

Appendix 6

Junction 4 Assessment

Part 1: Settlement Context

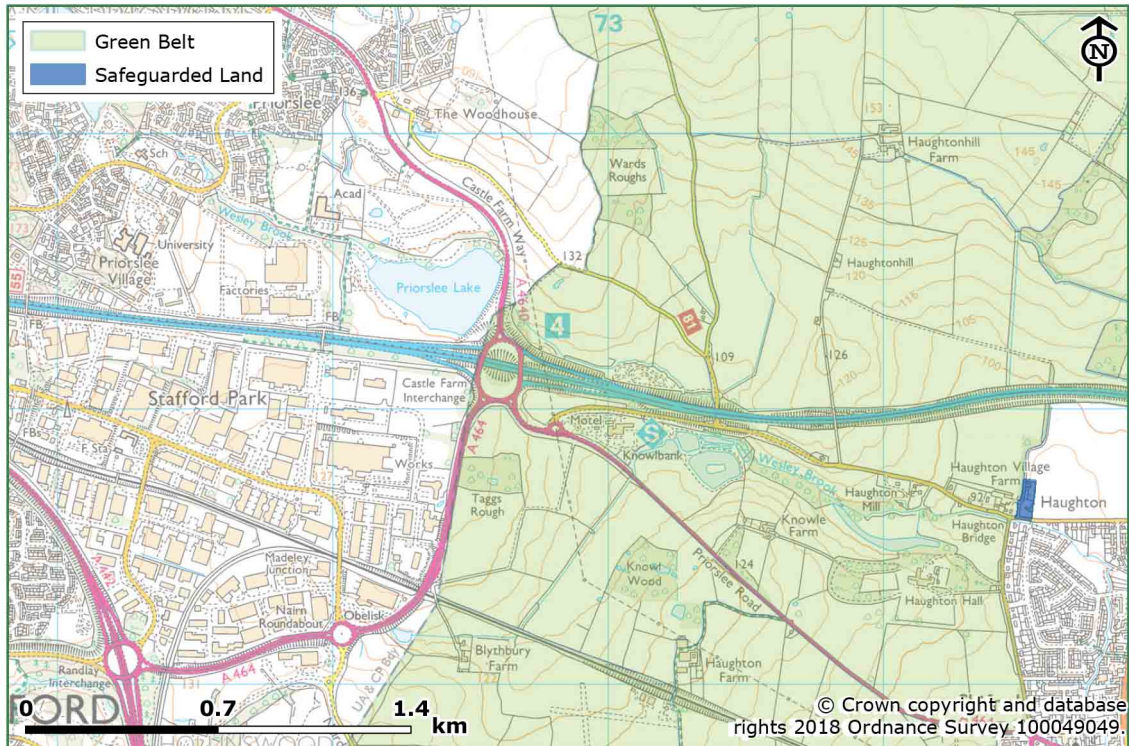


Figure A6.1: Junction 4 Settlement Context

In reviewing the Shropshire Green Belt, the Council wish to examine a range of opportunities that might form part of an appropriate growth strategy for Shropshire from 2016 to 2036, to meet the objectives of the Local Plan review. The Green Belt review therefore considers land around the principal settlements in the Green Belt and the strategic location and sites around M54 Junction 4 including the site of Knowle Bank Service Station.

The Local Plan's review on principal settlements reflects the 'urban focus' of the preferred spatial strategy but the Council also wish to focus investment into strategic corridors and new growth zones, utilising existing road and rail connections to seek to deliver a 'step change' in the Shropshire economy.

This further objective responds directly to the Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy that identifies the principal strategic corridors and growth zones in Shropshire. This includes the M54 / A5 east growth corridor which includes Junction 4 and adjacent strategic sites including Knowle Bank Service Station. This growth zone is linked to investment in Telford, Wolverhampton and Stafford where the clustering and supply chain opportunities from existing and future business (including international investment) may create demand for development around Junction 4 to help deliver Shropshire's economic growth objectives and to support the development needs of its neighbours.

Part 2: Parcels - Assessment of Harm on the Green Belt

The map and aerial show the location and extent of all the parcels around Junction 4 of the M54 that were considered in the Stage 1 Green Belt Assessment (2017) (outlined in blue and purple on Figures A6.2 and A6.3) around Junction 4. The parcels outlined in purple are those that are being considered in further detail as part of the assessment of harm. This assesses the harm to the Green Belt as a consequence of releasing land for development.

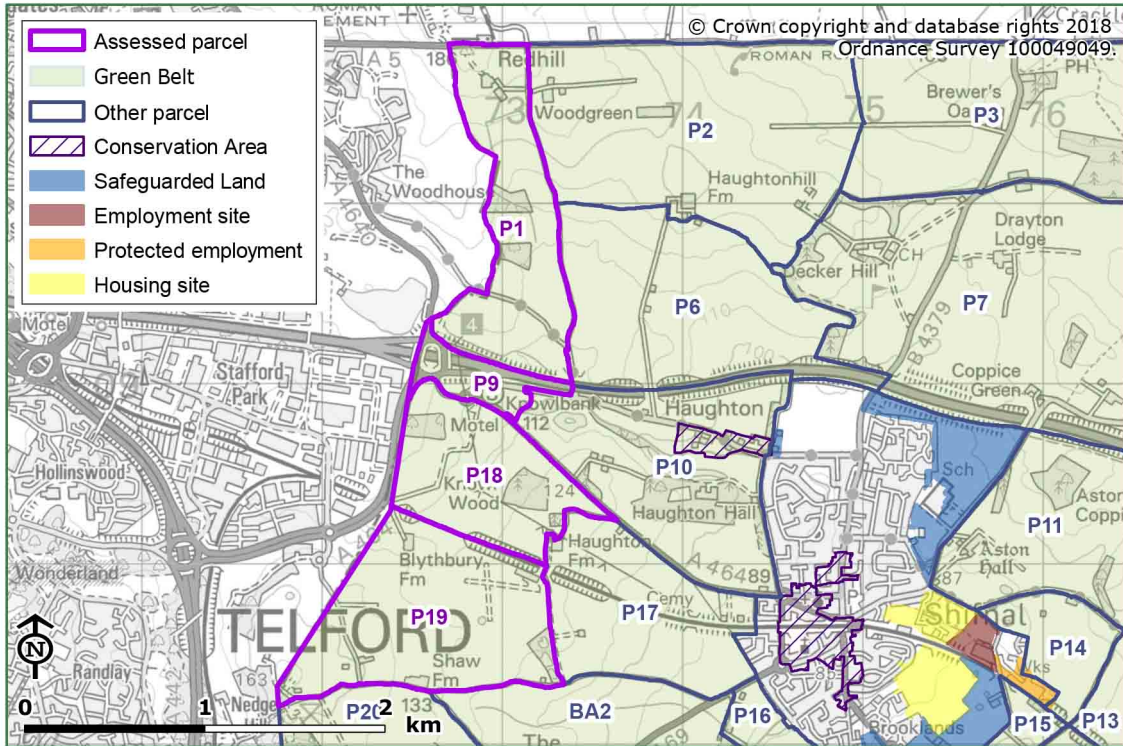


Figure A6.2: Junction 4 Surrounding Green Belt Parcels

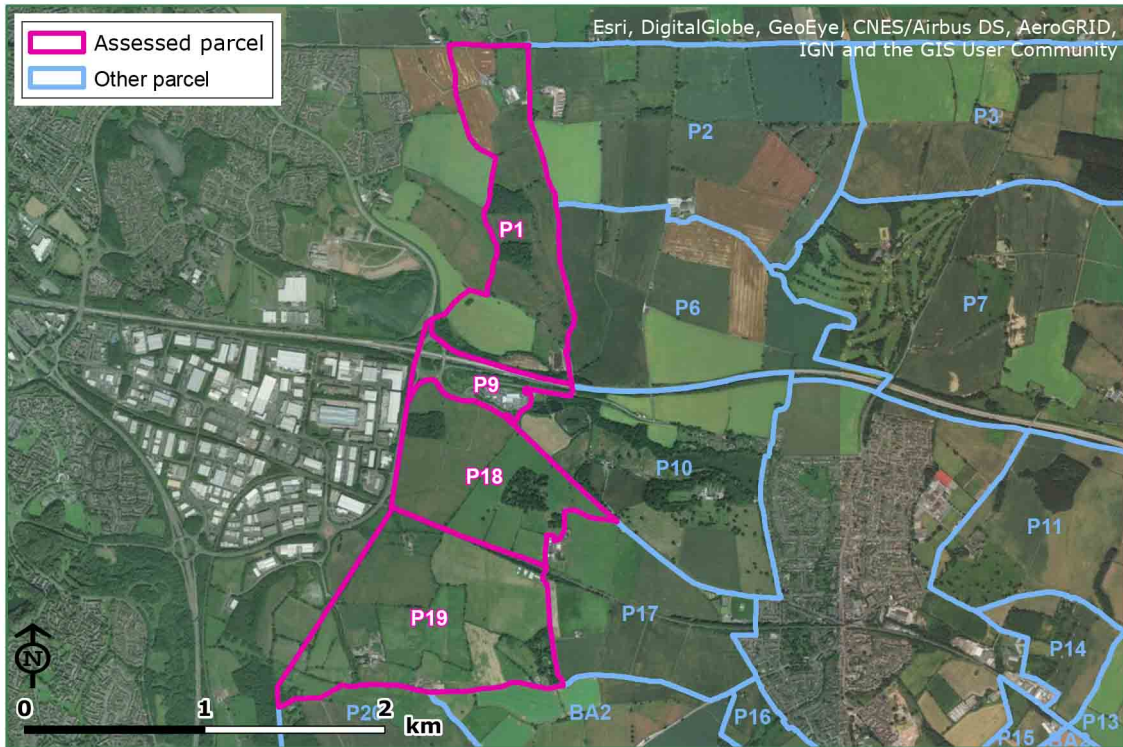


Figure A6.3: Junction 4 Assessed Green Belt Parcels

Parcel P1

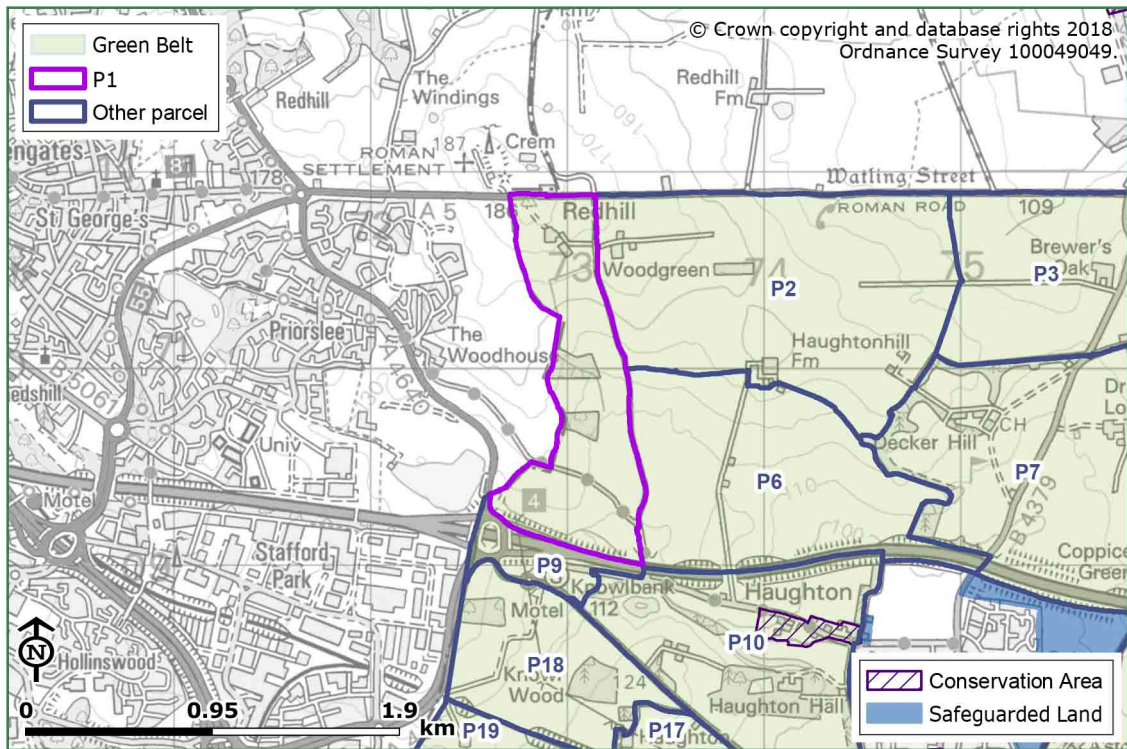


Figure A6.4: Parcel P1



Figure A6.5: Rolling farmland and woodland within parcel P1, view looking north from the rural lane defining the eastern edge of the parcel.

Relationship to settlement/countryside

Parcel P1 is located to the immediate north of Junction 4 and to the east of Telford, separated from the settlement edge by an area of open land that is not within the Green Belt but is allocated for housing. The parcel currently contains very little development and is open. The eastern boundary is defined by a rural lane, the northern boundary lies along the A5 and the southern boundary lies along the M54 and its slip roads. The A5 is lined by mature trees and tall hedgerows which provide a degree of separation from the adjoining land to the north. The M54 has large embankments with tree cover.

The land to the west of P1 lies within the Council area of Telford and Wrekin and is allocated for housing in their Adopted Local Plan (2018) as Allocation H1- Priorslee Sustainable Urban Extension. The allocation allows for approximately 1,100 homes to be built within a 57 hectare site which will, when developed will bring the eastern edge of Telford closer to the Green Belt.

The conclusions about the performance of Parcel P1 are set out in the descriptions below. No sub-parcels were identified that would have a lower degree of harm.

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Strong

This parcel adjoins the administrative area of Telford & Wrekin. The parcel is entirely free of urban sprawl, with development limited to part of the M54 slip road in the far south-west of the parcel. The parcel displays a strong sense of openness which is provided by a landcover comprising a patchwork of arable and pastoral fields along with small blocks of woodland. The parcel is considered to be playing a strong role in inhibiting the unrestricted eastward sprawl of Telford.

The M54 defines the southern boundary of the parcel, this acts as a strong and durable barrier feature to inhibit any urban sprawl moving north into the parcel. There are no strong physical boundary features on or close to the western boundary that could inhibit the eastward urban sprawl of Telford, though it should be noted that the alignment of the administrative boundary to Shropshire forms the western boundary of Parcel P1. It should also be noted that there is available development land in the sustainable urban extension for Telford that lies outside the Green Belt boundary. Additionally, there are no strong barrier features along the northern (despite the presence of the A5), eastern or western boundaries to prevent urban sprawl occurring within those areas of Parcel P1.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Moderate

The parcel is located close to the eastern edge of Telford and also has a functional relationship with the town of Shifnal approximately 1.2km to the southwest. Agricultural land lies between the western edge of the parcel and the urban area of Telford (within the administrative area Telford & Wrekin). Agricultural land with woodland cover, which is impacted by the presence of the M54 Motorway, lies between the parcel and the town of Shifnal. Receptors travelling along the M54 may perceive a relationship between the settlements; however, there is very little intervisibility due to embankments, vegetation and undulating agricultural land located between the motorway and settlements.

The settlements are in relatively close proximity and any new development that took place within the parcel could lead to the perception of narrowing the gap between these settlements.

The parcel also has a relationship with Haughton Village which is washed over by the Green Belt and located to the southwest. This hamlet is not considered a town with regard to Purpose 2, nonetheless it is contiguous with Shifnal and it is acknowledged that any new development that took place within the parcel could lead to the perception of narrowing the gap between this hamlet and Telford.

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Strong

There is a limited sense of encroachment within the parcel due to the M54 junction located in the southwest of the parcel. Land immediately adjacent to the parcel, within the Telford & Wrekin administrative boundary is defined as a sustainable urban extension area, therefore development in this area could further cause a sense of encroachment within the west of the parcel.

The A5 lies immediately to the north of the parcel which gives a localised sense of encroachment. The M54 bounds the south of the parcel and is visible from areas of agricultural land in the south; however it is largely screened by embankments and vegetation, which reduce the sense of encroachment caused by this physical corridor. The urbanising influences within the parcel are limited to a motorcross track to the very south of the parcel. There are also farm buildings to the north but these are not considered to be an urbanising feature (in accordance with the NPPF). The parcel is predominantly undeveloped and open; it displays many characteristics of the countryside and is rural. The Green Belt parcel is considered to be playing a strong role preventing further encroachment of the open countryside.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Weak

Digital analysis, based on bare earth height data, indicates that this parcel is theoretically visible from the historic settlement area located within Shifnal. In practice, there is very little intervisibility between the parcel and the Shifnal historic settlement area. The openness of the elevated land within the parcel is not considered to form an important part of the immediate setting of this historic settlement, however it does contribute to its wider rural setting, which is an important part of its special character.

Purpose 5 - To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

All parcels make an equally significant contribution to this purpose.

Alternative Green Belt Boundaries

The Green Belt boundary to the west of P1 currently comprises field boundaries and hedgerows which do not constitute a strong boundary. The M54 motorway along the southern boundary of Parcel P1 would constitute a strong boundary to the south. The rural lane along the eastern boundary of the parcel would constitute a readily recognisable alternative Green Belt boundary but would not mark a strong distinction between settlement and countryside.

Harm to Green Belt Resulting from Release

The parcel contains very little built development, is open and is associated with a large area of open countryside to the northeast of Telford. Releasing this parcel from the Green Belt would lead to significant encroachment on the countryside and would constitute urban sprawl from the large built up area of Telford. Releasing Parcel P1 from the Green Belt would lead to a **High** level of harm to the Green Belt designation in this local area.

Parcel P9

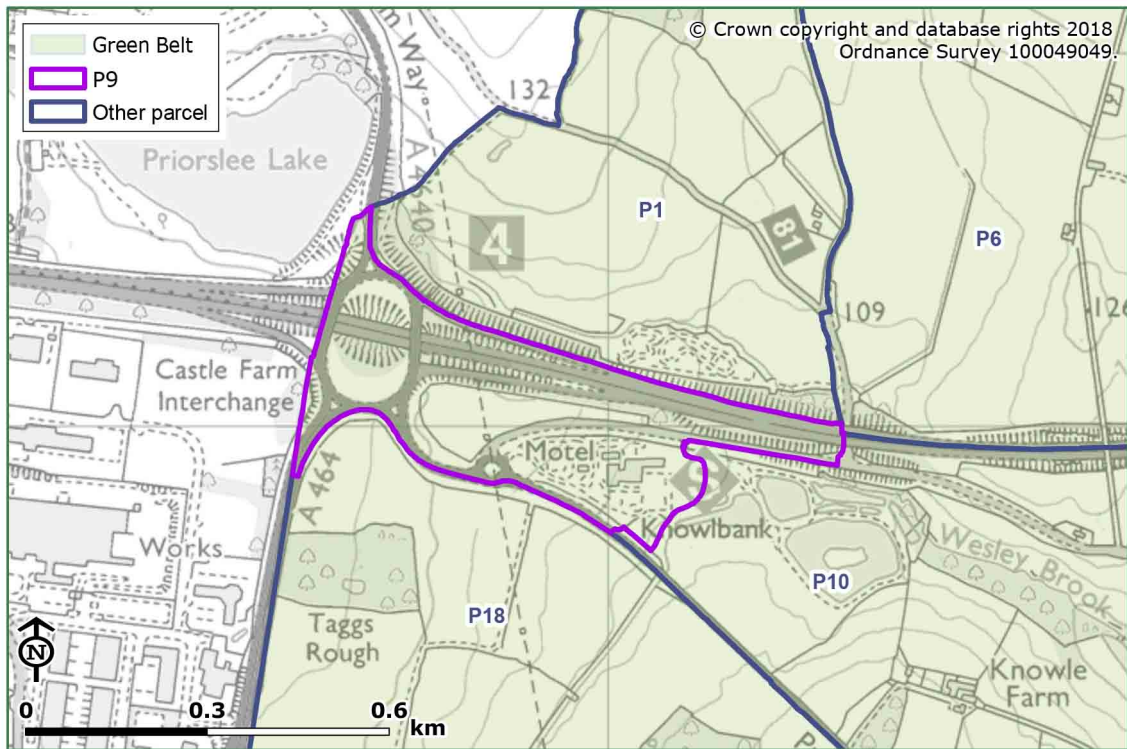


Figure A6.6: Parcel P9



Figure A6.7: Extensive development of Knowle Bank Service Station within parcel P9

Relationship to settlement/countryside

Parcel P9 is located to the immediate east of Telford. The land within the parcel is extensively developed, containing the Knowle Bank Service Station, as well as large road embankments associated with Junction 4 of the M54 which connects with the A464. The extent of existing built development within the parcel has significantly compromised the sense of openness, despite the presence of undeveloped land, and the parcel displays few characteristics of the countryside. The parcel is strongly associated with the settlement of Telford.

The conclusions on the contribution of parcel P9 to the Green Belt purposes and the harm of releasing it from the Green Belt are set out in the descriptions below. No sub-parcels were identified that have a lower level of harm.

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Purpose 1a: Weak

This parcel is adjacent to the built area of Telford. The majority of the parcel is developed, containing the Knowle Bank Service Station as well as large road embankments and the motorway junction of the M54 and A464. The remaining undeveloped land includes an elongated field of waste ground located between the service station and the motorway. The extent of existing built development within the parcel has compromised the sense of openness.

Purpose 1b: Moderate

The northern boundary of the parcel is formed of the M54 and this is a strong barrier feature inhibiting urban sprawl in the north of the parcel. The western boundary is formed of the M54 motorway junction. Priorslee Road leads off this junction which could allow development to move into the parcel from the west. There are no strong barrier features along or close to the southern or eastern boundary that could prevent urban sprawl from taking place within those areas of the parcel, or prevent any outward sprawl of development located within the parcel. Any eastward expansion of Telford into parcel P9 would be contained within this parcel by the developed footprint of Knowle Bank Service Station.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Weak

This parcel is located between the settlements of Telford, adjacent to the west of the parcel, and the town of Shifnal, to the east. At this point the settlements are in relatively close proximity to one another (approx. 2km); however there is little intervisibility between the two due to a ridge of higher ground to the east of the parcel which accommodates Haughton Farm. The majority of the parcel consists of the Knowle Bank Service Station as well as large road embankments and the motorway junction of the of the M54 and A464. The remaining undeveloped land includes an elongated field of waste ground located to the west of the service station, between parcel P9 and the motorway. It is considered that this undeveloped land is playing a weak role in preventing the physical coalescence and perceptual merging of Telford and Shifnal. Any further development taking place within the parcel is unlikely to lead to a perception of narrowing the gap between Telford and Shifnal.

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Weak

There is a strong sense of encroachment within the parcel as a result of the Knowle Bank Service Station and the M54/A464 motorway junction which cover the majority of the parcel. The parcel does not display strong characteristics of the countryside and lacks rural character.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

No Contribution

Digital analysis, based on bare earth height data, indicates that this parcel is theoretically visible from the historic settlement area located within Shifnal. In practice the parcel has very little intervisibility with the Shifnal and does not form part of its immediate setting. The majority of the parcel is developed and it does not contribute positively to the historic significance or special character of the historic settlement.

Purpose 5 - To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

All parcels make an equally significant contribution to this purpose.

Alternative Green Belt Boundaries

The existing Green Belt boundary to the west is formed by the A464 flyover and slip road with the M54. The M54 motorway along the northern boundary of Parcel P9 would constitute a strong and defensible boundary. The A464 (Priorslee Road) along the southern boundary of the parcel would also form a clearly defined alternative Green Belt Boundary, albeit this is not as strong. The eastern boundary of the parcel comprises a line of tree planting which is less clearly defined and part of a road leading to Shifnal. There are no stronger alternative boundaries within or in close proximity to the parcel. Release of the parcel would lead to creation of longer Green Belt boundary.

Harm to Green Belt Resulting from Release

This parcel is almost fully developed containing buildings and infrastructure associated with Knowle Bank Service Station. Releasing this parcel would not constitute encroachment on the countryside due to the existing level of development within the parcel which means it has a stronger association with the built up area than the wider countryside. The parcel is also relatively well contained by existing roads and tree belts, although its release would lead to the creation of a more convoluted Green Belt boundary. Overall releasing parcel P9 from the Green Belt would lead to a **Low-Moderate** level of harm to the Green Belt designation in this local area.

Parcel P18

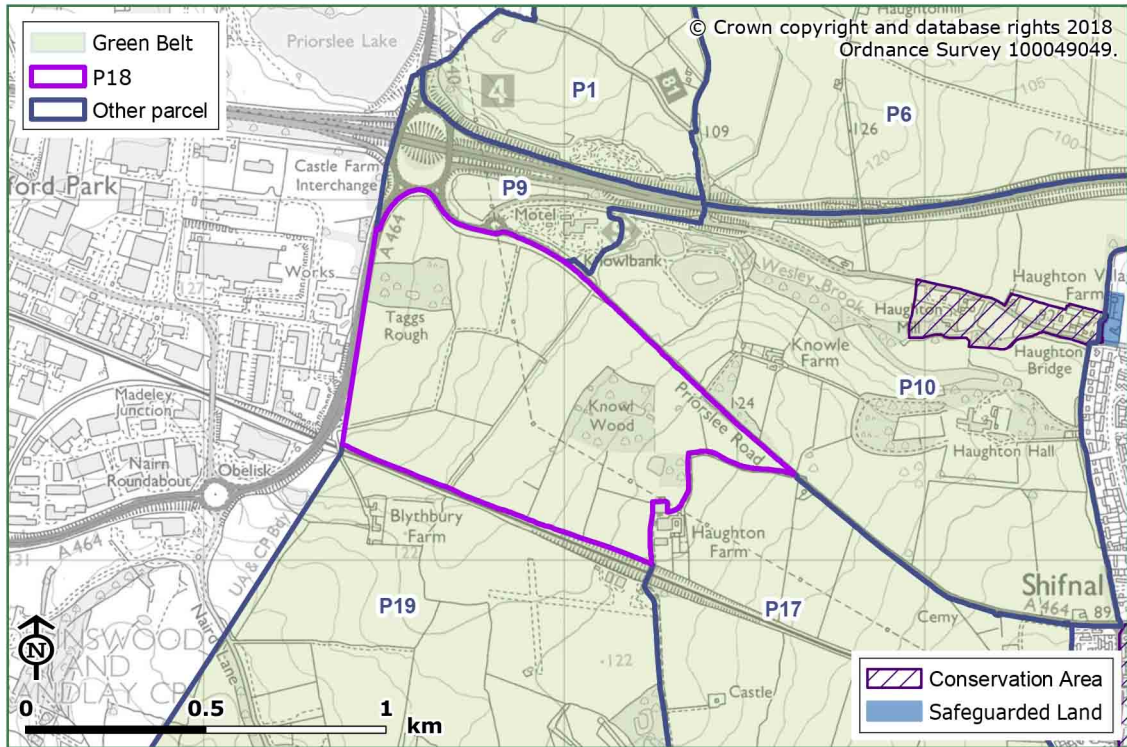


Figure A6.8: Parcel P18



Figure A6.9: Undulating farmland within parcel P18, view south from the A464 with large buildings within Telford seen in the background.

Relationship to settlement/countryside

Parcel P18 is located to the immediate east of Telford. The parcel contains no urban development and displays a strong sense of openness with a land cover of arable and pastoral fields and small blocks of woodland. The parcel forms part of a band of open countryside set between Telford and Shifnal.

The conclusions on the contribution of parcel P18 to the Green Belt purposes and the harm of releasing it from the Green Belt are set out in the descriptions below. No sub-parcels were identified that have a lower level of harm.

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Purpose 1a: Strong

This parcel is adjacent to the built up area of Telford. There is no urban development within the parcel with the land free from urban sprawl. The parcel displays a strong sense of openness due to a land cover of arable and pastoral fields and small blocks of woodland. The parcel is considered to be playing a strong role in inhibiting the unrestricted eastward sprawl of Telford. It is noted that the western boundary of Parcel P18 is formed by the administrative boundary between Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin.

Purpose 1b: Moderate

This parcel is adjacent to the built up area of Telford. The western boundary of the parcel is formed of the A464 dual-carriageway, this acts as a significant and durable barrier feature to inhibit the eastward urban sprawl of Telford. However, it is possible for development to move into the north-west corner of the parcel with access provided by Priorslee Road which leads off the A464/M54 motorway junction. The southern boundary is formed of a railway line and is a strong barrier feature inhibiting the urban sprawl in the south of the parcel. There are no strong barrier features along or close to the northern or eastern boundary that could prevent urban sprawl from taking place within the parcel. Parcel P18 adjoins the existing strategic employment area of Stafford Park Industrial Estate, if this important employment area were to undergo expansion it is likely that it would require an extensive area of new land for development, therefore the vulnerability of parcel P18 to urban sprawl from Telford would be significant.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Strong

The parcel forms part of a critical gap, along with Parcels 10, 17 and 19, between the settlements of Telford, to the west, and Shifnal, approximately 1km to the east. There is strong intervisibility between the settlements due to the generally flat and open landscape. The parcel plays an essential role in preventing the merging or erosion of the visual and physical gap between the settlements of Telford and Shifnal, significantly visible when travelling between Telford and Shifnal along the railway track and along Priorslee Road adjacent to the parcel.

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Moderate

The parcel contains no development, however there is some sense of encroachment within the parcel due to the presence of the railway line along its southern border, the A464 / M54 junction located to the northwest of the parcel, the Knowle Bank Service Station located to the north of the parcel, and most significantly the A464 and Stafford Park Industrial Estate located along the western border of the parcel. The tall buildings within the industrial estate overlook and are visible across much of the parcel due, to the generally flat and open nature of the parcel, thereby causing a sense of encroachment.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Weak

Digital analysis, based on bare earth height data, indicates that this parcel is theoretically visible from the historic settlement area located within Shifnal. In practice, there is little intervisibility between this parcel and Shifnal. The openness of the undulating land within this parcel is not considered to form part of the immediate setting of this historic settlement, however it does contribute to its wider rural setting.

Purpose 5 - To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

All parcels make an equally significant contribution to this purpose.

Alternative Green Belt Boundaries

The existing boundary along the A464 dual carriageway to the west of the parcel constitutes a readily recognisable and strong boundary. The eastern boundary is defined by a farm access track and is less well defined and would constitute a weaker Green Belt boundary.

Harm to Green Belt Resulting from Release

This parcel contains a limited amount of built development and is more closely associated with the wider areas of open countryside to the east of Telford than to the settlement edge. Releasing this parcel from the Green Belt would lead to sprawl from the large built up area, encroachment on the countryside and a substantial narrowing of the critical gap between Telford and Shifnal. The release of parcel P18 could also weaken the integrity of neighbouring Green Belt land, particularly to the south and east with regard to Purpose 2 and 3 and result in a weakened Green Belt boundary. The release of parcel P18 would lead to a **High** level of harm to the Green Belt.

Parcel P19

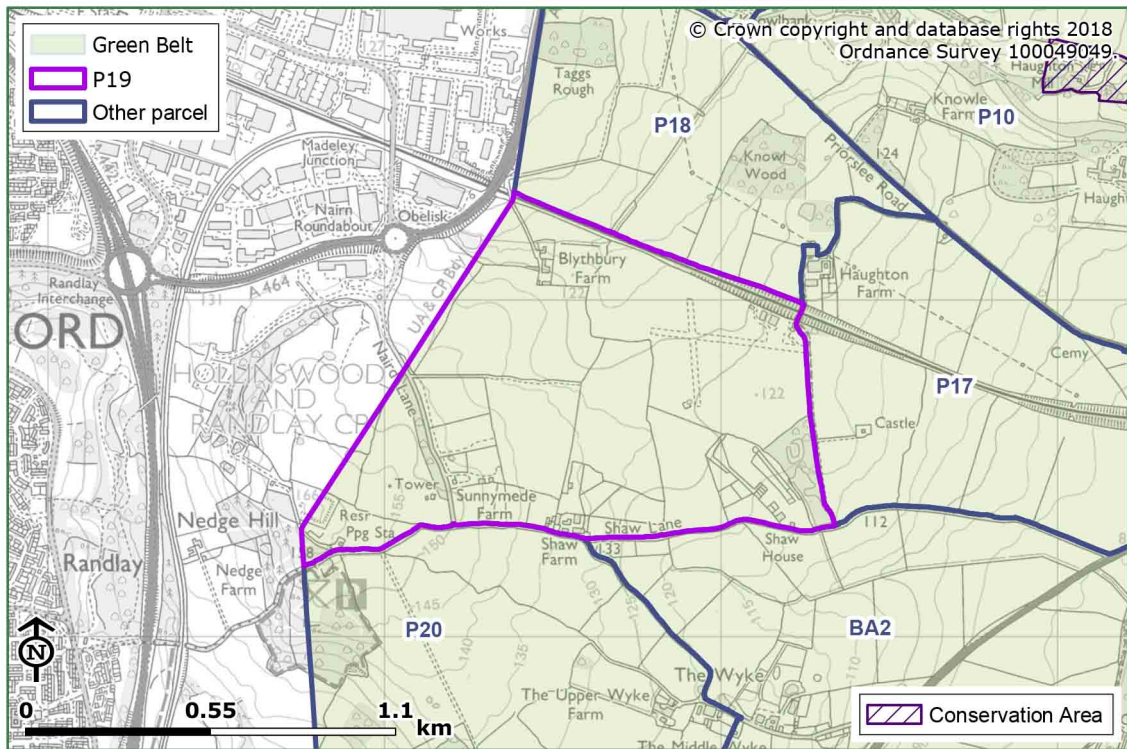


Figure A6.10: Parcel P19



Figure A6.11: Farmland within parcel P19, views northeast from Shaw Lane with buildings within Telford seen in the distance.

Relationship to settlement/countryside

Parcel P19 is located to the immediate east of Telford. The parcel contains very little urban development and displays a strong sense of openness with a landcover of arable and pastoral fields and small blocks of woodland. The parcel has a closer association with the wider countryside than with the settlement edge of Telford. The parcel forms part of a band of countryside set between Telford and Shifnal together with adjoining parcels P1, P18 and P20.

The conclusions on the contribution of parcel P19 to the Green Belt purposes and the harm of releasing it from the Green Belt are set out in the descriptions below. No sub-parcels were identified that have a lower level of harm.

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Purpose 1a: Strong

This parcel is adjacent to the built up area of Telford. The parcel remains largely free of urban sprawl, with urban development limited to a vehicle storage site in the south-west. The parcel displays a strong sense of openness provided by a landcover of arable and pastoral fields as well as a small private airfield for light aircraft. The parcel is considered to be playing a strong role in inhibiting the unrestricted eastward sprawl of Telford. It is noted that the western boundary of Parcel P19 is formed by the administrative boundary between Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin.

Purpose 1b: Strong

This parcel is adjacent to the built up area of Telford. A railway line defines the northern boundary of the parcel, this acts as a strong and durable barrier feature to inhibit the urban sprawl in the north of the parcel. The western boundary of the parcel is formed by the administrative boundary between Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, there are no strong boundary features on or close to this boundary that could inhibit the eastward urban sprawl of Telford. Additionally, there are no strong barrier features on the eastern or southern boundaries to prevent urban sprawl in those areas of the parcel. Parcel P19 is in close proximity to the south-eastern edge of the existing strategic employment area of Stafford Park Industrial Estate, but located some distance further away than Parcel P18. If this important employment area were to undergo expansion it is likely that it would require an extensive area of new land for development, therefore the vulnerability of parcel P19 to urban sprawl from Telford would be high.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Strong

Parcel P19 forms part of a critical gap, along with parcels P10, P17 and P18, between the settlements of Telford, to the west, and Shifnal, approximately 1km to the east. There is strong intervisibility between the settlements due to the generally flat and open landscape. Parcel P19 plays an essential role in preventing the merging or erosion of the visual and physical gap between the settlements of Telford and Shifnal, significantly visible when travelling between Telford and Shifnal along the railway track and along Shaw Lane adjacent to the parcel.

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Moderate

There is some sense of encroachment within the parcel as a result of the presence of a vehicle storage site within the parcel, the railway line along its northern boundary and the settlement boundary of Telford along its western boundary. The land immediately adjacent to the parcel within the settlement boundary of Telford is defined as a strategic employment area and therefore development in this area could further cause a sense of encroachment within the parcel. The urbanising influences are however limited and the parcel is predominantly undeveloped and therefore parcel P19 is playing a role in preventing further encroachment into the countryside.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Weak

Digital analysis, based on bare earth height data, indicates that this parcel is theoretically visible from the historic settlement area located within Shifnal and to Ironbridge Gorge located further south. In practice, there is little intervisibility between this parcel and these historic settlement areas. The openness of the undulating land within this parcel is not considered to form part of their immediate setting; however it does contribute to the wider rural setting.

Purpose 5 - To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

All parcels make an equally significant contribution to this purpose.

Alternative Green Belt Boundaries

The existing Green Belt boundary runs along the administrative boundary of Telford and Wrekin and in many places, does not have a readily recognisable boundary on the ground as it cuts through fields and hedgerows. The new Green Belt boundary would be formed by the railway line along the northern boundary, Hem Lane along the southern boundary and a rural lane along the eastern boundary. These would form readily recognisable alternative Green Belt boundaries but the eastern and southern boundaries in particular would not form strong Green Belt boundaries.

Harm to Green Belt Resulting from Release

This parcel contains a limited amount of built development but is more closely associated with the wider area of open countryside to the east of Telford than the settlement of Telford. Releasing this parcel from the Green Belt would lead to sprawl from the large built up area, encroachment on the countryside and a substantial narrowing of the critical gap between Telford and Shifnal. The release of parcel P19 could also weaken the integrity of neighbouring Green Belt land to the north, east and south with regard to Purpose 2 and 3. The release of parcel P19 would lead to a **High** level of harm to the Green Belt.

Conclusion

Figure A6.12 shows the level of harm associated with the release of the parcels considered within the assessment around Junction 4..

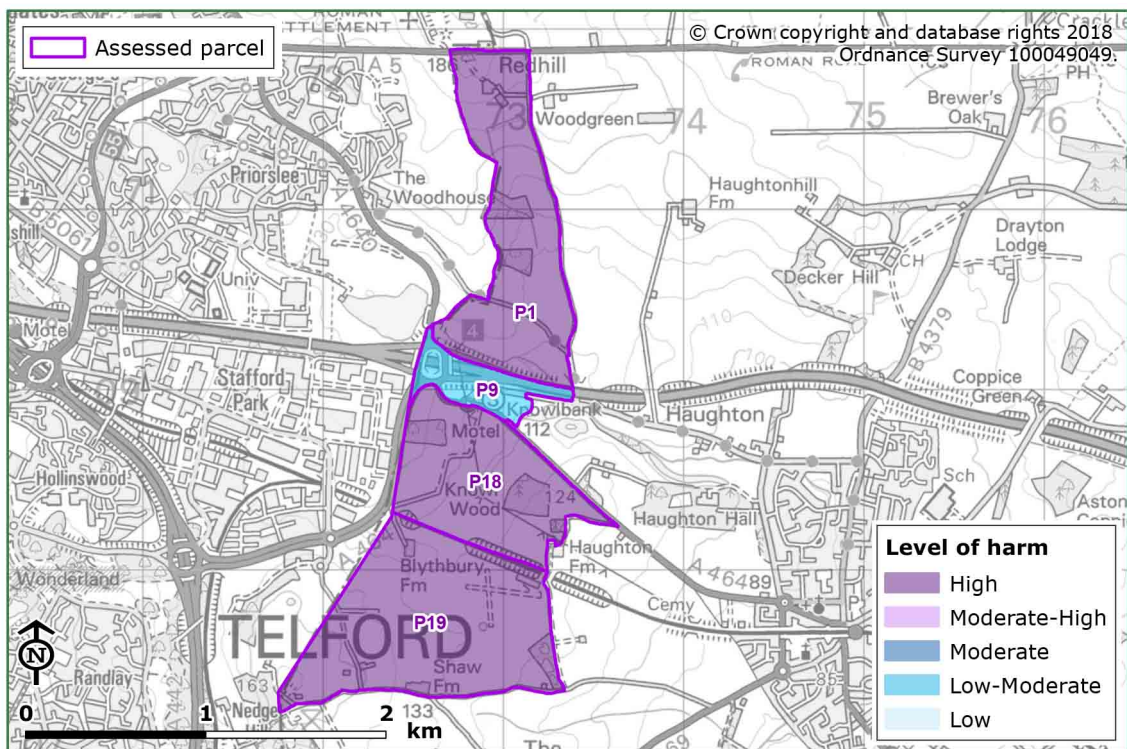


Figure A6.12: Junction 4 Surrounding Green Belt Parcels – Individual Harm from Release

The parcel assessment summarised on Figure A6.12 indicates that the release of Green Belt land for development would result in a 'high' level of harm to the Green Belt located in between Shifnal and Telford, as well as to the northeast of Telford (with the exception of P9). The small parcel P9 is already extensively developed and its release would have a 'low-moderate' level of harm on the Green Belt.

Part 3: Opportunity Areas – Assessment of Harm on the Green Belt

The assessment of the harm that could be caused by releasing Green Belt land for development has been tested through the identification of one distinct Opportunity Area around Junction 4 and by the identification a further Sub-opportunity Area. The findings of these assessments are set out below.

Opportunity Area J4-1

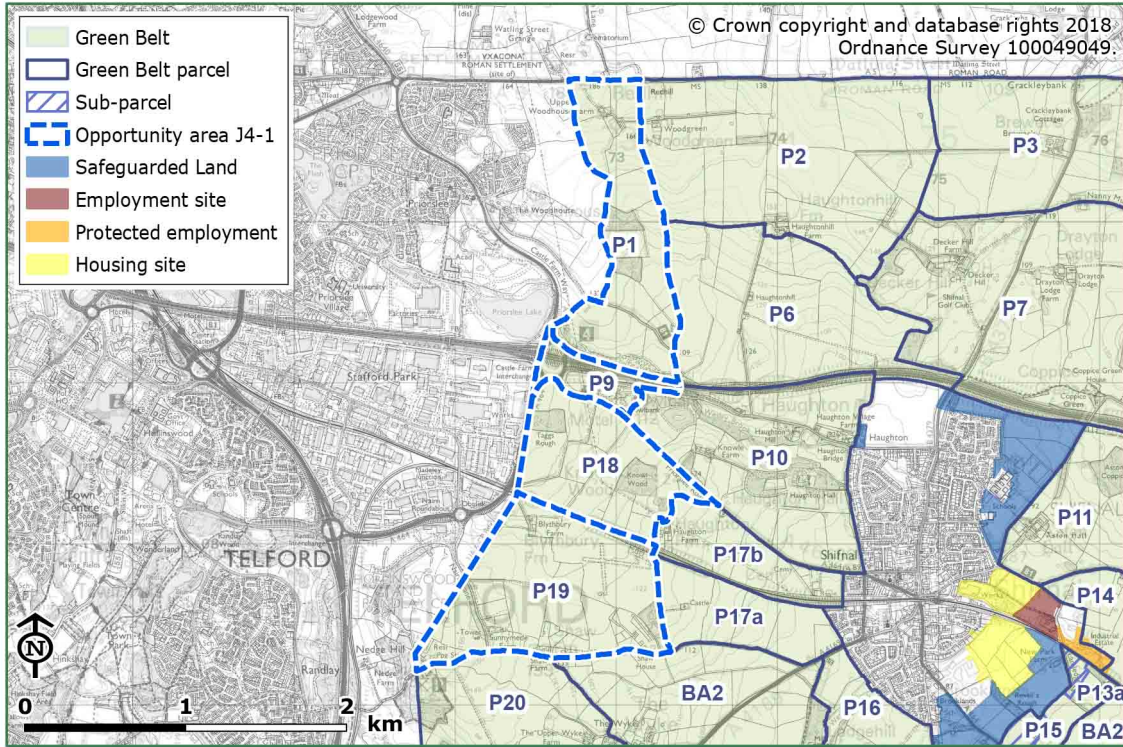


Figure A6.13: Opportunity Area J4-1

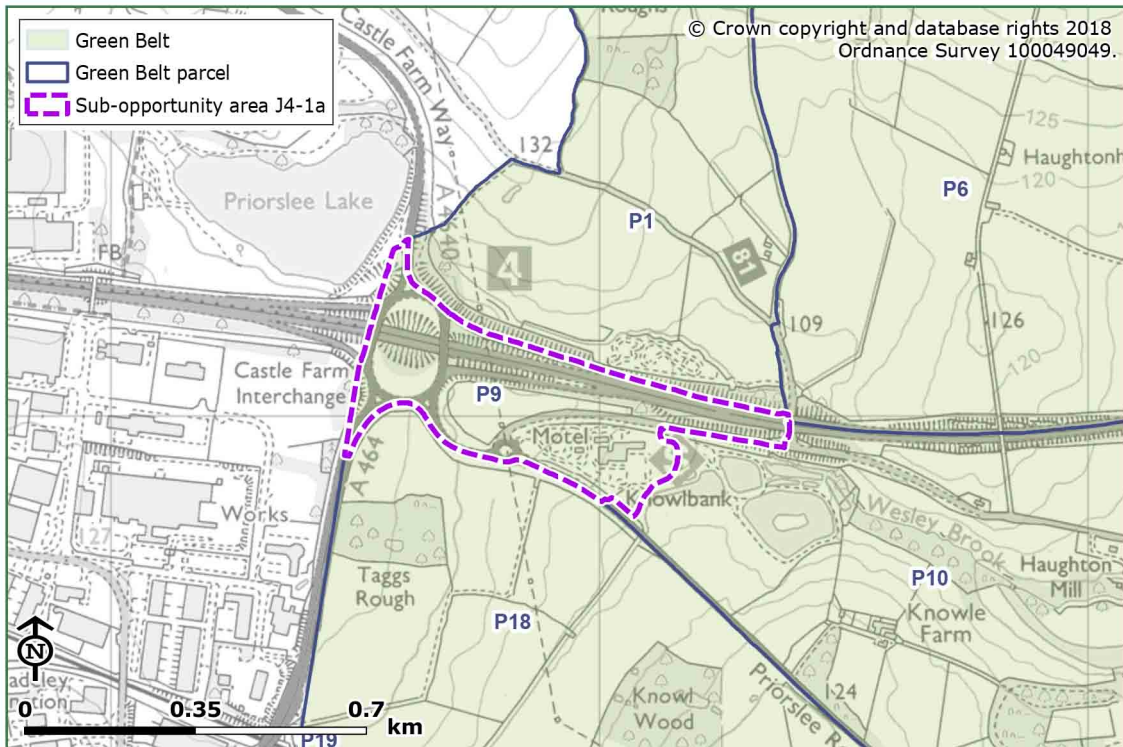


Figure A6.14: Sub-opportunity Area J4-1a

Description of Opportunity Area J4-1

Opportunity Area J4-1 comprises the entire area of parcels P1,P9,P18 and P19 to identify a potential direction for growth on the Telford Wrekin boundary to the west of Shifnal.

Sub-opportunity Area J4-1a

One Sub-Opportunity area has been identified that would have a lower level of overall harm on the Green Belt. Sub-opportunity Area J4-1a comprises the release of parcel P9 only.

Summary of Assessment of Harm for Individual Parcels

The individual release of parcels P1, P18 and P19 would have a **High** level of harm to the Green Belt. The individual release of parcel P9 would have a **Low-Moderate** level of harm on the Green Belt.

Assessment of harm

Removal of Opportunity Area J4-1

The removal of J4-1 would result in development being located in the band of open agricultural land set between Shifnal and Telford. Any development within these areas would lead to urban sprawl from Telford, a significant level of encroachment on this area of open countryside and a narrowing of the critical gap between Telford and Shifnal. The release of Opportunity Area J4-1 would lead to a **High** level of harm to the Green Belt designation in this local area.

High

No mitigation measures have been identified, as release of the opportunity area would lead to a high level of harm to the Green Belt.

Removal of Sub-opportunity Area J4-1a

Sub-opportunity area J4-1a includes the entire area of parcel P9 – as assessed above.

This parcel is almost fully developed containing buildings and infrastructure associated with the Knowle Bank Service Station. Releasing this parcel would not constitute encroachment on the countryside due to the existing level of development within the parcel which means it has a stronger association with the built up area than the wider countryside. The parcel is also relatively well contained by existing roads and tree belts, although its release would lead to the creation of a longer Green Belt boundary. Overall releasing Sub-opportunity Area J4-1a (P9) from the Green Belt would lead to a **Low-Moderate** level of harm to the Green Belt designation in this local area.

Low-Moderate Harm

The following section sets out the mitigation measures that could be considered in order to minimise the degree of harm to the Green Belt associated with the release of J4-1a.

Mitigation Measures

- Tree planting and hedgerows along the southern and eastern boundary of Parcel P9 should be retained and strengthened at any weak points in order to create a well-defined and readily recognisable Green Belt boundary. Trees should be retained and protected in accordance with best practice.
- Development within Sub-opportunity Area J4-1a should be restricted to appropriate small scale and low density residential development of up to two storeys or single storey employment/ commercial development to minimise encroachment on the neighbouring Green Belt land.

Part 4: Conclusions

The assessment has reviewed the potential harm to the Green Belt of releasing land for development within the individual parcels in this Green Belt Review. This has subsequently informed the identification of one opportunity area; and one sub-opportunity area around Junction 4.

The findings of the assessment of harm likely to result from releasing the opportunity areas or sub-opportunity areas for development are summarised in **Table A6.1**.

Table A6.1: Summary Assessment of Harm for Opportunity Areas around Junction 4

Opportunity Area Reference	Area (ha)	Rating
J4-1	271.0	High
J4-1a	18.0	Low-Moderate

The consideration of the release of Green Belt land around Junction 4, set out in detail in the preceding sections and summarised in the table above, highlights the various potential Green Belt impacts arising from the possible release of land for development. The assessment in this Green Belt Review has shown that up 18ha of land (within opportunity area J4-1a) could be released from the Green Belt for development to the south east of Junction 4 with only low-moderate levels of harm to the Green Belt designation in this local area.

Whilst development on Green Belt land may inevitably lead to some degree of encroachment into the countryside within the Green Belt, the strategic function of the West Midlands Green Belt will not be affected by the small scale release of land in J4-1a (P9) around Junction 4. Release of opportunity area J4-1 would however have a strategic effect on the functioning of the Green Belt by leading to a narrowing of the critical gap between Shifnal and Telford.