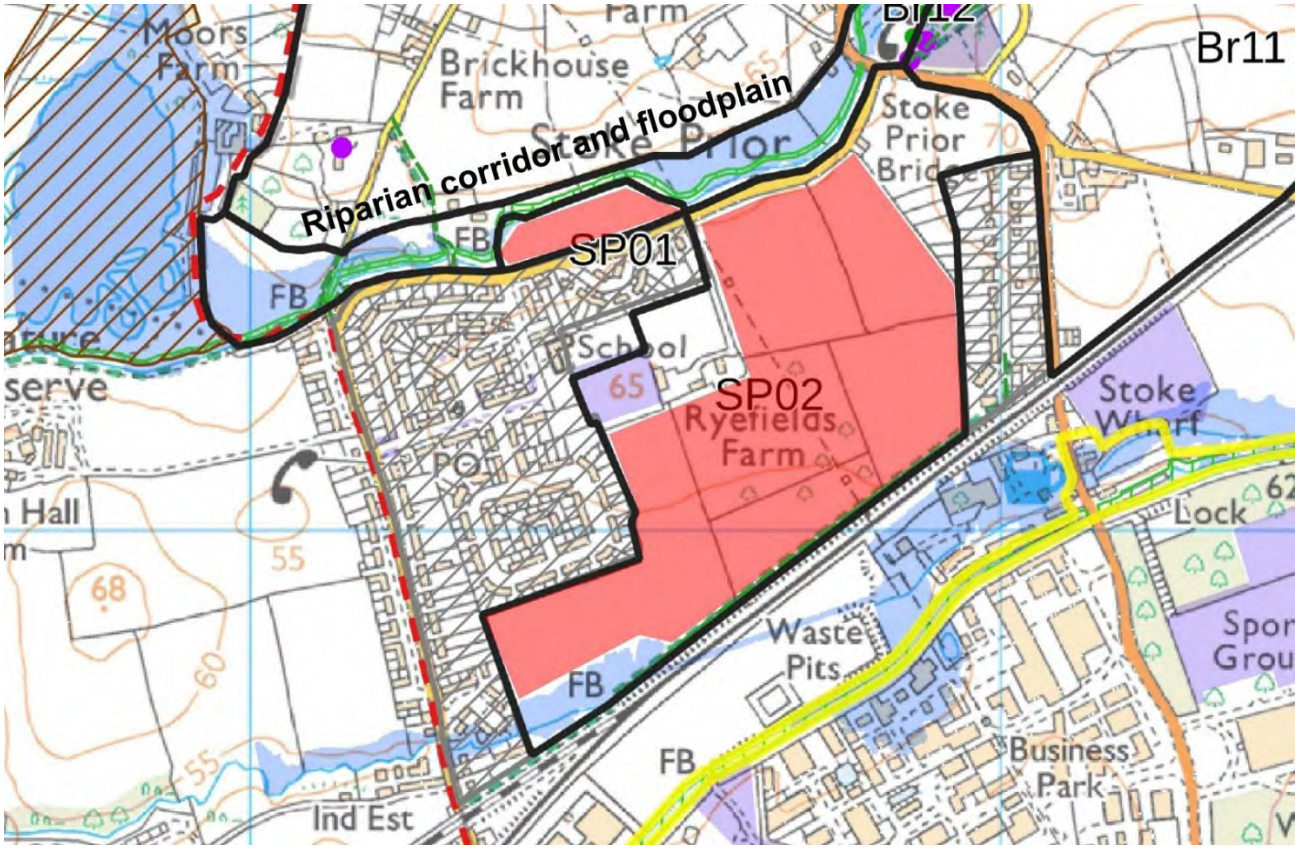
Settlement Sensitivity Summary: Stoke Prior

Summary

The original Stoke Prior is a small historic settlement centred around a distinctive church in the Salwarpe valley. The areas considered by the study are around two blocks of 20c settlement lying on the gently rising southern slopes of the valley to the south and south east, separated by pastoral land. The 20c settlement is defined on its northern edge by the river which is a Local Wildlife site, and on its southern edge by a railway line. Beyond this is the settlement/industrial and commercial area of Stoke Works, associated originally with the Worcester and Birmingham Canal, and then in particular with the manufacture of Harris decorative products. It is likely that Stoke Prior provided housing for local workers.

Sensitivity to housing is considered medium/low in the area between the two parts of the 20c settlement and medium in the small parcel adjacent to the river corridor. Opportunities have been identified in both.

Sensitivity to employment use is considered high in all areas around the settlement.



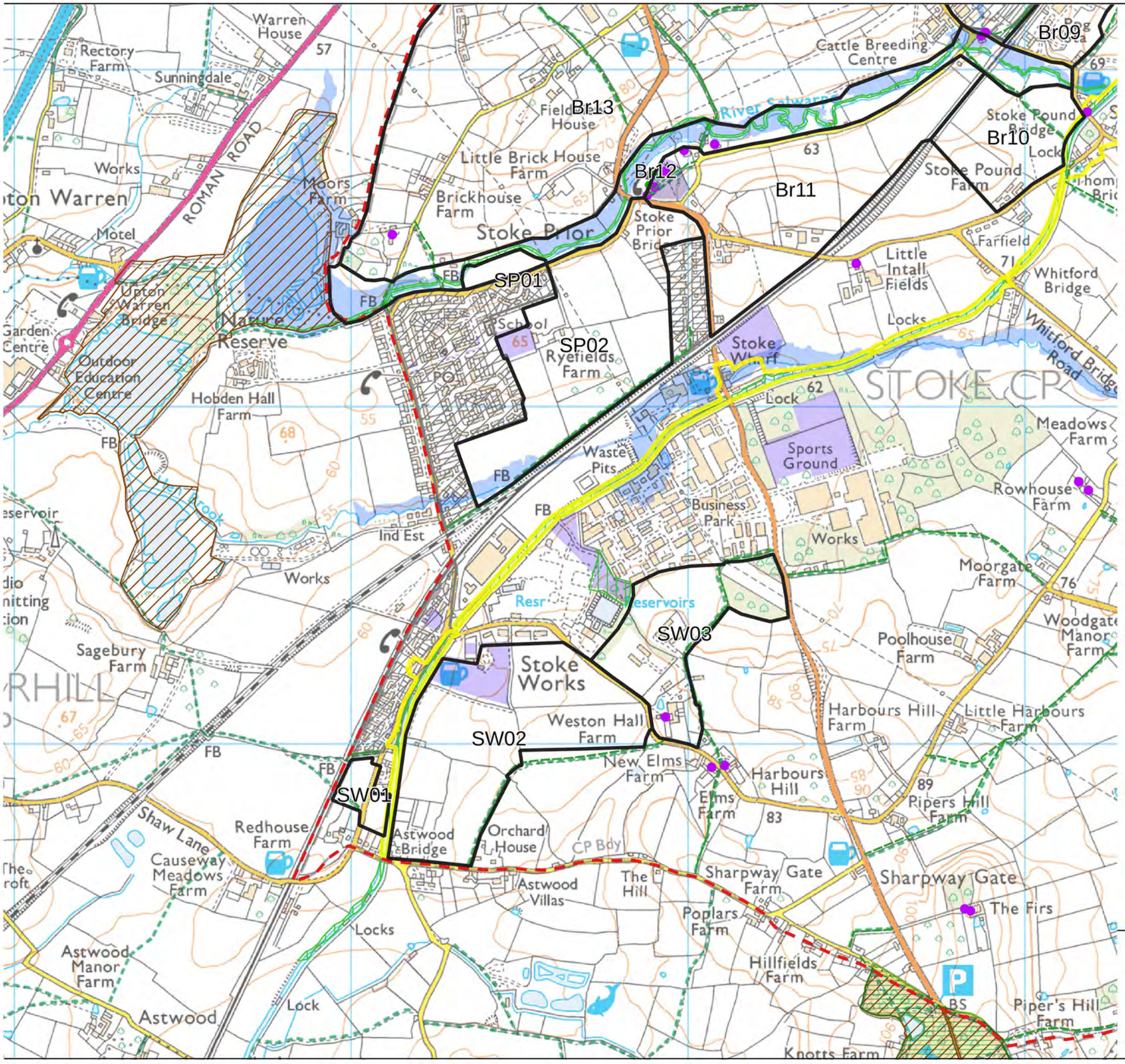
Key

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

Opportunity for Housing

Land parcel on edge of Salwarpe river corridor (SP01).

View west across pasture between the two parts of the settlement showing remnant orchard trees (SP02).



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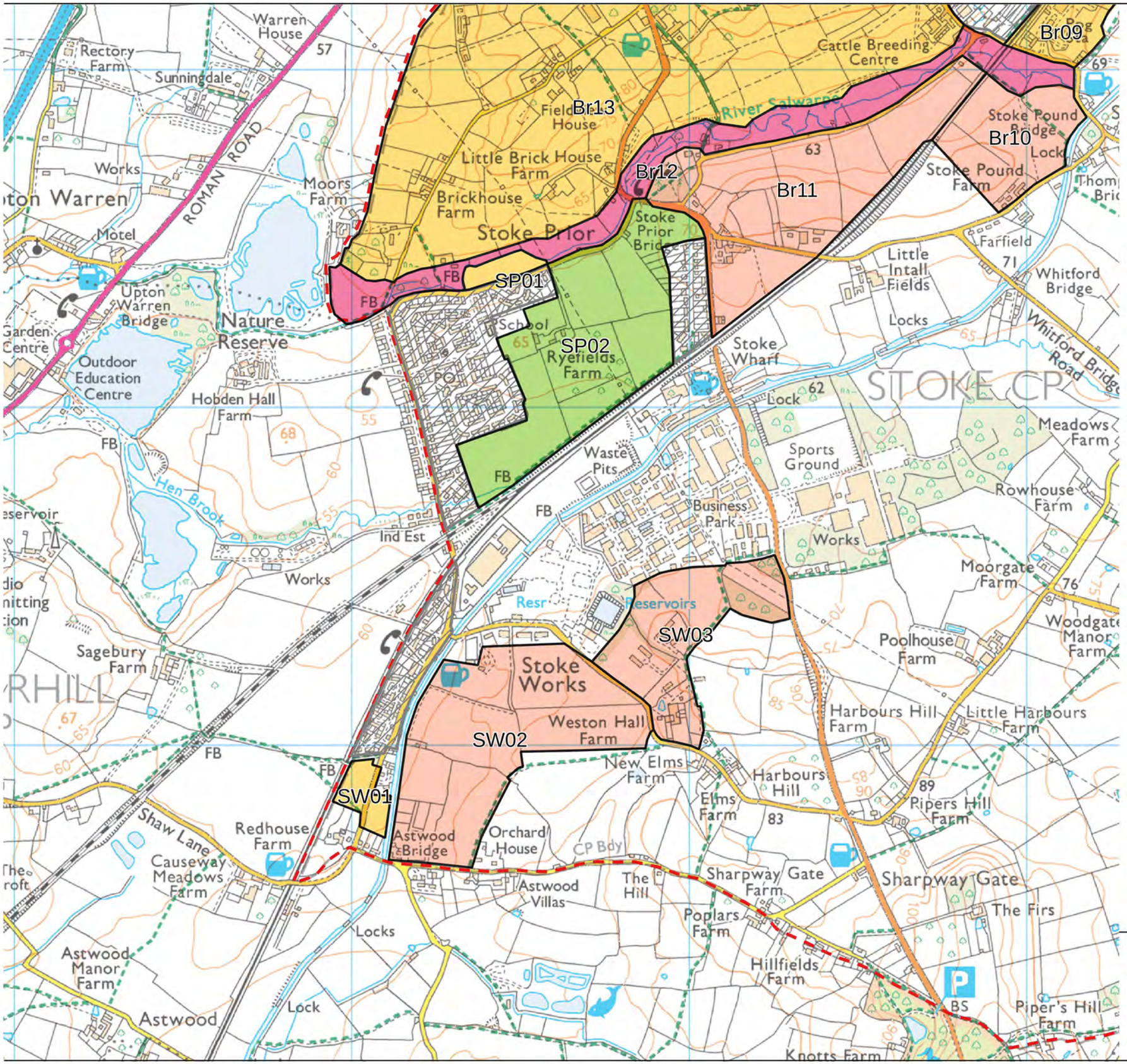
Stoke Prior and Stoke Works
Land parcels, Constraints and Designations



KEY

- District Boundary
- Settlement development limits

Sensitivity to housing development

- High
- High/medium
- Medium
- Medium/low

N

0 250 500 m

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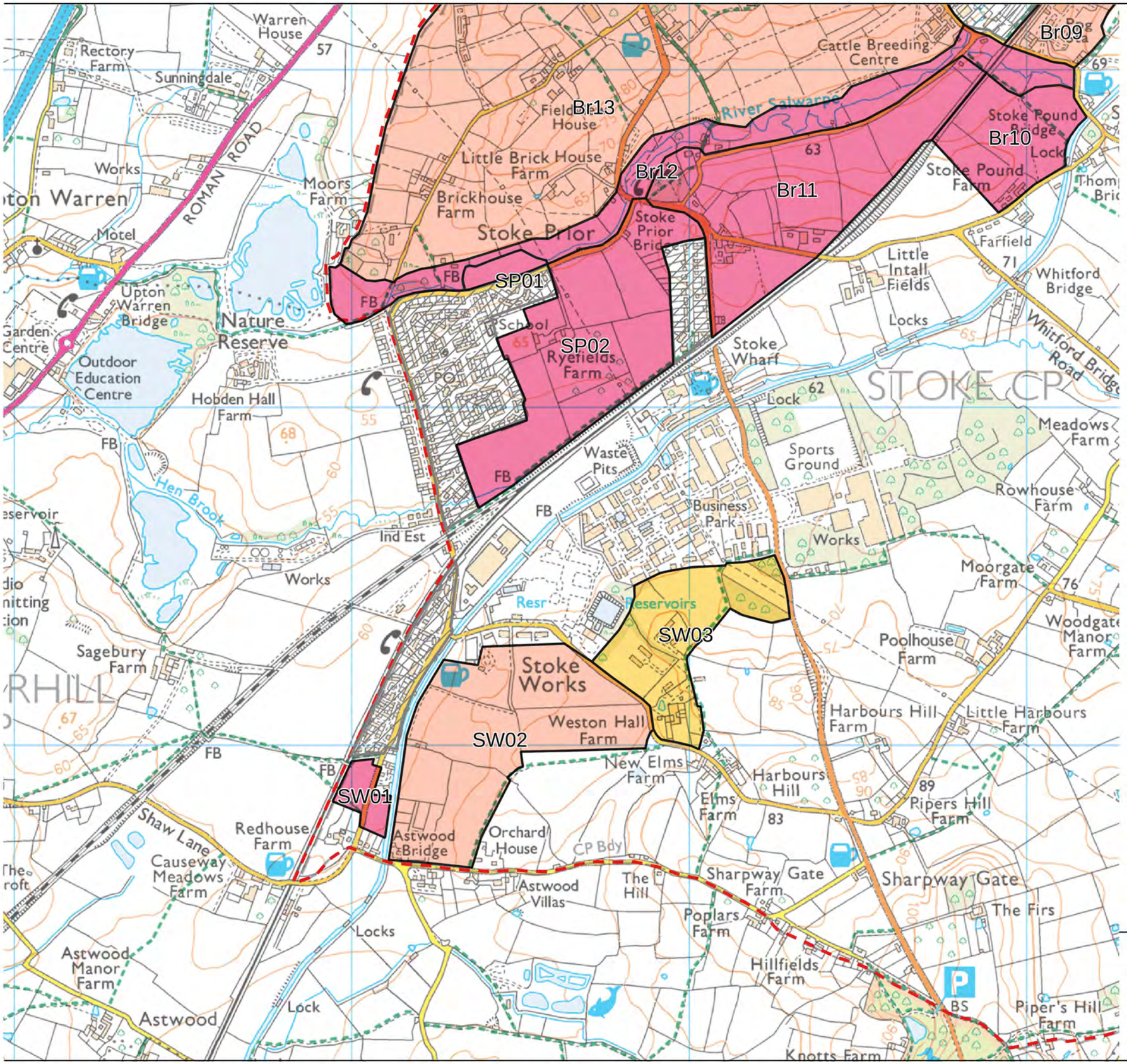
Stoke Prior and Stoke Works Settlements: Sensitivity to Housing



KEY

- District Boundary
- Settlement development limits

Sensitivity to employment use

- High
- High/medium
- Medium

N

0 250 500 m

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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.	SP01

ASSESSED SENSITIVITY EVALUATION

Sensitivity to Housing	Medium
Sensitivity to Employment	High

Sensitivity Summary

The landscape value lies in its location adjacent to a Local Wildlife site around the northern edge of the site, associated with the River Salwarpe, with additional value provided by the presence of a thick line of riverside trees. The landscape susceptibility to housing lies in the presence of these trees and the associated wetland vegetation along the stream and extension of the settlement at Stoke Prior across the road. The visual susceptibility lies in views from the road and adjoining dwellings. New housing could be appropriate in this area, as long as it was well designed to fit the site and retain the existing riverside trees. Opportunities should also be sought to enhance the wetland character of the river corridor. Employment use would be inappropriate due to the proximity of existing dwellings adjoining this area.

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	The River Salwarpe is a Local Wildlife site adjoining the site.
Cultural heritage	M	Apparently raised meadow bounded by river and road.
Distinctiveness	M	The distinctiveness of the site is associated with the strong line of trees along the River Salwarp that wrap around the northern edge of the parcel.
Perceptual	M	
Scenic factors		Parcel currently unmanaged, but adjoining riverside trees provide an attractive backdrop to the site.
Tranquillity		Minor road and settlement adjacent. No public access.
Recreational and functional	M/L	
Recreational		No public access.
Functional		Abandoned field currently provides a habitat patch for wildlife.
Condition	M/L	Untidy landscape in poor condition.
Associations		-
Summary evaluation of overall value		**M**

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

Natural factors	M/L	
Landform eg steep slopes		Flat landform, falling 1-2 metres onto narrow floodplain of River Salwarpe.
Presence of water		-
Cultural factors	M/L	

Historic field/land use pattern		Now abandoned, but formerly part of adjoining regular field pattern.
Settlement pattern		Field shed only building on site.
Land use factors	M/L	
Function of area e.g. floodplain, GI corridor, biodiversity corridor or patch, productive land.		Former pastoral field now abandoned and unkempt.
Amenity- presence of footpaths/recreation corridors		No PROWs.
Functional relationship between the area and the settlement/key features		May possibly have been used as horse pasture by nearby residents.
Perceptual factors	M	
Scale		Medium scale
Enclosure		Enclosed by hedgerow and riverside trees.
Skyline		-
Landmarks/features		-
Detractors		Unkempt appearance of parcel.
Settlement edge character		20c settlement to south across road with mature gardens.
Visual relationship between the area and the settlement/key features (eg cumulative impact issues)		Parcel separarted from adjoining settlement by public road.
Summary evaluation of landscape susceptibility		**M**

VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

General factors		
Intervisibility	M/L	Enclosed area not widely visible.
Key views		-
Key receptors		
Residents- rural/semi-rural	H/M	Restricted views from dwelling on far side of river.
Residents-urban/suburban edge	H/M	Visible from houses on the far side of the road.
Promoted trails		-
Public rights of way		-
Access/common land		-
Cycleways		-
Roads	M	Visible from road along southern boundary of parcel.
Summary evaluation of visual susceptibility		**M**

OPPORTUNITIES, DESIGN AND MITIGATION

Development location, layout and design recommendations where appropriate:

The parcel could be developed for housing provided the trees and waterside vegetation on the River Salwarpe are protected. Houses should be built facing southwards behind an access road, at a similar density to the adjoining housing, with long rear gardens to protect the riverside environment.

Opportunities and potential for landscape mitigation where appropriate:

The key to good mitigation is to protect and enhance the riverside environment.

Land Cover Parcel No.	SP02

ASSESSED SENSITIVITY EVALUATION

Sensitivity to Housing	Medium/low
Sensitivity to Employment	High

Sensitivity Summary

The landscape value lies in the setting of the distinctive Church of St Michael to the north east, Hen Brook with associated riparian vegetation, remnant orchard trees and the PROW. The landscape susceptibility to housing lies in the watercourse corridor, the local skyline, the orchard trees and the setting to the church. The visual susceptibility to housing lies in views from the church and users, the PROW and local residents. The parcel has potential for large-scale housing but a substantial green buffer should be retained on the north eastern corner to protect and enhance the setting of the listed church and associated features. The parcel is significantly more sensitive to employment use as it is surrounded and overlooked by housing and employment use would be substantially out of 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	Medium

LANDSCAPE VALUE FACTORS

Landscape designations		-
Natural heritage	M/L	Hen Brook with associated riparian vegetation along the southern edge. Trimmed hedges around improved grassland to the south and arable fields to the north with remnant orchard trees.
Cultural heritage	M	Mix of regular fields created through piecemeal enclosure to the north to regular planned enclosure to the south derived from former moorland and orchard. Listed Church of St Michael to the north east.
Distinctiveness	H/M	Orchard trees within parcel and church to the north east is distinctive.
Perceptual	M/L	
Scenic factors		View to church.
Tranquillity		Minor road to the north and railway to the south. Suburban settlement on two sides and pylons and power lines through the parcel. PROW along southern edge.
Recreational and functional	M	
Recreational		PROW along southern edge.
Functional		Hen Brook and orchard trees are potential GI corridors.
Condition	M/L	Poor condition with hedge field boundaries removed although trimmed hedges remain to the north.
Associations		N/A
Summary evaluation of overall value		**M/L**

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

Natural factors	M

Landform eg steep slopes		Flat to the south with gentle slopes down to the north.
Presence of water		Hen Brook.
Cultural factors	M	
Historic field/land use pattern		Mix of regular fields created through piecemeal enclosure to the north to regular planned enclosure to the south derived from former moorland and orchard.
Settlement pattern		Suburban housing to east and west, with one smallholding with 20c dwellings located centrally.
Land use factors	M/L	
Function of area e.g. floodplain, GI corridor, biodiversity corridor or patch, productive land.		Hen Brook is potential GI corridor.
Amenity- presence of footpaths/recreation corridors		PROW along southern edge.
Functional relationship between the area and the settlement/key features		PROW along southern edge connects to settlement on either side.
Perceptual factors	M/L	
Scale		Medium.
Enclosure		Relatively open within and enclosed around edges.
Skyline		East west hedge located centrally acts as the skyline when viewed from the road to the north.
Landmarks/features		Church to the north east outside the parcel.
Detractors		Pylons and power lines and settlement edge in parts.
Settlement edge character		Mostly linear suburban settlement edge.
Visual relationship between the area and the settlement/key features (eg cumulative impact issues)		The area provides a pleasant green view for adjacent residents.
Summary evaluation of landscape susceptibility		**M/L**

VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

General factors		
Intervisibility	M/L	Limited intervisibility of the area- confined to the church and valley floor to the north.
Key views	H/M	View from churchyard and lychgate.
Key receptors		
Residents- rural/semi-rural	H/M	Centrally located smallholding.
Residents-urban/suburban edge	H/M	Suburban edge to east and west.
Promoted trails		N/A
Public rights of way	H/M	PROW to south.

Access/common land		N/A
Cycleways		N/A
Roads	M	Minor road linking to Stoke Prior to north and mainline railway to the south.
Summary evaluation of visual susceptibility		**M**

OPPORTUNITIES, DESIGN AND MITIGATION

Development location, layout and design recommendations where appropriate:

The parcel has potential for large-scale housing but a substantial green buffer should be retained on the north eastern corner to protect and enhance the setting of the listed church and associated features. The remaining orchard trees, the PROW and the watercourse should form part of the GI and improve linkages across the site, including to the north and south. The orchard could be used as a theme and should be enhancedwith additional orchard trees using local varieties. The hedgerow to the north should be retained and housing should front of the road behind the hedge with trees with appropriate accesses running parallel to the road.

Opportunities and potential for landscape mitigation where appropriate:

As above.