

South Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment

Annex II: Strategic Viewpoints

South Gloucestershire Council

Final Draft Report for Adoption Chapter 17

Prepared by LUC

September 2024



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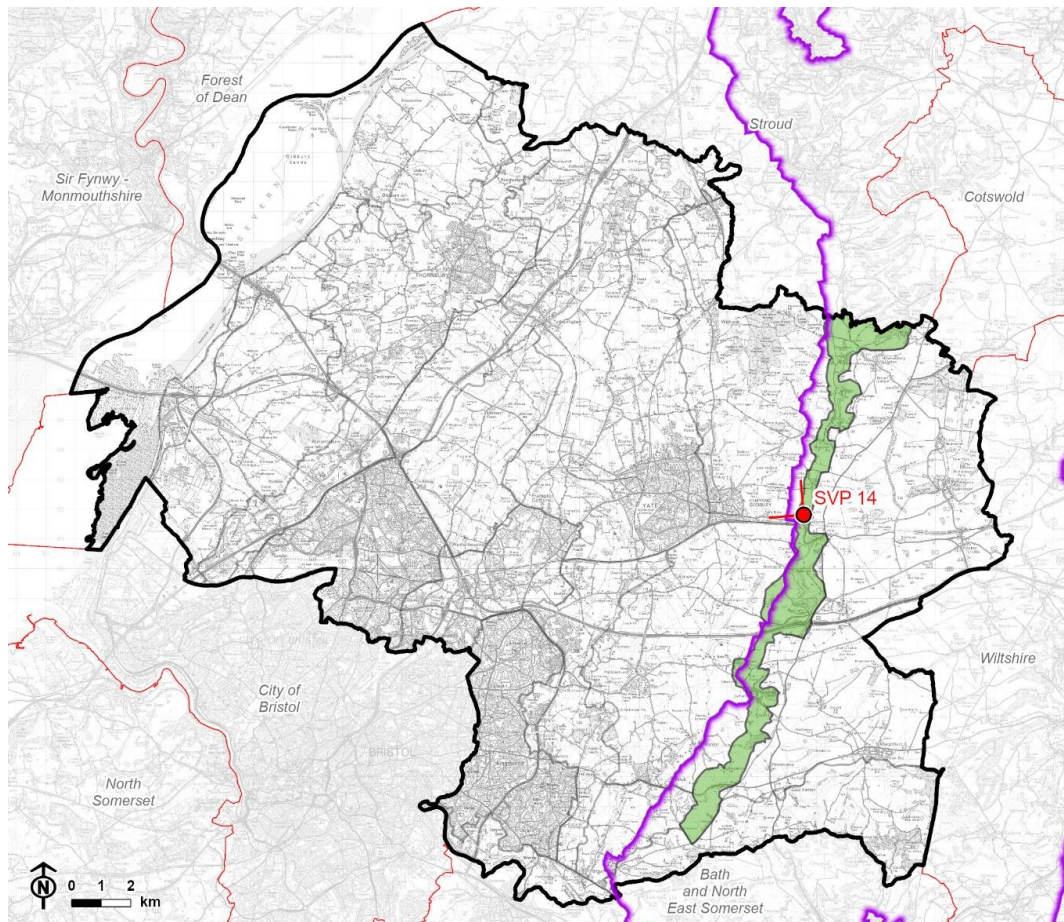
Contents

Chapter 17	118
Strategic Viewpoint 14: St John’s Church (Old Sodbury)	
Characteristics	123
Summary	124

Chapter 17

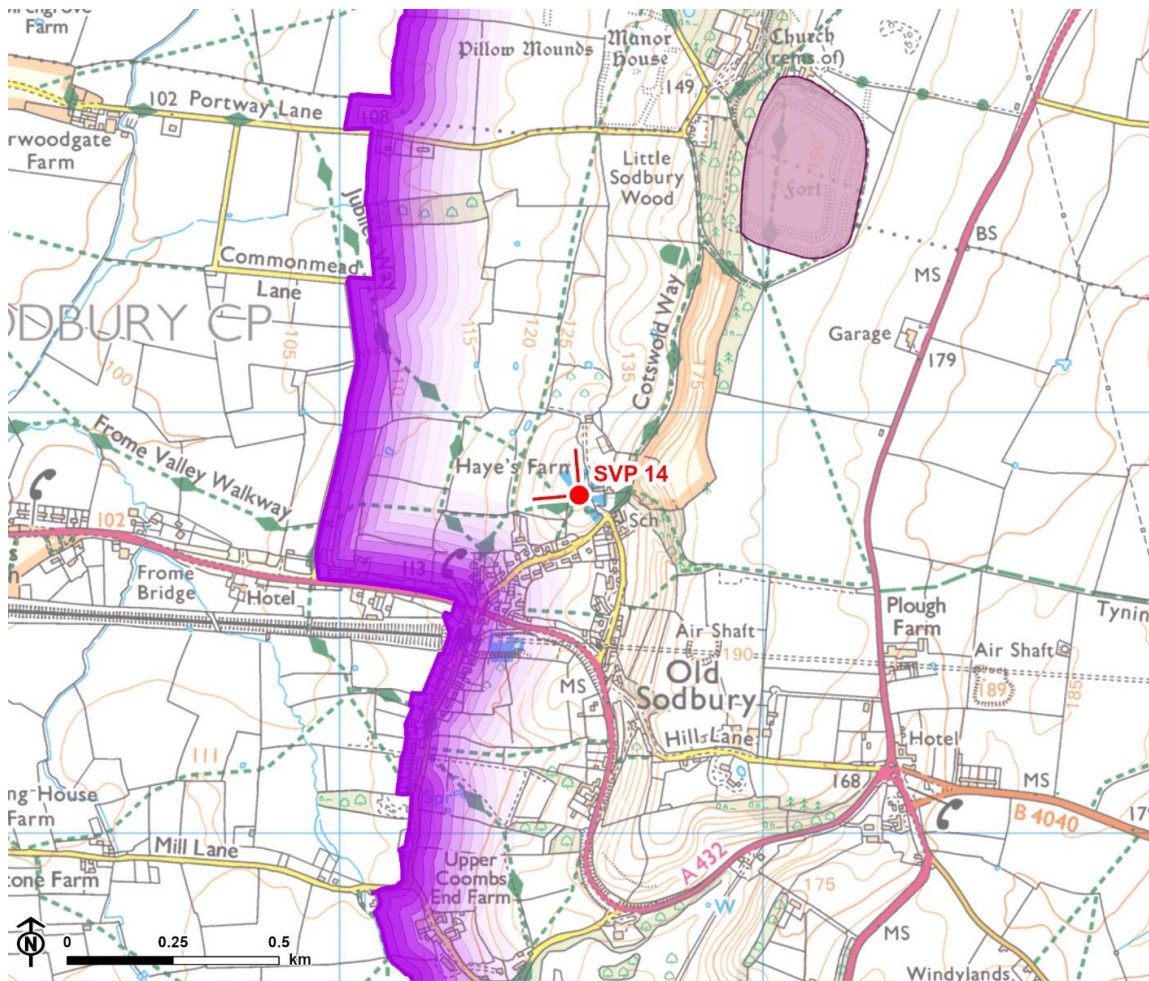
Strategic Viewpoint 14: St John's Church (Old Sodbury)

Figure 17.1: Location of Strategic Viewpoint 14 and landscape character context



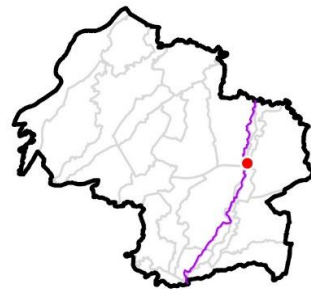
-  Council boundary
-  Neighbouring local authority
-  Cotswolds National Landscape (AONB) boundary
-  LCA 4: Cotswold Scarp
-  Strategic viewpoint and angle

Figure 17.2: Detailed map of the location of Strategic Viewpoint 14



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-  Council boundary
-  Cotswolds National Landscape (AONB) boundary
-  Scheduled monument
-  Strategic viewpoint and angle



Viewpoint Information

Grid reference: ST 75537 81804

View location: St John's Church, Old Sodbury.

View direction: View west over LCA 5: Wickwar Ridge and Vale, north along LCA 4: Cotswold Scarp, and south-west over LCA 6: Pucklechurch Ridge and Boyd Valley.

Relationship with Visually Important Hillside (VIH): The viewpoint is located along the Cotswold Scarp VIH.

Experienced by: Recreational users of The Cotswold Way National Trail and adjacent public footpaths (LSO/52/60 and LSO/49/30), as well as visitors to St. John's Church.

Figure 17.3: View Composition of Strategic Viewpoint 14



Key landscape feature

Landmark / historic feature

Detractive feature

Figure 17.4: Full Panoramic Photograph of Strategic Viewpoint 14



Strategic Viewpoint 14: Old Sodbury Church



Strategic Viewpoint 14 (continued)

Characteristics

Popularity, access and facilities

- The viewpoint location is symbolised as a promoted viewpoint on OS mapping and is likely to attract many visitors as a result.
- LCA 4: Cotswold Scarp notes the significance of the viewpoint location and states *"In particular important viewpoints from the scarp include... Old Sodbury Church... together with sections of the Cotswold Way permit expansive views of the vale landscape below and as far as Wales in the distance."*
- The viewpoint is publicly accessible, located adjacent to the churchyard of St John's Church with several public footpaths leading to it, including the Cotswold Way National Trail and the Jubilee Way locally promoted route.
- A bench and a toposcope are provided to facilitate enjoyment and interpretation of the view.

Relationship with Cotswolds National Landscape

- The viewpoint is located within the CNL and enables panoramic views to and from the designated landscape.
- Views from the Cotswold Scarp are considered to be a special quality of the designated landscape, as set out in the CNL Management Plan.

Quality, value and features of the view

- A relatively elevated viewpoint located on a small mound along the Cotswold Scarp VIH, enabling panoramic views (180°) to the west across the adjacent lower-lying 'vale' landscape (characterised by small-medium regular-shaped mixed fields defined by dense and managed hedgerows, interspersed with small woodlands and a sparse settlement pattern). To the south-west, the village of Old Sodbury is nestled within the backdrop of the undulating rural landscape rising up from the valley with the Pucklechurch Ridge and Boyd Valley beyond.

Chapter 17 Strategic Viewpoint 14: St John's Church (Old Sodbury)

- Views to the north extend along the wooded slope of the Cotswold Scarp with the distinctive landform feature prominent on the horizon. The profile of the South Wales hills forms a backdrop in views west, rising above the lower-lying landscape of South Gloucestershire.
- The viewpoint is located immediately adjacent to St John's Church (Grade II* listed), with intermittent views to the south/south-east towards the designed historic parkland associated with Dodington House RPG (Grade II* listed), located approximately 1.1km away.
- The tower of St John the Baptist Church (Grade I listed) within Chipping Sodbury Conservation Area (2.8km to the west) forms a landmark feature. The Tyndale Monument is a distant landmark feature that is visible on the Cotswold Scarp to the north approximately 14km away (within Stroud District). The top of the Severn Bridge can be seen rising above the treeline in long distance views to the west (20km away).
- New residential development on the edge of Yate, the three wind turbines on the Tytherington Plain, and distant views of pylon lines form low-key detractive elements in the overall composition of the view.

Summary

The St John's Church (Old Sodbury) viewpoint is categorised as a SVP as it meets most of the criteria to some extent. It is a popular, well known and recorded viewpoint and likely to attract many visitors; it is noted in the South Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment as being a natural observation point from which to appreciate the landscape; it is located on promoted footpaths with a bench and toposcope facilitating enjoyment and interpretation of the view; it allows appreciation of the Cotswold National Landscape and provides a notable view from the designated landscape; and it provides a panoramic view that takes in the notable landscape features of the vale, the Pucklechurch Ridge and Boyd Valley, the Cotswold Scarp, the historic parkland associated with Dodington House and the hills of South Wales, and the landmark features of St John the Baptist Church, the Tyndale Monument and the Severn Bridge.

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