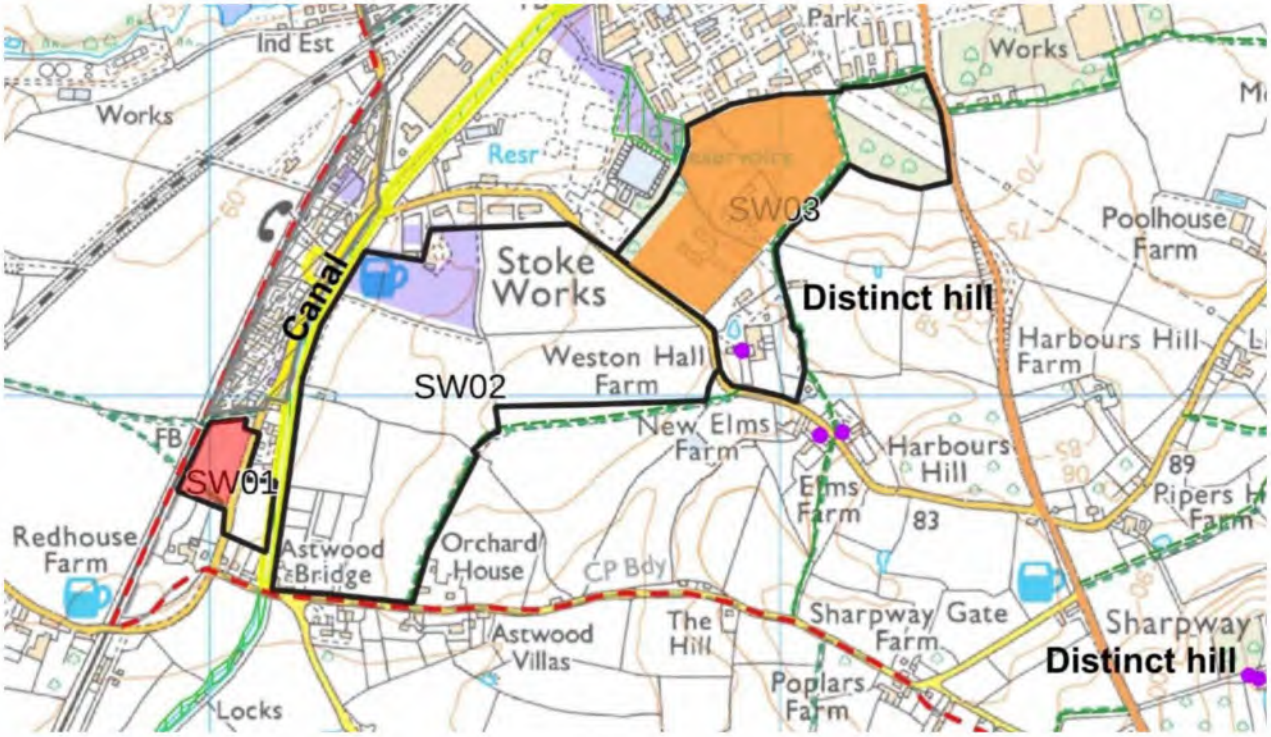
Settlement Sensitivity Summary: Stoke Works

Summary

Stoke Works is primarily an industrial and commercial area associated originally with the Worcester and Birmingham Canal, and then in particular with the manufacture of Harris decorative products whose works lie to the north east. Residential development comprises of a linear block of dwellings and pub to the south west and some dwellings and a pub at Stoke Wharf to the north east. The northern and western edge of the settlement is defined by a railway line. Some commercial brownfield sites have been redeveloped for housing and some new commercial units have also been located on the southern edge of the developed area. Arable and pastoral land with woodland plantations rises up to the south of the area and east of the canal towards a series of small farm complexes. There are views from public footpaths and the canal towards the hills to the south.

Sensitivity to housing is considered high/medium to the south and east and medium in the area west of the canal. An opportunity has been identified in a small site between the road and railway.

Sensitivity to employment use is considered high west of the canal, high/medium to the east of the canal and medium to the east. An opportunity has been identified on the lower slopes south of the Saxon Business Park.



Key

As for Land parcels, Constraints and Designations figure plus below.

Opportunity for Housing

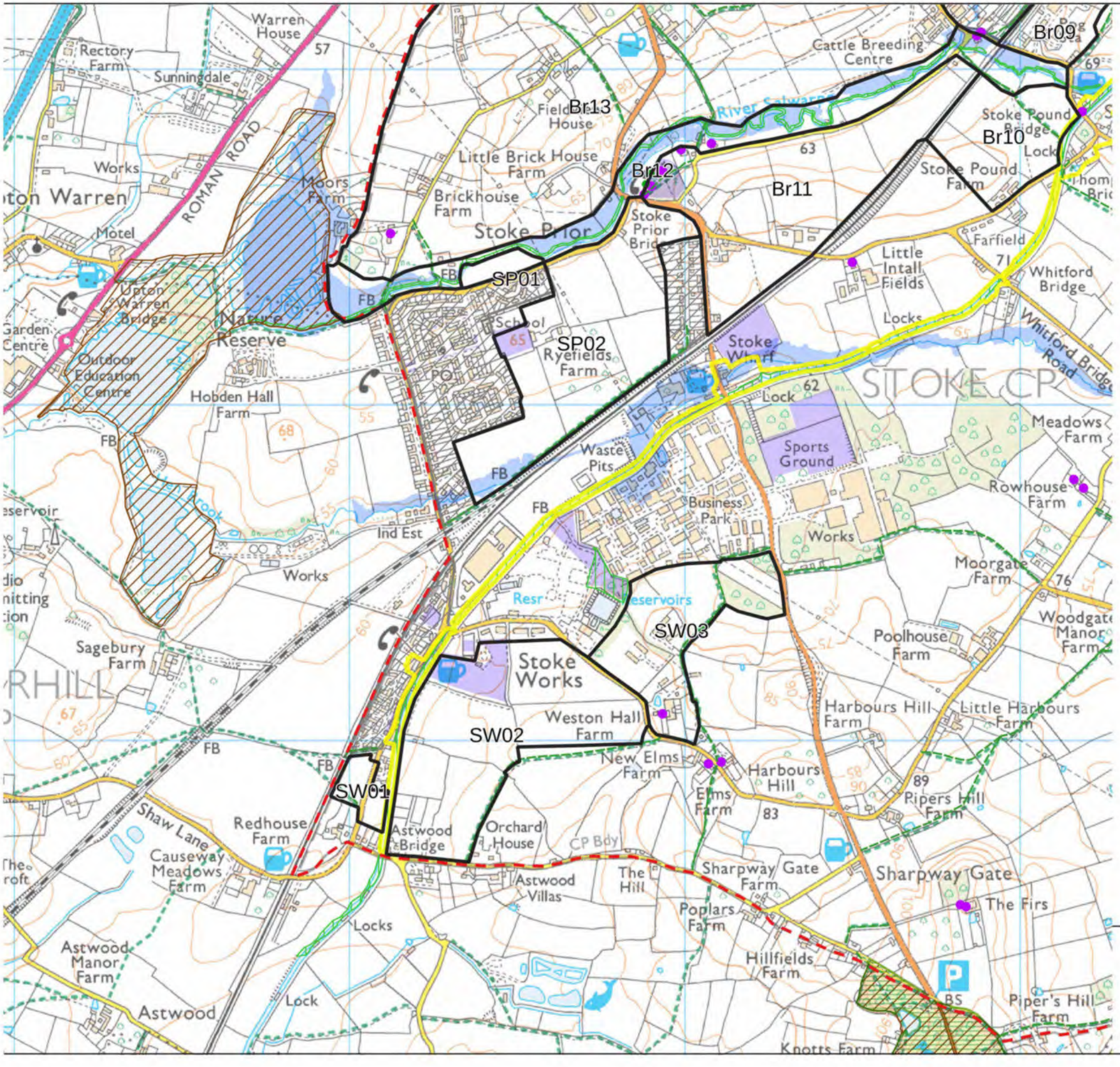
Opportunity for Employment use

View east to the canal on the southern edge of the settlement (SW01).

View from near settlement core across canal to open landscape to the east (SW02).

View south across rising landscape to hills (SW02).

View south west towards chicken sheds on hill north of business park (SW03).



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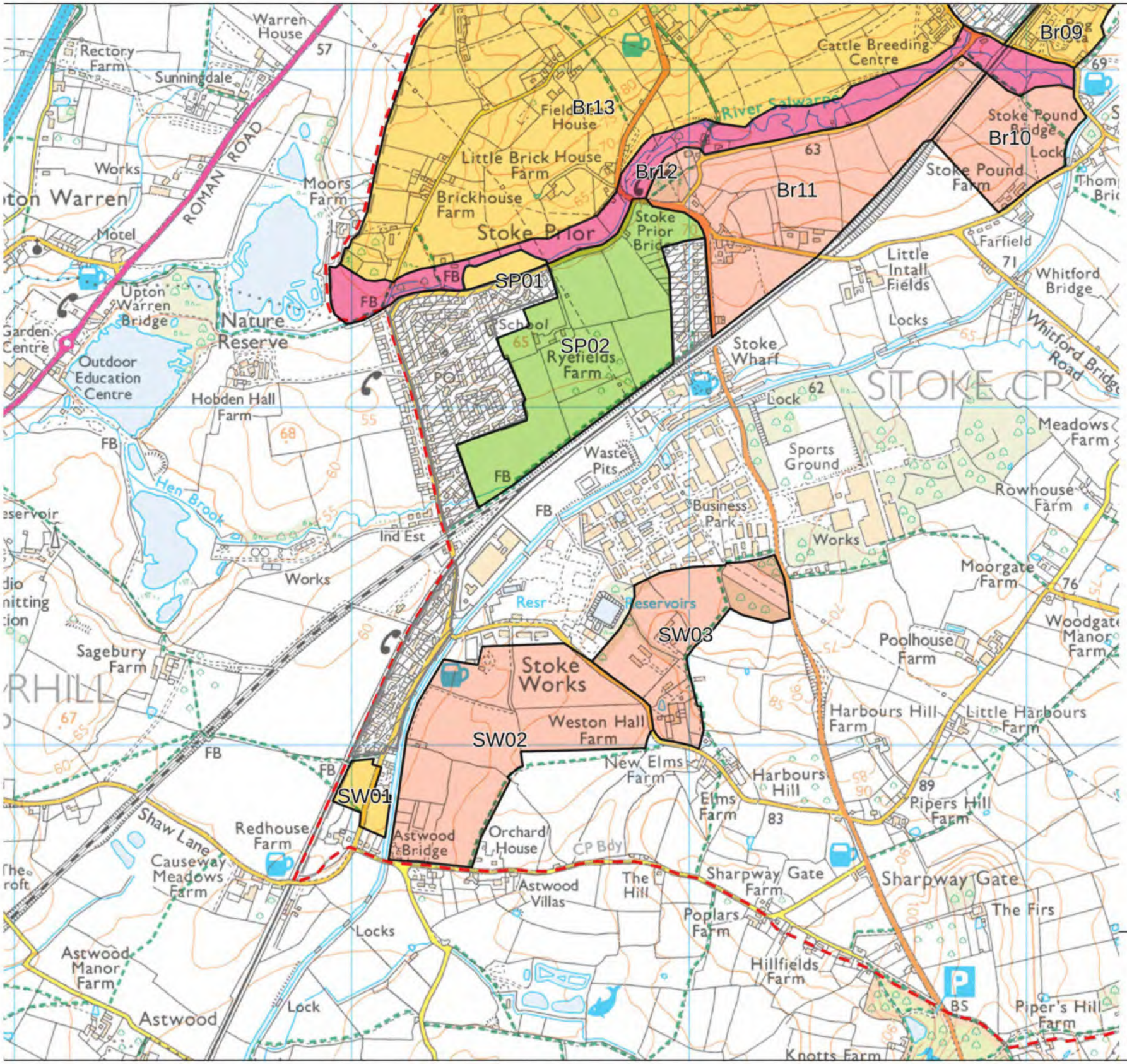
Project: Bromsgrove District Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Study
Client: Bromsgrove District Council

Stoke Prior and Stoke Works
Land parcels, Constraints and Designations



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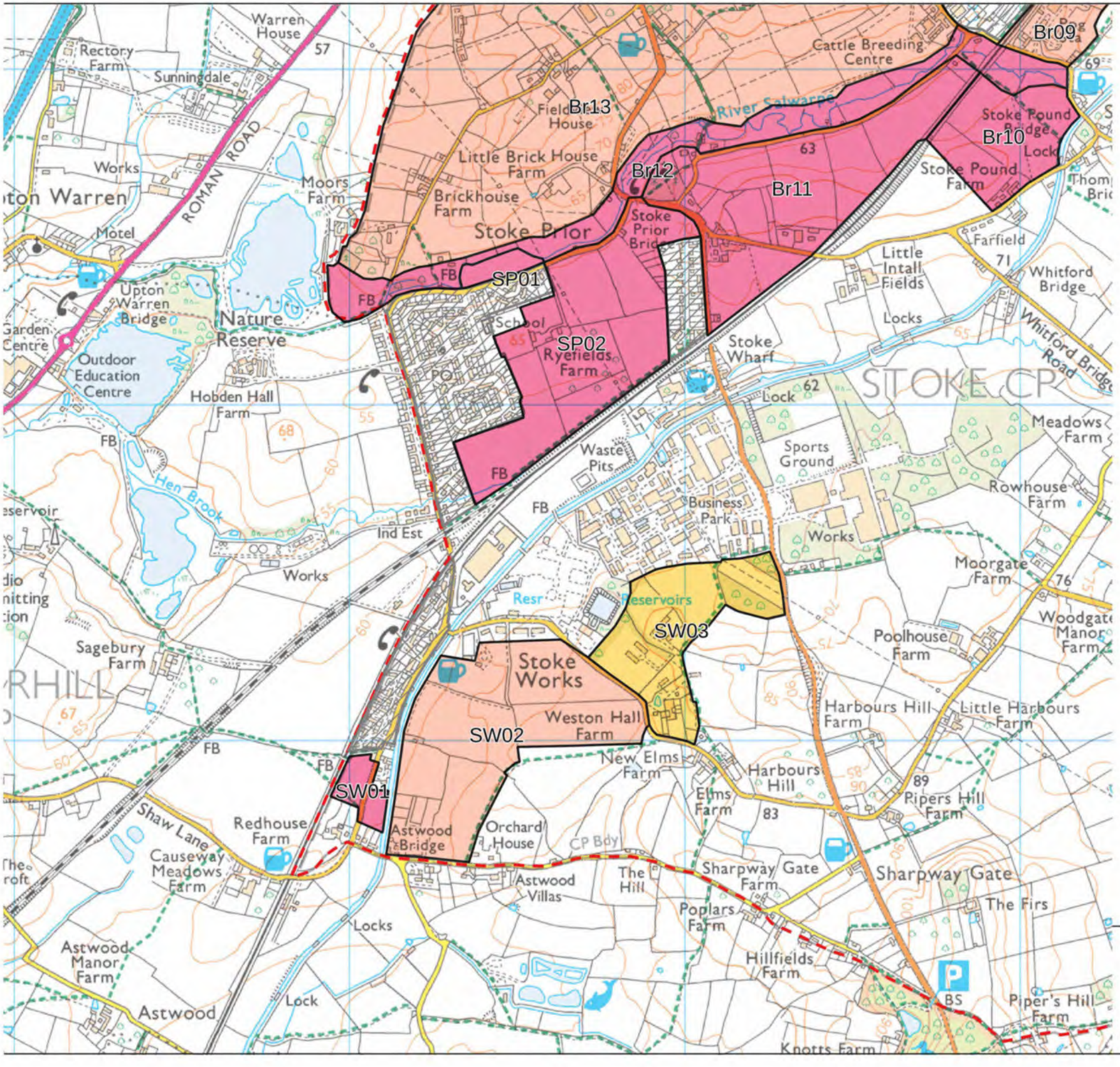
Stoke Prior and Stoke Works Settlements: Sensitivity to Housing



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Project: Bromsgrove District Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Study
Client: Bromsgrove District Council

Stoke Prior and Stoke Works
Landscape sensitivity to employment use

Land Cover Parcel No.	SW01

ASSESSED SENSITIVITY EVALUATION

Sensitivity to Housing	Medium
Sensitivity to Employment	High

Sensitivity Summary

The landscape value lies in the adjacent Worcester and Birmingham Canal which is a Conservation Area and Local Wildlife site, with its recreational use and role as a wildlife corridor which the parcel connects to, and the PROWs and trees on the site. The landscape susceptibility to housing lies in the role of the parcel as a gap in the built frontage of the settlement, its functional relationship with the canal as biodiversity corridor and PROWs linking the settlement to the wider countryside to the west. The visual susceptibility to housing lies in the openness to view from the canal and views from the PROWs and adjacent residents and road approaching the settlement. The main sensitivity of the parcel lies in the openness of the field east of the road adjacent to the canal. It would be possible to accommodate housing to the west of the road. The sensitivity to employment use would be substantially greater on both these very small sites with semi-rural character and housing on either side.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CONTEXT

National character area	Severn and Avon Vales
WCC landscape character type (LCT)	Principal Timbered Farmlands
WCC land cover parcel (LCP) sensitivity	High

LANDSCAPE VALUE FACTORS

Landscape designations		-
Natural heritage	H/M	Canal to the east is a Local Wildlife site. Rough grass fields apparently cut occasionally. Hedges with some trees along north and south boundaries but limited boundary vegetation on north south boundaries.
Cultural heritage	H/M	Canal to the east is a Conservation Area. Rectilinear field within interrupted row west of the road and rectilinear field within nucleated row to the east.
Distinctiveness	H/M	Canal to the east is a distinctive feature.
Perceptual	M	
Scenic factors		Views to canal corridor with associated narrow boats to the east and to open countryside to the west beyond railway.
Tranquillity		Minor road and railway adjacent. Built form apparent to the north filtered by vegetation. PROW across area and canal users visible.
Recreational and functional	H/M	
Recreational		Canal to the east is an important corridor adjacent. PROWs across site linking to countryside to the west.
Functional		Canal to the east is a wildlife corridor to which the parcel contributes.
Condition	M/L	Poor condition with no maintained hedgerows on site and few trees.
Associations		Canal related.
Summary evaluation of overall value		**M**

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

Natural factors	H/M	
Landform eg steep slopes		Flat site to the west with eastern site rising gently to canal.
Presence of water		Canal to the east.
Cultural factors	M	
Historic field/land use pattern		Rectilinear field within interrupted row west of the road and rectilinear field within nucleated row to the east.
Settlement pattern		These sites form gaps within built frontage which is characteristic of canal-related development.
Land use factors	H/M	
Function of area e.g. floodplain, GI corridor, biodiversity corridor or patch, productive land.		Canal to the east is a biodiversity corridor and the parcel contributes to green space adjacent.
Amenity- presence of footpaths/recreation corridors		Canal to the east (although towpath is on other side).PROWs run to wider countryside to the west.
Functional relationship between the area and the settlement/key features		There is connection between the settlement and wider countryside through the parcel.
Perceptual factors	M	
Scale		Small
Enclosure		Enclosed to the east and more open to the west.
Skyline		N/A
Landmarks/features		N/A
Detractors		Railway footbridge and small overhead lines.
Settlement edge character		Ribbon development edge but rural settlement to the south west.
Visual relationship between the area and the settlement/key features (eg cumulative impact issues)		Semi rural spaces on the edge of the settlement.
Summary evaluation of landscape susceptibility		**M**

VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

General factors		
Intervisibility	M	Buildings would be intervisible in the countryside to the west
Key views	H/M	Views from canal across parcel to wider countryside.
Key receptors		
Residents- rural/semi-rural	H/M	To south east but largely screened.
Residents-urban/suburban edge	H/M	To north.
Promoted trails		N/A
Public rights of way	H/M	Two PROWs

Access/common land		N/A
Cycleways		N/A
Roads	M	Minor road and railway
Summary evaluation of visual susceptibility		**H/M**

OPPORTUNITIES, DESIGN AND MITIGATION

Development location, layout and design recommendations where appropriate:

It would be possible to accommodate housing to the west of the road providing existing trees and hedges are retained and protected and the road frontage is softened with native hedge planting with houses fronting the road but set back behind the hedge. The boundary to the railway should be softened with trees and native shrubs outside private curtilages.

Opportunities and potential for landscape mitigation where appropriate:

Land Cover Parcel No.	SW02

ASSESSED SENSITIVITY EVALUATION

Sensitivity to Housing	High/medium
Sensitivity to Employment	High/medium

Sensitivity Summary

The landscape value lies in its role as part of the setting for the Worcester and Birmingham Canal and associated Conservation Area and Local Wildlife site on its western boundary, its character as part of a strongly unified and relatively enclosed agricultural landscape with a tranquil rural character, within a rolling lowland setting, the PROW on its southern boundary and attractive views across the area both to and from the canal and PROW. Landscape susceptibility to housing lies in its openness on rising slopes, and its strong rural character with its scattered mature hedgerow trees. Visual susceptibility to housing lies in views from the canal and towpath and PROW and minor roads to the south and east. The parcel is sensitive to housing. Sensitivity to employment uses is greater due to the increased effect on the canal corridor and rising rural character.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CONTEXT

National character area	Severn and Avon Vales
WCC landscape character type (LCT)	Principal Timbered Farmlands
WCC land cover parcel (LCP) sensitivity	High

LANDSCAPE VALUE FACTORS

Landscape designations	H/M	Conservation Area associated with the historic canal and towpath defining the western edge of the parcel.
Natural heritage	H/M	Thick, ancient mixed species hedgerows with scattered mature oak trees.
Cultural heritage		Canal Conservation Area, piecemeal enclosure.
Distinctiveness	H/M	A distinctive and unified agricultural landscape providing a sharp contrast to the adjoining settled industrial landscape at Stoke Works.
Perceptual		
Scenic factors		Historic farmed landscape with a strong rural character.
Tranquillity		Relatively tranquil rural landscape away from immediate vicinity of the urban area.
Recreational and functional	H/M	
Recreational		Towpath and canal and PROW running around the eastern boundary of the parcel, sports ground.
Functional		Parcel managed as productive arable farmland.
Condition		Intensively farmed agricultural landscape within a well managed pattern of medium to large sized hedged fields.
Associations		-
Summary evaluation of overall value		

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

Natural factors	H/M	
Landform eg steep slopes		Rolling landform

Presence of water		-
Cultural factors	H/M	
Historic field/land use pattern		Irregular pattern of large arable/grass fields.
Settlement pattern		Dispersed farmsteads and rural dwellings.
Land use factors	H/M	
Function of area e.g. floodplain, GI corridor, biodiversity corridor or patch, productive land.		Productive arable farmland.
Amenity- presence of footpaths/recreation corridors		Canal towpath and well used PROW along field hedgerow. Sports ground.
Functional relationship between the area and the settlement/key features		Canal towpath and PROW provide strong functional connection between parcel and adjoining urban area.
Perceptual factors	M	
Scale		Medium to large.
Enclosure		Views framed by landform and tall hedgerows.
Skyline		
Landmarks/features		Scattered mature hedgerow trees.
Detractors		Occasional views to settlement edge/taller buildings.
Settlement edge character		Settlement edge defined mostly by residential development/gardens.
Visual relationship between the area and the settlement/key features (eg cumulative impact issues)		Settlement edge partially screened by tree cover.
Summary evaluation of landscape susceptibility		**H/M**

VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

General factors		
Intervisibility	M	Self contained landscape with moderate intervisibility.
Key views	M/L	Limited viewpoints.
Key receptors		
Residents- rural/semi-rural	H/M	From adjoining rural farms/roadside dwellings.
Residents-urban/suburban edge	H/M	Intermittent views from urban edge to north and east of parcel.
Promoted trails		-
Public rights of way	H/M	PROW running along eastern edge of parcel and along canal towpath to west.
Access/common land		-
Cycleways		-
Roads	M	Frequent views from adjoining minor roads.

Summary evaluation of visual susceptibility	**H/M**

OPPORTUNITIES, DESIGN AND MITIGATION

Development location, layout and design recommendations where appropriate:

Opportunities and potential for landscape mitigation where appropriate:

Land Cover Parcel No.	SW03

ASSESSED SENSITIVITY EVALUATION

Sensitivity to Housing	High/medium
Sensitivity to Employment	Medium

Sensitivity Summary

The landscape value lies in the secondary woodland to the east with irregular pattern of outgrown hedges both of which contribute to GI , the PROW through the area and the proximity to listed farmhouses to the south. The landscape susceptibility to housing lies in the juxtaposition with the employment uses to the north which separate the parcel from other housing in the settlement (including recently constructed dwellings off Westonhall Road), the existing woodland and the hedges. The visual susceptibility to housing lies in the views from the PROWs in the site and to the south west, views from dwellings to the south and from adjacent roads. The parcel is sensitive to housing mainly due to the juxtaposition with employment uses. The sensitivity to employment use is less due to the relationship with similar uses to the north and because the site is generally set down below the rising slopes to the south which could aid integration. However, the heights of buildings to the south and west should be considered carefully to minimise effects and there should be strong tree belts on these boundaries. The woodland and linear meadow beneath power lines to the east should not be developed but should be managed for biodiversity/recreation.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CONTEXT

National character area	Severn and Avon Vales
WCC landscape character type (LCT)	Principal Timbered Farmlands
WCC land cover parcel (LCP) sensitivity	High

LANDSCAPE VALUE FACTORS

Landscape designations		-
Natural heritage	M	Secondary woodland to the east with outgrown hedges, poorly established more recent tree belts and improved grassland.
Cultural heritage	H/M	Listed buildings to the south, irregular and regular small to medium fields derived from piecemeal enclosure with 20c secondary woodland.
Distinctiveness	M	Woodland provides strong green edge to the industrial part of the settlement. Outside the parcel to the south a cluster of three listed farmhouses form a distinctive rural cluster.
Perceptual	M	
Scenic factors		Scenic qualities mainly relate to the rising rural character land to the south and two listed buildings to the south on Westonhall Road.
Tranquillity		B4091 to the east and minor road to the west. Industrial estate to the north is noticeable and there are chicken sheds within parcel. PROW through area.
Recreational and functional	M	
Recreational		PROW through area linking settlement to countryside.
Functional		Established woodland blocks and hedges could contribute to GI.
Condition	M	Mixed condition hedges- poor elm to the west and moderate elsewhere.
Associations		N/A

Summary evaluation of overall value		**M**

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

Natural factors	M	
Landform eg steep slopes		Gently rising to the south.
Presence of water		None apparent.
Cultural factors	M	
Historic field/land use pattern		Irregular and regular small to medium fields derived from piecemeal enclosure with 20c secondary woodland.
Settlement pattern		Industrial estate to the north and interrupted rural settlement of farms and dwellings to the south.
Land use factors	M	
Function of area e.g. floodplain, GI corridor, biodiversity corridor or patch, productive land.		Established woodland blocks and hedges are biodiversity patches/corridors and could contribute to GI.
Amenity- presence of footpaths/recreation corridors		PROW through area linking settlement to countryside.
Functional relationship between the area and the settlement/key features		PROW only connection.
Perceptual factors	M	
Scale		Medium
Enclosure		Moderately enclosed by vegetation and landform.
Skyline		N/A
Landmarks/features		N/A
Detractors		Industrial estate to the south , chicken sheds and powerlines within parcel and rural delipidation of farm complex to the south.
Settlement edge character		Industrial estate linear edge softened by vegetation to the west and east but with failed planting buffer centrally.
Visual relationship between the area and the settlement/key features (eg cumulative impact issues)		Woodland within parcel integrates settlement edge very positively to the east.
Summary evaluation of landscape susceptibility		**M**

VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

General factors		
Intervisibility	M	Moderate intervisibility
Key views	M/L	N/A
Key receptors		

Residents- rural/semi-rural	H/M	Rural farms and dwellings to the south.
Residents-urban/suburban edge		N/A
Promoted trails		N/A
Public rights of way	H/M	One PROW within area but another to the south west overlooks area.
Access/common land		N/A
Cycleways		N/A
Roads	M	B4091 to the east and minor road to the west.
Summary evaluation of visual susceptibility		**H/M**

OPPORTUNITIES, DESIGN AND MITIGATION

Development location, layout and design recommendations where appropriate:

The heights of any proposed buildings to the south and west should be considered carefully to minimise effects and there should be strong tree belts on these boundaries. The woodland and linear meadow beneath power lines to the east should not be developed but should be managed for biodiversity/recreation.

Opportunities and potential for landscape mitigation where appropriate:

As above.