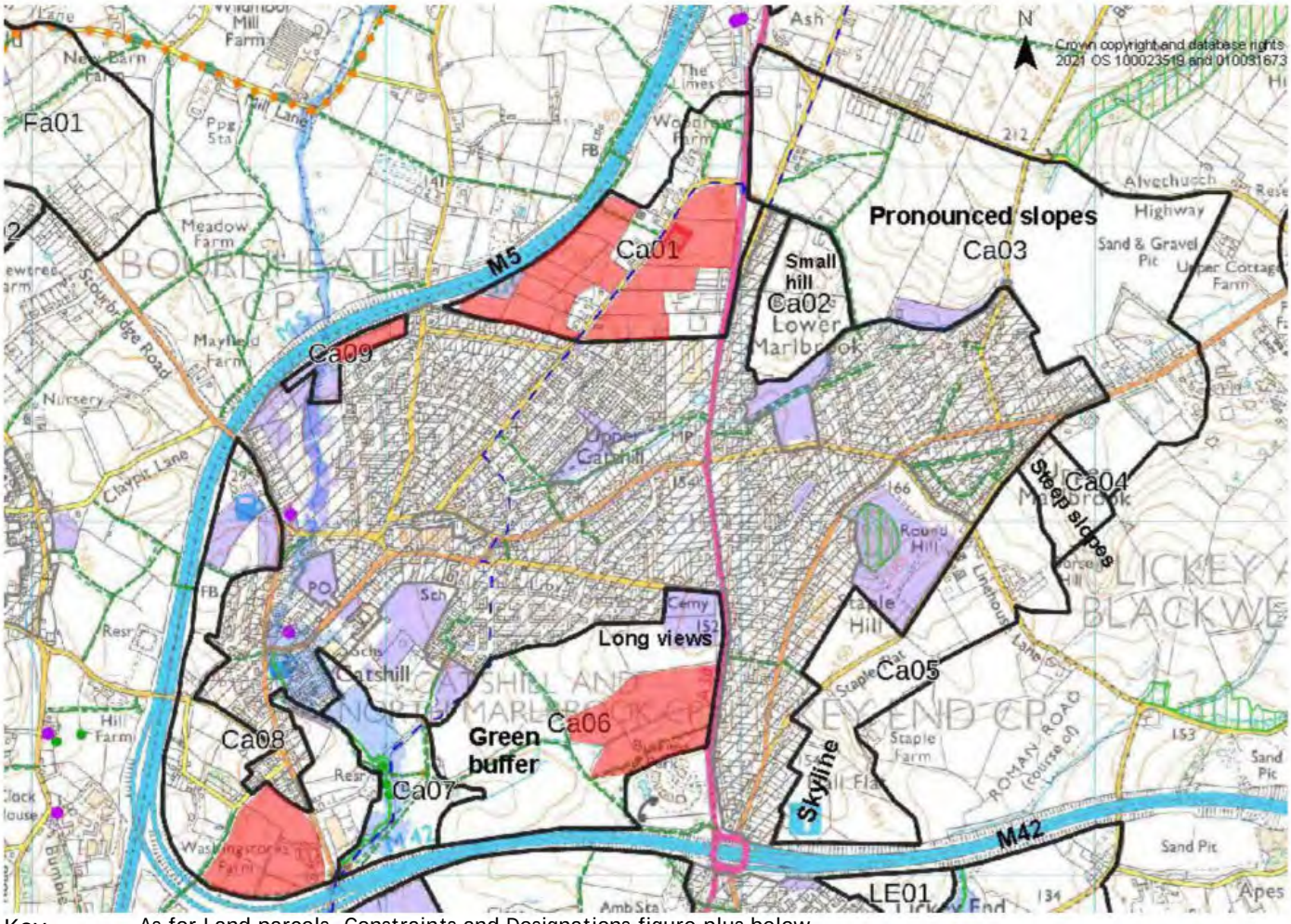
Settlement Sensitivity Summary: Catshill

Summary

Catshill lies on sloping land falling from the Lickey Hills to the north east across enclosed common/heathland to the valley of Battlefield Brook to the south west of the settlement, before rising again towards the M5 to the west. A small ridge with built form on its top extends south along the line of the A38 towards Lickey End. It consists primarily of incremental 20c development with its older core to the west in and around the Stourbridge Road with the listed Christ Church (associated with A.E. Housman) a particular feature. The valley with its strong riparian corridor, floodplain and open rising land to the east and west form a strong green buffer between Catshill and the M42 and Bromsgrove to the south. The area west of the Birmingham Road is particularly well used for informal recreation and the Topaz Business Park forms a distinctive coherent modern landmark when viewed from the M42. The thin strip of open land between the settlement and the M5 (to the west of Stourbridge Road) manages to retain a semi-rural character with interrupted settlement and pasture and notable features such as Christ Church's extended churchyard/burial ground. To the north, the late enclosed common/heathland character extends towards Lydiate Ash. To the north east, the land rises to a small distinct hill at Bellevue and then more substantially towards the Lickey Hills with arable fields and vegetated landfill which are locally prominent. There are also distinct changes in level to the east of the settlement with open slopes south west of the well wooded Round Hill and towards Gorse Hill.

Sensitivity to housing is considered high along the Battlefield Brook and north of Gorse Hill. The distinct rising and falling land to the north east and east of the settlement respectively is considered to be high/medium sensitivity. Opportunities have been identified in parts of Ca01 and Ca09 to the north and parts of Ca06 and Ca08 to the south.

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



Key

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

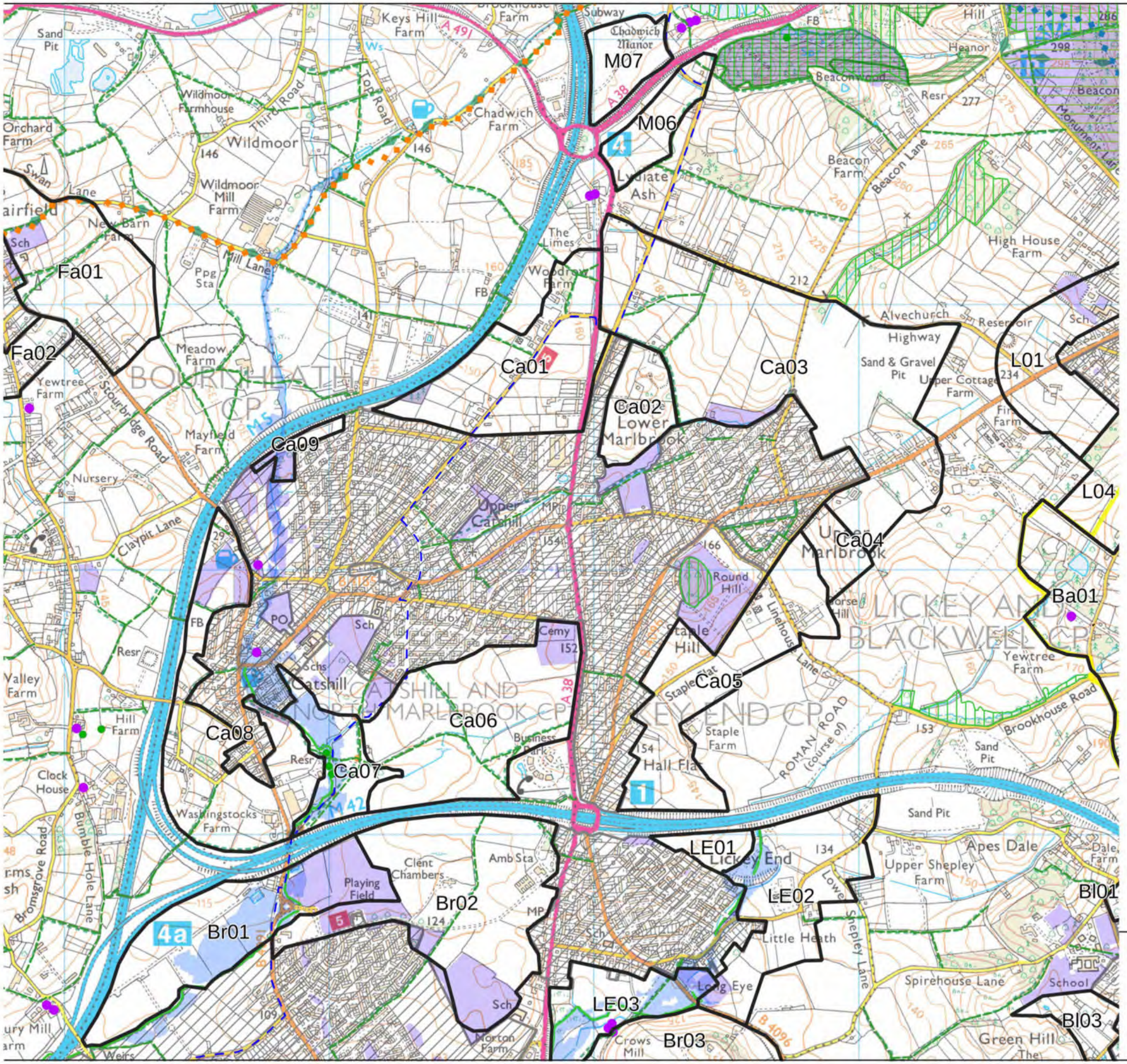
Opportunity for Housing

View north to distinctive hill at Bellevue across open space (Ca02).

View north east to rising arable land north east of the settlement (Ca03).

View south from settlement across green buffer towards M42 showing well screened edge of Bromsgrove and well used informal paths (Ca06).

View west from Linehouse Lane towards southern edge of settlement which is screened by landform and vegetation (Ca05).



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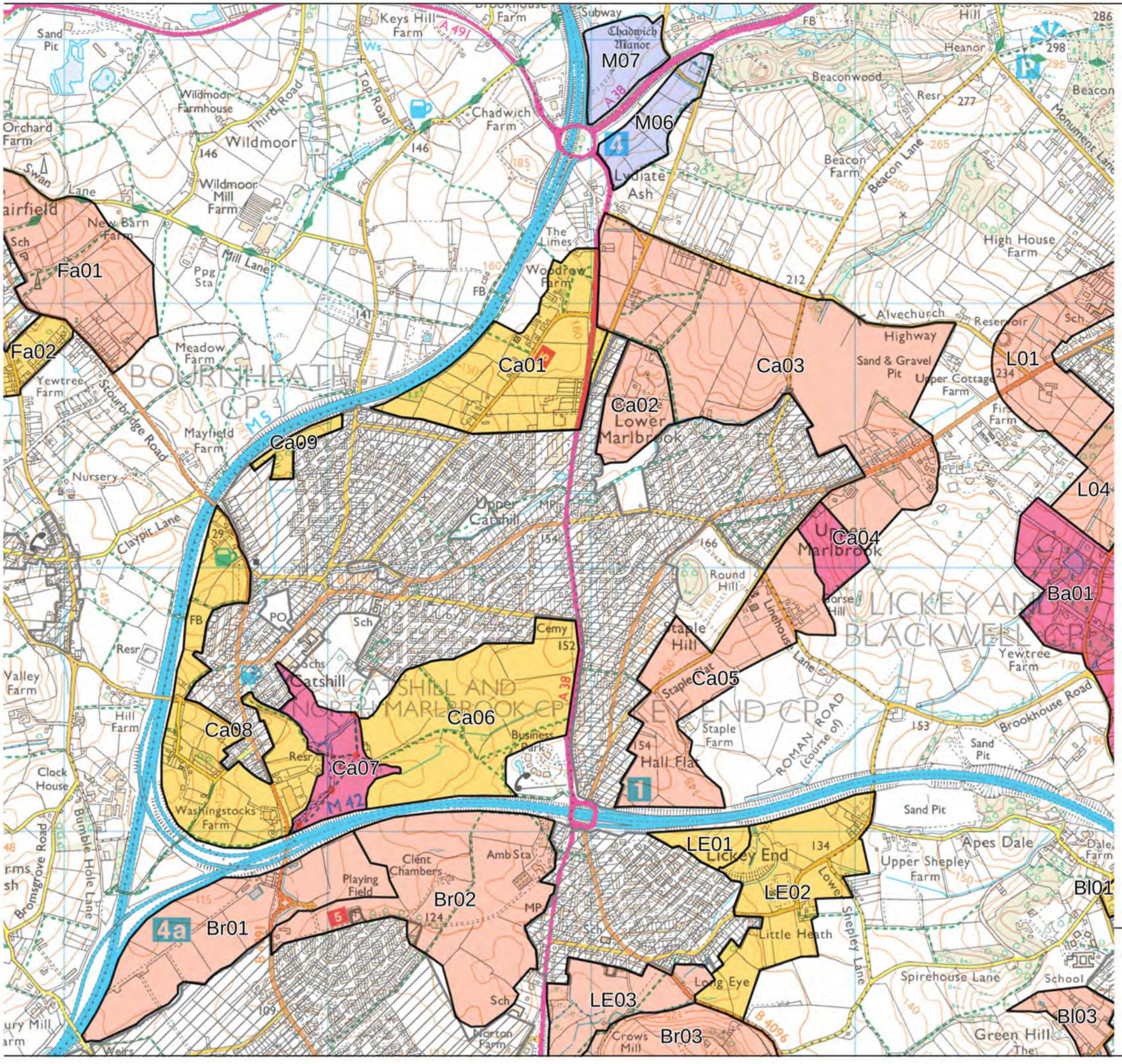
Project: Bromsgrove District Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Study
Client: Bromsgrove District Council

Catshill
Land parcels, Constraints and Designations



KEY

- District Boundary
- Settlement development limits

Sensitivity to housing development

- High
- High/medium
- Medium
- N/A

N

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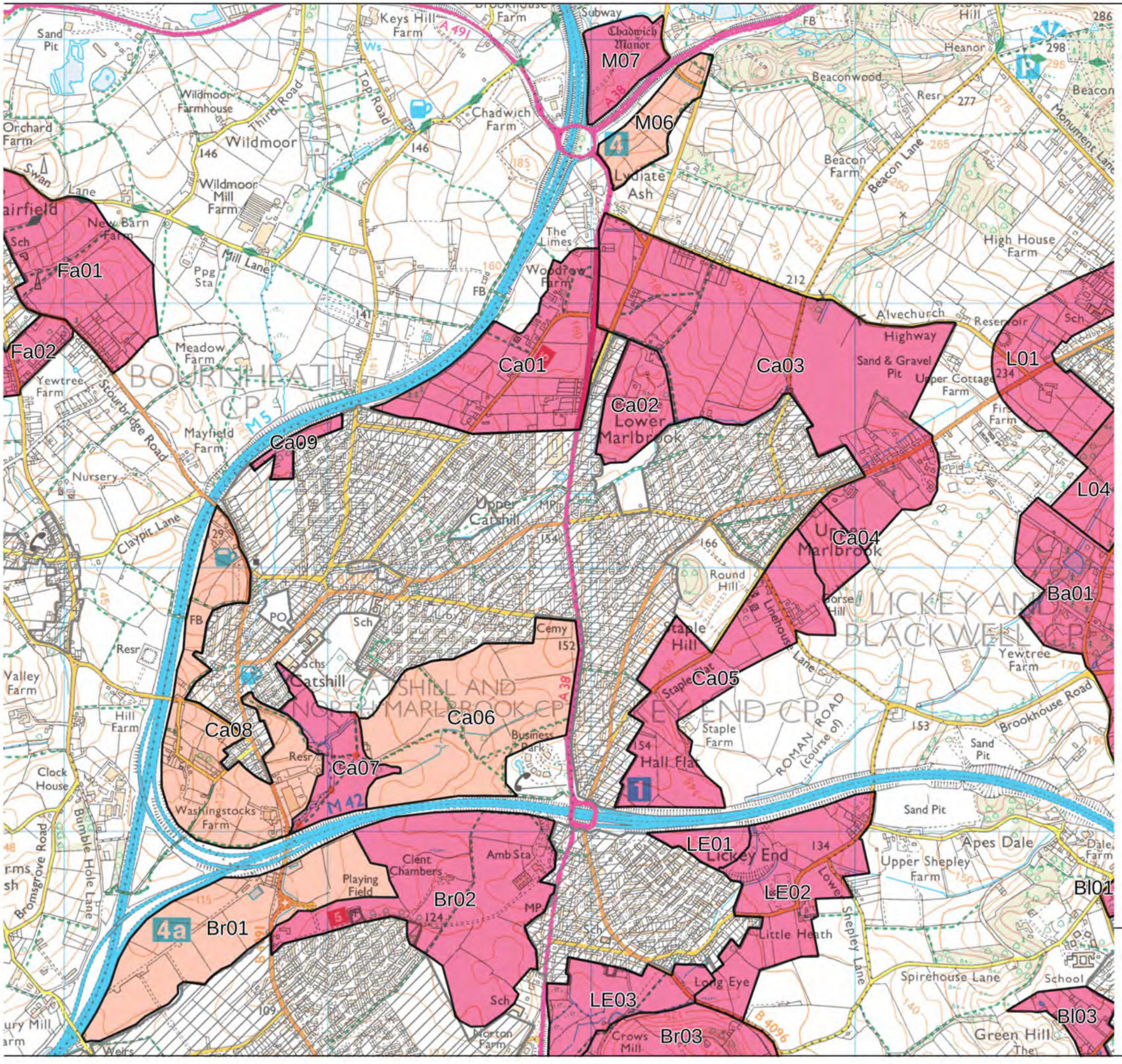
Project: Bromsgrove District Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Study
Client: Bromsgrove District Council

Catshill
Settlements: Sensitivity to Housing



KEY

- District Boundary
- Settlement development limits

Sensitivity to employment use

- High
- High/medium

N

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

Catshill
Landscape sensitivity to employment use

Land Cover Parcel No.	Ca01

ASSESSED SENSITIVITY EVALUATION

Sensitivity to Housing	Medium
Sensitivity to Employment	High

Sensitivity Summary

The landscape value lies in the small secondary woodlands, hedgerows and unimproved grassland. Landscape susceptibility to housing lies in the sloping landform, secondary woodland, the small size of some of the field pattern in places, and the distance from the main settlement in the northern part of the parcel. The visual susceptibility to housing lies in the PROWs, adjacent residents and motorists approaching the settlement from the north. The most sensitive part of the area is north of Woodrow Lane. Carefully designed housing maybe appropriate to the south/east and west of the road providing connections are made into the settlement and as much existing vegetation can be retained as possible. The area is more sensitive to employment uses due to the relationship with the dwellings which are scattered throughout the area, the residential settlement edge and the small size of the fields.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CONTEXT

National character area	Arden
WCC landscape character type (LCT)	Enclosed Commons
WCC land cover parcel (LCP) sensitivity	Low

LANDSCAPE VALUE FACTORS

Landscape designations		N/A
Natural heritage	M	Mix of improved and unimproved pastures bounded by both outgrown and trimmed hedges with some small patches of secondary woodland including conifers and mature gardens.
Cultural heritage	M	Former common with mainly planned enclosures with rectilinear fields and dwellings with large gardens.
Distinctiveness	M/L	Typical planned enclosure with bracken in hedges.
Perceptual	M/L	
Scenic factors		Moderate pleasant framed short views to the north and west.
Tranquillity		M5 and A38 are sources of noise and movement. Settlement built form is apparent to the south and south-east. Four PROWs.
Recreational and functional	H/M	
Recreational		National Cycle Route along Woodrow Lane. Four PROWs link the parcel with the wider countryside to the east and west.
Functional		Unimproved pastures bounded by both outgrown and trimmed hedges with some small patches of secondary woodland could contribute to GI.
Condition	M	Good in places and poor in others.
Associations		N/A
Summary evaluation of overall value		**M/L**

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

Natural factors	H/M	
Landform eg steep slopes		Gently sloping north east to south west.
Presence of water		None apparent.
Cultural factors	M/L	
Historic field/land use pattern		Former common with mainly planned enclosures with rectilinear fields and dwellings with large gardens.
Settlement pattern		20c housing estates to the south and interrupted linear development of larger houses along Woodrow Lane and A38.
Land use factors	M	
Function of area e.g. floodplain, GI corridor, biodiversity corridor or patch, productive land.		Two fields to north are arable land. Unimproved pastures bounded by both outgrown and trimmed hedges with some small patches of secondary woodland could contribute to GI.
Amenity- presence of footpaths/recreation corridors		Four PROWs connect east and west.
Functional relationship between the area and the settlement/key features		The parcel is not functionally strongly connected.
Perceptual factors	M	
Scale		Medium to small.
Enclosure		Moderately enclosed.
Skyline		Trees to north and east on skyline.
Landmarks/features		None.
Detractors		M5 but screened in summer.
Settlement edge character		Straight 20c settlement edge to south and ribbon development to east.
Visual relationship between the area and the settlement/key features (eg cumulative impact issues)		Neutral edge.
Summary evaluation of landscape susceptibility		**M**

VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

General factors		
Intervisibility	M/L	Limited intervisibility outside area.
Key views	M/L	None.
Key receptors		
Residents- rural/semi-rural	H/M	Woodrow Farm.
Residents-urban/suburban edge	H/M	To south and east.
Promoted trails		N/A
Public rights of way	H/M	Four PROWs.

Access/common land		N/A
Cycleways	H/M	National Cycle Route on Woodrow Lane.
Roads	M	Mainly A38 and Woodrow Lane.
Summary evaluation of visual susceptibility		**H/M**

OPPORTUNITIES, DESIGN AND MITIGATION

Development location, layout and design recommendations where appropriate:

Carefully designed housing maybe appropriate to the south/east and west of Woodrow Lane providing connections are made into the settlement and as much existing vegetation can be retained as possible.

Opportunities and potential for landscape mitigation where appropriate:

A planting buffer along A38 should separate the development from the road and create a green edge to the settlement.

Land Cover Parcel No.	Ca02

ASSESSED SENSITIVITY EVALUATION

Sensitivity to Housing	High/medium
Sensitivity to Employment	High

Sensitivity Summary

The landscape value lies in the character as a distinctive locally prominent rounded hill with hilltop trees, attractive views to the hill from the north, east and south, its relative tranquillity away from roads particularly to the east and unimproved grassland, outgrown and trimmed hedges. The landscape susceptibility to housing lies in its prominent slopes and its role as the local skyline rising above the adjacent housing and landscape and forming part of a green visual corridor out from the settlement and the open space to the south. The visual susceptibility to housing lies in views from the PROWs to the east, north east and the open space to the south and views from local residents. These factors make the area sensitive to housing which would be very prominent and adversely affect the distinctive character of this settlement edge. The sensitivity to employment would be even more marked with employment buildings being even more prominent and inappropriate directly adjacent to housing.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CONTEXT

National character area	Arden
WCC landscape character type (LCT)	Enclosed Commons
WCC land cover parcel (LCP) sensitivity	Low

LANDSCAPE VALUE FACTORS

Landscape designations		N/A
Natural heritage	M	Mix of improved and unimproved grassland bounded by both outgrown and trimmed hedges with a small patch of secondary woodland including conifers in the mature hilltop garden.
Cultural heritage	M	Former common with mainly planned enclosures with semi-regular fields and two dwellings with large gardens.
Distinctiveness	H/M	Distinctive locally prominent rounded hill with hilltop trees.
Perceptual	H/M	
Scenic factors		Attractive views to the hill from north, east and south.
Tranquillity		Situated away from roads. Two detached dwellings lying within the area with the settlement lying adjacent. No public access.
Recreational and functional	M	
Recreational		No public access.
Functional		Unimproved grassland, trees and hedgerows could contribute to GI.
Condition	M	Generally good condition.
Associations		N/A
Summary evaluation of overall value		**H/M**

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

Natural factors	M

Landform eg steep slopes		Distinct small hill.
Presence of water		None apparent- watercourse to the south outside the parcel.
Cultural factors	M	
Historic field/land use pattern		Former common with mainly planned enclosures with semi-regular fields and two dwellings with large gardens.
Settlement pattern		Adjacent settlement is 20c ribbon or housing estate development.
Land use factors	M/L	
Function of area e.g. floodplain, GI corridor, biodiversity corridor or patch, productive land.		Unimproved grassland, trees and hedgerows could contribute to GI.
Amenity- presence of footpaths/recreation corridors		No public access.
Functional relationship between the area and the settlement/key features		No functional connection to settlement.
Perceptual factors	H/M	
Scale		Medium to small.
Enclosure		Generally open.
Skyline		Forms local skyline particularly when viewed from the south and east.
Landmarks/features		Clump of trees on hilltop.
Detractors		N/A.
Settlement edge character		Adjacent settlement is 20c straight ribbon or curving housing estate development.
Visual relationship between the area and the settlement/key features (eg cumulative impact issues)		The parcel is a visual green corridor penetrating into the settlement combined with the open space to the south.
Summary evaluation of landscape susceptibility		**H/M**

VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

General factors		
Intervisibility	H/M	The hill is visible from the south and from the north east and east.
Key views	H/M	View from public open space on Braces Lane and PROWs to the north east and east.
Key receptors		
Residents- rural/semi-rural	H/M	Isolated detached houses.
Residents-urban/suburban edge	H/M	Settlement to the south east and west.
Promoted trails		N/A
Public rights of way	H/M	PROWs to the north east and east.

Access/common land		N/A
Cycleways		N/A
Roads	M	Braces Lane to south- oblique views.
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.	Ca03

ASSESSED SENSITIVITY EVALUATION

Sensitivity to Housing	High/medium
Sensitivity to Employment	High

Sensitivity Summary

The landscape value lies in the attractive views from the upper part of the area and the rolling and rising landform, the National Cycle Route on Birmingham Road and three PROWs to the west, the strong tree cover including tree belts such as along the A38 and to the east, the hedges and the rough grassland with scrub. The landscape susceptibility to housing lies in the rising land which forms the skyline and backcloth to the settlement, the particular prominence of Marlbrook Tip, the openess of the area centrally and its exposure to views over a wide area, the area's role as a green buffer between Catshill and Lydiate Ash and Lickey, the presence of the PROWs with views and the tree cover which contributes to character to the east and west in particular. Visual susceptibility lies in views from the National Cycle Route, the three PROWs, visibility from residents in and around Catshill and Lydiate Ash. These factors mean that the area is sensitive to housing. Sensitivity to employment use is greater due to the prominence of the area, particularly the landfill, the steep slopes, the relationship with housing and the role as a green gaps between settlements.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CONTEXT

National character area	Arden
WCC landscape character type (LCT)	Enclosed Commons
WCC land cover parcel (LCP) sensitivity	Low

LANDSCAPE VALUE FACTORS

Landscape designations		N/A
Natural heritage	M	Mix of outgrown and trimmed hedges with trees along some hedgerows and lanes and also in belts around paddocks/enlarged curtilages, the mix of arable and rough and mown grassland and scrub.
Cultural heritage	M/L	Former common with mainly planned enclosures with rectilinear fields and dwellings with large gardens. Also a large sand and gravel pit which has been landfilled.
Distinctiveness	M	Limited distinctiveness.
Perceptual	H/M	
Scenic factors		Fine distant views from Alvechurch Highway south and attractive rolling and rising landform
Tranquillity		Old Birmingham Road and two minor roads result in some traffic noise and movement. Settlement edge at lower level on hillside in large gardens/enclosures. Three PROWs to the west.
Recreational and functional	M	
Recreational		National Cycle Route on Birmingham Road to the west. Three PROWs to the west.
Functional		Outgrown and trimmed hedges with trees along some hedgerows and lanes and also in belts around paddocks/enlarged curtilages and rough grassland/scrub could contribute to GI.
Condition	M	Good condition to the east and west either side of the landfill site.

Associations		N/A
Summary evaluation of overall value		**H/M**

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

Natural factors	M	
Landform eg steep slopes		Convex slopes rise distinctly from the south to north and the landfill rises above this in a domed landform. A small lies to the east.
Presence of water		A watercourse runs to the east and there is a pond and drainage ditches in the landfill site.
Cultural factors	M	
Historic field/land use pattern		Former common with mainly planned enclosures with rectilinear fields and dwellings with large gardens.
Settlement pattern		Main settlement to the south with discontinuous housing ribbon development along roads.
Land use factors	M	
Function of area e.g. floodplain, GI corridor, biodiversity corridor or patch, productive land.		Arable land to the west. Outgrown and trimmed hedges with trees along some hedgerows and lanes and also in belts around paddocks/enlarged curtilages and rough grassland/scrub could contribute to GI.
Amenity- presence of footpaths/recreation corridors		Three PROWs to the west.
Functional relationship between the area and the settlement/key features		Connection into the area from settlement through the PROWs.
Perceptual factors	H/M	
Scale		Large to medium/small.
Enclosure		Open centrally and more enclosed to the east and west.
Skyline		Slopes form the skyline.
Landmarks/features		None.
Detractors		Landfill rough vegetation is noticeable.
Settlement edge character		Settlement edge is set down and is integrated by landform and vegetation on the lower slopes.
Visual relationship between the area and the settlement/key features (eg cumulative impact issues)		The area acts largely as a green backcloth to Catshill and acts as a green gap between Catshill and Lydiate Ash to the north and Lickey to the north east.
Summary evaluation of landscape susceptibility		**H/M**

VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

General factors		
Intervisibility	H/M	Strong intervisibility especially on upper slopes.

Key views		N/A
Key receptors		
Residents- rural/semi-rural	H/M	Settlement to the south.
Residents-urban/suburban edge	H/M	Around Lydiate Ash to the north.
Promoted trails		N/A
Public rights of way	H/M	Three PROWs to the west.
Access/common land		N/A
Cycleways	H/M	National Cycle Route on the Birmingham Road to the west.
Roads	M	A38 to the west and a network of local 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.	Ca04

ASSESSED SENSITIVITY EVALUATION

Sensitivity to Housing	High
Sensitivity to Employment	High

Sensitivity Summary

The landscape value lies in intermixed patches of heathland, scrub and secondary woodland which contribute to the GI of the area connecting to Gorse Hill. Landscape susceptibility to housing lies in the prominent steep hill slopes on the south western fringe of the Lickey Hills, the patchwork of secondary woodland, scrub and areas of rough heathland and the well defined settlement edge to the west. The visual susceptibility to housing lies in the intervisibility with lower lying farmland to the west, from local residents and users of Linehouse Lane. Housing would be highly inappropriate on slopes. Employment uses would be even more inappropriate due to the steep slopes, their prominence and the relationship with the adjacent residential area.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CONTEXT

National character area	Arden
WCC landscape character type (LCT)	Enclosed Commons
WCC land cover parcel (LCP) sensitivity	Medium

LANDSCAPE VALUE FACTORS

Landscape designations		-
Natural heritage	H/M	Steep hillside with intermixed patches of heathland, scrub and secondary woodland.
Cultural heritage	M	Planned enclosure of former common.
Distinctiveness	H/M	Prominent sloping ground forms a strong feature when viewed from the south west.
Perceptual	H/M	
Scenic factors		Prominent sloping ground.
Tranquillity		Minor road adjacent. Settlement edge apparent to the south west. No public access.
Recreational and functional	M	
Recreational		No public access.
Functional		Intermixed patches of heathland, scrub and secondary woodland contribute strongly to GI.
Condition	M/L	Apparently low input management.
Associations		-
Summary evaluation of overall value		**H/M**

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

Natural factors	M	
Landform eg steep slopes		Steep hill slopes (related to Gorse Hill) on the south western fringe of the Lickey Hills.

Presence of water		-
Cultural factors	M	
Historic field/land use pattern		Planned enclosure of former common.
Settlement pattern		Interrupted linear settlement to the west.
Land use factors	M	
Function of area e.g. floodplain, GI corridor, biodiversity corridor or patch, productive land.		Intermixed patches of heathland, scrub and secondary woodland contribute strongly to GI.
Amenity- presence of footpaths/recreation corridors		No public access.
Functional relationship between the area and the settlement/key features		Limited functional relationship between settlement and parcel.
Perceptual factors	H/M	
Scale		Small to medium.
Enclosure		Distant and and more framed views.
Skyline		Part of wooded hilltop skyline to east.
Landmarks/features		Area of open heath on slope.
Detractors		-
Settlement edge character		Built edge softened by garden trees to northwest.
Visual relationship between the area and the settlement/key features (eg cumulative impact issues)		Tree cover in parcel helps to hide urban edge.
Summary evaluation of landscape susceptibility		**H/M**

VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

General factors		
Intervisibility	H/M	High intervisibility of area with its surroundings.
Key views		-
Key receptors		
Residents- rural/semi-rural	H/M	From adjoining rural farms/dwellings to south.
Residents-urban/suburban edge	H/M	From adjoining settlement edge.
Promoted trails		-
Public rights of way		-
Access/common land		-
Cycleways		-
Roads	M	Prominent 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.	Ca05

ASSESSED SENSITIVITY EVALUATION

Sensitivity to Housing	High/medium
Sensitivity to Employment	High

Sensitivity Summary

The landscape value lies in the attractive views of the distinctive undulating slopes of open agricultural character, its semi-improved pasture, arable fields enclosed by trimmed hedges with a few trees in places. Landscape susceptibility to housing lies in the openness to views of the rising slopes and skyline especially to the east and the open setting to the distinctive treed Roundhill adjacent. Visual susceptibility to housing lies in the intervisibility of the slopes to the south and east, from minor roads used for walking, from adjacent residents and users of the M42. Housing development in this area would clearly extend what is a well defined settlement edge into open countryside with housing on the slopes having a significantly greater impact than the current edge. It is therefore considered sensitive. Employment use would be even more prominent on these open slopes and would be incongruous and incompatible with the adjacent residential edge.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CONTEXT

National character area	Arden
WCC landscape character type (LCT)	Enclosed Commons
WCC land cover parcel (LCP) sensitivity	Low

LANDSCAPE VALUE FACTORS

Landscape designations		-
Natural heritage	M	Undulating hillside of arable and semi-improved pasture enclosed by trimmed hedges with a few trees in places.
Cultural heritage	M	Planned enclosure of former common with regular fields to the north and piecemeal enclosure of semi-regular fields to the south.
Distinctiveness	H/M	Distinct undulating hillslopes, especially to the south and west and the distinctive treed Roundhill adjacent.
Perceptual	M	
Scenic factors		Pleasant open views along slopes and towards rural slopes from lower ground.
Tranquillity		M42 to the south and minor roads running through parcel. Settlement edge of Catshill apparent to the north in places.No public access.
Recreational and functional	M	
Recreational		No access via PROW.
Functional		Semi-improved pasture enclosed by trimmed hedges with bracken with a few trees provide limited GI linking into Roundhill allotments to the north.
Condition	M	Hedgerows generally well managed.
Associations		-
Summary evaluation of overall value		**M**

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

Natural factors	M

Landform eg steep slopes		Minor ridge top and sides to the south and distinct slopes sweeping in an arc to the north and east.
Presence of water		-
Cultural factors	M	
Historic field/land use pattern		Planned enclosure of former common with regular fields to the north and piecemeal enclosure of semi-regular fields to the south.
Settlement pattern		One deserted farmstead, one smallholding and a few rural dwellings within the area.
Land use factors	M	
Function of area e.g. floodplain, GI corridor, biodiversity corridor or patch, productive land.		Semi-improved pasture enclosed by trimmed hedges with bracken with a few trees provide limited GI linking into Roundhill allotments to the north.
Amenity- presence of footpaths/recreation corridors		No public access.
Functional relationship between the area and the settlement/key features		Limited functional relationship.
Perceptual factors	H/M	
Scale		Medium scale landscape.
Enclosure		Open landscape with wide views to east.
Skyline		Roundhill forms large wooded skyine centrally with rounded rural skyline to the south and linear residential development on edge of Catshill visible, partly softened by garden vegetation.
Landmarks/features		Above dwellings form a hilltop feature contrasting with agricultural land in parcel when viewed from Linehouse Lane.
Detractors		M42
Settlement edge character		Linear settlement edge to the north, partly mitigated by vegetation.
Visual relationship between the area and the settlement/key features (eg cumulative impact issues)		See above
Summary evaluation of landscape susceptibility		**H/M**

VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

General factors		
Intervisibility	H/M	High intervisibility to the south and to east.
Key views	M	View from Linehouse Lane (see above).
Key receptors		
Residents- rural/semi-rural	H/M	Views from farmsteads and other roadside dwellings in parcel.
Residents-urban/suburban edge	H/M	Views from adjoining settlement edge.

Promoted trails		-
Public rights of way		-
Access/common land		-
Cycleways		-
Roads	M	Framed views from M42 and minor roads used for walking within and beyond parcel.
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.	Ca06

ASSESSED SENSITIVITY EVALUATION

Sensitivity to Housing	Medium
Sensitivity to Employment	High/medium

Sensitivity Summary

The landscape value lies in the distinctive rolling slopes with the copses as central features, attractive views from upper slopes especially around the cemetery to the south west across the parcel and green gap with Bromsgrove to the Malverns in the distance, hedgerows and watercourse and their contribution to GI, the productive arable land and the many well used PROWs and informal paths which connect this area to the settlement. The landscape susceptibility to housing lies in its openness, the rising slopes and minor ridge to the north, its role as a green buffer and recreational resource between the motorway and the settlement. The visual susceptibility to housing lies in the views from the PROWs and informal paths within the parcel and to the west, and views from the National Cycle Route to the west, from local residents and from the M42 and A38. The area is seen in juxtaposition with the prominent but very simple Topaz Business Park. The majority of the area is considered to be an area of constraint, particularly the upper slopes to the north adjacent to the cemetery and housing edge due to their role in helping to integrate the existing settlement edge and the fine vews from them, but also along the southern edge due to its openness to the M42. A potential site for housing development is considered to be in the field directly north of the watercourse/ditch as far as the hedge north of the central copse and the part of the field south of the watercourse as far west as a point linking the southern point of the copse with the north western corner of the Business Park. The sensitivity to employment use is greater due to the height of potential development in relation to the residential settlement edge and openness to view.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CONTEXT

National character area	Arden
WCC landscape character type (LCT)	Principal Settled Farmlands
WCC land cover parcel (LCP) sensitivity	Medium

LANDSCAPE VALUE FACTORS

Landscape designations		N/A
Natural heritage	M	Minor watercourse/ditch (partly culverted) and mix of trimmed and outgrown hedges around arable and improved grassland with copse.
Cultural heritage	M	Irregular medium to large fields derived from piecemeal enclosure and cemetery to the north.
Distinctiveness	H/M	Distinctive rolling slopes with copses as key features.
Perceptual	M	
Scenic factors		Attractive views from upper slopes especially around the cemetery to the south west across the parcel and green gap with Bromsgrove to Malverns in the distance.
Tranquillity		M42 to the south and busy A38 to the east. Built form of prominent Topaz Business Park to the south east, residential development on the skyline to the east and residential development to the north. Well used PROWs and informal paths criss-cross the area.
Recreational and functional	M	
Recreational		PROWs and informal paths criss-cross the area- the area is part of well used open land to the south of Catshill.

Functional		Minor watercourse/ditch and mix of trimmed and outgrown hedges with copse contribute to potential GI.
Condition	M/L	Poor condition with gappy hedges.
Associations		N/A
Summary evaluation of overall value		**M**

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

Natural factors	M	
Landform eg steep slopes		Sweeping rolling slopes with minor ridge to the north and valley falling east to west lying centrally.
Presence of water		Watercourse/ditch, culverted to the west.
Cultural factors	M/L	
Historic field/land use pattern		Irregular medium to large fields derived from piecemeal enclosure and cemetery to the north.
Settlement pattern		None within parcel. Topaz Business Park to the south east and residential development to the north and east.
Land use factors	H/M	
Function of area e.g. floodplain, GI corridor, biodiversity corridor or patch, productive land.		Minor watercourse/ditch and mix of trimmed and outgrown hedges with copse contribute to potential GI.
Amenity- presence of footpaths/recreation corridors		PROWs and informal paths criss-cross the area north to south and east to west.
Functional relationship between the area and the settlement/key features		The area is part of open green land to the south of Catshill which forms a buffer between the settlement,the M42 and Bromsgrove and is very well used for informal recreation.
Perceptual factors	M	
Scale		Medium to large.
Enclosure		Generally open.
Skyline		Landform forms skyline to the north viewed from lower points in the area and residential development forms skyline to the east.
Landmarks/features		Topaz Business Park is a prominent feature when viewed from M42 and valley to the west.
Detractors		M42.
Settlement edge character		Residential settlement edge to the north is partly mitigated/filtered by landform and boundary vegetation. It is less mitigated to the east although there is some planting and a low hedge.
Visual relationship between the area and the settlement/key features (eg cumulative impact issues)		The parcel forms a strong and attractive open setting to the 20c settlement.
Summary evaluation of landscape susceptibility		**M**

VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

General factors

Intervisibility	H/M	Intervisible to the west and M42, and over longer distances at higher elevations.
Key views	H/M	Cemetery and PROWs.

Key receptors

Residents- rural/semi-rural		N/A
Residents-urban/suburban edge	H/M	From east primarily but also north.
Promoted trails		N/A
Public rights of way	H/M	PROWs across parcel and to the west
Access/common land		N/A
Cycleways	H/M	National Cycle Route to the west
Roads	M	M42 and A38.
Summary evaluation of visual susceptibility		**H/M**

OPPORTUNITIES, DESIGN AND MITIGATION

Development location, layout and design recommendations where appropriate:

A potential site for housing development is considered to be in the field directly north of the watercourse/ditch as far as the hedge north of the central copse and the part of the field south of the watercourse as far west as a point linking the southern point of the copse with the north western corner of the Business Park. Housing should be maximum two storey to reflect surrounding development and should front and be set back from the A38.

Opportunities and potential for landscape mitigation where appropriate:

Existing trees within the site should be protected and retained as part of the GI. A strong native tree and shrub boundary belt to the south west and west would be needed to minimise the impact on the perceived green gap from the motorway and wider area itself. This should form part of the publicly accessible GI. The hedge along the A38 should be retained as far as possible to soften this edge and houses should front and be set back from the road.

Land Cover Parcel No.	Ca07

ASSESSED SENSITIVITY EVALUATION

Sensitivity to Housing	High
Sensitivity to Employment	High

Sensitivity Summary

The landscape value lies in the distinctive meandering tree lined watercourse of the Battlefield Brook, its wetland associations and enclosed semi-natural character acting as a strong GI corridor, its floodplain function, the network of PROWs and a National Cycle Route, providing access to these wetland habitats and grasslands, which are a key wildlife and attractive visual feature of the landscape. Landscape susceptibility to housing lies in the floodplain function, the recreational use, the role as a strong natural corridor penetrating into Catshill, the openness to view in the southern part of the parcel, and its role separating Catshill from Bromsgrove and the M42. Visual susceptibility to housing lies in views from the National Cycle Route, the network of well-used PROWs and views from residents and the M42. This important river corridor in the valley bottom is very sensitive to housing. Sensitivity to employment use would be similar to housing except that structures would be more prominent in the landscape and would be out of character with the residential edge to the north.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CONTEXT

National character area	Arden
WCC landscape character type (LCT)	Principal Settled Farmlands
WCC land cover parcel (LCP) sensitivity	Medium

LANDSCAPE VALUE FACTORS

Landscape designations		-
Natural heritage	H/M	Battlefield Brook with its meandering river channel and associated riparian vegetation and wetland habitats, floodplain grassland, copse, outgrown hedges and arable field to the south.
Cultural heritage	M	Piecemeal enclosure with historic river crossing points over footbridges providing access through the wet riverside environment.
Distinctiveness	H/M	Low lying, wetland corridor with a meandering tree lined watercourse is a distinctive feature.
Perceptual	H/M	
Scenic factors		An enclosed landscape with a strong sense of place.
Tranquillity		M42 to the south is a major noise source and presence on embankment to the south. Visible built form/settlement edge is framed by strong tree and hedge cover. Cycle way and PROWs traverse the area.
Recreational and functional	H/M	
Recreational		Good access by PROW and National Cycle Route across the river corridor.
Functional		Battlefield Brook and associated riparian vegetation and wetland habitats, floodplain grassland, copse, outgrown hedges contribute to strong GI and arable field to the south is productive.
Condition	M	Gappy internal hedgerows with wire fencing.
Associations		-

Summary evaluation of overall value		**H/M**

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

Natural factors	H/M	
Landform eg steep slopes		Low lying river valley floor and floodplain.
Presence of water		River channel with associated wetland vegetation.
Cultural factors	M	
Historic field/land use pattern		Piecemeal enclosure of regular pattern of hedged fields.
Settlement pattern		Unsettled
Land use factors	H/M	
Function of area e.g. floodplain, GI corridor, biodiversity corridor or patch, productive land.		Battlefield Brook and associated riparian vegetation and wetland habitats, floodplain grassland, copse, outgrown hedges contribute to strong GI and arable field to the south is productive.
Amenity- presence of footpaths/recreation corridors		Good access via a network of PROWs.
Functional relationship between the area and the settlement/key features		Strong functional connection between the river corridor and adjoining urban areas.
Perceptual factors	H/M	
Scale		Medium scale landscape.
Enclosure		Enclosed landscape with internal views framed by tree cover.
Skyline		Views out of area framed by adjoining rising land.
Landmarks/features		Trees along meandering river channel.
Detractors		M42
Settlement edge character		Urban edge softened by waterside and garden trees.
Visual relationship between the area and the settlement/key features (eg cumulative impact issues)		Role separating Catshill from Bromsgrove and the M42.
Summary evaluation of landscape susceptibility		**H/M**

VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

General factors		
Intervisibility	M/L	Moderate to low intervisibility of area with its surroundings.
Key views	H/M	Views from National Cycle Route/PROWs
Key receptors		
Residents- rural/semi-rural		-.
Residents-urban/suburban edge	H/M	Restricted views from urban edge.
Promoted trails		-

Public rights of way	H/M	Frequent views from PROWs crossing area.
Access/common land		-
Cycleways	H	Frequent views from National Cycle Route.
Roads	M	Wide views from M42 running along southern boundary of area.
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.	Ca08

ASSESSED SENSITIVITY EVALUATION

Sensitivity to Housing	Medium
Sensitivity to Employment	High/medium

Sensitivity Summary

The landscape value of the area lies in the distinctive features which include the cemetery and its setting, the sandstone cutting on Rocky Lane and the semi-rural settlement and associated small scale enclosures and woodland along Hinton Fields to the west, the six PROWs and the three open spaces, and the National Cycle Route to the south east. The landscape susceptibility to housing lies in the rising slopes which would make development open to view, the tree cover, the role as open land with PROWs providing a recreation resource for the adjacent settlement, and the interrupted semi-rural settlement with small-scale enclosures along Hinton Fields. The visual susceptibility to housing lies in views from the cemetery, PROWs, the Cycle route, adjacent residents and views from the M42 and M5. The parts most sensitive to housing development are north of Rocky Lane upto the B4091, directly adjacent to Rocky Lane due to the sandstone cutting and wider visibility to the south, the area surrounding the traditional settlement on Hinton Fields and to the south on the locall hilltop and west of the B4091 on slopes adjacent to the valley floor. There may be an opportunity around Washingstocks Farm as far west as Hinton Fields and the PROW to the west. The sensitivity to employment is greater due to the landform and width of area to the north and the slopes and relationship to housing to the south.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CONTEXT

National character area	Arden
WCC landscape character type (LCT)	Principal Settled Farmlands
WCC land cover parcel (LCP) sensitivity	Medium

LANDSCAPE VALUE FACTORS

Landscape designations		N/A
Natural heritage	M	Regenerating woodland in the Catshill Piggeries site, secondary woodland in Stourbridge Road open space and adjacent to Hinton Fields, trees in outgrown and trimmed hedgerows and mainly improved grassland/pasture.
Cultural heritage	M	Piecemeal enclosure reorganised in places, with interrupted linear and incremental settlement along Hinton Fields to the west and farm buildings to the north and south- the former now derelict. Christ Church cemetery lies on the slopes to the north.
Distinctiveness	H/M	Distinctive features include the cemetery and its setting, the sandstone cutting on Rocky Lane and the semi-rural settlement and associated small scale enclosures and woodland along Hinton Fields to the west.
Perceptual	M	
Scenic factors		Small scale attractive views around the cemetery and along adjacent pastures.
Tranquillity		The M5 and M42 adjacent are major sources of noise although movement is not perceived, B4091 to west and some minor roads. Built form apparent to the east, mostly to the south-east. Six PROWs cross/bound the area.
Recreational and functional	M	
Recreational		Six PROWs cross/bound the area. Catshill Piggeries site, Stourbridge Road and cemetery are accessible.

Functional		Regenerating woodland in the Catshill Piggeries site, secondary woodland at Stourbridge Road NSN and adjacent to Hinton Fields and trees in outgrown and trimmed hedgerows could contribute to GI.
Condition	M/L	Generally poor condition hedgerows although some are continuous well maintained.
Associations		N/A
Summary evaluation of overall value		**M**

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

Natural factors	M	
Landform eg steep slopes		The landform slopes distinctly down from west to east. This is particularly apparent to the north within the area and south of Hinton Fields.
Presence of water		Small watercourse to the east by Stourbridge Road NSN.
Cultural factors	M	
Historic field/land use pattern		Piecemeal enclosure reorganised in places.
Settlement pattern		Interrupted linear and incremental traditional settlement along Hinton Fields to the west with suburban edge of Catshill to the east.
Land use factors	M	
Function of area e.g. floodplain, GI corridor, biodiversity corridor or patch, productive land.		Regenerating woodland in the Catshill Piggeries site, secondary woodland adjacent to Hinton Fields and outgrown and trimmed hedges could contribute to GI.
Amenity- presence of footpaths/recreation corridors		Six PROWs cross the area linking the settlement to the countryside to the west and valley to the east. Catshill Piggeries site and cemetery are accessible.
Functional relationship between the area and the settlement/key features		PROWs provide the main link.
Perceptual factors	M	
Scale		Medium to small.
Enclosure		Enclosed to the north and more open on the south eastern slopes.
Skyline		Parcel forms the local skyline to the west. It is locally apparent from the cemetery, in views from Stourbridge Road B4091 and locally in the valley to the east.
Landmarks/features		None.
Detractors		Motorways but not visible unless adjacent, their lighting, Washingstocks Farm and other farm buildings south of Hinton Fields.
Settlement edge character		20c incremental housing estates but with a discreet edge to the north of Rocky Lane.
Visual relationship between the area and the settlement/key features (eg cumulative impact issues)		The settlement tends to be set down north of Rocky Lane but is more apparent on the south Eastern part of Hinton Fields.

Summary evaluation of landscape susceptibility	**M**	

VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

General factors

Intervisibility	M	Some intervisibility to the south east.
Key views	H/M	View to open skyline from cemetery.

Key receptors

Residents- rural/semi-rural	H/M	Hinton Fields to the west.
Residents-urban/suburban edge	H/M	Adjacent 20c housing.
Promoted trails		N/A
Public rights of way	H/M	Six PROWs.
Access/common land		N/A
Cycleways	H/M	National Cycle Way passes by the south east corner.
Roads	M	M42, M5 (immediate western edge only), B4091 and local roads.

Summary evaluation of visual susceptibility	**M**

OPPORTUNITIES, DESIGN AND MITIGATION

Development location, layout and design recommendations where appropriate:

There may be an opportunity around Washingstocks Farm as far west as Hinton Fields and the PROW to the west. The site should be designed to minimise the apparent reduction of the gap between Catshill and Bromsgrove and protect housing from noise and emissions from the M42. Housing should present a positive gateway to Catshill from the south and at the higher levels should be two storey maximum to minimise visual impact to the south.

Opportunities and potential for landscape mitigation where appropriate:

A soft green GI edge to the south east along the Stourbridge Road.

Land Cover Parcel No.	Ca09

ASSESSED SENSITIVITY EVALUATION

Sensitivity to Housing	Medium
Sensitivity to Employment	High

Sensitivity Summary

The landscape value lies in the western part of the area which forms part of the floodplain either side of the watercourse and has trees, scrub and marshy vegetation which contribute to the north south biodiversity corridor. The landscape susceptibility to housing lies in the western area defined by the floodplain with associated vegetation and biodiversity corridor and amenity/recreation function as local green space. The visual susceptibility to housing is from users of the valley floor and local residents. The western part defined by local green space and the floodplain is sensitive to housing and should not be developed. The eastern area comprising of horse pasture has potential for housing development. Employment use on the site to the development dimensions set out in the method would not be feasible and so is not assessed.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CONTEXT

National character area	Arden
WCC landscape character type (LCT)	Principal Settled Farmlands
WCC land cover parcel (LCP) sensitivity	Medium

LANDSCAPE VALUE FACTORS

Landscape designations		N/A
Natural heritage	M	Scrub and rough grassland to the west and improved horse pasture to the east.
Cultural heritage	M/L	Essentially linear area with a field pattern that is a post-war modification of planned enclosure from moorland.
Distinctiveness	M/L	None.
Perceptual	M	
Scenic factors		Vegetated watercourse corridor is attractive.
Tranquillity		M5 on embankment is a noise source directly adjacent. Housing is apparent to the south. There is no formal public access.
Recreational and functional	M	
Recreational		Local Green Space to the west.
Functional		The western part of the site is a floodplain either side of the watercourse with scrub and trees and marsh vegetation.
Condition	M/L	Poor condition with no hedges.
Associations		N/A
Summary evaluation of overall value		**M**

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

Natural factors	M	
Landform eg steep slopes		Low lying floodplain to the west and flat pasture to the east.
Presence of water		Watercourse running north south.

Cultural factors	M/L	
Historic field/land use pattern		Field pattern is post-war modification of planned enclosure from moorland.
Settlement pattern		20c linear housing estate to the south.
Land use factors	M	
Function of area e.g. floodplain, GI corridor, biodiversity corridor or patch, productive land.		Floodplain with associated vegetation forms a biodiversity corridor linking north and south.
Amenity- presence of footpaths/recreation corridors		No public access.
Functional relationship between the area and the settlement/key features		Area to west informal recreation area.
Perceptual factors	M	
Scale		Small.
Enclosure		Enclosed.
Skyline		N/A
Landmarks/features		N/A
Detractors		M5 and adjacent housing.
Settlement edge character		20c housing estate edge with limited vegetation.
Visual relationship between the area and the settlement/key features (eg cumulative impact issues)		The scrub and trees to the west help to integrate and softened the settlement whilst the horse pastures to the east form a narrow buffer between housing and the motorway.
Summary evaluation of landscape susceptibility		**M**

VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY FACTORS

General factors		
Intervisibility	L	Very limited.
Key views	M/L	None.
Key receptors		
Residents- rural/semi-rural		N/A
Residents-urban/suburban edge	H/M	Settlement edge.
Promoted trails		N/A
Public rights of way		N/A
Access/common land		N/A
Cycleways		N/A
Roads	M	Minor road to the south west.

Summary evaluation of visual susceptibility	**M**

OPPORTUNITIES, DESIGN AND MITIGATION

Development location, layout and design recommendations where appropriate:

The eastern area comprising of horse pasture has potential for housing development. Ideally this would accommodate a pedestrian link between the open space to the west with the road to the east.

Opportunities and potential for landscape mitigation where appropriate: