



GILLESPIES

SHROPSHIRE LANDSCAPE & VISUAL SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

IRONBRIDGE
[63IBG]

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63. IRONBRIDGE [63IBG]



LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Ironbridge is a town on the River Sever, at the heart of the Ironbridge Gorge. It lies within the civil parish of The Gorge and is located in the east of Shropshire. The decommissioned Ironbridge Power Station is an iconic feature in the landscape and is located approximately 0.75 miles from Ironbridge town. Ironbridge has a population of 2,580. This site has been divided into 3 parcels for the purpose of this study.



IRONBRIDGE A [63IBG-A]

LOCATION AND CHARACTER

Parcel A is located to the west of Ironbridge Power Station with the A4169 forming the western boundary, that is also the Severn Way with two further PRoW within the northern half of the parcel. The parcel is characterised by steeply sloping arable fields and woodland at Tick Wood. The eastern boundary of the parcel is Ironbridge Power Station, now permanently closed, and to the north is a sand pit/quarry, and the southern boundary the designated Tick Wood. The A4169 divides the parcel from the Shropshire Hills AONB to the west.



1. VIEWS TOWARDS HIGHER LANDFORM TOWARDS SHROPSHIRE HILLS AONB



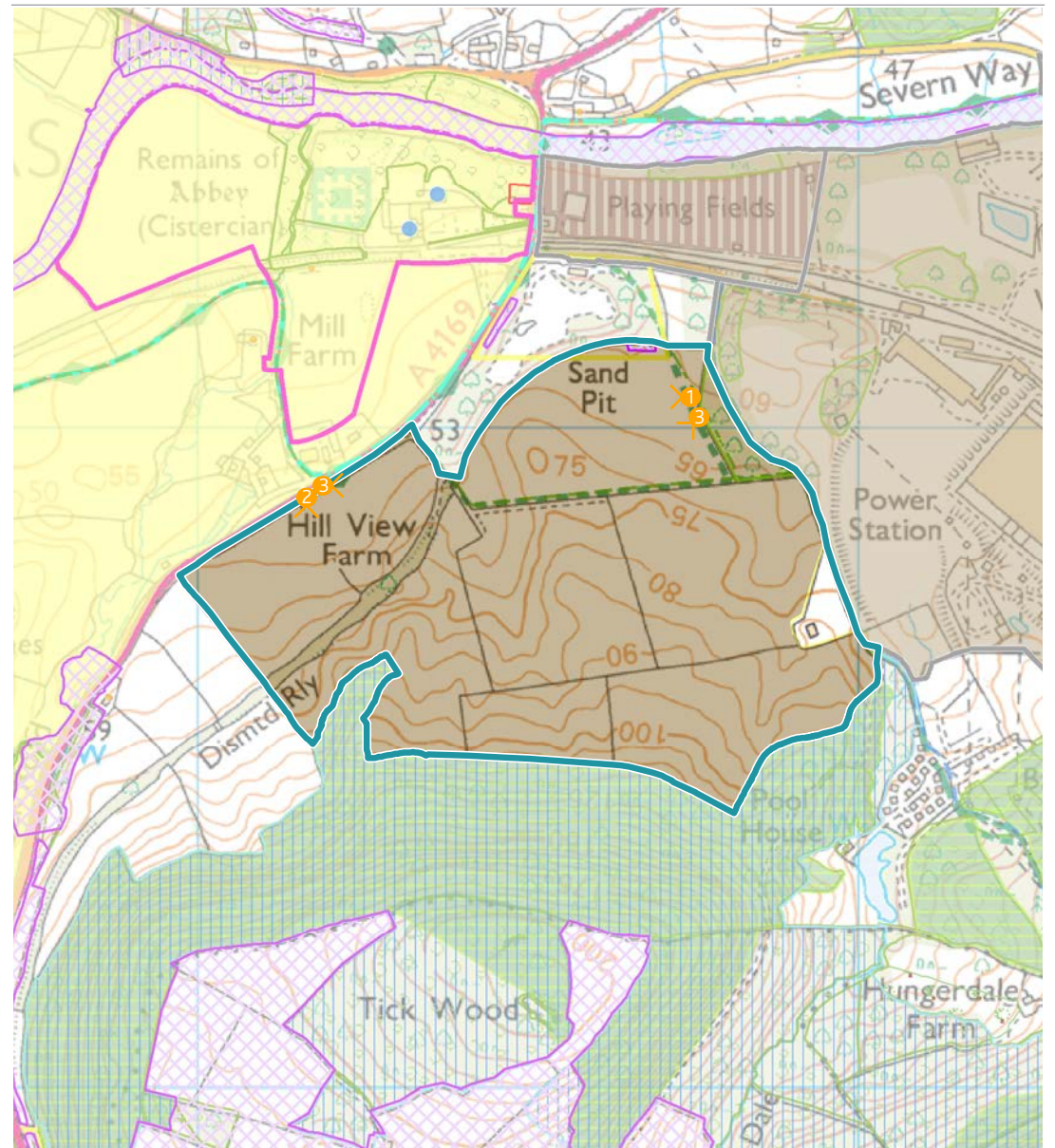
2. VIEWS ACROSS ARABLE FIELDS TOWARDS TICK WOOD



3. THE UNDULATING LANDFORM FORMS THE SKYLINE IN PLACES



4. IRONBRIDGE POWER STATION CHIMNEY VISIBLE ABOVE THE LANDFORM AND VEGETATION



LANDSCAPE

LANDSCAPE VALUE

This is a landscape of moderate strength of character and in good condition. Several designated sites surround this parcel of relatively low value including Buildwas Sand Quarry Regionally Important Geological Site and Buildwas Local Wildlife Site and SSSI which cut into the northern boundary of the parcel slightly and are associated with the Sand Pits adjacent to the parcel. Tick Wood, which is on a steep hill, outside of but adjacent to the parcel boundary is a prominent feature within this landscape and is designated as Ancient Woodland and SSSI. The Shropshire Hills AONB is outside of but adjacent to the western site boundary, where the remains of the Cistercian Abbey are located. The Severn Way also follows the western boundary of the parcel. The immediate surrounding landscape contributes to the enjoyment of the area more than the parcel itself which is of low value.

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY

The landscape of the parcel is influenced more by its surroundings than the quality and condition of the elements within it. The landform is undulating and overlain by an arable farming system, falling away from Tick Wood down to the workings at Ironbridge Power Station. There is a strong sense of place, which is derived from the surrounding landscape designations, however the parcel itself has a typical rural character. There is a low sense of remoteness and tranquility due to the parcels proximity to the Power Station and location adjacent to the A4169. Hedgerows and hedgerow trees are strong elements in the landscape, which are particularly susceptible to development as they are irreplaceable in the short to medium term and Tick Wood, although outside of the parcel, is a strong and prominent feature within the landscape. There is no existing settlement within this parcel.

LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

This parcel is on steep landform and contributes to the setting of the Shropshire Hills AONB and other designated features, however designated landscapes within the parcel itself are minimal and the parcels proximity to Ironbridge Power Station means development would not be out of character for the area. Overall the sensitivity of the landscape to change arising from new housing is medium and to employment is also medium.



LOW	MEDIUM-LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM-HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH
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LOW	MEDIUM-LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM-HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH
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VISUAL

VISUAL VALUE

The Shropshire Hills AONB is located adjacent to this parcel and so this parcel is within the setting of the AONB, however the parcel itself does not necessarily take in its special qualities. There are also views from the parcel towards the Remains of the Cistercian Abbey, which is within the AONB and views towards Ironbridge Power Station. There are also views towards the rising valley sides of the River Severn, further past Parcel C. The landscape is intact with a number of detracting features including a small mast and double overhead wood pole line, however the main detractor is outside of the parcel – the chimneys associated with Ironbridge Power Station.

VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY

There are open views across the parcel, however views to the south are restricted by steep landform and woodland at Tick Wood and by other blocks of woodland. Hedgerows limit views in some places particularly where on rising landform, however generally views are open. There are views between Parcel A and B, as the Power Stations Chimneys are visible above the undulating landform and vegetation along the parcel boundary. Views towards Parcel C are limited due to Parcel C's low lying landform and the vegetation cover surrounding the northern boundary of this parcel. The parcel itself forms a skyline in places due to the undulating topography, however for a large part of the views, Tick Wood forms the backdrop. The parcel and the AONB are indivisible and in close proximity to each other. The level of access of this parcel is occasional as the only public access is from the two PRoWs which run through the parcel, the people using these footpaths are of a high susceptibility to change to their surroundings as a result of development.

VISUAL SENSITIVITY

Although Ironbridge Power Station is visible and detracts from the landscape, the parcel is on steep landform which is within the setting of the Shropshire Hills AONB and development within this parcel would be visible on the skyline in places. Therefore the views experienced are of medium-high sensitivity to change arising from new housing and high sensitivity to change arising from employment.



LOW	MEDIUM-LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM-HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH
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LOW	MEDIUM-LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM-HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH
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IRONBRIDGE B [63IBG-B]

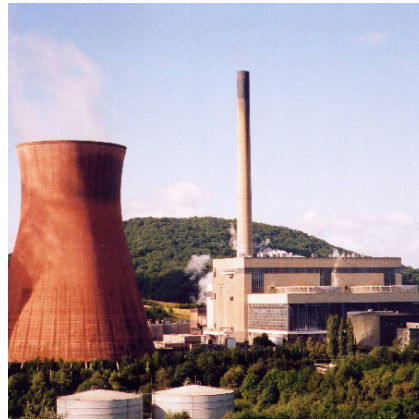
Please note that due to sensitivities of the use of the parcel as a power station, access is restricted. This assessment is formed mostly from desk based research and from visiting surrounding publicly accessible areas.

LOCATION AND CHARACTER

Parcel B is located along the River Severn to the east of Ironbridge, with no publicly accessible roads or PRoW. The parcel comprises Ironbridge Power Station which includes infrastructure such as coal stacks, large buildings, 4 large cooling towers, a chimney, and a disused railway track, of which the taller elements are visible throughout the surroundings. The parcel also includes a small linear strip of woodland along the river, where there is a bridge into the power station. Parts of Ironbridge Power Station are no longer in operation but contribute to an industrial landscape character.



1. VIEW OF RIVER SEVERN



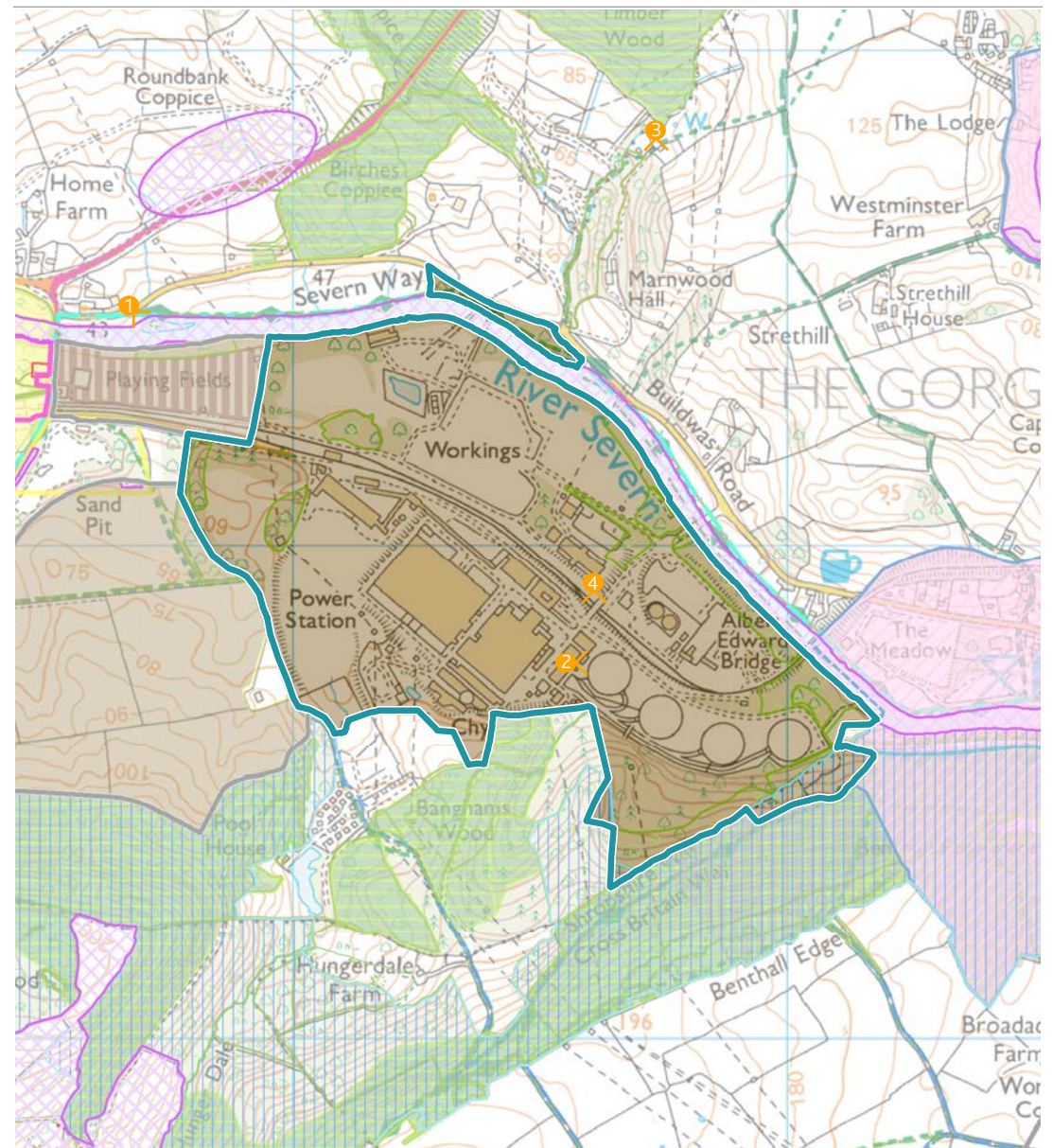
2. IRONBRIDGE POWER STATION
PHOTO © CHRIS BELL (CC-BY-SA/2.0)



3. COOLING TOWERS FROM EDGE OF TIMBER WOOD
PHOTO © MAT FASCIONE (CC-BY-SA/2.0)



4. RIVER SEVERN NEAR COOLING TOWERS
PHOTO © GARETH JAMES (CC-BY-SA/2.0)



LANDSCAPE

LANDSCAPE VALUE

This is a landscape of a very strong industrial character and in variable condition. There are limited designations within the parcel itself, however Banghams Wood, adjacent to the parcel boundary is Ancient Woodland and the River Severn, forming the northern boundary, is designated as a Local Wildlife Site and its course is followed by the Severn Way. The Severn Way runs through the small linear section of woodland across the river from the power station. There is a golf course on the power stations site, however this seems to be related to the power station and therefore is unlikely to be in use since the power stations closure. There are woodland corridors following the River Severn and larger areas of woodland to the south east of the parcel, however the most prominent feature within this landscape is the Power Station buildings, towers and chimneys. The parcel is not publicly accessible, therefore the landscape does not make an important contribution to the enjoyment of the area.

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY

This is a landscape made up of woodland and Ironbridge Power Station with no fields or open space. The landscape is flat within the power station and along the river, and is steeper rising up the river valley sides within the woodland in the south east corner. There is a strong sense of place within the parcel, however this is negative due to the power station. There is a low sense of remoteness and tranquility. The woodland to the south east of the parcel forms a strong element within the landscape, and is particularly susceptible as it is irreplaceable in the short to medium term. There is no existing settlement within this parcel.

LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

Due to the industrial character of this area, which has already been altered significantly by man-made infrastructure, the sensitivity of the landscape to change arising from new housing is Low and to employment is also Low. It should be noted that due to the degraded nature of this parcel, there could be opportunities to improve the landscape through development.



LOW	MEDIUM-LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM-HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH
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LOW	MEDIUM-LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM-HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH
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VISUAL

VISUAL VALUE

Due to screening from the woodland along the River Severn Corridor and boundaries of the parcel and the large woodland blocks to the south of the parcel, there is no association with the Shropshire Hills AONB, despite it being located less than 300m away to the west. There are some views to and from River Severn, including the Severn Way, from the northern boundary, however the river corridor vegetation filters these views. The landscape is degraded with the main detracting elements being the power station and chimneys themselves.

VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY

There are limited views throughout the parcel and in and out of the parcel due to the dense vegetation cover on the boundaries and within the parcel itself. The prominent structures within the power station and extensively visible from the wider landscape, due to the height and dominance of the towers and chimney. It should be noted, however that any development on this parcel is likely to be lower in height than these existing structures. There are filtered views between Parcel B and C over the River Severn, through intervening vegetation and there are views between Parcel B and A, however this is mainly the taller elements within the power stations rather than the landscape itself. The landform itself does not form a skyline, however the towers and chimneys are visible on the skyline.

VISUAL SENSITIVITY

Due to the well screened views throughout the parcel the views experienced are of low sensitivity to change arising from new housing and low sensitivity to change arising from employment. It should also be noted that any proposed development is likely to be of lower height than structures that are currently on the parcel, and therefore likely to have less of an impact than the current uses, provided that the current vegetation on site remains.



LOW	MEDIUM-LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM-HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH
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LOW	MEDIUM-LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM-HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH
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IRONBRIDGE C [63IBG-C]

LOCATION AND CHARACTER

Parcel C is located north west of Ironbridge Power Station along the River Sever. The A4169 forms the western boundary. The parcel comprises of playing fields, bounded by linear woodland. The River Sever forms the northern boundary of the parcel. Ironbridge Power Station forms the eastern boundary of the parcel, where coal stacks are located adjacent to the parcel, with intervening woodland in between. A sand pit forms the boundary to the south, along with a disused railway track and the Shropshire Hills AONB is located outside of the parcel, to the west.



1. OVERHEAD LINES AND THE CHIMNEYS ACT AS DETRACTORS WITHIN THE LANDSCAPE



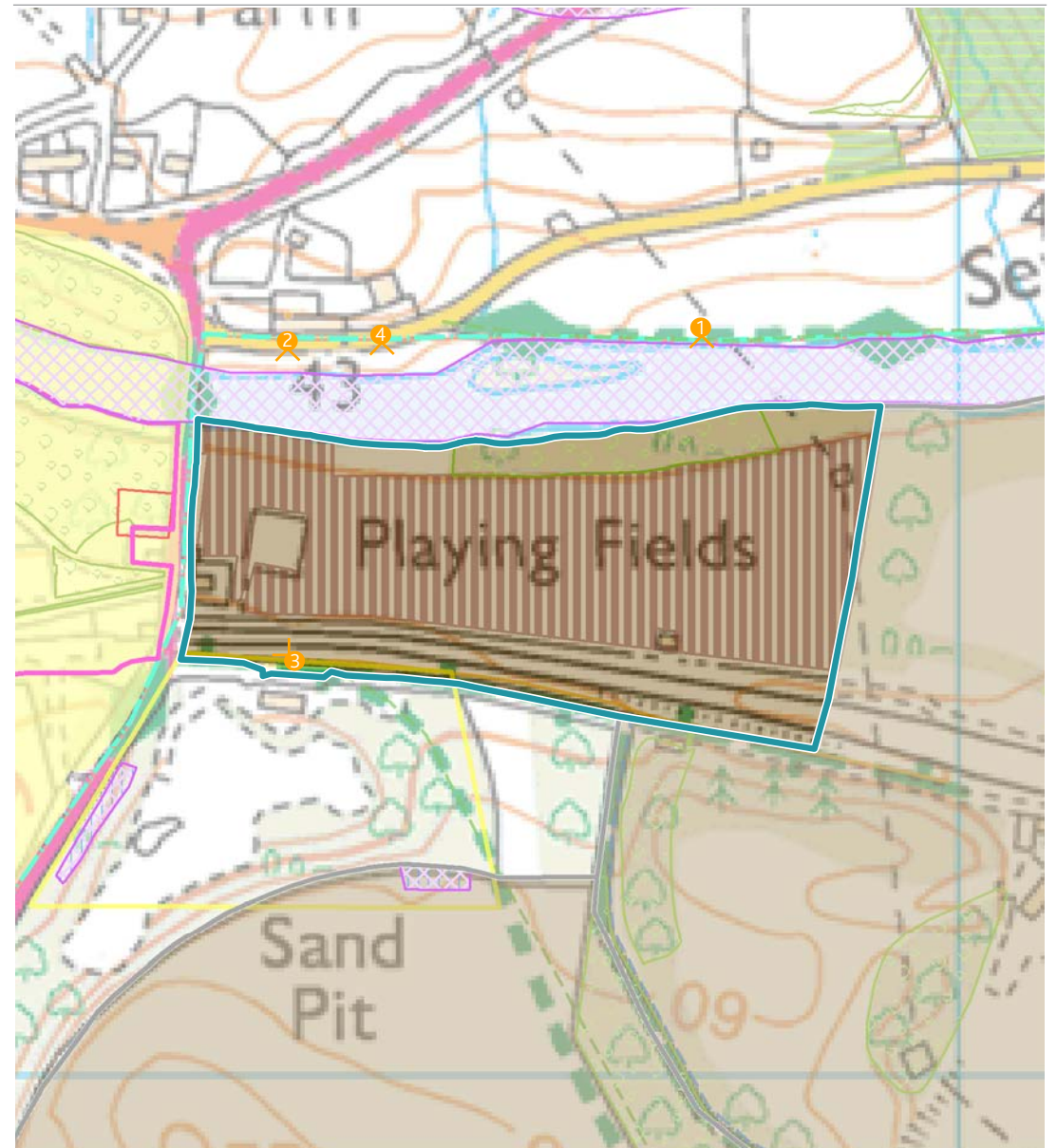
2. BANKS OF THE RIVER SEVERN, THE PARCEL VIEWED FROM BUILDWAS ROAD



3. THE DISUSED RAILWAY LINE RUNNING ALONG THE SOUTHERN BORDER OF THE PARCEL



4. WOODED LINEAR BELT BETWEEN THE RIVER SEVERN AND THE PARCEL



LANDSCAPE

LANDSCAPE VALUE

This is a landscape of a moderate strength of character and in moderate condition. There are no designations within the parcel itself, however the parcel is almost entirely comprised of playing fields, which have recreational value. The River Severn, which forms the northern boundary and is a strong physical feature within the parcel, is a Local Wildlife Site and the Severn Way runs along this on the opposite side of the river and down the A4169 on the western boundary. There is also evidence that the banks of the river are used as flood management. Buildwas Sand Quarry RIG site is located adjacent to the parcel to the south and the Shropshire Hills AONB and the Remains of the Cistercian Abbey, which is a Scheduled Monument and grade 1 listed building, are adjacent to the parcel to the west. The presence of recreational features of playing fields and angling platforms along the River Severn, means the landscape makes an important contribution to the enjoyment of the area.

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY

This enclosed and simple landscape, is entirely made up of sports pitches and amenity grass and therefore no field patterns exist. The landscape is a flat river valley bottom with a medium sense of place, which is higher in areas which have a connection through to the River Severn. The parcel has a low sense of remoteness and tranquility due to its proximity to the A4169 and Ironbridge Power Station. The woodland boundaries around the parcel form strong elements in the landscape which are particularly susceptible to change as they are irreplaceable in the short to medium term. There is no existing settlement within this parcel.

LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

Although there are no designations within the parcel itself, due to the recreational value of the sports pitches and the relationship with the River Severn, which is a LWS and also used for recreational purposes, the sensitivity of the landscape to change arising from new housing is medium-high and to employment is also medium-high, due to the parcels proximity to the employment/industrial buildings in the immediate surroundings.



LOW	MEDIUM-LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM-HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH
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LOW	MEDIUM-LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM-HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH
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VISUAL

VISUAL VALUE

The Shropshire Hills AONB is located adjacent to the parcel however the woodland which forms the parcels boundaries, the low lying nature of the parcel and the woodland surrounding The Remains of the Cistercian Abbey, screen views between the AONB and the parcel. There are no long distance views from the parcel, with the woodland creating a sense of enclosure. The landscape is intact with the main detracting elements being the overhead line which cuts the corner of the parcel, the disused railway track, which was once associated with the power stations, a telecommunications mast, the Ironbridge Power Station, towers and chimney are visible over the woodland belts and the A4169, which is visible above the parcel crossing the river.

VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY

There are limited views throughout the parcel, due to the woodland along the boundaries screening views. To the north east corner of the parcel there are visual connections through to the River Severn and across the river towards Buildwas Road. However, for the majority of the parcel, the River Severn is screened by a linear belt of woodland and so the sports field is generally visually contained. Views towards the power station buildings are also restricted due to the woodland cover, with the taller elements visible over the woodland, however in general the power station is well screened. The disused railway track is also well screened by vegetation. The woodland within the parcel forms a skyline to its surroundings, however the landform itself does not, as it is low lying. There is a frequent level of access within the parcel, due to the recreational features within the landscape and these receptors are of high susceptibility to development, such as people using the sports pitches or fishing. Development could be accommodated within areas of existing screen planting.

VISUAL SENSITIVITY

Although the receptors using this landscape are of higher susceptibility, the well screened views created by woodland cover throughout the parcel and the power station and overhead lines act as detractors. Overall, the views experienced are of medium-low sensitivity to change arising from new housing and medium from new employment.



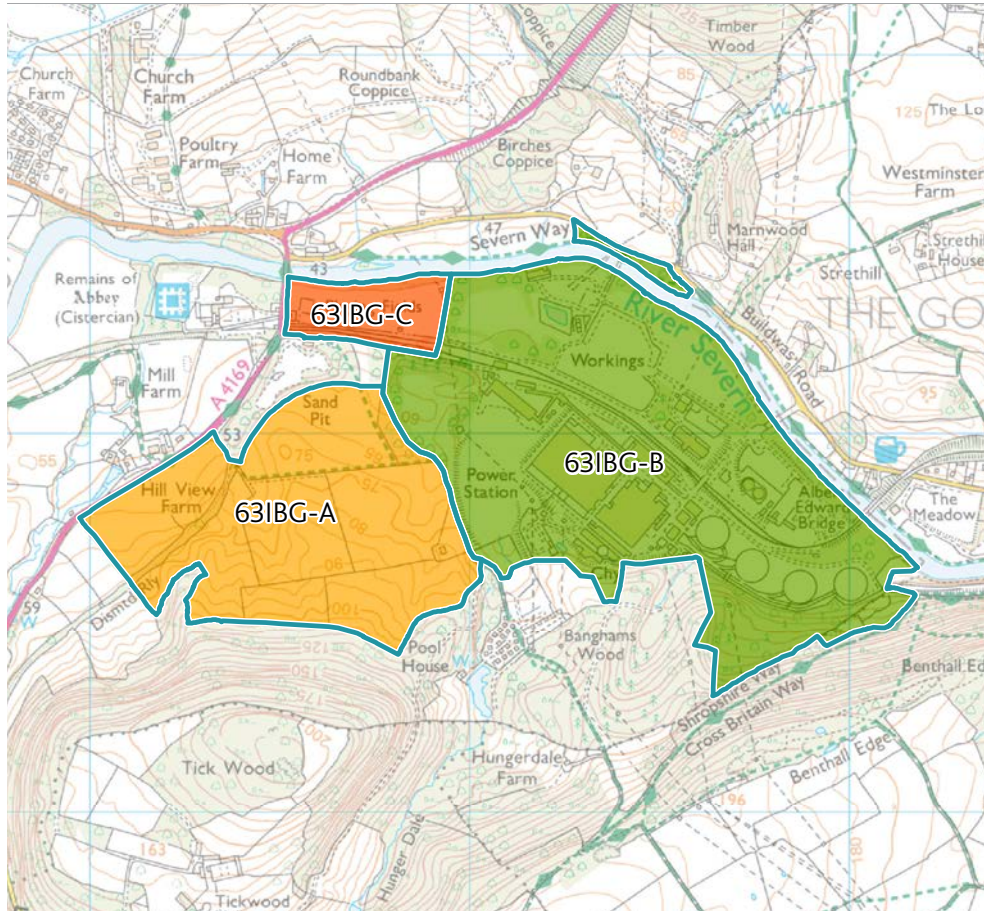
LOW	MEDIUM-LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM-HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH
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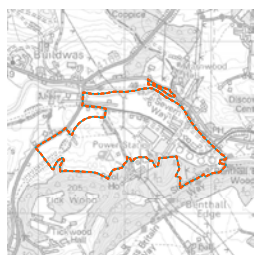
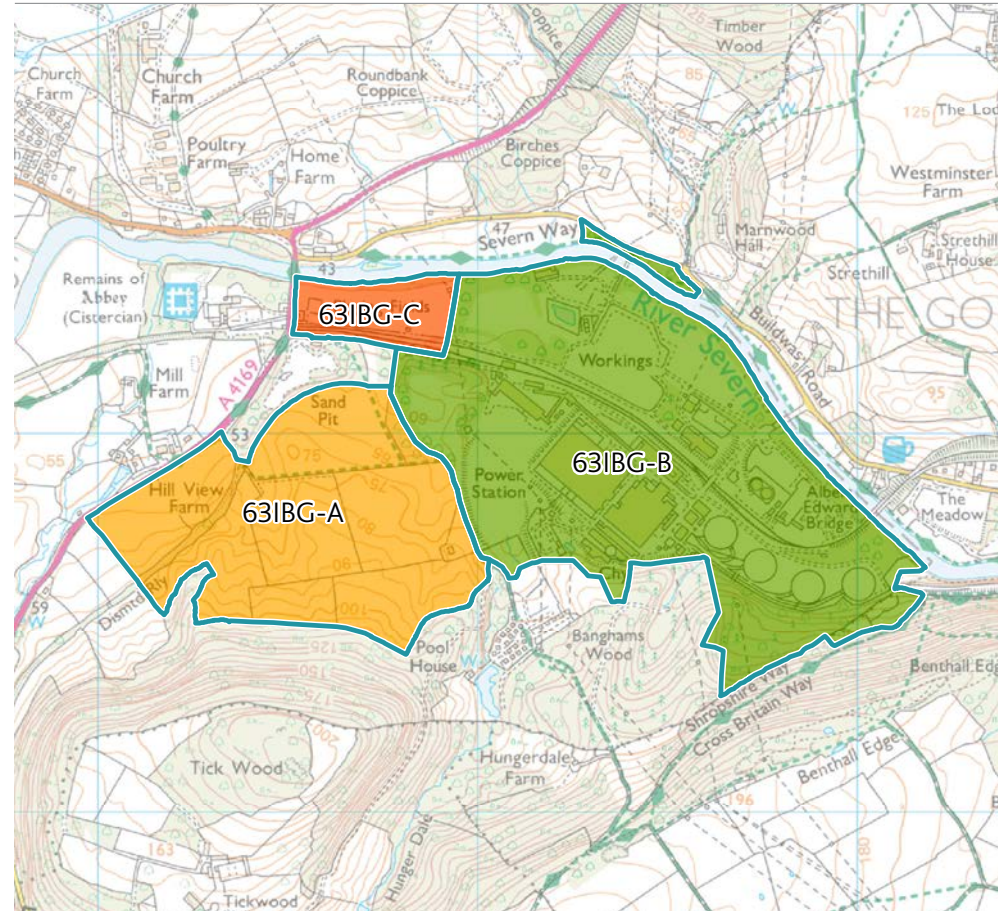
LOW	MEDIUM-LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM-HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH
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IRONBRIDGE LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

HOUSING



EMPLOYMENT



KEY:

 SENSITIVITY PARCEL

LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY:

 VERY HIGH

 MEDIUM-HIGH

 MEDIUM-LOW

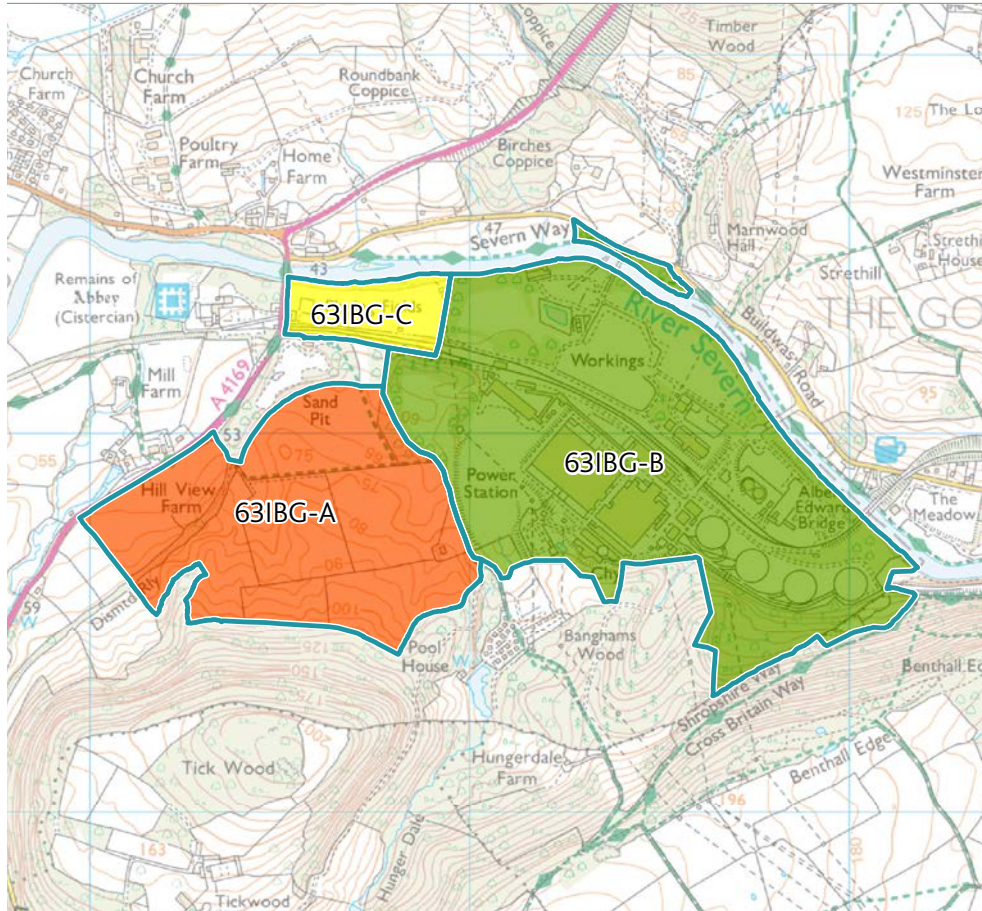
 HIGH

 MEDIUM

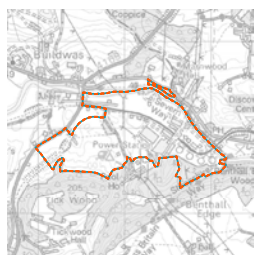
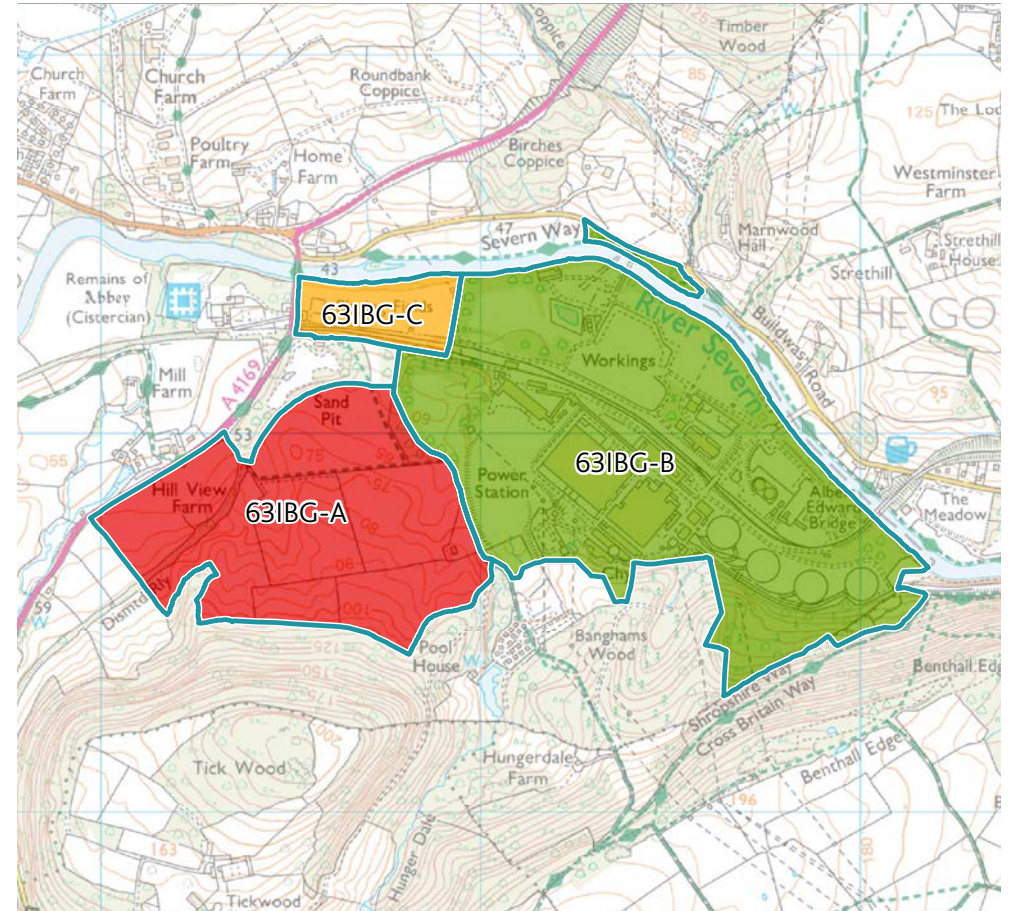
 LOW

IRONBRIDGE VISUAL SENSITIVITY

HOUSING



EMPLOYMENT



KEY:

 SENSITIVITY PARCEL

VISUAL SENSITIVITY:

 VERY HIGH

 MEDIUM-HIGH

 MEDIUM-LOW

 HIGH

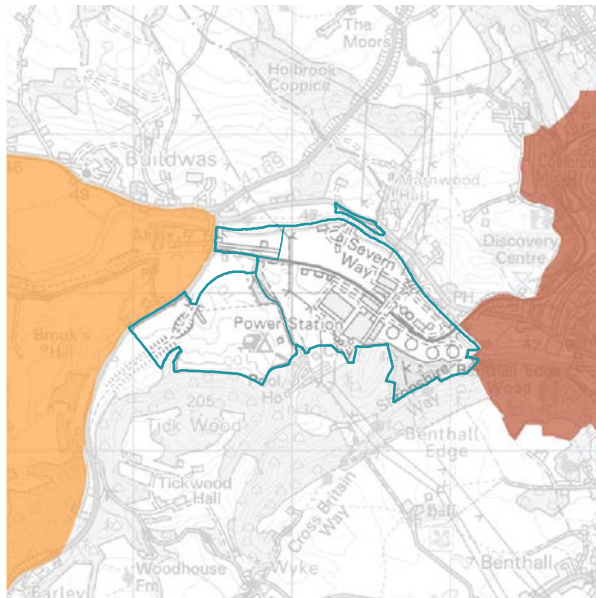
 MEDIUM

 LOW

DESIGN GUIDANCE FOR IRONBRIDGE









[631BG]

3 SENSITIVITY PARCELS



AONB
WHS

KEY

-  PARCEL BOUNDARY
-  SETTLEMENT
-  HIGHER LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY TO DEVELOPMENT
-  HIGHER VISUAL SENSITIVITY TO DEVELOPMENT
-  VIEWS TO BE PROTECTED
-  DESIGNATED FEATURES WHERE THE SETTING SHOULD BE CONSIDERED
-  VISITOR DESTINATION WHERE THE SETTING SHOULD BE CONSIDERED
-  IMPORTANT LANDSCAPE FEATURE WHICH SHOULD BE RETAINED

