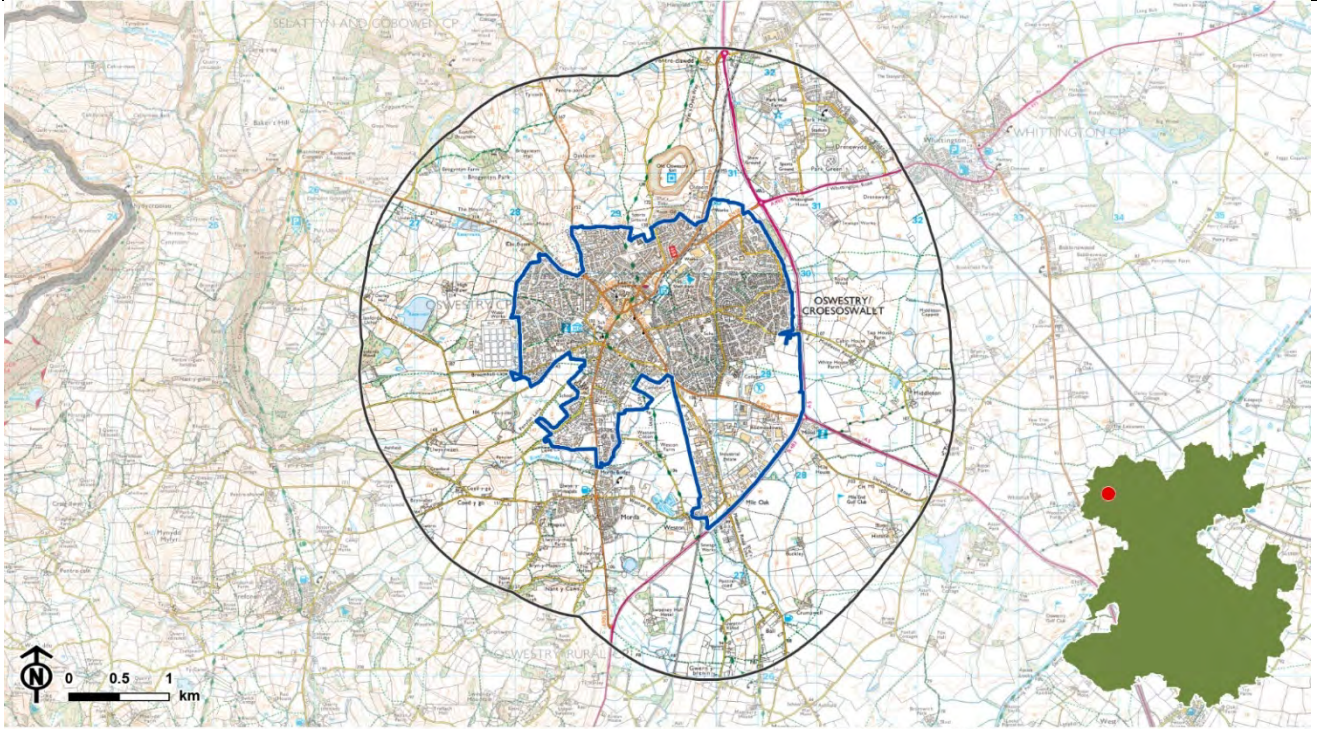


Principal Centre – Oswestry

Location



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CB:KC EB:Chamberlain_K LUC 10924-00_000_Location OSbase 05/02/2020 Source: SC, LUC, OS



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CB:KC EB:Chamberlain_K LUC 10924-00_001_Location Aerial 05/02/2020 Source: SC, LUC, OS

Summary of Settlement Study Area and Location

Introduction

Oswestry is a Principal Centre according to Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2020). The study area boundary as defined within this Green Infrastructure Strategy is a 1.5km offset from the settlement limits. The Key Centre of Ellesmere is located approximately 7km north west from the identified study area of Oswestry

Oswestry, in north west Shropshire, is one of the UK's oldest border towns on the English-Welsh border and this position as a 'frontier town' has led to a relatively turbulent history. The town is 20km south of Wrexham and 27km north west of Shrewsbury. Oswestry functions as a market and shopping centre for north west Shropshire and mid Wales and has a population of over 19,000. The Town Council area covers 882ha with a population density of 19.7 people per hectare.

Development context

Existing development allocations in the town are set out in the SAMDev (2015)², however the Shropshire Local Plan is currently being reviewed. The Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2020) proposes other sites, which are not yet adopted. The sites currently allocated and those being proposed are set out below.

Existing Housing allocations within the town (SAMDev Sites, 2015³):

- Site OSW004: Land off Whittington Road, Oswestry. Site provision: 117 dwellings
- Site OSW024: Eastern Gateway Sustainable Urban Extension, Oswestry. Site provision: 900 dwellings
- Site OSW029: Former Oswestry Leisure Centre, Oswestry. Site provision: 40 dwellings
- Site OSW030: The Cottams, Morda Road, Oswestry. Site provision: 65 dwellings
- Site OSW034, 035 and 045: Land South of the Cemetery, Oswestry. Site provision: 80 dwellings
- Site OSW033: Alexandra Road Depot, Oswestry. Site provision: 35 dwellings
- Site OSW042: Richard Burbidge, Oswestry. Site provision: 180 dwellings

Existing Employment land allocations (SAMDev Sites, 2015):

- Site ELR042: Land north of Whittington Road, Oswestry. Provision: 2 ha
- Site ELR043: Land south of Whittington Road, Oswestry. Provision: 14 ha
- Site ELR072: Land at Mile End East, Oswestry. Provision: 23 ha

Committed Urban Employment Sites: Land adjoining Maesbury Road / A483 Weston Lane (2.1ha), Land at Rod Meadows (1.7ha), Mile End Business Park (1.6ha), Kensington Gardens (0.9ha), Unit 1 Mile Oak Industrial Estate (0.2ha), site adjoining Factory No2 Maesbury Road (0.2ha), Land south of Aspect House (0.1ha).

The Proposed Housing Allocations included within the Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2020) are:

- Site OSW017: Land at Trefonen Road, Oswestry (west). Site Area: 1.47ha. Site capacity: Approx 30 dwellings
- Site PKH002, PKH011, PKH013, PKH029, PKH031, and PKH032: Land at Park Hall, Oswestry (north east). Site Area 15.11ha. Site capacity: Approx 240 dwellings

According to the Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2020), the need for additional housing will accommodate around 1,900 dwellings and make available 57 hectares of employment development between 2016 and 2038. Much of the potential for larger scale infill development in the town has already been captured through the SAMDev Plan. Shropshire Council proposes to deliver the majority of the new housing required by reinforcing the existing urban fabric of the former Park Hall Camp to deliver a new community as a mixed use 'garden settlement'. Extensive areas of land have been promoted in this located, sufficient to provide for long term expansion beyond the proposed Plan period.

² Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan 2015

³ Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan 2015



Old Oswestry Hill Fort Car Park and Footpath



Cae Glas Park

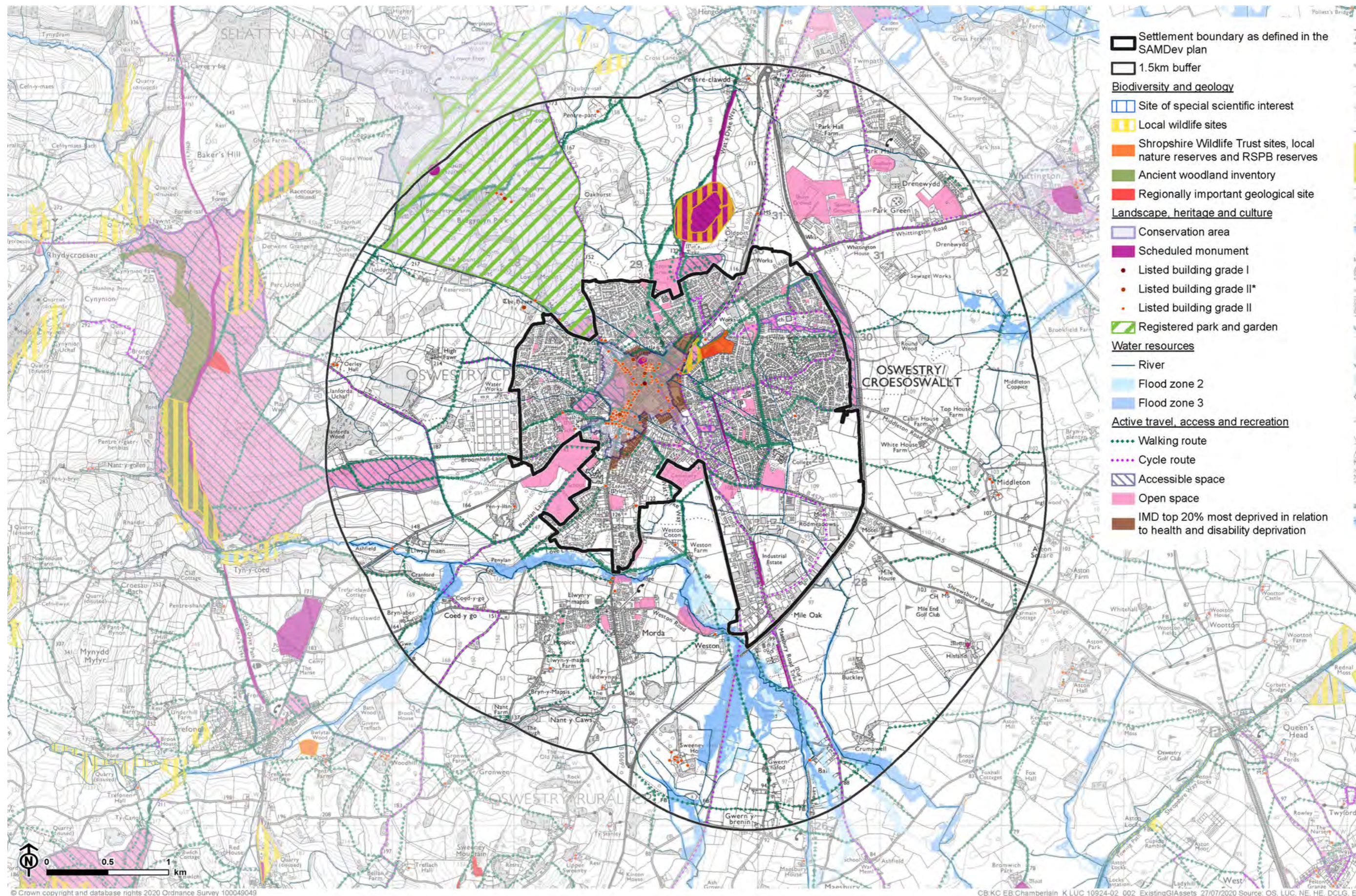


Llwyn Coppice Playing Field





What's Dyke Way Footpath and River Morda Floodplain


Existing Green Infrastructure Assets and Key Constraints






Existing Green Infrastructure Assets and Constraints

Theme	Existing Green Infrastructure Assets / Constraints
<p>Key Theme 1: Biodiversity and Geology</p> 	<p>Biodiversity</p> <p>Designated Sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ SSSI impact risk zones are evident through the study area, however these predominantly relate to air pollution and are unlikely to apply to residential developments. ■ Shelf Bank LNR is located within central Oswestry. This is a 3ha area of public open space consisting of acid grassland and naturally regenerated areas of woodland and scrub. <p>Notable and Priority Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Priority Habitats focus around pockets of deciduous woodland along river and road corridors and forming incidental field boundaries. Some lowland meadow and pasture is evident within the River Morda floodplain whilst upland areas support small patches of good quality semi-improved grassland. ■ A number of Shropshire Environment Network (SEN) Corridors are located within the study area, including along the River Morda, wood pasture to the west of the settlement, Brogyntyn Park, Mile End Golf Course and the A5 road corridor. Alongside these identified corridors are a number of urban fringe restoration or creation SEN areas including expansion of the A5 green corridor south, sports playing fields on Upper Brook Street, The Cricket Club and the Cemetery. Core SEN areas are also located at Old Oswestry Hill Fort and Shelf Bank LNR. ■ Local Wildlife Sites are noted at Old Oswestry Hill Fort (grassland landscape) and Oswestry Railway Station. <p>Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Protected and priority amphibians, plants and invertebrates are, in general terms, clustered through the River Morda, road and rail corridors and linked to key landscape features such as Brogyntyn Park. Dominant species include Bat, Polecat and Otter with records of badger mainly linked to the southern part of the study area along road corridors. ■ Priority flowering plant species are predominantly linked to woodland edge locations and upland grassland areas. ■ Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam are the dominant non-native invasive species within the Oswestry study area, most notably along river and rail corridors. ■ Please note species records only reflect what was present when the surveyor was on site and may not be exhaustive of the true species and geographic spread within the study area. <p>Geology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There are no recorded RIGS within the study area.
<p>Key Theme 2: Landscape, Heritage and Culture</p> 	<p>Landscape</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The landscape within the study area surrounding this Key Centre is characterised as a split between (NCA) 61: Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain and NCA 63: Oswestry Uplands⁴. The landscape is further defined within two Landscape Character Types; Settled Pastoral Farmlands and Principal Settled Farmlands. The landscape is dominated by agricultural practice which conveys a mixed use and irregular field pattern. Edge of settlement recreation including sports grounds are also prevalent. ■ Landscape and visual sensitivity north of Oswestry, near Old Oswestry Hill Fort, is much higher than that of the landscape to the east adjacent the A5 Bypass. Parcels to the west were assessed

⁴ The Shropshire Landscape Typology, 2006

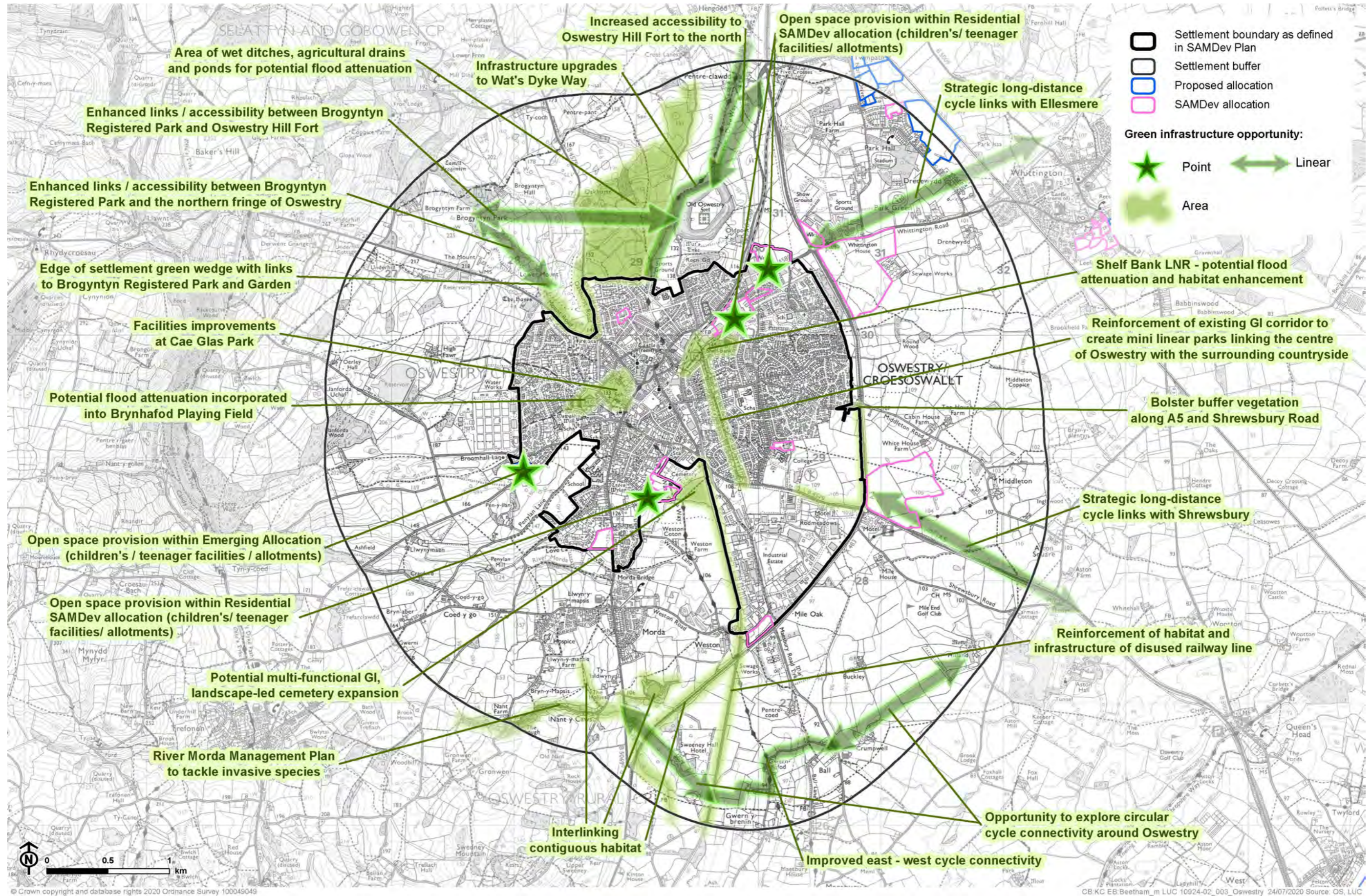
	<p>at Medium sensitivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Parkland landscape character is distinctive within the countryside to the west of Oswestry, and green buffers are key urban fringe features. <p>Heritage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Brogyntyn Registered Park and Garden is located as a green wedge to the north west of Oswestry. Pant Glas and Brogyntyn Conservation Area encompasses the extent of the Registered park and part of the landscape to the north west. A second conservation area is located within the centre of Oswestry. ■ A number of prominent Listed buildings are linked with the two conservation areas including Brogyntyn Hall and Hermon Chapel. ■ Old Oswestry Hill Fort Scheduled Monument (English Heritage) is a highly distinctive feature to the north of the settlement.
<p>Key Theme 3: Water Resources</p> 	<p>Fresh Water Assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Oswestry lies predominantly within the Severn Catchment. The River Morda runs west to east south of the town. ■ There are several wet ditches, drains and agricultural ponds in the landscape north of Oswestry. To the west and south, there are several reservoirs located within proximity of the urban fringe. <p>Flooding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The majority of Oswestry lies within Flood Zone 1. The topography of the town and the culverted watercourse suggests that Oswestry is unlikely to flood from primarily fluvial sources. The village of Morda just to the south of Oswestry is partially located within Flood Zones 2 and 3 of the River Morda; however, due to the topography of Morda, only a small number of properties are affected, immediately to the west and east of Morda Bank, and to land along Weston Lane and Weston Road going out of the village. ■ A large number of roads are affected by surface water flooding flowing from high ground in the west to lower ground in the east where there are large areas of ponding in the 1,000-year event (The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment). ■ Oswestry has been identified as a catchment which is the most vulnerable to cumulative increases in flood risk due to new development. <p>Pollution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) are areas designated as being at risk from agricultural nitrate pollution. An area to the east of Oswestry is designated a Surface Water NVZ whilst a larger area to the south east is classified as Groundwater NVZ. <p>Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Shropshire Outline Water Cycle Study (2010) sets out that the proposed urban extension area within Oswestry is located on highly permeable geology and surface water run-off should be infiltrated wherever possible. The remainder of growth in Oswestry will be suitable for both infiltration and attenuation approaches to managing surface water, depending on local characteristics of the site.

<p>Key Theme 4: Active Travel, Access and Recreation</p> 	<p>Transport Context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Oswestry is bound to the east by the A5 Bypass. This strategic transport corridor links northern Wales with Welshpool to the south. The A495 joins the bypass from the east, linking Oswestry with Ellesmere. <p>Active Travel</p> <p>Walking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A number of PROW and Bridleways are located within the study area creating local connectivity particularly to the south of Oswestry. ■ The Wat's Dyke Way Heritage Trail is a long distance footpath which connects around 40 miles of the Welsh Marches and the River Dee Estuary. In the study area, the route passes through the centre of Oswestry in a north-south orientation with significant off-road sections linking key GI features including Old Oswestry Hill Fort and the River Morda. ■ The Oswestry Place Plan (2019 / 2020) advocates the creation and enhancement of safe pedestrian / cycling networks linking the villages north of Oswestry, including Gobowen, St.Martins and Weston Rhyn. This may include strategic links across the A5, routes between primary and secondary schools, the train station and canal network. <p>Cycling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ National Cycle Route 455 starts / terminates in Oswestry. Throughout the study area the route follows Llwyn Road north skirting Old Oswestry Hill Fort to the west. ■ NCN 455 is well connected with several local on-road Shropshire Cycle Routes which link surrounding settlements including Whittington to the east, Gobowen to the north, Morda and Pant to the south and onwards into Wales to the west. <p>Access and Recreation</p> <p>Open Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Open space in and around Oswestry is varied, with large pockets of outdoor sports provision linked to schools and colleges. Natural and semi-natural green space is evident at Old Oswestry Hill Fort north of the settlement, Llwyn Coppice adjacent Gatacre Recreation Ground, Bypass Amenity Zone Woodlands to the west of the A5 and railway land linked to the Cambrian Heritage Railway. ■ Formal parks and gardens are located at Cae Glass Park in the centre of Oswestry and Brogyntyn Public Park on the northern fringe of the town. ■ Amenity green space is scattered throughout Oswestry and Morda.
<p>Key Theme 5: Health and Wellbeing</p> 	<p>Health</p> <p>Health Deprivation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The IMD relating to health indicates that the central urban core of Oswestry is ranked as one of the most health deprived parts of the county. Adjacent to this core to the west are some of the least health deprived areas within Shropshire encompassing 1970s residential expansion. <p>Childhood Obesity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The eastern part of the study area is identified as having high prevalence of childhood obesity in the context of Shropshire. <p>Air Quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There are no recorded AQMA within the study area. <p>Wellbeing</p> <p>Accessible Open Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Open Space Assessment undertaken by LUC to inform this GI Strategy identified the following baseline provision of open space. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Accessible Open Space: 0.86ha per 1000 persons (2018 population base). Analysis shows that the northern and central parts of the town fall within 400m of such provision, however the




	<p>southern part (Maesbury Road Industrial Estate) of the settlement does not.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Allotments: 0.05ha per 1000 persons (2018 population base). Analysis shows that the majority of the settlement is within the 1.2km access buffer for provision. There are peripheral parts of the settlement to the east and west which are outwith this provision. – Provision for children and teenagers: 8 spaces provide facilities for children and teenagers. Analysis shows provision for children and teenagers is relatively well spread throughout the settlement. Morda to the south of Oswestry offers 3 additional spaces. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ See the Open Space Assessment appended to the GI Strategy Report for more details. <p>Noise Pollution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There is identified road noise 24 hours a day on the A5 and the A483 throughout the extent of the study area to the east of Oswestry.
<p>Key Theme 6: Climate Change</p> 	<p>Tree cover</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There are several linear tree belts and woodland blocks within the study area, composed of broadleaved or mixed trees which afford natural shading (National Forest Inventory). Tree belts are predominantly associated with road and river corridors alongside urban fringe amenity green space. <p>Flooding Climate Change Allowance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The majority of the existing Flood Zones have been modelled as Higher Central, Central and Upper End with regard to Climate Change Allowance according to The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment⁵. Areas within Flood Zone 2 are highly vulnerable, requiring essential infrastructure and should be applied to development. Flood Zones are likely to increase in certain areas which may increase flood risk to properties.



⁵ Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, 2018


Green Infrastructure Opportunities



Key Green Infrastructure Opportunities

Theme	Green Infrastructure Opportunities
<p>Key Theme 1: Biodiversity and Geology</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Shropshire Environment Network corridors within the study area including the River Morday, Brogyntyn Park and the active and disused rail corridors should be managed to ensure that they continue to support their functionality through enhanced local connectivity. Wider links between the woodland network, local wildlife and natural roadside verges could further reduce fragmentation of habitats within the study area. ■ Habitat connectivity should be enhanced by linking Shelf Bank LNR in the centre of Oswestry with the disused railway line by provision of a strengthened habitat corridor, which could form an accessible urban linear park. The emphasis should be on mosaic habitats – a strategic mix of woodland, scrub and grassland ecosystems, in keeping with the local character. ■ The semi-improved grassland areas within the floodplains of the River Morda should be managed to improve and extend Priority Habitats linked to key species including polecat and otter. Interlinking habitats including ditches, hedgerows, ponds and woodland blocks will be a key part of creating this ecological resilience. ■ Roadside verges should be protected and enhanced, especially to the east of the settlement and link to the disused railway line to provide an extensive network of nature corridors within the site and wider area. ■ A river management plan is recommended for the River Morda to manage invasive species including Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed.
<p>Key Theme 2: Landscape, Heritage and Culture</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reinforcement of settlement edge buffer vegetation is recommended to reinforce landscape character in the Oswestry area. In particular links to adjacent parkland landscape such as Brogyntyn Park to the north west. ■ Brogyntyn Registered Park and Garden offers a significant opportunity within the Oswestry study area. The setting of this historic landscape should be enhanced by providing reinforced habitat links to the northern fringe of Oswestry for increased local level access. ■ strengthened habitat links should also be provided to improve accessibility between heritage features such as Brogyntyn Registered Park and Oswestry Hill Fort to create more resilient landscapes for the local community and visitors. ■ The physical link between Pant Glas and Brogyntyn Park Conservation Area and Oswestry Conservation Area should be enhanced through green infrastructure (urban greening) to reinforce these key heritage areas and their historic assets. ■ Old Oswestry Hill Fort Scheduled Monument (English Heritage) is a key feature within the landscape. The feature has good accessibility but could benefit from infrastructure improvements including car parking and signage to link to the cross-connecting green infrastructure network such as Wat's Dyke Way.
<p>Key Theme 3: Water Resources</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All developments within flood sensitive areas in and around Oswestry will be subject to rigorous flood assessment and will be required to consider both infiltration and attenuation measures to ensure new development does not create a cumulative increase in flood risk. ■ All developments should incorporate sustainable urban drainage systems. ■ Enhanced management of the network of culverted watercourses (unnamed tributaries of the River Morda) is recommended to minimise flood risk. ■ The Oswestry Surface Water Management Plan identifies potential locations for attenuation storage at Brogyntyn Park, Brynhafod Road playing Fields and semi-natural open space near the Railway Heritage Centre. These projects are supported / recommended. ■ Wet ditches, field drains and agricultural ponds in the landscape north of Oswestry should be expanded to alleviate surface water flooding. Such improved features can create multi-functional biodiversity habitats.

<p>Key Theme 4: Active Travel, Access and Recreation</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provision of sustainable transport routes linking key tourist attractions within Oswestry is a priority identified within the Place Plan (2019 / 2020). The plan also stresses the importance of a Sustainable Transport Plan for the town to reduce carbon emissions, including improving cycling infrastructure within and into the town and connecting with neighbouring settlements, particularly to the south where there are several north-south routes. Improving east-west connectivity to link the disused railway line with Maesbury Road and create local level circular cycle routes is also recommended. ■ Utilisation of historic infrastructure such as towpaths and disused railway lines to provide active travel routes is recommended, in particular the heritage route to the south of Oswestry which passes through Weston could be key considerations ■ Cycle corridors connecting Oswestry with the neighbouring settlements of Ellesmere and Shrewsbury utilising existing National and Local Cycle Networks and off-road connectivity wherever possible would be a strategic opportunity. ■ The Oswestry Place Plan (2019 / 2020) advocates the creation and enhancement of safe pedestrian / cycling networks linking the villages north of Oswestry, including Gobowen, St.Martins and Weston Rhyn. This may include strategic links across the A5, routes between primary and secondary schools, the train station and canal network. These opportunities are slightly out with the study area but provide a sustainable transport context in the countryside north of the settlement which can be replicated within Oswestry town. ■ The Oswestry Place Plan (2019 / 2020) has identified specific interventions, which are supported by this Strategy, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Improvements to the skateboard park in Oswestry (also raised during town council consultation) – Boundary improvements and infrastructure additions at Brynhafod Playing Fields – Playground improvements in Cae Glas Park – Refurbishment of artificial grass pitch at Marches School, and encouragement of cross-school and community use to maximise benefit – Installation of 3G pitch at Park Hall Facility in order to develop a multi-pitch sports and community hub ■ Additional burial space has been identified as a priority within Oswestry Town within the Place Plan (2019 / 2020). This could include an extension at the existing site off Victoria Fields, with an opportunity to create a landscape-led multi-functional park setting. ■ Improvements to the infrastructure of Wat's Dyke Heritage Trail including resurfacing and interpretation within the study area is recommended. This route forms an important GI element linking significant heritage features.
<p>Key Theme 5: Health and Wellbeing</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Addressing health disparities within Oswestry could be tackled through provision of existing enhanced and high-quality new public greenspace. SAMDev Residential Allocations at Gobowen Road and Whittington Road which are within proximity of the most health deprived parts of Oswestry could offer children's play and / or allotment provision on site, or where this is not practicable, commit to improvements to existing GI nearby, including the Cambrian Heritage Railway open space and Old Oswestry Hill Fort. ■ Children's play and allotments have been noted as a deficit, particularly within southern Oswestry. All Residential SAMDev and proposed allocations should provide food growing opportunities and play provision within development proposals. ■ Increased accessibility to existing Accessible Natural Greenspace including Oswestry Hill Fort to the north and the disused railway lines to the south is recommended to help address disparities in accessibility to open space within the town. ■ Strengthening of buffer vegetation along the A5 and the A483 is recommended, particularly within proximity to residential areas to improve perceptions of road noise and mitigate visual impact of

	<p>these busy road corridors.</p>
<p>Key Theme 6: Climate Change</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There is opportunity to better connect the key green corridors of the disused railway, road and river corridors to create an interlinking web of climate resilient habitats which can help address localised issues such as surface water flooding or solar reduction. ■ Oswestry Town offers potential for expansion of urban greening. This can be linked to publicly accessible spaces such as school grounds, including The Marches School, but also to a framework of street trees for example along the disused rail lines which can help reinforce canopy connectivity. ■ All new planting should provide climate resilient species.

Summary of key opportunities						
Reinforcement of existing GI corridor (disused railway line to east) to create mini linear parks linking the centre of Oswestry with the surrounding countryside	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Shelf Bank LNR - Potential flood attenuation and habitat enhancement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bolster buffer vegetation along A5 and Shrewsbury Road	✓	✓	✓			✓
Potential multi-functional GI, landscape-led cemetery expansion	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Open space provision (allotments / children's / teenager facilities) within proposed allocations for housing and residential SAMDev allocation sites				✓	✓	✓
Reinforcement of habitat and infrastructure of disused railway line (west)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Interlinking contiguous habitat reinforcing lowland meadow within River Morda floodplain	✓	✓	✓			✓
River Morda Management Plan to tackle invasive species	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Opportunity to explore circular cycle connectivity around Oswestry				✓	✓	✓
Strategic long-distance cycle links with Ellesmere and Shrewsbury should be explored				✓	✓	✓
Potential flood attenuation incorporated into Brynhafod Playing Field	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Facilities improvements at Cae Glas Park				✓	✓	✓
Edge of settlement green wedge to the north of Oswestry with links to Brogyntyn Registered Park and Garden	✓	✓				✓
Enhanced links / accessibility between Brogyntyn Registered Park and the northern fringe of Oswestry				✓	✓	✓
Enhanced links / accessibility between Brogyntyn Registered Park and Oswestry Hill Fort				✓	✓	✓
Area of wet ditches, agricultural drains and ponds for potential flood attenuation to the west of Old Oswestry Hill Fort	✓	✓	✓			✓
Infrastructure upgrades to Wat's Dyke Way surrounding Old Oswestry Hill Fort				✓	✓	✓