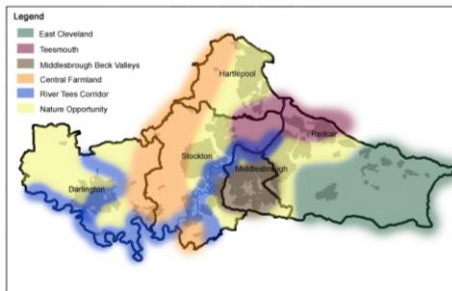


Biodiversity Opportunity Area: Central Farmland – Wynyard Woodland Chain CF BOA III

1. Background



The Tees Valley can be divided into five broad areas of landscape type. The BOA's comprise the key areas for potential biodiversity enhancement within these larger areas where targeted maintenance, restoration, creation, mitigation and offsetting measures should be adopted to enhance biodiversity and in turn help to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services. Collectively the BOA's form a strategic network, representing a significant environmental asset for the Tees Valley.

TVNP Priority 1: Protect and enhance the geodiversity and biodiversity of the Tees Valley ensuring the conservation, restoration and creation of key landscapes and habitats, including mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

TVNP Priority 2: Work at a landscape scale to restore and deliver robust ecological networks that demonstrate a wide range of environmental, social and economic outcomes.

NPPF: para. 109: The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: protecting and enhancing valued landscapes...; recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services; minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, ...establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;

NPPF: para. 117: plan for biodiversity at a landscape-scale across local authority boundaries; identify and map components of the local ecological networks (including) areas identified by local partnerships for habitat restoration or creation; preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations

2. Overview:

The BOA falls within the [NCA Profile: 23 Tees Lowlands \(NE439\)](#)

Characteristics of Central Farmland area: Patchwork agricultural landscape including areas of increasingly scarce unimproved neutral grassland, ponds, hedgerows, small wetlands, a broken corridor of woodland from Crimdon Dene to Wynyard to community forests and the river Tees. A large percentage of many breeding populations of bird species of key importance in the Tees Valley are present within this Landscape Area

Characteristics of BOA: An area of mixed woodland with incised wooded river valleys historic parkland and satellite nature reserves to the south. The area of mixed woodland contains both commercial timber plantations and semi-natural deciduous woodland. These woodland blocks are broken up by rolling arable fields, with residential and industrial developments encroaching on the woodland plantations and rural landscape. At its centre is the historic Wynyard Park a Grade 2* parkland surrounding Wynyard Hall.

landform along Brierley Beck; Incised Wooded Valleys (W1) Parkland (W2) Wynyard Wooded Farmland (W3) Fringe Farmland (T1) Valley Landscapes (T2) Thorpe Beck Valley Elevated Open Farmland (T3)

Local authority areas: Hartlepool Borough Council; Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council in the Tees Valley. Sedgefield and Peterlee Districts of County Durham border it to the west with some small areas of woodland included.

Landscape Character Assessment – Stockton

Stockton Landscape Character Assessment areas: Wynyard & Thorpe & Billingham Beck Valley

3. Profile:

3.1 Geology and Soils:

Sherwood Sandstone Group, Roxby Group mudstone and siltstone to the south of Crookfoot reservoir, Ford formation dolomite to the north. Surface geology: alluvium and glaciofluvial deposits along the river valleys surrounding area predominantly Devensian Till. Soils mostly slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils with loamy and clayey floodplain soils with naturally high groundwater along Billingham Beck.

3.2 Biodiversity:

3.2.1 Statutory-designated sites: [Central Farmland Area Designations](#)

SSSI: Whitton Bridge Pasture – favourable condition

LNR: Stillington Forest Park; Thorpe Wood

3.2.2: Non-statutory sites,

LWS: LS.ST50 Thorpe Wood; LS.ST52 Wynyard Woodland Park; HP26 West Carr Plantation, HP15 Close Wood Complex, HP39 High Newton Hanzard Verges & HP1 North Burn Marsh. Crookfoot Reservoir Amerston Gill, Pawton Hill Gill

LGS: Gravel Hole

Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest: Wynyard Park

Sites of biological interest (from Phase 1): High Wood, Cow Pasture Wood. Wynyard woodlands: Brierley Wood (woodland), Brierley Wood (grassland), Stillington pond, Whinny Moor Plantation, Horseshoe plantation, Brierley Beck Wood, Flat Wood, Wash Plantation, Bottle Hill Woods. Tilery Wood Hut Ponds, Castle Eden Walkway bomb pond, Wynyard Lake, Thorpe Pond, Thorpe Wood perimeter pond, Fulthorpe Farm Pond, Warren Farm verge, Norton Foundry Tip, White House Plantation.

3.2.3: Priority habitats and priority species NERC Act S.41

[Central Farmland Area habitats and species;](#) [Priority habitats and species in the Tees Valley](#)

Priority habitats: deciduous woodland; wood pasture and parkland; arable field margin; hedgerows; ponds (taken from Priority Habitat Inventory for England)

Tees Valley BAP Priority species: Great crested newt, Harvest Mouse, Brown Hare, Barn Owl, Corn Bunting, Grey Partridge, Tree Sparrow.

S41 bird species: Bullfinch, Dunnock, House Sparrow, Lapwing, Linnet, Marsh Tit, Reed Bunting, Skylark, Starling, Willow Tit, Yellowhammer.

3.2.4: Further important habitats. unimproved neutral grassland, roadside verges, churchyard & cemeteries.

3.2.5: Further important species. Globeflower introduced to HP26 West Carr Plantation.

3.2.6: Ancient woodland presence: present including PAWS

3.2.7: landscape-scale conservation activity: Stockton Borough Council on LNRs & country parks, LWS and Honey Pot Wood. Hartlepool Countryside Volunteers are active throughout the borough (managed by Hartlepool BC).

3.3 Archaeology:

Scheduled monuments: St Thomas a Becket's church (remains); Medieval Farmstead and Irregular Open Field System at High Burntoft Farm

3.4 Access:

3.4.1. Country Parks: Wynyard Woodland Park;

3.4.2 Cycleways: National Cycle Route 1/ EuroVelo route 12 including Castle Eden Walkway

3.4.3 PRow: Public footpaths & bridleways

3.5 Key Ecosystem Services:

Water provision (abstraction); agricultural production; forestry production; energy generation (wind turbines, solar farm) recreational (fishing, walking, cycling, equestrian, golf, nature observation, astronomy); pollination services; flooding regulation

[Tees Valley Green Infrastructure Strategy](#) and any open space categories

3.6 Socio-Economic:

3.6.1 Employment: Wynyard business park, leisure (hospitality, golf, fishing, walking) visitor attractions, agriculture, forestry

3.6.2 Housing/employment land allocations: Extensive areas around Wynyard – shown on map

3.6.3 Community involvement: Friends of Stillington Forest Park; Wynyard Woodland Park Countryside Volunteers (Hartlepool volunteers?)

3.6.4 Agri-environment schemes: North East Region Theme Area HLS: x 1 higher level environmental stewardship agreement, x 3 entry level stewardship agreement; x 9 entry level plus higher level environmental stewardship agreements.

4. Objectives & proposals:

Objective 1: Positive management of existing sites derived from [Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services](#) outcomes, : Whitton Bridge Pasture SSSI to achieve 'favourable condition' by 2020. LWS in the BOA are in positive management by 2020.

Objective 2: Habitat restoration & creation.

- Cow Pasture Wood – improve protection of area from grazing, improve link with adjoining mature woodland High Wood and Crookfoot Wood through hedge planting.
- Extend marsh area along North Burn south of North Burn Marsh Local Wildlife Site.
- Deciduous woodland restoration on PAWS within Close Wood LWS and adjacent woodland along Newton Hanzard Beck.
- Deciduous woodland restoration in Brierley Wood extending south west along Brierley Beck to where it adjoins Fulthorpe Glen.
- Extend areas of deciduous woodland (any suggestion to specific locations e.g. south of Scotland wood)
- Lots of pond sites around Wynyard village (protect? Expand? Create?)
- Wetland creation opportunity along Thorpe Beck valley, to the south of Wynyard road to Wolviston Mill.
- Wetland creation to the south of the village of Thorpe Thewles.
- Restoration of unimproved neutral grassland (lost since Phase 1 habitat survey) e.g. adjacent to North Burn and north of Crookfoot Reservoir
- Hedgerow restoration & creation linking areas of deciduous woodland in the south of the BOA including Stillington Wood, Thorpe Wood and link them to the main body of Wynyard woodland to the north.
- Maximise the enhancement of biodiversity along river corridors
- Invasive species control – Giant Hogweed (Wynyard estate)
- De-silting of Thorpe Wood pond
- Designate those sites as 'sites of biological interest' into LWS/LNR to raise awareness and afford better protection.



Objective 3: Socio economic including; access, public involvement.

- Maintain and extend local access network, including links into Hartlepool and Sedgefield
- Investigate potential for increased planting/ management to increase value of woodland, hedgerows and open space to the local community and for biodiversity
- Manage river corridors for wildlife thus reducing siltation and nutrient inputs, and providing shading to keep water cool, and can help slow the flow and reduce flood risk to communities downstream.

5. Nomenclature

BOA – Biodiversity Opportunity Area

HLS – High Level Stewardship

SSSI – Site of Special Scientific Interest

LNR – Local Nature Reserve

LWS – Local Wildlife Site

LGS – Local Geological Site

PAWS – Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site

PRoW – Public Rights of Way

NERC Act s.41 – Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. Section 41: Species of Principal Importance in England

BOA Objectives & Targets for the whole of the Tees Valley will be compiled in a summary table.