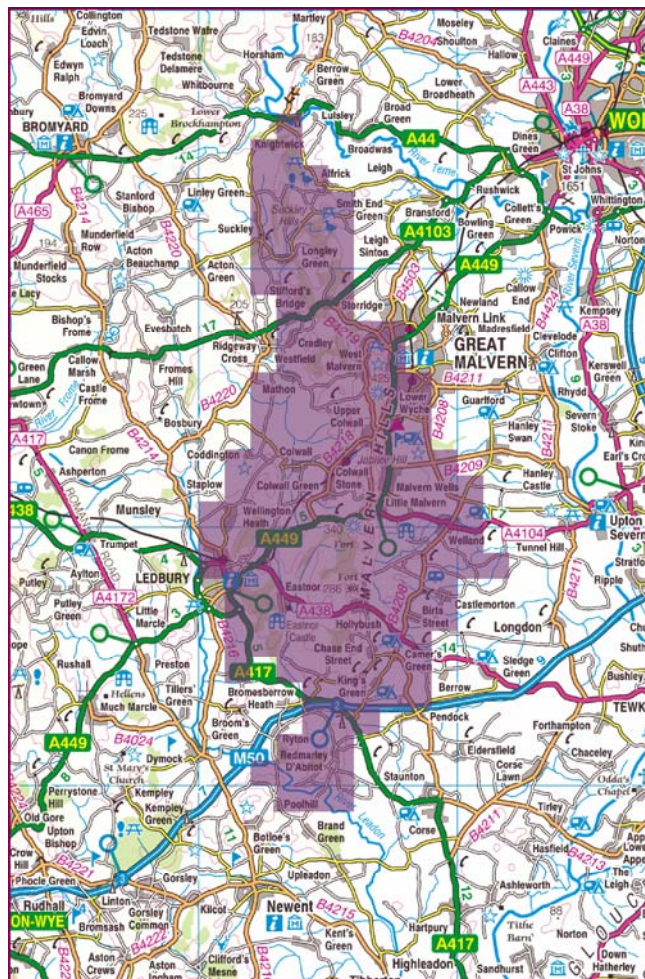


Malvern Hills Target Area



© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Natural England 100046223, 2008

Total Area: 16,000ha

Why is the Malvern Hills Target Area a priority for Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) management?

The **Malvern Hills Target Area** is important for its significant contribution to the following Higher Level Stewardship objectives: **Biodiversity, Landscape, Historic Environment and Access.**

This area is nationally designated as an **The Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)** and is centred on the distinctive narrow ridge of hills known as 'The Malverns'. Within this target area there are important areas of **acid grassland** and scattered patches of heath, whilst the

encroaching scrub and woodlands on the slopes provides habitat for the nationally important **high brown and pearl-bordered fritillary butterflies**. The ridge of the Hills is also notable for its prehistoric boundary earthworks and **Iron Age hillforts**. The lower slopes and commons include areas that provide evidence of early farming and industrial use, including **limestone quarrying** and early **industrial woodland** management. As an area of high landscape value, the area is popular with walkers, and there are opportunities to enhance **public access**.

What do I need to do to get an agreement?

Applications must perform ONE* or more of the following land management activities:

- Maintain/Restore/Create important areas of **acid grassland** and **heathland**, particularly where these provide suitable habitat for important butterfly species such as the **high brown and pearl-bordered fritillaries**. Also, **species rich hedgerows, traditional orchards, ancient semi-natural woodlands** and the range of **wetland habitats** associated with drainage from the hills¹
- Positive management of **visible and below ground archaeological and historic features such as limekilns and earthworks** that are assessed as a priority in the region²
- Protect, maintain and restore **historic landscapes and their features, such as designed parkland at Eastnor or designed planting on the Hills**, where they are assessed as a priority in the region³
- Maintain or restore **historic buildings** that are assessed as a priority in the region⁴
- Implement land management practices and capital works to minimise soil erosion and run off from **land at risk of generating diffuse pollution**⁵
- Maintain and restore **field boundaries** where these make a significant contribution to the maintenance of historic landscape character
- Create new **permissive access** where there is identified demand or need in order to link people with places, enhance existing networks and/or provide opportunity to improve people's understanding of the farmed environment through **educational access**. For example, through the provision of links to existing promoted routes such as the **Worcestershire Way**

If you think that you can help Natural England achieve any of the above objectives please contact your local office using the number below. Natural England currently hold additional information about environment features on your holding which will be used to identify priority holdings, as a result of this, please note that you may be contacted directly by us.

Please note: * applications seeking to maintain or restore field boundaries **MUST** be accompanied by another land management activity from the list provided.

Footnotes:

¹creation of the habitats listed above will be considered where there are significant opportunities to extend, link or buffer important areas of existing habitat to reduce the impacts of fragmentation.

²This statement refers to both designated (Scheduled Monuments) and undesignated historic

environment features that have been prioritised in accordance with advice from Natural England, English Heritage and local authority archaeologists. It aims to ensure positive management of visible features such as earthworks, standing stones and structures, and action for the most vulnerable archaeological sites that are currently in cultivation, for example by reducing the depth of damaging cultivations through minimum tillage or direct drilling where this offers a suitable level of protection. It also includes the maintenance of below-ground archaeology under permanent uncultivated vegetation and maintaining sufficient waterlogged conditions to preserve organic archaeological material in wetlands.

³This statement refers to both designated (Registered Parks and Gardens, World Heritage Sites and Registered Battlefields) and undesignated historic environment features that have been prioritised in accordance with advice from Natural England, English Heritage and local authority archaeologists. It aims to significantly address the condition of historic landscapes through the proactive maintenance or restoration of structures or features that make a major contribution to the design intentions, character or feel of the area, as well as providing for their biodiversity and amenity value.

⁴Natural England has a method of prioritising historic buildings by assessing them for their significance, vulnerability and value for money. To check the eligibility of your building, and to find out if your building is a priority for action, please contact Natural England.

⁵Options or capital items that improve infiltration and reduce runoff may also provide benefits for flood management.

For more information on Higher Level Stewardship please see our website: www.naturalengland.org.uk

Before applying for HLS you are required to discuss your proposals with a Natural England adviser.

To contact an adviser please telephone 0300 060 1115