



GILLESPIES

SHROPSHIRE LANDSCAPE & VISUAL SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

OSWESTRY
[05OSW]

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05. OSWESTRY [05OSW]



LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Oswestry is an ancient market town in the north of Shropshire, close to the Welsh border and is one of the UK's oldest border settlements with a population of 19,070. The town started as the 3000-year-old settlement of Old Oswestry, an Iron Age hill fort. Much of the town centre has been designated a Conservation Area due conveying its mixture of architectural styles and a market that dates back to 1190. For the purposes of this study the town has been divided into 4 parcels.



OSWESTRY A [05OSW-A]

LOCATION AND CHARACTER

Parcel A is located to the west of Oswestry and lies some 25km north of the Shropshire Hills AONB and some 4km east of the Welsh border. Brogyntyn Park Registered Park and Garden forms the boundary to the north. The settlement edge forms the parcels eastern edge with Oswestry Water Treatment Works. There is a cultural and landscape pattern of planned parkland character that is evident throughout the parcel. Although there is some agricultural intensification and settlement expansion, the parcel character remains positive with distinctive in parkland characteristics.



1. FROM THE B4580 LOOKING NORTH WEST OVER CONSERVATION AREA



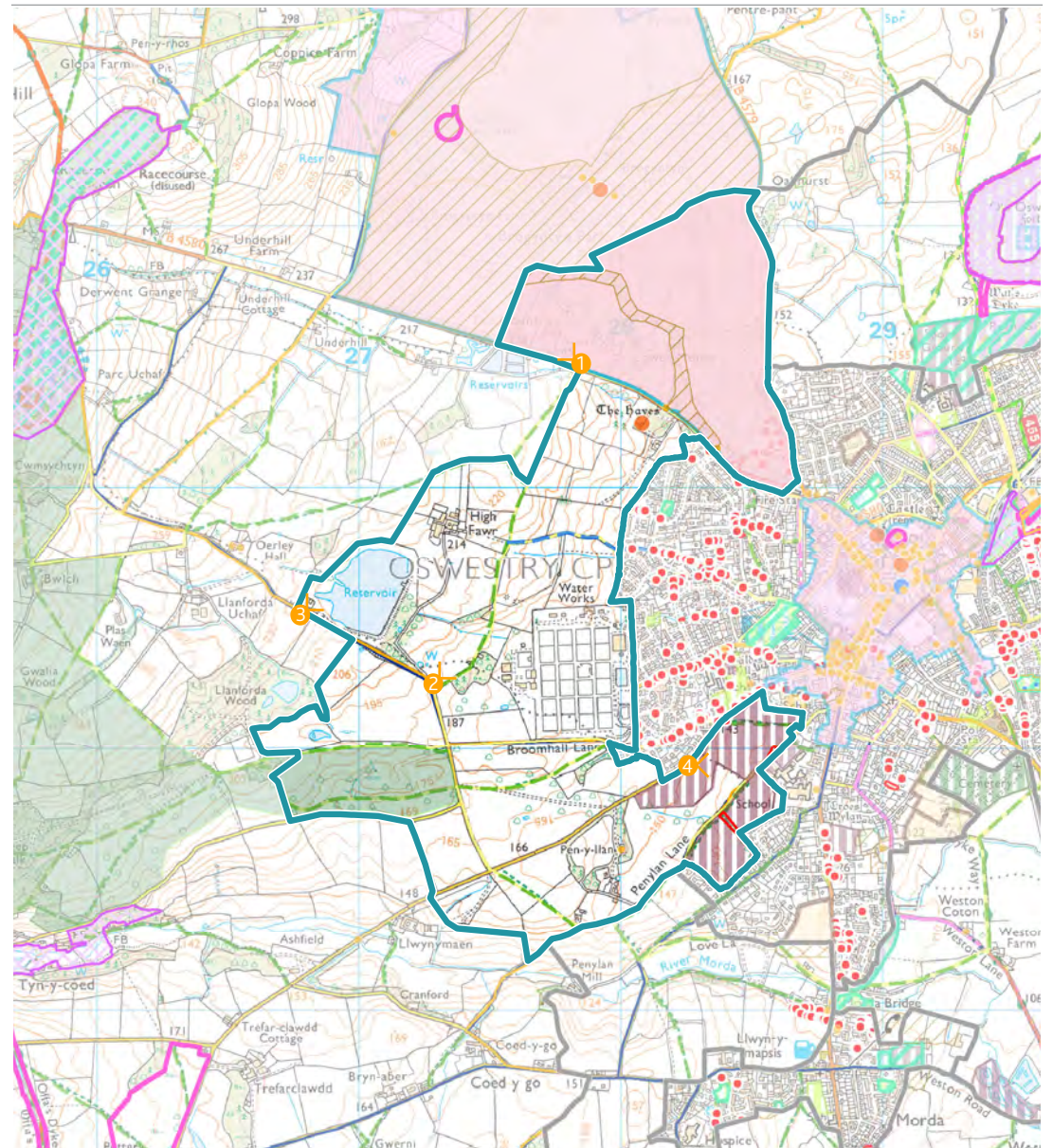
2. FROM CENTRE WEST OF PARCEL LOOKING EAST OVER RESERVOIR TOWARDS OSWESTRY



3. FROM CENTRE OF PARCEL ALONG MINOR ROAD LOOKING NORTH EAST



4. FROM EDGE OF OSWESTRY LOOKING EAST TOWARDS SETTLEMENT EDGE



LANDSCAPE

LANDSCAPE VALUE

This planned parkland landscape has a very strong character and although there are some detractors including a water treatment works, the implemented landscape reinstatement once established, is likely to successfully integrate the works into the landscape and would be appropriate to the rest of the parcel character. Quality and condition in the parcel is high, especially the managed landscapes of Llanforda Estate, which is a Woodpasture and Parkland BAP Priority Habitat, and, Brogyntyn Park Registered Park and Garden to the north. Brogyntyn Park is also a Conservation Area and represents one third of the parcel. The major waterbody of Llanforda reservoir, along with other designated features in the parcel, add to nature conservation and historic value. Outlying hedgerows to the parkland habitat are robust, however connectivity could be improved. The landscape makes an important contribution to enjoyment in the area via circular routes, PRoW and parkland. There is also a large outdoor sports area associated with The Marches School to the south east.

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY

The south of the parcel is both flatter in topography and of lower elevation, with the potential to accommodate development compared to the rolling landscape to the north and centre of the parcel. Landscape pattern to the south and north of the parcel is irregular and medium scale, whereas the centre of the parcel contains more regular field boundary forms and a smaller scale. These central fields tend to be of pastoral farming land use, with the exception of the water treatment works and reservoir. Overall there is a medium level of tree cover, with scattered parkland trees and hedgerows are mostly intact, with some instances of stone walls and fences. There is a medium sense of place and some sense of tranquility.

LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

The distinctive parkland character throughout the parcel and historic features to the north are particularly sensitive to development, the character of which could be altered as a result of changes to landscape pattern and loss of features. The south of the parcel has a slightly lower sensitivity to development, which means overall the sensitivity of the landscape to change arising from new housing is medium and to employment is medium-high.



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

There are glimpsed views within the parcel to the Conservation Area and Registered Park and Garden of Brogyntyn Park, however this area is not widely accessible. Views are not associated with the Shropshire Hills AONB. There are no promoted or significant views out of the parcel, although views within are positive and of high quality. Views across the Llanforda Estate from PRoW are also relatively scenic.

VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY

Views in the parcel are open with some long-distance views over Oswestry from elevated locations. Lower lying areas are more contained and offer filtered views within the parcel that could accommodate some development without extensive change to the view, however this should be balanced against alterations to parkland setting and loss of distinctive features within the view. The parcel is intervisible with the settlement edge to the north east and south east, although intervening ground levels and vegetation screen views from the main residential area to the water treatment works. There is some intervisibility with parcel B and Morda A, however these are glimpsed through vegetation. The parcel forms part of a skyline, particularly in the centre and north of the parcel, with strong visual features of topography emphasised by denser tree cover. Development would typically be more appropriate on lower ground where development can be enclosed and views from sensitive receptors contained by planting. The water treatment works whose associated structures create a skyline at closer range, detract from the otherwise highly scenic views within the parcel. South of Broomhall Lane, there is a higher frequency of receptors along roads, within the sports grounds, along the B4580 and the settlement edge. Settlement within the parcel is sparse, with dispersed farmsteads and individual properties.

VISUAL SENSITIVITY

Views within this parkland landscape are relatively scenic, with open views into and from Oswestry that should be considered during development. Large scale development and loss of parkland features could have a noticeable change to the view which means overall views experienced are of medium sensitivity to change arising from new housing and medium-high to 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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OSWESTRY B [05OSW-B]

LOCATION AND CHARACTER

Parcel B is located to the north of Oswestry and some 25km north of the Shropshire Hills AONB and 6km south of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB. The parcels boundaries are formed in the west by the B4579 and the A5 to the east. The historic Scheduled Monument Old Oswestry Fort is a highly distinctive feature in the parcel as well as Wat's Dyke. The topography is undulating, overlain with a complex and irregular landscape pattern of pastoral enclosure. Woodland and tree cover is not extensive, although there are scatterings of veteran trees within fields and hedgerows.



1. FROM THE TOP OF OLD OSWESTRY HILL FORT, LOOKING NORTH WEST



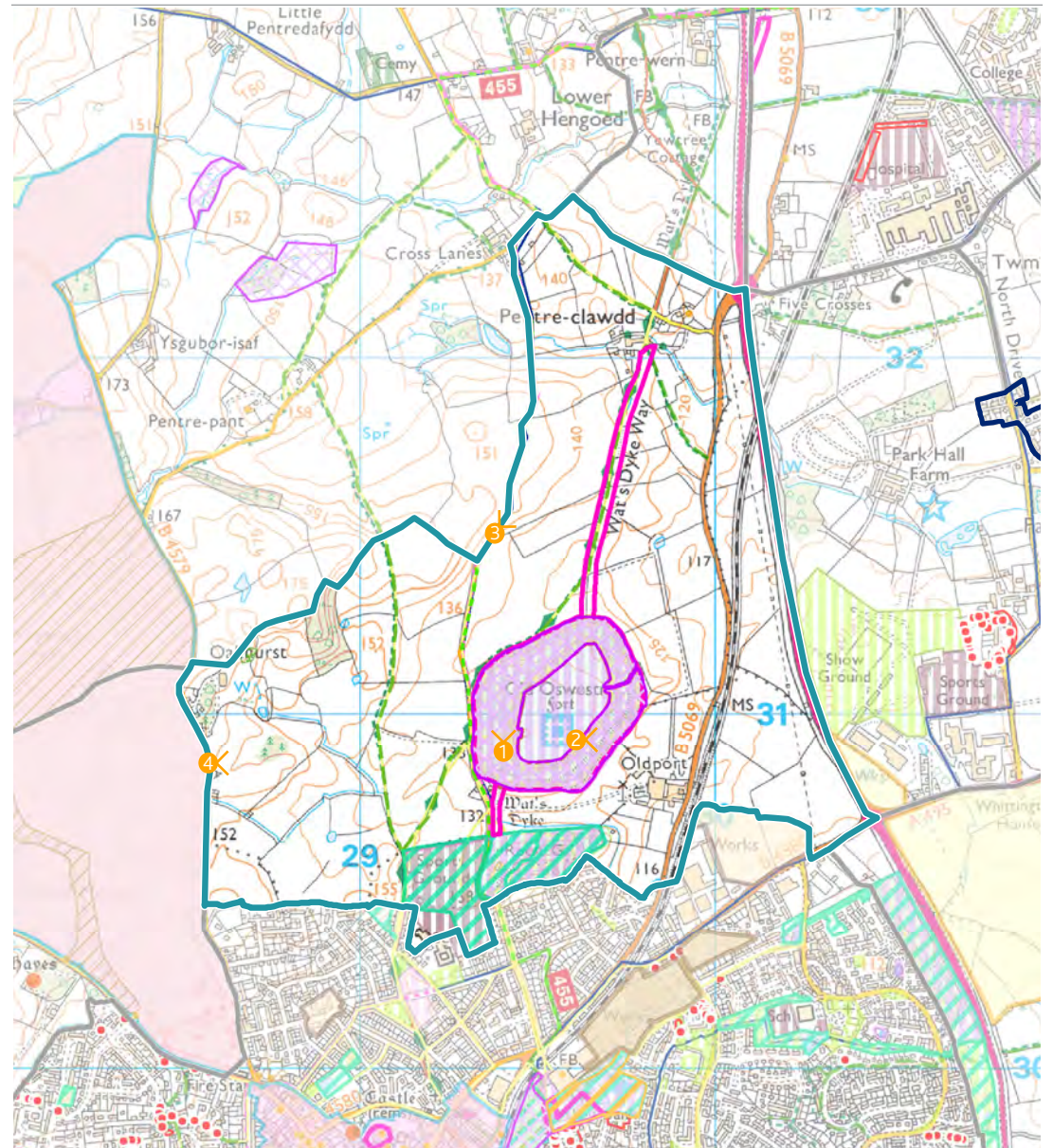
2. FROM THE TOP OF OLD OSWESTRY HILL FORT, LOOKING EAST TOWARDS OSWESTRY



3. FROM THE CENTRE OF THE PARCEL LOOKING EAST



4. FROM THE B4579 AT THE EDGE OF BROGYNTYN PARK CONSERVATION AREA LOOKING EAST



LANDSCAPE

LANDSCAPE VALUE

This is a landscape of strong and positive character derived from the high quality landscape of Brogyntyn Park to the west, distinctive undulating topography and historic Old Oswestry Hill Fort to the centre, which is a designated feature and English Heritage Site. To the east, the character is fragmented and weakened by industrial development. There is concentrated woodland cover near Llwyn Coppice Playing Field, however, elsewhere tree cover is sparsely scattered throughout the parcel, some of which are veteran trees and are reflective of the planned parkland landscape characteristics to the south of the parcel. The landscape makes an important contribution to enjoyment in the area, associated with Old Oswestry Hill Fort, and Wat's Dyke Way regional trail/circular walking routes, which connect the fort to Oswestry town centre. Sports grounds in the south of the parcel, and other PRoW also offer recreational benefits.

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY

Landform in the parcel is undulating and distinctive, with the particular visual foci of Old Oswestry Hill Fort. The Hill Fort is also designated as a Local Wildlife Site, and contains tall grassland and scrubby habitats. Habitats elsewhere in the parcel are confined to streams and gappy and eroded hedgerows, as there are few areas of dense tree cover and would be vulnerable to further loss as a result of development. The landscape pattern is irregular and of medium scale, with typically pastoral land use and areas of open grassland and heathland to the west. There is some industrial land use in the east of the parcel that reduces tranquility and strength of character, however the centre and west of the parcel display strong sense of place, rural character and tranquility. The residential settlement edge is well integrated, however to the east the commercial edge is more abrupt.

LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

Topography, landscape character, historical and cultural features are particularly sensitive to any development and the highly valuable features should be retained with their settings enhanced and protected. Old Oswestry Hill Fort Local Wildlife Site, woodland, heath and grassland provide nature conservation value that is vulnerable to further loss as a result of development which means overall the sensitivity of the landscape to change as a result of development for housing is high and to employment is very high.



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 parcel offers many open views towards Old Oswestry Hill Fort and occasional views to the Conservation Area of Brogyntyn Park. Views in the centre and east over the parcel are scenic taking in distinctive topography and positive rural character. Views are not associated with the Shropshire Hills AONB.

VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY

The parcel has varied views ranging from visually contained, to open and elevated due to areas of varied topography. There are open far reaching views from elevated landform, including Old Oswestry Hill Fort which itself is a focal point of many views within the parcel including views from parcels A, C and Park Hill A and from the settlement edge of Oswestry. Both Oswestry Hill Fort and planned parkland characteristics on rising landform to the west are strong focal features. Any development within this landscape would be highly noticeable within the view and could result in the degradation of the setting of heritage assets and views of high scenic quality. The distinctive topography provides strong visual features in the parcel, often creating local skylines that would be particularly vulnerable to development and changes to the view. The scenic quality is generally high, although industrial developments to the east are detracting elements. There is a frequent level of residential access at the settlement edge and recreational receptors associated with Old Oswestry Hill Fort, PRoWs including Wats Dyke Way regional trail and Route 455 of the National Cycle Network. The B5069 which runs north to south through the parcel also represents a frequent level of access, whereas receptors along other minor roads in the parcel are occasional.

VISUAL SENSITIVITY

There are few detracting features in the parcel, which has several distinctive visual foci, including landform that also forms part of a skyline on many occasions. Although elements to the south east detract from the quality of the view, the rest parcel is of high value and would be sensitive to further development that would be noticeable within the view. Therefore, views experienced are of high sensitivity to change arising from new housing and very-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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OSWESTRY C [05OSW-C]

LOCATION AND CHARACTER

Parcel C is located to the east of Oswestry and some 25km north of the Shropshire Hills AONB and 7km south of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB. The parcel perimeter is formed by field boundaries to the east, the A495 to the north, Middleton Road to the south and Oswestry settlement edge to the west. The A5 corridor runs north south along the settlement edge with a publicly accessible amenity green space forming a buffer between the two. East of the A5 the parcel is characterised by a flat landform and irregular field patterns of small to large agricultural land use.



1. FROM A495 LOOKING SOUTH WEST OVER THE PARCEL



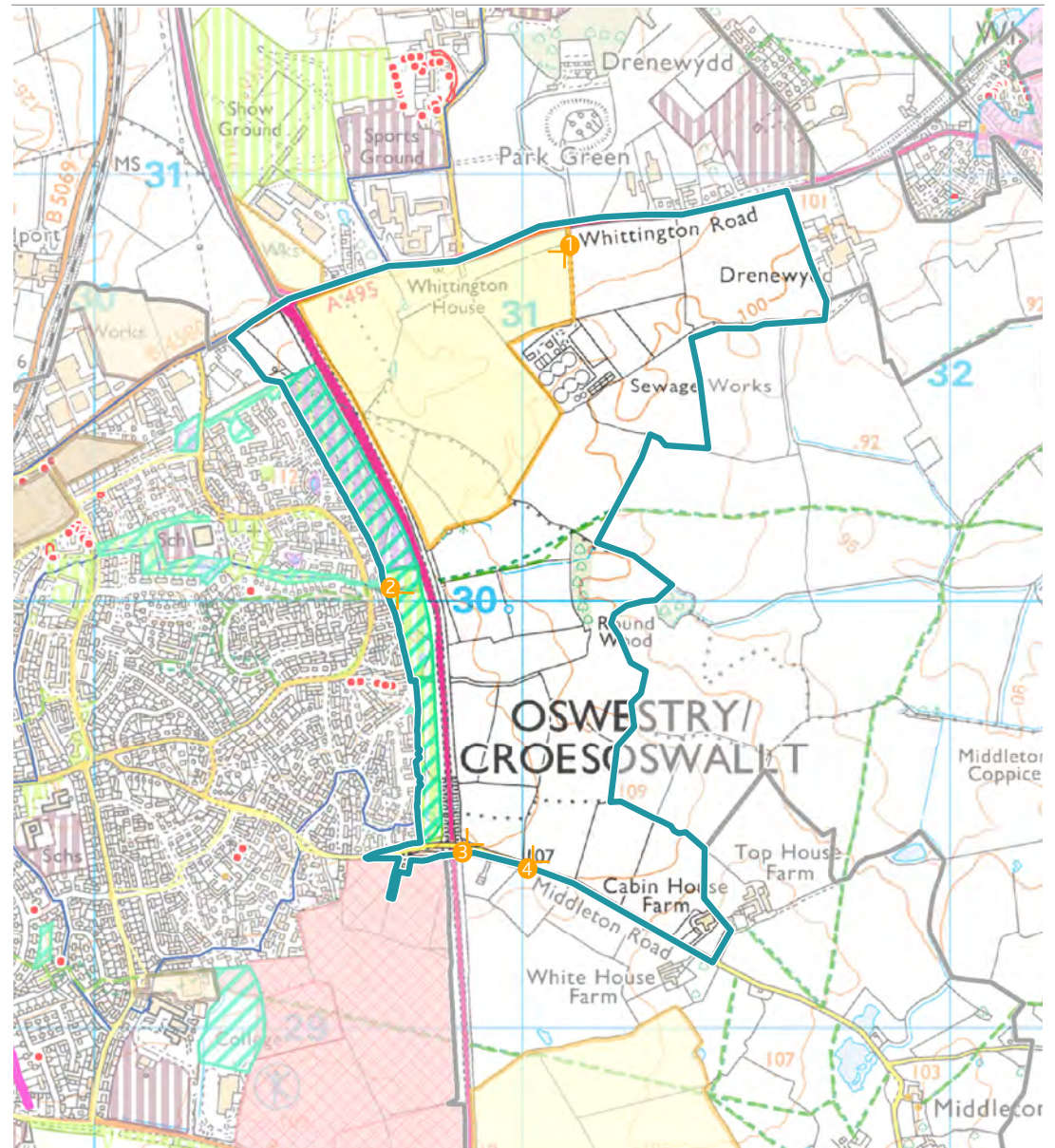
2. FROM SETTLEMENT EDGE LOOKING SOUTH EAST TO OPEN ACCESS LAND WITHIN THE PARCEL



3. FROM SOUTH WEST OF PARCEL ALONG MIDDLETON ROAD LOOKING NORTH EAST



4. FROM CENTRE SOUTH OF PARCEL ALONG MIDDLETON ROAD LOOKING NORTH EAST



LANDSCAPE

LANDSCAPE VALUE

This typically rural landscape is of variable condition with a lack of apparent historic, cultural or distinctive features. Natural conservation value is low with poor connectivity of woodland and hedgerow features to the wider landscape and additional fragmentation due to major road corridors. Riparian habitats, water features and copses within the parcel offer some ecologically beneficial structure. East of the A5 there is minimal recreational interest in the parcel, with one PRow and few connections to the wider network being intersected by the A5 to the west. A linear area of open access land to the settlement edge is beneficial for local recreational purposes.

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY

Green space along the settlement edge is disconnected from the rural landscape to the east by the A5, but forms a valuable buffer between the settlement edge and A5 that would be susceptible to loss as a result of development. To the east, the landform of the parcel is flat to gently rolling with an irregular pattern of medium scale arable and pastoral farmland, with low level of tree cover that would be less susceptible to development than small scale fields with a robust pattern. Hedgerow field boundaries in the parcel vary in quality and condition and are vulnerable to further loss and erosion as a result of development. Expansion of Oswestry has included major road infrastructure resulting in a low sense of tranquility in the parcel. There is little relationship between the parcel and settlement edge and settlement is generally isolated properties and dispersed farmsteads that would be vulnerable to noticeable change in landscape pattern as a result of development.

LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

The parcel has a positive character overall despite lack of notable features within the parcel, however combined with low levels of tranquility and eroded landscape features means overall, the sensitivity of the landscape to change as a result of development for housing is low and to employment is low.



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

There are no views to important landscape sites within the parcel. Views to the Scheduled Monument Oswestry Fort are often filtered or blocked by intervening vegetation, topography and vertical structures. Views from the Scheduled Monument are of value and views into this parcel should be considered during development.

VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY

The parcel is mostly visually contained, with limited views inwards outwards across this flat to gently rolling landscape due to tall hedgerows. This potentially reduces susceptibility, as views would be better screened at lower levels with mature vegetation. There are filtered and open views from higher ground in the parcel that would be more susceptible to noticeable changes in the view. There is intervisibility with Park Hill A which has higher visual susceptibility due to frequency and type of receptors. There is some visibility with parcel D however this is filtered by intervening vegetation. The parcel does not form part of a skyline, aside from the linear tree cover along the settlement edge and A5. Scenic quality in the parcel is low due to lack of notable features and focal points, with many wood pole overhead lines present. Road users represented a constant level of access to the outskirts of the parcel, mainly along the A5 however elsewhere, level access and sensitivity of receptors is low.

VISUAL SENSITIVITY

Views within the parcel and generally contained, with views along main roads and the settlement edge framed by vegetation, limiting views out from sensitive residential and recreational receptors and combined with the low frequency of receptors elsewhere within the parcel means that the views experienced are of low sensitivity to change arising from new housing and low 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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OSWESTRY D [05OSW-D]

LOCATION AND CHARACTER

Parcel D lies southeast of Oswestry and is some 25km north of the Shropshire Hills AONB and 7km south of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB. The Oswestry bypass of the A5 and A483 forms the west parcel boundary. Middleton Road forms the northern boundary and parkland at the Sweeney Hall Hotel lies to the west. The predominantly flat landform supports a dairy farming system with Mile End golf course to the south east and a wastewater treatment works to the south west of the parcel. Tree cover is scarce and creates open views throughout.



1. FROM MIDDLETON ROAD LOOKING SOUTH ACROSS THE PARCEL



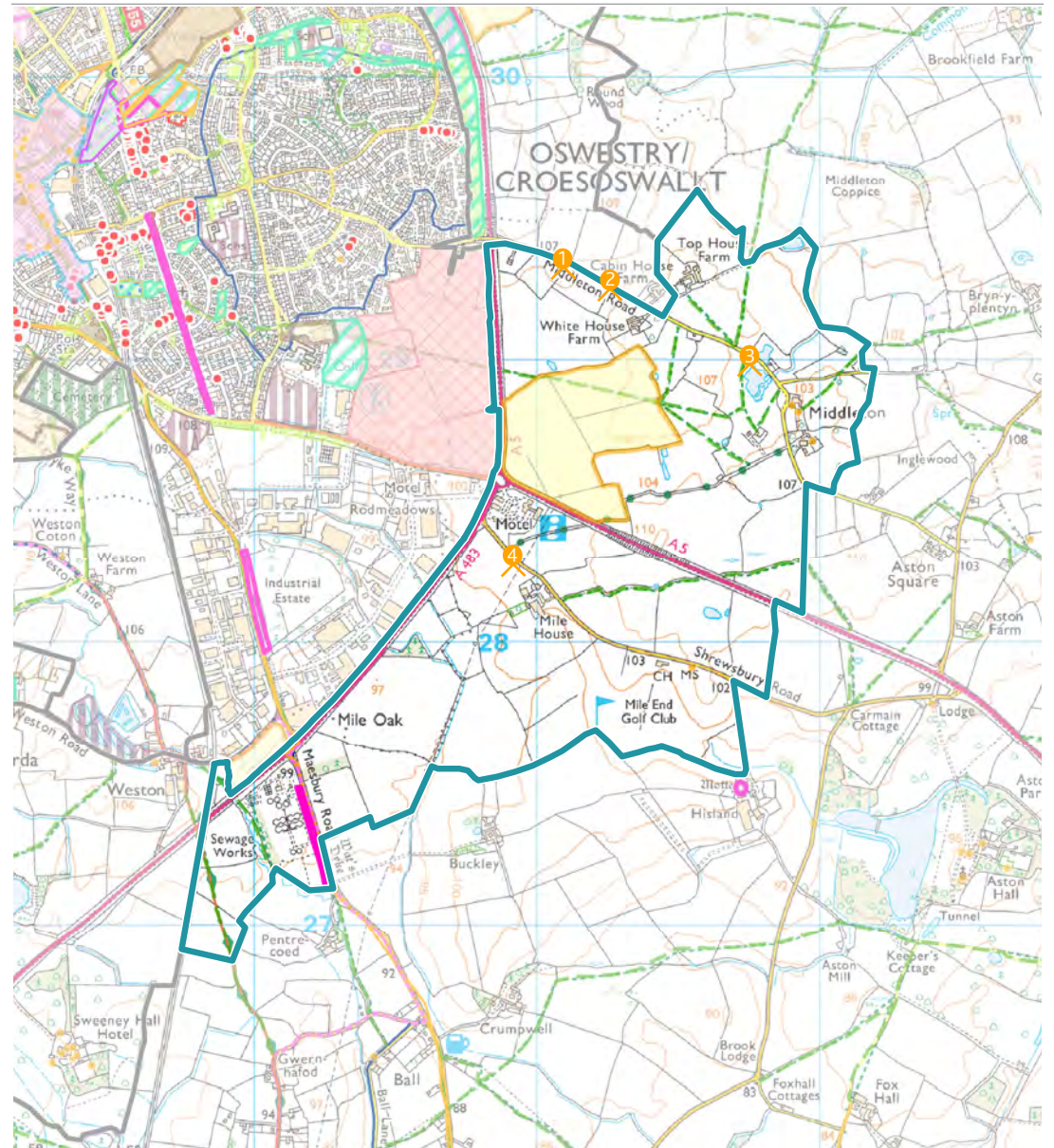
2. FROM MIDDLETON ROAD LOOKING SOUTHWEST ACROSS THE PARCEL



3. FROM MIDDLETON ROAD LOOKING SOUTHEAST ACROSS PARCEL



4. FROM CENTRE OF PARCEL ALONG SHREWSBURY ROAD LOOKING SOUTH



LANDSCAPE

LANDSCAPE VALUE

The typical rural character of the parcel has some positive features of historical value at Middleton to the north east and Wat's Dyke to the south, however the majority of heritage features are outside the parcel at Sweeney Hall Hotel to the south and Aston Hall and parkland to the east. The parkland characteristics of these two properties does offer some value as part of a wider character of planted parkland around Oswestry. Inner field and hedgerow trees are sparse as a result of agricultural intensification and the densest tree cover is mostly associated with the Mile End Golf Course, and outlying parkland areas. To the north, an extensive PRow network connects to the wider area, with Wats Dyke heritage and regional trail to the south, however connections between these two recreational resources is poor with a lack of PRow to the centre of the parcel.

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY

The landform of the parcel is relatively flat with some areas of gently rolling topography. The typical rural pattern of medium to large scale fields could accommodate some development within the existing field system without substantial change to landscape character, however isolated properties and dispersed farmsteads would be highly susceptible to noticeable changes in landscape pattern. Ponds, watercourses and ditches are present throughout the parcel and would be vulnerable to loss as a result of development, with potential connectivity of habitats affected. Hedgerows are mostly intact, but would be vulnerable to loss or erosion as a result of development, being irreplaceable in the short to medium term. There has been some noticeable change to the cultural pattern towards industrial development fostering a low sense of tranquility. Pockets of more tranquil landscape exist to the north-east around Middleton.

LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

The northeast of the parcel is of higher sensitivity due to its historic buildings, natural features and extensive PRow network, while to the centre of the parcel, dispersed properties are lower in numbr with a lower level of public access. This is balanced by the presence of Mile End Golf Course offering some recreational value meaning overall, the sensitivity of the landscape to change arising from new housing is medium-low and to employment is medium-low.



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

There are no views from the parcel to important landscape sites and views are not associated with the Shropshire Hills AONB. There are glimpsed views to and from the heritage assets of Wat's Dyke and Scheduled Monument beyond the south east parcel boundary.

VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY

There are limited views inwards and outwards from the parcel due to roadside vegetation forming framed and enclosed views, lowering visual susceptibility as development would be less noticeable in the view on low-lying ground and screened by mature vegetation. Open and long-distance views are afforded from high ground in the parcel in the vicinity of Middleton and along Shrewsbury Road and such views would be vulnerable to noticeable change as a result of development. The parcel shared very limited intervisibility with Parcel C and Morda Parcel C due to intervening vegetation. The parcel does not form part of a skyline, due to gently rolling to flat landform, reducing susceptibility to changes on the view as a result of development. Detracting elements of wood pole overhead lines and street lighting columns reduced scenic quality in the vicinity of major roads where there is a constant level of access from road users. Elsewhere, there is a high number and varied type of receptor due to recreational use or PRow and facilities and dispersed residential receptors. Dispersed individual properties, farmsteads and recreational users of the extensive PRow network and amenities are typically highly susceptible to changes to their surroundings.

VISUAL SENSITIVITY

There are no views towards important landscape sites, however there are views to and from heritage assets within the parcel. The sensitive recreational receptors using PRow and golf course amenities within a typical rural landscape of slightly eroded scenic quality means views experienced are of low sensitivity to change arising from new housing and low sensitivity to change arising from employment.



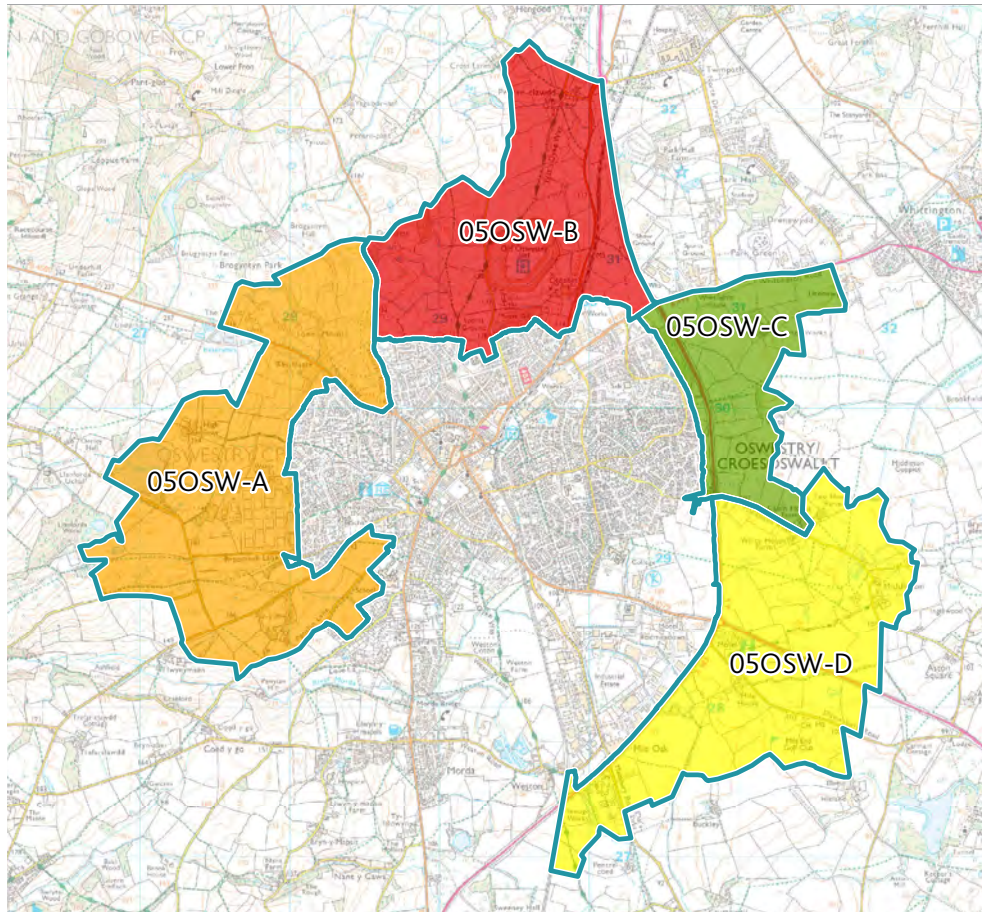
LOW	MEDIUM-LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM-HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH
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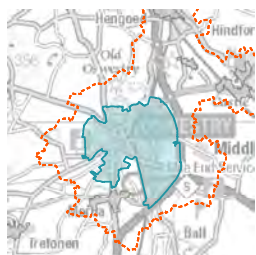
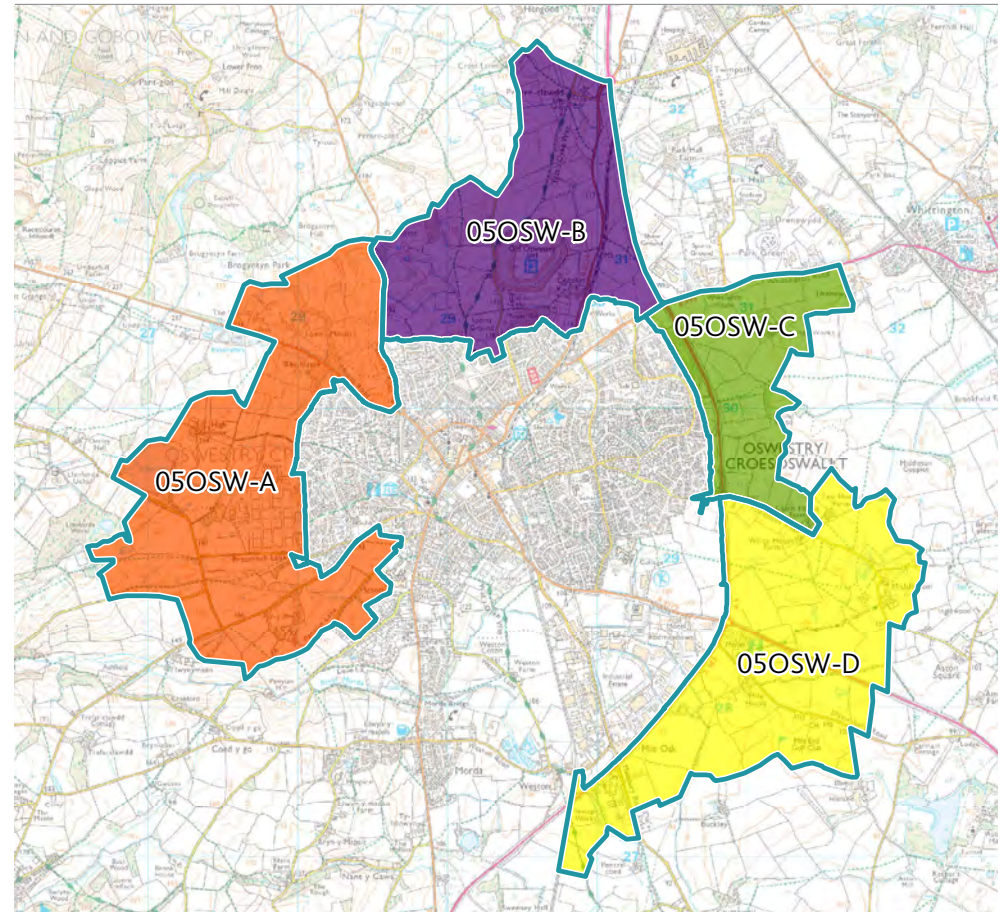
LOW	MEDIUM-LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM-HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH
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OSWESTRY LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

HOUSING



EMPLOYMENT



KEY:

 SENSITIVITY PARCEL

LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY:

 VERY HIGH

 HIGH

 MEDIUM-HIGH

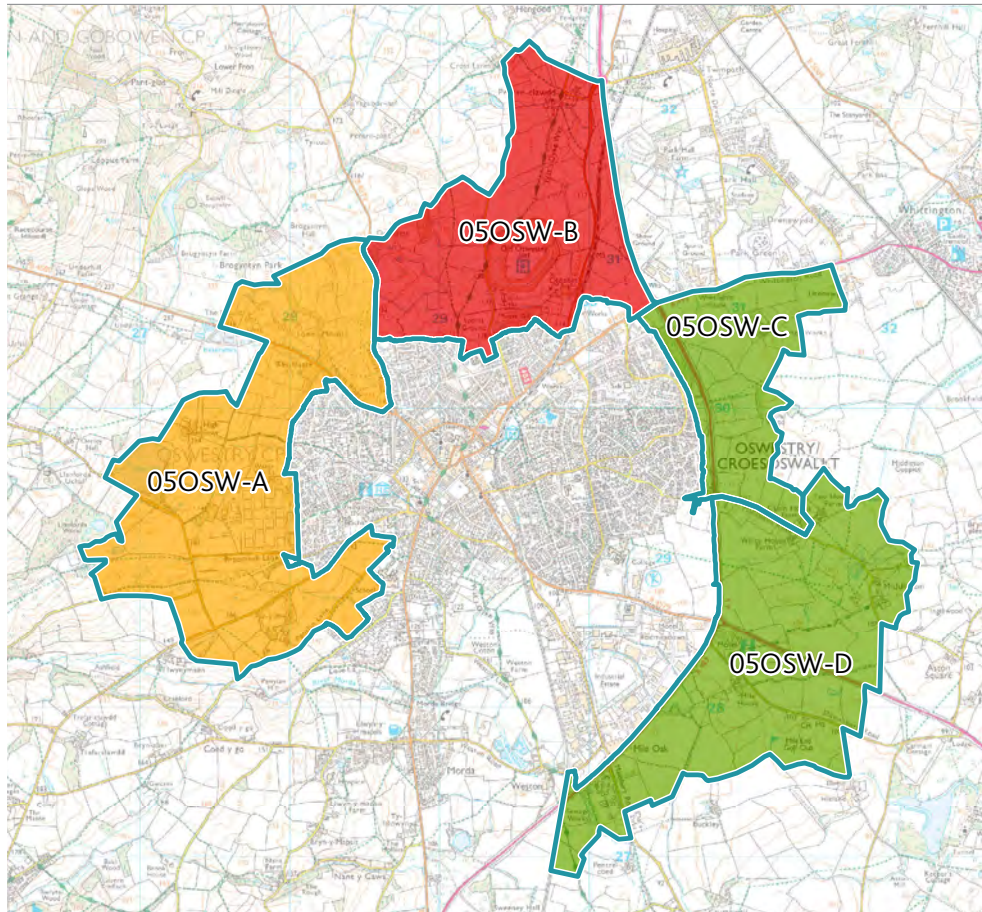
 MEDIUM

 MEDIUM-LOW

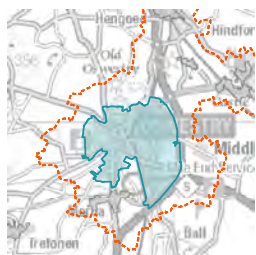
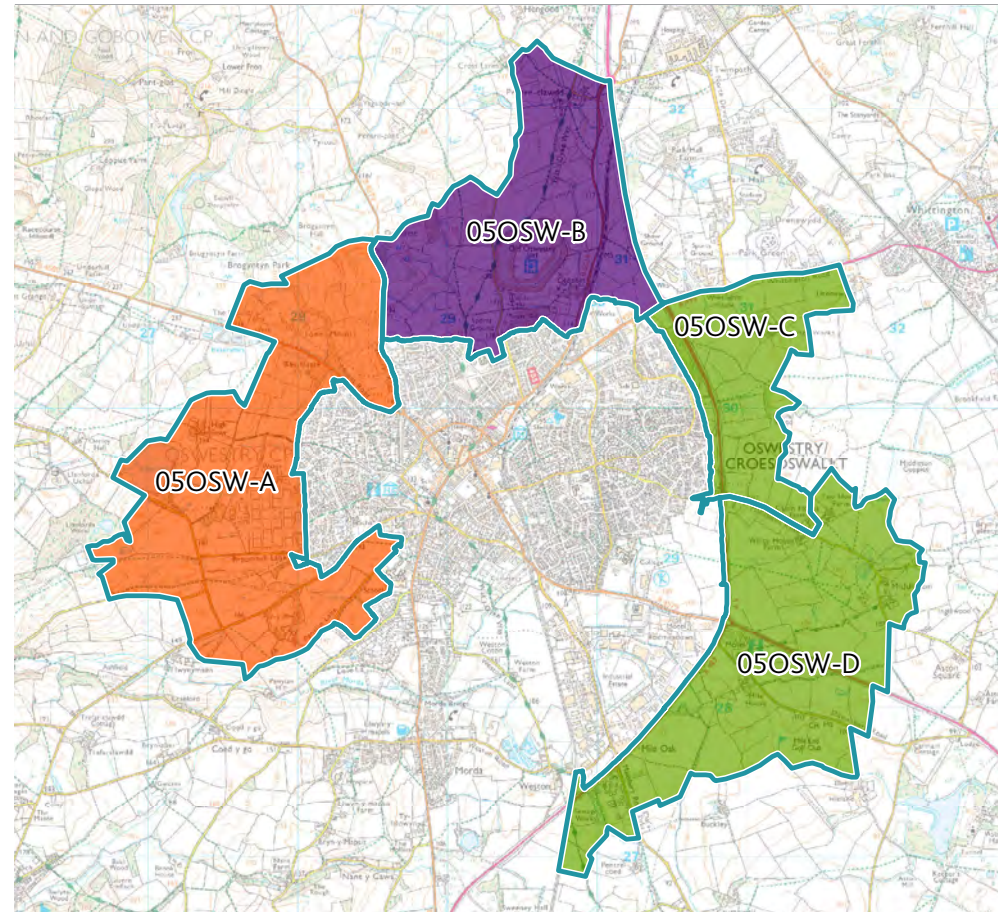
 LOW

OSWESTRY VISUAL SENSITIVITY

HOUSING



EMPLOYMENT



KEY:

SENSITIVITY PARCEL

VISUAL SENSITIVITY:

VERY HIGH

HIGH

MEDIUM-HIGH

MEDIUM

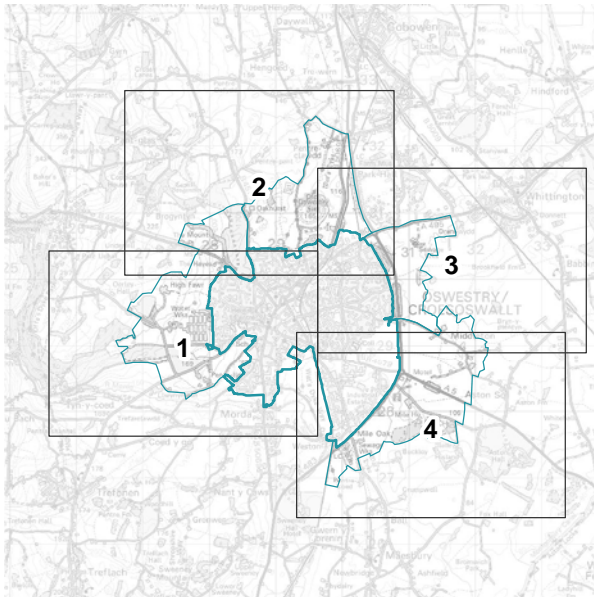
MEDIUM-LOW

LOW









DESIGN GUIDANCE FOR OSWESTRY

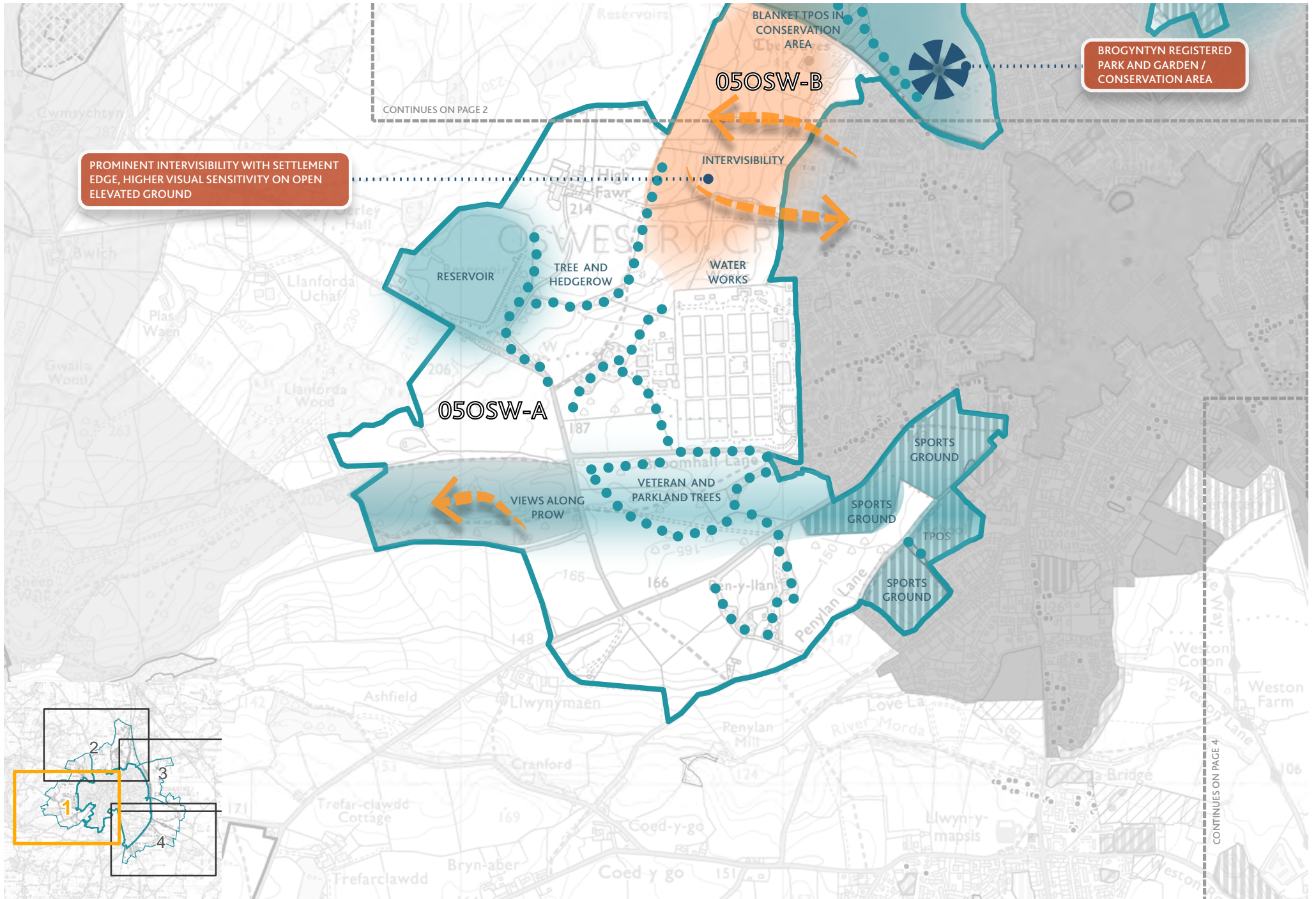
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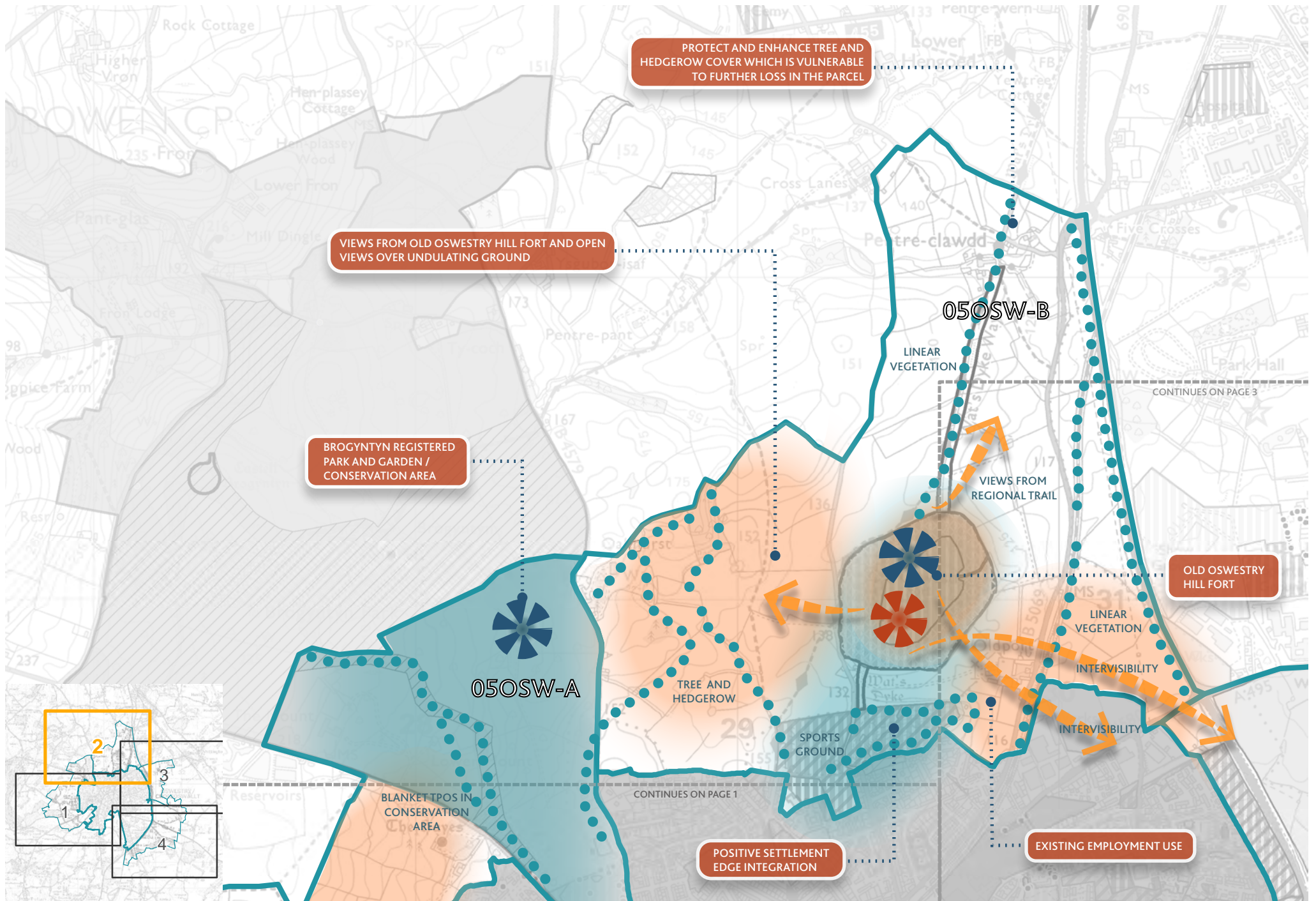
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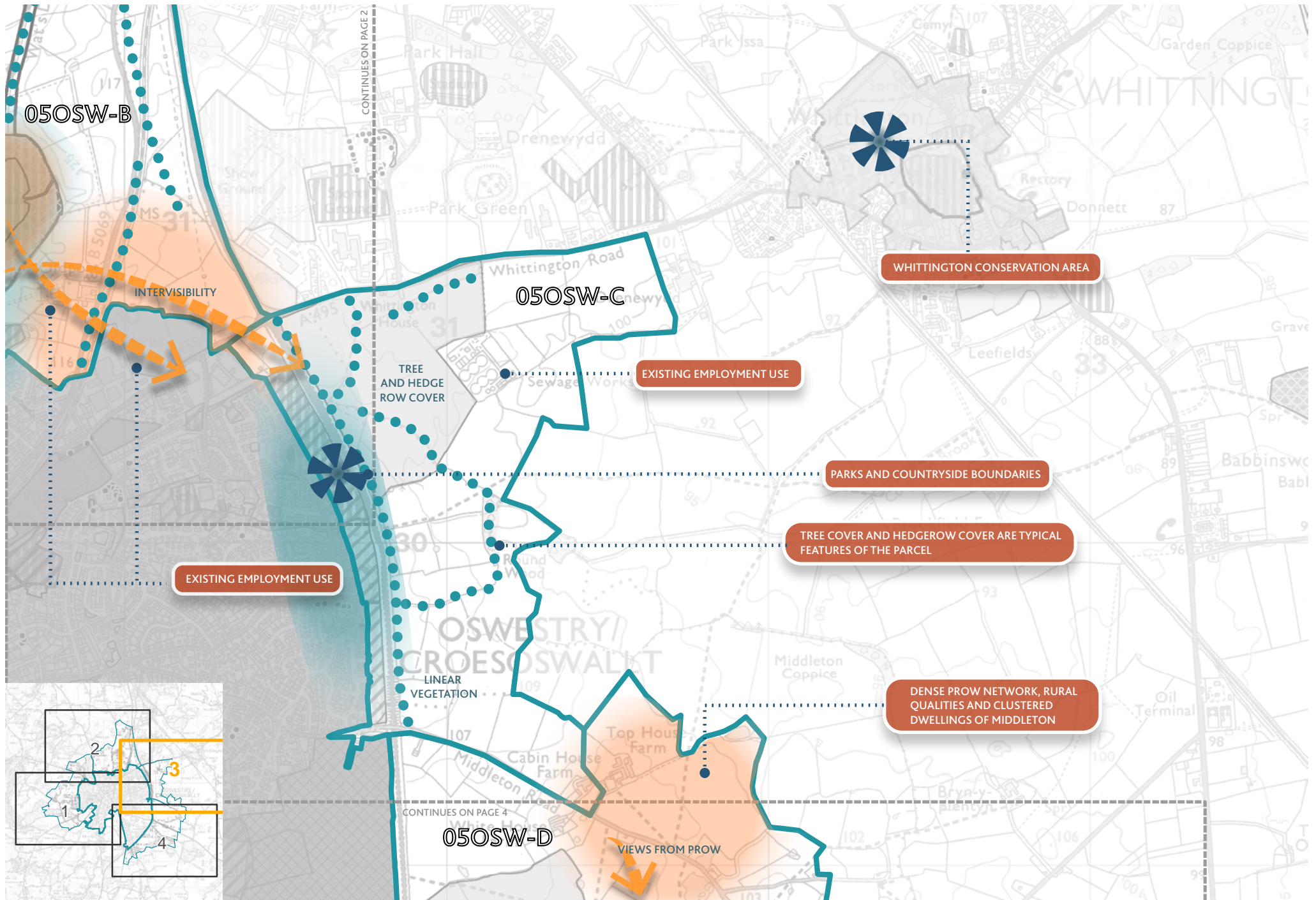


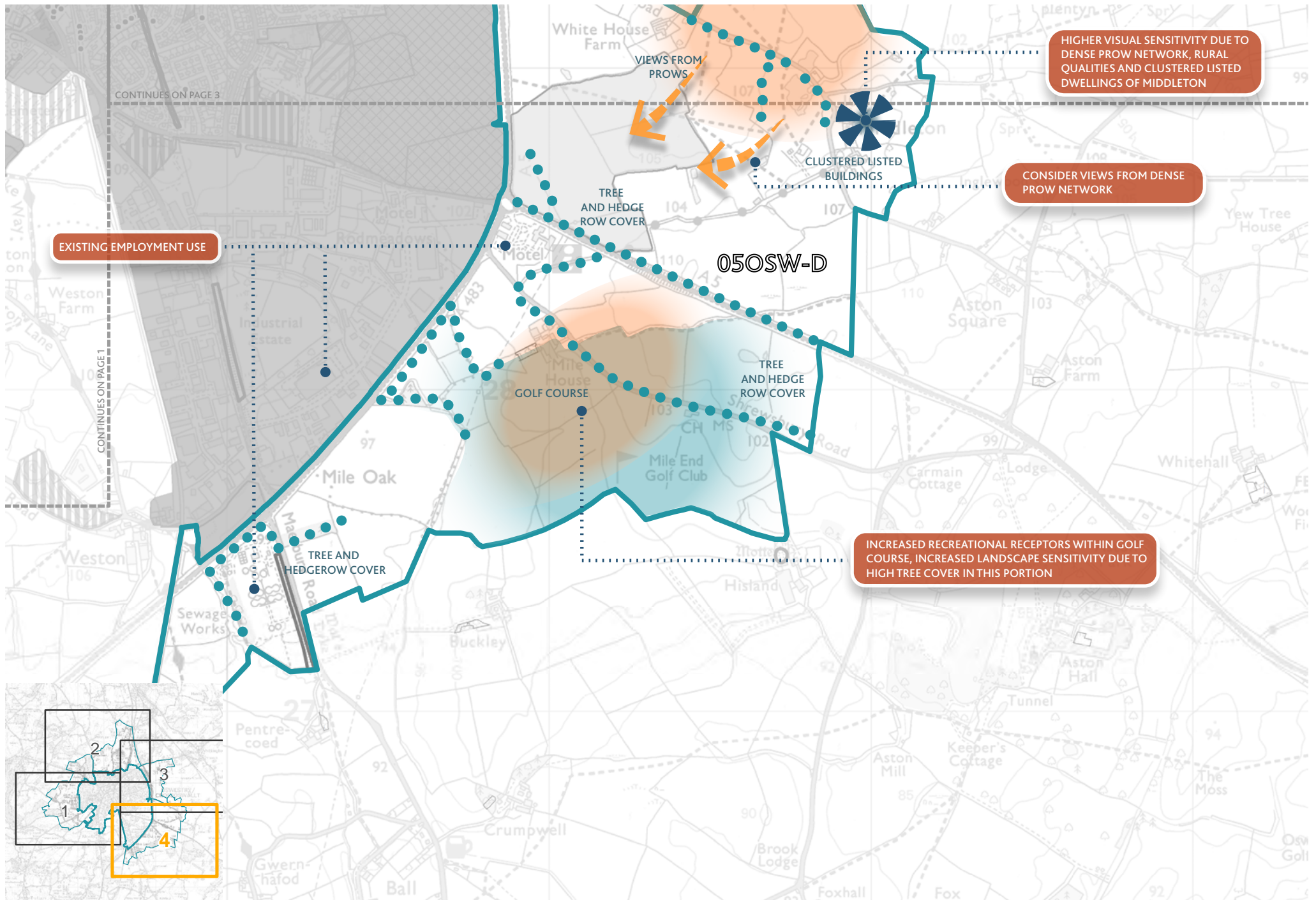
KEY

-  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









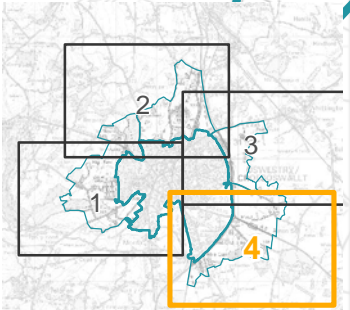
EXISTING EMPLOYMENT USE

HIGHER VISUAL SENSITIVITY DUE TO DENSE PROW NETWORK, RURAL QUALITIES AND CLUSTERED LISTED DWELLINGS OF MIDDLETON

CONSIDER VIEWS FROM DENSE PROW NETWORK

INCREASED RECREATIONAL RECEPTORS WITHIN GOLF COURSE, INCREASED LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY DUE TO HIGH TREE COVER IN THIS PORTION

050SW-D



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