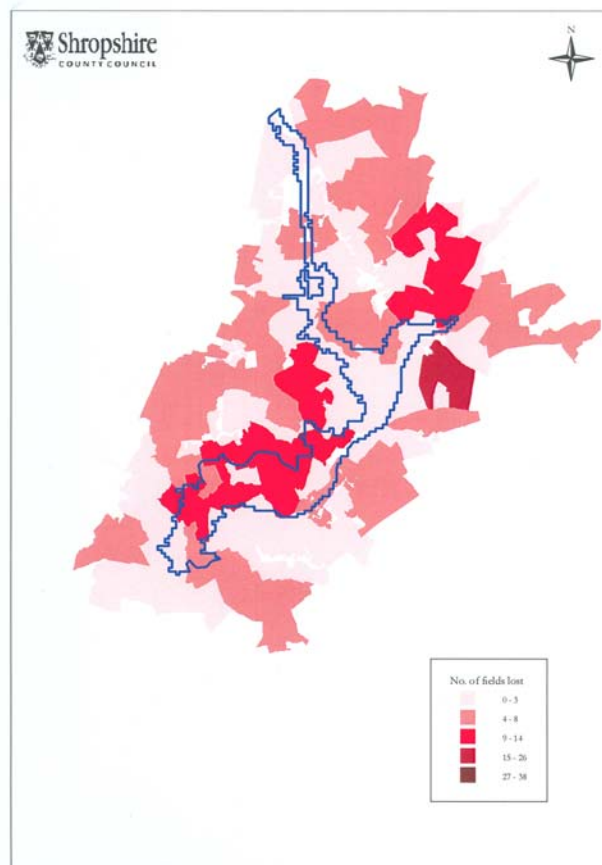
As we can see from Figure 3, the area both within and around the proposed wet washland is dominated by two different historic landscape character types: 'small irregular fields', and 'large irregular fields'. The topography of the area (i.e. low relief with large areas of floodplain and gently sloping valley side) make it ideal for meadowlands and pasture. Examination of field loss since the publication of the 1st edition of the 6" Ordnance Survey map (c 1880) reveals that field loss over much of the area has been low – moderate (see Fig. 4). In many of the areas of 'small irregular fields' the sinuosity of the field boundaries, together with the below average loss of fields since the 1880s, suggests that these patterns are potentially quite ancient, perhaps dating back as far as the late medieval period. The field loss data also suggests that, in those areas with moderate field loss between the hamlets of Crickheath and The Wood, some of the blocks of 'large irregular

fields' have been created through field amalgamation in the second half of the 20th century. The same applies to the areas of 'other large rectilinear fields' in this part of the wet washland area.

A change in the nature of the field patterns is discernable as one moves away from the edges of the wet washland, onto slightly higher ground and better drained soils. In these areas, blocks of 'piecemeal enclosure' and 'reorganised piecemeal enclosure' denote the existence of former medieval open field systems. The present field pattern was probably created through early enclosure of the former field strips, on a piecemeal basis, at some point between the late medieval and early post-medieval periods (i.e. between approximately the later 14th and the later 17th centuries). Subsequent reorganisation of the field pattern in some places since the publication of the 1st edition 6" Ordnance Survey map has produced areas of 'reorganised piecemeal enclosure'.

The area of 'planned enclosure' immediately to the east of the hamlet of Gwern y brenin, near the northern end of the washland, may result from the enclosure of formerly open

Fig. 4 – Map showing numbers of fields lost since the publication of the 1st ed. 6" OS map in the Morda Wet Washland and the surrounding area.



common land. The same might apply to the area of 'smaller irregular fields' that lies immediately to the east and south-east of the hamlet of Morton

Common. In both cases, however, further research is required to confirm these suggestions.

The settlement pattern in the area appears to consist almost exclusively of linear settlements, which stretch out along the roads, and dispersed farmsteads. Most of these settlements were in existence by the 1880s, and have not expanded to any significant degree since. However, it would be unwise to speculate when these settlements were first established without undertaking more detailed research.

The potential impact of the wet washland upon the historic landscape character of this area is potentially quite slight, given that much of the area was probably traditionally used for meadows and pasture land. It seems likely that the area within the proposed washland may have been more prone to prolonged winter flooding in the past, prior to drainage improvements in the second half of the 20th century. This said, it is desirable that further amalgamation of fields is avoided in those parts of the washlands that have 'small irregular fields' and low field loss since the 1880s. These field patterns are potentially ancient, and the landscape character of these areas would suffer as a result of further hedgerow loss.

It is also desirable that, where earthwork remains of water meadows and other water management features exist, they are **not** damaged by the implementation of the scheme. A significant number of drains, small water courses and mill races are visible on both the modern and the historic Ordnance Survey maps. It would be advisable, therefore, to undertake a more detailed archaeological assessment of the extent and level of preservation of these, and other now features, which relate to the history of water management in this area. If these do survive to any degree, restoring them as part of a flood management strategy could have potential benefits for the quality of both the historic and the natural environment in the wet washland zone.

References.

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