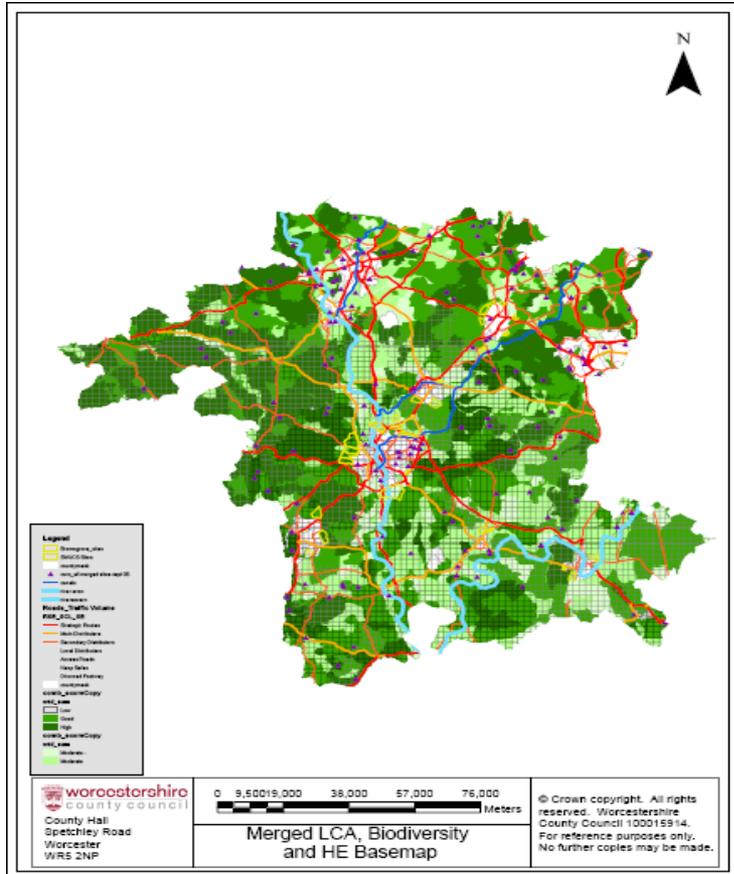


# Draft Environmental Character Areas for GI

Dale Bristow  
Strategic Planning and Environmental Policy  
Manager,  
Worcestershire County Council

# Composite map of the environmental assets



*Regional and local planning authorities should work together to ensure that they have up-to-date information, at the appropriate scale, about the characteristics of the natural environment in their areas to inform plan-making. PPS17 consultation*

Use of GIS in analysis of data allows for differing scales of approach:

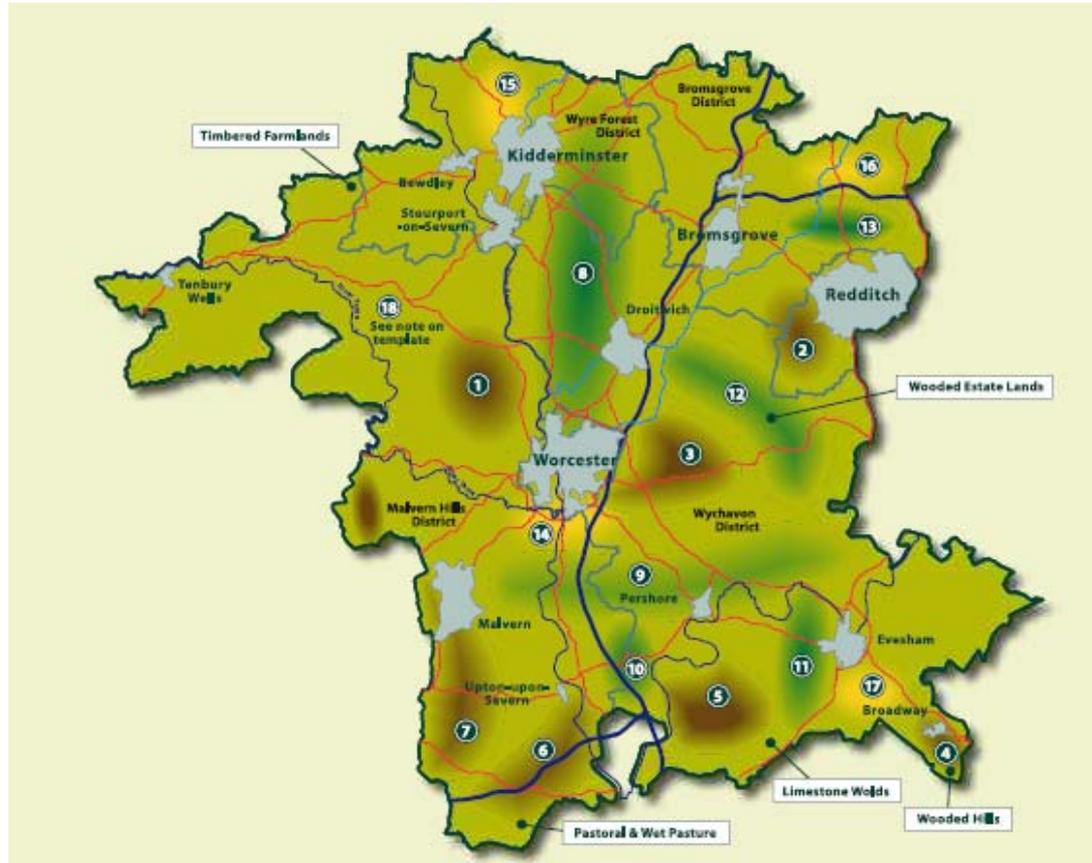
- Sub regional - elements which enhance the area as a whole e.g. country parks and river corridors
- District - rights of way and informal green space
- Site – street, garden and allotments

# But is it green infrastructure?

- *A slab of tarmac isn't infrastructure, but a road is. Give tarmac a purpose, some users, a public benefit and a place in a wider network – and it becomes essential infrastructure.*
- *In the same way just because a piece of land is open doesn't make it 'green infrastructure'.*
- *Our green and blue spaces need to have a function and serve the needs of society, the economy and the environment before we consider it as being Green Infrastructure.*

Source: North West Green Infrastructure Guide

# Environmental character areas for GI planning



# Next steps...

1. Agree character area names
2. Draft GI multifunctional objectives for each character area (acknowledge competing demands)
3. Undertake functional assessment (incl. health/climate change/economic considerations)
3. Identify movement networks (human and ecological), destination hubs and the locations of change : needs assessment (human and ecological)
4. Prioritise spatial locations for intervention

# Function and needs assessment

## Functional assessment

Consider the way a parcel of land is used and the functions it performs

## Needs assessment

Currently meets the need of the community (human and ecological), future changes and how this can be improved.

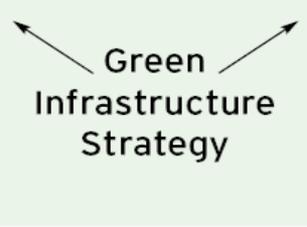
Source: North West Green Infrastructure Guide

SITE 1: Urban fringe farmland, used for low-key equestrianism. Near road and rail corridors into commercial side of town. Adjacent river and in floodplain. Few trees, no public rights of way.

SITE 2: Urban park surrounded by housing of various ages. Pockets of multiple deprivation and several schools within walking distance. Originally a designed landscape, now rather faded.

		Green Infrastructure Function or Benefit			
EXISTING	POTENTIAL			EXISTING	POTENTIAL
	✓	Create setting for economic growth/regeneration			✓
✓	✓	Job creation & social enterprise		✓	✓
✓	✓	Skills & training			✓
		Community cohesion		✓	✓
		Community safety			✓
✓	✓	Sport			
	✓	Physical health		✓	✓
		Mental health and wellbeing		✓	✓
	✓	Access to natural greenspace		✓	✓
	✓	Land and property value uplift		✓	✓
	✓	Flood management			
	✓	Climate change adaptation and mitigation			✓
	✓	Air & water quality			
		Natural tourism			✓
	✓	Biodiversity in situ		✓	✓
	✓	Environmental connectivity			
		Culture		✓	✓
	✓	Quality of place		✓	✓

Create new green infrastructure with emphasis on economic and environmental functions. To be achieved by environmental improvements near key economic corridors. Creation of riverside trails and new wetland and woodland habitats; in conjunction with operators of existing enterprise.



Conserve as greenspace and Enhance functions through greater community engagement and links to nearby education, employment and cultural initiatives.

## Consultation paper on a new Planning Policy Statement: Planning for a Natural and Healthy Environment

### Policy NE4: Local planning approach for green infrastructure

NE4.1 Local development frameworks should set out a strategic approach for the creation, protection and management of networks of green infrastructure. In doing so, local planning authorities should build on work undertaken at the regional and subregional level. Policies should:

- (i) provide for green infrastructure, particularly in locations where it will assist in reducing the impacts of climate change by providing flood water storage areas, sustainable drainage systems, urban cooling and local access to shady outdoor space
- (ii) avoid development being located in areas which result in the fragmentation or isolation of natural habitats
- (iii) identify opportunities to enhance green infrastructure and the natural habitats within it, by retaining, enhancing or creating green corridors linking rural and urban fringe areas and urban green spaces; and
- (iv) identify opportunities to enhance the functions urban green spaces can perform.

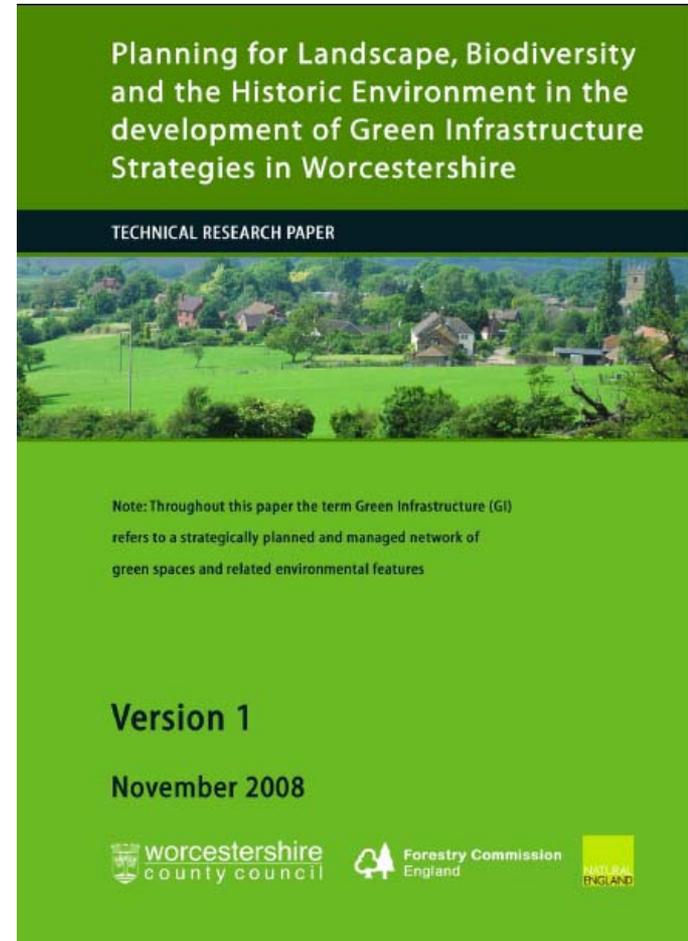


# Worcestershire sub regional GI steering group

Mark July - Senior Specialist Government  
and Communities, Green Infrastructure

# Contents

1. What is GI?
2. The benefits
3. Guidance and policy
4. GI data audit and mapping
5. Sub regional GI planning partnership
6. Examples to inspire



# Green Infrastructure.....



- is the network of green spaces and natural elements that intersperse and connect our cities, towns and villages.
- provides multiple benefits for the economy, the environment and society.
- spans administrative and political boundaries; it is both publicly and privately owned.
- in urban situations complements and balances the built environment; in rural settings it provides a framework for sustainable economies and biodiversity; in between it links town and country and interconnects wider environmental processes.
- **is an influence not a constraint!**

# Moving from Grey to Green



## Traditional infrastructure considerations:

- Transport
- Water
- Energy
- Waste
- And now Green which also:
- Covers the county
- Has its connectivity
- Hierarchy
- Exists so needs to be managed

## Benefits of GI

- Cleaner air
- Climate change adaptability -better flood protection & cooler cities
- Local food
- Sustainable waste management and renewable energy
- Improved mental and physical health / social inclusion
- Critical support for biodiversity
- Sustainable economy – image/investment/land & property values/tourism
- Well designed public places – sense of place

# GI NOT JUST A GOOD IDEA...



- **GI policy at national level** (PPS 1, PPS 12 and PPS natural environment)
- **World Class Places, May 2009**
- **RSS policy**
- **Sustainable Community Strategy**
- **Good practice documents – e.g. CABE /North West RDA**
- **5 steps to the GI planning process:**
  - 1) Partnership and priorities
  - 2) Data audit and resource mapping
  - 3) Functional assessment
  - 4) Needs assessment
  - 5) Intervention plan

# GI planning in Worcestershire



The screenshot shows a Microsoft Word document titled "GI Framework - Microsoft Word" with the "Table Tools" ribbon active. The document content is a flowchart titled "Diagrammatic Representation of Next Stages in Development of a Worcestershire GI Framework: For Information and Comment". The flowchart is organized into four columns representing time periods: Autumn-Winter 2009, Spring 2010, Summer 2010, and Autumn 2010-Winter 2011. Each column contains a sequence of tasks and stages, connected by arrows indicating a sequential flow. The stages are: Stage 2 (Audit of strategic GI assets), Stage 3 (Prioritise strategic needs & geographical areas), Stage 4 (Integrate/interpret sub-regional spatial patterns), Stage 5 (Implementation Road Map), and Sub-regional GI strategy. The flowchart also includes a "Communication Schedule Phased Approach" section at the bottom, which is a red box containing text about the development of a GI webpage and a web-based GI map tool. The document footer shows "Page: 1 of 3", "Words: 548", and "English (U.K.)". The taskbar at the bottom indicates the system is running Microsoft PowerPoint in compatibility mode.

Autumn-Winter 2009

Spring 2010

Summer 2010

Autumn 2010-Winter 2011

Stage 2: Audit of strategic GI assets for sub-region

Stage 3: Prioritise strategic needs & geographical areas (Protect/Enhance/Create)

Stage 4: Integrate/interpret sub-regional spatial patterns to identify the strategic GI network based on the current and future deficiencies & opportunities including climate change considerations e.g. carbon storage

Stage 5: Implementation Road Map

Sub-regional GI strategy including concept plans for strategic development sites & Implementation plan (What/Who/Cost/How?)

Pre-Application

Master Plan and Management Plan prepared by developer

Planning Applications

Local level GI network at finer level of detail e.g. views, phase 1 surveys, use of green roofs, open space needs etc

Site Allotments DPDs

Communication Schedule Phased Approach - GI webpage created with links to data and documents where available  
GI papers as developed and ultimately a web based GI map tool

Diagrammatic Representation of Next Stages in Development of a Worcestershire GI Framework: For Information and Comment

N.B. Dates are indicative. References to stages are those stages identified on p 19 of Version 1 of WCC's Green Infrastructure paper

Page: 1 of 3 Words: 548 English (U.K.) Microsoft PowerPoint - [GI presentation for March 10 [Compatibility Mode]] 70%

# GI from sub regional scale to site level



Use of GIS in analysis of data allows for differing scales of approach.

Benefit of sub regional GI planning:

1. Opportunity to pool resources, share services, skills, intelligence between partners and thus providing a commonality of approach across boundaries
2. Partnership working at a strategic level with a shared vision, prioritising activity
3. Comprehensive approach enhancing ability to obtain resources.

## Outcomes

A comprehensive, interactive and highly flexible evidence base that:

- Provides a framework for land management
- Informs planning decisions
- Identifies role for natural environment in the economy, health and climate change agendas
- Attracts funding and inward investment

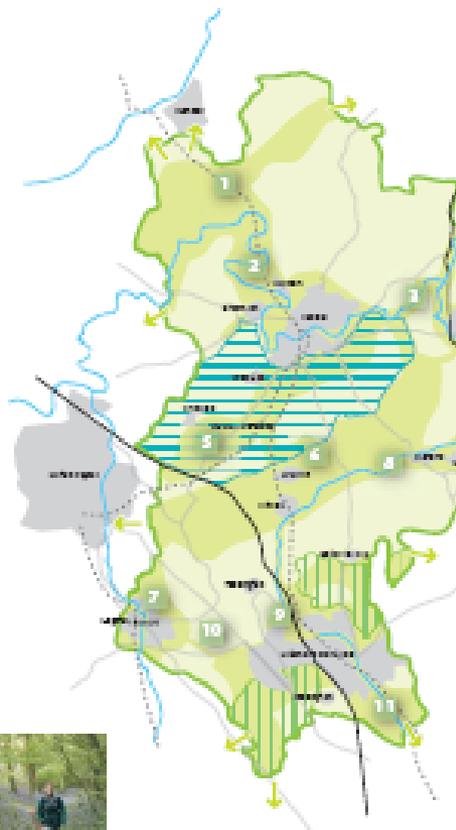
# Sub regional and site examples



The result, the Bedfordshire and Luton Strategic Green Infrastructure Network



- VIDEO OF THE High Line 4.45min
- <http://www.thehighline.org/galleries/videos>



**The Bedfordshire and Luton Green Infrastructure Consortium**

<p><b>Members &amp; Partners</b></p> <p>Children's Commission Bedfordshire County Council</p> <p>Communities and Local Government Bedford and Borough Council</p> <p>Environment Agency Luton Borough Council</p> <p>Forestry Commission Beds Bedfordshire District Council</p> <p>Coastal South Bedfordshire District Council</p> <p>Natural England</p>	<p><b>Local Authorities</b></p> <p>Bedfordshire County Council</p> <p>Bedford Borough Council</p> <p>Luton Borough Council</p> <p> Beds Bedfordshire District Council</p> <p>South Bedfordshire District Council</p>	<p><b>Voluntary Sector</b></p> <p>BECC</p> <p>British Trust for Conservation Volunteers</p> <p>Camphill in Forest</p> <p>Natural England</p> <p>Conservation Trust</p> <p>Conservation</p> <p>Millers Hill Trust</p> <p>NSF</p> <p>Twicken</p> <p>Wildlife Trust</p>
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**How can I find out more?**  
 You can visit our information and green infrastructure area Bedfordshire and Luton including **NSF** (not for sale) through our website [www.thehighline.org](http://www.thehighline.org) or call 01454 274330, or write to David, Bedford@thehighline.org





How can we work with you to create a green infrastructure network? Please contact us on 01454 274330, or write to David, Bedford@thehighline.org

# Further inspiration



[http://www.gcvgreenetwork.gov.uk/video/bigger\\_picture.php](http://www.gcvgreenetwork.gov.uk/video/bigger_picture.php)

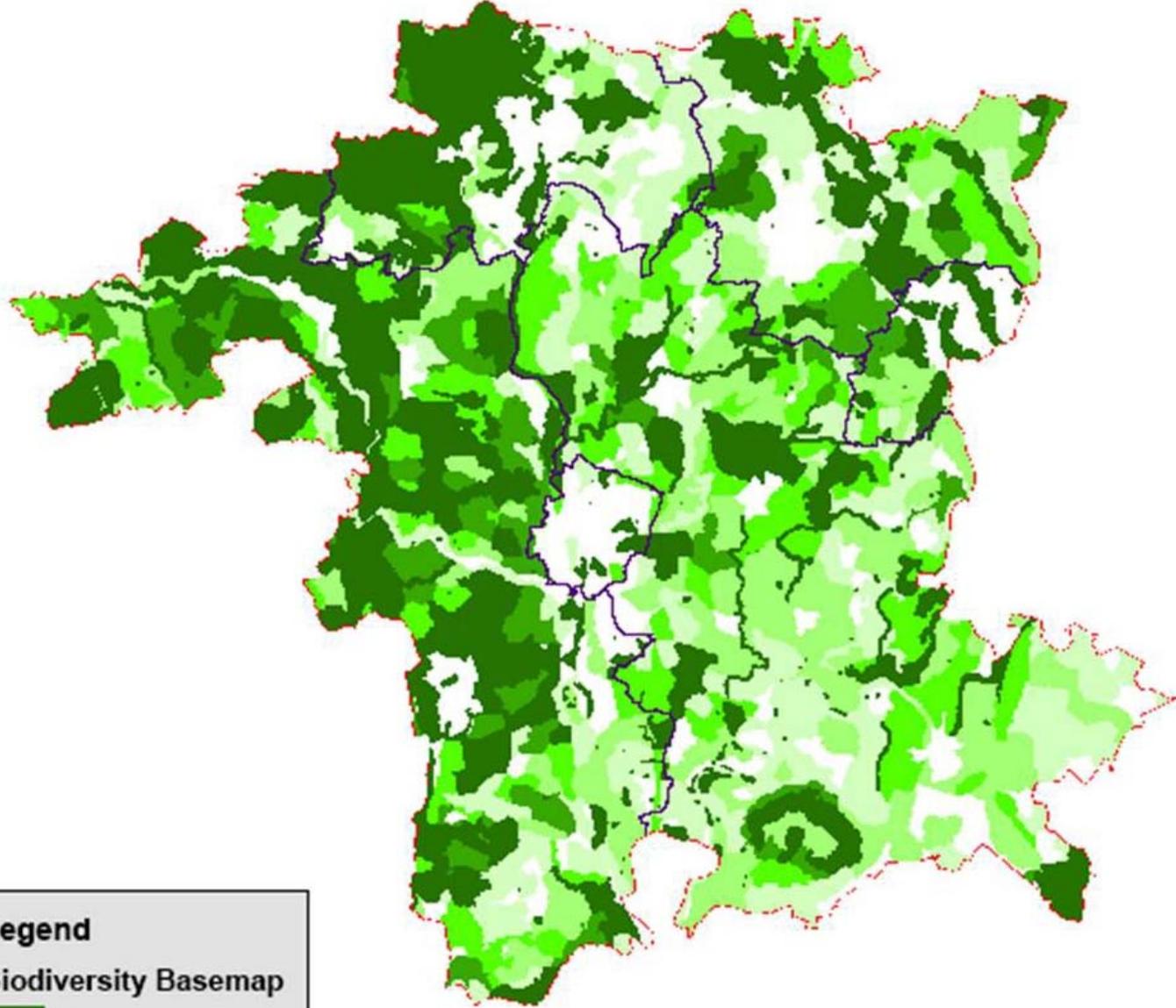
# Green Infrastructure

## Biodiversity Baseline and Aspirations





Partially digitised area with existing data overlay

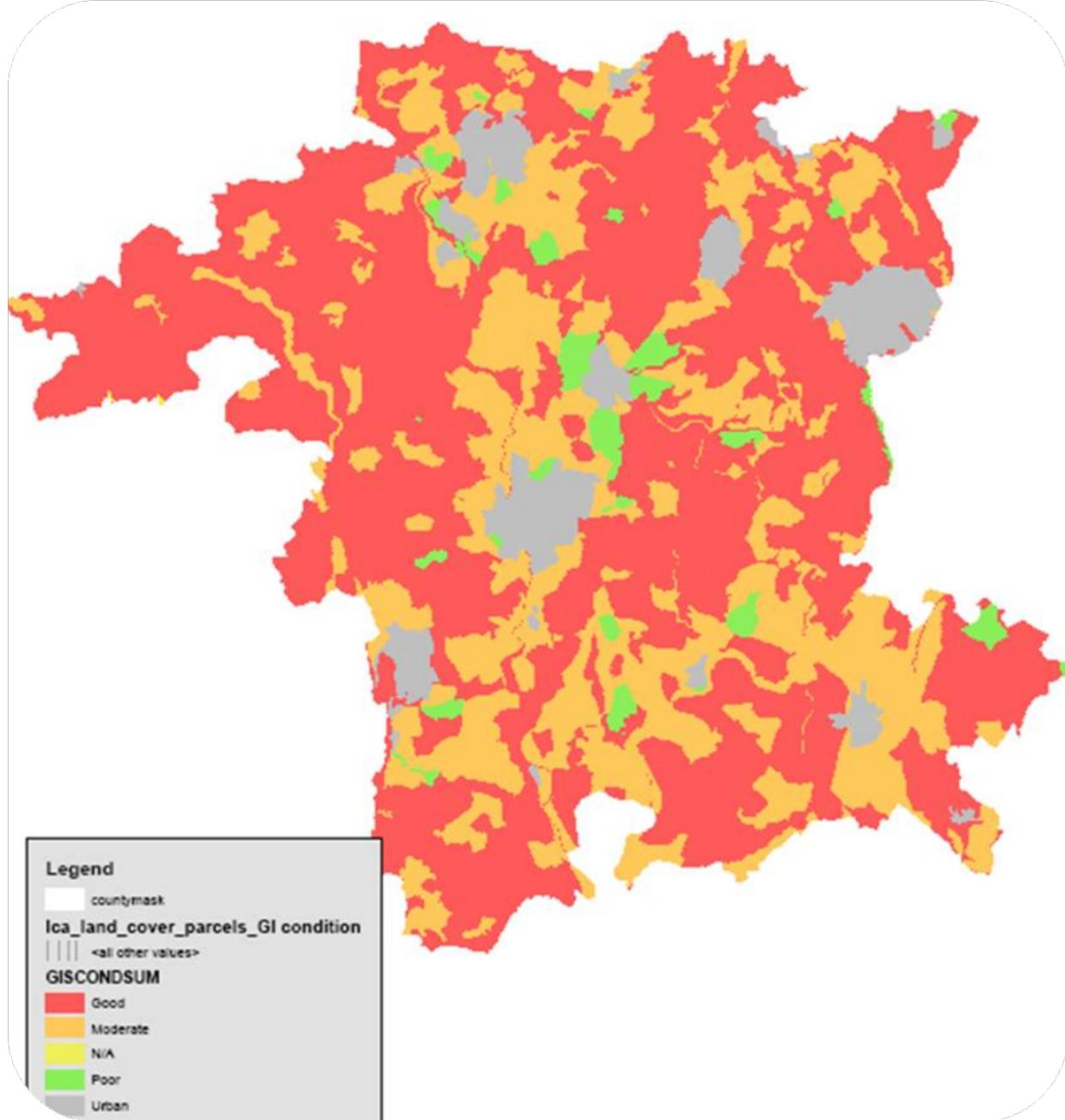


**Legend**

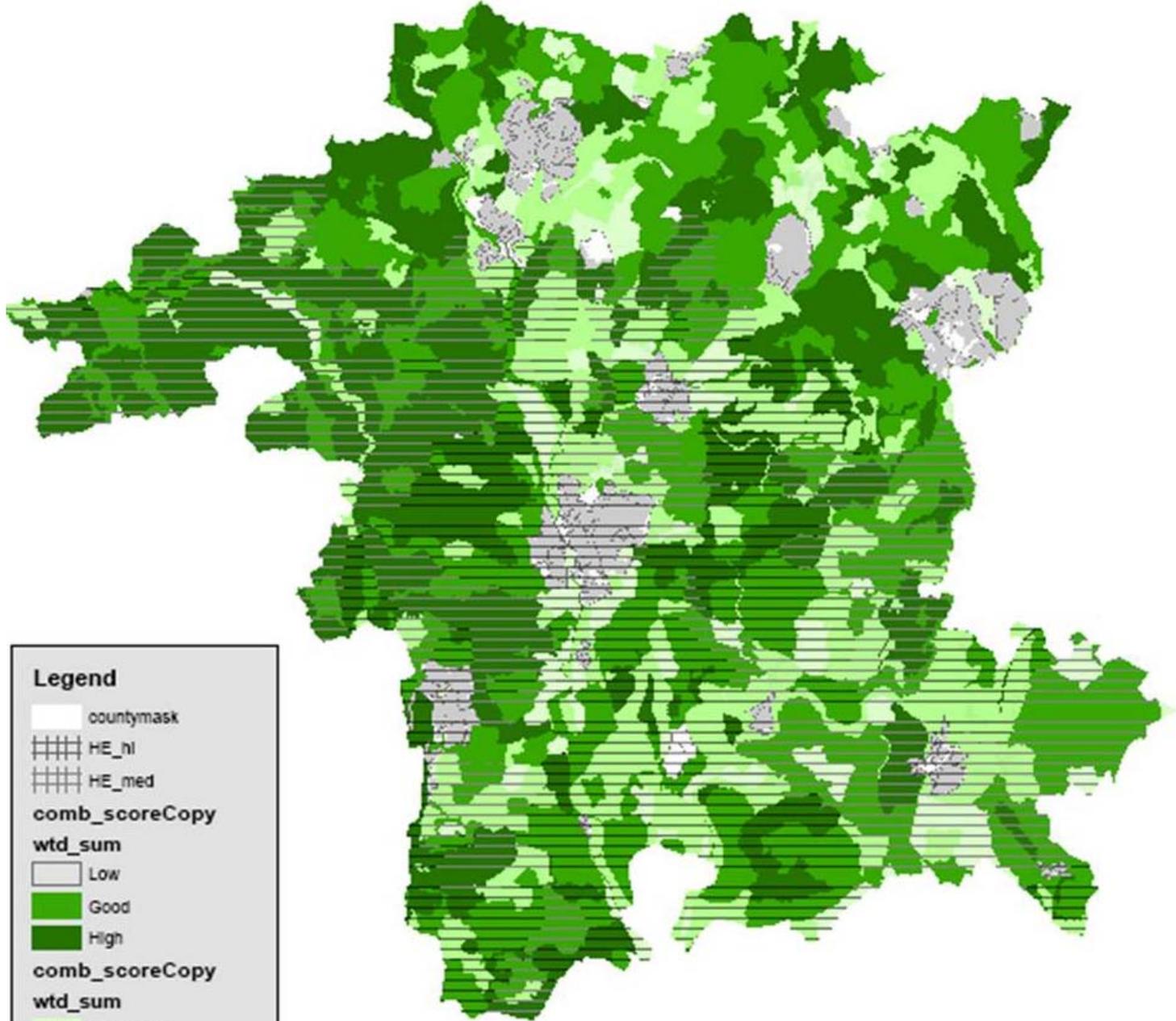
**Biodiversity Basemap**

-  High
-  Good
-  Moderate +
-  Moderate
-  Moderate -
-  Low

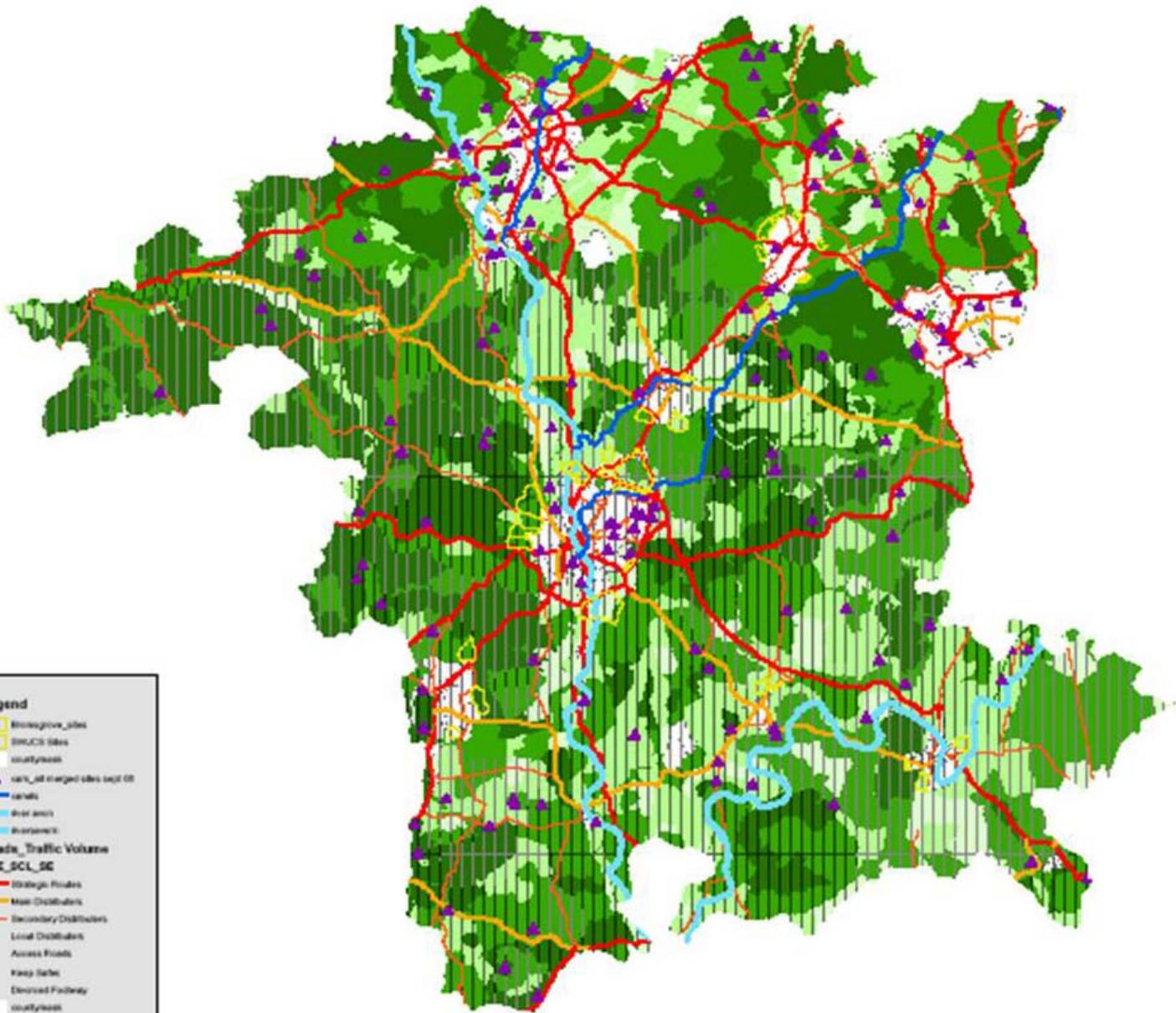
**Biodiversity Basemap**



Landscape Character GI condition and sensitivity



Merged Biodiversity, LCA & HE Basemap



Green Infrastructure Basemap

# Green Infrastructure

## Biodiversity Baseline and Aspirations

- Use best and most up to date data, ensuring parity across the county.
- Integrate development and land management into natural frameworks.
- Direct efforts to protect & enhance existing features.
- Link the principle features to recreate a 'living landscape'.
- Create new features where there is opportunity and need.