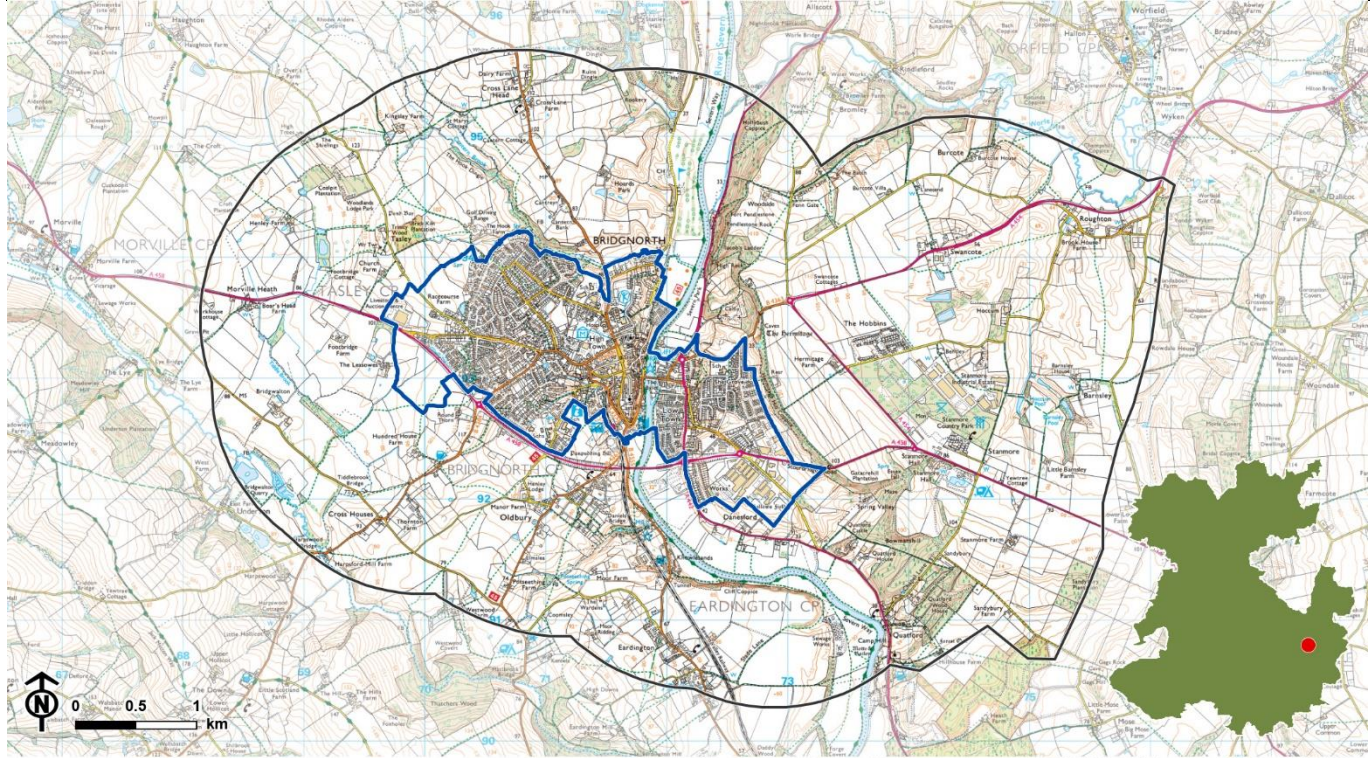


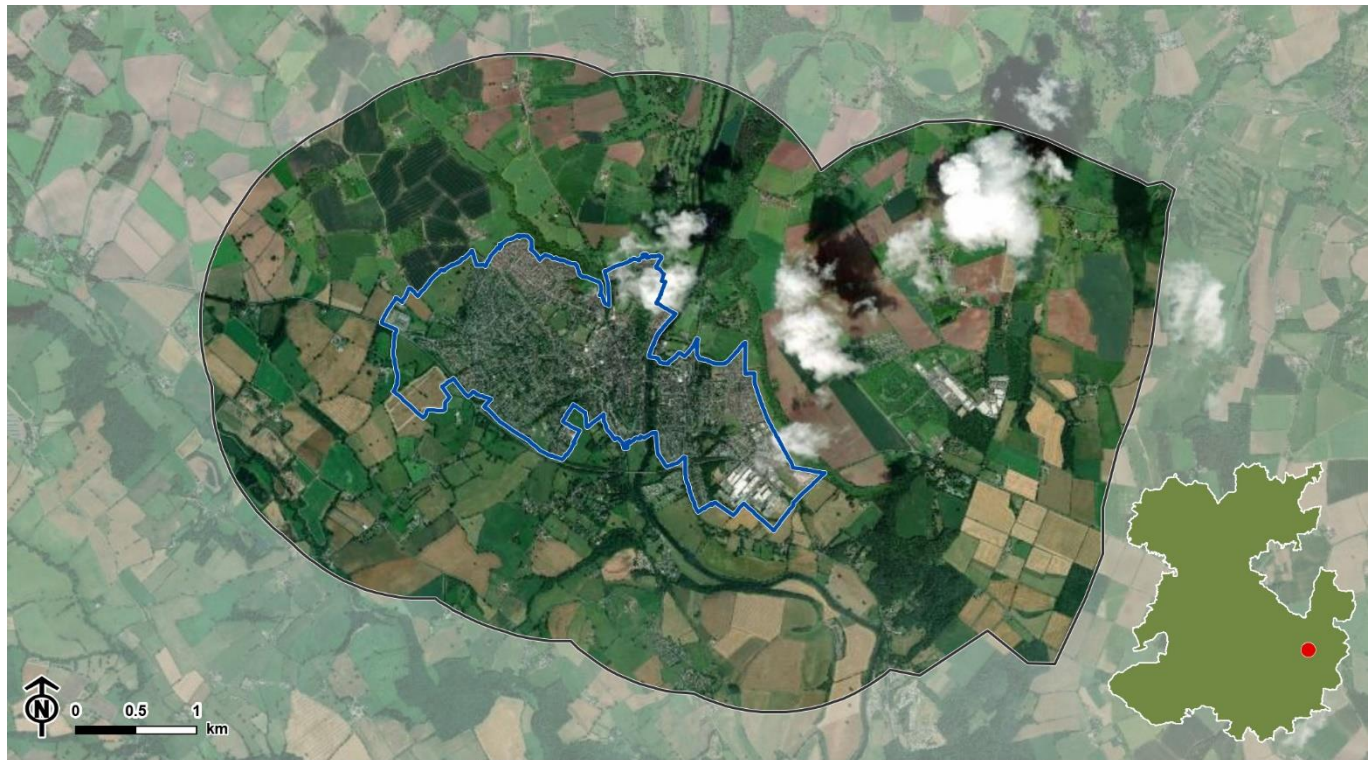
Principal Centre – Bridgnorth

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

Bridgnorth is a Principal Centre according to Shropshire Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2020). The study area boundary as defined within this Green Space Strategy is a 1.5km offset from the defined settlement limits.

The town of Bridgnorth, in south east Shropshire, is located on a sandstone cliff and divided by the River Severn, with High Town on the western bank and Low Town on the eastern bank. The town grew as one of the busiest river ports in Europe, but river trade declined with the introduction of railways. Bridgnorth now has a population of over 12,000 people and the Town Council Area covers 1068ha with a population density of 11.3 people per hectare. It is a popular tourist destination due to its medieval street pattern, fine old buildings and steam railway. The geology and topography of the area provide strong environmental constraints, particularly around the river and cliffs and areas of high landscape value to the south and north of the town. It is bound on the east by the metropolitan Green Belt.

Development context

Existing development allocations in the town are set out in the SAMDev (2015)¹, however the Shropshire Local Plan is currently being reviewed. 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, 2015²):

Site BRID001/BRID020b: Land north of Wenlock Road, Tasley, Bridgnorth. Site provision: 200 dwellings, 6.3ha for other uses

Site BRID020a: Land north of Church Lane, Tasley, Bridgnorth. Site provision: 300 dwellings

Existing Employment land allocations (SAMDev Sites, 2015):

Site ELR011/a: Land at Tasley south of the A458 bypass. Provision: 6.7 ha

Site ELR011/b: Land at Tasley south of A458 at Tasley. Provision: 6.6 ha

Site W039: Land at Old Worcester Road. Provision 1.5 ha

Committed Urban Employment Sites:

Stanmore Industrial Estate, Stanmore (2.8ha),

Bridgnorth Aluminium, Stourbridge Road (0.3ha),

Faraday Drive (East and West), Bridgnorth (0.3ha),

Chartwell Business Park (East)(4.6ha).

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

BRD030 – Tasley Garden Village. Provision 1,050 dwellings, 16Ha employment

P58a - Land north of Stanmore Industrial Estate. Provision: 6.8Ha employment

STC002 Land adjacent Hickman Road, Stanmore Industrial Estate. Provision: 4.6Ha employment

Bridgnorth is proposed to accommodate around 1,800 dwellings and at least 49 hectares of employment development between 2016 and 2038. Due to the constrained nature of the town, development of housing is focussed to the west as part of a large mixed use site called Tasley garden village. This is to the south west of a SAMDev employment allocation.

¹ Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan 2015

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



Stanmore Country Park



River Severn floodplain

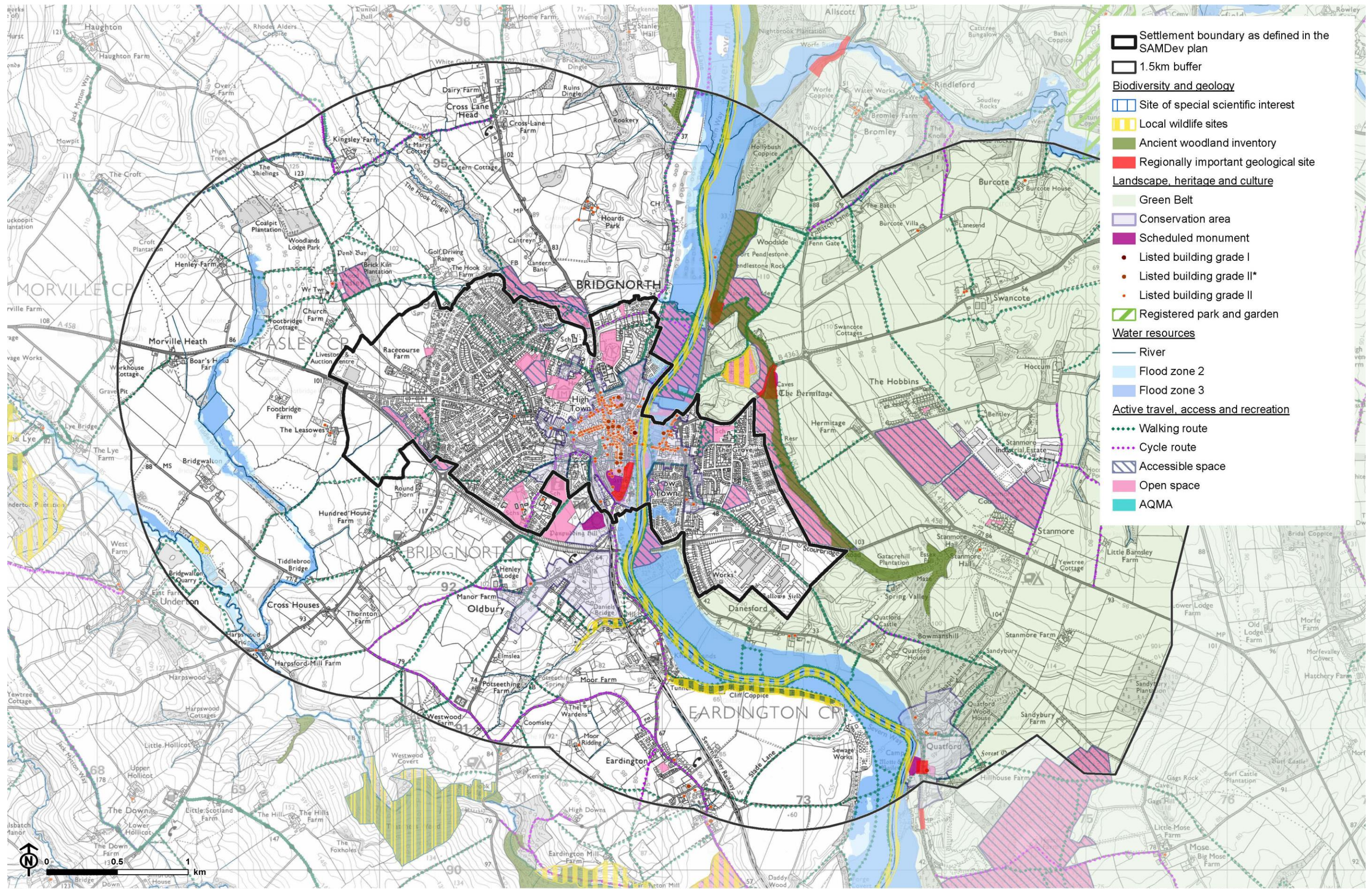


**Views to Priority Habitat Deciduous woodland alongside
Canter Brook**



River Severn, designated as a Local Wildlife Site


Existing Green Infrastructure Assets and Key Constraints



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CB:KC EB:Chamberlain_K LUC 10924-02_002_ExistingGIAssets 27/07/2020 Source: OS, LUC, NE, HE, DCLG, EA

Existing Green Infrastructure Assets and Constraints

Theme	Existing Green Infrastructure Assets / Constraints
<p data-bbox="153 1032 344 1115">Key Theme 1: Biodiversity and Geology</p> 	<p data-bbox="360 360 501 387">Biodiversity</p> <p data-bbox="360 405 555 432">Designated Sites</p> <ul data-bbox="360 450 1465 656" style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Although there are no SSSIs within the study area, Thatchers Wood and Westwood Covert SSSI is located approximately 3km south of the town centre and approximately 400m from the edge of the study area boundary. It's impact zone covers almost the full extent of the study area. The impact zone of Devils Hole, Morville SSSI also covers around 25% of the study area. These relate to minerals and agricultural developments and not residential, retail or other commercial types of development. ■ There are no nature reserves, local or national, within the study area. <p data-bbox="360 674 692 701">Notable and Priority Habitats</p> <ul data-bbox="360 719 1490 1520" style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ancient semi-natural woodland is evident at Hermitage Hill Coppice, running along the eastern edge of the town, featuring areas of ancient replanted woodland at the north and south ends. Another strip of ancient woodland is evident south of the town, on the southern bank of the River Severn. Generally, in the wider area, areas of ancient woodland tend to follow the river corridor. ■ Priority Habitats are focused on Deciduous Woodland distributed across the whole study area, mainly in linear tracts following river corridors and along streams and tributaries. There are two small areas of good quality semi improved grassland recorded on the southern side of the study area. There is also a small area of species-rich lowland meadow recorded on the south eastern edge of the town. There are seven small traditional orchards in the study area, all found at farms. ■ Shropshire Environmental Network core areas focus on existing priority habitats. A number of Shropshire Environmental Network Corridors are located within the study area, expanding on and connecting the core areas including along the River Severn, the woodlands at Hermitage Hill and Comer woods. There are also four areas identified for habitat restoration or creation, all of which are within the town itself and focussed on existing open spaces. ■ Local Wildlife Sites are noted at Bridgnorth Cemetery Heath, River Severn (Bailey's Rough to Quatford Riparian habitat), Cliff Coppice, and Mill Valley, Oldbury. ■ Roadside natural verges are frequent and evenly dispersed across the study area, however these become fragmented as the roads enter the settlement. ■ Otter records show these are using the River Severn corridor, especially within the settlement. Bat records are found throughout the study area, however appear to follow roads in many cases. ■ Priority mammals (brown hare, hedgehog, dormouse) are recorded across the study area. Priority invertebrates are distributed across the area, strongly associated with river corridors. ■ Flowering plant species are found at highest density on the border between the deciduous woodland and open farmland. Priority flowering plants are often but not exclusively associated with areas of woodland <p data-bbox="360 1538 464 1565">Species</p> <ul data-bbox="360 1583 1465 1816" style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Protected mammals, almost exclusively otters and bats, are clustered around the River Severn Corridor. Bats are also recorded at farm buildings in the open areas of the survey area. ■ Polecats have also been recorded in the north of the study area. ■ Otter records are found in the south, in the open areas and rural fringes of the settlement. ■ 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 data-bbox="360 1834 459 1861">Geology</p> <ul data-bbox="360 1879 1449 1955" style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There are four recorded RIGS within the study area; an exposed sandstone cliff near Quatford Church in the south of the study area, medieval hermitage cave dwellings on the eastern edge of Bridgnorth, High Rock north of Bridgnorth town centre and Castle Hill Gardens in the town centre.

**Key Theme 2:
Landscape,
Heritage and
Culture**







Landscape

- Overall sensitivity to development is high due to a rich cultural and natural heritage, including a historic market town with numerous listed buildings, and geological formations of regional significance. The topography of the area creates scenic views in a landscape of contrast.
- The landscape within the study area surrounding this Principle Centre is in National Character Area 66 – Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau. The landscape is further defined within nine Landscape Character Types surrounding the urban 'core', including various types of farmland, riverside meadows surrounding the river corridor, and wooded river gorge on the eastern banks, a large area of enclosed lowland heath in the east, and two small areas of sandstone estate land and incised sandstone valley on the north eastern fringe.
- The dominant landscape features are associated with the River Severn and floodplain, wooded ridges and river valleys and estate landscapes. Farmland is a mix of pastoral and arable. Areas of higher elevation overlook the historic town.
- Mature vegetated boundaries form strong elements within the landscape and away from the former Ironbridge Power Station site there is a strong sense of place, tranquillity and remoteness.
- Agricultural land is mainly grade 3 mid quality, with some areas of higher grade 2 quality.
- A number of landowners around the site are involved in countryside and environmental stewardship schemes, including woodland management plans.
- The Dudmaston Estate, National Trust open land, is located on the south eastern fringe of the study area.


Heritage






- There are four Scheduled Ancient Monuments in Bridgnorth, including The Hermitage, Bridgnorth Castle (buried and upstanding remains), Panpudding Hill ringwork and bailey, and a Motte and bailey castle 90m west of St Mary Magdalene's Church, Quatford
- Bridgnorth town itself is designated as a conservation area due to its medieval street pattern and numerous well-preserved historic buildings. The village of Quatford, in the south east, is also a conservation area.
- A number of prominent listed buildings are located in the town, densely concentrated in the town centre, most notably Bishop Percy's House, grade I listed property. There are also numerous grade II listed properties in the surrounding villages.







<p>Key Theme 3: Water Resources</p> 	<p>Freshwater Assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The River Severn flows through the town, and is a major asset in terms of the character of the town which influences its attractiveness to those seeking to live, work and visit. Access to the river for canoes and other small craft is provided at various points along the river within the town. ■ As stated below, it also results in flood risk to properties in the town. ■ There are several tributary river valleys for the River Severn located within the study area including Mor brook, Tiddle brook and Cantern brook. <p>Flooding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Whilst the River Severn and its main tributaries provide green corridors, they also present fluvial flood risk to rural and urban communities, particularly as the River Severn flows through the town centre. Historic flooding records are exclusively concentrated around the River Severn. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2018) set out that the Low Town is largely affected by surface water flooding between the A442 and the Severn due to runoff from higher ground in the east. Properties here are largely affected in the 1,000-year event; however, properties along Pale Meadow Road, Washbrook Road and Lavington View are also affected in the 30-year event. It is unlikely that green infrastructure interventions within the study area will be able to reduce local flood risk. <p>Pollution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A large area on the eastern side of the study area, including the town, has been identified as a Ground Water Nitrate Vulnerable Zone. Land to the west of the town is identified as a Surface Water Nitrate Vulnerable Zone, defined by DEFRA as an area which is at risk from agricultural nitrate pollution. <p>Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Outline Water Cycle Study sets out that the eastern half of the settlement is generally more suitable for infiltration, whereas in the other parts of the settlement, a combination of SUDs approaches is likely to be necessary.
<p>Key Theme 4: Active Travel, Access and Recreation</p> 	<p>Transport context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The A458 and the A442 converge on the town and meeting in the south eastern corner. The A458 runs east to west past the southern part of the town and links the town to Much Wenlock to the north west and Stourbridge to the east. The A442 running north to south through the eastern section of the town links the area to Telford in the north and Kidderminster to the south east. <p>Active Travel</p> <p>Walking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Numerous PROW and Bridleways are located across the study area, particularly in the rural fringe areas and following the banks of the River Severn. ■ The Severn Way long distance footpath starts on the Plynlimon plateau in Wales and passes along the entire Severn Valley to Bristol. Within the study area it follows the course of the river from north to south through the town centre ■ A number of locally promoted walking routes cross the study area, often taking in local natural features such as geological formations, rivers and woodlands. <p>Cycling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ National Cycle Route 45 runs through the centre of the study area. The section of the route within Shropshire is known as the Mercian Way. ■ A few local cycle routes are also present, mainly around the town centre on smaller roads. <p>Access and Recreation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There are a number of publicly accessible open spaces in the area. Within the town there are two small public gardens, Castle Gardens and Lavington gardens. Stanmore Country Park is located east of the town centre. ■ There are several outdoor sports facilities and amenity green spaces within the settlement. Bridgnorth golf course lies to the north of the town. ■ The majority of households in the town centre are within 1km of accessible greenspace.

<p>Key Theme 5: Health and Wellbeing</p> 	<p>Health</p> <p>Health Deprivation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The IMD for Health deprivation indicates that there is an east-west split, where the east of the study area is generally more deprived and the west generally less deprived. Within Bridgnorth itself, levels of deprivation are generally low. The main exception to this is the area around Sydney Cottage Drive which is one of the 30-40% most deprived areas in Shropshire. <p>Air Quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There is an AQMA on Pound Street, designated in 2005. <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: 0.82ha per 1000 persons (2018 population base). Analysis shows whilst most of the town falls within 400m of such provision, there is an area in the centre between Oldbury Wells School and Wenlock Road that does not. – Allotments: <0.01haa per 1000 persons (2018 population base). – Provision for Children and Teenagers: 5 spaces in total. Analysis shows that the Whole town falls within 800m of these spaces. ■ 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 from the A442 (north) and A454 (east).
<p>Key Theme 6: Climate Change</p> 	<p>Tree cover</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tree cover is relatively evenly dispersed around the study area. According to information from Shropshire Council, there are scattered blocks of mixed trees interspersed within Bridgnorth town centre and surrounding residential areas, providing some shelter from the elements. However it is felt that the urban area could benefit from more street planting. <p>Flooding Climate Change Allowance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment sets out that according to the ‘central upper’ climate change modelling, flood risk areas are likely to be focussed on the existing flood zones, although this is likely to increase in certain areas, which may increase risk to property in the town.

Key Green Infrastructure Opportunities

Theme	Green Infrastructure Opportunities
<p data-bbox="185 875 376 958">Key Theme 1: Biodiversity and Geology</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="440 353 1465 443">■ The Shropshire Environmental Network and Natural England Habitat Network within the study area should be managed to ensure that they are enhanced in order to support relevant wildlife populations. <li data-bbox="440 465 1465 712">■ Habitat creation and management to create a robust habitat corridor to the north of Bridgnorth, linking Stanmore Country Park, Hermitage Hill Coppice, via the nearby wooded areas around the Cemetery, the Cemetery Heath local wildlife site, to the River Severn, and continuing along the Cantern Brook, to the Tasley residential allocation and along the unnamed water channel (ditch) to the area of deciduous woodland to the north of the Tasley allocation and to the waterbodies associated with the Tiddle Brook. Habitat creation should focus on the water corridor (channel and the substrate lining this), existing woodland and appropriate buffer vegetation. <li data-bbox="440 734 1465 857">■ Improvements to all open spaces in the town to promote greater biodiversity should be encouraged. The northern part of Friars Playing Fields offers a specific opportunity for low intensity managed grassland provision in relation to creating a strong Northern Green Spine. <li data-bbox="440 880 1465 1037">■ A landscape led master planning approach is recommended for the proposed expansion of Bridgnorth Cemetery. This should incorporate sensitive design and management. This should also seek to optimise biodiversity enhancement such as along roads and drainage opportunities and low intensity habitat management, recognising the role of this site in creating a northern green spine as set out above. <li data-bbox="440 1059 1465 1137">■ Effective management of the deciduous woodland at Stanmore Country Park should be delivered to maximise biodiversity, for example coppicing and management of invasive species. <li data-bbox="440 1160 1465 1283">■ Effective management of the deciduous woodland on Hermitage Ridge should be delivered, for example coppicing and management of invasive species, and to naturalise the eastern edge of this woodland area, with new planting to create a wider area of woodland with a more gradual boundary change into woodland. <li data-bbox="440 1305 1465 1395">■ Within the south west employment allocation, the Tiddle Brook corridor should be strengthened, by ensuring management practices to create improvements to the channel and lining substrate and creation of buffer habitat alongside it. <li data-bbox="440 1417 1465 1541">■ Habitat connectivity to the south of Bridgnorth should be strengthened, focusing on the A458 corridor, including habitat management and provision of planting and habitat to create stepping-stones to enhance connectivity – involving the creation of a ‘Southern Green Spine’. <li data-bbox="440 1563 1465 1653">■ Urban greening within the town, such as street trees, should be undertaken where opportunities allow, although it is recognised that the historic and relatively constrained nature of Bridgnorth reduces the potential for this compared to other study areas.

<p>Key Theme 2: Landscape, Heritage and Culture</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provision of information to allow greater understanding and interpretation of the scheduled monument at Hermitage Hill is recommended.
<p>Key Theme 3: Water Resources</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Management of water corridors such as the Cantern and Tiddle Brooks should be undertaken in a manner which reduces localised flood risk.
<p>Key Theme 4: Active Travel, Access and Recreation</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The large Tasley development site is separated from the town by the A458. A number of pedestrian and cycle crossings are recommended along this road, including the possibility of a footbridge to reduce this separation. ■ . ■ The allocated residential development at Tasley should provide new open space within it, to prevent further strain on existing areas. As set out in the baseline section of this report, the area around Sydney Cottage Drive area performs relatively poorly in terms of access to open space. It is therefore recommended that open space is provided in a location within the allocation which is near Clee View Road, with direct and high-quality walking and cycling link provided between this area and the open space. ■ In order to address deficiencies in access to open space, community use of Oldbury Wells school fields, to allow their use by the wider public outside school hours, could be investigated.
<p>Key Theme 5: Health and Wellbeing</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The provision of food growing opportunities within the proposed residential allocations, e.g. allotments, is recommended. ■ The provision of a publicly accessible open space near the Sydney Cottage Drive is recommended to help enhance accessibility to open space in this area, which is identified as being of relatively high deprivation in health terms. ■ Provision of open space within the allocation at Tasley. Including provision for children and young people and allotments. ■
<p>Key Theme 6: Climate Change</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provision of street trees within Bridgnorth is relatively limited, increased planting throughout the town is recommended as this will help to provide shelter from the elements and reduce urban heating effects. ■ All new planting should provide climate resilient species. ■ The provision of a sustainable through-town transport link will help to reduce reliance on motorised vehicles.

Summary of key opportunities						
Strengthening of the environmental network Corridor between Stanmore Country Park, Hermitage Hill Coppice, via the nearby wooded areas around the Cemetery, the Cemetery Heath local wildlife site, to the River Severn, and continuing along the Canter Brook, to the Tasley residential allocation and along the unnamed water channel (ditch) to the area of deciduous woodland to the north of the Tasley allocation and to the waterbodies associated with the Tiddle Brook. This is to include habitat management and additional planting to improve biodiversity, address localised flood risk. The proposed expansion to the cemetery should take account of this ambition.	✓		✓			✓
Promote biodiversity and habitat creation within the existing town, for example maintenance changes within all existing open spaces to improve biodiversity and planting of more street trees.	✓			✓	✓	✓
Linkages to existing travel routes and across the A458 to the settlement of Bridgnorth from the development allocation at Tasley. A direct connection is promoted to the Clee View Road area.			✓	✓	✓	
Strengthen habitat connectivity to the south of Bridgnorth, focussing on the A458 corridor.	✓	✓				✓
Proposed allocations at Stanmore should be linked to Stanmore Country Park. Small scale SUDs could be incorporated within the development.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Provide a new open space within the residential allocation at Tasley with provision for children and young people in addition to informal open space, food growing opportunities and direct and attractive links to the Clee View Road area.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Investigate community use of Oldbury Wells school fields, to allow their use by the wider public outside school hours.				✓	✓	