



**McDonald's,
Pengarnddu Business
Park, Merthyr Tydfil**

**Landscape and Visual
Appraisal**

Prepared by:
**The Environmental Dimension
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On behalf of:
McDonald's Restaurants Ltd

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Contents

Section 1	Introduction, Purpose and Methodology	4
Section 2	Findings of EDP Data Trawl and Policy Review	8
Section 3	Existing (Baseline) Conditions: Landscape Character	13
Section 4	Existing (Baseline) Conditions: Visual Amenity	25
Section 5	The Proposed Development and Mitigation	30
Section 6	Summary of Effects	32
Section 7	Conclusions	38

APPENDICES

Appendix EDP 1	EDP Assessment Methodology
Appendix EDP 2	Site Photographs/Representative Photoviewpoints (edp9069_d007a 05 September 2025 RBa/JWe)

PLANS

Plan EDP 1: Published Landscape character (edp8922_d004a 05 September 2025 VMs/JWe)
Plan EDP 2: Site Character Plan (edp9069_d002a 05 September 2025 VMs/JWe)
Plan EDP 3: Environmental Planning Considerations (edp9069_d003a 05 September 2025 VMs/JWe)
Plan EDP 4: Site Location and Topographical Relief (edp9069_d001a 05 September 2025 VMs/JWe)
Plan EDP 5: Findings of Visual Appraisal and Viewpoint Locations (edp9069_d005a 05 September 2025 VMs/JWe)

Section 1

Introduction, Purpose and Methodology

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP) has been commissioned by McDonald's Restaurants Ltd (hereafter referred to as 'the Applicant') to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) of proposals to develop a new McDonald's Restaurant with associated infrastructure, in the Penygarnddu Business Park off the Heads of the Valleys Road (A465) (hereafter referred to as 'the Site' or 'Site'). The Site falls within Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (MTCBC) Local Planning Authority (LPA) area and is briefly described in **Section 2** of this LVA.
- 1.2 EDP is an independent environmental planning consultancy with offices in Cardiff, Cheltenham and Cirencester. The practice provides advice to private and public sector clients throughout the UK in the fields of landscape, ecology, archaeology, cultural heritage, arboriculture, rights of way and masterplanning. Details of the practice can be obtained at our website (www.edp-uk.co.uk). EDP is a Registered Practice of the Landscape Institute (LI)¹ specialising in the assessment of the effects of proposed development on the landscape.

THE SITE AND THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 1.3 **Plan EDP 3** illustrates the location of the Site's boundaries and the study area for the LVA. The Site, which is brownfield lies within the existing Business Park adjacent to the Penygarnddu industrial estate off the A465 and its access is provided off an unnamed and unclassified road Which will be referred to as "Common Road" in this report. The Site is bordered by Lidl to the north and west, and the associated carpark wraps around the Site boundary on a higher elevation atop a concrete retaining wall. An earth bund containing self-seeded young trees and scrub on-site follows along the wall's edge within the Site, and a level change of around c.4.5m is estimated between the Site and the Lidl carpark.
- 1.4 In the eastern part of the Site, a group of conifer trees on the Site's edge demarcates part of the boundary of a residential property. There are two properties in the Site boundary, with one in disrepair to be demolished and the other to be separated from the rest of the Site with landscaping and fencing boundary treatments. Currently a fence in disrepair completes the boundary treatment between the vacant part of the Site and the residences.
- 1.5 The main components of the proposed development comprise a restaurant (single storey), a drive-thru facility, car parking and landscaping treatment including tree and shrub planting, a hedgbank and sustainable drainage solutions.

¹ LI Practice Number 1010

- 1.6 This LVA is part of a suite of documents accompanying a full planning application for the proposed development.

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THIS LVA

- 1.7 The purpose of this LVA is to identify the baseline conditions of the Site and surrounding area to determine those landscape and visual characteristics that might inform the design of the development proposals, including recommendations for mitigation. It then provides an assessment of the landscape and visual effects predicted to arise from development on the Site with reference to the baseline analysis.

- 1.8 In undertaking the assessment described in this LVA, EDP has:

- Undertaken a thorough data trawl of relevant designations and background documents, described in **Section 2**;
- Assessed the existing (baseline) condition and character of the Site and its setting, described in **Section 3**;
- Assessed the existing visual (baseline) context, especially any key views to and from the Site (**Section 4**). The establishment of baseline landscape and visual conditions, when evaluated against the proposed development, allow the identification and evaluation of landscape effects later in the LVA at **Section 6**;
- Described the landscape aspects of the proposed development that may influence any landscape or visual effects (**Section 5**);
- In **Section 6**, assessed the landscape and visual effects in accordance with the approach described below;
- Reached overall conclusions in **Section 7**; and
- Provided an analysis of the likely landscape and visual effects of the proposed scheme, which is determined by combining the magnitude of the predicted change with the assessed sensitivity of the identified receptors. The nature of any predicted effects is also identified (i.e. positive/negative, permanent/reversible).

METHODOLOGY ADOPTED FOR THE ASSESSMENT

- 1.9 The proposed development assessed by this LVA is not subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). This LVA has, therefore, been undertaken in accordance with the principles embodied in '*Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – Third Edition* (LI/IEMA, 2013)' (GLVIA3) and other best practice guidance insofar as it is relevant to non-EIA schemes.

- 1.10 **Familiarisation:** EDP's study has included reviews of aerial photographs, web searches, LPA publications and landscape character assessments. EDP has also obtained, where

possible, information about relevant landscape and other designations such as National Landscapes (NL) (formerly Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Conservation Area's (CA) and Registered Historic Parks & Gardens (RPG).

- 1.11 **Consultation:** The Applicant has received a formal response following the pre-application submission. The pre-application response, dated 13 September 2024, raised no concerns regarding the visual impact of the proposals. The response does highlight the need to carefully consider boundary treatments, and their visual impact, especially along the Site's southern edge. This treatment will have an impact on the overall acceptability of the scheme. Reduction of visual intrusion and prevention of conflicts between uses will be required along this edge.
- 1.12 **Field Assessment:** EDP has undertaken a comprehensive field assessment of local Site circumstances, including a photographic survey of the character and fabric of the Site and its surroundings, using photography from a number of representative viewpoints. The field assessment was undertaken under supervision of a chartered landscape architect on 30 January 2025 in dry and clear weather conditions.
- 1.13 **Acknowledgement of any shortcomings:** It is acknowledged that not all possible viewpoints have been assessed as part of this report, however a range of views have been considered in order to represent the majority of receptor groups that would be impacted.
- 1.14 **Design Inputs:** EDP's baseline reporting and field assessment has informed a process whereby the development proposals have been refined to avoid, minimise or compensate for landscape effects. Such measures are summarised in **Section 5**.
- 1.15 **Assessment Methodology:** Predicted effects on the landscape resource arising from the proposed development (as detailed in **Section 6** of this LVA) have been determined in accordance with the principles embedded within published best practice guidance insofar as the assessment adopts the following well-established, structured approach:
- Likely effects on landscape character and visual amenity are dealt with separately;
 - The assessment of likely effects is reached using a structured methodology for defining sensitivity and magnitude, which is contained as **Appendix EDP 1**. This framework is combined with professional judgement. Professional judgement is an important part of the assessment process; it is neither 'pro' nor 'anti' development but acknowledges that development may result in beneficial change as well as landscape harm;
 - As advised in GLVIA3, the appraisal takes into account the effects of any proposed mitigation; and
 - Typically, a 15-year time horizon is used as the basis for conclusions about the residual levels of effect. 15 years is a well-established and accepted compromise between assessing the shorter-term effects (which may often be rather 'raw' before any proposed mitigation has had time to take effect) and an excessively long time period.

STUDY AREA

1.16 To establish the baseline and potential limit of material effects, the study area has been considered at two geographical scales:

- First, a broad 'study area' extending to 3km from the Site, was adopted, based mainly on desk-based study, allowing the geographical scope of the assessment to be defined based on the likely extent of views to/from the Site, extent of landscape effects and the Site's environmental planning context; and
- Second, following initial analysis and subsequent fieldwork, the broad study area was refined down to the land that is most likely to experience landscape effects. The extent of this detailed study area is 1km from the Site boundary, although occasional reference may be made to features beyond this area where appropriate. This detailed study area is illustrated on **Plan EDP 3**.

Section 2

Findings of EDP Data Trawl and Policy Review

- 2.1 The findings of EDP's data trawl of relevant environmental planning designations are illustrated on **Plan EDP 3** and summarised in this section.
- 2.2 An appreciation of the 'weight' to be attributed to any landscape or visual effects arising from development starts with an understanding of the planning context within which any such development is to be tested for its acceptability.

BACKGROUND PUBLISHED EVIDENCE BASE DOCUMENTS

- 2.3 The following documents are relevant and will be discussed as appropriate later in this report:
- National Landscape Character Area 37: South Wales Valleys (Natural Resources Wales, 2014);
 - Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (MTCBC) replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) 2016–2031 (adopted 29 January 2020)²; and
 - LANDMAP Character Assessment.

FINDINGS OF EDP DATA TRAWL

Landscape-related Designations and Other Considerations

- 2.4 Landscape-related designations and policy considerations within 3km of the Site are as follows:
- National Landscape designations: The Site does not lie within a nationally designated landscape such as a National Landscape or National Park. Bannau Brycheiniog National Park (BBNP) is located approximately 2.56 km to the north of the Site at its closest point;
 - Local landscape designations: The Site does not lie within a locally designated landscape. However, the Special Landscape area (SLA) 1 Nant Morlais and Cwm Taf Fechan is located 0.51km north of the Site; and
 - The Site is not located within Green Belt, a Strategic Wedge, Green Wedge or Important Local Gap.

² <https://www.merthyr.gov.uk/media/5642/replacement-ldp-written-statement-final-composite-version-140120.pdf>

Bannau Brycheiniog National Park

- 2.5 The Site lies approximately 2.56km south of Bannau Brycheiniog National Park (BBNP) at its closest point. BBNP's current Management Plan, Dyfodol Y Bannau, The Future Development³ and special qualities of the national park.
- 2.6 The Management Plan does not contain policies relating to the setting of the National Park nor does BBNP have a Position Statement on development within the setting of the National Park. It does set how a clear mission for the park and what the objectives that supports this mission are, as well as the special qualities (SQs) of the Park. These SQs have been reviewed and none of the SQs would be affected by the proposals due to the scale of development proposed and the distance and intervening built form which already separates BBNP and the Site.
- 2.7 Furthermore, a review of the current Bannau Brycheiniog Local Development Plan 2007-2022 (Adopted 2013), did not reveal any further guidance as to protecting visual landscape assets.
- 2.8 The viewshed analysis illustrated on **Plan EDP 5** confirms that the vast majority of views from the National Park that falls within the study area extent would not experience any change as a result of the development proposed. Part of the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) shows a slight overlap with a narrow section of BBNP, however, a ground truthing exercise on-site revealed that the proposals would not be distinguishable against the larger units to the north of the Site. Therefore, as a result of the combination of distance and intervening elements, visual or perceptual change to BBNP is unlikely to be perceptible and therefore, the national park is scoped out from further consideration within this report.

Heritage Matters

- 2.9 Heritage assets can influence the visual character of the landscape and enrich its historic value. This LVA addresses heritage assets only insofar as they are components of the wider contemporary landscape – not in terms of their significance and value as heritage assets. Heritage assets across the study area are summarised below:
- There are no designated heritage assets within the Site;
 - There are no scheduled monuments within 1km of the Site;
 - There are no conservation areas within 1km of the Site; and
 - There are no Registered Historic Parks and Gardens (RPG) within the 1km study area.
- 2.10 There are six listed buildings within 1km, these are as follows:
- Aqueduct on Dowlais Free Drainage System c.924m west of the Site;

³ The Management Plan for the Brecon Beacons National Park 2023-2038 (Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, 2023) Accessed 20, May 2025

- White Gate Road Bridge and Aqueduct c.924m west of the Site;
- Lower Row c.983m south-west of the Site;
- Mile Post c.862m south-west of the Site;
- Antelope Hotel c.832m south-west of the Site; and
- Tredegar Arms c.503m south-west of the Site.

Ecology Matters

- 2.11 A separate Ecology Appraisal (prepared by EDP, report reference: edp9069_r003) considers the ecological assets of the Site and within the study area. There is one ecological designation found 0.51km north of the Site, namely Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) 39.

Arboriculture Matters

- 2.12 A separate Arboricultural Assessment considers the arboriculture assets on the Site and within the study area. The baseline report (prepared by EDP, report reference: edp9069_r004) shows that there are no areas of Ancient Woodland within the Site and no Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) considerations.

Public Rights of Way and Open Access Land

- 2.13 A review of online maps for Merthyr Tydfil reveals a section of Public Rights of Way⁴ (PRoW) and Open Access Land (OAL) within the study area:
- 2.14 Across the study area, there are a several small clusters of footpaths;
- The closest footpath is 102/11, which is found c.400m to the south-west of the Site. This adjoins to additional footpaths south and west of the Site including;
 - A cluster of footpaths exists around the Top Pond (recreational fishing area) c.629m west of the Site. Within this cluster, footpath 105/10 extends north to south and connects the National Cycle Route (NCN) that passes near the southern perimeter of the Site in an East–West direction. In addition, the Dowlais top residential area is connected to the BBNP via footpath 105/13 stemming from this cluster;
 - Another cluster of Footpaths connect with the aforementioned 105/10; consisting of; 105/5, 105/8, 105/7, 105/4, 105/9 which are found west of the Site and form a connection to and around the Top Pond recreational area, and the Middle Pond recreational area along with the Dowlais top residential area;

⁴ <https://www.rowmaps.com/kmls/MT/> Accessed online 16.01.2025.

- A cluster of Footpaths consisting of 102/38, 102/39, 102/34 and 102/35, c. 461m south of the Site are situated to the west of the waste management site and north of the former Ffos y fran open cast mining site, and
- Lastly Footpath 102/34 is c.461m south of the Site and runs roughly north to south along the western edge of the waste management and former coal mining sites.

- 2.15 The vast majority of views from the western cluster of footpaths that fall within the study area extent would not experience any change as a result of the proposed development due to the local topography and lack of unobstructed sight lines, and therefore been scoped out from further consideration within this report. However, part of the ZTV shows a c.60m overlap from footpath 105/10 with filtered views that will be investigated further in this report.
- 2.16 Despite views being potentially present from the footpaths in and around the waste management and north of the former Ffos y fran open cast mining area, to the south of the Site, these footpaths have also been scoped out from further consideration within this report. This is due to intervening elements such as the existing business park, Heads of the Valleys road works, the detracting waste management operations, and access to the paths within the detailed study area identified as being primarily across the busy A road, limit receptor activity and visual or perceptual change from these footpaths.
- 2.17 The Site is not publicly accessible at present, and there are no PRoW or OAL rights across the Site. The Pengarnddu Business Park, of which the Site sits within, is bordered by OAL to the north and south of the estate. Views from OAL areas to the south are scoped out of the report due to the presence of intervening elements. These include the existing business park, ongoing Heads of the Valleys road works, waste management operations. In addition, access to pathways within the detailed study area is mainly via the busy A road restricts receptor activity and limits visual or perceptual changes from this part of the OAL.
- 2.18 In the area of the OAL located north of the Business Park and the Pengarnddu Industrial Estate, theoretical views are limited to two parallel strips approximately 17 metres wide within the detailed study area. However, a ground truthing exercise on-site confirmed that the proposals would not be distinguishable from the larger units to the north of the Site, and have therefore been excluded from this report.

National Cycle Route

- 2.19 The NCN 46 falls within 1km of the study area, connecting Bromsgrove to Neath. The route comes within c.30m of the Site, and viability extends for c. 600m in a north-east to south-west direction. The proximity of this cycle route presents a unique opportunity to link the proposals with a sustainable travel network.

PLANNING POLICY BASELINE

Local Planning Policy

Adopted Local Plan (Published)

2.20 The Site is situated within MTCBC LPA and is subject to policy set out in the adopted MTCBC RLDP 2016-2031⁵ (adopted 29 January 2020). The LDP includes over-arching general development policies, to which the development proposals will be tested in the round. A review of the local planning policy circumstances with respect to design and character is summarised below:

- Policy SW11 - Sustainable Design and Placemaking This policy advises how development can meet the requirements for “*attractive and sustainable*” places via “*high quality, sustainable and inclusive design*”. Within a landscape design context, the following points from the policy apply:
 - “*be appropriate to its local context in terms of scale, height, massing, elevational treatment, materials and detailing, layout, form, mix and density*”;
 - “*Not result in an unacceptable impact on local amenity, loss of light or privacy, or visual impact, and incorporate a good standard of landscape design*”;
 - “*Contribute to the provision of green infrastructure, including open space in accordance with the Council’s standards, sustainable drainage systems where appropriate, and ensure that the County Borough’s network of green infrastructure is accessible and connected*”;
 - “*Allow access for the widest range of people possible, and demonstrate that any traffic movements will not have an unacceptable impact on local amenity or highway safety and satisfy the Council’s parking standards*”;
 - “*Provide and protect relevant utility services and infrastructure without causing any unacceptable environmental impacts*”;
 - “*Incorporate measures to improve ground and surface water quality wherever possible*”; and
 - “*Promote the creation of healthy and active environments and reduce the opportunity for crime and anti-social behaviour*”.

⁵ <https://www.merthyr.gov.uk/media/5642/replacement-ldp-written-statement-final-composite-version-140120.pdf>

Section 3

Existing (Baseline) Conditions: Landscape Character

- 3.1 This section provides an assessment of the 'baseline' (existing) conditions in respect of the character of the Site and its landscape context. It summarises any relevant published landscape assessments that contribute to a better understanding of the landscape context but rarely deliver sufficiently site-specific or up-to-date information to draw robust conclusions about the significance of any change proposed by the development. Accordingly, EDP has undertaken its own assessment of the Site itself, which is included in this section.

NATIONAL CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

- 3.2 At a national level, the character of Wales has been classified into National Landscape Character Areas (NLCA) published by Natural Resources Wales (NRW). The Site is located within the north-eastern corner of NLCA 37: South Wales Valleys⁶.

- 3.3 NLCA 37: The South Wales Valleys is described as an area that has: *"Deep valleys that have been heavily developed, known for their distinctive industrial heritage and cultural identity. These valleys are characterised by ribbon developments, steep upland settings, and limited inter-valley access due to the steep and furrowed terrain. Industrial growth in the 19th century, driven by rich mineral resources and rail transport, led to the creation of coal, steel, and iron industries, accompanied by extensive infrastructure of large buildings, furnaces, towers, chimneys, viaducts, spoil heaps and levels. The associated human settlement patterns added chapels, shops, and schools to the valleys urban character.*

As industrial sites have since been abandoned or redeveloped, the area's identity is evolving, blending heritage with a greener environment. Despite the tendency for new woodlands to be coniferous, more robust regeneration efforts are restoring nature and wildlife is returning. Through initiatives like the Valleys Regional Park the area is combining conservation with economic renewal."

- 3.4 **Plan EDP 1** illustrates the published character within the study area.

LANDMAP LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

- 3.5 In order to assess the acceptability of development, in landscape terms at any specific location, it is important to understand the landscape and visual amenity circumstances against which any decisions are made, based on both published Landscape Character Areas and more site-specific landscape assessment undertaken through field site studies and site appraisal.

⁶ <https://cdnfd.cyfoethnaturiol.cymru/media/682625/nlca37-south-wales-valleys-description-1.pdf?mode=pad&rnd=131550626704970000> – Accessed 22.01.2025.

3.6 The landscape character of the Site and the surrounding area is defined within the LANDMAP resource managed by NRW. LANDMAP is the national information system used to undertake an assessment of landscape character at a local scale. LANDMAP is a GIS-based landscape resource where landscape characteristics, qualities and influences on the landscape are recorded and evaluated into a naturally consistent data set. It identifies key landscape characteristics and qualities that can be used to aid planning policy and decisions. The accompanying guidance states that it is the use of all five layers of information (Historic Landscapes, Visual and Sensory, Cultural Landscape, Geological Landscape and Landscape Habitats) that promotes sustainable landscape decision-making, giving all five layers equal consideration.

3.7 The Site is contained within LANDMAP 'aspect areas'⁷ summarised in **Table EDP 3.1**. Each aspect area is described, assessed and assigned one of four overall grades of value below:

- Low: Little or no importance;
- Moderate: Local importance;
- High: Regional or county importance; and
- Outstanding: International or national importance.

Table EDP 3.1: LANDMAP Character Assessment

Aspect Area	Area Name/Classification	Evaluation
Geological Landscape	Dowlais Top Mountain and upland valley, Extensive boulder clay cover, and made ground, with numerous disused shafts and adits, waste tips and reclaimed opencast coal mines. Iron works and waste tip.	Moderate
Landscape Habitat	None (UID-MRTHRLH007) Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats; Grassland & Marsh acidic grassland	High
Visual and Sensory	Merthyr Tydfil Development/built land/urban.	Low
Historic Landscape	HL005 Merthyr Tydfil Core Built environment/settlement/nucleated settlement.	High
Cultural Landscape	Merthyr Tydfil Development/built land/urban.	Low

3.8 An analysis of the LANDMAP character assessment identifies that the visual and sensory aspect layer is evaluated to be of 'low' overall value. The aspect area is described within the published assessment as (with emphasis added by EDP in relation to the Site and immediate context):

⁷ LANDMAP aspect areas - <https://smnr-nrw.hub.arcgis.com/apps/c7770d2881394c899123bae210afe370/explore> - accessed 05.01.2024.

“Mix of neglected areas, recent improvements to townscape and landscape infrastructure and new development which is poor quality in places. sensory qualities unattractive, noisy and settled. Principal recommendation maintain wedges of open space and capitalise on distinctive character of 'village' communities”.

- 3.9 One of the recommendations of the Visual and Sensory Aspect Area is to *“maintain wedges of open space and capitalise on distinctive character of 'village' communities”*. The Site is brownfield and of low value, therefore no areas of open farmland would be affected by the development proposed.
- 3.10 The LANDMAP assessment identifies that the geological landscape aspect area covering the Site is identified as ‘moderate’. The justification for the evaluation states *“Productive Coal Formation, many old coal and iron workings, large areas of made and reclaimed land”*.
- 3.11 The Landscape Habitat aspect area covering the Site is evaluated as ‘high’. The reason for this evaluation is not stated however the SSSI outside the business park falls within the classification boundary whose justification states: *“Boundary adjusted to include new developments, split of aspect considered, but deemed unnecessary due to the encroachment of the quarry”*. The SSSI would remain unaffected by the proposals.
- 3.12 The Cultural Landscape aspect area has been given an overall low evaluation. The reason for this evaluation is based on the description that states *“The town has a very complex form with no discernible pattern and coherence. Some areas are in poor condition and there are numerous detractors. New development and reclamation have obscured the important heritage of the area in parts”*.
- 3.13 The Historic Landscape value aspect area is indicated as having a ‘high’ overall evaluation. The evaluation justifies this by explaining:
- “Merthyr Tydfil urban core has been assigned an overall value of outstanding, reflecting its key importance as a nationally important industrial centre during the 18th and 19th centuries. Merthyr Tydfil rapidly expanded from a modest village in the 1750s to become the largest town in Wales by 1801, its rapid growth fuelled by its association with the great expansion of the ironworking industry in this area from the mid-18th century onwards. Despite impacts from extensive recent land reclamation.”*
- 3.14 However, the Site is not within the urban core, the boundary has which draws the Site into the same area as the core explains the justification as *“Within the area are the now relict iron processing areas of Cyfarthfa, Ynys Fach, Dowlais, Ifor, and Penydarren ironworks as defined by HLC work undertaken on behalf of Cadw (Roberts 2003)”*. Importantly it notes *“the area also includes adjacent 'nucleated' areas”*.

REVIEW OF SITE CIRCUMSTANCES AGAINST PUBLISHED DOCUMENTATION

- 3.15 A Site visit took place in January 2025 in clear weather conditions. The visit was complemented by a review of aerial photography, mapping and field assessments from publicly accessible locations (e.g. from local roads and PRow).

- 3.16 The Site is physically well contained. The proximity to the nearby embankment, road corridors and hill forms as seen in **Plans EDP 4** and **5**, create a visual sense of enclosure to the south. North and east of the Site further retail/industrial units obstruct views beyond the access road and to the west conifer hedges and a multiuse residential/retail unit bound the Trunk Road. The Heads of the valley road construction project continues onward around a large hill form closing of the western flank of the ZTV from the Site. The Site lies close to large retail units and industrial sheds. The location of the Site is near the periphery of development in terms of the Business Park it sits within. The waste management site at Trecatti is visible from the Site.
- 3.17 The Site comprises two parcels; a small residential area with 2 two-storey houses and outbuildings, and a larger brownfield area which is partially tarmacked, and enclosed by a large bund. The bund is c.4.5m in height, and it is contained to the north-west edge. The bund is vegetated with grasses, scrub and some self-seeded trees – the bund itself limits views into and out of the Site, and the vegetation adds some further enclosure, but it is limited. Palisade fencing in disrepair demarcates the brownfield Site's edge to the north and south. The western edge is enclosed by a retaining wall of which the neighbouring Lidl retail site carpark sits a top of this.
- 3.18 To the east a group of conifer trees partially separates the residential area from the brownfield site.



Image EDP 3.1: View from within the Site looking toward the eastern residential boundary and conifer screen, With part of the damaged southern boundary fence in middle ground.

- 3.19 Off site to the south, a council owned yard/construction compound is separated from the Site with a palisade fence in place, but the boundary is in disrepair. The yard site is also slightly lower in elevation than the brownfield part of the Site. Views looking south of the

Site extend across a portion of the Heads of the Valley Road to a manmade hill which is bare. Beyond the road, views toward the waste management site are perceptible; vehicular movement and large plastic/tarpaulin sheets covering the infill material are seen against a manmade hill with formed contours. Texaco petrol station is located c.105m from the Site, and it is located in between the Heads waste management site, and the A465.



Image EDP 3.2: View from within Site looking toward the southern boundary with the council owned site, the waste management site is visible in the background.

- 3.20 The Site is accessible from Common Road, on its northern edge. There is a large industrial/retail unit on the opposite side of the road. Behind this unit, landform rises steeply and there is a tree belt, on the horizon as well as a medium sized wind turbine (c.45m to tip) which is located approximately 132m to the north of the Site at its closest point.



Image EDP 3.3: View from the Site with the access in the fireground and buildings on the opposite site of Dowlais Road.



Image EDP 3.4: Wind turbines are only partially visible within a comfortable viewing position due to height and proximity to the Site.

- 3.21 The Site is well contained from the west due to the bund and retaining wall associated with the Lidl site. The level change and containment, limit most views into the Site from this direction. The south of the Site is more open and some longer ranging, distant views up towards the waste management site (c. 640m in distance) are available although, views are partially hampered in part by the Heads of the Valley road, and a hill in the road's margin in the middle ground. The construction compound directly below the Site may also add to the obscuring of views in this direction, see **Image EDP 3.5**.



Image EDP 3.5: Looking through the Site entrance to the south-west. Earth bund shown on righthand side of this photo in front of Lidl retail unit and retaining wall is visible in the background.

- 3.22 As described, Lidl is located immediately west of the Site and its carpark is retained by a concrete wall and there is a localised level difference between the Site and the neighbouring unit. Further afield, to the north-west of the site behind another the large Asda retail unit and parking is a parcel of OAL which joins to the Merthyr Common, which contains part of PRow route 105/10. Merthyr Common is flanked by Power substations and industrial/retail development to the east. The path ascends c.14m from the top pond recreation area, c.676m west of the Site. The views are obscured toward the Site due to Lidl and the large retail units in Pengarnddu industrial estate, a wind turbine and boundary tree screens to the various units within the business park. Due to its elevation a small c.10m section of the PRow falls within the ZTV, however any potential views of the Site are extremely limited.
- 3.23 To the east, there is a pinch point where the A465 (heads of the valleys road) hill form and the Common Road come within 15m of each other. NCN 46 runs between the two roads on a path separated from both roads by grass verges. An elevational change between the A465 and the NCN 46 is perceptible, and further separation is offered by a simple wooden post and rail fence. The eastern portion of the Site is the residential section (2-3 dwellings within

the Site boundary) are walled off blocking ground floor views in and out of the Site with a grey concrete slab fence. The area to the east most immediately adjacent to the Site hosts two auto garages and one attached residence that sit a few meters back of Common Road, with a partial low shrub screen. A more substantial conifer screen appears to block direct views from the attached residence into the Site entrance **Plan EDP 2** illustrates the Site's context as described.

3.24 To the south of the Site, the area is heavily influenced by major alterations to the landform. This includes the A465 roadworks featuring multiple large roundabouts and a large hill formation between the onramp and the main road. A waste management site is located atop the c.40m high hilltop (measured from elevation of the Site) and the remnants of the Ffros y Fran open cast coal mine.

3.25 Immediately north of the Site, as discussed, is a large metal industrial/retail unit and associated parking. Just behind this is a stand of trees forming a boundary between it and neighbouring buildings including a wind turbine and additional industrial buildings. To the north of these and c.500m north of the Site is OAL (adjoining to Merthyr common). The gradient into which the Site is cut into the base of the 535m Twyn Pwll Morlais landform and the surrounding industrial buildings obscures most views to and from Merthyr Common as demonstrated by the ZTV.

3.26 Overall, the Site is considered to reflect most of the key character area descriptions identified above in the LANDMAP character assessment. Specific similarities have been identified between the Site and its relevant aspect areas, which are summarised below.

LANDMAP identified the visual and sensory aspect area, of which the Site sits in as being low in value. Its justification, contained in paragraph 3.10, states a *"Mix of neglected areas, townscape and landscape infrastructure and new development which is poor quality in places. sensory qualities unattractive, noisy and settled"*. The Site's visual and sensory character is defined by the proximity and scale of these adjacent buildings.

3.27 The host aspect area for cultural landscape was defined as being low in terms of sense of place/local distinctiveness. In the case of the Site, this is specifically relating to the observation of new development obscuring important heritage and some areas being in poor condition as the Site is at present.

3.28 The host aspect area for geological landscape was defined as being moderate due to the coal formations and the impact of reclaimed land. The Site is cut into a large hill and facing onto the reclaimed landform of the A465 and former Ffos y Fran opencast coal mine and therefore is reflective of these qualities.

3.29 The following differences are summarised below, between the historic landscape of the Site and its wider aspect area, as described in LANDMAP.

3.30 In historic landscape terms, the Site conflicts with the description of the historic landscape aspect area. The host area explains that *"Merthyr Tydfil urban core has been assigned an overall value of outstanding, reflecting its key importance as a nationally important industrial centre during the 18th and 19th centuries. Merthyr Tydfil rapidly expanded from*

a modest village in the 1750s to become the largest town in Wales by 1801, its rapid growth fuelled by its association with the great expansion of the ironworking industry in this area from the mid-18th century onwards. Despite impacts from extensive recent land reclamation". The Site sits within a business park between modern retail units and major roadworks. It bears no perceptual historic connection with the Dowlais ironworks, or the industrial development referenced in LANDMAP. The explanation for the valuation is broad and vague in respect to the Site's specific context.

- 3.31 The host landscape habitat aspect area was evaluated as High although this evaluation does not accord with the findings on the Site itself. This aspect area covers primarily the SINC area to the north. The Site is separate from this area in terms of connectivity and is a brown field site with an artificial bund of earth containing some self-seeded vegetation of low value, rubbish and debris litter.

Assessing the Value of the Landscape Resource

- 3.32 GLVIA3 sets out the requirements for considering the sensitivity of landscape resources at paragraphs 5.39 to 5.47, and states that: "*Landscape receptors need to be assessed firstly in terms of their sensitivity, combining judgements of their susceptibility to the type of change or development proposed and the value attached to the landscape*".
- 3.33 Landscape value is the 'inherent' component, which is independent of the development proposal, while the other component, susceptibility, is development specific.
- 3.34 When considering landscape value, GLVIA3 advocates that the starting point should be a review of existing landscape designations, including those at a local and national level, to identify what it is that is valued sufficiently to warrant a greater level of protection. In this instance, the Site is not within a nationally or locally designated landscape, as confirmed on **Plan EDP 3**. GLVIA3 makes it clear that not being located within a designated landscape does not mean that the Site has no value from a landscape perspective.
- 3.35 Landscape value of non-designated landscapes is informed by a range of factors as set out in the Technical Guidance Note (TGN) 02/21: Assessing landscape value outside national designations⁸. These factors assist in delivering a framework for an objective landscape assessment of value. The criteria defined within TGN 02/21 is given below in **Table EDP 3.2**, with EDP's observations alongside. These observations are based on published material and from EDP's field assessment. For each of the criteria, the Site and local area is judged on the basis of a range of form, 'good' through 'ordinary' to 'poor', in terms of the performance against the criteria.

⁸ <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/publication/tgn-02-21-assessing-landscape-value-outside-national-designations/>
- accessed 05.11.2024.

Table EDP 3.2: Consideration of Landscape Value.

GLVIA/TGN Factor	The Site	The Wider Site Context
Natural Heritage: Landscape with clear evidence of ecological, geological, geomorphological or physiographic interest which contribute positively to the landscape.	Poor. The LANDMAP geological assessment for the area is moderate however the valuable features described are not present above ground on-site. Of note, the Site is a brownfield and bears some resemblance to waste tips as mentioned in the LANDMAP assessment in that regard. The ecological/habitat component of the landscape assessment also does not apply here due to the brownfield nature of the Site which therefore bears no resemblance to the grassland habitat described.	Poor. The wider context contains less ecological interest given the industrial surroundings of the Site. The built form does not contribute positively to the landscape and its setting.
Cultural Heritage: Landscape with clear evidence of archaeological, historical or cultural interest which contribute positively to the landscape.	Poor. The Site is somewhat limited regarding historical and cultural context and visual link to these, due to its setting within the modern industrial estate/ business park where the context has been completely reshaped because of the roads. However, the area has historical links with the former Dowlais ironworks, the free drainage system, rail links and limestone quarries which may imbue a sense of place in local memory.	Ordinary. Any cultural value within the surrounding context has been diminished largely due to the large-scale warehouses that surround the Site at present. However, several high-quality heritage buildings and national landscape are found within 1km of the Site. Again, these are visually cut off by the A465 and Pengarnddu business park providing little weighting to the consideration.

GLVIA/TGN Factor	The Site	The Wider Site Context
Landscape Condition: Landscape which is in a good physical state both with regard to individual elements and overall landscape structure.	Poor. The Site comprises no grassland or good quality boundary vegetation. Trees are limited to self-seeded saplings growing in a somewhat precarious position and a heavily lopped conifer screen to the residential area of the Site. A few Scots pines are also present to the periphery of the main brownfield part of the Site. A large unmaintained bund with gorse bushes and scrub exists to the Western boundary.	Poor. The immediate context is a very 'hard' landscape ridden with development. Further afield, beyond this is Merthyr common and the top pond recreation area with several PRoW however these are strewn with wind turbines, power exchanges small sheds and refuse. This is at some distance from the Site. The A465 makes a large cut through the landscape. The waste management site scars the top of the adjacent hill to the south. The BBNP is found in the hilltops to the north, but viewers are desensitised by the large business park.
Associations: Landscape which is connected with notable people, events and the arts.	Ordinary. Local memory of Pengarnddu village and the association with Dowlais ironworks remain, however the business park continues to provide associations with the Site as a place of work/commerce.	
Distinctiveness: Landscape that has a strong sense of identity.	Poor. The Site has no particularly strong sense of identity or distinctiveness.	Ordinary. The wider Site context has little to no sense of identity other than being within the valleys, offensive detractors such as pylons, wind turbines, a waste management site and large shed structures desensitise the landscape though could arguably make it more distinctive.
Recreational: Landscape offering recreational opportunities where experience of landscape is important.	Poor. The Site has no recreational use and is closed to the public.	Ordinary. The wider Site context features several PRoW routes, as well as the top pond recreational area. The setting to these routes however falls short of expectations of quality recreational routes, as sprawling development, fast-roads, and logistics depots dominate the surrounding context alongside occasional dilapidated built forms and refuse.

GLVIA/TGN Factor	The Site	The Wider Site Context
Perceptual (Scenic): Landscape that appeals to the senses, primarily the visual sense.	Poor. The tranquillity of the Site is limited due to the proximity of the A465, which has a dominant sound impact across the Site. As well as Dowlais Top Road.	Poor. The Site's surroundings suffer from the activities of the industrial areas. This is detrimental to the scenic quality of the wider context.
Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity): Landscape with a strong perceptual value notably wildness, tranquillity and/or dark skies.	Poor. The Site is close to the A465 and other surrounding roads. As a result, the Site is not wild or tranquil.	Poor. Given the extensive detractors within the landscape, it is not perceived as being wild nor tranquil.
Functional: Landscape which performs a clearly identifiable and valuable function, particularly in the healthy functioning of the landscape.	Poor. The Site is a brownfield site with minimal landscape features of note.	Poor. The wider Site context has a mixed sense of character, as an urban fringe area, there is no outright landscape function. However, some users travel along the PRow and access common/recreation areas. Other users include employment sites, industrial retail units and road users on the a465.

- 3.36 Having assessed the Site in accordance with TGN 02-21, overall, it is considered of no more than 'poor' landscape value when considered in the round, which equates to a low value as defined within **Appendix EDP 1**. Moreover, there exists no evidence (based on 'demonstrable physical attributes') to suggest that further weight should be attached to the value of the Site derived from the use or enjoyment of this area by local residents (beyond that considered above), or as expressed by any other stakeholder.

INTERIM CONCLUSIONS: LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Overall Sensitivity of the Site's Immediate and Wider Context

- 3.37 The susceptibility of the landscape resource is defined as the ability of the receptor (whether the overall character, individual fabric elements or perceptual aspects) to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation.
- 3.38 On the basis of the above considerations of susceptibility factors for the Site and the wider context, these factors correlate reasonably with those qualities described within the LANDMAP assessment. The influence of the A465, neighbouring industrial sheds and the visual detractors within the surrounding landscape such as pylons, wind turbines, and waste management site, reduce the overall sensitivity of the Site's immediate and wider

context, particularly from a visual and sensory perspective. EDP concur with the LANDMAP evaluation in regard to most aspect areas.

- 3.39 The overall sensitivity of the Site's wider and immediate context is judged to be **low**.

Overall Sensitivity of the Site Character

- 3.40 In summary, the main character and valuable fabric of the Site itself is congruent with most of its surroundings. It is currently majority brownfield apart from a residential portion walled and separated from the rest of the Site. It is heavily influenced by its industrial surroundings, particularly with regards to its visual and sensory characteristics.
- 3.41 The character of the Site is degraded to different degrees, primarily due to the proximity to the A465, which introduces significant noise intrusion. The constant passing of heavy goods vehicles further detracts from the tranquillity of the Site.
- 3.42 The susceptibility of change to the Site itself is therefore judged to be low due to the detracting elements identified above.
- 3.43 The Site, as a whole, is therefore judged to have a **low** sensitivity in regard to landscape character.

Section 4

Existing (Baseline) Conditions: Visual Amenity

INTRODUCTION

- 4.1 Visual amenity (as opposed to 'visual character' described in **Section 3**) is not about the visual appearance of the Site, but has to do with the number, distribution and character of views towards, from or within the Site. An analysis of visual amenity allows conclusions to be reached about who may experience visual change, from where and to what degree those views will be affected by the Proposed Development.
- 4.2 This section describes the existing views; changes to views wrought by the proposed development are analysed in **Section 6**. An analysis of existing views and the 'receptors' likely to experience visual change is conducted in three steps described in turn below.

STEP ONE: DEFINING ZONES OF THEORETICAL AND PRIMARY VISIBILITY

- 4.3 The starting point for an assessment of visual amenity is a computer-generated ZTV. The ZTV is derived using digital landform height data only and therefore it does not account for the screening effects of intervening buildings, structures or vegetation, but it does give a prediction of the areas that, theoretically, may be able to experience visual change; it thus provides the basis for more detailed field assessment.
- 4.4 The ZTV is then refined by walking and driving local roads, rights of way and other publicly accessible viewpoints to arrive at a more accurate, 'field-tested' zone of primary visibility (ZPV). The ZPV is where views of the proposed development would normally be close-ranging and open, whether in the public or private domain, on foot, cycling or in a vehicle. In this instance, the field assessment was undertaken under the supervision of a Chartered Landscape Architect in January 2025 in good weather conditions and therefore confidently predicts the extent of wintertime views.
- 4.5 Beyond the ZPV lies a zone of visibility that is less open, being either partly screened or filtered. Views from within this zone would include the proposal – it may not be immediately noticeable but once recognised would be a perceptible addition to the view.
- 4.6 **Plan EDP 5** illustrates the findings of the visual appraisal from which it can be seen that the ZPV extends as follows:
- To the north, views are immediately limited by the level changes between the site and the adjacent land to the north and west. In addition, trees and the adjacent industrial units further curtail views and therefore the ZPV extends to no further than the adjacent access road;
 - To the south, immediate views towards the site are mostly limited to road users of the extensive A465 and associated hill form. Whilst views do exist from the hilltops to the south within 1km of the Site, these vantage points are accessed via potentially

dangerous and otherwise impractical means and therefore do not represent a likely receptor group. The vantage points are further discounted due to the operational waste management site and closed opencast mining site. The exception of these limited views is the NCN 46 which runs c. 30m below the Site, situated between the A465 and the neighbouring council-owned land;

- To the east, views are mostly contained given the residential unit's wall and narrow views owing to vegetation, Industrial units and the change elevation and direction of Common Road; and
- To the west, most views are filtered by the bund/retaining wall and neighbouring unit's boundary planting with the exception of the south-west corner. One additional viewpoint lies within the ZPV to the northwest of the Site which offers a limited filtered view.

STEP TWO: DEFINING RECEPTOR GROUPS

- 4.7 Within the ZPV and wider area, the people ('receptors') likely to experience visual change can be considered as falling into a number of discernible groups.

Rights of Way Users

- 4.8 The majority of nearby PRoW are found to the west of the Site facilitating access from the nearby Dowlais top and Pant residential areas through the top pond recreation area and up towards the BBNP, of these there is a single PRoW that is partially within the ZPV and within 1km of the Site. South of the Site hosts a cluster of PRoW routes that traverse the hills in which the waste management site and opencast coalmine are found.
- 4.9 PRoW users are typically given a high sensitivity due to their dominant recreational usage. Users of the following PRoW routes have been identified as part of this assessment and those considered which are likely to have some intervisibility with the proposals are ascribed a medium sensitivity owing to the wider built and industrial character within which the Site sits.
- 4.10 PRoW within the ZPV and wider area comprise:
- Between 500m - 1km to the west, there is a network of paths that sits outside of the ZTV for the most part. **Photoviewpoint EDP 4** is a representative view from PRoW 105/10 is within this group however as there is a small amount of overlap with the ZTV; and
 - To the south and east, footpaths within the ZPV were not considered due to their general inaccessibility and proximity to the A465 road works, opencast coal mine and waste management site.

Road Users

- 4.11 Views towards the Site from roads are limited to the south of the Site, given the surrounding topography and built form (construction on council owned site). Road users to the north have the most visibility as the Site's entrance is located off the Dowlais Top trunk road.
- 4.12 Users of A roads are typically given a low sensitivity while users of minor roads and lanes are generally given a medium sensitivity. Users of the following road routes have been considered as part of this assessment.

A Roads

A465 Heads of the Valleys Road

- 4.13 Limited views are offered from the (onramp) slip road. It is considered that views on this part of road make up a small portion of the overall route and the road use is primarily at speed and for transit purposes. The sensitivity of this receptor group is therefore low.

Minor Roads

Common Road

- 4.14 The Common Road passes the site immediately to the north and offers the only road access directly into the Site's entrance. Users of this road will experience close range and direct views of the Site. Views of the site will be seen in context of the surrounding industrial warehouses, which desensitises the receptors along this route. The sensitivity of this receptor group is therefore low.

Other Users

National Cycle Network Route 46

- 4.15 **Photoviewpoint EDP 2** represents a view from NCN 46. NCN 46 passes by the south of the Site from the north-east to the west where it carries users over the entrance to the business park via a pedestrian bridge. The sensitivity of this receptor group is medium. The council yard site will filter most view from the south, however the bridge being higher than the rest of the path in the west will afford brief views from this vantage point. Views from the east are obscured by the existing residential properties within the Site boundary. Views of the Site will be seen in context of the surrounding industrial warehouses, which desensitises the receptors along this route. The sensitivity of this receptor group is therefore low.

Residential Dwellings/Groups

- 4.16 Views from private residential properties, although likely to be of high or in some cases, very high sensitivity to changes in the view, are not protected by national planning guidance or local planning policy. Accordingly, changes to the character, 'quality' and nature of private views are not a material planning consideration in the determination of a planning application. However, they remain relevant to this review regarding the predicted extent and nature of visual change. The Site is removed from settlements but there are individual properties in the vicinity of the Site.

Residential Property on Common Road

- 4.17 The closest property to the Site (*excluding those within the same ownership boundary*) is located c.28m north-east of the Site entrance. The baseline view available from this residence is mainly towards the northeast residential pocket of the Site. This property is attached to an industrial unit and sits within the context of the surrounding industrial estate. The property is accessed via an unnamed road and therefore no screening is present to the frontage of the property, in order to maintain view splays and afford safe access to and from the road. A c.5m tall evergreen hedge to the west appears to obscure any views into the Site entrance or into the property from the Site entrance, as depicted within **Photoviewpoint EDP 1**. The sensitivity for this receptor is considered medium. The residence is attached to an MOT garage and is surrounded by several detracting features. These include powerlines, a wind turbine, industrial sheds, and a fast road within its immediate context, all of which reduce the property's sensitivity as a receptor.

Residential Property on development edge (within the ownership boundary)

- 4.18 This residence is obscured to the west, where it has a boundary with the council owned site of highways use. The views in this direction are filtered through a thick c.5m tall evergreen hedge. To the north the house has a boundary with another property which is derelict and marked for demolition. A dilapidated concrete fence separates the house to the east from Common Road. The properties frontage and face onto the NCN 46 to the south.

STEP THREE: DEFINING REPRESENTATIVE VIEWPOINTS

- 4.19 Within the ZPV, there are individual points at which views towards the Site are gained. EDP has selected a number of viewpoints that are considered representative of the nature of the views from each of the receptor groups. The selection of the representative viewpoints is based on the principle that the assessment needs to test the 'worst case' scenario, and in selecting these viewpoints, EDP has sought to include:
- A range of viewpoints from all points of the compass where views are present, north, south, east and west,
 - A range of viewpoints from distances at close quarters at the Site boundary; and
 - Viewpoints from all the above receptor groups.
- 4.20 The representation of views is supported by five photo viewpoints (PVP), their locations are illustrated on **Plan EDP 5**. Photographs from the selected viewpoints are contained in **Appendix EDP 2**. The purpose of these viewpoints is to aid the assessment of visual receptor(s). These viewpoints are not assessed separately.

Table EDP 4.1: Summary of Representative Photo viewpoints

PVP No.	Location	Grid Reference	Distance and Direction of View	Reason(s) for Selection and Sensitivity of Receptor
1	NCN 46 looking west (including Common Road)	308039, 208463	79m; looking west	Road users, NCN users residents; Medium/Low
2	NCN 46 looking east	307834, 208347	113m; looking north-east	NCN users; Medium
3	Heads of the valley's road A465 slip road looking north	307911, 208344	80m; looking north	Road users; Low
4	PRoW 105/10 Looking south-east	307294, 208717	690m; south-east	ProW users; Medium
5	Common Road looking south	307902, 208511	55m; looking south	Road users; Low

Section 5

The Proposed Development and Mitigation

- 5.1 Having defined the baseline conditions in **Section 3** and **4**, this report now reviews the proposed development and (in **Section 6**) undertakes an assessment of the likely effects in landscape terms.

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 5.2 Details of the development proposals include:

- The erection of a freestanding McDonald's Restaurant with 'drive-thru' facility, car parking, landscaping and associated works. The proposed building is situated towards the south-western edge of the Site, which is contained by an existing embankment and existing tree belts to the north;
- Soft landscaping to the perimeter of the Proposed Development and within areas to the sides of the access road, to enhance and increase biodiversity, comprising native trees, hedgerows and additional ornamental species;
- Non-vehicular access to the NCN 46 directly from the Site;
- Access via the existing Common Road, and off the A465 via Pengarnddu industrial estate; and
- Site boundary will be designed with appropriate space for meaningful planting to meet any mitigation requirements.

OVERALL LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

- 5.3 The baseline features of the Site and its immediate context do not lend themselves to development, in the sense that, unfortunately, due to the quality, location, and long-term feasibility, most of the vegetation will be removed to facilitate the development.

PROPOSED LANDSCAPE MITIGATION AND ENHANCEMENT

- 5.4 The baseline state of the Site will be improved to provide attractive planting, opportunities for wildlife and to introduce better ecological functionality of the Site.
- 5.5 Consistent with a landscape-led approach, EDP's landscape team has provided continuous feedback from the early stages of this LVA process, recommending layout responses to avoid or minimise potential landscape and visual effects when considering the more detailed findings of our field assessment. Thus, the scheme proposals incorporate a degree of integrated mitigation as discussed, to avoid or reduce potential landscape and visual effects.

5.6 With reference to the landscape proposals, the key elements that inform the landscape strategy are as follows:

- Trees and scrub on the earth bund will be replaced with better suited trees of size and age, new planting to gap-up fragmented areas and references to the local landscape and culture brought in through species selection;
- Tree planting to improve Site biodiversity and localised habitat connectivity, providing enhanced connections to the wider Green Infrastructure (GI) network, particularly to the west where the planting will run alongside the Lidl retail car park planting installation;
- Addressing the need for a residential screen and appropriate view splay to adjacent property and residences within the Site boundary;
- A Pembrokeshire style hedge bank will be created along the northern edge of the Site, native whips and local stone will create additional wildlife benefits and be a visual reference to wider Welsh landscape heritage;
- Proposed planting within the development would include pockets of ornamental shrub planting to create an aesthetically pleasing urban environment to improve and contribute to the local landscape character within the Site's industrial setting; and
- A new pedestrian/cycle link through native scrub, flowering grasses and select trees around the SuDS basin will introduce better connections to the cycle path and open up views from Common Road into the landscaped area, helping to soften the business park and neighbouring industrial estate's dominating visual character.

Section 6 Summary of Effects

INTRODUCTION

- 6.1 In this section, the predicted effects on landscape character and visual amenity are summarised. The assessment uses the thresholds for magnitude, sensitivity and significance defined at **Appendix EDP 1** as a guide, but moderated where appropriate with professional judgement. Professional judgement is an important part of the assessment process; it is neither 'pro' nor 'anti' development but acknowledges that development may result in beneficial change as well as landscape harm. The assessment also takes account of the likely effectiveness of any proposed mitigation.

CONSTRUCTION EFFECTS

- 6.2 The magnitude of change will be very high (on both the Site itself and immediate context) and when combined with the low sensitivity of the Site, will result in a **major/moderate** adverse level of effect. The effect will, however, be temporary and extend only for the duration of the construction process.

PREDICTED EFFECTS ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Effects Upon the Site (Year 1 and Operation)

- 6.3 Following construction, the predicted effects consider suitable and appropriate management of existing and proposed landscape features, undertaken in accordance with a landscape management plan or similar.
- 6.4 It is a consequence of the nature of the development proposed that the visual and sensory character of the Site would change moderately due to landscape plan implementation. The magnitude of change is not an indication of bad design but is to be expected as the result of the change of use of any brownfield site to incorporate a new McDonalds restaurant alongside ancillary infrastructure. However, as discussed in **Section 4**, due to the enclosed nature of the Site, the nature of its surroundings, it is unlikely that the introduction of the Proposed Development would have a detrimental effect on the wider area's visual character.
- 6.5 The changes predicted to occur on the dimensions that contribute to the character of the Site are described below and evaluated overall. Predicted effects are structured using the same format used to describe the Site in **Sections 1** and **3** of this LVA:
- The physical landscape: The Proposed Development is likely to yield some change to the topographical and geological structure of the Site due to the nature of construction. Drainage features, and localised variations to levels will occur, though the Site is mostly flat, and set into an embankment up from the A road, that has an elevation change between the site and the neighbouring council owned property to the

south, at present this elevation differential is poorly defined. The baseline of the Site will change to provide a consistent and clear elevation change treated with landscaped edges and a secure fence to delineate two properties from one another;

- The Site's visual and sensory character: The visual and sensory character of the Site would change from a mostly brownfield site with a derelict property and some out buildings in disrepair to a new commercial development with a new link provided off road to the national cycle network. The appearance of the proposed scheme will lead to betterment in terms of Site character overall. The derelict property will be demolished and replaced with green space and drainage features; the existing security fencing will be removed from the access and a landscaped entrance will be implemented. The vehicular access, parking and building will be set back from the access road and the landscape elements will be managed to ensure the green infrastructure on-site is healthy and thrives in the longer term. The surrounding vegetated bund will be removed but the change in level between the adjacent Lidl parking area and the Site will continue to provide enclosure, as would the property to the south, though the level of screening is dependent on materials stockpiled, however a 1.8 meter fence is also proposed between the two properties. The sensory aspect of the Site will be impacted through activity, noise and traffic expected during operation;
- Landscape fabric and habitats: There will be vegetation removal to facilitate the development, namely on the bund and along the eastern edge. This change will give rise to suitable space and layout considerations for new planting and is seen as a positive change in the round. Proposed native planting and landscaped edges will be implemented at the peripheries of the Site and new tree planting will break up the area of hardstanding which will be formalised for parking. The Site's limited amount of vegetation, although lost, has not been assessed as having notable ecological value;
- Historic landscape character: The Site has no known historic value other than general association with the area's industrial heritage. Where possible the use of select species and hard landscape areas will be sensitive to the wider area's geological attributes and flora of the local area; and
- Cultural connections: The Site has no known cultural value other than general association with the area's industrial heritage. The new development will not obscure views out towards anything other than the industrial units north of the Site and the A465, council owned yard and parts of the waste management site. The proposed landscape strategy could provide positive benefits in this regard through the introduction of species of local provenance.

6.6 On balance, therefore, the overall magnitude of change on the Site character is balanced by the reuse and redevelopment on an otherwise brownfield site with uninhabitable buildings which have fallen into disrepair. The landscape elements of the Site are self-seeded, and the health of the bund planting is unlikely to thrive with no management. The magnitude of change on the character of the Site is considered high beneficial overall. The magnitude of change combined with the low sensitivity results in a **moderate** beneficial level of effect at Year 1 and Year 15.

PREDICTED EFFECTS ON THE CHARACTER OF THE SITE'S SURROUNDINGS

- 6.7 Within the baseline, the Site's context and its surroundings were acknowledged to have been mostly congruent within the LANDMAP assessment on the whole. The area immediately surrounding the Site would be subject to the greatest change to the defined landscape character and this is predicted to diminish quickly with distance due, primarily, to intervening vegetation, landform and the built environment. The effects on the immediate area are summarised below. The overall sensitivity of the Site's immediate local context was judged to be low.
- 6.8 In this assessment of the effects on the landscape character of the Site's surroundings, it is important to consider the scale and extent of the likely change to the Site's context. The Proposed Development would sit within the context of a business park of which large sheds and warehouses are defining features. Whilst the development would yield changes to the Site itself, changes to the character of the Site's surroundings would be low. This is due, primarily, to the existing surroundings and the consideration of the boundary edges through the landscape strategy. Retention and replacement of key characteristic elements (such as boundary trees) and the limited visibility of the Site from the wider landscape means that effects of character are unlikely to be experienced beyond 30-40m of the Site boundary itself. This extent of effect is likely to be reduced at year 15 when the proposed vegetation becomes established. Visual containment is due to existing vegetation (within the business park and neighbouring industrial estate) and landform to the immediate south of the Site.
- 6.9 At construction and Year 1, the magnitude of change will be at its highest due to clearing of the Site, levelling of the terrain, and presence of new built form. However, the Site is relatively contained in its context and boundary treatments will be tied into existing vegetation. The magnitude of change on the immediate Site's surroundings is judged to be moderate when this is combined with the **low** sensitivity, this yields a **moderate/minor** neutral level of effect for Year 1.
- 6.10 In Year 15 the Site's boundaries will have increased vegetation which will obscure and filter views in. The scale and nature of the development will be in line with its surrounding context and therefore the magnitude of change on the immediate Site's surroundings is judged to be **low**. When this is combined with the low sensitivity, this yields a **minor**, neutral level of effect in year.

PREDICTED EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY

- 6.11 For all visual receptors identified within this section, the Proposed Development would result in short-term construction activity and long-term visual effects. Effects upon receptors are derived through the changes to the views experienced.
- 6.12 The predicted effects on visual amenity are summarised in **Table EDP 6.1**.

Table EDP 6.1: Summary of Visual Effects

Receptor/Photoviewpoint	Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change		Level of Effect	
		Year 1	Year 15	Year 1	Year 15
Photoviewpoint EDP 1 Road users NCN users, residents	Medium/ Low	Medium	Low	Moderate/ Minor	Minor
Photoviewpoint EDP 2 NCN users	Medium	Low	Low	Moderate/ Minor	Moderate/ Minor
Photoviewpoint EDP 3 Road users	low	Very low	Very low	Minor Negligible	Minor Negligible
Photoviewpoint EDP 4 PRoW users	High	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate
Photoviewpoint EDP 5 Road users	Low	Medium	Medium	Moderate/ Minor	Moderate/ Minor

Summary of Visual Effects

- 6.13 The following paragraphs summarise the likely effects on those receptor groups identified as having potential to experience change as a result of the proposals, as identified in **Section 4** of this LVA.

National Cycle Network Users

- 6.14 One National Cycle Route falls within the study area, namely NCN 46. This route is c.30m from the Site boundary at its closest point. A new link is proposed to connect the cycle route to the proposed development off road, and bike stands are incorporated into the layout to facilitate a rest stop for users of this route and provide safer, more sustainable access. The baseline view as illustrated by **Photoviewpoint EDP 2** includes a filtered view of the Site from the nearest, highest vantage point is contained as shown by (looking north-east). **Photoviewpoint EDP 1** (looking west). includes a dilapidated dwelling in the centre of the middle ground, another dwelling to the left of it (which will be retained), their associated concrete fence, and a small outcrop of trees next to the fence.
- 6.15 During construction, the users of the route are likely to perceive demolition and removal of vegetation and trees as well as the construction of the new building and associated landscape features. During operation at Year 1 and 15, the users of the route will see glimpsed and filtered views of the proposed built form for approximately 600m of the path. At its closest point, users of the route will see a cycle link via a new landscaped area in the first instance when approaching from the east.
- 6.16 The magnitude of change for this receptor group, when considered in proportion to the overall availability of views along the entire route, is deemed to be low. This combines with a moderate sensitivity for the users, yielding a beneficial **moderate** overall effect for users of the cycleway/footpath for Year 1 and a minor effect in Year 15 once landscaping is established and some softening of the build form is in effect.

Public Rights of Way Users

- 6.17 Within the immediate study area, Footpath 105/10 incorporates c.75m of theoretical visibility which equates to c.2% of the route measured from top pond to the border with the BBNP. This route is c.650m from the Site boundary at its closest point. The baseline view as illustrated by **Photoviewpoint EDP 4** includes A filtered view of the Site, it is difficult to distinguish the individual built form of the neighbouring Lidl unit and likely to be the case with new development on the Site as it sits within a lower elevation further obscuring viewing opportunities.
- 6.18 During construction, the users of the route are unlikely to perceive demolition or removal of vegetation, the construction of the new building and associated landscape features will potentially be visible during operation at Year 1 and 15, the users of the route may see glimpsed and filtered views of the proposed built form primarily consisting of roof outlines or signage. The presence of several dilapidated outbuildings and refuse piles along this section of footpath 105/10 has a desensitising effect on receptors to any limited views in the background. The high sensitivity combined with a moderate magnitude of change results in a **Major/Moderate** neutral effect. In Year 15. The high sensitivity combined with a low magnitude of change results in a **Moderate/Minor** neutral effect in Year 15.

Road Users

A465(Heads of the Valleys Road (south of the Site))

- 6.19 As established within **Section 3**, the A465 slip road passes below the southern boundary and travels in an east-west direction. The A road itself is obscured from view due to a large hill form. Views of the Site here will be visible in places, to the north and predicted to be filtered through the council owned site once construction activity has concluded. Intervisibility with the Site limited as this is a transitional view. The sensitivity, defined in the baseline is low. The magnitude of change for users of this road is also found to be low as the focus of drivers will be in the upcoming interchange. The views have been already desensitized by the surrounding industrial and retail units. The overall effect on users of route is therefore adverse, **Minor/Negligible** during construction and beneficial **Minor/Negligible** during Year 1 and Year 15.

Common Road

- 6.20 c. 300m of unclassified road where national speed limits are in effect, in and around the business park and neighbouring industrial estate found north of the Site is afforded direct views of the Site. Views are experienced at close range and at speed as the absence of consistent streetlights cause vehicles to fluctuate between 30mph and 60mph. The road extends alongside the northern edge of the A465 on higher elevation affording views of the surrounding hills. These views are punctuated by large warehouses and wind turbines prior to passing the Site when approaching from the east. The opposite approach is from the northwest the road winds around various pylons, outbuildings, and industrial sheds before passing the Site. The speed from this direction is slower due to the main interchange for the business park and industrial estate slowing traffic to 30mph.

- 6.21 The view when facing south-east from this direction (as illustrated in **Photoviewpoint EDP 5**) is dominated by the large barren hill of the A465. The middle ground shows the Site's entrance metal gates in the centre. To the left the residential portion of the Site is visible through a strip of deteriorated tree cover and dilapidated concrete fence. In the foreground to the right is the Lidl signage, and the red metal and brick fence of the neighbouring retail/industrial shed closes in the view from the left.
- 6.22 The effects of construction on receptors will be limited. Demolition of the grey residential unit the middle ground will temporarily increase the view to the A465 hill form. Construction activity will not be out of character on this stretch of road given the activity of the property to the south and the A465 construction projects. In Year 1 the views will change seeing the replacement of metal gates at the site's entrance with landscaping and entrance signage into the proposed development. The dilapidated concrete boundary and deteriorated tree screen will be replaced with hedging and appropriate trees increasing the view splay around the curve. Year 15 will see the background view to the A465 become filtered through vegetation screening and the restaurant building as well as additional signage.
- 6.23 Considering the context the magnitude of change for users of Common Road will be low, which combines with the low sensitivity, established within the baseline. The level of effect will therefore be **moderate/minor** and beneficial for construction, Year 1 and Year 15.

Residential Receptors

- 6.24 The property within the same ownership boundary, will be sold off after construction of the Site. It will experience the site through filtered views provided by landscape screening in Year 1 and 15. The property will be occupied within its new context of neighbouring a McDonalds site within the business park.
- 6.25 The property off Common Road currently has 1st and ground floor views toward the site's residential portion. The view includes 2 houses within the ownership boundary, one in disrepair. The Site's boundary is demarcated within this view by a dilapidated concrete fence.
- 6.26 During construction receptors will experience demolition of one building and the removal of low-quality vegetation. In Year 1 the installation of a hedge bank will soften views onto the site and new landscaping will screen the remaining residence. In Year 15 the established landscaping will screen out a majority of the site within the view. The medium sensitivity of this receptor along with a medium magnitude of change creates a beneficial **moderate** effect. In Year 15 the medium sensitivity with the low magnitude of effect correlated to an overall **minor** beneficial effect.

Section 7 Conclusions

- 7.1 EDP is an independent environmental consultancy and Registered Practice of the Landscape Institute specialising in the assessment of developments at all scales across the UK.
- 7.2 This report has summarised the findings of a comprehensive landscape data trawl and field appraisal undertaken by EDP's landscape team (**Sections 2, 3 and 4**). In **Section 5**, the Proposed Development is described with any proposed mitigation. **Section 6** undertakes an assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects having regard to the above and based on a combination of the thresholds set out in **Appendix EDP 1** coupled with professional judgement.
- 7.3 Those receptors most likely to experience change are the host LANDMAP aspect areas covering the Site itself, and landscape and visual receptors that fall within the immediate vicinity of the Site, which is extremely localised in this instance. These receptors include road users and users of the national cycle network.
- 7.4 The effect on both the Site character and the public routes is influenced by the baseline character of the site and its immediate surroundings; the Site is brownfield with industrial fencing used for security, and there are derelict buildings on-site. The redevelopment of this small parcel of land is seen as beneficial in the round. Landscape treatments and links to the national cycle network are clear benefits for people and for wildlife, which the infrastructure associated with the proposed building use appears to be set down in the landscape and the extent of likely visual effects is minimised as a result. Where the building and signage will be seen, it will be seen in the context of existing industrial units which are significantly larger in scale than the building proposed.
- 7.5 The character of the Site and its wider context is largely defined by its past and present uses, of which many detractors are found, including the road network, wind turbines, large industrial sheds, electricity pylons and large street lighting columns. These desensitise the Site to change, particularly when considering the commercial development that forms the proposals.
- 7.6 Visually, the Site is extremely well contained, particularly to the north-east, given the level change between the Site and Lidl. Further north, industrial units and vegetation forms the backdrop of the view. To the south, the activity on the council compound below the site is expected to be in temporary use but the longer-term plans for this Site are unknown therefore the southern boundary of the proposed development aims to create a suitable separation from the compound and the road network beyond.
- 7.7 The proposals contain mitigation measures, introduced throughout the design process, to integrate the development into the existing fabric of the Site. Included in this is a new link to the NCN.

- 7.8 For the reasons outlined in this report, the proposals represent a small-scale commercial development on a brownfield site which has been sensitively designed/placed to integrate into the local context. Accordingly, this LVA concludes that the Site has the capacity for the development as proposed and that there is no 'in principle' or policy landscape or visual reason why the Site should not be developed.

Appendix EDP 1

EDP Assessment Methodology

INTRODUCTION

- A1.1 This section provides a methodology for landscape and visual impact assessment as used by EDP.

METHODOLOGY

- A1.2 The assessment methodology for assessing landscape and visual effects prepared by EDP is based on the following best practice guidance:
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – Third Edition (GLVIA3) (LI/IEMA, 2013);
 - An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (Natural England 2014); and
 - Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note (TNG) 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals (17 September 2019).
- A1.3 Other reference documents used to understand the baseline position in landscape terms comprise published landscape character assessments appropriate to the Site's location and the nature of the proposed development.
- A1.4 The nature of landscape and visual assessment requires both objective analysis and subjective professional judgement. Accordingly, the following assessment is based on the best practice guidance listed above, information and data analysis technique, it uses quantifiable factors wherever possible and subjective professional judgement where necessary and is based on clearly defined terms.

Landscape Assessment

- A1.5 Landscape effects derive from changes in the physical landscape fabric that may give rise to changes in its character and how this is experienced. These effects need to be considered in line with changes already occurring within the landscape and which help define the character of it.
- A1.6 Effects upon the wider landscape resource, i.e. the landscape surrounding the development, requires an assessment of visibility of the proposals from adjacent Landscape Character Areas, but remains an assessment of landscape character and not visual amenity.

Visual Assessment

- A1.7 The assessment of effects on visual amenity draws on the predicted effects of the development, the landscape and visual context, and the visibility and viewpoint analyses,

and considers the significance of the overall effects of the proposed development on the visual amenity of the main visual receptor types in the study area.

Identifying Landscape and Visual Receptors

A1.8 This assessment has sought to identify the key landscape and visual receptors that may be affected by the changes proposed.

A1.9 The assessment of effects on landscape as a resource in its own right draws on the description of the development, the landscape context and the visibility and viewpoint analysis to identify receptors, which, for the proposed development may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- The landscape fabric of the development site;
- The key landscape characteristics of the local context;
- The 'host' Landscape Character Area that contains the proposed development;
- The 'non-host' Landscape Character Areas surrounding the host character area and that may be affected by the proposals (where relevant); and
- Landscape designations on a national, regional or local level (where relevant).

A1.10 The locations and types of visual receptors within the defined study areas are identified from Ordnance Survey maps and other published information (such as walking guides), from fieldwork observations and from local knowledge provided during the consultation process. Examples of visual receptors may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Settlements and private residences;
- Users of National Cycle Routes and National Trails;
- Users of local/regional cycle and walking routes;
- Those using local rights of way – walkers, horse riders, cyclists;
- Users of open spaces with public access;
- People using major (motorways, A and B) roads;
- People using minor roads; and
- People using railways.

Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects

A1.11 The assessment of effects on the landscape resource includes consideration of the potential changes to those key elements and components that contribute towards recognised landscape character or the quality of designated landscape areas; these

features are termed landscape receptors. The assessment of visual amenity requires the identification of potential visual receptors that may be affected by the development. As noted, following the identification of each of these various landscape and visual receptors, the effect of the development on each of them is assessed through consideration of a combination of:

- Their overall sensitivity to the proposed form of development, which includes the susceptibility of the receptor to the change proposed and the value attached to the receptor; and
- The overall magnitude of change that will occur – based on the size and scale of the change, its duration and reversibility.

Defining Receptor Sensitivity

- A1.12 A number of factors influence professional judgement when assessing the degree to which a particular landscape or visual receptor can accommodate change arising from a particular development. Sensitivity is made up of judgements about the 'value' attached to the receptor, which is determined at baseline stage, and the 'susceptibility' of the receptor, which is determined at the assessment stage when the nature of the proposals, and therefore the susceptibility of the landscape and visual resource to change, is better understood.
- A1.13 Susceptibility indicates *"the ability of a defined landscape or visual receptor to accommodate the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences"*⁹. Susceptibility of visual receptors is primarily a function of the expectations and occupation or activity of the receptor. A degree of professional judgement applies in arriving at the susceptibility for both landscape and visual receptors and this is clearly set out in the technical appendices to this Assessment.
- A1.14 A location may have different levels of sensitivity according to the types of visual receptors at that location and any one receptor type may be accorded different levels of sensitivity at different locations.
- A1.15 With reference to Box 5.1 within GLVIA3 (page 84), **Table EDP A1.1** provides an indication of the criteria by which the overall value of a landscape receptor may be judged. Within the assessment, further reference to the Landscape Institute's 'TGN 02-21: Assessing landscape value outside national designations' may be applied where appropriate. **Table EDP A1.2** provides an indication of the criteria by which the overall susceptibility of the landscape in relation to the type of development proposed.

⁹ Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition Page 158

Table EDP A1.1: Assessment of Landscape Value

Landscape Character Area Value				
Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
Undesignated countryside and landscape features; absence of distinctive landscape characteristics; despoiled/-degraded by the presence of many landscape detractors.	Undesignated countryside and landscape features; few distinctive landscape characteristics; presence of landscape detractors.	Undesignated countryside and landscape features; some distinctive landscape characteristics; few landscape detractors.	Locally designated/valued countryside (e.g. Areas of High Landscape Value, Regional Scenic Areas) and landscape features; many distinctive landscape characteristics; very few landscape detractors.	Nationally/internationally designated/valued countryside and landscape features; strong/distinctive landscape characteristics; absence of landscape detractors.
Consideration of Other Value Criteria				
Condition/Quality				
A landscape with no or few areas intact and/or in poor condition.	A landscape with few areas that are intact and/or in a reasonable condition.	A landscape with some areas that are intact and/or in reasonable condition.	A landscape with many areas that are intact and/or in a reasonable condition.	A landscape with most areas intact and/or in good condition.
Scenic Quality				
A landscape of little or no aesthetic appeal.	A landscape of low aesthetic appeal.	A landscape of some aesthetic appeal.	A landscape of high aesthetic appeal.	A landscape of very high aesthetic appeal.
Rarity and Representativeness				
A landscape that does not contain rare landscape types or features.	A landscape that contains few distinct landscape types or features.	A landscape that contains distinct but not rare landscape types or features.	A landscape that contains one or more rare landscape types or features.	A landscape that is abundant in rare landscape types or features.
Conservation Interests				
A landscape with no or very limited cultural, geological and/or nature conservation content.	A landscape with limited cultural, geological and/or nature conservation content.	A landscape with some cultural, geological and/or nature conservation content.	A landscape with rich cultural, geological and/or nature conservation content.	A landscape with abundant cultural, geological and/or nature conservation content.

Landscape Character Area Value				
Recreation Value				
A landscape with no or very limited contribution to recreational experience.	A landscape with no or limited contribution to recreational experience.	A landscape that provides some contribution to recreational experience.	A landscape that provides a good contribution to recreational experience.	A distinct landscape that forms a strong contribution to recreational experience.
Perceptual Aspects				
A landscape with prominent detractors, probably part of the key characteristics.	A landscape with landscape detractors, and is not particularly wild, tranquil or unspoilt.	A landscape with few detractors that also retains some perceptual values.	A landscape with very few detractors that has a relatively wild, tranquil or unspoilt landscape.	A wild, tranquil or unspoilt landscape without noticeable detractors.
Cultural Associations				
A landscape without recorded associations.	A landscape with few recorded associations.	A landscape with some and/or moderately valued associations.	A landscape with numerous and/or highly valued associations.	A landscape of rich and/or very highly valued associations.
Overall Judgement of Landscape Value				
Very Low value – receptor largely reflects very low value criteria above.	Low value – receptor largely reflects low value criteria above.	Medium value – receptor largely reflects medium value criteria above.	High value – receptor largely reflects high value criteria above.	Very High value – receptor largely reflects very high value criteria above.

Table EDP A1.2: Assessment of Landscape Susceptibility

Very Low Susceptibility to Change	Low Susceptibility to Change	Medium Susceptibility to Change	High Susceptibility to Change	Very High Susceptibility to Change
Pattern, Complexity and Physical Susceptibility to Change to the Proposed Development				
A simple, monotonous and/or degraded landscape with common/indistinct features and minimal variation in landscape pattern.	A landscape with an occasionally intact pattern and/or with a low degree of complexity and with few features in reasonable condition.	A landscape with some intact pattern and/or with a degree of complexity and with features mostly in reasonable condition.	A landscape with mostly patterned/-textured or a simple but distinctive landscape and/or with high value features and essentially intact.	A strongly patterned/-textured or a simple but distinctive landscape and/or with high value features intact.
Visual Susceptibility to Change to the Proposed Development				
A very enclosed landscape that contains or strongly filters views, with an absence of visual landmarks and a lack of intervisibility with designated landscapes.	A predominantly enclosed landscape that contains or filters most views, with very few views of visual landmarks or intervisibility with designated landscapes.	A partially enclosed landscape with some visual containment and filtering, possible limited intervisibility with visual landmarks and designated landscapes.	An open landscape with intervisibility and limited visual filtering or enclosure. Prominent visual landmarks may be present, and/or intervisibility with designated landscapes may occur.	An open or exposed landscape with extensive intervisibility and no or very limited visual filtering or enclosure. Prominent visual landmarks are present, and/or intervisibility with designated landscapes occurs.

Very Low Susceptibility to Change	Low Susceptibility to Change	Medium Susceptibility to Change	High Susceptibility to Change	Very High Susceptibility to Change
Experiential Susceptibility to Change to the Proposed Development				
A landscape with prominent visual and/or aural intrusion and close relationship with large scale built development/infrastructure. A landscape that contains many light sources and essentially suffers from widespread light pollution.	A busy landscape with frequent visual and/or aural intrusion and nearby relationship with large scale built development/- infrastructure. A landscape that contains frequent light sources and suffers from light pollution.	A partially tranquil landscape with limited visual and/or aural intrusion, some relationship with built development/ infrastructure may be present. A landscape that contains some light sources.	A tranquil landscape with limited visual and/or aural intrusion, some relationship with built development/ - infrastructure may be present. A landscape that contains few light sources.	A very tranquil, wild or remote landscape with little or no sense of visual or aural intrusion. A landscape that contains very few light sources and provides dark skies.
Overall Judgement of Susceptibility to Change to the Proposed Development				
Very Low susceptibility – receptor largely reflects very low criteria above.	Low susceptibility – receptor largely reflects low criteria above.	Medium value – receptor largely reflects medium criteria above.	High susceptibility – receptor largely reflects high criteria above.	Very High susceptibility – receptor largely reflects very high criteria above.

A1.16 **Table EDP A1.3** provides an indication of the criteria by which the overall sensitivity of the landscape resource is judged within this assessment and considers both value and susceptibility independently.

Table EDP A1.3: Assessment of Landscape Sensitivity

		Susceptibility of Landscape Receptor				
		Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
Receptor Value	Very High	Very High	Very High/High	High	High/Medium	Medium
	High	Very High/High	High	High/Medium	Medium	Medium/Low
	Medium	High	High/Medium	Medium	Medium/Low	Low
	Low	High/Medium	Medium	Medium/Low	Low	Low/Very Low
	Very Low	Medium	Medium/Low	Low	Low/Very Low	Very Low

A1.17 For visual receptors, judgements of susceptibility and value are closely interlinked considerations. For example, the most valued views are those that people go and visit because of the available view, and it is at those viewpoints that their expectations will be highest and thus most susceptible to change.

A1.18 **Table EDP A1.4** provides an indication of the criteria by which the overall sensitivity of a visual receptor is judged within this assessment and considers both value and susceptibility independently.

Table EDP A1.4: Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Category	Visual Receptor Criteria
Very High	Designed view (which may be to or from a recognised heritage asset or other important viewpoint), or where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience. Key promoted viewpoint, e.g., interpretative signs. References in literature and art and/or guidebooks tourist maps. Protected view recognised in planning policy designation. Visual receptors with a very high susceptibility to change may include those with views from residential properties, especially from rooms normally occupied in waking or daylight hours; national PROW, e.g. National Trails and nationally designated countryside/landscape features with public access, which people might visit purely to experience the view; and visitors to heritage assets of national importance.

Category	Visual Receptor Criteria
High	View of clear value but may not be formally recognised, e.g. framed view of high scenic value, or destination hill summits. It may also be inferred that the view is likely to have value, e.g. to local residents. Visual receptors with a high susceptibility to change are considered to be those whose attention or interest is focussed on their surroundings and may include those with views from recreational receptors where there is some appreciation of the landscape, e.g., golf and fishing; local PRoW, access land and National Trust land, also panoramic viewpoints marked on maps; road routes promoted in tourist guides for their scenic value.
Medium	View is not promoted or recorded in any published sources and may be typical of the views experienced from a given receptor. Visual receptors with a medium susceptibility to change may include people engaged in outdoor sport other than appreciation of the landscape, e.g. football and rugby, or road users on minor routes passing through rural or scenic areas.
Low	View of clearly lesser value than similar views experienced from nearby visual receptors that may be more accessible. Visual receptors with a low susceptibility to change may include road users on main road routes (motorways/A roads) and users of rail routes or people at their place of work (where the place of work may be in a sensitive location). Also views from commercial buildings where views of the surrounding landscape may have some limited importance.
Very Low	View affected by many landscape detractors and unlikely to be valued. Visual receptors with a very low susceptibility to change may include people at their place of work, indoor recreational or leisure facilities or other locations where views of the wider landscape have little or no importance.

A1.19 **Tables EDP A1.1 to A1.4** offer a template for assessing overall sensitivity of any landscape or visual receptor as determined by combining judgements of their susceptibility to the type of change or development proposed and the value attached to the landscape as set out at paragraph 5.39 of GLVIA3. However, the narrative in this report may demonstrate that assessment of overall sensitivity can change on a case-by-case basis.

A1.20 For example, a high susceptibility to change and a low value may result in a medium overall sensitivity, unless it can be demonstrated that the receptor is unusually susceptible or is in some particular way more valuable. A degree of professional judgement applies in arriving at the overall sensitivity for both landscape and visual receptors.

Magnitude of Change

A1.21 The magnitude of any landscape or visual change is determined through a range of considerations particular to each receptor. As set out within GLVIA3 (page 39), the following steps are considered in defining the magnitude of change.

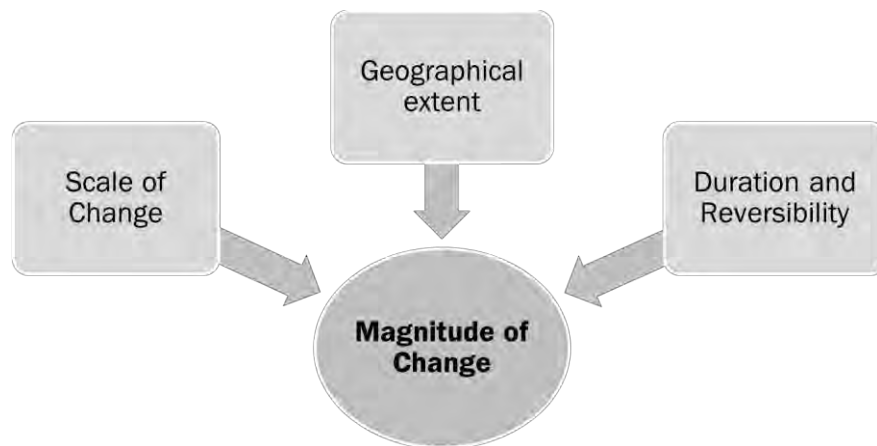


Figure EDP A2.1: Assessing the magnitude of change.

A1.22 Receptor locations from which views of the proposed development are not likely to occur will receive no change and therefore no effect. With reference to the ZTV and site survey, the magnitude of change is defined for receptor locations from where visibility of the proposed development is predicted to occur.

A1.23 **Table EDP A1.5** provides an indication of the criteria by which the size/scale of change at a landscape or visual receptor is judged within this assessment.

Table EDP A1.5: Landscape and Visual Receptor Size/Scale of Change Criteria

Category	Landscape Receptor Criteria	Visual Receptor Criteria
Large Scale 	Total loss of or major alteration to key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline condition. Addition of elements which strongly conflict with the key characteristics of the existing landscape.	There would be a substantial change to the baseline, with the proposed development creating a new focus and having a defining influence on the view.
	Notable loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline condition. Addition of elements that are prominent and may conflict with the key characteristics of the existing landscape.	The proposed development will be clearly noticeable, and the view would be fundamentally altered by its presence.
	Partial loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline condition. Addition of elements that may be evident but do not necessarily conflict with the key characteristics of the existing landscape.	The proposed development will form a new and recognisable element within the view which is likely to be recognised by the receptor.
	Minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline landscape. Addition of elements that may not be uncharacteristic within the existing landscape.	The proposed development will form a minor constituent of the view being partially visible or at sufficient distance to be a small component.

Category	Landscape Receptor Criteria	Visual Receptor Criteria
 Small Scale	Barely discernible loss or alteration to key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline landscape. Addition of elements not uncharacteristic within the existing landscape.	The proposed development will form a barely noticeable component of the view, and the view whilst slightly altered would be similar to the baseline situation.

A1.24 **Table EDP A1.6** provides an indication of the criteria by which the geographical extent of the area affected is judged within this assessment.

Table EDP A1.6: Geographical Extent Criteria

Category	Landscape Receptors	Visual Receptor Criteria
Largest Smallest	Large scale effects influencing several landscape types or character areas.	Direct views at close range with changes over a wide horizontal and vertical extent.
	Effects at the scale of the landscape type or character areas within which the proposal lies.	Direct or oblique views at close range with changes over a notable horizontal and/or vertical extent.
	Effects within the immediate landscape setting of the Site.	Direct or oblique views at medium range with a moderate horizontal and/or vertical extent of the view affected.
	Effects at the Site level (within the development Site itself).	Oblique views at medium or long range with a small horizontal/vertical extent of the view affected.
	Effects only experienced on parts of the Site at a very localised level.	Long range views with a negligible part of the view affected.

A1.25 The third, and final, factor, in determining the predicted magnitude of change is duration and reversibility. Duration and reversibility are separate but linked considerations. Duration is judged according to the defined terms set out below, whereas reversibility is a judgement about the prospects and practicality of the particular effect being reversed in, for example, a generation. The categories used in this assessment are set out below.

Duration

- Long-term (15 years+);
- Medium to long-term (10 to 15 years);
- Medium-term (5 to 10 years);
- Short-term (1 year to 5 years); or
- Temporary (less than 12 months).

Reversibility

- Permanent with unlikely restoration to original state, e.g. major road corridor, power station, urban extension, etc.;
- Permanent with possible conversion to original state, e.g. agricultural buildings, retail units;
- Partially reversible to a different state, e.g. mineral workings;
- Reversible after decommissioning to a similar original state, e.g. wind energy development; or
- Quickly reversible, e.g. temporary structures.

A1.26 With consideration of the judgements set out above, **Table EDP A1.7** combines these judgements to provide the overall criteria by which the magnitude of change may be judged. While not all of the criteria may apply, the size/scale, geographical extent criteria and the duration/reversibility of effects on receptors are taken together to form a reasoned assessment of the magnitude of change. The overall magnitude of change is derived using professional judgement.

Table EDP A1.7: The Assessment of the Overall Magnitude of Change

Category	Receptor Criteria
Very High	Total loss of, or major alteration to key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline condition. Addition of elements which strongly conflict with the key characteristics of the existing landscape. The proposed development would create a new focus and have a defining influence on the view. Landscape and visual effects are typically large in scale, resulting in a permanent and irreversible change, influencing several landscape types or character areas. Visual changes would be experienced in direct, close ranging views with changes over a wide horizontal and vertical extent.
High	Notable loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline condition. Addition of elements that are prominent and may conflict with the key characteristics of the existing landscape. The proposed development would be clearly noticeable, and the view would be fundamentally altered by its presence. Direct or oblique views at close range with changes over a notable horizontal and/or vertical extent. Notable landscape and visual effects may be experienced in the medium to long-term, with possible conversion to original state, at the scale of the landscape type or character area/s within which the proposal lies.

Category	Receptor Criteria
Medium	Partial loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline condition. Addition of elements that may be evident but do not necessarily conflict with the key characteristics of the existing landscape within the immediate setting of the Site. The proposed development would form a new and recognisable element within the view which is likely to be recognised by the receptor. Visual change would be experienced in direct or oblique views at medium range with a moderate horizontal and/or vertical extent of the view affected. Effects may be partially reversible to a different state, being experienced in the medium term.
Low	Minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline landscape. Addition of elements, largely at the Site level, which may not be uncharacteristic within the existing landscape. The proposed development would form a minor constituent of an oblique view, being partially visible or at sufficient distance to be a small component at medium or long range and with a small horizontal/vertical extent of the view affected. The duration of the change may be short-term, being reversible to a similar original state.
Very Low	Barely discernible loss or alteration to key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline landscape. Addition of elements, experienced on parts of the Site at a very localised level, not uncharacteristic within the existing landscape. The proposed development would form a barely noticeable component of the view, often being seen as a small component in a long-range view where, although slightly altered, the change would be similar to the baseline situation. Effects may be temporary and quickly reversible to the original state of the baseline context.

Significance of Effect

A1.27 The purpose of the EIA process is to identify the significant environmental effects (both beneficial and adverse) of development proposals. Schedule 4 to the EIA Regulations specifies the information to be included in all environmental statements, which should include a description of:

“The description of the likely significant effects ...should cover the direct effects and any indirect, secondary, cumulative, transboundary, short-term, medium-term and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of the development.”

A1.28 In order to consider the likely significance of any effect, the sensitivity of each receptor is combined with the predicted magnitude of change to determine the significance of effect, with reference also made to the geographical extent, duration and reversibility of the effect within the assessment. Having taken such a wide range of factors into account when assessing sensitivity and magnitude at each receptor, the significance of effect can be derived by combining the sensitivity and magnitude in accordance with the matrix in **Table EDP A1.8**.

Table EDP A1.8: Level of Effects Matrix

Overall Sensitivity	Overall Magnitude of Change				
	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
Very High	Very Substantial	Substantial	Major	Major/- Moderate	Moderate
High	Substantial	Major	Major/- Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/- Minor
Medium	Major	Major/- Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/- Minor	Minor
Low	Major/- Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/- Minor	Minor	Minor/- Negligible
Very Low	Moderate	Moderate/- Minor	Minor	Minor/- Negligible	Negligible

A1.29 In certain cases, where additional factors may arise, a further degree of professional judgement may be applied when determining whether the overall change in the view will be significant or not. For example, in cases where a moderate effect is experienced by a high or very high sensitivity receptor, this may be considered to be significant. Similarly, where a moderate effect is experienced by a very low sensitivity receptor, this may not be considered significant. Where this occurs, further explanation is given within the assessment.

Definition of Effects

A1.30 Taking into account the levels of effect described above, and with regard to effects being either adverse or beneficial, the following table represents a description of the range of effects likely at any one receptor.

Table EDP A1.9: Definition of Effect

Category	Definition of Adverse Effects	Definition of Beneficial Effects
Very Substantial	Typically, the landscape or visual receptor is very highly sensitive with the proposals representing a very high adverse magnitude of change. The changes would be at complete variance with the landscape character and would permanently diminish the integrity of a valued landscape or view.	The removal of substantial existing incongruous landscape or visual elements and the introduction or restoration of highly valued landscape elements or built form which would reinforce local landscape character and substantially improve landscape condition and visual amenity.
Substantial	Typically, the landscape or visual receptor has a very high to high sensitivity with the proposals representing a very high to high adverse magnitude of change to the view or landscape resource. Changes would result in a fundamental change to the landscape resource or visual amenity.	The removal of existing incongruous landscape/visual elements and the introduction or restoration of some valued landscape or visual elements would complement landscape character and improve landscape condition and improve the local visual amenity.

Category	Definition of Adverse Effects	Definition of Beneficial Effects
Major	Typically, the landscape or visual receptor has a high to medium sensitivity with the proposals representing a high to medium magnitude of change. The proposals would represent a material but non-fundamental change to the landscape resource or visual amenity.	The removal of some existing incongruous landscape elements and/or the introduction or restoration of some potentially valued landscape elements which reflect landscape character and result in some improvements to landscape condition and/or visual amenity.
Moderate	Typically, the landscape or visual receptor has a medium sensitivity with the proposals representing a medium magnitude of change. The proposals would result in a slight but non-material change to the landscape resource or visual amenity.	Some potential removal of incongruous landscape features or visual amenity, although more likely the existing landscape and/or resource is complemented by new landscape features or built features compliant with the local landscape and published landscape character assessments.
Minor	Typically, the landscape or visual receptor has a low sensitivity with the proposals representing a low magnitude of change. There would be a detectable but non-material change to the landscape resource or visual amenity.	The proposals would result in minimal positive change to the landscape or visual resource, either through perceptual or physical change, and any change would not be readily apparent but would be coherent with ongoing change and process, and coherent with published landscape character assessments.
Negligible	Typically, the landscape receptor has a very low sensitivity with the proposals resulting in very limited loss or alteration to the landscape resource or change to the view. There would be a barely perceptible change to the landscape resource or visual amenity.	There would be a barely perceptible positive or negative change to the landscape resource or visual amenity.

A1.31 Effects can be adverse (negative), beneficial (positive) or neutral. The landscape effects will be considered against the landscape baseline, which includes published landscape strategies or policies if they exist. Changes involving the addition of large-scale man-made objects are typically considered to be adverse as they are not usually actively promoted as part of published landscape strategies. Accordingly, the assessment of landscape effects as a result of these aspects of the proposed development will be assumed to be adverse, unless otherwise stated within the assessment.

Visual effects are more subjective as people's perception of development varies through the spectrum of negative, neutral and positive attitudes. In the assessment of visual effects, the assessor will exercise objective professional judgement in assessing the level of effects and, unless otherwise stated, will assume that all effects are adverse, thus representing the worst-case scenario.

Appendix EDP 2

Site Photographs/Representative Photoviewpoints (edp9069_d007a 05 September 2025 RBa/JWe)

Photoviewpoint EDP 1: Dowlais Top road looking west

Photoviewpoint EDP 2: Footpath (not PRoW but part of cycle network looking east)

Photoviewpoint EDP 3: Heads of the valley's road A465 slip road looking north

Photoviewpoint EDP 4: PRoW 105/10 Looking south-east

Photoviewpoint EDP 5: Dowlais Top road looking south



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length

Photoviewpoint EDP 2: Footpath (not PRoW but part of cycle network looking east)



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



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Registered office: 01285 740427
www.edp-uk.co.uk
info@edp-uk.co.uk

Grid Coordinates: 307834, 208347
Date and Time: 30/01/2025 @ 10:17
Projection: Cylindrical
Visualisation Type: 1

Horizontal Field of View: 39.6°
Height of Camera: 1.6m
Make, Model, Sensor: Sony A7 MK2, FFS
Enlargement Factor: 100% @ A3

Direction of View: NE
Distance: 113m
aOD: 380m
Focal Length: 50mm

date
drawing number
drawn by
checked
QA
05 SEPTEMBER 2025
edp9069_d007a
RBa
JWe
JFr

client
project title
drawing title
McDonald's Restaurants Ltd
McDonald's Merthyr Tydfil, Heads of the Valleys Road
Photoviewpoint EDP 2

Photoviewpoint EDP 3: Heads of the valley's road A465 slip road looking north



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



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Registered office: 01285 740427
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Grid Coordinates: 307911, 208344
Date and Time: 30/01/2025 @ 10:23
Projection: Cylindrical
Visualisation Type: 1

Horizontal Field of View: 86.6°
Height of Camera: 1.6m
Make, Model, Sensor: Sony A7 MK2, FFS
Enlargement Factor: 96% @ A1 width

Direction of View: N
Distance: 80m
aOD: 378m
Focal Length: 50mm

date
drawing number
drawn by
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QA

05 SEPTEMBER 2025
edp9069_d007a
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JWe
JFr

client
project title
drawing title

McDonald's Restaurants Ltd
McDonald's Merthyr Tydfil, Heads of the Valleys Road
Photoviewpoint EDP 3

Photoviewpoint EDP 4: PRoW 105/10 Looking south-east



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



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Registered office: 01285 740427
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Grid Coordinates: 307294, 208717
Date and Time: 30/01/2025 @ 11:22
Projection: Planar
Visualisation Type: 1

Horizontal Field of View: 39.6°
Height of Camera: 1.6m
Make, Model, Sensor: Sony A7 MK2, FFS
Enlargement Factor: 100% @ A3

Direction of View: SE
Distance: 690m
aOD: 391m
Focal Length: 50mm

date
drawing number
drawn by
checked
QA
05 SEPTEMBER 2025
edp9069_d007a
RBa
JWe
JFr

client
project title
drawing title
McDonald's Restaurants Ltd
McDonald's Merthyr Tydfil, Heads of the Valleys Road
Photoviewpoint EDP 4

Photoviewpoint EDP 5: Dowlais Top road looking south



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



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Registered office: 01285 740427
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Grid Coordinates: 307902, 208511
Date and Time: 30/01/2025 @ 11:45
Projection: Planar
Visualisation Type: 1

Horizontal Field of View: 39.6°
Height of Camera: 1.6m
Make, Model, Sensor: Sony A7 MK2, FFS
Enlargement Factor: 100% @ A3

Direction of View: S
Distance: 55m
aOD: 387m
Focal Length: 50mm

date
drawing number
drawn by
checked
QA
05 SEPTEMBER 2025
edp9069_d007a
RBa
JWe
JFr

client
project title
drawing title
McDonald's Restaurants Ltd
McDonald's Merthyr Tydfil, Heads of the Valleys Road
Photoviewpoint EDP 5

Plans

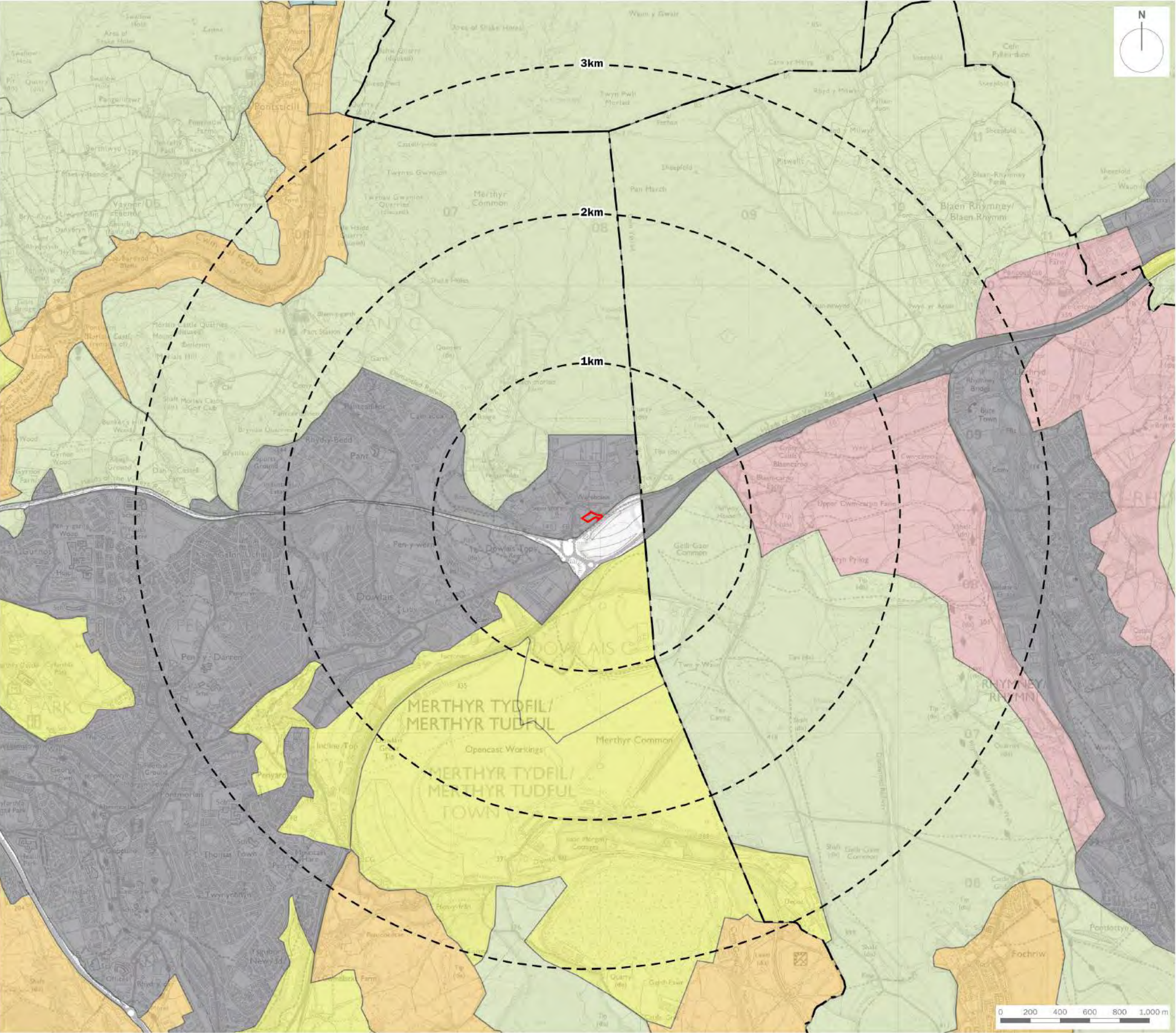
Plan EDP 1: Published Landscape character
(edp8922_d004a 05 September 2025 VMs/JWe)

Plan EDP 2: Site Character Plan
(edp9069_d002a 05 September 2025 VMs/JWe)

Plan EDP 3: Environmental Planning Considerations
(edp9069_d003a 05 September 2025 VMs/JWe)

Plan EDP 4: Site Location and Topographical Relief
(edp9069_d001a 05 September 2025 VMs/JWe)

Plan EDP 5: Findings of Visual Appraisal and Viewpoint Locations
(edp9069_d005a 05 September 2025 VMs/JWe)



Site Boundary

Range Rings (at 1km intervals)

Local Authority Boundary

Landmap - Cultural Landscape Services

Built Land

Developed Unbuilt Land

Exposed Upland/Plateau

Hills, Lower Plateau & Scarp Slopes

Inland Water (Including Associated Edge)

Upland Valleys

client

McDonald's Restaurants Ltd

project title

McDonald's Merthyr Tydfil, Heads of the Valleys Road

drawing title

Published Landscape Character

date

05 SEPTEMBER 2025

drawn by

VMS

drawing number

edp9069_d004a

checked

JWe

scale

1:25,000 @ A3

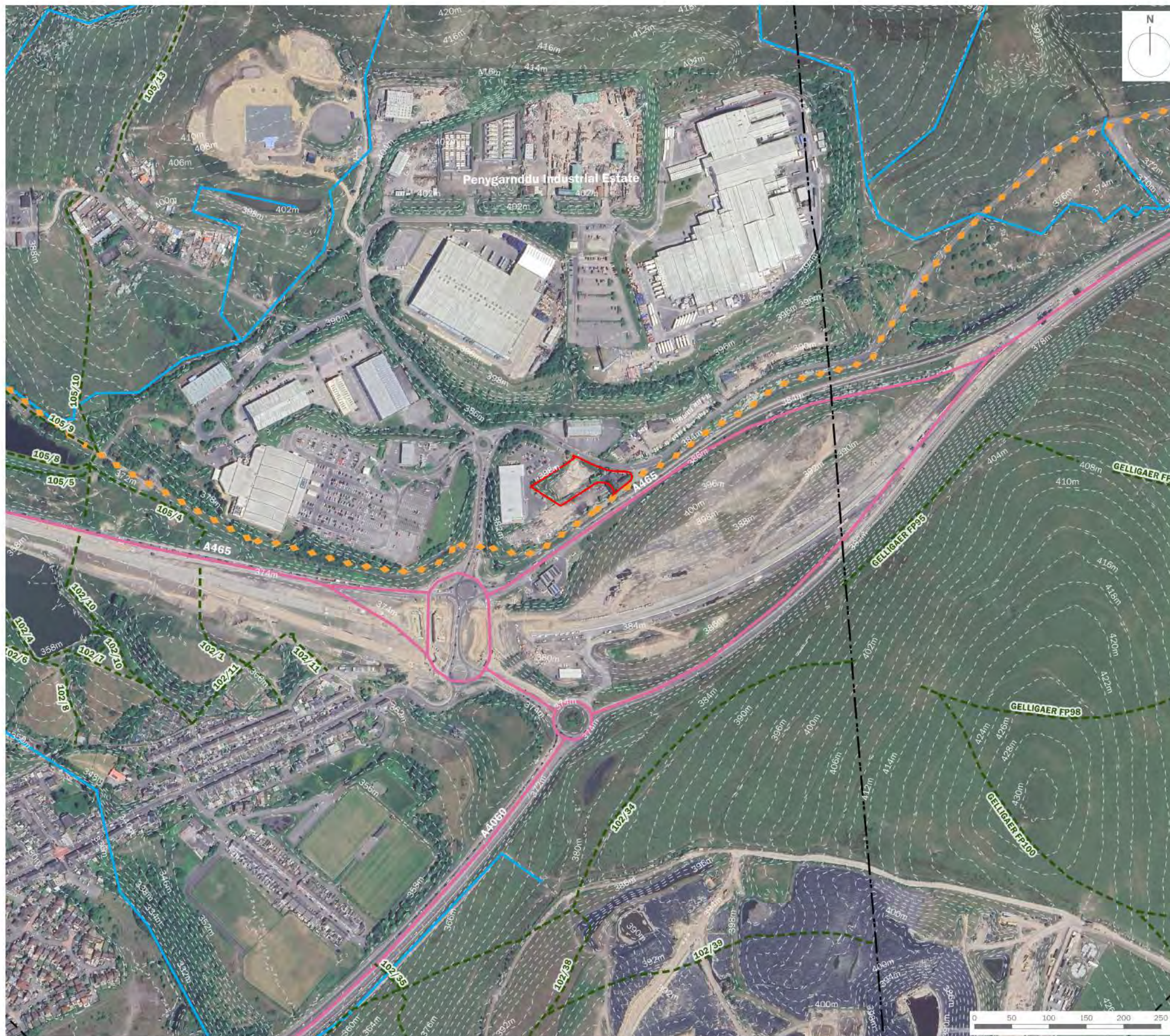
QA

JFr

edp

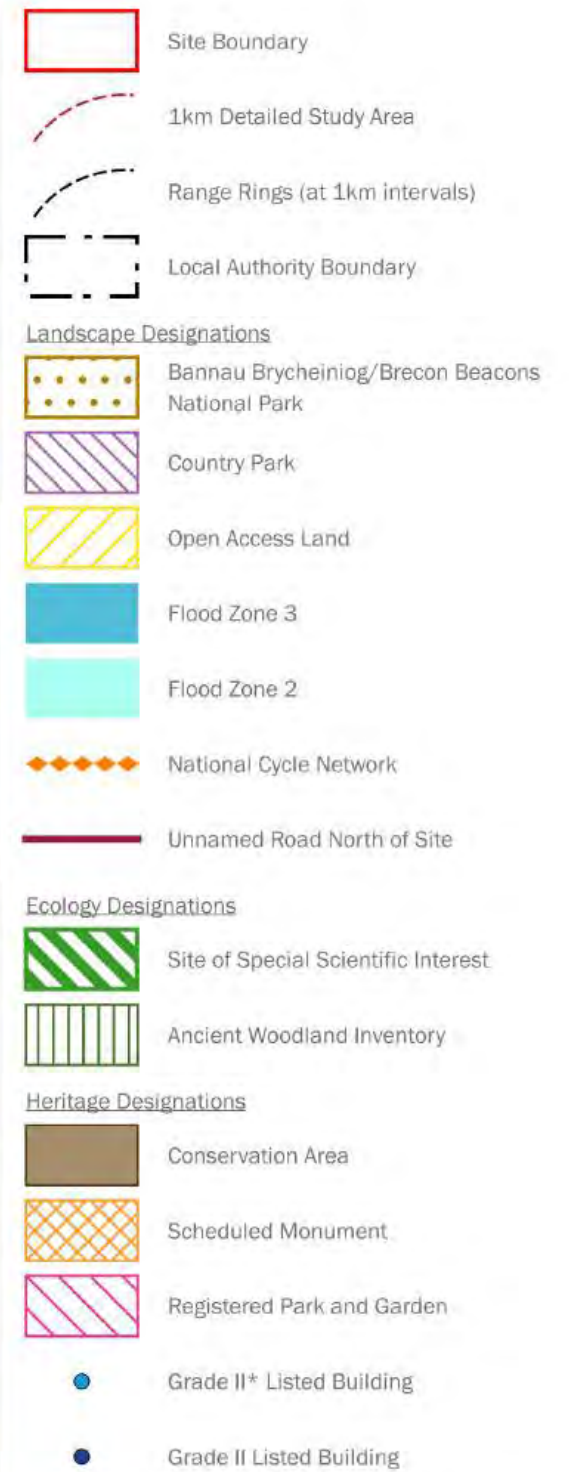
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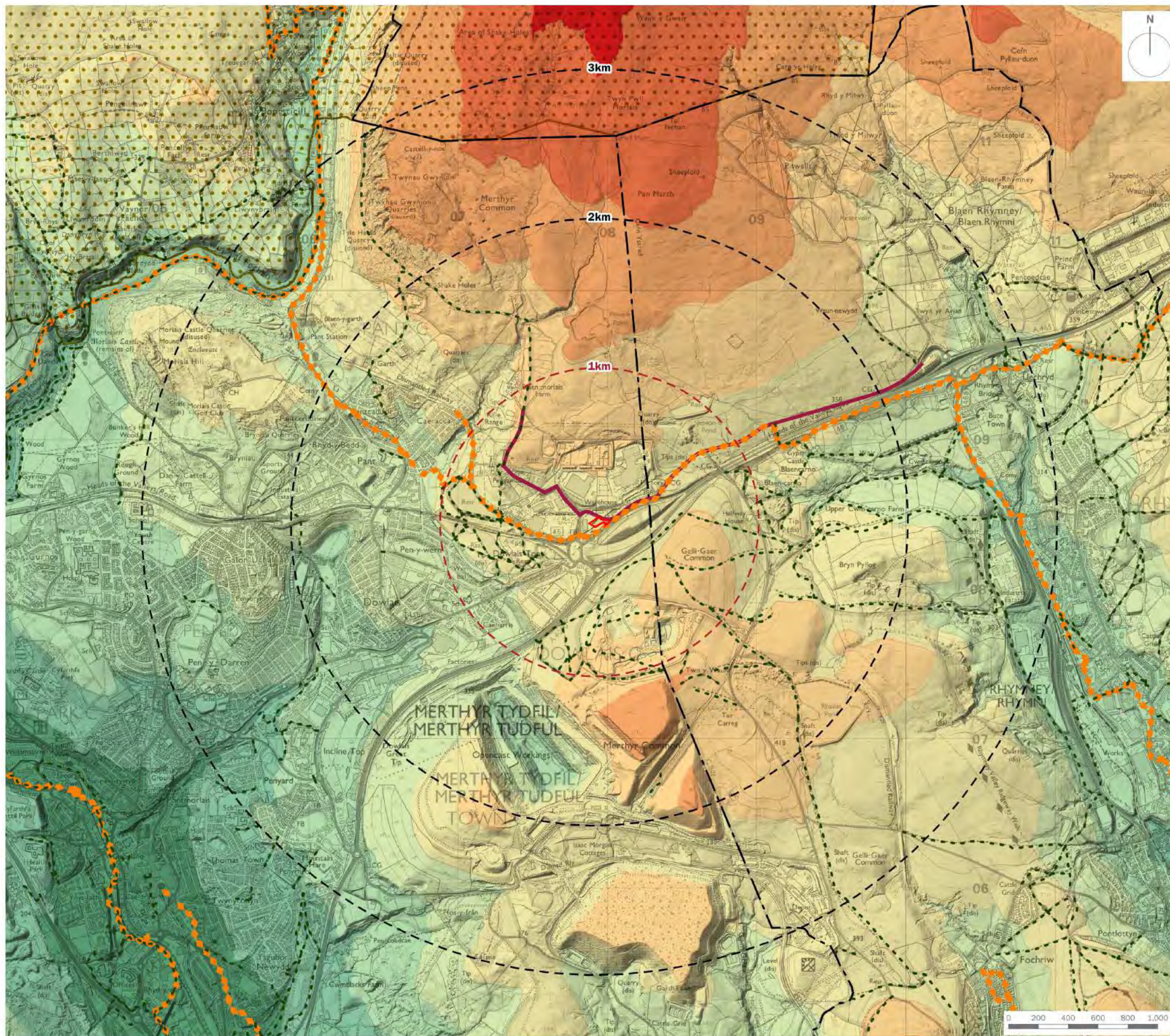


- Site Boundary
- Contours (at 2m intervals)
- National Cycle Network
- B Road
- Public Right of Way
- Watercourse

client	McDonald's Restaurants Ltd		
project title	McDonald's Merthyr Tydfil, Heads of the Valleys Road		
drawing title	Site Character Plan		
date	05 SEPTEMBER 2025	drawn by	VMS
drawing number	edp9069_d002a	checked	JWe
scale	1:5,000 @ A3	QA	JFr

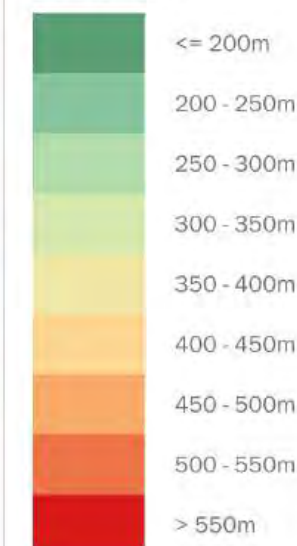


client	McDonald's Restaurants Ltd		
project title	McDonald's Merthyr Tydfil, Heads of the Valleys Road		
drawing title	Environmental Planning Considerations		
date	05 SEPTEMBER 2025	drawn by	VMS
drawing number	edp9069_d003a	checked	JWe
scale	1:22,500 @ A3	QA	Gyo



- Site Boundary
- 1km Detailed Study Area
- Range Rings (at 1km intervals)
- Local Authority Boundary
- Public Right of Way
- National Cycle Network
- Bannau Brycheiniog/Brecon Beacons National Park
- Unnamed Road North of Site

Elevation (aOD)



client

McDonald's Restaurants Ltd

project title

McDonald's Merthyr Tydfil, Heads of the Valleys Road

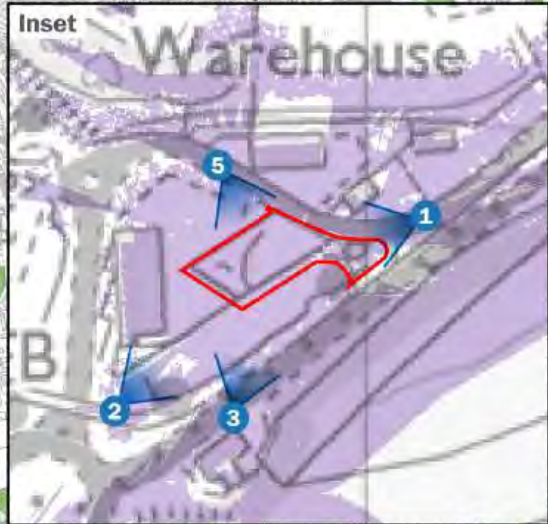
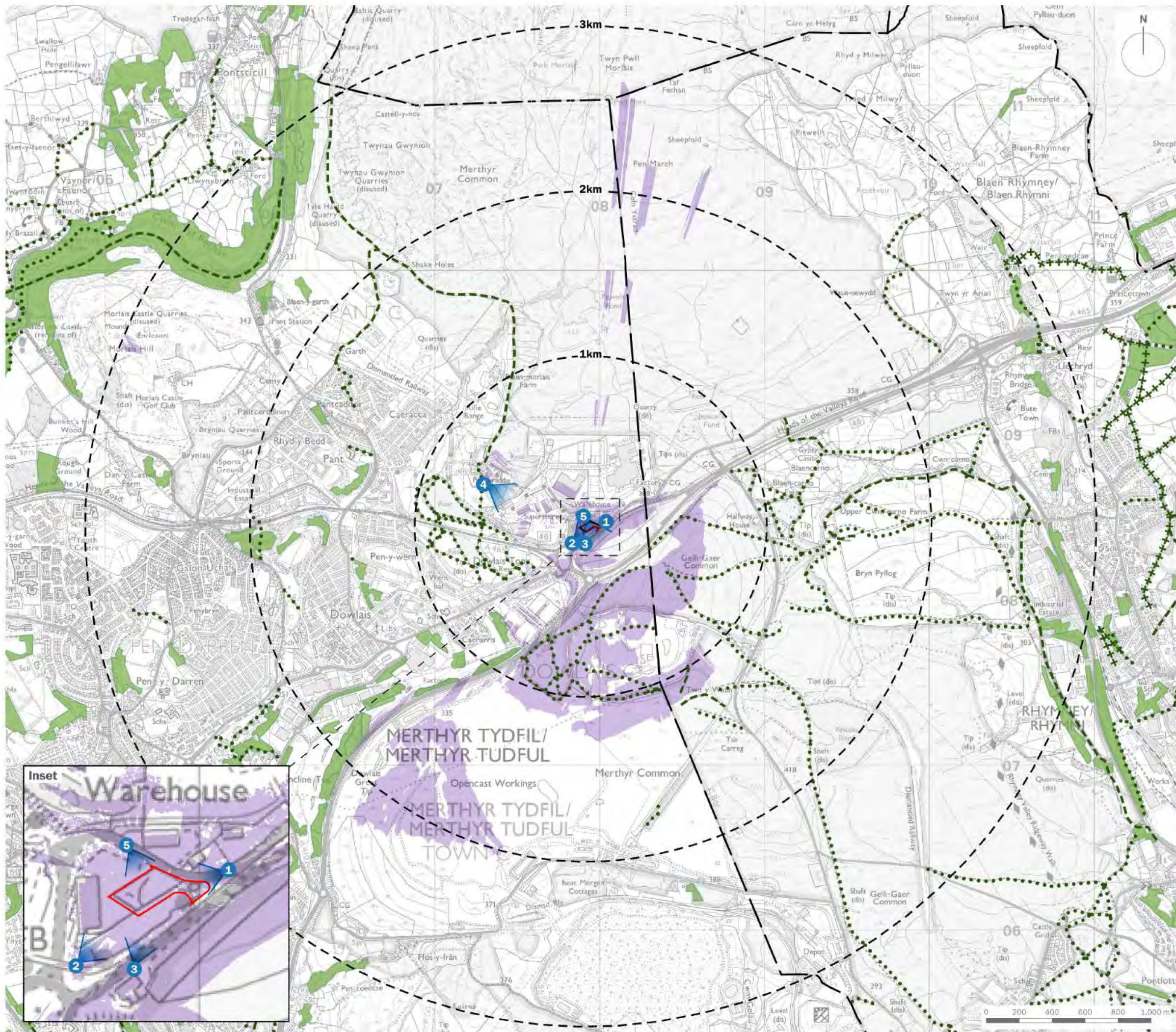
drawing title

Site Location and Topographical Relief

date	05 SEPTEMBER 2025	drawn by	VMS
drawing number	edp9069_d001a	checked	JWe
scale	1:25,000 @ A3	QA	GYo

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- Site Boundary
- Range Rings (at 1km intervals)
- Local Authority Boundary
- National Forest Inventory
- Public Rights of Way
 - Bridleway
 - Byway Open to All Traffic
 - Footpath
 - Restricted Byway
- Photoviewpoint Location
- Zone of Theoretical Visibility

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) was calculated using a spatial modelling algorithm which considers the following parameters:

- 1.6m Receptor Elevation (Observer Height)
- 5m Proposed Development Locations
- 360 Degree Field of View
- LIDAR 1m Last Return Digital Surface Model (DSM) (vertical accuracy of +/- 5cm)

client	McDonald's Restaurants Ltd		
project title	McDonald's Merthyr Tydfil, Heads of the Valleys Road		
drawing title	Findings of Visual Appraisal and Viewpoint Locations		
date	05 SEPTEMBER 2025	drawn by	VMS
drawing number	edp9069_d005a	checked	JWe
scale	1:22,500 @ A3	QA	JFr



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