

River Alyn Valley 9b

This is one of a series of Local Planning Guidance Notes based on Wrexham LANDMAP (adopted November 2004), setting out recommendations for each Landscape Character area.



River Alyn Valley summary

- Much broadleaved woodland of high biodiversity value
- Variety of other important habitats particularly grasslands and aquatic or damp habitats
- Followed by A483, Chester Shrewsbury railway and part of Mold Road
- Part within Alyn Waters country park
- Fragmented land use pattern
- Wilderness tip is a locally prominent feature
- Archaeologically rich area including prehistoric hill fort at Bryn Alyn, and Wat's Dyke

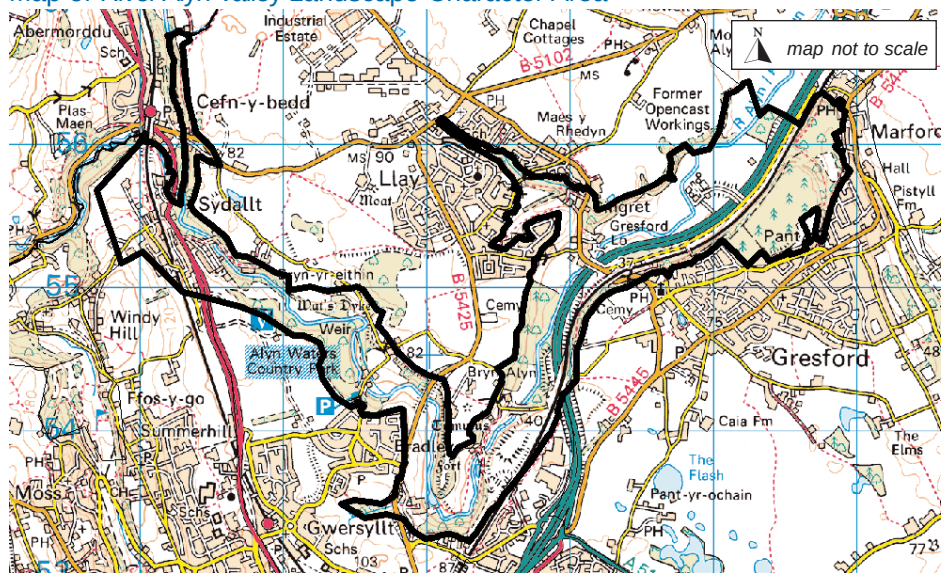


Valley of the River Alyn which is cut into the sandy lowland plateau on which Wrexham, Gresford and Llay are situated. It appears generally wooded but also includes a variety of other land uses, both urban and rural in character

Landscape context

The River Alyn Valley is one of several wooded river valleys which have been affected by industrial uses, past or present. The other landscape character areas of this type are Clywedog Valley (9a), Ffrith Valley (9c) and Dee Valley - Froncysyllte to Newbridge (9d)

Map of River Alyn Valley Landscape Character Area



Character Area boundaries should be considered transitional rather than precise
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Key characteristics

Visual character:

- Lowland wooded valley in two main sections
- To the west the valley is narrow and hidden from general view
- The eastern section is wider and viewed from the A483 and railway, providing an attractive entrance to Wrexham town. Wilderness Tip, Gresford industrial estate, masts, and the active sand quarry at Ballswood intrude in some views

Geological character:

- The River Alyn Valley drains eastward to the River Dee and is cut deeply into the sands and gravels of the lowland plateau

known as the Wrexham Delta Terrace, with a very sharp change of direction near north Wrexham

- Artificial landforms, caused by mining, quarrying and reclamation works are common

Ecological character:

- Valley woodlands include semi natural ancient woodland, upland mixed ash woodland and dense scrub
- Some particularly valuable grassland habitats can be found, including restored areas which are important for threatened species such as skylarks
- The river is important for aquatic species, and there are associated wetland habitats including swamp, sedge, wet woodland and rush pasture



Historical character:

- Wat's Dykes crosses at Bryn Alyn and follows the northern edge of the valley
- Bryn Alyn hillfort, is an important feature, but the former Rofft hillfort at Gresford has been largely quarried away

Cultural character:

- Generally mixed, with employment areas at Alyn and Gresford industrial estates, recreation and education for the surrounding population at Alyn Waters country park, transport links (Wrexham - Chester and Wrexham - Mold), and also agricultural production
- Alyn industrial estate is of high heritage value with its surviving colliery buildings with prominent chimney seen from the A541 (Mold Road).
- The former Llay Hall colliery site has been restored to natural grassland and trees, but Wilderness Tip (formerly part of Gresford colliery) remains
- The Bryn Alyn area, with its promontory hill fort, Bronze Age mound, Wat's Dyke and steep slopes, has a particularly strong sense of place

Overall management strategy:

Conservation, restoration and enhancement

Management guidance

Aims	Guidelines
Enhance existing visual character	● Avoid large scale and inappropriate development ● Retain and strengthen wooded character
Conserve geological features	● Maintain continuity and integrity of exposures and landforms ● Maintain integrity of fluvial and glacial landforms
Enhance and extend wildlife habitats	● Maintain and develop woodland corridors, expand native woodlands types, increase diversity in woodland structure and retain old/dead trees ● Enhance river bank habitats and minimise hard bank engineering such as canalisation or retaining walls ● Protect otters, water voles and bats - refer to River Habitat Action Plan and Otter Species Action Plan ● Enhance lowland pastures and protect and manage lowland meadows
Conserve historical features	● Preserve Bryn Alyn hillfort in situ, encourage removal of woody vegetation, assess in relation to wider historic ● No development on or near Wat's Dyke - contact Cadw ● Conserve and assess fieldscape
Enhance and interpret cultural heritage	● Improve public access to Bryn Alyn area, with low key interpretation - consider links with Alyn Waters Country Park (refer to green network Strategy due March 2007 for other links) ● Preserve visible reminders of regional coal industry at Alyn Industrial Park ● Continue existing management of Alyn Waters Country Park, consider incorporating former Llay Hall colliery site ● Support community history initiatives ● Improve linkage of routes for recreational access generally



Landscape sensitivity:

The Alyn Valley is a small scale linear character area and is vulnerable to any inappropriate built development within it or on its edge. It already suffers a loss of tranquillity and accessibility because of major roads

For further information contact:

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All our information is available in accessible formats

