



Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment of Proposed Residential Development at Twyn yr Odyn, Merthyr Tydfil

Text, Plans, Photographs & Appendices

Prepared for Persimmon Homes East Wales

March 2020

TDA/2539/LC&VIA/RhC/03.20



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Section 1

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Tirlun Design Associates (TDA) have been instructed by Persimmon Homes East Wales to undertake a landscape character and visual assessment of land at Twyn yr Odyn, Merthyr Tydfil ('The Site'), and assess the general visual and landscape character impacts a proposed new residential development would have upon its surrounding landscape.
- 1.2 Desktop research and site surveys were carried out in March 2020 and their findings are contained herein.
- 1.3 The following document should be read in conjunction with the Planning Statement prepared by Persimmon Homes East Wales.
- 1.4 The primary question asked within this document is:

'Can the proposed site at Twyn yr Odyn accommodate a residential development without unacceptable landscape character and/or visual amenity impacts upon its immediate setting or the wider landscape?'

- 1.5 The document has been set out as follows:
 - **Section 2 - Qualifications & Experience** introduces the member of staff dealing with this assessment on behalf of TDA and highlights their qualifications and experience relevant to this study.
 - **Section 3 – Twyn yr Odyn: Site/Landscape Context & Landscape Character** introduces the site, its landscape context and reviews the landscape character baseline.
 - **Section 4 - Visual Appraisal & Landscape Assessment** is a visual appraisal and landscape
 - **Section 5 – Landscape Mitigation & Enhancement** sets out the soft landscape proposals for the site
 - **Section 6 - Summary & Conclusion** provides a summary of the study and presents a conclusion to the question raised within paragraph 1.4.

Section 2

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

- 2.1 This assessment has been carried out on behalf of TDA by Rhodri Garth Crandon. His qualifications include an honours degree in Landscape Architecture gained from Cheltenham & Gloucester College of Higher Education (CGHE) and a Post Graduate Diploma in Landscape Architecture also from CGHE.
- 2.2 Rhodri is the director of TDA, a landscape consultancy practice based in South Wales, and has over 15 years professional practice experience within the field of landscape architecture. Over this period, he has undertaken many projects relevant to this study which have dealt with issues relating to landscape design, landscape planning and landscape & visual assessment.
- 2.3 In addition, Rhodri has worked as an expert witness in relation to landscape character and visual issues on many relevant projects both in the private and public sector, including Monmouthshire County Council during their Unitary Development Plan Inquiry.

Section 3

Twyn yr Odyn: SITE/LANDSCAPE CONTEXT AND LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Site Context

- 3.1 The proposed development site is located on the south eastern fringe of Merthyr Tydfil immediately west of the A4060.
- 3.2 The site is made up of a single parcel of rough grassland between the existing residential properties on Oak Tree Rise and Wallhead Road. The site boundaries are defined by dense bands of native understorey.
- 3.3 TDA drawing no. TDA/2539/01 – Location of Photo Viewpoints (refer to Plans section of this document) clearly illustrates the site and its context.

Landscape Context

- 3.4 The site is crossed and surrounded by a number of public rights of way. Refer to TDA drawing no. TDA/2539/01 – Location of Photo Viewpoints which is included in the Plans section of this document.
- 3.5 Based upon the study of up to date mapping provided by Sustrans there are no national or local cycle routes within the site's immediate locality. The closest is National Cycle Route 477 which passes approximately 600m to the west.
- 3.6 The site does not contain any listed buildings or scheduled ancient monuments and none of the trees present are subject to Tree Preservation Orders.
- 3.7 Based on the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council local development plan (January 2020), the site and its surroundings are not covered by any local or national landscape designations

Landscape Character

LANDMAP – Natural Resources Wales

- 3.8 The Countryside Council for Wales, now Natural Resources Wales, has undertaken an extensive landscape character assessment of Wales using the LANDMAP information system.
- 3.9 LANDMAP is a GIS (Geographical Information System) based landscape resource where landscape characteristics, qualities and influences on the landscape are recorded and evaluated into a nationally consistent data set.
- 3.10 Specialists collect LANDMAP Information in a structured and rigorous way that is defined by five methodological chapters, the Geological Landscape, Landscape Habitats, Visual & Sensory, Historic Landscape and Cultural Landscape (Refer to Appendix 1). Each of these elements and how they assess the site and its surroundings (including principal management recommendations and long-term guidelines) are further explored below:

Geological Landscape

- 3.11 LANDMAP has located the site within the 'Dowlais Top' aspect area.
- 3.12 It states that this aspect area, which is classified as being of moderate overall value, comprises a north facing scarp slope. A productive coal formation, the area contains extensive made-up ground, disused shafts, adits, waste tips, and reclaimed opencast mines.
- 3.13 The principal management recommendations and guidelines for the aspect area are to restore degraded land

Landscape Habitats

- 3.14 LANDMAP has located the site within the 'MRTHRLH012' aspect area.
- 3.15 It states that this aspect area, which is classified as being of moderate overall value, is predominantly pasture in a river floodplain, with semi-improved neutral grasslands quite extensive. There are some BAP habitats present including wet woodland, small areas of lowland heathland and patches of purple moor-grass and rush-pasture. Areas of woodland and scrub, bracken and areas of colliery spoil supporting secondary heath, acid/neutral grasslands are also present.
- 3.16 There are no principle management recommendations or guidelines.

Visual & Sensory

- 3.17 LANDMAP has located the site within the 'Merthyr East Flank' aspect area.
- 3.18 It states that this aspect area, which is classified as being of low overall value, is a primarily disturbed landscape lacking in diversity that forms an unattractive and bleak backdrop to this side of town.
- 3.19 The principal guidelines are to create new wooded landscapes and improve vegetation on reclaimed sites.

Historic Landscape

- 3.20 LANDMAP has located the site within the 'Taff Valley Corridor' aspect area.
- 3.21 It states that this aspect area, which is classified as being of high overall value, comprises the 19th century key industrial transport corridor.
- 3.22 The guidelines for the area are to enhance presentation and access to transport links and maintain intervening areas of fieldscape.

Cultural Landscape

- 3.23 LANDMAP has located the site within the 'Williamstown, The Quar, Georgetown, Morg' aspect area.
- 3.24 It states that this aspect area, which is classified as being of moderate overall value, is an outstanding example of visual, social and cultural anonymity and mediocrity.
- 3.25 The principal management recommendation is to keep historic evidence and retain the few surviving historic structures.

- 3.26 Following a more detailed, site specific visual appraisal and landscape assessment carried out in March 2020 (refer to Section 4) it can be confirmed that the summaries made by LANDMAP are a broadly accurate description of the landscape which defines and surrounds the site.
- 3.27 Indeed, the site is an area of fairly bleak and anonymous made-up ground located below the A4060 towards the bottom of the scarp slope.
- 3.28 Due to a combination of the natural topography of the surrounding area, the A4060 to the east, the existing residential development to the north, east and west and the existing boundary vegetation, the site's visual envelope and influence is generally restricted.

Section 4

VISUAL APPRAISAL & LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

Assessment Methodology

- 4.1 The following section has been produced in accordance with the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition)' produced by The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2013) and The Landscape Institute's Advice Note 01/11 'Photography and photomontage in landscape and visual impact assessment'.

Desktop Assessment

- 4.2 In addition to the research undertaken to establish the site's landscape context and character described in Section 3, a desktop assessment of the site was undertaken to identify local visual receptors.
- 4.3 Drawing no. TDA/2539/01 – Location of Photo Viewpoints, located in the Plans section of this document, clearly identifies local, publicly accessible, visual receptors.

Visual Appraisal

- 4.4 As a consequence of the assessment described above, photo viewpoints were carefully selected to review the developments possible impacts upon visual receptors throughout the surrounding area.
- 4.5 For document clarity and ease of interpretation views are categorised according to their distance from the site as follows:
- Short-range – 0-0.5 kilometres from the nearest site periphery.
Mid-range – 0.5-1.0 kilometres from the nearest site periphery.
Long-range – 1.0+ kilometres from the nearest site periphery.
- 4.6 The significance of the developments impact upon existing views from areas accessible to the general public has been assessed using the significance criteria for visual impact included in Appendix 2. The visual impact of the proposed development upon each photo viewpoint is described in ***bold italics*** below.
- 4.7 Due to the natural topography of the area combined with the A4060 to the east, the existing residential development to the north, east and west and the existing boundary vegetation, the visual envelope of the site is generally restricted and the proposed development would be well screened from the majority of surrounding public viewpoints. This is clearly illustrated by the photographs taken from publicly accessible areas adjacent to and surrounding the site which are further described below.

Photo Viewpoints

- 4.8 Photo viewpoints 1-6 below can be found in the Photographs section of this document. Their locations and view angles are illustrated by TDA drawing no. TDA/2539/01 – Location of Photo Viewpoints, located in the Plans section of this document.
- 4.9 **Photo Viewpoint 1** is a short-range view looking north from a public right of way off Milbourne Close. The site is screened by the natural topography of the area and boundary vegetation.
Developments visual impact: no change
- 4.10 **Photo Viewpoint 2** is a short-range view looking north from a public right of way off Milbourne Close. The site is clearly visible.
Developments visual impact: moderate adverse impact
- 4.11 **Photo Viewpoint 3** is a short-range view looking south west from a public right of way off Oak Tree Rise. The site is screened by intervening vegetation
Developments visual impact: no change
- 4.12 **Photo Viewpoint 4** is a short-range view looking south from a public right of way adjacent to Ty Cwm Extra Care. The site is screened by intervening residential properties and vegetation.
Developments visual impact: no change.
- 4.13 **Photo Viewpoint 5** is a short-range view looking south east from Gilfach Cynon. The site is screened by the natural topography of the area and intervening residential properties.
Developments visual impact: no change.
- 4.14 **Photo Viewpoint 6** is short-range view looking south east from Wallhead Road. The site is screened by existing residential properties and intervening vegetation.
Developments visual impact: no change.

Landscape Assessment

- 4.15 The visual appraisal has established that, with the exception of Photo Viewpoint 2, views of the site from local, publicly accessible, visual receptors are screened by a combination of the natural topography of the area, intervening boundary vegetation and surrounding residential properties.
- 4.16 With regards to photo viewpoints 2, it is important to note that the viewpoint is immediately adjacent to the site boundary, as such any visual impact is highly localised.
- 4.17 With regards to Photo Viewpoint 6, it should be noted that small glimpses of the future residential development may be possible through gaps in the existing residential properties on Wall Head Road. However, as the surrounding residential properties are already clearly visible, glimpses of additional dwellings will not be out of context and the development will not be visually incongruous.

Landscape Character

- 4.18 A future residential development on the Twyn yr Odyn site would be viewed in the context of the existing properties that surround it. Whilst any proposed residential development would change the character of the site itself, the development would represent a relatively small and logical infilling of a gap in the existing housing and would therefore be in keeping with the wider landscape character of the area.
- 4.19 Consequently, based on the screening provided by a combination of the natural topography of the area, the surrounding boundary vegetation and existing residential properties, it is considered that the site could accommodate a new residential development without unacceptable landscape character or visual amenity impacts upon its immediate setting or the wider landscape.

Section 5

LANDSCAPE MITIGATION & ENHANCEMENT

5.1 Following close consultation with Persimmon Homes East Wales, detailed soft landscape proposals for the new residential development (Refer to drawing no. TDA/2539/02 located in the Plans section of this document) have been carefully developed. The proposals will facilitate the improvement of the landscape characteristics of the site in the medium to long term. The proposals include:

- The integration of the development into the existing field pattern and the retention of all existing boundary vegetation wherever possible.
- The enhancement of boundaries with new native planting to soften the edges of the development and increase screening.
- Detailed on plot landscape scheme and public open space provision to break up massing of the development and improve the biodiversity and landscape value of the site.
- Native and ornamental tree planting to provide biodiversity improvements and a strong arboricultural character.
- Creation of new species rich grassland habitat in accordance with LANDMAP recommendations.

Section 6

SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

Summary

6.1 In assessing whether the site at Twyn yr Odyn can accommodate a new residential development without unacceptably impacting upon the landscape character or visual amenity of its immediate setting or the wider landscape this study has:

- Undertaken a desktop assessment of the site's landscape character;
- Undertaken an on-site visual appraisal and landscape assessment.

6.2 Section 1 of this document identified a key question in relation to the site, this being:

'Can the proposed site at Twyn yr Odyn accommodate a residential development without unacceptable landscape character and/or visual amenity impacts upon its immediate setting or the wider landscape?'

6.3 This section of the document will summarise the study's findings in helping to answer the question.

6.4 Firstly, Section 3 – Twyn yr Odyn: Site/Landscape Context and Landscape Character established that, due to a combination of the natural topography of the surrounding area, the A4060 to the east, the existing residential development to the north, east and west and the existing boundary vegetation, the site's visual envelope and influence is generally restricted.

6.5 Secondly, Section 4 – Visual Appraisal & Landscape Assessment established that, with the exception of Photo Viewpoints 2, views of the site from local, publicly accessible, visual receptors are screened by a combination of the natural topography of the area, intervening vegetation and existing residential properties.

6.6 With regards to photo viewpoints 2, it was noted that the viewpoint is immediately adjacent to the site boundary, as such any visual impact is highly localised.

6.7 With regards to Photo Viewpoint 6, it was noted that small glimpses of the future residential development may be possible through gaps in the existing residential properties on Wall Head Road. However, as the surrounding residential properties are already clearly visible, glimpses of additional dwellings would not be out of context and the development would not be visually incongruous.

6.8 Also, with regards to landscape character, it was noted that a future development would be viewed in the context of the existing properties at Twyn yr Odyn. Whilst any proposed residential development would change the character of the site itself, the development would represent a relatively small and logical infilling of a gap in the existing housing and would therefore be in keeping with the wider landscape character of the area.

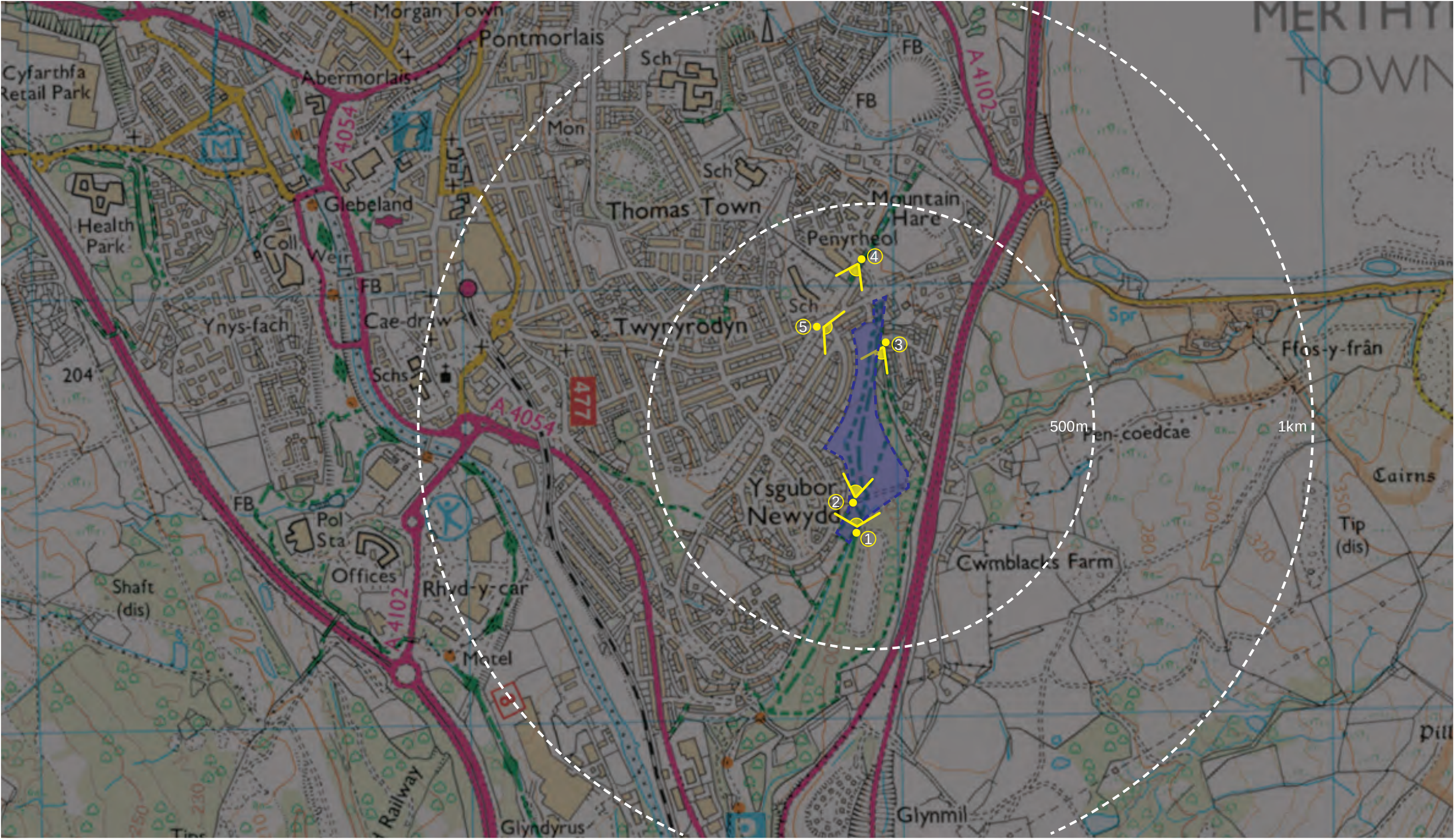
6.9 Finally, Section 5 – Landscape Mitigation & Enhancement described how biodiversity and screening of the site will be enhanced through a carefully designed landscape strategy.

Conclusion

6.10 Overall it is therefore considered that the site can accommodate a new residential development without unacceptable landscape character or visual amenity impacts upon its immediate setting or the wider landscape.

PLANS

TDA/2539/01 - Location of Photo Viewpoints



Key



Site Location



Photo Viewpoints
& Approximate View Angles

NOTE:
General visual receptors such as public rights of way, other routes of public access and roads / paths represented by standard Ordnance Survey symbols

Client	Persimmon Homes East Wales
Project	Twyn yr Odyn, Merthyr Tydfil
Drawing Title	Location of Photo Viewpoints
Drawing No.	TDA/2539/01
Scale	Not to Scale
Date	March 2020



Newland Fawr Farm, Llangan, CF35 5DN
Tel: 01446 7789367. admin@tirlun-design.co.uk

PHOTOGRAPHS

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Photo Viewpoint 1 | Short-range view looking north from a public right of way off Milbourne Close |
| Photo Viewpoint 2 | Short-range view looking north from a public right of way off Milbourne Close |
| Photo Viewpoint 3 | Short-range view looking south west from a public right of way off Oak Tree Rise |
| Photo Viewpoint 4 | Short-range view looking south from a public right of way adjacent to Ty Cwm Extra Care |
| Photo Viewpoint 5 | Short-range view looking south east from Gilfach Cynon |
| Photo Viewpoint 6 | Short-range view looking south east from Wallhead Road |

The site (screened)

A4060



Photo Viewpoint 1: Short range view looking north from a public right of way off Milbourne Close

The site

A4060



Photo Viewpoint 2: Short range view looking north from a public right of way off Milbourne Close

Oak Tree Rise

The site (screened)



Photo Viewpoint 3: Short range view looking south west from a public right of way off Oak Tree Rise

Approximate location of site (screened)

Ty Cwm Extra Care



Photo Viewpoint 4: Short range view looking south from a public right of way adjacent to Ty Cwm Extra Care

Approximate location of site (screened)

Residential properties on Glasier Road



Photo Viewpoint 5: Short range view looking south east from Gilfach Cynon

The site (screened)

Residential properties on Wallhead Road



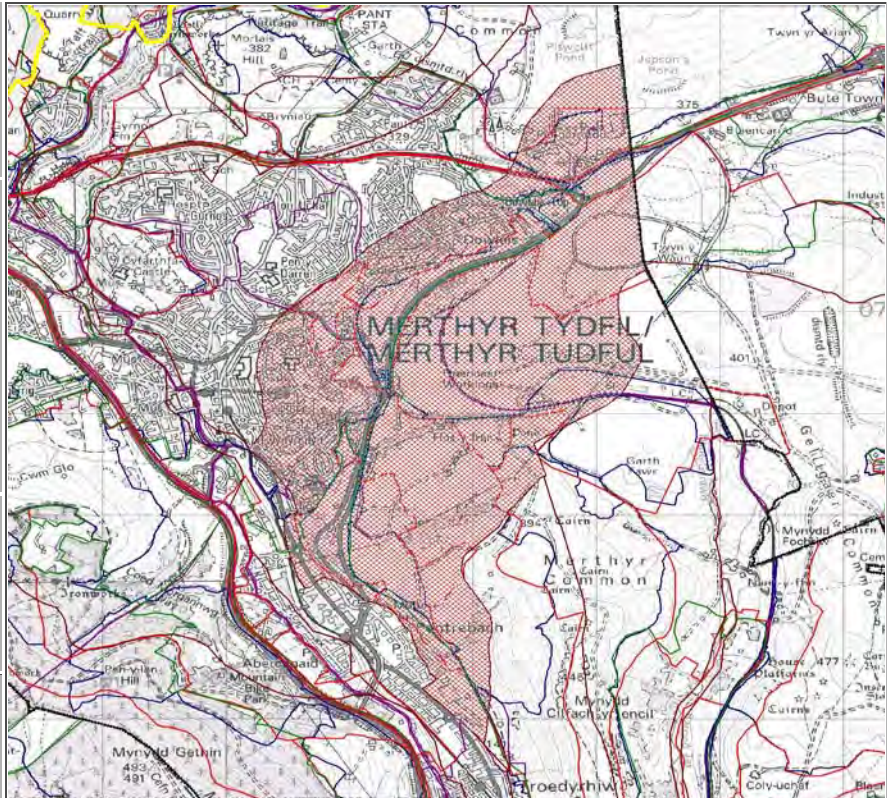
Photo Viewpoint 6: Short range view looking south east from Wallhead Road

APPENDIX 1

LANDMAP (Natural Resources Wales)

Geological, Landscape Habitats, Visual & Sensory, Historic, Cultural Chapters

Geological Landscape

Aspect Area Name	Dowlais Top	 © Natural Resources for Wales . All rights reserved. Contains Ordnance Survey Data. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100019741. Crown Copyright and Database Right (2015)
Aspect Area Classification	Mountain and upland valley /Glaciated mountain terrain /Glacial mountain valley (Level 3)	
Aspect Area Code	MRTHRGL008	
Date Of Survey : 25 /08 /2003		

Description

Which of the following is a significant contributor to the geological character of the area?	Superficial deposits (Boulder clay) Structural features (NW-SE peny darren and Dowlais faults) Active processes (Fluvial) Past processes (Glacial) Other (Disused coal and iron workings)
What additional subsidiary Level 3 components are notable?	Upland valley slope Mineral workings
What Level 4 components are notable in this area?	Coal / mineral spoil tips Made ground Reclaimed land
What active geological and geomorphological processes are significant in this area?	Fluvial
Are there components of significant hydrological importance?	Yes (Afon Taf)
Are there any pedological processes that are significant in the area or have had a landscape forming effect?	Yes (Low permeability soils)
Is there current mineral extraction?	No
Has there been mineral extraction in the past?	Yes (coal mines, opencast, iron workings, tips, made ground)
Are there SSSI / GCR sites here?	No
Are there geological SINC, 2nd tier, or RIGS sites in the area?	No

Evaluation

Value	Moderate (Productive Coal Formation, many old coal and iron workings, large areas of made and reclaimed land)
Condition	Fair (Industrial degradation of land)
Trend	Constant

Recommendations

Existing management	Generally Appropriate
Principal management recommendations	Conserve/restore worked out land
Guideline	Long Term (Restore degraded land)

Tolerance To Change

Are there any significant threats to the current integrity and condition of the Earth Heritage features of the area?	Not known
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Aspect Area Boundary

To what level was this information site-surveyed?	Level 3
At 1:10,000, how much of the Aspect Area boundary is precise?	None
What baseline information source was used for Aspect Area boundary mapping?	Other (1:50 000 BGS Geological map sheet; 1:25 000 OS Explorer map sheet; Digital Terrain Model compiled from OS panorama digital terrain data (50m resolution))
If OS Data was used, what was the scale?	1:25,000
What is the justification for the Aspect Area boundaries?	Upper Cwmgorse Marine Band - Farewell Rock Fm, bounded to W by Afon Taf (Merthyr Church Fault)

Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Criteria: Research Value	Moderate (Productive Coal Formation, many old coal and iron workings)
Evaluation Criteria: Educational Value	Unassessed

Description

Which of the following is a significant contributor to the geological character of the area?	Stratigraphic formation(s) (Productive Coal Formation)
What is the characteristic Level 3 component of the area?	Glacial mountain valley
What is the geographical and topographical character of this area?	N-facing scarp slope to east of Afon Taf, in S-dipping Productive Coal Formation, between Upper Cwmgorse Marine Band and Farewell Rock Formation. Minor tributary valleys draining down scarp. Cut by NW-SE Penydarren and Dowlais faults. 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.

Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Criteria: Historical Value	Moderate (Productive Coal Formation, many old coal and iron workings)
Evaluation Criteria: Rarity / Uniqueness	Low (Productive Coal Formation, many old coal and iron workings, large areas of made and reclaimed land)
Evaluation Criteria: Classic Example	Low (Productive Coal Formation, many old coal and iron workings, large areas of made and reclaimed land)
Evaluation Criteria: Overall Evaluation	Moderate (Productive Coal Formation, many old coal and iron workings)
Justification of overall evaluation	Productive Coal Formation, many old coal and iron workings, large areas of made and reclaimed land

Bibliography

List the key sources used for this assessment	1:50 000 BGS Geological Map sheet 231 Merthyr, S&D, 1979; Digital Terrain Model compiled from OS panorama digital terrain data (50m resolution); 1:100 000 Groundwater Vulnerability Map, Environment Agency. Sheet 36, Gwent, South and Mid Glamorgan, 1996; 1:625 000 Geological Map of the UK: Quaternary Geology, S sheet, 1977; Barclay, W.J., Taylor, K. and Thomas, L.P. 1988. Geology of the South Wales coalfield. Part 5, The country around Merthyr Tydfil : Memoir of the British Geological Survey, Sheet 231 (England and Wales). 3rd ed., H.M.S.O., London, x+52p.;
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Assessment	
Additional Assessments	
Additional Comments	Scarp slope and tributary valleys in S-dipping mudstone-dominated Coal Measures, extensive boulder clay cover. Disused mines, quarries, tips, extensive made ground.
Monitoring	
Has the information ever been verified in the field?	No
Does this area have a special or functional link with an adjacent area?	Yes (Eastern slope of Afon Taf (MRTHRGL001))
Description	
If Classification is "Other", specify here	
Recommendations	
Existing management remarks:	Neutral
Monitoring	
Date of monitoring?	2013-03-01
Monitoring undertaken by	K.N. Page (Geodiversity and Landscape Specialist) in conjunction with L.Cherns (University of Cardiff) at the change detection stage of the monitoring process and with input from the local planning authority
Has this record been updated following monitoring work?	

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List the key sources used for this assessment	Wildlife Site/SINC data used within this project were collated by Local Environmental Records Centres Wales on behalf of the various Local Authorities and Wildlife Trusts involved in the site designation process.
Assessment	
Additional Assessments	
Additional Comments	Mostly improved pasture in river floodpalin, but with semi-improved neutral grasslands quite extensive; BAP habitats present include wet woodland (alder dominated) along side river, small areas of lowland heathland and patches of purple moor-grass and rush-pasture; other semi-natural habitats include ancient semi-natural woodlands (especially to south), other woodlands and scrub, bracken and areas of colliery spoil supproting secondary heath, acid/neutral grasslands, artificial habitats and built-up areas; otter occurs all along the river system; great crested newt may occur in small ponds if present; bats probably present and roosting in riverside buildings and habitats; BAP birds and other fauna likely associated with river and floodpalin
Evaluation Matrix	
Evaluation Criteria: Priority Habitats	Moderate (Relatively built up area with areas of broadleaved woodland and hedgerows which add value)
Evaluation Criteria: Significance	High (Several ancient woodland noted, and areas of priority habitat.)
Evaluation Criteria: Opportunity	Moderate (Conserve any remaining natural habitat)
Evaluation Criteria: Expansion rates	Low (Area has not declined)
Evaluation Criteria: Sensitivity	Moderate (Threat from development)
Evaluation Criteria: Connectivity/ Cohesion	Low (The habitat provides limited landscape connectivity.)
Evaluation Criteria: Habitat Evaluation	Moderate (Several ancient woodlands noted, and areas of Priority habitat.)
Evaluation Criteria: Importance for key species	Outstanding (High level of key species found)
Evaluation Criteria: Overall Evaluation Habitat and Species	Moderate
Description	
If yes, which species? (for each of the species, also note the source of information)	Species Include(Lutra lutra) Otter, (Turdus merula) Blackbird, (Euphydryas aurinia) Marsh Fritillary, (Phylloscopus trochilus) Willow Warbler, (Picus viridis) Green Woodpecker, (Chiroptera) Unspecified Bat, (Carex vesicaria) Bladder-sedge, (Passer domesticus) House Sparrow, (Sturnus vulgaris) Common Starling, (Parus major) Great Tit, (Hemaris tityus) Narrow-bordered Bee Hawk, (Motacilla cinerea) Grey Wagtail, (Hyacinthoides non-scripta) Bluebell, (Apus apus) Common Swift, (Gonepteryx rhamni) Brimstone, (Hemaris tityus) Narrow-bordered Bee Hawk, (Segmentina nitida) Shining ram's-horn snail, (Lathyrus nissolia) Grass Vetchling, (Phylloscopus collybita) Chiffchaff, (Passer domesticus) House Sparrow, (Sambucus ebulus) Dwarf Elder, (Ficedula hypoleuca) Pied Flycatcher, (Parus caeruleus) Blue Tit, (Riparia riparia) Sand Martin, (Segmentina nitida) Shining ram's-horn snail, (Ficedula hypoleuca) Pied Flycatcher
Evaluation Matrix	
Justification of overall evaluation	
Recommendations	
Existing management remarks:	
Monitoring	
Date of monitoring?	2012-07-01
Monitoring undertaken by	Environment Systems Limited
Has this record been updated following monitoring work?	This record has been updated following monitoring work as more up to date information is available
Change indicated by	Phase 1 Habitat Survey & Seasonal Change Maps
What has changed?	

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Visual and Sensory

Aspect Area Name	Merthyr East Flank
Aspect Area Classification	Development / Developed Unbuilt Land / Derelict / Waste Ground (Level 3)
Aspect Area Code	MRTHRVS876
Date Of Survey : 24/11/2003	

Description

Aesthetic Qualities: Sense of Enclosure?	Open
Aesthetic Qualities: Diversity?	Diverse
Aesthetic Qualities: Texture?	Medium
Aesthetic Qualities: Lines?	Straight
Aesthetic Qualities: Colour?	Muted
Aesthetic Qualities: Balance?	Discordant
Aesthetic Qualities: Unity?	Neutral
Aesthetic Qualities: Pattern?	Organised
Aesthetic Qualities: Seasonal Interest?	None
Other Factors: Level of Human Access?	Frequent
Other Factors: Night Time Light Pollution?	Moderate
Other Factors: Use of Construction Materials?	Generally Inappropriate
What materials? Give Details:	light and brightly coloured profile steel- too prominent
There are attractive views...	out (to brecon beacons)
There are detractive views...	...both in and out (into areas above A4060 and towards Merthyr,in particular the commercial area at Dowlais Top...To adjacent Ffos-y-fran coal workings)
Perceptual and Other Sensory Qualities	Unattractive Noisy Exposed
What is the sense of place/ local distinctiveness	Weak (reclaimed areas have yet to mature to give a sense of place)

Evaluation

Value:	Low
Condition:	Fair
Trend:	Improving

Recommendations

Define the key qualities that should be conserved:	enclosure of vegetated areas
Define the key qualities that should be enhanced:	
Define the key qualities that should be changed:	openness and exposure of grazed slopes
Define the key elements that should be conserved:	woody vegetation, diverse swards
Define the key elements that should be enhanced:	
Define the key elements that should be changed:	reclaimed pastures
Principal management recommendation:	create new landscape structure to integrate slopes into wider landscape

Tolerance To Change

Are there any significant threats to the current integrity and condition of the visual & sensory features of the area?	
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Aspect Area Boundary

To what level was this information site-surveyed?	Level 3
At 1:10,000, how much of the Aspect Area boundary is precise?	Most
What baseline information source was used for Aspect Area boundary mapping?	OS Raster

Description

Aesthetic Qualities: Scale?	Large
Physical Form And Elements: Landcover Pattern?	Open Land
Physical Form And Elements: Topographic Form?	Disturbed

Aspect Area Boundary

If OS Data was used, what was the scale?	1:10,000 and 1:25,000
What is the justification for the Aspect Area boundaries?	town to the north and west, open moorland to east, Ffos-y-fran coal workings area to the east, pastoral farmland of Taf Vale to south and east...Boundary altered at change detection monitoring to exclude recent developments around Incline Top and part of Ffos-y-fran workings in north east.

Bibliography

List the key sources used for this assessment	
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Assessment

Additional Assessments	
Additional Comments	

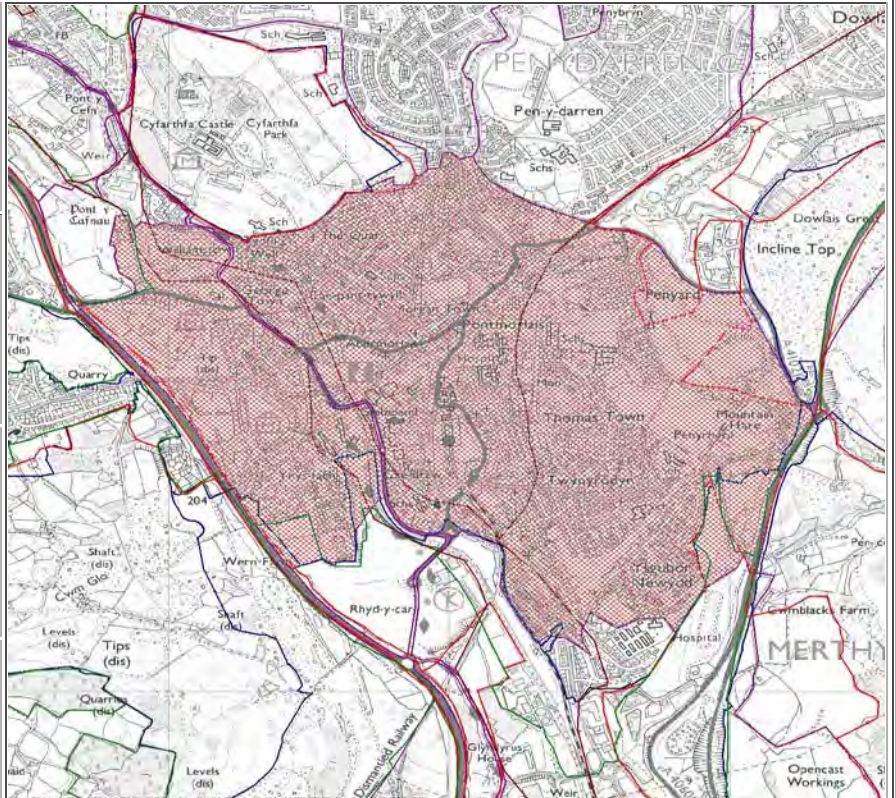
Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Criteria: Overall Evaluation	Low
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Justification of overall evaluation	The area is still a raw landscape, prominent on the valley sides above Merthyr... While some areas are establishing a landscape infrastructure there are extensive areas which are open and lacking diversity of texture and cover... There remain a few detractors...
Evaluation Criteria: Scenic quality	Low
Evaluation Criteria: Integrity	Low
Evaluation Criteria: Character	Low
Evaluation Criteria: Rarity	Low
Description	
Summary Description	The area is primarily defined by the degree of disturbance of the landform and the lack of diversity in vegetation cover... Almost all the area has clearly been disturbed and is apparently currently unused or reclaimed... The slopes form a stark and unattractive backdrop to this side of the town... Large areas of reclaimed land are open covered in pasture for sheep grazing with some fencing against the road edge e...g... the slopes to the west of former Trecatti landfill site and the plateau on each side of the realigned A4060... These form a bleak and apparently sterile landscape... Planting may help to integrate some areas in time... Trecatti landfill now reclaimed to reduction in noise, blowing litter and gulls. Recent development has reduced area around Incline Top. There are also examples of reclamation which much more successfully create new landscapes which add to the visual quality of the area e...g... the western edge of Incline Top where small blocks of woodland and stone wall detailing create a semi-rural character... Some open cast is being carried out and also landfill which is just visible on the exposed ridge... To the south, upland pastures mix with the disturbed landscape to form a more intimate mosaic which is more akin to areas on the western flank (Character Area 11)...
Physical form and elements: Settlement pattern	No settlements
Physical form and elements: Boundary type	Fences
Recommendations	
Guideline	Immediate (create new structure - wooded landscapes close to development rising to open moorland ridge) Immediate (improve vegetation cover on existing reclaimed areas) Medium Term (design new landscapes and development to integrate better into valley side- design guidelines)
Existing management	
Existing management remarks:	over grazing has limited range of vegetation types
Monitoring	
Has the information ever been verified in the field?	Yes (1:10000/1:25000)
Does this area have a special or functional link with an adjacent area?	Yes (disturbed margin between open moorland, coal workings (Ffos-y-fran) and settlement)
During which season(s) was fieldwork carried out?	Winter
Date of monitoring?	2013-01-01
Monitoring undertaken by	Bronwen Thomas Landscape Architect, plus White Consultants at initial change detection stage, in consultation with LPA. Based on 2011/12 change detection.
Has this record been updated following monitoring work?	This record has been updated following monitoring work, there was a real change in the aspect area
Change indicated by	OS Data, Aerial Photographs Satellite Imagery Interpretation Policies, plans & information resources Fieldwork
What has changed?	Description Boundaries
LMP 14 & 09	
LANDMAP derived landscape types (LMP14)	Industry and infrastructure
LANDMAP derived landscape types (LMP09)	

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Cultural Landscape

Aspect Area Name	Williamstown, The Quar, Georgetown, Morg	 © Natural Resources for Wales . All rights reserved. Contains Ordnance Survey Data. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100019741. Crown Copyright and Database Right (2015)
Aspect Area Classification	Influences / Material expressions / Urban / Urban Settlement (Level 4)	
Aspect Area Code	MRTHRCL018	
Date Of Survey : 21/08/2003		

Description

The classification at level 3 describes the dominant cultural context, but which other contexts are important to the cultural landscape of this area?	Urban People Artistic
Which level 4 classes are particularly significant to the cultural landscape character of this area - Influences?	Urban Settlement Education & Welfare
To what extent do the context and level 4 details selected contribute to the cultural identity, local distinctiveness or sense of place of the area?	Weak (Original character removed)
To what extent is the cultural information widely recognised or appreciated?	Specialist (Mostly among historians / musicians)
Are there any artistic expressions that are particularly famous or associated with the Aspect Area?	Yes (Joseph Parry, composer)
Are there any people / movements / institutions that are particularly famous or associated with the Aspect Area?	No
Is there any folklore or are there legends that are particularly famous or associated with the Aspect Area?	No
Are there any events / traditions that are particularly famous or associated with the Aspect Area?	No
Are there any technical / scientific discoveries that are particularly famous or associated with the Aspect Area?	Not known
What are the attributes of the cultural elements in the Aspect Area?	Transitional
What chronological periods are culturally dominant in the area?	Post 1950
Are there certain place-names in the area that are particularly significant?	Yes
Summary Description: (no more than 150 words)	Former industrial workers housing largely demolished; few industrial remains; short stretch of Glamorganshire Canal and relocated Rhys-y-Car bridge incongruous

Tolerance To Change

Are there any significant threats to the current integrity and condition of the Cultural Landscape features of the area?	No
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Description

If yes, give examples of the place-names and their significance	Ynysfach sigbnificant 19th century ironworks, now a moribund museum
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Aspect Area Boundary

To what level was this information site-surveyed?	Level 3
At 1:10,000, how much of the Aspect Area boundary is precise?	Most
What baseline information source was used for Aspect Area boundary mapping?	OS Landline
If OS Data was used, what was the scale?	1:10,000
What is the justification for the Aspect Area boundaries?	Boundaries of new estates and road system

Bibliography

List the key sources used for this assessment	The Welsh Church from Conquest to Reformation, by Glanmor Williams, The University of Arkansas Press, Fayetteville, 1993; When was Wales? A History of the Welsh, by Gwyn A... Williams, Penguin Books, 1985; Merthyr Politics: The Making of a Working Class Tradition, ed... Gwyn A... Williams, University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 1966; A History of Wales, by John Davies, Penguin Books, 1994
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Assessment

Additional Assessments	none
Additional Comments	none

Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Criteria: Overall Evaluation	Moderate
Justification of overall evaluation	Moderate, though (paradoxically, perhaps) the Aspect Area may be said to be an outstanding example of visual, social and cultural anonymity and mediocrity
Evaluation Criteria: Recognition / transparency	Sub-regional recognition (Recognised as new housing; memory of past fading)
Evaluation Criteria: Period	Apparent (Typical 20th/21st regeneration with no distinction)
Evaluation Criteria: Rarity (Culture)	Commonplace
Evaluation Criteria: Documentation	Unassessed

Description

The classification at level 3 describes the dominant cultural context, but which other contexts are important to the cultural landscape of this area?	Industrial
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Monitoring

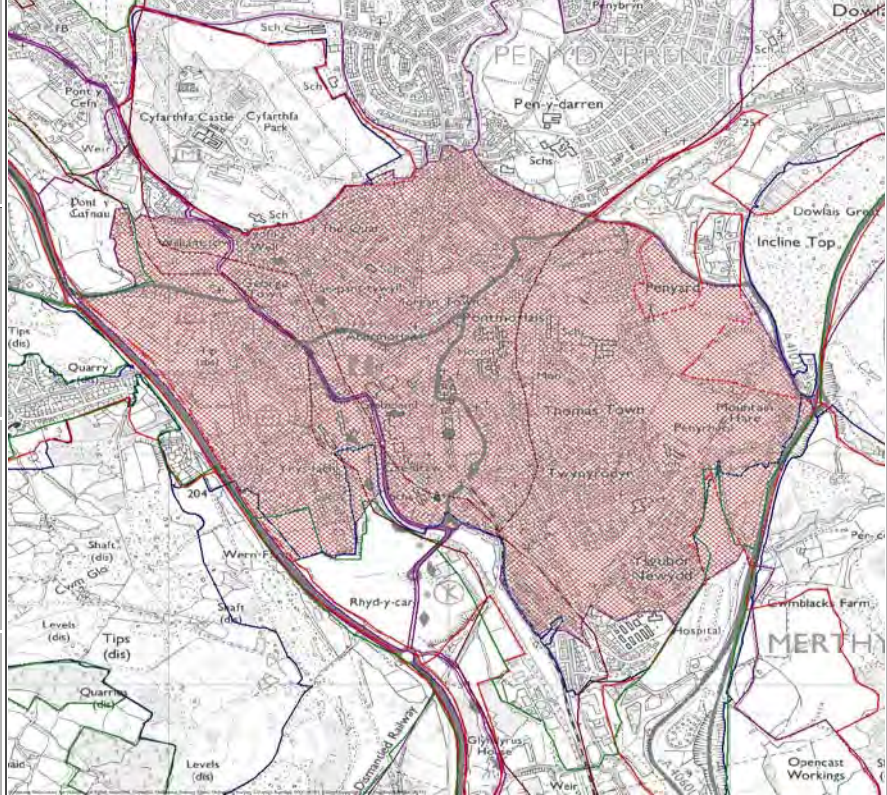
Does this area have a special or functional link with an adjacent area?	Yes (MRTHRCL013, 016 - residential areas for workers in ironworks)
Has the information ever been verified in the field?	Yes (1:10000)

Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Criteria: Group Value	Moderate
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Evaluation Criteria: Survival	N/A (Only recently built)
Evaluation Criteria: Vulnerability	Highly vulnerable
Evaluation Criteria: Diversity	Simple
Evaluation Criteria: Potential (Culture)	Moderate (Further development may take place)
Description	
Which level 4 classes are particularly significant to the cultural landscape character of this area - Associations?	Famous People Politics
Evaluation	
Condition:	Good
Value:	Moderate
Trend:	Constant
Recommendations	
Existing management:	Generally Appropriate
Existing management remarks:	New character emerging post-demolition
Principal management recommendations	Keep historical evidence
Guideline	Long Term (Retain few surviving hstoric structures)
Description	
If Classification is "Other", specify here	

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Cultural Landscape		
Aspect Area Name	Williamstown, The Quar, Georgetown, Morg	
Aspect Area Classification	Influences / Material expressions / Urban / Urban Settlement (Level 4)	
Aspect Area Code	MRTHRCL018	
Date Of Survey : 21/08/2003		
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Description	
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Which level 4 classes are particularly significant to the cultural landscape character of this area - Influences?	Urban Settlement Education & Welfare
To what extent do the context and level 4 details selected contribute to the cultural identity, local distinctiveness or sense of place of the area?	Weak (Original character removed)
To what extent is the cultural information widely recognised or appreciated?	Specialist (Mostly among historians / musicians)
Are there any artistic expressions that are particularly famous or associated with the Aspect Area?	Yes (Joseph Parry, composer)
Are there any people / movements / institutions that are particularly famous or associated with the Aspect Area?	No
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Are there any technical / scientific discoveries that are particularly famous or associated with the Aspect Area?	Not known
What are the attributes of the cultural elements in the Aspect Area?	Transitional
What chronological periods are culturally dominant in the area?	Post 1950
Are there certain place-names in the area that are particularly significant?	Yes
Summary Description: (no more than 150 words)	Former industrial workers housing largely demolished; few industrial remains; short stretch of Glamorganshire Canal and relocated Rhys-y-Car bridge incongruous

Tolerance To Change	
Are there any significant threats to the current integrity and condition of the Cultural Landscape features of the area?	No
Description	
If yes, give examples of the place-names and their significance	Ynysfach sigbnificant 19th century ironworks, now a moribund museum

Aspect Area Boundary	
To what level was this information site-surveyed?	Level 3
At 1:10,000, how much of the Aspect Area boundary is precise?	Most
What baseline information source was used for Aspect Area boundary mapping?	OS Landline
If OS Data was used, what was the scale?	1:10,000
What is the justification for the Aspect Area boundaries?	Boundaries of new estates and road system

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List the key sources used for this assessment	The Welsh Church from Conquest to Reformation, by Glanmor Williams, The University of Arkansas Press, Fayetteville, 1993; When was Wales? A History of the Welsh, by Gwyn A... Williams, Penguin Books, 1985; Merthyr Politics: The Making of a Working Class Tradition, ed... Gwyn A... Williams, University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 1966; A History of Wales, by John Davies, Penguin Books, 1994

Assessment	
Additional Assessments	none
Additional Comments	none

Evaluation Matrix	
Evaluation Criteria: Overall Evaluation	Moderate
Justification of overall evaluation	Moderate, though (paradoxically, perhaps) the Aspect Area may be said to be an outstanding example of visual, social and cultural anonymity and mediocrity
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Evaluation Criteria: Period	Apparent (Typical 20th/21st regeneration with no distinction)
Evaluation Criteria: Rarity (Culture)	Commonplace
Evaluation Criteria: Documentation	Unassessed

Description	
The classification at level 3 describes the dominant cultural context, but which other contexts are important to the cultural landscape of this area?	Industrial
Monitoring	
Does this area have a special or functional link with an adjacent area?	Yes (MRTHRCL013, 016 - residential areas for workers in ironworks)
Has the information ever been verified in the field?	Yes (1:10000)

Evaluation Matrix	
Evaluation Criteria: Group Value	Moderate

Evaluation Criteria: Survival	N/A (Only recently built)
Evaluation Criteria: Vulnerability	Highly vulnerable
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Evaluation Criteria: Potential (Culture)	Moderate (Further development may take place)
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Existing management:	Generally Appropriate
Existing management remarks:	New character emerging post-demolition
Principal management recommendations	Keep historical evidence
Guideline	Long Term (Retain few surviving hstoric structures)
Description	
If Classification is "Other", specify here	

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APPENDIX 2

Significance Criteria for Visual Impact

Extract of 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition) produced by The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment 2013).

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA FOR VISUAL IMPACT

Extract of 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2nd Edition) produced by The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2002).

Substantial adverse impact.

Where the scheme would cause a significant deterioration in the existing view.

Moderate adverse impact

Where the scheme would cause a noticeable deterioration in the existing view.

Slight adverse impact

Where the scheme would cause a barely perceptible deterioration in the existing view.

Slight beneficial impact

Where the scheme would cause a barely perceptible improvement in the existing view.

Moderate beneficial impact

Where the scheme would cause a noticeable improvement in the existing view.

Substantial beneficial impact

Where the scheme would cause a significant improvement in the existing view.

No change

No discernable deterioration or improvement in the existing view.