

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

National Road BESS.

On behalf of REWE 2 Ltd.

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1. Introduction.

- 1.1. Pegasus Group have been commissioned by REWE 2 Ltd to prepare a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) in support of a full application for a Proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) with associated infrastructure, including a substation, earthworks, access, drainage, landscaping and an underground cable route, from here on referred to as the 'Proposed Development'.
- 1.2. The Site is located at Land North and South of National Road, Cilfynydd, hereafter referred to as the 'Site' as shown on the Site Location Plan at **Figure 1**. The majority of the Site is in the Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC) administrative boundary. A small portion of the eastern boundary is within the Caerphilly County Borough Council (CCBC) administrative boundary. The Site collectively measures approximately 24ha, of which the majority is used for grazing livestock and keeping horses.
- 1.3. A desktop study was carried out to review a range of published information relating to the Site and its context, including planning policy and guidance, environmental designations, and published landscape character assessments.
- 1.4. Field assessment was undertaken in August/September 2024 (summer views) and February 2025 (winter views) in dry conditions with good visibility. The field work has been used to review the findings of the desktop study and to determine the extent of the visual influence, as well as assessing the potential effects of the Proposed Development on the existing landscape character and determine to what extent they are consistent with the findings of the desk-based assessment.
- 1.5. The main objectives of the LVIA are as follows:
 - To describe the landscape character of the Site and its surroundings, evaluate its sensitivity to change and, considering the magnitude of change, assess the effect that the proposal would have on the landscape character.
 - To identify potential visual receptors (i.e. people who would be able to see the development), evaluate their sensitivity to change and, considering the magnitude of change, assess the effect that the proposal would have on visual amenity. A detailed residential visual amenity study is excluded from this LVIA, noting that appropriate privacy distances between existing properties and new built development would be maintained.
 - To identify landscape elements associated with the site, evaluate their sensitivity to change and, considering the magnitude of change, assess the effect the proposals would have on landscape elements.
 - To identify mitigation measures and opportunities for landscape character and visual amenity enhancement in order to mitigate, offset or reduce the predicted adverse effects.
- 1.6. The LVIA assesses the operational stage of the Proposed Development only, as the construction stages would be of short and temporary duration. Any potential effects brought about by the construction stages are likely to be lower or similar to those assessed post-construction. The effects are therefore assessed at Year 1, immediately post-completion, and at Year 15 to take into

account the time to establish proposed mitigation and enhancement measures. The assumed vegetative growth is taken as 0.5m per year.

- 1.7. This LVIA should be read in conjunction with the supporting Planning, Design and Access Statement (PDAS). The illustrative Landscape Masterplan is included at Appendix E.

Consultation

- 1.8. The scope of work and assessment outlined in this LVIA has been subject to Pre-Application consultation, with advice provided by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC) Planning Officer prior to finalising the assessment. Following field assessment, representative viewpoints were selected within the 5km study area to show typical views towards the Site experienced by people in the LVIA study area and to show baseline landscape character at the Site and in the surrounding area. This approach and our set of representative viewpoints were agreed with RCTCBC Planning Officer (see Appendix 2) and considered to be appropriate, representative and proportionate to the scale of the Proposed Development, given its location and characteristics.

Approach and Methodology

- 1.9. The LVIA has been undertaken with regard to the following best practice:
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd edition) – Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013);
 - GLVIA3 Statement of Clarification 1/13, 2/13, 1/14, and 2/14 – Landscape Institute (2013 and 2014);
 - An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment – Natural England (2014);
 - An Approach to Landscape Sensitivity Assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management – Natural England (2019);
 - Visual Representation of Development Proposals, Technical Guidance Note 06/19 – Landscape Institute (2019);
 - Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations, Technical Guidance Note 02/21 – Landscape Institute (2021); and
 - Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA3), Technical Guidance Note 01/24 – Landscape Institute (2024)
- 1.10. The detailed LVIA Methodology is provided in Appendix A.
- 1.11. The GLVIA3 states in paragraph 1.1 that:

“...Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both the

***landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity."*¹**

1.12. GLVIA3 also states in paragraph 1.17 that when identifying landscape and visual effects there:

***"...is a need for an approach that is in proportion to the scale of the project that is being assessed and the nature of the likely effects. Judgement needs to be exercised at all stages in terms of the scale of investigation that is appropriate and proportional."*²**

1.13. GLVIA3 also recognises in paragraph 2.23 that:

***"...professional judgement is a very important part of LVIA. While there is some scope for quantitative measurement of some relatively objective matters much of the assessment must rely on qualitative judgements"*³**

Limitations to the Assessment

1.14. In undertaking the landscape and visual assessment in relation to the Proposed Development, there are limitations and constraints affecting the outputs from this work. These include:

- The baseline assessment has been based on information readily available at the time of undertaking the assessment;
- Every effort has been made to ensure that the photographs and their locations represent a variety of receptors and views from a range of distances and directions;
- Both winter views (illustrating deciduous trees devoid of leaf cover) and summer views (with trees in leaf) have been obtained for the baseline views. The assessment assumes winter conditions unless otherwise stated;
- The assessed development is based on planning application drawings that accompany the planning application and the Illustrative Landscape Masterplan as shown at Appendix E, and is assessed on the assumption that the proposals are delivered in line with these drawings and associated timescales; and
- The assessed development at year 1 is based on the drawings and elevations that accompany the application. The development at year 15 is assessed on the assumption that the proposals are delivered in line with these drawings and estimated conservative growth of existing and proposed mitigation planting.

1.15. The focus of this report is on landscape and visual effects arising from the proposals; however, whilst effects on cultural heritage and ecology are beyond the scope of this LVIA, heritage assets and nature conservation designations in the study area are shown on Environmental Designations Plan at Figure 2.

¹ Paragraph 1.1, Page 4, GLVIA3rd Edition

² Paragraph 1.17, Page 9, GLVIA, 3rd Edition

³ Paragraph 2.23, Page 21, GLVIA, 3rd Edition

Nature of Effect

- 1.16. The degree of landscape or visual effect is identified by means of a descriptive scale as per the GLVIA 3rd Edition guidance. However, it is also necessary to consider the nature of the landscape and visual effects. GLVIA3 assists on this point noting paragraph 5.37 concerning landscape effects which states that:

“One of the more challenging issues is deciding whether the landscape effects should be categorised as positive or negative. It is also possible for effects to be neutral in their consequences for the landscape. An informed professional judgement should be made about this and the criteria used in reaching the judgement should be clearly stated. They might include, but should not be restricted to:

- ***The degree to which the proposal fits with existing character.***
- ***The contribution to the landscape that the development may make its own right, usually by virtue of good design, even if it is in contrast to existing character.***
- ***The importance of perceptions of landscape is emphasised by the European Landscape Convention, and others may of course hold different opinions on whether the effects are positive or negative, but this is not a reason to avoid making this judgement, which would ultimately be weighed against the opinions of others in the decision-making process.”***

- 1.17. A precautionary approach is applied to this LVIA that assumes all landscape and visual effects are considered to be negative or adverse unless otherwise stated.

2. Site Location and Description.

Site Context

- 2.1. The Site lies approximately 3.5km northeast of Pontypridd and approximately 1km northeast of Cilfynydd. The Site collectively measures approximately 24ha spread across thirteen field parcels, of which the majority is used for grazing livestock and keeping horses. The Site area also comprises the National Grid Cilfynydd Substation which would be the point of connection for the cable route.
- 2.2. The Site itself accommodates a hillside location along the northern edge of the Nant Ddu/Nant Cae-Dudwg broad river valley (see Figure 1: Site Location Plan). The Site extends to the north and south of National Road from the wooded river in the south to the existing substation to the northeast. The land cover is currently pastureland bound by a mixture of mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees; post and wire fencing; and stone walling along the northern edge.
- 2.3. Cilfynydd Tips is located to the west, with the settlements of Cilfynydd and Glyncoch located further southwest. It is an open and exposed southerly aspect with panoramic views from local high points to the south, including Mynydd Eglwysilan. Energy infrastructure is located at Cilfynydd 400kV Substation (National Grid), with multiple tracks of High Voltage Overhead Power lines and pylons scattered across the local landscape, including within the site boundary.
- 2.4. Properties are located at Trefechan Farm and Trefechan Cottage to the southwest. Beyond this, there is established Open Access Land (CRoW) around Cilfynydd Tips which comprises dense bracken ground cover with meandering footpaths around the area. Lili Wen Farm is located in the valley approximately 400m to the east.
- 2.5. The Site's development sections are split into three areas. For the purposes of this assessment, it is important to define these areas as they are referred to throughout this report. (see Plate 1: Site Areas)
- 2.6. The 'southern area' (dashed blue line) is located on the lower slopes directly south of National Road near the entrance to Trefechan Farm (the location of the proposed substation). This area is approximately 187m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) at its highest point along National Road and falls southwards towards the river at approximately 165m AOD along the southern boundary of the Site.
- 2.7. The 'northern area' (dashed orange line) is located on the upper slopes of the valley and comprises six broadly rectangular field parcels (the location of the proposed BESS development). This falls from approximately 245m AOD at its highest point along the northern boundary, to the southern edge of the field parcels at approximately 218m AOD. Please refer to the topographical data forming part of the engineering drawings for detailed information regarding the existing topography.
- 2.8. The remainder of the Site area, including the land in between the 'northern area' and the 'southern area' is referred to as the 'cable corridor' (dashed yellow line) as it is comprised of land under the client's control that is included prior to the fixing of the exact location for the cable route. This also includes the National Grid Cilfynydd substation to allow flexibility in the connection of the cable to the grid.



Plate 1: Indicative Site Areas

- 2.9. The Site's vegetation is predominantly unmanaged mature hedgerow and broadleaved hedgerow trees limited to the field boundaries. The northern area is particularly sparse and windswept in terms of its tree cover with browsing damage from livestock around the base and lower stems. The field enclosure of this northern area has fragmented over time through a mixture of grazing and adverse weather. To the south on the lower slopes, vegetation is denser and more wooded along the river corridor of the Nant-Ddu to the east and Nant Car-Dudwg to the south. A tree survey has been carried out in September 2023 and updated in August/September 2024, with an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) completed by Barton Hyett Associated in February 2025 (Ref: BHA_5420_AIA) which accompanies the application. The trees are low to high quality value, ranging in size and maturity. Details of the tree resource can be found in the Tree Survey Schedule at Section 4 of the AIA. Tree Reference Numbers taken from this Tree Survey Schedule would be utilised as a reference throughout this report, with location references taken from the Combined Tree Retention/Removal & Protection Plan (CTRRPP) (Ref: BHA_5420_O2).
- 2.10. In terms of pedestrian access, the Site is in private ownership with no public access permitted. National Road as it passes through the Site provides a pedestrian connection from Llanfabon to Cilfynydd Tips. The entirety of Cilfynydd Tips and its surrounding land is designated as Open Access Land / Other Statutory Access Land under the Countryside Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000.

Environmental Designations

- 2.11. Environmental designations in the study area are shown on Figure 2. The Site forms part of the Taff Vale Eastern Slopes Special Landscape Area (SLA) which is a non-statutory landscape designation. Mynydd Eglwysilan SLA is located to the south.

- 2.12. The Site lies on the boundary between the Taff Vale Eastern Slopes Special Landscape Area (SLA) within RCTCBC and the Mynydd Eglwysilan SLA within CBCC. SLAs are a non-statutory designation applied by the local planning authority to define areas of high landscape importance. An extract of the report associated with this SLA (*Designation of Special landscape Areas in Rhondda Cynon Taf*, TACP Consultants, February 2008 & *Designation of Special Landscape Areas within Caerphilly*, TACP Consultants, January 2008) can be found at Appendix C.
- 2.13. There are no Ancient Woodland, Tree Preservation Orders or Conservation Areas on or near to the Site. The Site is also not subject to any other material constraints. It is not within a High Coal Risk Area in respect of historic coal mining; it is not within Zone C1/C2 of the Welsh Governments Development Advice Maps in respect of flooding; it is not a Listed Building; nor is it affected by Public Right of Way.

3. Description of Proposals.

The Proposed Development

3.1. This application seeks permission for a:

“Proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) with Associated Infrastructure, including a Substation, Earthworks, Access, Drainage, Landscaping and an Underground Cable Route Connection.”

3.2. A series of technical drawings explain the layout of the Proposed Development and associated infrastructure, and this LVIA should be read in conjunction with these plans and the description provided. The Illustrative Landscape Masterplan is contained at Appendix E which illustrates the general arrangement of proposed battery storage modules, infrastructure, ancillary facilities, and the substation compound.

3.3. The following components are depicted on the submitted plans, with associated height parameters that are assessed throughout this LVIA:

Northern Area (BESS Infrastructure)

- 142no. containerised battery energy storage units sited in pairs measuring approx. 6m in length x 2.4m in width x 2.9m in height to be placed on development platforms;
- 71no. inverter/transformer stations (SMA) measuring approx. 6m in length x 2.4m in width and 2.9m in height;
- 7no. auxillary transformers measuring approximately 7.2m in length x 3.4m in width and 2.7m in height;
- 3no. spare parts containers measuring approximately 13.7m in length x 2.4m in width and 2.6m in height;
- 4m high acoustic fencing and 2.4m high palisade security fencing to enclose the developable area (matte green in colour. RAL colour to be agreed at a later stage); and
- Relevant communications equipment including inward facing CCTV measuring a height of 2.4m.

Southern Area (Substation Infrastructure)

- 1no. 33/400kV transformer;
- 3no. bus bars at a height of approximately 9.4m and 3no. high level bus bars at a height of approximately 12m;
- 1no. earthing/auxiliary transformer (EAT) measuring approximately 2.7m in height;
- 3no. harmonic filters measuring approximately 6m in height;
- 3no. cable sealing ends measuring approximately 7.6m in height;

- 1no earth switches measuring approximately 8.7m in height;
- 1no. circuit breakers measuring approximately 6.6m in height;
- 1no. disconnector at a height of approximately 9.1m;
- 3no. surge arrestors at a height of approximately 8.6m;
- 1no. control room measuring approximately 5.9m in height;
- 3no switchgear cabinets measuring approximately 3.1m in height; and
- 4m high acoustic fencing and 2.4m palisade fencing security fencing to enclose the substation (matte green in colour. RAL colour to be agreed at a later stage).

3.4. The proposed 'Cable Corridor' will comprise a buried cable route connection which would connect the principle site to the POC at Cilfynydd 400kV substation, via agricultural field parcels. An indicative cable route within a cable corridor is shown on the accompanying plans measuring approximately 700m in length.

3.5. The proposed layout incorporates a number of built-in mitigation measures:

- The layout has been devised to form tight clusters of infrastructure, with the majority of the Site area remaining undeveloped with the exception of the underground cable route. The proposed substation is located in the 'southern area' at the least visually sensitive part of the Site, and the low-lying profile of BESS infrastructure in the northern area, so that it would not break the skyline of the view and can benefit from screening;
- Offsets from the field boundary vegetation to avoid any impacts on root protection areas of retained hedgerow and trees. The relatively wide buffer also provides a generous maintenance zone and helps avoid long-term management risks, which could result in the need for future tree works;
- Enhancement of all existing field boundary hedgerows and supplementation with additional hedgerow stock and trees to provide containment and introduce additional ecological benefits. Hedgerow stock and tree species would be native and tolerant of the wind pressure, reflect the existing arboricultural resource and ecology surveys;
- A modest area of woodland planting would wrap around the substation in the southern area to provide screening from the sensitive area in the south (Mynydd Eglwysilan). This would contribute to the wooded river valley corridor and link with the existing tree resource;
- The proposed substation would be located in close proximity to the existing large scale electricity pylon, thus utilising the least visually sensitive part of the Site and providing connectivity with the other nearby energy infrastructure;
- Proposed scattered native tree planting, similar in character to that evident in other parts of the valley fields, are present in the southern area of the Site. This provides

additional visual integration and contributes large, broadleaved trees where suitable to improve the ecological and arboricultural resource once established.

- 3.6. Given the undulating nature of the topography, a considerable level of earthworks are required to make level platforms suitable for this BESS infrastructure/substation. This is illustrated at Appendix F: Illustrative Landscape Section. The southern area surrounding the substation has been levelled from National Road to allow access into the northern edge. This earthworks requires the raising of the southern portion with an engineered bank wrapping around the southern and western perimeter. This is heavily wooded with suitable species to wrap around the development, screening it from Trefechan Farm as well as providing an audible buffer to any noise from the substation. The northern area comprises three tiers of BESS infrastructure, divided by retaining walls and access tracks between each tier. The tier systems allows for the retention of some elements of the field structure and retained hedgerows, as well as introducing new hedgerows and trees between each tier to provide additional screening. Please refer to Pegasus Levels Strategy Sheets 1 to 3 (Ref: P22-2733-PEG-XX-XX-DR-C-2000-P3).
- 3.7. A Colour Assessment falls outside of the scope of work for this LVIA. However, greens, dark greens and browns (particularly in winter when viewed with the nearby bracken and woody features in nearby areas) dominate the local landscape, and this can be used to devise a colour palette for the Proposed Development, particularly the BESS infrastructure (containers, inverters etc.) and any fencing). A mixture of colours mimicking the local landscape have been chosen (illustrated on Figure 6: Photomontage), however further discussion with the Council can take place during the determination stage if necessary to define the exact colour palette.
- 3.8. The above described refinements, part of the iterative design process that has been carried out across the design stages, responds to the on-site analysis and findings of this LVIA and form an intrinsic part of the Proposed Development.
- 3.9. Other equipment and infrastructure throughout the Site of relevance to this LVIA include:
 - The main access would be from the southwest up the existing access track. A secondary would be taken from National Road to the east through the existing field gate.
 - The access tracks would resemble a typical agricultural loose stone track. Its alignment along the field edge, but away from hedgerows and trees, loose surface of crushed stone of local provenance, and lack of any perimeter fencing in this part of the Site, would help reduce any adverse influence.
 - Where access gates are necessary double leaf security gates to match proposed palisade fencing.
 - CCTV around the main part of the site, i.e., the perimeter of the battery storage compound and the substation.
 - The only lighting would be timer motion sensor activated security lighting, enabling the security company to have a visual at night if required. Any installed lighting would be downwards facing to limit any light emittance when lit.
 - The construction phase from start to finish would take approximately 12 months.

- The Proposed Development would be decommissioned after 40 years with the land being reinstated back to agricultural land use.

3.10. The location of the above listed elements and other ancillary equipment and facilities have been informed by the findings of this LVIA.

4. Effects on Landscape Elements.

- 4.1. The following section assesses the effect on the landscape elements that currently characterise the Site. It considers the introduction of the new landscape elements as indicated on the Illustrative Masterplan and how these physically affect the existing features present within the Site.

Land Cover

- 4.2. The Site is currently agricultural grassland of mixed value (Refer to Avian Ecology Ecological Assessment Ref: Pegas-075-6663_100225 for further details regarding grassland/ground cover quality). The 'northern area' comprises modified grassland with boundary features of tree lines, earth mounds and stone walls between the individual fields. The 'southern area' comprises predominantly rush pasture with an area of modified grassland to the west and a single tree line along part of the southern boundary. The remainder of the Site allowed for the cable corridor comprises a mixture of rough and modified grassland with field boundaries defined by hedgerows, mature hedgerow trees, and native woodland. This area also comprises the National Grid Cilfynydd Substation. The landscape is typical of the location with nearby energy infrastructure and therefore the landcover is assessed to be of medium susceptibility and value, which results in a medium sensitivity.
- 4.3. This grassland the defines the Site's northern and southern areas where the clusters of Proposed Development would be located would be removed and replaced by the Proposed Development. This would include the substation in the 'southern area' and the BESS infrastructure in the 'northern area'. The 'cable corridor' would be temporarily altered to complete underground works, but this would soon be restored to grassland and would not require the loss of tree cover, as shown in the CTRRPP.
- 4.4. Following the completion of the construction stage, the area between the battery modules and ancillary equipment, outside of the access tracks, would be sown with a suitable grassland mix for east of maintenance. The remaining areas, outside of the substation and BESS tiers, would remain the same or if disturbed through construction traffic would be resown with a suitable wildflower mix to benefit biodiversity.
- 4.5. The area of the proposed substation would be laid to hardcore or left as a building platform, with no opportunities for grass within the compound for health and safety reasons and operational procedures. Proposed access tracks would require ground levelling and surfacing with crushed stone, which would be permeable to avoid water puddling or run off.
- 4.6. It is assessed that whilst there would be some beneficial changes to landcover with the landscaping in place in terms of improving species diversity, the majority of the Proposed Development areas would comprise new built form resulting in an overall adverse effect upon land cover, relative to the baseline. This covers the development areas only and not the majority of the Site are included as part of the cable corridor. The magnitude of change is assessed as medium, which when combined with the medium sensitivity results in a moderate adverse effect upon land cover.

Topography

- 4.7. The Site has a modest slope from the peaks of the Cilfynydd Tips to the north and the riverbed to the south typical of the valley landscape. This is a topographical difference of approximately

80m from the top (northern edge, 245m AOD) to the bottom (southern edge, 165m) with a relatively uniform incline with the exception of National Road which cuts through the centre. Localised earthworks to create suitable development platforms would be necessary to accommodate the Proposed Development. The susceptibility of the topography to changes as a result of the Proposed Development is medium, which when combined with a medium value, would result in an overall medium sensitivity.

- 4.8. The changes to the topographic profile would be substantial and related to the construction of the built infrastructure including terraced development platforms and careful consideration of the levels of associated road infrastructure at appropriate gradients.
- 4.9. Once the Proposed Development is constructed, the overall topographic profile of the Site's developed areas would change with the introduction of retaining structures and engineered banks within the northern and southern areas. The remaining area of the Site, including the cable corridor and the existing substation would remain unchanged. The overall magnitude of change to the ground profile of the Site would be medium as it would be changed but legible to some degree. With a medium sensitivity and a medium magnitude of change, the overall effects on the topography would be moderate adverse.

Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

- 4.10. The BS5837:2012 Tree Survey and AIA sets out a detailed assessment of the condition of trees within and adjoining the Site. The Site has a number of medium to high value trees scattered within the hedgerows throughout, both internally and along the boundaries.
- 4.11. The existing trees and hedgerows are considered moderate value overall from a landscape element perspective, as they are mostly mature and contribute to the character of the area which would be difficult to replace in the short to medium term. Most trees are also considered to be moderate value as recognised by the tree survey (130 moderate value trees in total including individual trees, groups, woodland and hedgerow). Twelve trees, one group and one woodland are considered high value in arboricultural terms, and fifteen trees, three groups and fifteen hedgerows considered low value. Their susceptibility to changes arising from the development proposed would be high, reflecting their maturity and the time it would take for this landscape element to be replaced. With a medium value and high susceptibility to change, the overall sensitivity of the tree resource is medium-high.
- 4.12. The CTRPP shows that no tree removal is required for the 'southern area'. The 'northern area' would require the removal of two moderate value trees (T4 & T18) and five small sections of moderate value hedgerow (H5, H9, H13, H22 and H27) and two low value hedgerow (H12 and H14) to facilitate the internal access tracks.
- 4.13. The Proposed Development would result in the retention of the majority of tree cover across the Site. This accounts for a very small area of the overall tree cover and therefore the tree and hedgerow resource that defines the landscape character would remain. This would be enhanced with additional trees, hedgerow infill and woodland belts which provides key connectivity for wildlife through the Site. Trees and hedgerow would be protected during the construction phase as described in Section 7 of the AIA: Principles for Tree Protection on Development Sites, which describes measures to comply with BS5837:2012.
- 4.14. Overall, the Proposed Development would bring about a notable increase in the quantity of trees and hedgerows within the Site as shown on the Illustrative Landscape Masterplan (Appendix E). The key areas of new planting are to be located within the 'southern area' on the

engineered banks which wrap around the substation. Additional trees and hedgerows have also been introduced throughout the 'northern area' at a safe distance away from the BESS infrastructure, including the linear network along field boundaries. Additional planting typologies within green space include additional large broadleaved specimens on the slopes to the south.

- 4.15. It is assessed that the magnitude of change upon the tree resource with the addition of the new tree planting as shown in the Illustrative Landscape Masterplan would be low. This would translate to moderate beneficial effects on the tree resource within the Site, with beneficial effects increasing over time as the trees mature to further integrate the proposals into the local landscape setting. This would increase the diversity of planting whilst also reinforcing local landscape character and field structures.

Public Rights of Way and Published Walking Routes

- 4.16. There are no public footpaths within the Site boundary. The nearest publicly accessible land is located across the Cilfynydd Tips (Craig-Evan-Leyshon Common) to the west which is Open Access Land (CRoW) which has a network of footpaths around it.
- 4.17. The Proposed Development would not have any direct physical effects upon PRoWs as none are located within the Site. The proposals would introduce no change as a recreational resource due to the secure nature of the facility. This would have no effect on this landscape element.
- 4.18. Effects on visual amenity as experienced from the local PRoW network are considered in Section 6 of this LVIA.

Summary of Effects on Landscape Elements

- 4.19. With the application of mitigation measures, it is considered that the proposals would introduce moderate adverse effects on the land cover and topography. The existing trees and hedgerows would be retained and when coupled with the introduction of new planting to all boundaries, would result in a beneficial effect on trees, woodland and hedgerow cover.
- 4.20. The effects on landscape elements in the Site resulting from the proposals are summarised in the table below.

Table 1: Summary of Effects on Landscape Elements

Landscape Elements	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Overall Effect
Land Cover	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Moderate adverse
Topography	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Moderate adverse
Trees and Hedgerows	Medium	High	Medium-High	Low	Moderate Beneficial
Public Access	High	High	High	None	Nil effects

5. Effects on Landscape Character.

- 5.1. This sections seeks to establish how the proposals would have a bearing on landscape character locally. The effects on landscape character consider how the introduction of new landscape elements physically alters the landform, landcover, landscape pattern, and perceptual attributes of the Site or how the visibility of the proposals change the way in which landscape character is perceived. Landscape character is defined in GLVIA3 as the:

“Distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.”

Published Landscape Character Assessment

- 5.2. The following paragraphs identify the key characteristics of the landscape described in published landscape character assessments.

National Landscape Character Areas

- 5.3. National Landscape Character Areas (NLCAs) prepared by Natural Resources Wales, form the broadest scale of landscape character assessment in Wales.
- 5.4. The Site and the surrounding areas within the district are located in the NLCA37: South Wales Valleys. The published description, key characteristics and landscape opportunities of this NLCA are included at Appendix B. A Summary Description is included which describes the area:

“Many deep, urbanised valleys dissect an extensive upland area. Combined with industrial heritage and distinct identity of its people, the South Wales Valleys provide some of Wales’ most widely known and iconic national images.”

- 5.5. Due to the small size of the Site, this national level assessment is considered too geographically extensive to provide detailed information that would be relevant to the Site and Proposed Development. For this reason, the description and characteristics of this NLCA have been reviewed to inform this LVIA but they have not been assessed as a specific landscape receptor.

LANDMAP

- 5.6. The LANDMAP is a whole landscape approach which covers all landscapes throughout Wales (excluding the cities of Cardiff and Swansea). LANDMAP is the formally adopted methodology for landscape assessment and is advocated by Planning Policy Wales. The landscape character is defined collectively by five layers/aspects of information (taken from the LANDMAP website):
- Geological Landscape – *“identifies those landscape qualities which are linked to the control or influence exerted by bedrock, surface processes, landforms and hydrology.”;*
 - Landscape Habitats – *“focusses on recording habitat features, characteristics and their spatial relationships within the context of the wider landscape.”;*
 - Visual & Sensory – *“maps landscape characteristics and qualities as perceived through our senses, primarily visually.”... “The physical attributes of landform and land cover, their visible patterns and interrelationship.”;*

- Historic Landscape – “identifies landscape characteristics that depend on key historic land uses, patterns and features. Identifies only those classes of historic land uses, patterns and features that are prominent and contribute to the over historic character of the present landscape.”;
- Cultural Landscape – “describes the links between landscape and people, from the way in which cultural or human activity shapes the landscape, to the way in which culture shapes the way we respond to landscape.”

5.7. The description of each landscape is used as a basis for evaluation to make judgements to guide, for example, development or landscape management. LANDMAP includes evaluation scores for each aspect, which are defined as follows:

- Outstanding – national importance.
- High – regional or county importance.
- Moderate – local importance.
- Low – Little or no importance.

5.8. The guidance available on Natural Resource Wales website does not specifically advise on how to assess BESS schemes in the context of LANDMAP aspect areas.

5.9. Table 1 lists all LANDMAP aspect areas associated with the Site, including their overall evaluation. Those assessed cover the entirety of the Site.

Table 1: LANDMAP Aspect Areas

LANDMAP Aspect Area	LANDMAP Description	LANDMAP Evaluation
Geological Landscape: Taff Valley CYNONGLO5	<i>Part of extensive, dissected Pennant sandstone plateau of Lower Taff Valley.</i>	Moderate
Landscape Habitats: N/A CYNONLH133	<i>Despite the area being largely improved grassland there are numerous small areas of valuable habitat present, a number of which are Priority Habitat, a SSSI is present and a number of key species are present.</i>	High
Visual & Sensory: Llanfabon CYNONVS143	<i>A pleasant landscape, with some attractive rolling farmland away from the built form urban edges of Nelson, Blackwood and Treforest. This incongruous mix of combining elements of rural field patterns, isolated settlements/farmsteads and built form urban edge and pylons/masts leads to a complex overall character. Essentially rural with upland feel.</i>	Moderate <i>Without any notable quality, but parts of this area certainly have high scenic quality and integrity.</i>

LANDMAP Aspect Area	LANDMAP Description	LANDMAP Evaluation
	<i>Broad views across valleys and up to upland hills/outliers of Mynydd Eglwysilan and Meio that dominate inward views. Maturing managed vegetation on restored land at Penalta Community Park.</i>	
Historic Landscape: Llanfabon and Llanbradach CYNONHL290	<i>A reasonably well-preserved irregular fieldscape of medieval/post-medieval origin exhibiting evidence of prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval activity; the overall assessment of 'high' is based on the excellent preservation of the fieldscape and the diverse multi-period nature of the archaeological resource.</i>	High
Cultural Landscape: Llanfabon CYNONCLS016	<i>Sense of Place/Local Distinctiveness: Moderate</i> <i>Visual & Sensory Landscape Evaluation: Moderate</i> <i>Scenic Quality: Moderate</i> <i>Character: Moderate</i>	Moderate

Local Landscape Character Areas

- 5.10. At a district level, both Rhondda Cynon Taf and Caerphilly do not have a specific Landscape Character Area for their areas within their evidence base. They rely on the LANDMAP assessment and SLA literature, as described above and below.

Taff Vale Eastern Slopes SLA

- 5.11. The Primary Landscape Qualities and Features of Taff Vale Eastern Slopes SLA (of relevance) are:
- Long stretch of rural hillsides in contrast to densely developed valley floor and valleys to west.
 - All area plays important role in overall impression of the South Wales Valleys as gained from the A470, the major north/south route through Wales.
 - Gradation of small-scale irregular fields and woods on lower slopes, to larger fields on shallower mid slopes, top open land on tops, linked by steep winding lanes.
 - High point of Cefn Eglwysilan with prominent masts on skyline acting as landmarks.
 - Various earthworks relating to historically important medieval estate of Senghenydd on ridge top.

- Prominent Cilfynydd tops in north overlook Taff Vale. Unreclaimed and steep with sculptural forms, they are an important reminder of industrial past, now becoming attractively covered with gorse and heather.
- In places the upper edge of the valley settlements are starting to creep up the hillside intrusively.
- Taff Trail cycleway passes through lower part of the area

5.12. Key Policy and Management Issues of Taff Vale Eastern Slopes SLA of relevance include:

- *Conserve skyline.*
- *Protect/preserve/conserv e historic features relating to Senghenydd*
- *Bracken control on open common land*
- *Introduction of 'Tir Gofal' for conservation of grasslands*
- *Recreational and other rural developments to be in keeping with conspicuous hillside location.*
- *Conserve Cilfynydd tips in generally unreclaimed condition for historic/cultural and visual value.*

Mynydd Eglwysilan SLA

5.13. The Primary Landscape Qualities and Features of Mynydd Eglwysilan SLA of relevance include:

- *This includes the whole of the Mynydd Eglwysilan area to the north of Abertridwr and Senghenydd, together with the more lowland, agricultural landscapes around Nelson , and the Lancaiach Fawr estate.*
- *Landscape elements range from open uplands in the south to more lowland landscape mosaics to the north. The latter having a wider range of habitats and elements.*
- *The area has a network of rights of way, including the Rhymney Valley Ridgeway Footpath, and a range of historic and cultural landscape relics, including old earthworks (e.g. Senghenydd Dyke), burial sites and other features indicating a long history of land use and occupation.*

5.14. Key Policy and Management Issues of Mynydd Eglwysilan SLA of relevance include:

- *Loss of habitats, both upland and lowland which contribute to the character of the area.*
- *Loss of historic and cultural landscape elements.*
- *Impact of overhead power lines.*
- *Development pressures along settlement edges.*

Landscape Value

- 5.15. The Site is comprised of agricultural fields of modified grassland and rush grassland. This landcover is commonplace in the locality beyond the settlement limits. The Site falls within the SLA 10: Taff Vale Eastern Slopes which is a non-statutory landscape designation. RCTCBC defines a Special Landscape Areas as *“those areas which it considers to be the most important areas of high quality landscape within the Plan area”*. Within the adopted RCTCBC Local Development Plan (March 2011), Policy SSA23: Special Landscape Areas seeks to protect the area against inappropriate development where it is likely that there would be particular pressures for development or change; conserve and enhance existing distinctive and valued qualities and features of the landscape to avoid unacceptable deterioration, change or development; raise awareness of these distinctive landscapes and thereby raise standards of design to bring about positive change.
- 5.16. For these reasons, the Site falls at the higher spectrum of the landscape value continuum, representing an area of high intrinsic value landscape.
- 5.17. Based on the above analysis, the value of the Site is assessed as high.

Landscape Susceptibility to Change

- 5.18. The susceptibility of a landscape to change is dependent on the characteristics of the receiving landscape and the nature of the development proposed. This includes development similar in nature to that proposed (energy infrastructure). Overall, the Site has a medium susceptibility to change owing to the existing context in which the Site lies.

Landscape Sensitivity

- 5.19. Combining the high value of the Site and medium susceptibility to change, results in a medium-high sensitivity of the Site itself.

Assessment on the Landscape Character of the Site

- 5.20. The landscape character of the Site has the potential to be influenced to some degree by the Proposed Development. It would introduce new built features into the landscape, albeit sitting alongside features of a similar nature, and of a smaller size and scale to that of the high voltage pylons and the National Grid Substation.
- 5.21. The Site area which is due to be developed is less than half of the overall Site boundary area due to the indicative cabling route area and that covered by the existing substation for connection. The development area would not fill the entirety of the Site boundary, which forms a small part of the LANDMAP Aspect Areas and SLAs on which the Site is located.
- 5.22. The overall layout has been designed to broadly retain the field boundary network and replicate the layout and form of the existing infrastructure. The retained vegetation and additional planting proposed as part of the development would assist in reducing the impact of the development on the landscape character of the Site. This includes typologies like mixed broadleaved woodland; trees in hedgerow; and hedgerow stock. The planting strategy for the Site includes native species of local provenance which would be tolerant of the conditions. The proposed planting around the Site would over time start to replicate the existing vegetation within the Site's wider setting.

- 5.23. It is accepted that the Site's landscape character would temporarily change from open agricultural land to one that contains energy infrastructure: battery modules, ancillary infrastructure, substation compound etc. The magnitude of change within the Site of the areas being developed would change from grassland to the proposed substation in the 'southern area' and BESS infrastructure in the 'northern area', results in a medium magnitude of change and a major adverse effect upon the Site's baseline landscape character. Such effects would be limited to the Site itself, and not the surrounding landscape. The surrounding landscape would not be subject to any direct physical change thus its land use, land cover, and landform would remain unchanged and would prevail with the Proposed Development in place. The effects upon the surrounding and wider landscape, outside of the Site's boundaries, therefore, relate to the perceptual and sensory aspects of the landscape.
- 5.24. The magnitude of change upon the wider SLA and LANDMAP Aspect Areas during construction and Year 1 of operation would be assessed as low, owing to the fact that the Proposed Development is a similar typology to what is currently existing nearby and of a very modest scale and mass, in what is largely a rural landscape. This would translate to moderate adverse landscape character effects. The presence of the pylons and overhead cables, alongside the National Grid Cilfynydd Substation, act to mitigate the degree of change, particularly in relation to the perceptual and sensory aspect of the local landscape. In addition, the proposed schemes at Llanfabon (Ref: 23/10470/FUL) which is currently under construction, and the approved Twyl Hywel Wind Farm (Ref: 23/O427/DNS) for 14 wind turbines on Mynydd Eglwysilan, are located within this landscape (see Section X: Cumulative Assessment).
- 5.25. The sense of scale, field pattern, landscape framework, intervisibility with other LANDMAP Aspect Areas and SLAs would not be affected, nor would the visibility with any features that could be described as landmarks – albeit it is acknowledged that cross-valley views from Mynydd Eglwysilan Common (SLA11) would be gained due to the elevated landscape. This would be reduced once vegetation has established.
- 5.26. The proposed planting has been purposely devised to reduce the perception of change and screen the Proposed Development, thus, with time, further limiting its influence on the immediate environs. Whilst the introduced woodland around the 'southern area' upon the engineered banks would change the character of the Site, it has been judged that such design intervention would be in keeping with the well treed context of the wooded river valley and would mimic a presence of medium scale block of woodland, and to a degree acting to reduce the visibility of existing pylons.
- 5.27. The landscape mitigation proposals would introduce landscape features typical of the local landscape around the periphery, which would have the potential to enhance local landscape character. In the longer term, this would establish to maturity to contribute to the surrounding area in a sensitive manner. The reversibility of the Proposed Development after the stated temporary (40 year) time parameter would reduce the magnitude of change in the long term.

Summary of Effects on Landscape Character

- 5.28. The table below summarises the magnitude of change and overall effect on the landscape character assessed above.

Table 2: Summary of Effects on Landscape Character

Landscape Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Overall Effect
The Site	High	Medium	Major adverse
LANDMAP Aspect Area Geological Landscape: Taff Valley	Medium (Moderate LANDMAP Evaluation)	Low	Minor adverse
LANDMAP Aspect Area Landscape Habitats: N/A	High	Low	Moderate adverse
LANDMAP Aspect Area Visual & Sensory: Llanfabon	Medium (Moderate LANDMAP Evaluation)	Low	Minor adverse
LANDMAP Aspect Area Historic Landscape: Llanfabon and Llanbradach	High	Low	Moderate adverse
LANDMAP Aspect Area Cultural Landscape: Llanfabon	Medium (Moderate LANDMAP Evaluation)	Low	Minor adverse
SLA10: Taff Vale Eastern Slopes	High	Low	Moderate adverse

6. Effects on Visual Amenity.

- 6.1. The assessment of visual effects considers the changes in views arising from the Proposed Development in relation to visual receptors including the surrounding settlements, residential properties, highways and PRoWs together with the effects on identified viewpoints. Visual amenity is defined in GLVIA3.

“Overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area.”⁴

- 6.2. The assessment was carried out in August 2022 (summer) and February 2025 (winter). Site photographs were taken to record the character and nature of the views, and the existing visibility of the Site. The seasonal changes to the vegetative cover have been considered as part of the visual assessment.
- 6.3. Screened Zone of Theoretical Visibility (SZTV – Figure 3) has modelled the Proposed Development at its maximum height as outlined in Section 3: Description of Proposals. The SZTV model has used available map data and therefore takes account of most available features in the surrounding landscape. The methodology used for the production of the SZTV is set out on the plan itself, but in summary:
- The proposed battery storage modules and other ancillary infrastructure have been modelled to represent the likely worst-case scenario for the proposed development.
 - Built form (as shown on OS Open Map Local) has been modelled at 8m in height.
 - Areas of woodland (as shown on OS Open Map Local) are modelled at 15m in height.
- 6.4. The resulting plan, although modelled to include surrounding surface feature, provides an exaggerated depiction of likely visibility that requires review in the field. It is important to reiterate that the modelled SZTV does not take into account other vegetation such as field boundary and roadside hedgerows, which are not included in the above datasets. The area of potential visibility within 5km includes areas in the immediate vicinity as well as patches of land on the slopes in the surrounding area which is exaggerated due to the valley landscape topography and size of the Site area (in comparison to the area that is due to be developed which is a lot smaller). This means, and the field survey has confirmed, that the actual visibility of the Proposed Development would be substantially reduced from that shown on the modelled SZTV. It should also be noted that most of the land covered by the SZTV is private land. This LVIA necessarily focusses on publicly accessible locations including public roads, Public Rights of Way, Open Access Land and settlement edges.
- 6.5. The SZTV has been used to inform the selection of representative public viewpoints covering a variety of directions and distances from the Site, with an emphasis on higher sensitivity receptors. These include settlement edges and public rights of way (see Viewpoint Location Plan – Figure 4).

⁴ Glossary, Page 158, GLVIA 3rd Edition

- 6.6. The series of annotated photosheets from Viewpoints 1–14 are included at Figure 5. This LVIA would focus on these selected viewpoints that are situated to inform the baseline description and assessment of effects. The photographs have also been used to inform the assessment of effects upon the local landscape character. Supporting photomontages have also been included at Figure 6.
- 6.7. The inclusion of a viewpoint in this LVIA does not imply that predicted effects would occur. A variety of landscape and visual mitigation measures have been incorporated through the iterative design process to prevent, reduce or offset potential landscape and visual effects.
- 6.8. This assessment focusses on the operational stage, assessed following completion at Year 1, and at Year 15, to indicate the effectiveness of the proposed mitigation planting. The construction and decommissioning stages would be of relatively short duration and would be incrementally introduced to the Site with the final stage of the construction work resembling the development at Year 1 post completion. It is accepted that plant movement and construction activities would be present during the construction and decommissioning phases, and such activities may be perceptible from the surrounding areas. However, it is judged to be very limited. Thus, any effects brought about by the construction and decommissioning phases, although relevant, are considered to be similar or lower to those identified during the long-term operational phase of the Proposed Development.

Baseline Views

- 6.9. The following paragraphs summarise existing views towards the Site, experienced by the visual receptors listed above, and with reference to relevant representative viewpoints.

PRoW and Published Walking Routes

- 6.10. There are no public footpaths within the Site boundary. Public footpaths in the study area are limited around the Site to the path which follows the Nant Cae dudwg to the south. The Rhymney Valley Ridgeway Walk is also present in the Study Area which climbs the Mynydd Eglwysilan to the south (Viewpoint 10).

Open Access Land/Other Statutory Land

- 6.11. As previously mentioned, public footpaths in the study area are limited around the Site however there are large area of Open Access/Other Statutory Access Land in the vicinity of the Site at the Craig-Evan Leyshon Common to the west/northwest (Viewpoints 3, 4, 5 & 6) and the Mynydd Eglwysilan Common to the south on the other side of the valley (Viewpoint 10 and 11).

Public Highways

- 6.12. From the highway (National Road) traversing through the Site (Viewpoints 1, 2 & 3), views of the 'southern area' portion of the Site can be experienced at close proximity. Limited, gappy hedgerow is present along this route and therefore views are open and expansive across the valley.
- 6.13. Views from highways are generally fleeting and glimpsed through gaps in vegetation along the roadside whilst travelling by vehicle. No other highways have been considered relevant to the LVIA, due to lack of intervisibility and context.

Settlement

- 6.14. The Site is located approximately 1km to the northeast of Cilfynydd (Viewpoint 12). Scattered properties are present in the vicinity at Trefechan Farm to the southwest, Trefechan Cottages and Putwell to the west and Old Wen Farm to the east. Views are only available from Trefechan Farm due to its close proximity on the edge of the Site (Viewpoint 2).
- 6.15. There are no properties on the northern aspect of the Mynydd Eglwysilan which overlooks the Site and is comprised primarily of common land (Viewpoints 10 & 11).
- 6.16. Other settlements in the study area (included in the SZTV) are Glyncoch to the southwest (Viewpoint 13) and Treharris / Nelson to the north (Representative Viewpoint 14). Views towards the Cilfynydd Tips are evident; however, no views of the Site have been identified from these receptors.

Sensitivity of Receptors

- 6.17. With regard to the sensitivity of visual receptors, this is established by cross-referencing the value of views gained and their inherent susceptibility to change brought about by the Proposed Development.
- 6.18. In terms of value, the local area is a designated landscape of high value. In terms of their susceptibility, users of PRow and those exercising their right to access on Open Access Land are considered to be of high susceptibility. This is on the basis that the surrounding landscape forms a strong component of their visual amenity. The same approach is taken for residential receptors. Overall, the sensitivity of PRow/Open Access Land users and residential receptors is assessed as high.
- 6.19. Road users travel across different landscapes and are influenced by a variety of views, built form and elements of infrastructure. On that basis, their susceptibility is taken as medium, and their sensitivity is assessed as medium.

Visual Receptor Assessment

- 6.20. Noting that most of the surrounding photographs are heavily filtered by an interplay between vegetation and topographical changes, views of the proposals are limited to:
 - National Road (road users and walkers through the Open Access Land) directly through the Site;
 - Craig-Evan-Leyshon Common (Open Access/Statutory Access Land) to the west and northwest;
 - Mynydd Eglwysilan Common (Open Access/Statutory Access Land) to the south; and
 - Residential properties adjacent to the Site boundary (Trefechan Farm) would also have views of the Proposed Development from within their curtilage. The change experienced by residents in their views from the introduction of the Proposed Development is not the change that being assessed in this report as it is a private view.

- 6.21. Vegetation in the wider landscape beyond the Site in all directions, including woodland, tree belts, hedgerows and riparian corridors when combined with the mountainous/valley topography, provide a level of screening from most middle-to-longer distance views to the north, east and west.
- 6.22. Due to the Site's location on a south-facing slope, views from the south across the valley are evident from the northern edge Mynydd Eglwysilan, although the Site forms a very small component of a wide panoramic view across the landscape which includes multiple instances of energy infrastructure nearby at National Grid Cilfynydd 400kV Substation and its network of high voltage pylons (see Viewpoint 10 & 11).
- 6.23. This visual assessment is informed by 14 viewpoints discussed in the table overleaf. The viewpoints are fixed points in the LVIA study area and provide information that informs the description of the visual (and landscape) baseline and the assessment of effects. Other provisional viewpoints were visited for the purposes of this assessment as agreed by the RCTCBC Officer (see Appendix D: Viewpoint Approval); however, nine preliminary viewpoints were discounted from this assessment due to lack of visibility. The chosen viewpoints are representative of the receptors in the 3km study area. A record of all the provisional viewpoints can be submitted upon request.

Table 3: Assessment Viewpoints

Viewpoint Reference	Viewpoint Location	Approximate Distance from the Site and the Direction of the View towards the Site	Visual Receptors
1	National Road (1).	0m Looking southwest.	Road users.
2	National Road (2).	17m Looking east.	Road users.
3	National Road in Open Access Land near Trefechan Cottages.	127m Looking northeast.	Open Access Land, residents and road users.
4	Track up Cilfynydd Tips Open Access Land (1)	3m Looking east.	Open Access Land.
5	Track up Cilfynydd Tips Open Access Land (2).	13m Looking southeast.	Open Access Land
6	Track up Cilfynydd Tips Open Access Land (3) – highest point.	17m Looking south.	Open Access Land.

Viewpoint Reference	Viewpoint Location	Approximate Distance from the Site and the Direction of the View towards the Site	Visual Receptors
7	Public Footpath NELS/FP115/1.	241m Looking south.	Public footpath users.
8	Cefn Y Garth in Open Access Land to north.	844km Looking south.	Open Access Land.
9	Public Footpath NELS/FP23/1 near Llanfabon Cemetery.	463m Looking west.	Public footpath / Settlement to west.
10	Valley Way through Open Access Land on Mynydd Eglwysilan.	1.16km Looking north.	Open Access Land / Valley Way.
11	Bwlch Carnygelli through Open Access Land on Mynydd Eglwysilan.	1.99km Looking west.	Open Access Land / Road.
12	Wood Street, Cilfynydd.	1.07km Looking northeast.	Settlement to southwest.
13	Cefn Lane, Glyncoch.	1.56km Looking northeast.	Settlement to west.
14	Public footpath 109/20 through Treharris.	3.36km Looking south.	Public footpath users and settlement to north.

- 6.24. Based on the LVIA Methodology at Appendix 1, Table 2 below sets out the assessment of the visual effects at Year 1 and Year 15 following the construction of the Proposed Development shown on the Illustrative Landscape Masterplan show at Appendix E. The Year 15 assessment factors in the growth of mitigation planting.

Table 4: Summary of Effects on Visual Receptors

Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Overall Effect
Open Access Land / Other Statutory Access Land			

Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Overall Effect
Craig-Evan-Leyshon Common (Viewpoints 3, 4, 5 & 6)	High	Year 1: Craig-Evan-Leyshon Common is located directly to the west of the Site and wraps around the northern edge extending up to Whitehall Golf Club in the north. As evidenced by the SZTV, the majority of the common is not theoretically visible, with only an area within 200m of the Site theoretically visible. This is due to the location of the Cilfynydd Tips directly to the west of the Site whose landform rises above the Sites own topography. Viewpoint 3 is located on National Road to the west of Site near Trefechan Cottages. A mixture of vegetation and built form heavily filter any views towards the Site from this location. The topography falls away from this point towards the south to further reduce any potential visibility (shown by the SZTV). Viewpoint 4, 5 & 6 are sequential viewpoints whilst one travels up the track that skirts the edge of the Craig-Evan-Leyshon Common near the edge of the 'northern area' of the Site (where the BESS development would be located). They are close distance views into the Site's northern edge from higher ground. The Proposed Development has been well considered to limit the impact on Craig-Evan-Leyshon Common by including a large set back from the these edges of the Site. The westernmost parcel (near Viewpoint 4) would be left free from development and would be used for ecological enhancements and therefore not visually affected. The remaining five parcels would comprise considerable offsets from boundaries 15m+ which would include mitigation planting such as additional hedgerow and trees that would be suitable for the hillside setting. This planting would also be a fit with the landscape character of this area. A photomontage has been completed for Viewpoint 6 at the highest point of the track adjacent to the Site, overlooking the valley. As	Year 1: Major adverse directly adjacent to the Site. Negligible beyond the immediate periphery.

Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Overall Effect
		illustrated, the proposed BESS would be sunk into the ground to reduce the impact on this edge. The view in the foreground would inevitably change from pastureland to the Proposed Development for this short section of track between Viewpoint 5 & Viewpoint 6 (approximately 170m). However, the panoramic view towards Mynydd Eglwysilan and wider valley landscape would continue to remain and prevail with the development in place. The overall magnitude of change, as perceived from publicly accessible locations on the Site's northern edge, would be high. Beyond the immediate periphery and across the remaining area of the Craig-Evan-Leyshon Common, the magnitude of change would be negligible.	
		Year 15: The proposed mitigation planting would have established at Year 15 to reduce the impact of the BESS development in the 'northern area'. This is illustrated by the photomontage for Viewpoint 6 at Year 15. The overall magnitude of change would have the opportunity to reduce from high to medium when viewed from the immediate periphery along the northern edge as the growth of planting would assist in reducing the perception of built development. The magnitude of change would continue to be negligible beyond the immediate periphery.	Year 15: Major adverse directly adjacent to the Site. Negligible beyond the immediate periphery.
Mynydd Eglwysilan Common (Viewpoints 10 & 11)	High	Year 1: Mynydd Eglwysilan Common extends across the mountain on the periphery of Senghenydd Dyke. There are a couple of byways that traverse the hill, as well as the Rhymney Valley Ridgeway Walk and the road Bwlch carnygelli. This is an elevated area with panoramic views spanning across the south Wales valleys. As evidenced by the SZTV, the Site's location on a south-facing slope gives rise to views from the northern area of the Mynydd Eglwysilan as it overlooks the valley. Views of the Site form a minor component of the wider	Year 1: Moderate adverse

Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Overall Effect
		panoramic view as illustrated at Viewpoint 10, with users of the area benefitting from the scenic views in all directions. A photomontage has been completed for Viewpoint 10, both in summer and winter to illustrate the seasonal changes. The 'northern area' comprising the BESS development is visible atop the slope, but importantly does not break the skyline of the hill. A large majority of the vegetation has been retained as part of the landscape framework, with additional planting to complement the field structure. The BESS equipment has been sensitively designed so that the colour blends naturally into the landscape and does not appear prominent in the view. The 'southern area' comprising the proposed substation is visible on the lower slopes adjacent to National Road. The engineered banks that define the southern edge of this area comprise a woodland mix that will take time to establish and enclose the Site, especially from elevated land. The expansive land within the common and the distance from the Site also plays a crucial role in reducing the extent of visibility, as evidenced by Viewpoint 11 along Bwlch carnogelli. The National Grid Cilfynydd Substation, a much larger development than what is proposed, is also present in views from this receptor with its network of high voltage pylons spreading across the landscape. The magnitude of change is low as the Proposed Development would be viewed as part of the panoramic landscape with little opportunity for screening from elevated views at Year 1.	
		Year 15: The proposed mitigation planting would have established at Year 15 to reduce the impact of the Proposed Development. This	Year 15: Negligible

Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Overall Effect
		is illustrated by the photomontage for Viewpoint 10 at Year 15. The magnitude of change has the opportunity to reduce to negligible once the landscape mitigation planting has established.	
Highways			
National Road (Viewpoints 1, 2 & 3)	Medium	Year 1: The Site is located directly north and south of National Road. Only the 'southern area' (where the proposed substation is located) and the lower slopes of the 'cable corridor' are visible from National Road. The 'northern area' is not visible due to the intervening topography. Viewpoint 1 illustrates views from National Road looking west as one has exited the woodland to the northeast surrounding the National Grid Cilfynydd Substation. Views across the valley are a feature at this point where the Mynydd Eglwysilan can be seen from Cilfynydd and the surrounding valleys in the distance. The proposed substation would be located in the foreground of the view on the paddock to the north of Trefechan Farm and would be seen from this point once constructed. A photomontage has been completed for Viewpoint 2 which is located near the access to Trefechan Farm overlooking the field where the substation is located. As illustrated in the photomontage, the majority of the field in the foreground (currently used as a horse paddock) would become the substation. The substation is offset from the farm access by approximately 40m which would continue to be used for grazing. Beyond this, the substation is enclosed by acoustic fencing that would provide a level of screening, sensitively coloured to be of natural appearance. This would be wrapped by a	Year 1: Major adverse directly adjacent to the Site. Negligible beyond the immediate periphery.

Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Overall Effect
		dense belt of vegetation to surround the substation, particular on its engineered banks. From Viewpoint 3 to the southwest, the Site benefits from enclosure by the vegetation and built form surrounding Trefechan Cottages and Trefechan Farm. This, when coupled with the topographical, provides a dense screen to the Proposed Development. It is important to recognise that, although the Site is currently free from development, users of National Road pass directly adjacent to the National Grid Cilfynydd Substation approximately 500m northeast of the Site and therefore users of National Road, travelling in both direction past the Site, already experience a change in view from an open view of the valley whilst passing through the Craig-Evan-Leyshon Common to the secluded, wooded character to the northeast. The landscape mitigation strategy for the Proposed Development follows a similar principle to this existing development in that it is enclosed by woodland to screen it from users of National Road with glimpses of the valley to the south. The overall magnitude of change would be high as one passes directly adjacent to the proposed substation (approximately 250m). Beyond the Site's immediate periphery, the Proposed Development would not be visible as one passes through the landscape (shown at Viewpoint 3) due to the intervening vegetation, built form and topography, and therefore would be a negligible magnitude of change.	
		Year 15: The proposed mitigation planting would have established at Year 15 to reduce any direct views of the substation and its perimeter fencing. This is illustrated by the photomontage for Viewpoint 2 at Year 15.. The overall magnitude of change would have the opportunity to reduce from high to medium when viewed from the immediate	Year 15: Moderate adverse directly adjacent to the Site.

Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Overall Effect
		periphery of the substation as the growth of planting would assist in reducing the perception of built development. The magnitude of change would continue to be negligible beyond the immediate periphery.	Negligible beyond the immediate periphery.

7. Cumulative Effects.

- 7.1. Cumulative effects arise as a result of more than one development being present, under construction or operation, giving its rise to combined effects, so that the cumulative developments influence the landscape character and/or are experienced at proximity where they may have a greater incremental effect.
- 7.2. This means that the addition of the Proposed Development to a situation where other energy infrastructure is located may result in a greater effect. Based on the desktop studies and feedback from the Council, this Cumulative Assessment includes a review of:
- **Cumulative Site A: Land At Grid Ref 310441 193869 Craig-evan-leyshon Common Road Llanfabon (Ref: 23/O470/FULL)**
Erect a synchronous condenser with ancillary infrastructure and associated works including access and landscaping, and a cable connection to the adjacent existing substation for the purpose of supplying grid stability to the National Grid as part of their pathfinder 3 initiative – Consented.
 - **Cumulative Site B: Twyn Hywel Energy Park (Ref: 23/O427/DNS or DNS/3272053)**
Construct and operate up to 14 wind turbines and associated infrastructure including: hardstanding areas to include turbine foundations, crane hardstanding and laydown/storage area with associated micro-siting allowances; electrical substation and control building with underground power cables; new access route connecting onto the A472; onsite access tracks, with pipeline and watercourse crossings; borrow pit(s); anemometer mast; temporary construction and storage compound with associated lay down areas near to the Site entrance; Habitat Management Area; and offsite works to facilitate the movement of abnormal loads such as the construction of over-run areas and temporary modifications to street furniture – Consented.
- 7.3. The cumulative assessment covers the potential long term cumulative effects on the landscape character and visual receptors. Potential cumulative landscape character and visual effects during construction are not included, being of short duration and likely to be lower or similar to those assessed at the operational stage.
- 7.4. Cumulative effects can also be generated at the construction stage where the construction areas of two or more cumulative schemes physically overlap and affect the associated landscape features such as vegetation, landform, or other physical features. Such effects, however, are unlikely to arise as the application boundary and construction areas of the Proposed Development do not overlap with any of the cumulative sites. Therefore, cumulative effects upon landscape elements are not included in the assessment.

Cumulative Site A

- 7.5. Cumulative Site A is located directly to the east of the National Grid Cilfynydd Substation. It is adjacent to the Site boundary, but approximately 500m to the east of the Proposed Development parcels. The field work carried out whilst writing this LVIA found that the synchronous condenser and associated infrastructure and works is currently being constructed and as such, forms part of the baseline of this assessment and therefore does not have the potential for cumulative effects.

- 7.6. For the avoidance of doubt, the LVIA for Cumulative Site A (Liz Lake Associates, November 2023) has been fully reviewed and notes at Para 7.1.8 that *“the most noticeable changes will occur close to the Site itself, including the road frontage (National Road, Llanfabon Road), the nearby cemetery, and from a property called Fairview nearby; however, in general the visual effects are generally mostly Slight Adverse and, in some cases, Negligible. It is acknowledged that those closest to the Site will experience the most apparent effects on views and visual amenity both construction and immediately following implementation where receptors are particularly close to the Site, albeit it is recognised that the local context of this area in many views includes an existing infrastructure context, with a combination of substation and / or associated overhead wires and pylons crossing that converge in the locality and influence many local views; in addition, the effects (where experienced) are recognised as diminishing with distance.”*
- 7.7. The viewpoints and verified photomontages included within Cumulative Site A LVIA demonstrate the general lack of visibility towards the development. Viewpoint 26 on elevated land at Mynydd Eglwysilan is in a similar position to Viewpoint 10 of this LVIA. The photomontage for this viewpoint (Sheet 18 of 18 in Verified Photomontage Figures for the LVIA) includes a wireframe illustrating that the proposed development for Cumulative Site cannot be seen. This location is the greatest opportunity to view both sites in combination.
- 7.8. There is no potential for cumulative landscape or visual effects with Cumulative Site A.

Cumulative Site B

- 7.9. Cumulative Site B comprises 14 wind turbines and associated infrastructure scattered across Mynydd Eglwysilan to the south of the Site. This is a consented Development of National Significance (DNS) granted in November 2024.
- 7.10. The LVIA for Cumulative Site B (LUC, April 2023) assesses 32 viewpoints spread across a 28km study area. Although it is recognised as renewable energy development in the vicinity of the Site, due to its scale with a maximum blade tip height of 200m, it is not comparable to the Proposed Development which would be nestled into the valley landscape with a restricted visibility. It is also important to note that the Twyn Hywel Energy Park is a consented scheme that has been approved on its own merits following the rigorous examination of DNS application.
- 7.11. For this reason, there is no potential for cumulative landscape or visual effects with Cumulative Site B.

8. Summary and Conclusions.

- 8.1. This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared by Pegasus Group on behalf of REWE 2 Ltd in support of a planning application for the proposed 'National Road BESS' on land north and south of National Road, Cilfynydd. The Proposed Development comprises a series of battery storage units and ancillary infrastructure ('northern area'), and a substation ('southern area') forming two clusters of development. The remaining area of the Site comprises land that will be used to locate the buried cable route within the 'cable corridor', including the connection to the National Grid Cilfynydd Substation.
- 8.2. The effects of the Proposed Development on the landscape and visual amenity have been assessed in accordance with the Guidelines for Visual and Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA3). Effects have been assessed during the post-construction phase of the Proposed Development and have taken account of the establishment of proposed mitigation planting and of mitigation planting in the long-term (year 15). The assessment of effects is based on the suite of drawings that accompany the application.

Effects on Landscape Elements

- 8.3. In overall terms, the scheme would result in some net beneficial effects with regard to the landscape elements that currently define the landscape character of the Site. The elements that currently contribute to defining the character of the Site, namely trees, shrubbery and hedgerows at the boundaries, would all be strengthened and form more prominent elements in the medium and longer term. There would be a moderate adverse impact upon landcover and topography as a result of the change in land use and the levelling strategy adopted to complete the works.

Effect on Landscape Character

- 8.4. At the Site level, with a high susceptibility, value and sensitivity combined with a high magnitude of change, this would result in a major adverse effect in landscape character terms extending to the boundaries of the Site. It is important to recognise that, although the Site lies within the SLA and is considered high value in landscape character terms, it is not a unspoiled or pristine landscape. It comprises existing development of a similar nature, although at a much larger scale to what it currently is proposed, and therefore the Proposed Development is not entirely at odds with the innate characteristics of the area. The amount of planting and landscape enhancement would be greater than what is currently existing and beneficial given the scale of the Proposed Development.
- 8.5. The Site and the surrounding area are located within the National Landscape Character Area (NLCA) 37: South Wales Valleys Apart from the loss of a small area forming a minor portion of the wider NLCA, all of the key defining characteristics would remain and prevail with the scheme in place.
- 8.6. The landscape elements that constitute the character of the LANDMAP Geological Landscape, Landscape Habitats and Cultural Landscape Aspect Areas would generally remain physically unaffected by the Proposed Development. The effects on landscape character would therefore result from the visual influence of the BESS on the LANDMAP Historic Landscape and Visual & Sensory Aspect Areas, for both of which the magnitude of change is low due to the visual screening that contains the solar development. This would result in a moderate adverse effect on the wider landscape character area (or LANDMAP Aspect Areas) in which the Site and Proposed Development lies, and forms a small component of each individual LANDMAP Aspect Area.

Effect on the Taff Vale Eastern Slopes SLA

- 8.7. The layout of the proposals has been carefully considered, new hedgerow and tree planting are proposed to minimise landscape and visual effects, in accordance with the Key Policy and Management Issues for the SLA. The number of trees and length of hedgerow proposed will be greater than those that are existing, in accordance with the strategy. The existing National Grid Cilfynydd Substation to the east, as well as extensive overhead cables and pylons, also within the SLA, provides a degree of context to the development for the area.
- 8.8. The Proposed Development would result in a low magnitude of change as the Site covers a small area of the wider SLA and the inherent qualities of the SLA would be retained and enhanced, and the Key Policy and Management Issues are incorporated into the scheme, resulting in a moderate adverse effect.

Effect on Visual Amenity

- 8.9. The Screened Zone of Theoretical Visibility (SZTV) for the Site reflects the ranging topographical surroundings and context with theoretical distant views from across the valley to the south and on the slopes in the surrounding landscape. In reality, the 'actual' visibility of the Site is less than illustrated in the SZTV as demonstrated by the fourteen representative viewpoints. The reduced extent and pattern of visibility of the Proposed Development is due to the visual containment provided by the rising topography to the north, east and west with vegetative cover.
- 8.10. Considering the intervening topography and vegetation enclosing portions of the Site, it is assessed that views from the majority of publicly accessible locations within the surrounding area would be highly restricted to the immediate periphery in the north, east and west. To the south, elevated views from the Mynydd Eglwysilan Common (Open Access Land/Other Statutory Access Land) across the valley are evident due to the Site's location on a southerly aspect.
- 8.11. The visual impact upon a localised part of the Craig-Evan-Leyshon Common adjacent to the Site would be major adverse at Year 1, typically reducing to a moderate adverse level by Year 15 (see Viewpoint 6) following the growth of mitigation planting. The visual impact on a short section of National Road which passes through the Site would be major adverse at Year 1, reducing to moderate adverse at Year 15 (see Viewpoint 2). Views from across the valley on the Mynydd Eglwysilan (see Viewpoint 10) would be moderate adverse at Year 1, reducing to negligible at Year 15 once planting has established. These are evidenced by the photomontages for these viewpoints (Figure 7) completed at Year 1 and Year 15.
- 8.12. In conclusion, the Proposed Development would have some very limited and localised visual effects, but these would not result in long term unacceptable visual harm.

Cumulative Effects

- 8.13. In terms of the nearby developments, the consented synchronous condenser directly to the east of the National Grid Cilfynydd Substation (application reference: 23/0470/FULL) is currently being constructed at the time of writing and as such, forms part of the baseline of the landscape and visual assessment undertaken and does not have the potential for cumulative effects.
- 8.14. Twyn Hywel Energy Park (application reference: DNS/3272053) is recognised as renewable energy development, however, due to its scale with a maximum blade tip height of 200m assessed within a 28km study area, it is considered that although there is a potential to view the two schemes in combination, it would not be deemed a significant cumulative visual effect. This

is due to the completely differing typologies and scale of infrastructure between the two schemes. The Twyn Hywel Energy Park is a consented scheme that has been approved on its own merits as a Development of National Significance and will therefore form part of the baseline once constructed. The wind turbines would be visible from a large area surrounding Mynydd Eglwysilan whereas the Proposed Development is nestled into the sloping valley topography with limited opportunities to view from beyond 2km to the south, with no views available beyond the immediate periphery to the north, east and west.

Conclusion

- 8.15. The Proposed Development has been considered in the context of the relevant planning policies and published landscape character database, including the Special Landscape Areas which cover the Site, and has been subject to a thorough on-site assessment and iterative design process. This LVIA has concluded that the Proposed Development can be effectively integrated and assimilated into the surrounding landscape with the adverse effects highly localised to the immediate environs and elevated panoramic views to the south. These are temporary with the proposed mitigation planting substantially reducing the scale of adverse effects.
- 8.16. The introduced built-in mitigation measures, such as offset from boundaries, revised terracing for the BESS development, and substantial woodland planting around the substation assist in reducing the adverse effects and allowing the development to be integrated into the receiving environment without any undue residual harm. This would continue to improve over time as the proposed tree planting establishes.

References.

Best Practice Guidance

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, Third Edition 2013) (GLVIA3);
- GVLIA3 Statements of Clarification, Landscape Institute, 2013 and 2014;
- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, Natural England 2014;
- An Approach to Landscape Sensitivity Assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management – Natural England, 2019;
- Visual Representation of Development Proposals. Technical Guidance Note 06/19, Landscape Institute, 2019;
- Assessing landscape value outside national designations. Technical Guidance Note 02/21. Landscape Institute, 2021; and
- Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA3), Technical Guidance Note 01/24 – Landscape Institute (2024).

Data Sources

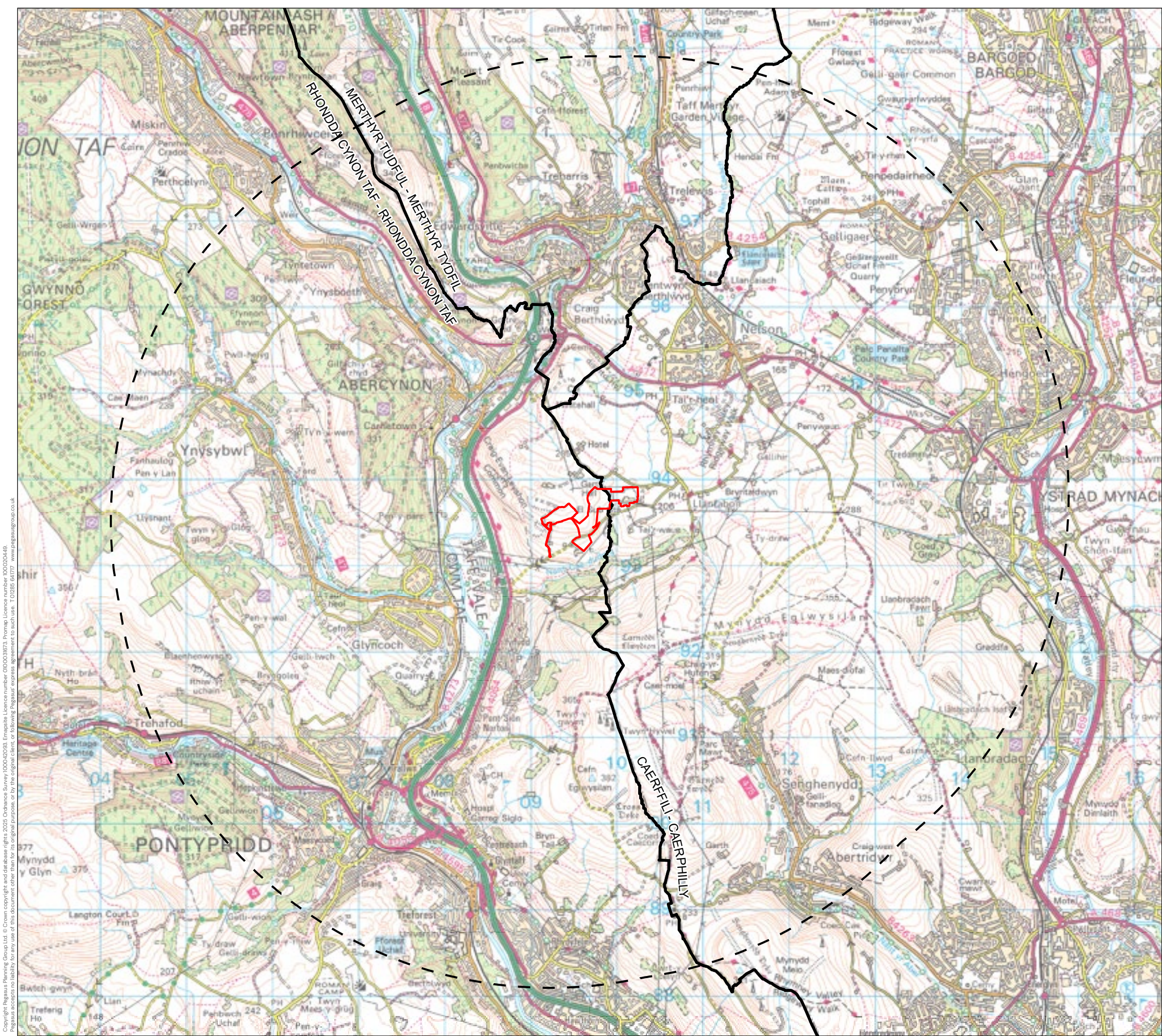
- Ordnance Survey maps (1:25,000 and 1:50,000 Explorer Series);
- Aerial images; and
- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC Map) (<https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>).

Landscape Character Sources

- National Landscape Character Area (NLCA) 37: South Wales Valleys;
- LANDMAP; and
- Special Landscape Area (SLA) 10: Taff Vale Eastern Slopes.



FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION PLAN



KEY

Site Boundary

5km Buffer

District Boundary

SITE LOCATION PLAN

NATIONAL ROAD BESS

REWE 2



DATE	SCALE	TEAM	APPROVED
17/02/2025	1:45,000@A3	NC/CS	LS

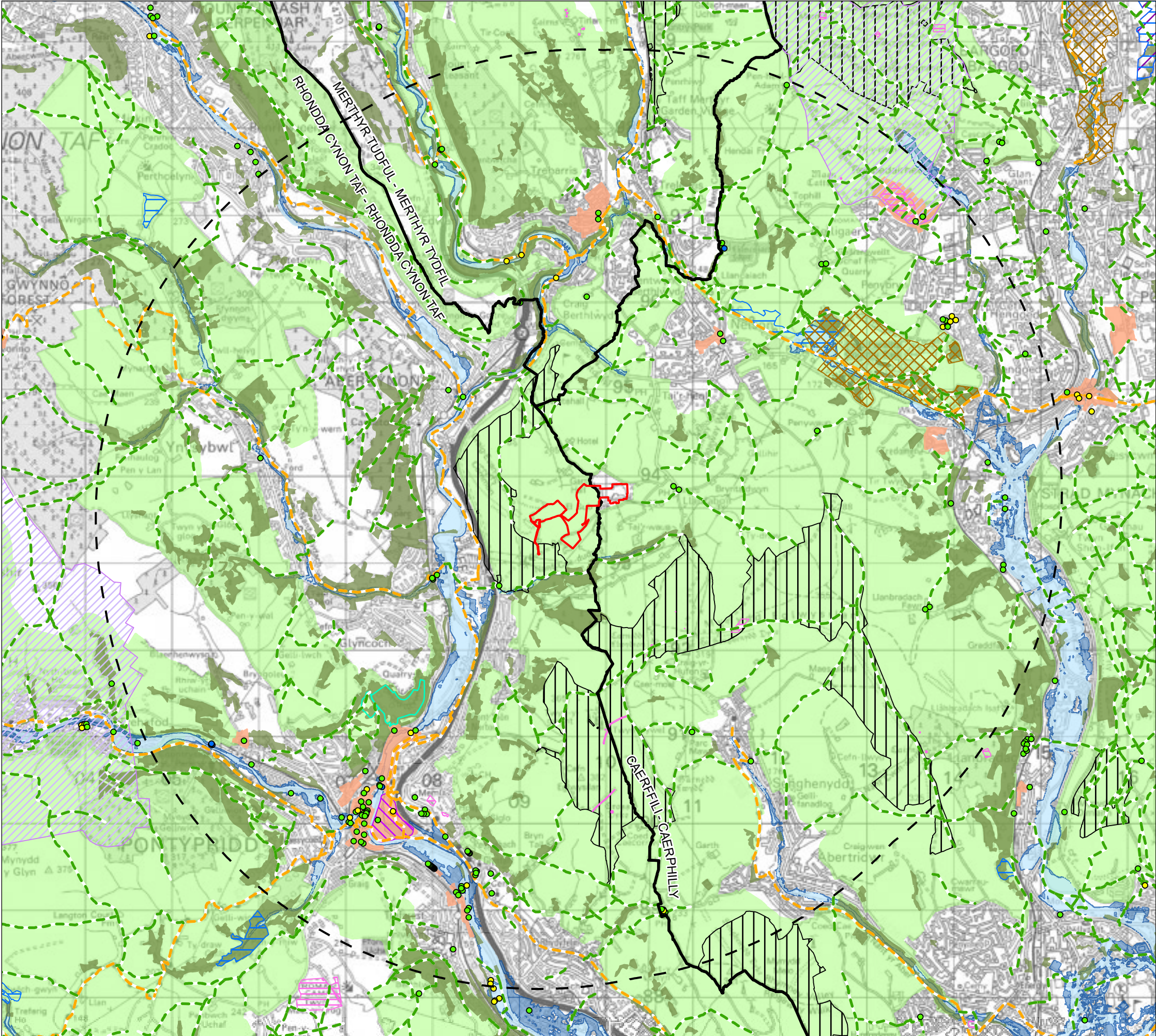
SHEET	REVISION
-	C

DRAWING NUMBER
P22-2733_EN_01



FIGURE 2: ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGNATIONS PLAN

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- KEY**
- Site Boundary
 - 5km Buffer
 - District Boundary
 - Listed Building Grade
 - I
 - II*
 - II
 - PRoWs
 - National Cycle Route
 - Parks and Gardens
 - Scheduled Monument
 - Historic Landscape Area
 - Country Park
 - Natural Wales Special Landscape Area
 - Ancient Woodland
 - Statutory Access Land
 - Conservation Area
 - Local Nature Reserve
 - Site of Special Scientific Interest
 - Special Areas of Conservation
 - NRW Flood Zone 2
 - NRW Flood Zone 3

ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGNATIONS PLAN

NATIONAL ROAD BESS

REWE 2

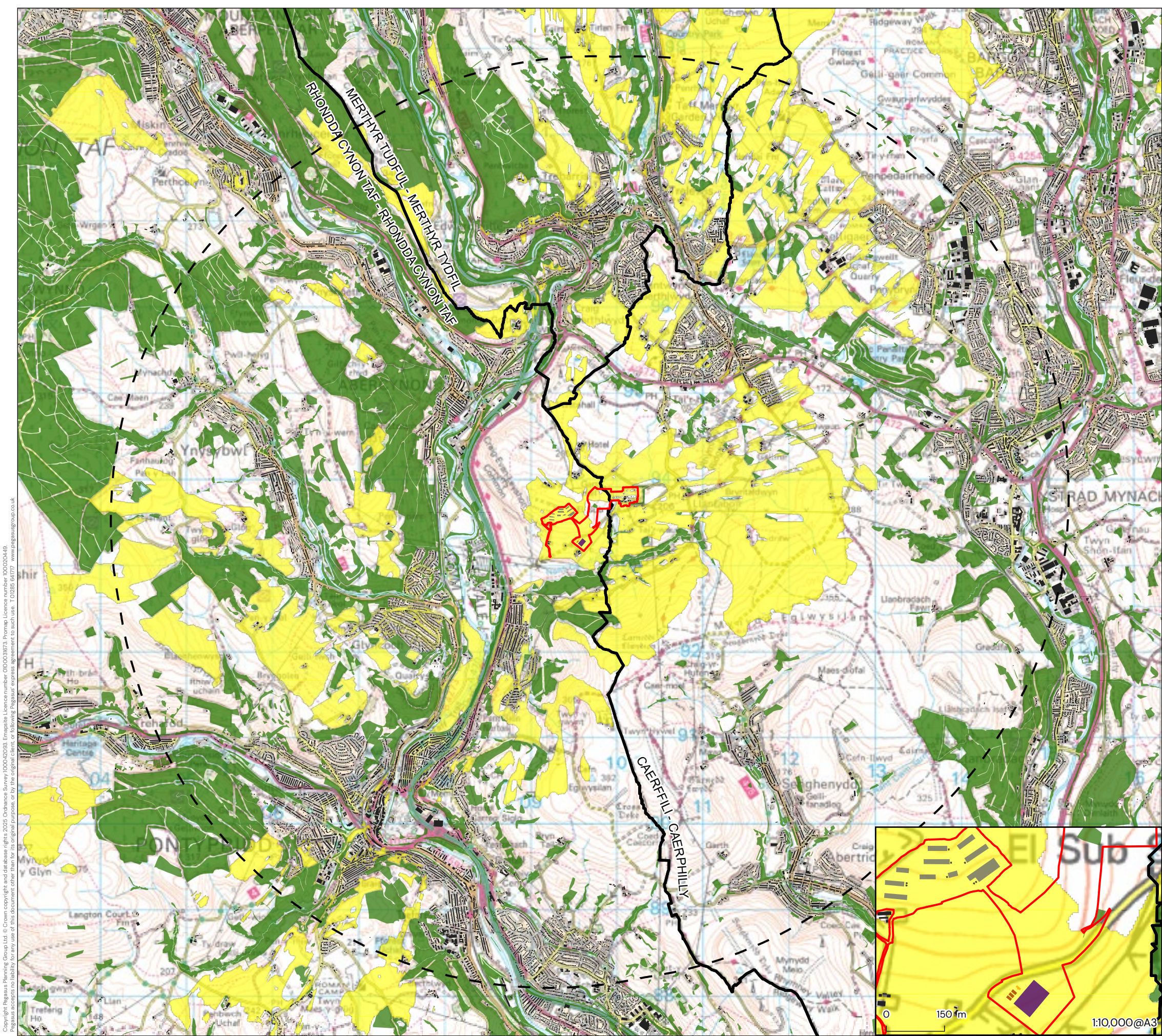


DATE	SCALE	TEAM	APPROVED
17/02/2025	1:45,000@A3	NC/CS	LS

SHEET	REVISION
-	C

DRAWING NUMBER
P22-2733_EN_02

FIGURE 3: SCREENED ZONE OF THEORETICAL VISIBILITY



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KEY

- Site Boundary
- 5km Buffer
- District Boundary
- OS Open Map Local Buildings
- OS Open Map Local Woodland
- Screened Zone of Theoretical Visibility – Multiple Development Heights

Site Layout

- BESS Units & Inverter/Transformer Station (SMA) – 2.9m
- Auxiliary Transformer – 2.3m
- Substation & Associated Infrastructure – 12m
- Control Room – 5.9m
- Switchgear – 3.1m

NOTES:

- Screened ZTV Production Information
- DTM data used in calculations is OS Terrain 5 that has been combined with OS Open Map Local data for woodland and buildings to create a Digital Surface Model (DSM).
 - Indicative woodland and building heights are modelled at 15m and 8m respectively.
 - Viewer height set at 1.7m (in accordance with para 6.11 of GLVIA Third Edition)
 - Calculations include earth curvature and light refraction

N.B. This Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) image illustrates the theoretical extent of where the development may be visible from, assuming 100% atmospheric visibility, and includes the screening effect from vegetation and buildings, based on the assumptions stated above.

SCREENED ZONE OF THEORETICAL VISIBILITY

NATIONAL ROAD BESS

REWE 2



DATE	SCALE	TEAM	APPROVED
17/02/2025	1:45,000@A3	NC/CS	LS

SHEET	REVISION
-	C

DRAWING NUMBER
P22-2733_EN_03

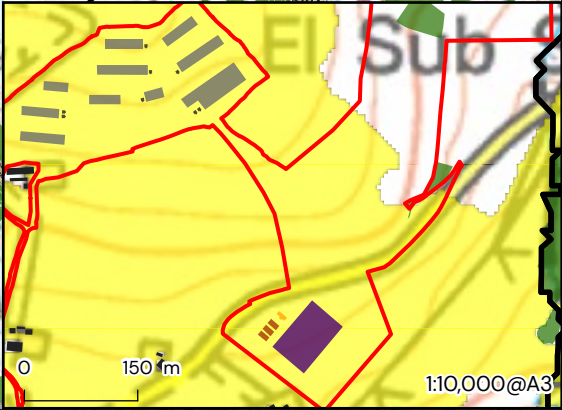
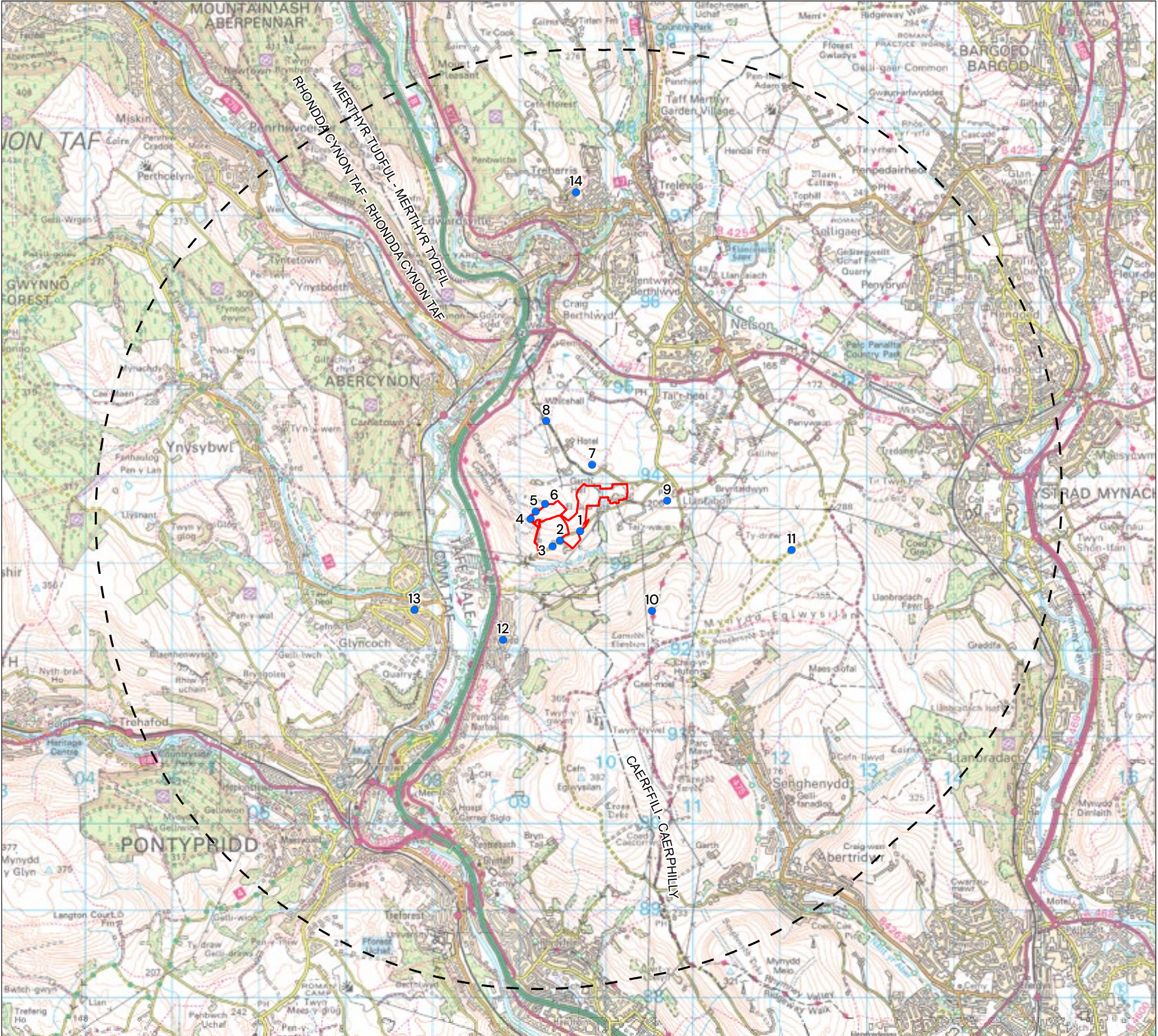




FIGURE 4: VIEWPOINT LOCATION PLAN

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KEY

Site Boundary

5km Buffer

Viewpoint Location

VIEWPOINT LOCATION PLAN

NATIONAL ROAD BESS

REWE 2



DATE	SCALE	TEAM	APPROVED
18/02/2025	1:45,000@A3	NC	LS
SHEET	REVISION		
-	A		
DRAWING NUMBER			
P22-2733_EN_13			



FIGURE 5: EXISTING VIEWS FROM VIEWPOINTS 1 TO 14



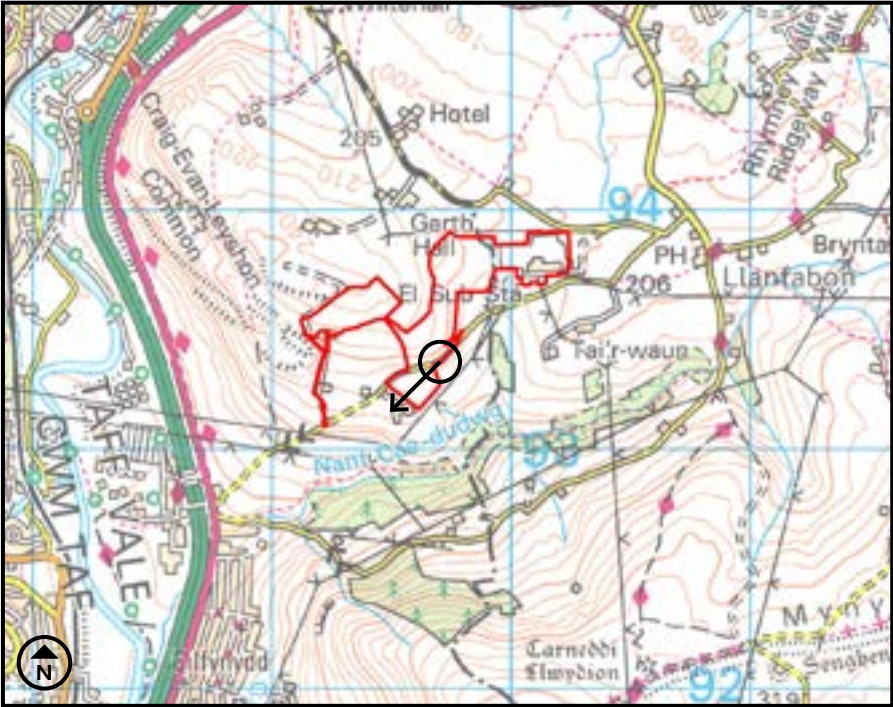
CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 1
National Road looking southwest



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 188m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 12:48	Distance from site	- 0m
OS grid reference	- 309700, 193365		



CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 1
National Road looking southwest



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 188m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 12:48	Distance from site	- 0m
OS grid reference	- 309700, 193365		





CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 2
National Road looking east



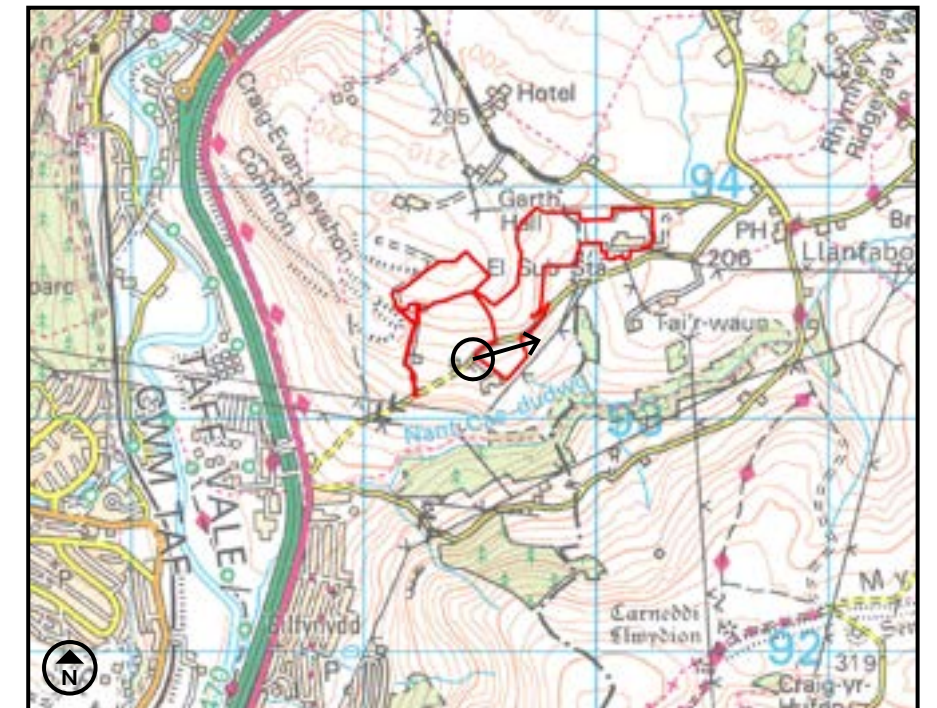
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Date & time of photograph - 05/02/2025 @ 12:54
OS grid reference - 309469, 193258

Viewpoint height (AOD) - 182m
Distance from site - 17m



CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 2

National Road looking east



Camera make & model - Canon EOS 6D Mark II
Date & time of photograph - 05/02/2025 @ 12:54
OS grid reference - 309469, 193258

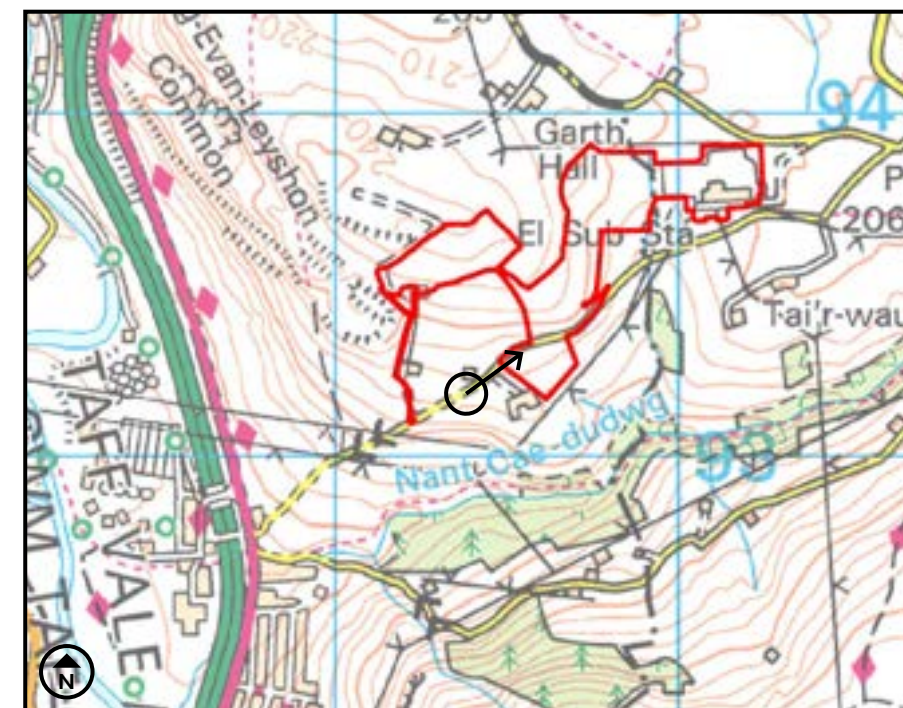
Viewpoint height (AOD) - 182m
Distance from site - 17m





CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 3

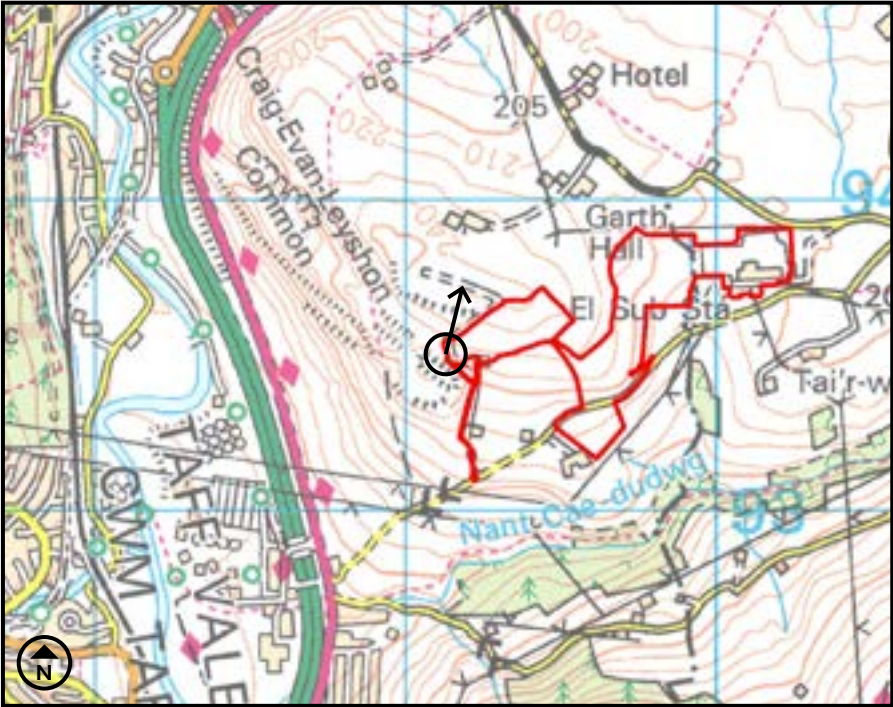
National Road in Open Access Land near Trefechan Cottages.





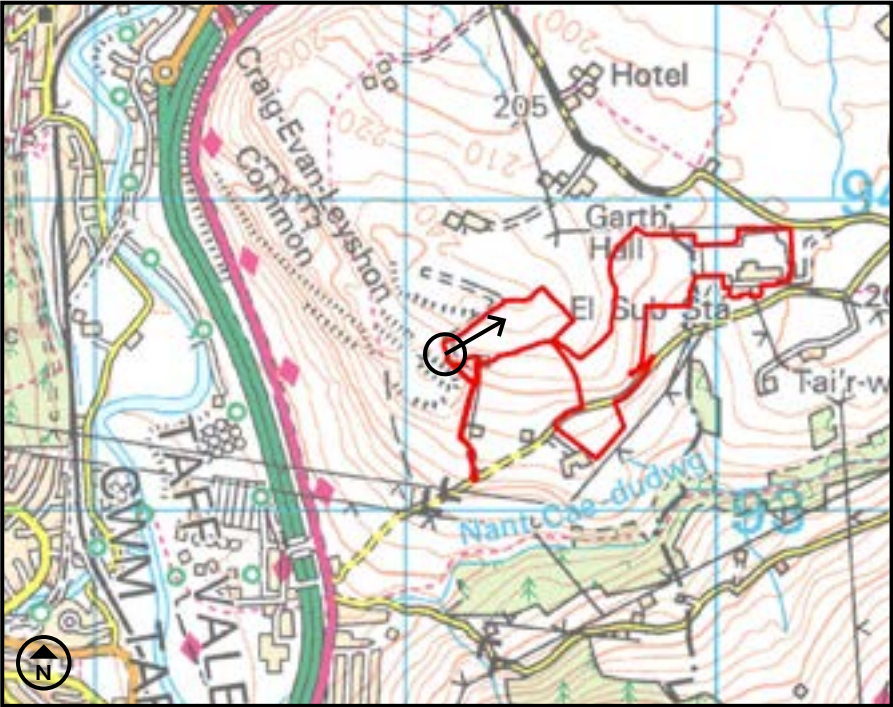


CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 4
Track up Cilfynydd Tips Open Access Land (1)





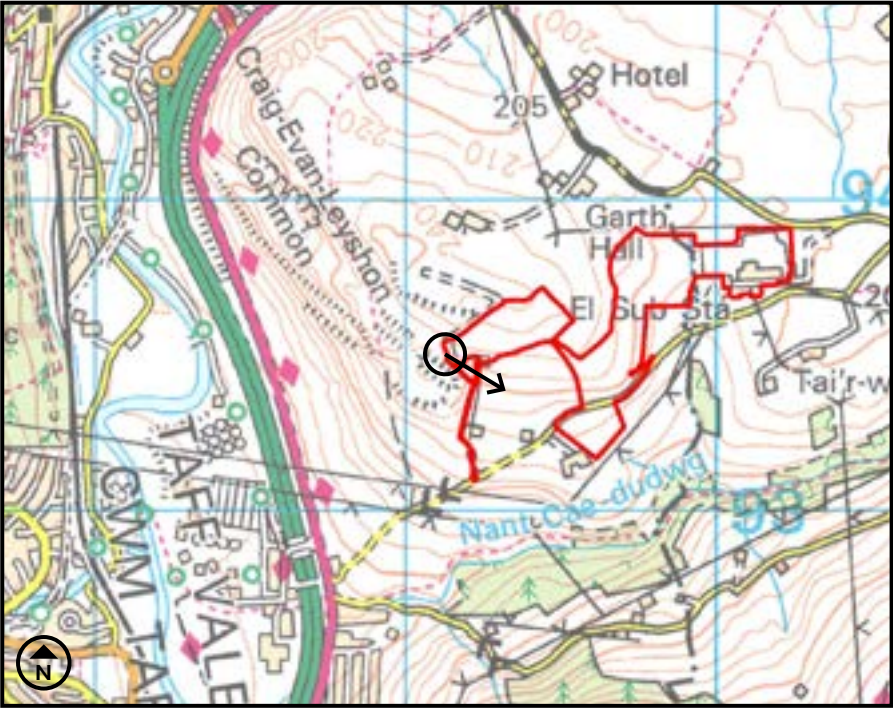
CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 4
Track up Cilfynydd Tips Open Access Land (1)



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 213m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 13:09	Distance from site	- 3m
OS grid reference	- 309130, 193505		



CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 4
Track up Cilfynydd Tips Open Access Land (1)

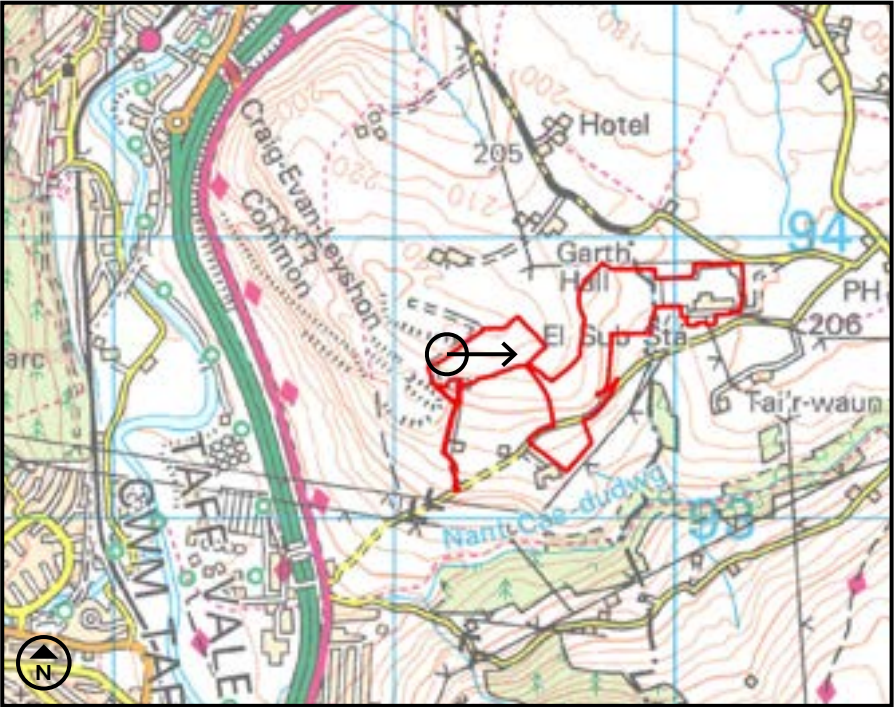






Approximate Site Extents
(Northern Area of Site visible)

CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 5
Track up Cilfynydd Tips Open Access Land (2)

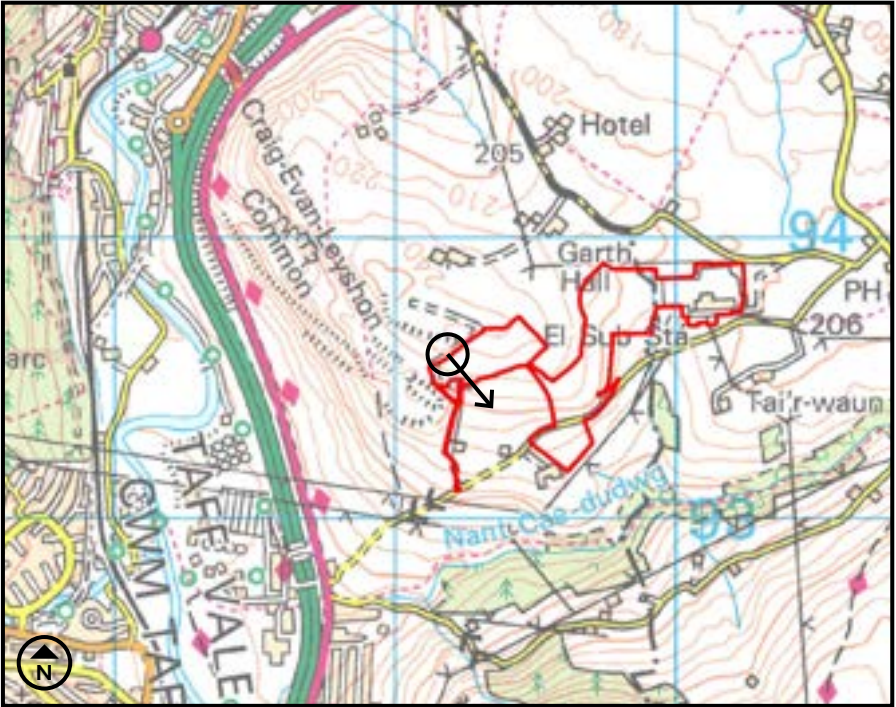


Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 229m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 13:12	Distance from site	- 13m
OS grid reference	- 309189, 193590		



CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 5

Track up Cilfynydd Tips Open Access Land (2)



Camera make & model - Canon EOS 6D Mark II
Date & time of photograph - 05/02/2025 @ 13:12
OS grid reference - 309189, 193590

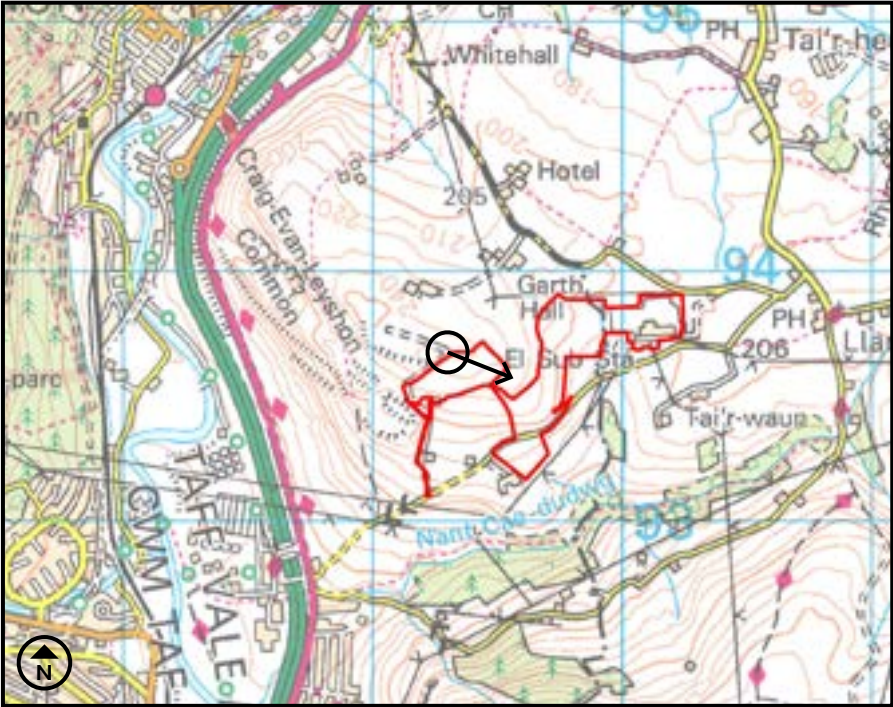
Viewpoint height (AOD) - 229m
Distance from site - 13m





CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 6

Track up Cilfynydd Tips Open Access Land (3) – highest point

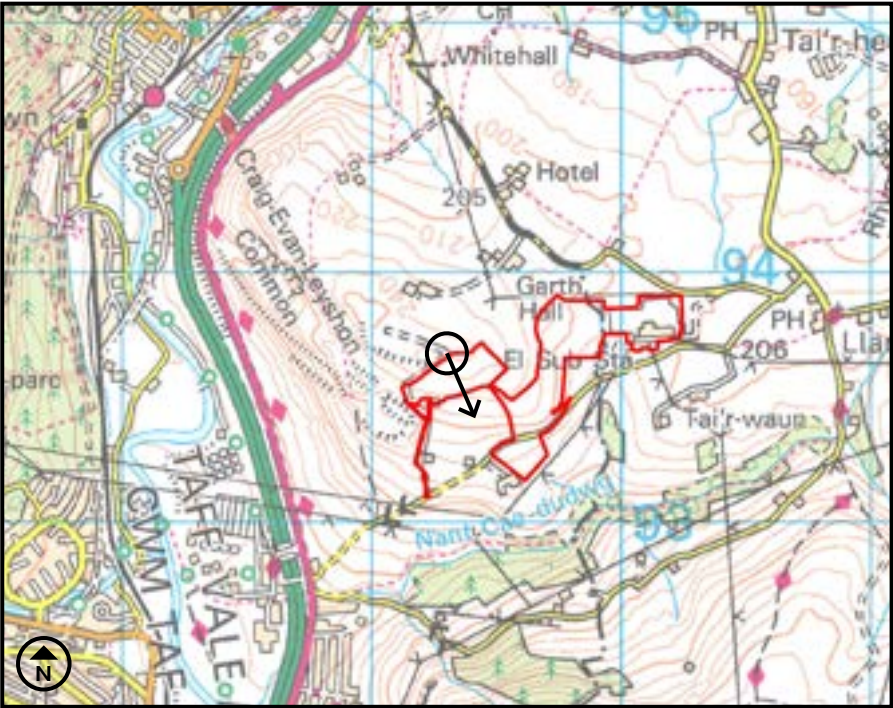


Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 243m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 13:16	Distance from site	- 17m
OS grid reference	- 309298, 193677		



CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 6

Track up Cilfynydd Tips Open Access Land (3) – highest point



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 243m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 13:16	Distance from site	- 17m
OS grid reference	- 309298, 193677		





CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 7
Public Footpath NELS/FP115/1



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 209m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 13:46	Distance from site	- 241m
OS grid reference	- 309839, 194131		





CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 8
Cefn Y Garth Road in Open Access Land







CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 9

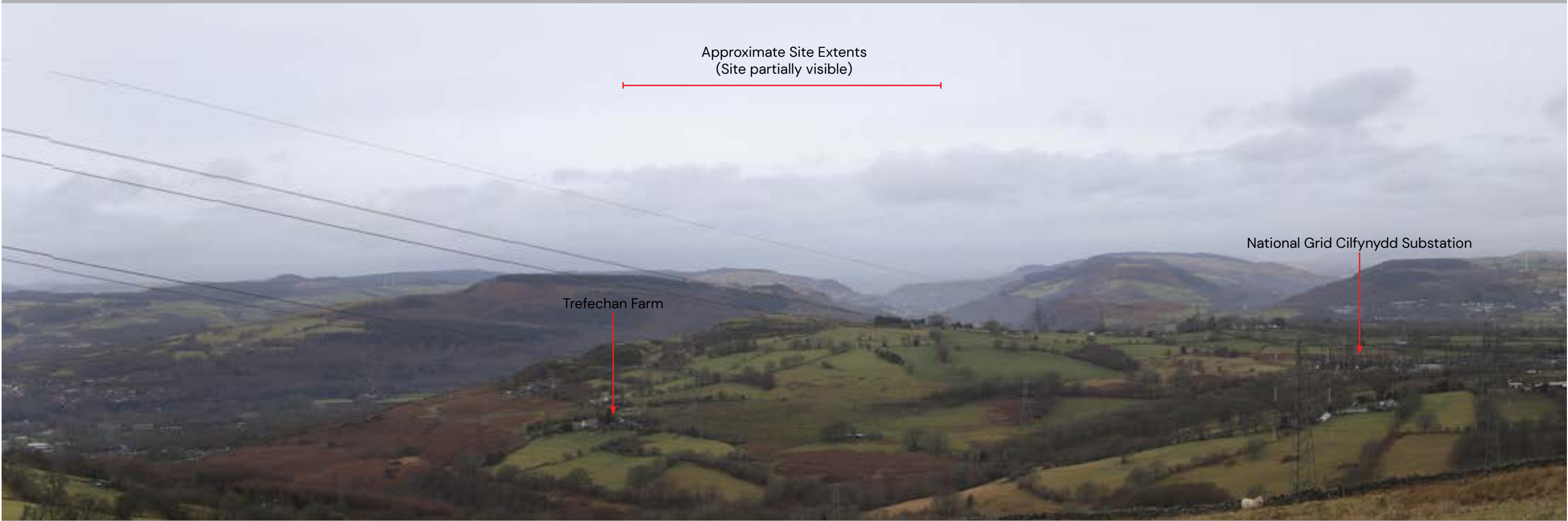
Public Footpath NELS/FP23/1 near Llanfabon Cemetery



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 205m
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OS grid reference	- 310702, 193718		

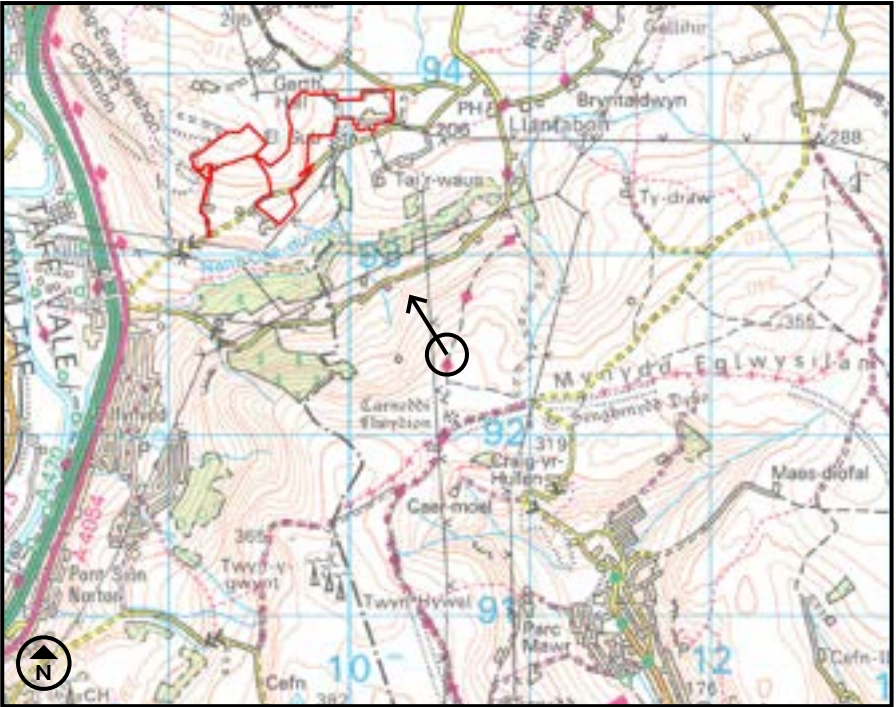






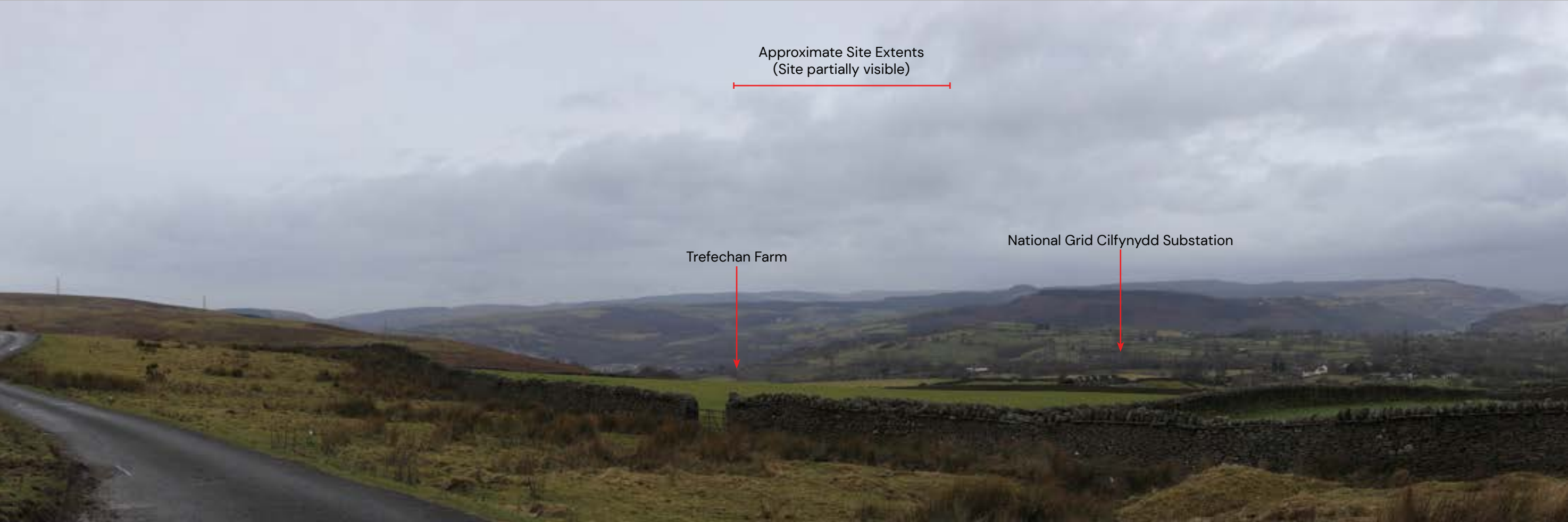
CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 10

Rhymney Valley Ridgeway Walk through Open Access Land on Mynydd Eglwysilan



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 306m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 11:49	Distance from site	- 1159m
OS grid reference	- 310528, 192450		





CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 11

Bwlch Carnygelli through Open Access Land on Eglwysilan Mountain



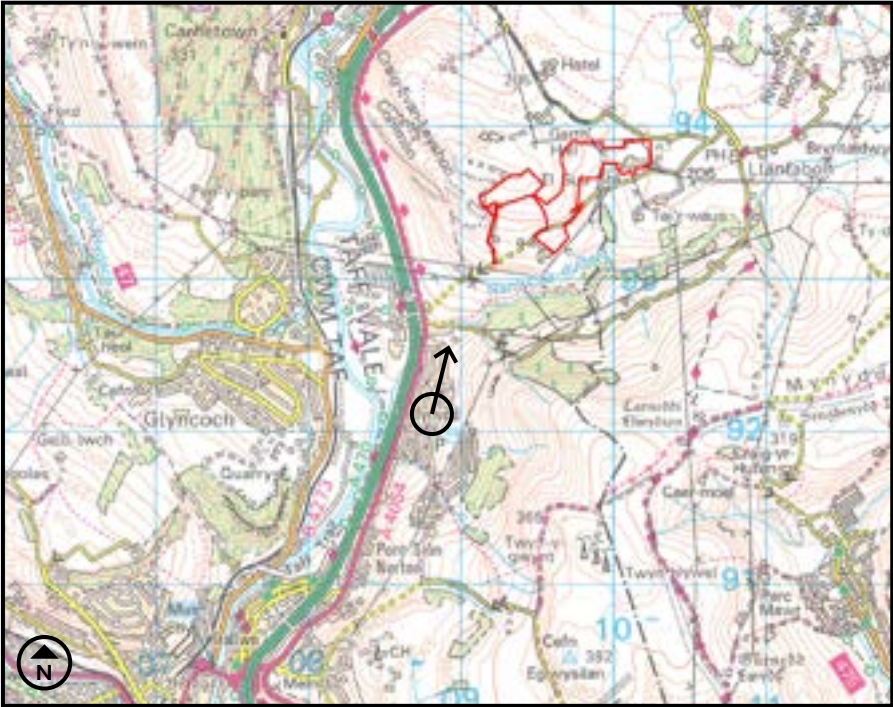
Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 301m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 12:06	Distance from site	- 1988m
OS grid reference	- 312135, 193147		





Panoramic view not available
Refer to Single Frame photograph.

CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 12
Wood Street, Cilfynydd



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 120m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 14:35	Distance from site	- 1065m
OS grid reference	- 308813, 192113		





CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 13
Cefn Lane, Glyncoch



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 98m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 14:59	Distance from site	- 1559m
OS grid reference	- 307794, 192460		



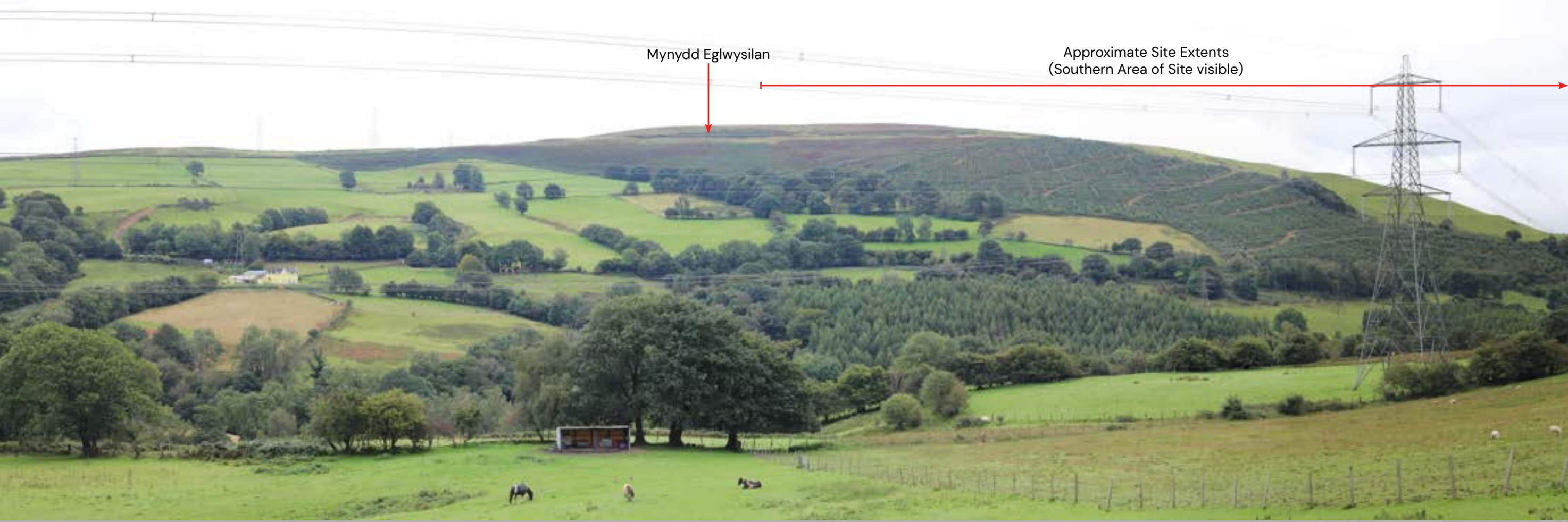


CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 14
Public Footpath 109/20 through Treharris

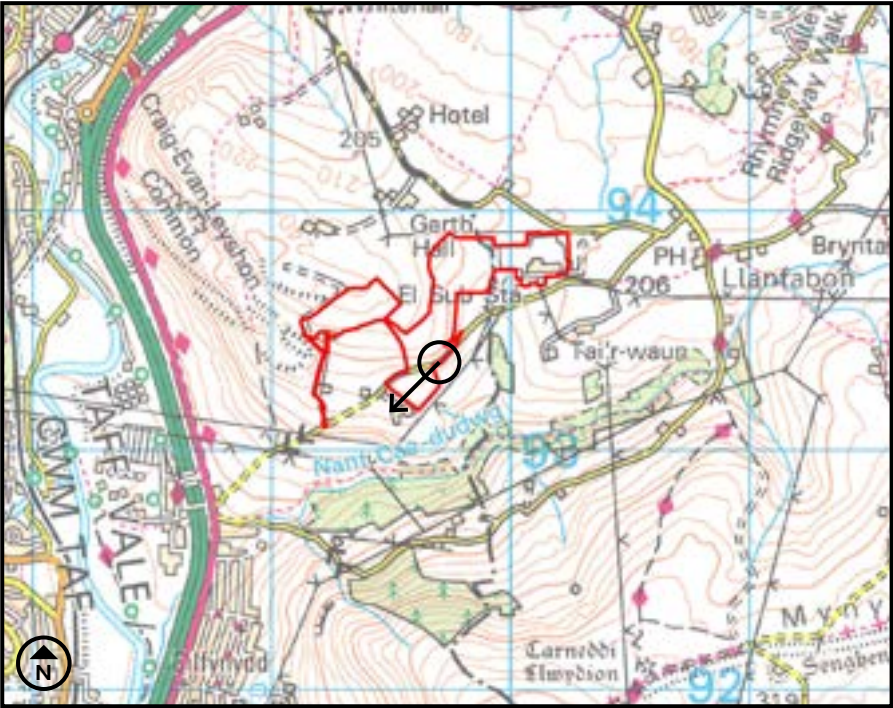


Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 209m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 14:18	Distance from site	- 3359m
OS grid reference	- 309654, 197268		





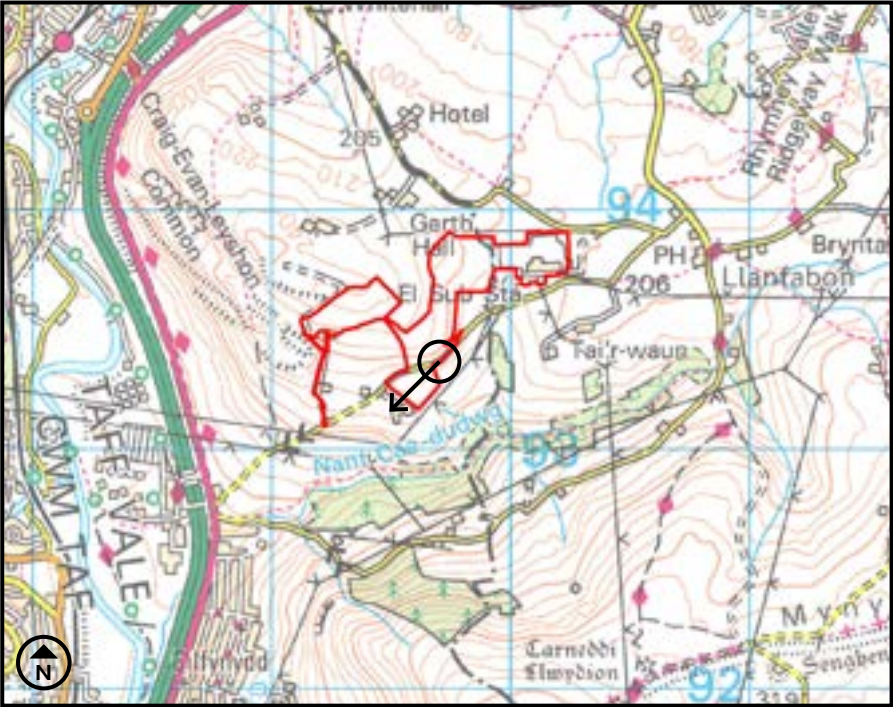
CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 1
National Road looking southwest



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 188m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 12:48	Distance from site	- 0m
OS grid reference	- 309700, 193365		



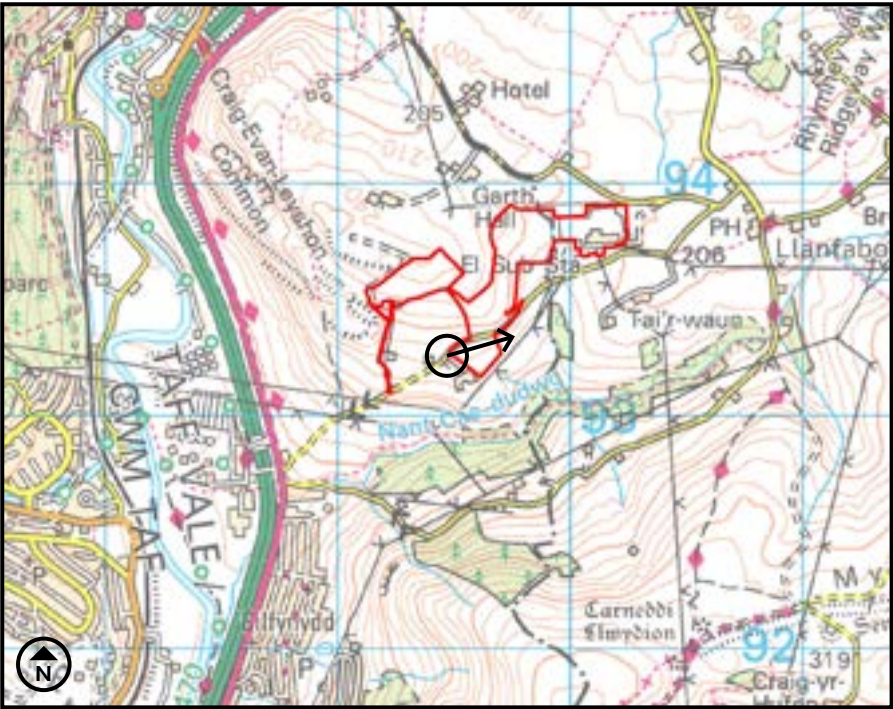
CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 1
National Road looking southwest



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 188m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 12:48	Distance from site	- 0m
OS grid reference	- 309700, 193365		



CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 2
National Road looking east

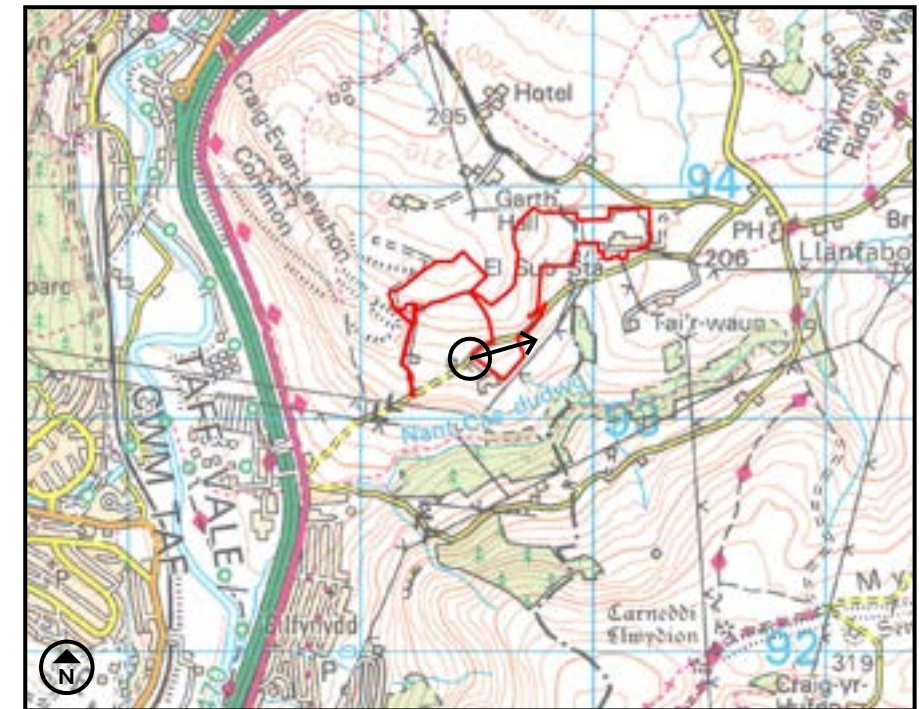


Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 182m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 12:54	Distance from site	- 17m
OS grid reference	- 309469, 193258		



CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 2

National Road looking east



Camera make & model - Canon EOS 6D Mark II
Date & time of photograph - 05/02/2025 @ 12:54
OS grid reference - 309469, 193258

Viewpoint height (AOD) - 182m
Distance from site - 17m



CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 3

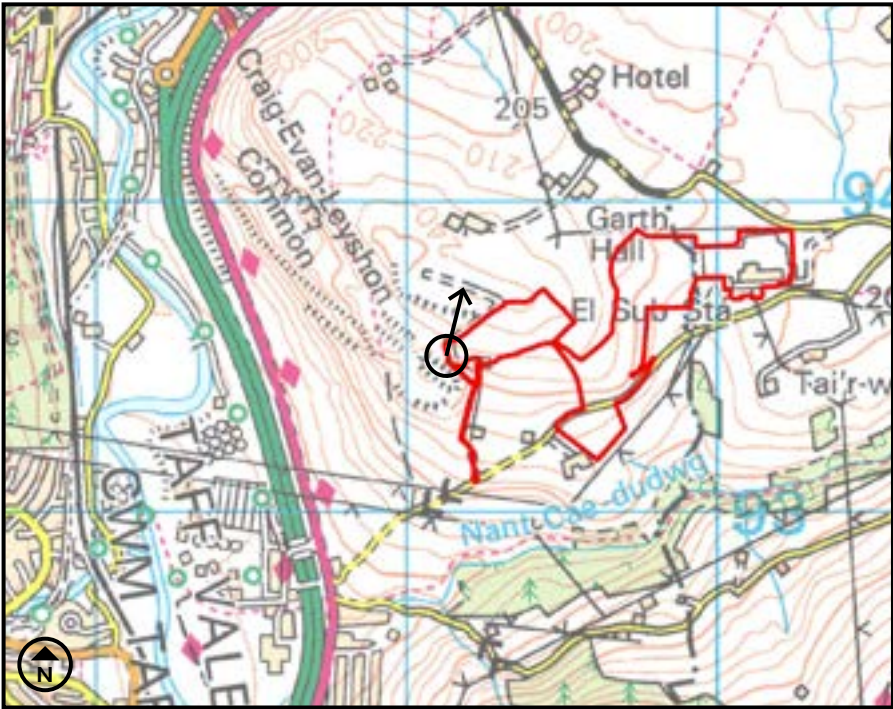
National Road in Open Access Land looking northeast



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 176m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 12:57	Distance from site	- 127m
OS grid reference	- 309384, 193189		



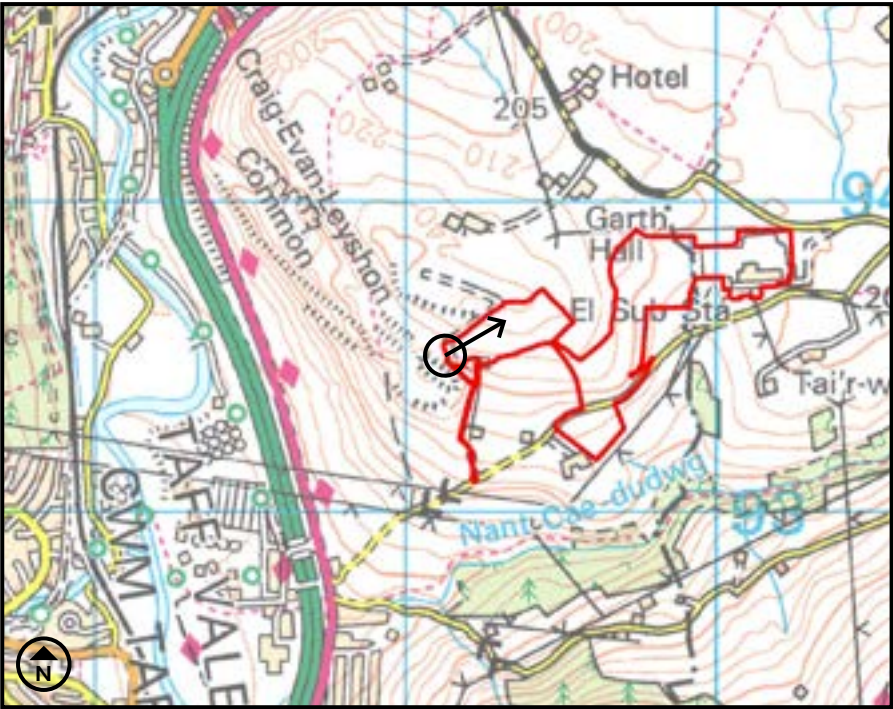
CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 4
Track to Cilfynydd Tips (1)



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 213m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 13:09	Distance from site	- 3m
OS grid reference	- 309130, 193505		



CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 4
Track to Cilfynydd Tips (1)

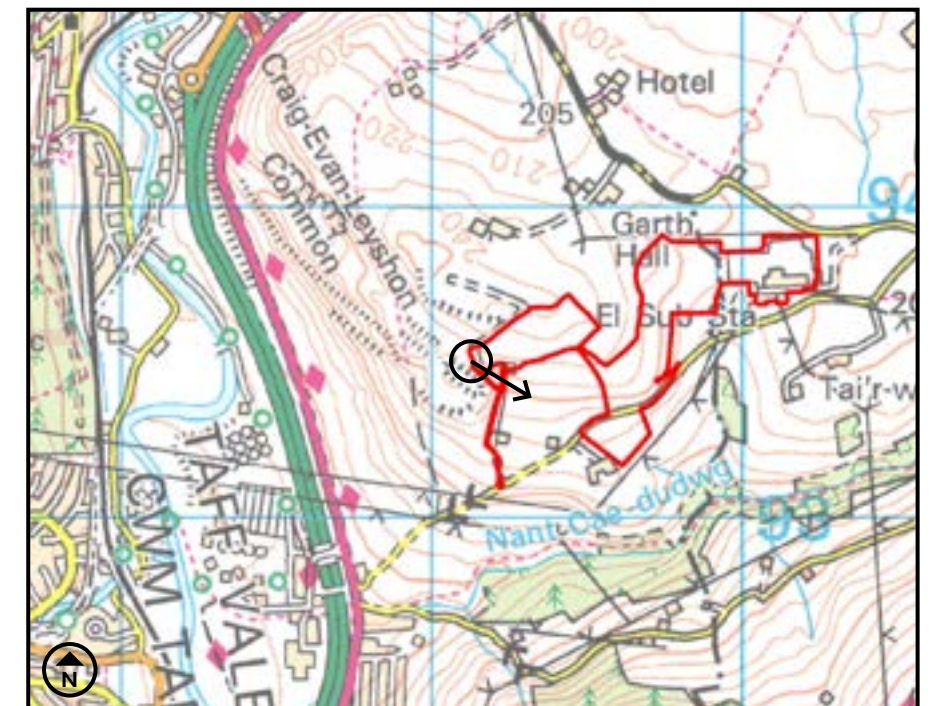


Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 213m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 13:09	Distance from site	- 3m
OS grid reference	- 309130, 193505		



CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 4

Track to Cilfynydd Tips (1)



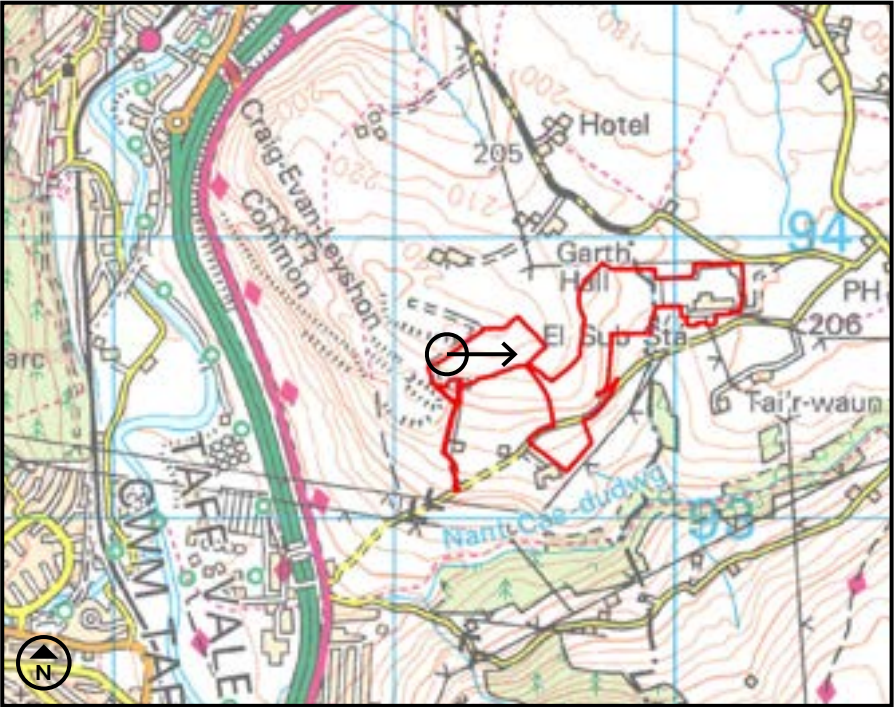
Camera make & model - Canon EOS 6D Mark II
Date & time of photograph - 05/02/2025 @ 13:09
OS grid reference - 309130, 193505

Viewpoint height (AOD) - 213m
Distance from site - 3m

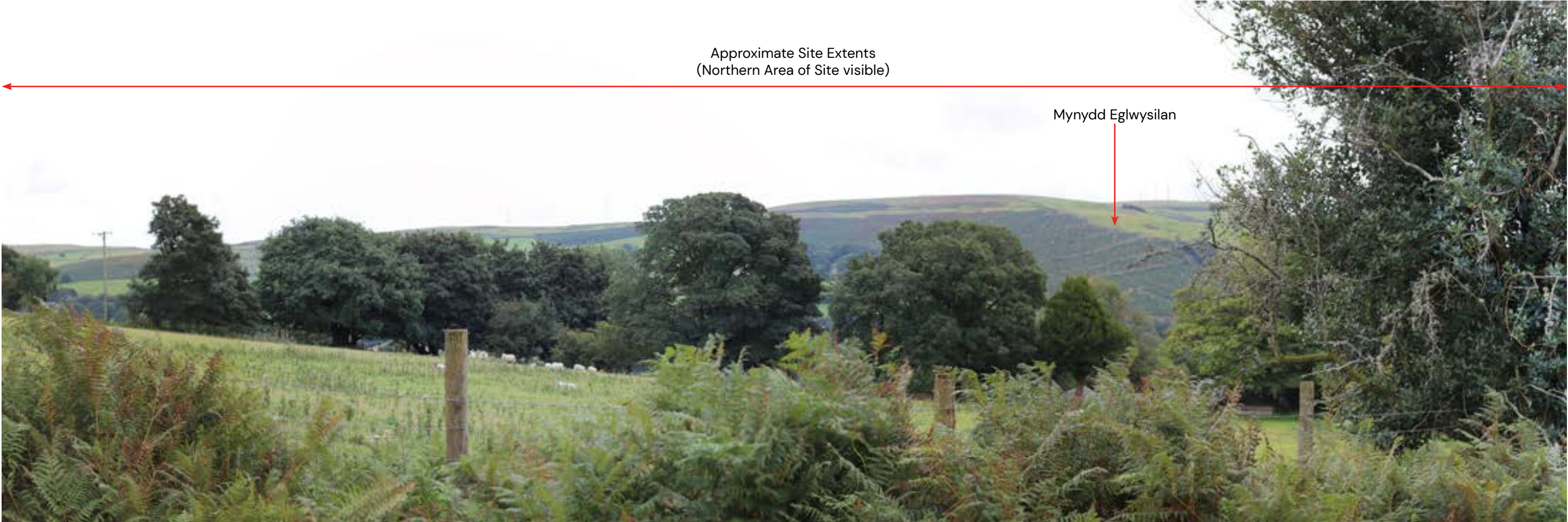


Approximate Site Extents
(Northern Area of Site visible)

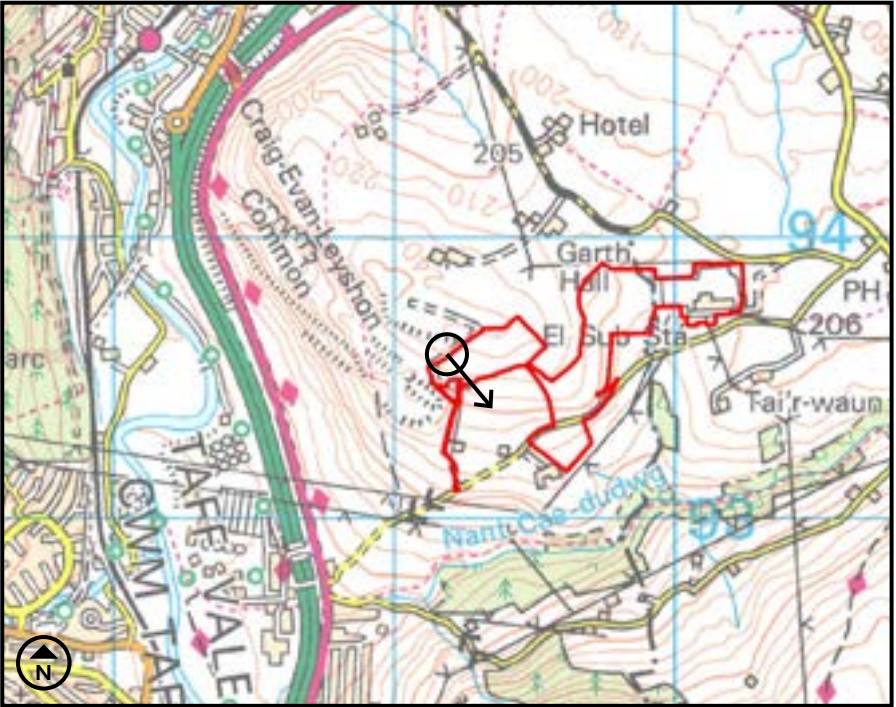
CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 5
Track up Cilfynydd Tips (2)



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 229m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 13:12	Distance from site	- 13m
OS grid reference	- 309189, 193590		



CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 5
Track up Cilfynydd Tips (2)

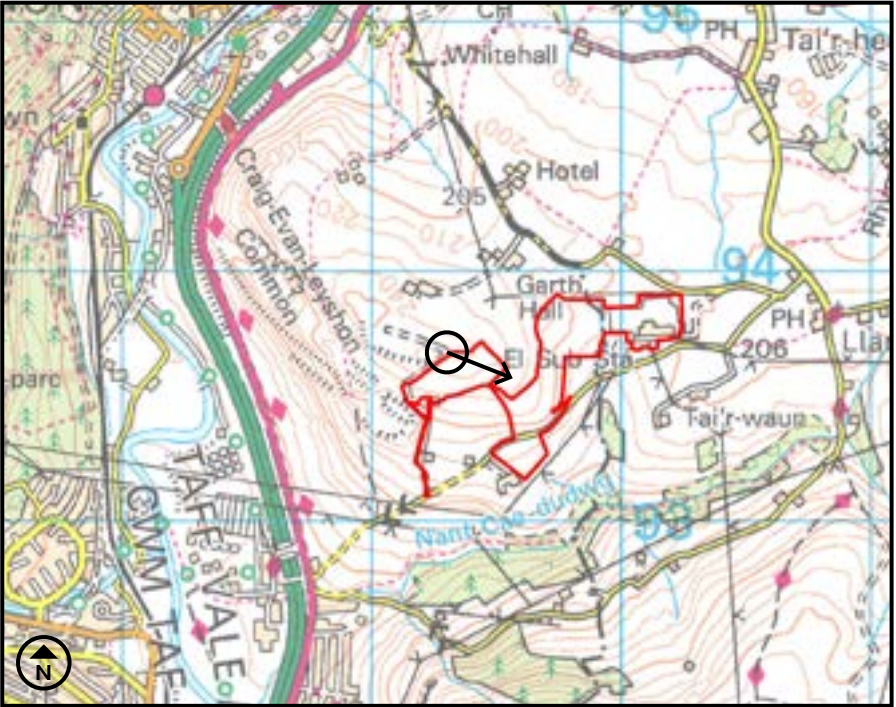


Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 229m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 13:12	Distance from site	- 13m
OS grid reference	- 309189, 193590		

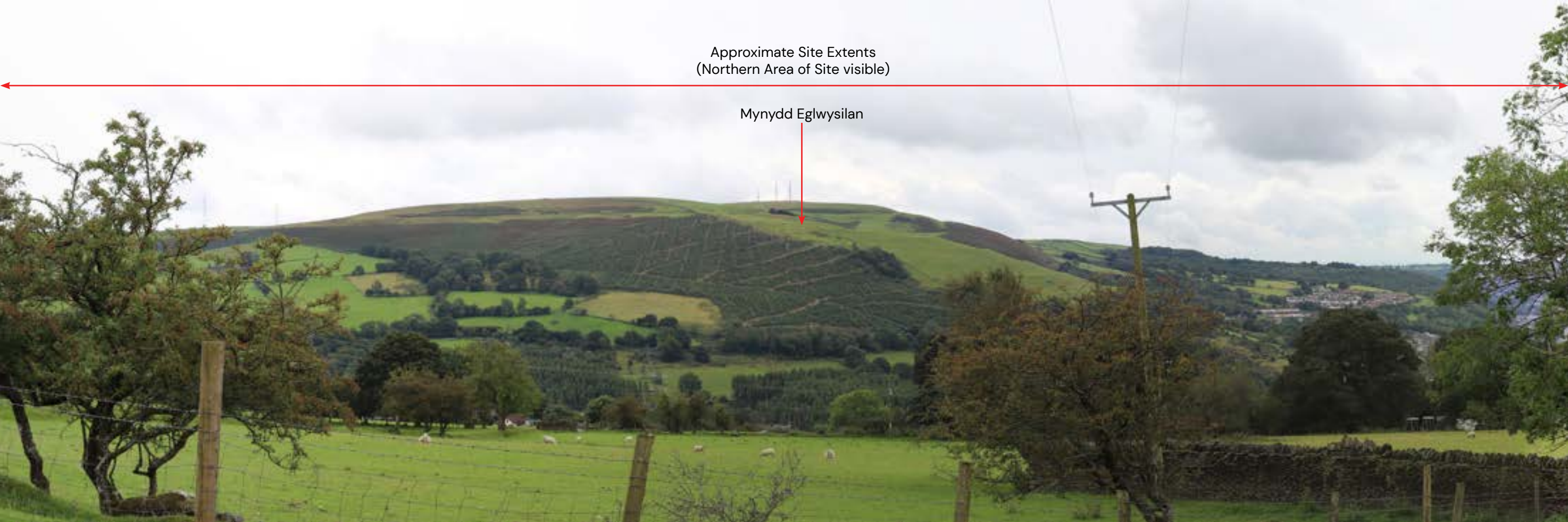
Approximate Site Extents
(Northern Area of Site visible)



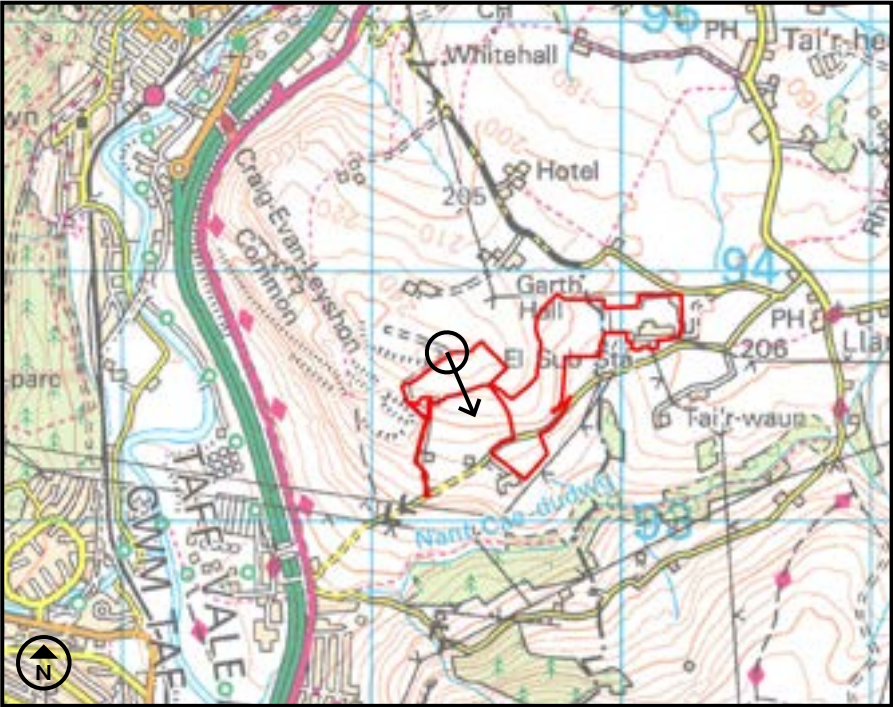
CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 6
Track up Cilfynydd Tips (3) at highest point



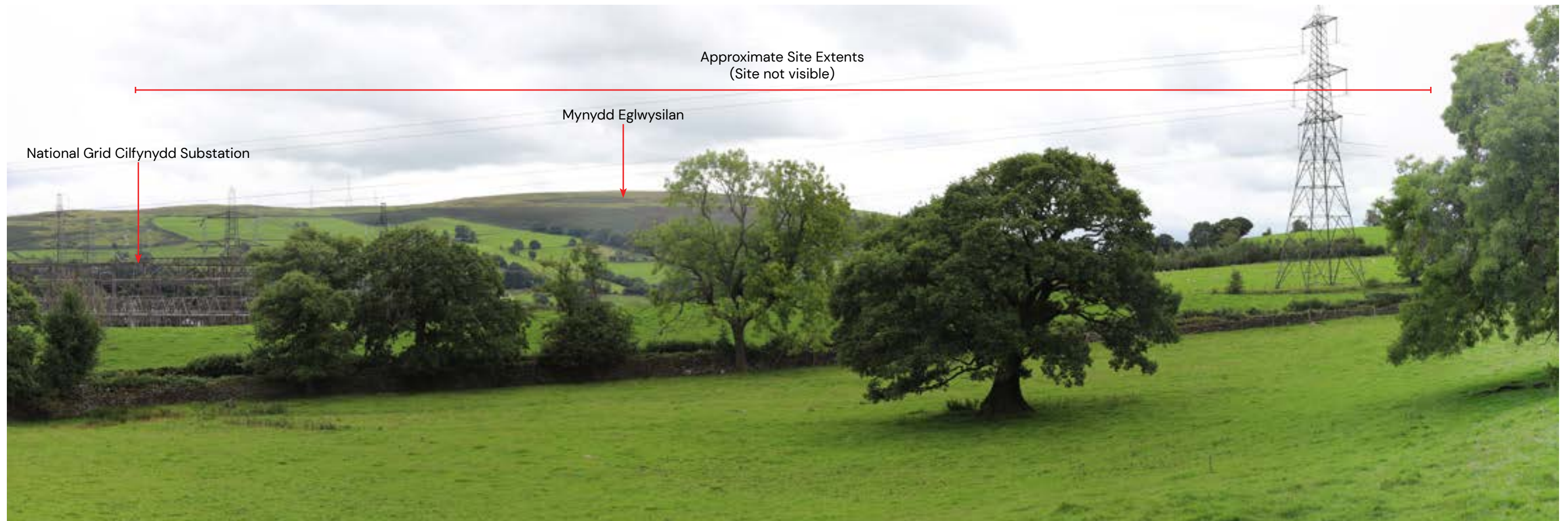
Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 243m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 13:16	Distance from site	- 17m
OS grid reference	- 309298, 193677		



CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 6
Track up Cilfynydd Tips (3) at highest point



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 243m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 13:16	Distance from site	- 17m
OS grid reference	- 309298, 193677		



CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 7

Public Footpath NELS/FP115/1



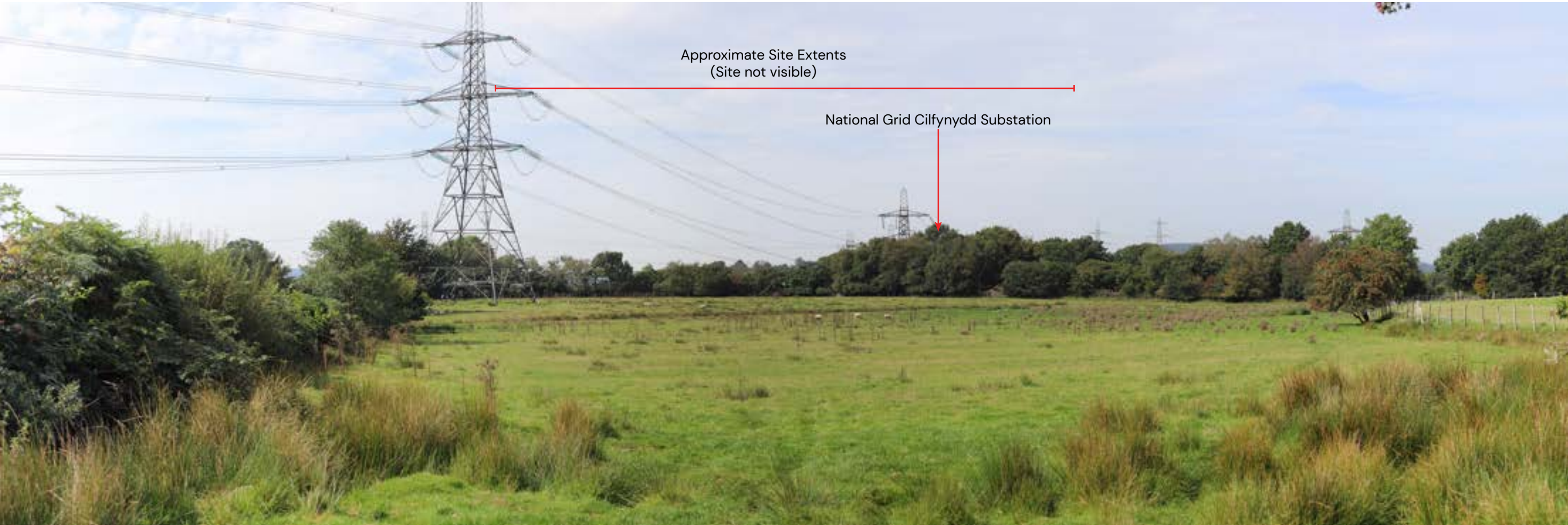
Camera make & model - Canon EOS 6D Mark II
 Date & time of photograph - 05/02/2025 @ 13:46
 OS grid reference - 309839, 194131

Viewpoint height (AOD) - 209m
 Distance from site - 241m



CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 8
Cefn Y Garth Road in Open Access Land





CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 9

Public Footpath NELS/FP23/1 near Llanfabon Cemetery



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 205m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 13:31	Distance from site	- 463m
OS grid reference	- 310702, 193718		



CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 10

Rhymney Valley Ridgeway Walk through Open Access Land on Eglwysilan Mountain



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 306m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 11:49	Distance from site	- 1159m
OS grid reference	- 310528, 192450		





CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 11

Bwlch Carnygelli through Open Access Land on Eglwysilan Mountain

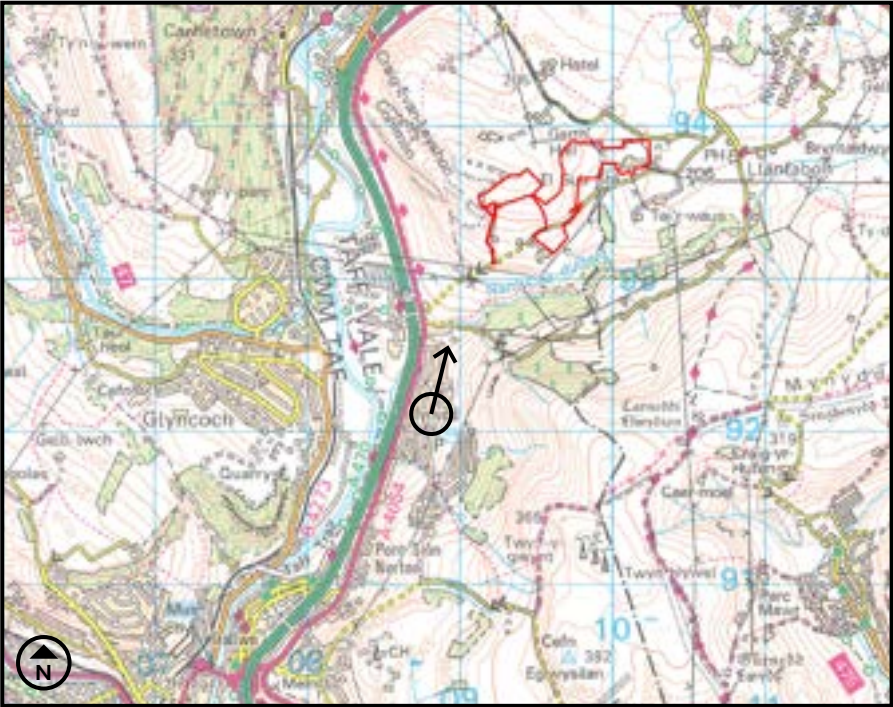


Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 301m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 12:06	Distance from site	- 1988m
OS grid reference	- 312135, 193147		



Panoramic view not available
Refer to Single Frame photograph.

CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 12
Wood Street, Cilfynydd



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 120m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 14:35	Distance from site	- 1065m
OS grid reference	- 308813, 192113		

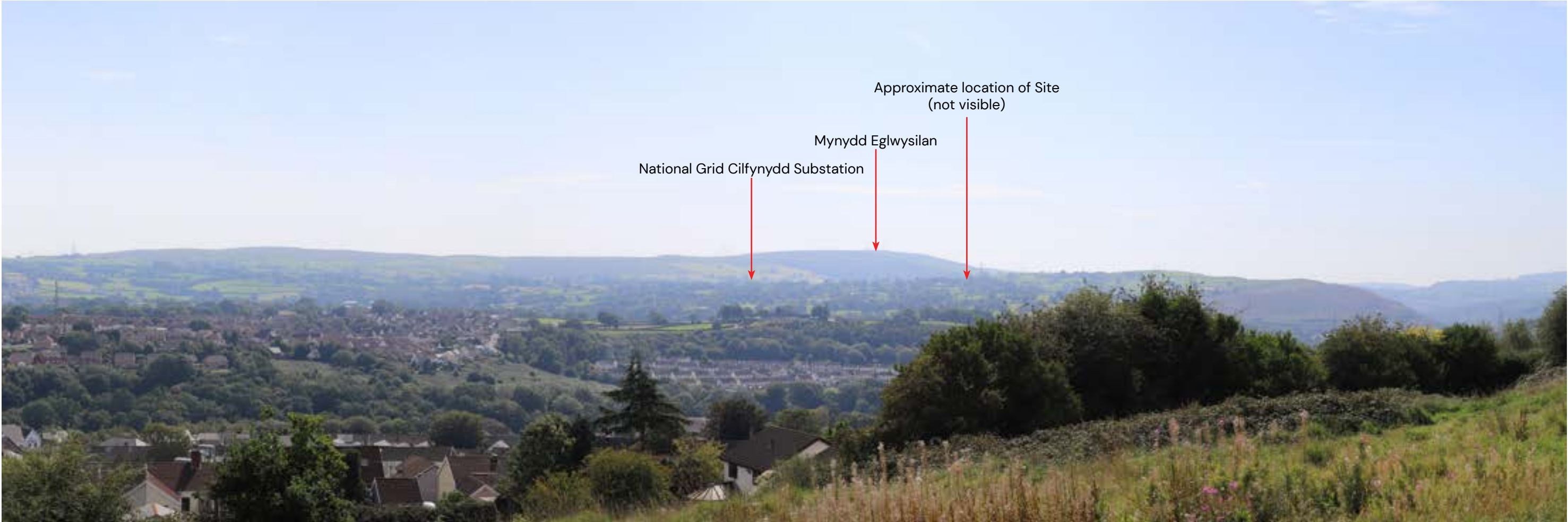


CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 13
Cefn Lane, Glyncoch



Camera make & model - Canon EOS 6D Mark II
Date & time of photograph - 05/02/2025 @ 14:59
OS grid reference - 307794, 192460

Viewpoint height (AOD) - 98m
Distance from site - 1559m



CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 14
Public Footpath 109/20 through Treharris



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 6D Mark II	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 209m
Date & time of photograph	- 05/02/2025 @ 14:18	Distance from site	- 3359m
OS grid reference	- 309654, 197268		



FIGURE 6: PHOTOMONTAGES



























APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

1. Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology

- 1.1. The Analysis is based on this methodology which has been undertaken with regards to best practice as outlined within the following publications:
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition, 2013) – Landscape Institute / Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment;
 - Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA3) – Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01 (2024);
 - Visual Representation of Development Proposals (2019) – Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19;
 - An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (2014) – Natural England;
 - An Approach to Landscape Sensitivity Assessment – To Inform Spatial Planning and Land Management (2019) – Natural England.
 - Reviewing Landscape Visual Impact Assessments (LVIA's and Landscape and Visual appraisals (LVAs) Technical Guidance Note 1/20 Landscape Institute.
 - Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations, Technical Guidance Note 02/21 – Landscape Institute (2021).
- 1.2. GLVIA3 states within paragraph 1.1 that “Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people’s views and visual amenity.”¹
- 1.3. GLVIA3 also states within paragraph 1.17 that when identifying landscape and visual effects there is a “need for an approach that is in proportion to the scale of the project that is being assessed and the nature of the likely effects. Judgement needs to be exercised at all stages in terms of the scale of investigation that is appropriate and proportional.”²
- 1.4. GLVIA3 recognises within paragraph 2.23 that “professional judgement is a very important part of LVIA. While there is some scope for quantitative measurement of some relatively objective matters much of the assessment must rely on qualitative judgements”³ undertaken by a landscape consultant or a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute (CMLI).
- 1.5. GLVIA3 notes in paragraph 1.3 that “LVIA may be carried out either formally, as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), or informally, as a contribution to the ‘appraisal’ of development proposals and planning applications”⁴ Although the proposed development is not subject to an EIA requiring an assessment of the likely significance of effects, this

¹ Para 1.1, Page 4, GLVIA, 3rd Edition

² Para 1.17, Page 9, GLVIA, 3rd Edition

³ Para 2.23, Page 21, GLVIA, 3rd Edition

⁴ Para 1.3, Page 4, GLVIA, 3rd Edition

assessment is also titled as an LVIA rather than an 'appraisal' in the interests of common understanding with other planning consultants.

- 1.6. The effects on cultural heritage and ecology are not considered within this LVIA.

Study Area

- 1.7. The study area for this LVIA covers a 3km radius from the site. However, the main focus of the assessment was taken as a radius of 1km from the site as it is considered that even with clear visibility the proposals would not be perceptible in the landscape beyond this distance.

Effects Assessed

- 1.8. Landscape and visual effects are assessed through professional judgements on the sensitivity of landscape elements, character and visual receptors combined with the predicted magnitude of change arising from the proposals. The landscape and visual effects have been assessed in the following sections:

- Effects on landscape elements;
- Effects on landscape character; and
- Effects on visual amenity.

- 1.9. Sensitivity is defined in GLVIA3 as "a term applied to specific receptors, combining judgments of susceptibility of the receptor to a specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor."⁵ Various factors in relation to the value and susceptibility of landscape elements, character, visual receptors or representative viewpoints are considered below and cross referenced to determine the overall sensitivity as shown in Table 1:

Table 1, Overall sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors

	VALUE			
SUSCEPTIBILITY		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
	HIGH	High	High	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Medium
	LOW	Medium	Medium	Low

- 1.10. Magnitude of change is defined in GLVIA3 as "a term that combines judgements about the size and scale of the effect, the extent over which it occurs, whether it is reversible or irreversible and whether it is short or long term in duration."⁶ Various factors contribute to

⁵ Glossary, Page 158, GLVIA, 3rd Edition

⁶ Glossary, Page 158, GLVIA, 3rd Edition



the magnitude of change on landscape elements, character, visual receptors and representative viewpoints.

- 1.11. The sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptor and the magnitude of change arising from the proposals are cross referenced in Table 11 to determine the overall degree of landscape and visual effects.

2. Effects on Landscape Elements

- 2.1. The effects on landscape elements includes the direct physical change to the fabric of the land, such as the removal of woodland, hedgerows or grassland to allow for the proposals.

Sensitivity of Landscape Elements

- 2.2. Sensitivity is determined by a combination of the value that is attached to a landscape element and the susceptibility of the landscape element to changes that would arise as a result of the proposals – see pages 88-90 of GLVIA3. Both value and susceptibility are assessed on a scale of high, medium or low.
- 2.3. The criteria for assessing the value of landscape elements and landscape character is shown in Table 2:

Table 2, Criteria for assessing the value of landscape elements and landscape character

HIGH	Designated landscape including but not limited to World Heritage Sites, National Parks, National Landscapes (formerly Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) considered to be an important component of the country's character or non-designated landscape of a similar character and quality. Landscape condition is good and components are generally maintained to a high standard. In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and absence of major built infrastructure, the landscape has an elevated level of tranquility. Rare or distinctive landscape elements and features are key components that contribute to the landscape character of the area.
MEDIUM	Undesignated landscape including urban fringe and rural countryside considered to be a distinctive component of the national or local landscape character. Landscape condition is fair and components are generally well maintained. In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and some major built infrastructure, the landscape has a moderate level of tranquility. Rare or distinctive landscape elements and features are notable components that contribute to the character of the area.
LOW	Undesignated landscape including urban fringe and rural countryside considered to be of unremarkable character. Landscape condition may be poor and components poorly maintained or damaged. In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and significant major built infrastructure, the landscape has limited levels of tranquility. Rare or distinctive elements and features are not notable components that contribute to the landscape character of the area.

- 2.4. The criteria for assessing the susceptibility of landscape elements and landscape character is shown in Table 3:

Table 3, Criteria for assessing landscape susceptibility

HIGH	Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a low capacity to accommodate the type of development being proposed owing to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover, built form, etc. Nature of land use – landscapes with no or little existing reference or context to the type of development being proposed. Nature of existing elements – landscapes with components that are not easily replaced or substituted (e.g. ancient woodland, mature trees, historic parkland, etc). Nature of existing features – landscapes where detracting features, major infrastructure or industry is not present or where present has a limited influence on landscape character.
MEDIUM	Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a medium capacity to accommodate the type of development being proposed owing to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover, built form, etc. Nature of land use – landscapes with some existing reference or context to the type of development being proposed. Nature of existing elements – landscapes with components that are easily replaced or substituted. Nature of existing features – landscapes where detracting features, major infrastructure or industry is present and has a noticeable influence on landscape character.
LOW	Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a high capacity to accommodate the type of development being proposed owing to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover, built form, etc. Nature of land use – landscapes with extensive existing reference or context to the type of development being proposed. Nature of existing features – landscapes where detracting features or major infrastructure is present and has a dominating influence on the landscape.

- 2.5. Various factors in relation to the value and susceptibility of landscape elements are assessed and cross referenced to determine the overall sensitivity as shown in Table 1.
- 2.6. Sensitivity is defined in GLVIA3 as “a term applied to specific receptors, combining judgments of susceptibility of the receptor to a specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor.”⁷ The definitions for high, medium, low landscape sensitivity are shown in Table 4:

⁷ Glossary, Page 158, GLVIA, 3rd Edition

Table 4, Criteria for assessing landscape sensitivity

HIGH	Landscape element or character area defined as being of high value combined with a high or medium susceptibility to change. Landscape element or character area defined as being of medium value combined with a high susceptibility to change.
MEDIUM	Landscape element or character area defined as being of high value combined with a low susceptibility to change. Landscape element or character area defined as being of medium value combined with a medium or low susceptibility to change. Landscape element or character area defined as being of low value combined with a high or medium susceptibility to change.
LOW	Landscape element or character area defined as being of low value combined with a low susceptibility to change.

Magnitude of Change on Landscape Elements

- 2.7. Professional judgement has been used to determine the magnitude of change on individual landscape elements within the site as shown in Table 5:

Table 5, Criteria for assessing magnitude of change for landscape elements

HIGH	Substantial loss/gain of a landscape element.
MEDIUM	Partial loss/gain or alteration to part of a landscape element.
LOW	Minor loss/gain or alteration to part of a landscape element.
NEGLIGIBLE	No loss/gain or very limited alteration to part of a landscape element.

3. Effects on Landscape Character

- 3.1. Landscape character is defined as the “distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.”⁸
- 3.2. The assessment of effects on landscape character considers how the introduction of new landscape elements physically alters the landform, landcover, landscape pattern and perceptual attributes of the site or how visibility of the proposals changes the way in which the landscape character is perceived.

Sensitivity of Landscape Character

- 3.3. Sensitivity is determined by a combination of the value that is attached to a landscape and the susceptibility of the landscape to changes that would arise as a result of the proposals – see pages 88–90 of GLVIA3. Both value and susceptibility are assessed on a scale of high, medium or low.
- 3.4. The criteria for assessing the value of landscape character is shown in Table 2.
- 3.5. The criteria for assessing the susceptibility of landscape character is shown in Table 3.
- 3.6. The overall sensitivity is determined through cross referencing the value and susceptibility of landscape character as shown in Table 1.

Magnitude of Change on Landscape Character

- 3.7. Professional judgement has been used to determine the magnitude of change on landscape character as shown in Table 6:

Table 6, Criteria for assessing magnitude of change on landscape character

HIGH	Introduction of major new elements into the landscape or some major change to the scale, landform, landcover or pattern of the landscape.
MEDIUM	Introduction of some notable new elements into the landscape or some notable change to the scale, landform, landcover or pattern of the landscape.
LOW	Introduction of minor new elements into the landscape or some minor change to the scale, landform, landcover or pattern of the landscape.
NEGLIGIBLE	No notable or appreciable introduction of new elements into the landscape or change to the scale, landform, landcover or pattern of the landscape.

⁸ Glossary, Page 157, GLVIA, 3rd Edition

4. Effects on Visual Amenity

4.1. Visual amenity is defined within GLVIA3 as the “overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area.”⁹

4.2. The effects on visual amenity considers the changes in views arising from the proposals in relation to visual receptors including settlements, residential properties, transport routes, recreational facilities and attractions; and representative viewpoints or specific locations within the study area as agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

4.3. Sensitivity is determined by a combination of the value that is attached to a view and the susceptibility of the visual receptor to changes in that view that would arise as a result of the proposals – see pages 113–114 of GLVIA3. Both value and susceptibility are assessed on a scale of high, medium or low.

4.4. The criteria for assessing the value of views are shown in Table 7:

Table 7, Criteria for assessing the value of views

HIGH	Views with high scenic value within designated landscapes including but not limited to World Heritage Sites, National Parks, National Landscape (formerly Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty), etc. Likely to include key viewpoints on OS maps or reference within guidebooks, provision of facilities, presence of interpretation boards, etc.
MEDIUM	Views with moderate scenic value within undesignated landscape including urban fringe and rural countryside.
LOW	Views with unremarkable scenic value within undesignated landscape with partly degraded visual quality and detractors.

4.5. The criteria for assessing the susceptibility of views are shown in Table 8:

Table 8, Criteria for assessing visual susceptibility

HIGH	Includes occupiers of residential properties and people engaged in recreational activities in the countryside using public rights of way (PROW).
MEDIUM	Includes people engaged in outdoor sporting activities and people travelling through the landscape on minor roads and trains.
LOW	Includes people at places of work e.g. industrial and commercial premises and people travelling through the landscape on major roads and motorways.

4.6. Sensitivity is defined in GLVIA3 as “a term applied to specific receptors, combining judgments of susceptibility of the receptor to a specific type of change or development

⁹ Page 158, Glossary, GLVIA3

proposed and the value related to that receptor.”¹⁰ The definitions for high, medium, low visual sensitivity are shown in Table 9:

Table 9, Criteria for assessing visual sensitivity

HIGH	Visual receptor defined as being of high value combined with a high or medium susceptibility to change. Visual receptor defined as being of medium value combined with a high susceptibility to change.
MEDIUM	Visual receptor defined as being of high value combined with a low susceptibility to change. Visual receptor defined as being of medium value combined with a medium or low susceptibility to change. Visual receptor defined as being of low value combined with a high or medium susceptibility to change.
LOW	Visual receptor defined as being of low value combined with a low susceptibility to change.

Magnitude of Change on Visual Receptors

- 4.7. Professional judgement has been used to determine the magnitude of change on visual receptors as shown in Table 10:

Table 10, Criteria for assessing magnitude of change for visual receptors

HIGH	Major change in the view that has a substantial influence on the overall view.
MEDIUM	Some change in the view that is clearly visible and forms an important but not defining element in the view.
LOW	Some change in the view that is appreciable with few visual receptors affected.
NEGLIGIBLE	No notable change in the view.

¹⁰ Glossary, Page 158, GLVIA, 3rd Edition

5. Significance of Landscape And Visual Effects

- 5.1. The likely significance of effects is dependent on all of the factors considered in the sensitivity and the magnitude of change upon the relevant landscape and visual receptors. These factors are assimilated to assess whether or not the proposed development will have a likely significant or not significant effect. The variables considered in the evaluation of the sensitivity and the magnitude of change is reviewed holistically to inform the professional judgement of significance.
- 5.2. Within Table 11 below, the major effects highlighted in grey are considered to be significant in terms of the EIA Regulations. It should be noted that whilst an individual effect may be significant, it does not necessarily follow that the proposed development would be unacceptable in the planning balance. The cross referencing of the sensitivity and magnitude of change on the landscape and visual receptor determines the significance of effect as shown in Table 11:

Table 11, Significance of landscape and visual effects

		Sensitivity		
		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
Magnitude of Change	HIGH	Major	Major	Moderate
	MEDIUM	Major	Moderate	Minor
	LOW	Moderate	Minor	Minor
	NEGLIGIBLE	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

6. Typical Descriptors of Landscape Effects

6.1. The typical descriptors of the landscape effects are detailed within Table 12:

Table 12, Typical Descriptors of Landscape Effects

MAJOR BENEFICIAL	Substantially: - enhance the character (including value) of the landscape; - enhance the restoration of characteristic features and elements lost as a result of changes from inappropriate management or development; - enable a sense of place to be enhanced.
MODERATE BENEFICIAL	Moderately: - enhance the character (including value) of the landscape; - enable the restoration of characteristic features and elements partially lost or diminished as a result of changes from inappropriate management or development; - enable a sense of place to be restored.
MINOR BENEFICIAL	Slightly: - complement the character (including value) of the landscape; - maintain or enhance characteristic features or elements; - enable some sense of place to be restored.
NEGLIGIBLE	The proposed changes would (on balance) maintain the character (including value) of the landscape and would: - be in keeping with landscape character and blend in with characteristic features and elements; - Enable a sense of place to be maintained.
NO CHANGE	The proposed changes would not be visible and there would be no change to landscape character.
MINOR ADVERSE	Slightly: - not quite fit the character (including value) of the landscape; - be a variance with characteristic features and elements; - detract from the sense of place.
MODERATE ADVERSE	Moderately: - conflict with the character (including value) of the landscape; - have an adverse effect on characteristic features or elements; - diminish a sense of place.
MAJOR ADVERSE	Substantially: - be at variance with the character (including value) of the landscape; - degrade or diminish the integrity of a range of characteristic features and elements or cause them to be lost; - change a sense of place.

7. Typical Descriptors of Visual Effects

7.1. The typical descriptors of the visual effects are detailed within Table 13:

Table 13, Typical Descriptors of Visual Effects

MAJOR BENEFICIAL	Proposals would result in a major improvement in the view.
MODERATE BENEFICIAL	Proposals would result in a clear improvement in the view.
MINOR BENEFICIAL	Proposals would result in a slight improvement in the view.
NEGLIGIBLE	The proposed changes would be in keeping with, and would maintain, the existing view or where (on balance) the proposed changes would maintain the general appearance of the view (which may include adverse effects which are offset by beneficial effects for the same receptor) or due to distance from the receptor, the proposed change would be barely perceptible to the naked eye.
NO CHANGE	The proposed changes would not be visible and there would be no change to the view.
MINOR ADVERSE	Proposals would result in a slight deterioration in the view.
MODERATE ADVERSE	Proposals would result in a clear deterioration in the view.
MAJOR ADVERSE	Proposals would result in a major deterioration in the view.

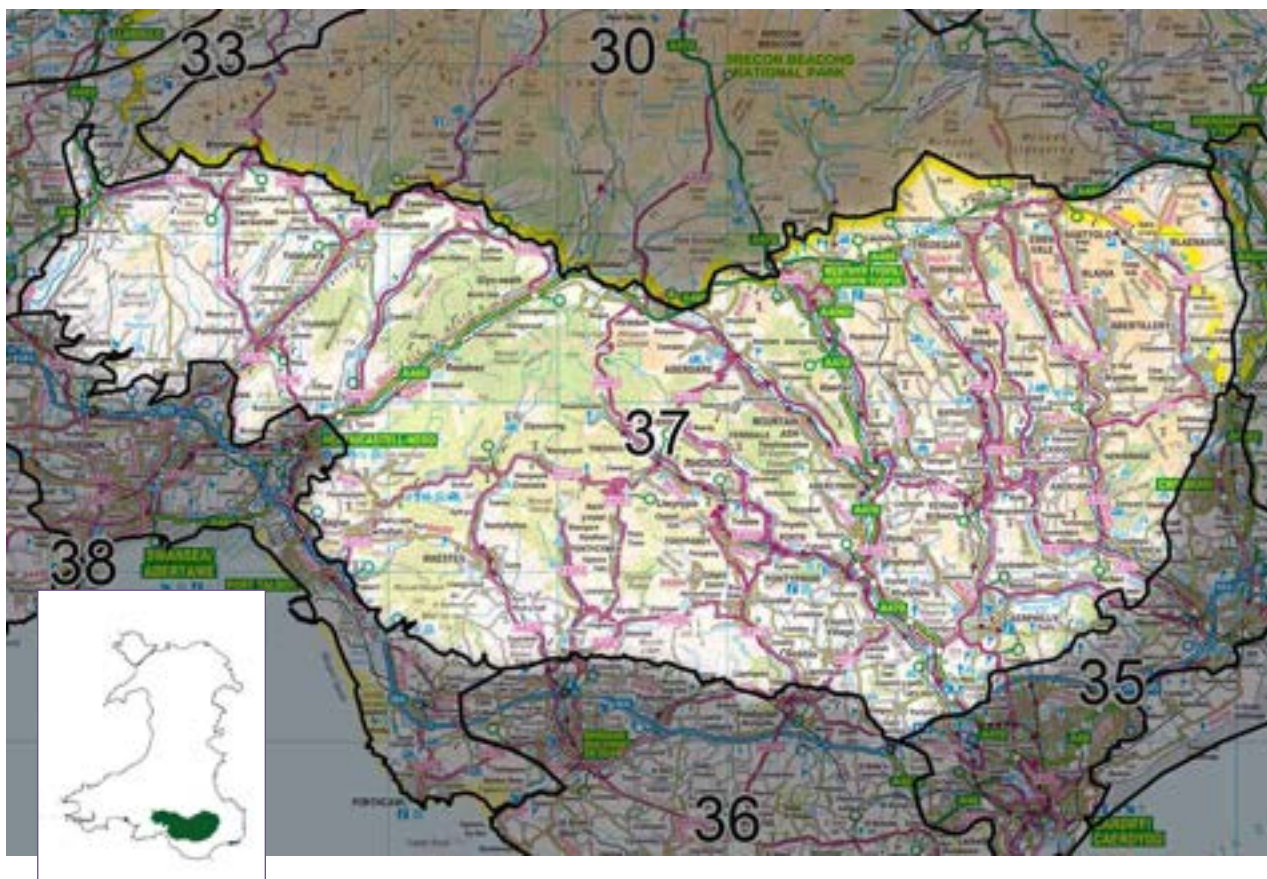
8. Nature of Effects

- 8.1. GLVIA3 includes an entry that states *"effects can be described as positive or negative (or in some cases neutral) in their consequences for views and visual amenity."*¹¹ GLVIA3 does not, however, state how negative or positive effects should be assessed, and this therefore becomes a matter of professional judgement supported by site specific justification within the LVIA.

¹¹ Para 6.29, Page 113, GLVIA 3rd Edition



APPENDIX B: NLCA 37: SOUTH WALES VALLEYS– RELEVANT EXTRACT



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Cymoedd y De – disgrifiad cryno

Mae llawer o gymoedd dwfn, trefoledig yn brathu i fynydd-dir eang. Ynghyd â'r etifeddiaeth ddiwydiannol, a hunaniaeth bendant ei phobl, mae ardal Cymoedd y De wedi esgor ar rai o ddelweddau cenedlaethol mwyaf adnabyddus ac eiconig Cymru.

Mae datblygiad strimynnog yn llenwi llawer o waelodion a llethrau isaf y cymoedd. Ochr yn ochr â'u cymeriad trefol a diwydiannol, ceir dir bryniog dramatig, gyda llethrau serth, gweunydd agored neu goedwigoedd. Mae rhwydweithiau o reilffyrdd a ffyrdd yn cydgysylltu pentrefi'r cymoedd. Mae natur y tir yn cyfyngu ar dramwyo rhwng y naill gwm a'r llall, ac nid oes ond ychydig fylchau uchel rhyngddynt. Mae twrw a phrysurdeb llawer o gymoedd yn gwrthgyferbynnu â chymeriad cymharol anghysbell a gwyllt y llwyfandiroedd uchel cyfagos.

Darparodd daeareg a dyddodion mwynol yr ardal yr adnoddau a sbardunodd ymlodiad cyflym datblygu diwydiannol yn y 19eg ganrif. O fedru cludo ar reilffyrdd, creodd y diwydiannau glo, dur a haearn newydd seilwaith eang o adeiladau mawrion, ffwrneisiau, tyrau, simneiau, traphontydd, tomenydd gwastraff a lefelydd. Canlyniad cartrefu'r gweithwyr yw'r rhesi hirion ac eiconig o dai teras sy'n canlyn ochrau'r bryniau: ac yn sgîl y gweithwyr, daeth capeli, siopau, ysgolion a chyfleusterau eraill, gan greu cymunedau newydd, trefol eu natur. Canlyniad arall bywyd yno, a'r amgylchedd garw, fu delwedd cymdeithas wydn, radicalaidd ei gwleidyddiaeth, a hoffai chwarae rygbi.

Canlyniad dirywiad diwydiannol ddiwedd yr 20fed ganrif fu cau, symud ymaith, gadael neu ailddatblygu llawer o safleoedd diwydiannol blaenorol. Mae'r newidiadau hyn yn parhau heddiw, fel y mae'r newidiadau cymdeithasol canlyniadol ym mywyd a hunaniaeth y cymunedau. Gwelir yr ardal, bellach, yn rhan o "ranbarth dinas" ehangach a chynyddol ôl-ddiwydiannol, y fwyaf yng Nghymru. Mae delwedd eiconig newydd yn aneglur, ar brydiau, ond y mae gweithgareddau wedi'u seilio ar yr etifeddiaeth, mewn amgylchedd tynerach a gwyrddach, yn dechrau dod i'r amlwg fel rhan o hyn.

Summary Description

Many deep, urbanised valleys dissect an extensive upland area. Combined with industrial heritage and the distinct identity of its people, the South Wales Valleys provide some of Wales' most widely known and iconic national images.

Extensive ribbon development fills many valley bottoms and lower slopes. Their urban and industrial character is juxtaposed with dramatic upland settings with steep hillsides, open moors or forests. Networks of railways and roads connect valley settlements. Topography constrains passage between valleys, and there are only a limited number of high passes between valleys. The noise and business of many valleys contrast with the relatively remote and wild qualities of adjacent hill plateaux.

Underlying geology and mineral deposits provided the resources that fuelled a rapid spread of industrial development in the C19th. Once rail transport became possible, new coal, steel and iron industries created an extensive infrastructure of large buildings, furnaces, towers, chimneys, viaducts, spoil heaps and levels. Housing for workers resulted in the extensive and iconic rows of terraced houses that run along hillsides. Their needs in turn brought chapels, shops, schools and other facilities to create new settlements with an urban character. The way of life and harsh environment resulted in the image of a tough, rugby playing and radically minded society. But the decline of industries in the late C20th resulted in the closure, removal, abandonment or redevelopment of many former industrial sites. These changes continue today, as do the consequential social changes to the way of life and community identity. The area is now seen as part of a wider, increasingly post-industrial, 'city region', the largest in Wales. A new iconic image is at times unclear, but heritage-based activities set within a softer, greener environment are emerging as part of this.

While greenness is returning to some former industrial landscapes many of the new woodlands are coniferous. Waterways are slowly welcoming back fish, and mammals such as otters. The importance of wildlife conservation being undertaken hand-in-hand with economic regeneration is being recognised as one of the keys to the sustained revitalisation of this most iconic Welsh 'bro', in the Heads of the Valleys and Valleys Regional Park initiatives.

Key Characteristics
Extensive Upland plateaux – typically wild and windswept, often with unenclosed tracts, running roughly north-south as ‘fingers’ parallel between intervening deep valleys.
Numerous steep-sided valleys - typically aligned in parallel, flowing in southerly directions, shaped by southward flowing glaciers, leaving behind distinctive corrie ('cwm') and crag features. Major rivers include the Tawe, Taff and Rhymney.
Ribbon urban and industrial areas in valleys – in places extending up valley sides and to valley heads. The area is sometimes regarded as being part of a ‘city region’. Middle and eastern valleys tend to be the most heavily and continuously developed, e.g Rhondda Valley. The uplands by comparison have little or no settlement.
Extensive remains of heavy industry – with a mix of derelict, preserved and largely redeveloped areas, notably for coal mining. Preserved as heritage (World heritage Site) at Blaenafon this typically includes old railway alignments, buildings and former tips.
Contrast of urban valley activity next to quiet uplands – e.g. busy roads, new developments, traffic noise, night lighting, verses the adjacent wilder, remoter, quieter uplands.
Large blocks of coniferous plantation and deciduous woodland fringes – covering many steep hillsides and hilltops, most notably in the middle to western portion of the area, providing a softer contemporary landscape where there was once industry.
Heather, rough grassland and steep bracken slopes – dominate many plateaux and are grazed mainly by sheep. Much is common land.
Improved pastures on some lower valley sides - grazed by sheep and some dairy cattle.
Field boundaries - dry stone walls mark the boundary of common land while fields on lower slopes are bounded by dense hawthorn hedges, interspersed with swathes of broadleaved woodland.
Transport routes restricted to valleys – the intervening topography makes valley to valley travel difficult, except at heads and bottoms of valleys. Occasionally there are roads that climb steeply over passes with dramatic views and ‘hair pin’ bends.
Iconic cultural identity – many popular images of a tough, rugby-playing, religious, radically-minded society still remain associated with the South Wales Valleys, however today’s post-industrial, internet-connected reality is somewhat different.

Visual and Sensory profile

The South Wales Valleys is one of Wales’ more widely known iconic images, combining the wilder and often inclement upland setting with the heavily industrialised and busy valleys. Active mines and industry are now generally an image of the past, however the legacy remains extensively apparent today and together with the steep topography of the valley sides, has a defining influence on landscape character. Levels and old railway alignments, the generally reclaimed but sometimes still perceptible physical footprints of mine spoil heaps, the often intensively urbanised valley floors with old industrial buildings, and lower valley sides with their distinctive long rows of workers terraces, retain the traditional image.

Yet today a new image is gradually but fundamentally changing the old one. Modern road improvements and bypasses bristle with street lighting, spreading the urban influence beyond the old settlement envelopes and altering the character experienced when travelling. In many valleys the legacy of slow travel through the ribbon development continues today, but in some places and notably along the A470 north-south corridor and along the A465 “Heads of the Valleys” east-west corridor road, travel is now much quicker.

For those with cars, the area has become far more easily accessed and the once very separate valleys are now just a few minutes drive apart. The orientation of valleys and the remaining legacy of railways and roads focus travel towards Wales's two largest cities, Cardiff and Swansea, which lie in neighbouring areas to the south, offering the combination of upland valley living and city working. The noise of industry and railways has typically changed to that of road traffic. Many former brownfield sites have been redesigned and redeveloped for new housing, industry and retail. These modern features of the mid and late C20th provide an entirely contemporary character, tending not to style their architecture or pattern of urban design using the traditions established in the C19th. The results tend to lack local distinctiveness, however a 'Valleys' sense of place still remains strong because of the enduring historic and dramatic upland landscape setting.

It is a landscape of contrasts. The valleys contain the extensive ribbon development, which snakes along the valley floors and lower valley sides, and sometimes with settlements precariously extending over intervening slopes and spurs. The windswept upland plateaux that separate the valleys could not be more different. Devoid of settlement, the uplands engender a strong sense of openness and remoteness, although in places compromised by proximity to industry and people, for example reclaimed spoil heaps, fly tipping, abandoned cars, 'horsiculture' and associated ramshackle sheds or allotments, pressure of people accessing the area for recreation in an unmanaged way, and occasional pylon lines, telecommunications masts and occasional wind turbine developments. But the open plateaux afford extensive views across the valleys, southwards to the Severn Estuary and northwards to the Brecon Beacons. At times, views from plateau to plateau conceal the intervening valleys and thus visually connect more with the wider uplands of Wales.

The middle to western valleys are dominated by the extensive coniferous plantations whereas the eastern valleys, although generally smaller, are more intimate. On many valley sides, there are distinctive 'ffridd' and 'rhos pasture' mosaics of small fields, hedgerows, boundary walls, wet flushes and marshland, interspersed with small stands of trees, copses and woodlands. It is the vestige of the former agricultural landscape that once dominated before the expansion of coal mining and the iron industries. The far western valleys, (those west of the Neath Valley) have slightly gentler intervening hills and long, unfenced lanes use the ridges as convenient routes. This affects experience of the area too, as ridgeline routes are uncommon elsewhere.

Many former spoil tips have been reclaimed, with varying degrees of integration into the intrinsic natural topography and upland setting. In some areas much new tree planting results in a landscape today that is much softer and more enclosed than that depicted in historic images. Individual valleys differ markedly in appearance: Neath and Dulais are green and broad by comparison with the cramped settlements of the Swansea and the two Rhonddas; Afan is steep and mountainous, covered in conifers, while the Taff and Ebbw Vales are convoluted in both terrain and settlement.



The new landscape: Trefforest Industrial Estate, occupying the flat land in the valley bottom, and anchored into its setting by maturing woodlands and thick hedgerows. © Luke Maggs



Blaengwynfi, with traditional hillside terraces and new forestry on mountain sides. © Luke Maggs



Urban terraced settlement along valleys and valley sides, with many houses having been individually modified with render, new windows or roofs, extensions and colour. © LUC



Ebbw Vale from the western side of the valley. Contrast of urban, ex-industrial valleys undergoing transition, with the enduring open moors on the adjacent hills. © LUC



From Mynydd Machen, looking towards a prominent hilltop spoil tip. Most spoil tips have been removed, regraded or planted over with trees. © LUC



Heavy industries that once dominated the South Wales Valleys are largely gone, however their iconic remains are now the cultural heritage that informs today's character. Here we see the remains of Ynyscedwyn Ironworks at Ystradgynlais. © Luke Maggs



Pen Pych table top. There may be industrial remains and urban settlement about, but the dramatic topography, open moors and steep wooded valley sides provide many of the kinds of appealing scenic qualities that are more widely known in upland landscapes elsewhere in Wales. © Luke Maggs



Gelli Gaer Common, one of the long, open roads that run along the gentler plateaux tops of the area west of the Neath Valley. © Richard Kelly



Terraced houses and old spoil heaps amidst the upland landscape: the traditional image as now preserved at Blaenavon (World Heritage Site). © John Briggs



From near the adjacent Brecon Beacons, looking down one of the upland plateaux that separate the industrialised valleys. Nantyglo is in the valley to the left, Ebbw Vale is in the valley to the right. © John Briggs



Brynmawr, one of the 'heads of the Valleys' settlements, with much C20th housing estate expansion. © John Briggs

Geological Landscape influences

The South Wales Valleys incorporates a large part of the southern-most uplands in Wales and is framed by the Brecon Beacons and Black Mountains to the north and the lowland vale landscapes to the south, east and west. The deeply incised valleys are a distinctive feature of the landscape. In the eastern sector the area is drained by a series of south and south-eastward flowing rivers including the Ebbw, Sirhowy, Rhymney and Taff, whilst the central region about the Rhondda is drained by the Rhondda Fawr and Rhondda Fach which are confluent with the Taff at Pontypridd. In contrast, drainage in the west is dominated by south-westward flowing rivers, including the Tawe, Neath and Afan. Ground elevations in the upland areas are highly variable, but in the north-east reach up to 581m on Coity Mountain and 574m on Cefn Coch. Farther west the ground reaches a maximum altitude of 600m on Garn Fach and 568m on Werfa at the head of the Ogmore Valley.

The bedrock geology is dominated by a thick sequence of Carboniferous sedimentary rocks. They are preserved in and around the South Wales Coalfield Basin, a structurally complex, WNW-trending trough-shaped structure that extends westwards into Pembrokeshire. The Lower Carboniferous sequence is dominated by a variety of marine,

limestone-dominated formations, together with some mudstones and ironstones, which form a narrow belt around the basin between Thornhill, Rudry, Risca and Pontypool, and north of Merthyr Tydfil, where the strata dip gently towards the south. There is a succeeding Upper Carboniferous sequence including sandstones, and marine mudstones and a succeeding 'Westphalian' sequence dominated by sandstones including the Pennant sandstones. The lower part of the succession forms the South Wales Coal Measures Group, and is dominated by mudstones, siltstones and coals arranged in repeating units.

The gently southward-dipping Pennant sandstones form an erosion-resistant cap to the upland plateaux of the South Wales Valleys, as well as a spectacular escarpment along their northern limit. Within the syncline are numerous minor folds, including the Pontypridd and Maesteg anticlines. Two of the most distinctive structures of the coalfield are the Neath and Swansea Valley disturbances which comprise NE-striking zones of folded and faulted strata that trend into the area from Devonian outcrops to the north and east. Both structures have a strong topographical expression, controlling the course of both the Neath and Swansea valleys, and are believed to root into major fractures in the underlying basement. The coalfield is also transected by a dense network of steep, dominantly NNW-striking cross-faults that frequently caused major problems during the extraction of coal. Some of these faults have a strong topographical influence as, for example, in the case of the Merthyr Church Fault, which controls the orientation of the Afon Taf Fawr in the vicinity of Merthyr Tydfil.

The area has been shaped by glaciation, where ice that accumulated in the Brecon Beacons and adjacent high ground spread southwards through the Pennant Sandstone escarpment and entered the coalfield, where glaciers incised deep U-shaped valleys. This southward advance was locally impeded by topography. For example, when the ice-sheet met the escarpment at Craig-y-Llyn (SN 910 039) it broke into two major lobes, one advancing south into the coalfield through the Cynon and Taff valleys, and the other west-south-west down the Neath Valley. Recessional halt moraines were formed on the valley floors as the ice melted. For example, in the Neath Valley at Tonnau and Cline, an impounded glacial lake stretched up the valley to Cwmgwrach. Throughout the area the principal glacial deposit is till (boulder clay) and most till occurs in the northern parts of the valleys, where it can reach a thickness of up to 30m. It passes down valley into outwash sands and gravels, which formed through the action of melt waters and created important landscape components of some valleys. A good example of a kame terrace is developed in the Afon Valley at Pontrhydyfen. Between about 13,000 and 11,500 years ago, small glaciers re-occupied the upland cirques along the north-facing Pennant Sandstone escarpment. These glaciers formed concentric ridges of moraine, often backed by marshy hollows and small lakes, as in the case of Llyn Fawr and Llyn Fach beneath Craig y Llyn.

Glacial deposits left on the valley floors have been progressively re-worked and re-deposited as alluvial silts and sands. River terraces occur intermittently, for example along the Taf Fawr, Mellte, Neath and Tawe, whilst alluvial fans have formed where steeply graded tributaries enter the more gently graded main valleys. Landslips form an important component of the landscape throughout the coalfield and occur on the glacially over-steepened flanks of the valleys where thick Pennant sandstones overlie weak and impermeable mudstones and rock masses were subject to failure and collapse. Whilst most mass movement took place during deglaciation, when the support of glacier ice was removed, some major landslips are recent, for example that at Bournville (SO 207 068) was initiated in 1893 and at East Pentwyn (SO 206 075) in 1954.

Landscape Habitats influences

The Valleys are characterised by upland areas incised by a number of valleys, with contrasting habitat to match. The bedrock geology has given rise to a variety of soil types. Basinal and blanket peats developed throughout the South Wales Valleys and provide an important record of post-glacial vegetation and climatic conditions. Loamy soils with a wet peaty surface characterise the sandstone uplands; well drained loamy soils are found on valley sides; while coarse loams subject to seasonal waterlogging are located on lower slopes and on valley floors.

Each valley has both unique and common features, such as broadly southerly flowing rivers fed by a myriad of smaller, faster flowing tributaries from the surrounding uplands. On the lower slopes of the valleys livestock-grazed, improved grassland bounded by hawthorn rich hedgerows is prevalent, together with linear stands of deciduous woodland – some of considerable ecological value, for example, Cwm Du Woods in the Llynfi Valley and Merddog Woods in the Ebbw Valley, which are SSSIs.

Further up the valley slopes, “fridd” habitat occurs, in which there is a distinctive mosaic of rough grazed fields, bracken, rhos pasture, scattered scrub and small pockets of woodland characterising the transition between the lower slopes and upland areas and important for a considerable number of species. At the tops of the valley slopes there is a gradation to more upland habitats, such as moorland with acid grassland and heath. There is also some contrast along the length of the valleys with their more southerly ends being more lowland in character and the heads of the valleys to the north displaying glacial features such as cirques (cymoedd) and crags, which support valuable communities. Particularly important examples are found in the Rhondda, for example, the rare arctic-alpine habitats at Craig-y-Llyn SSSI.

In between the valleys, areas of extensive plateaux are dominated by moorland vegetation of heather, blanket bog and acidic grassland formed on the wet peaty surface that overlies the generally loamy soils in the area. These moorland areas are largely grassy in nature and are generally grazed by sheep. Large areas of heath-dominated moorland are relatively scarce, but one such area of particular ecological value is The Bloreng, a mountain near Blaenafon.

Also present within the open moorland and hillsides are considerable blocks of coniferous plantation, particularly noticeable and extensive in the uplands to the north of Bridgend and Port Talbot, often of lower ecological importance and much has been planted in the C20th, some over reclaimed industrial workings.

Along the southern edge of the area, the land is lower lying with less steep and deep valleys, with the areas between the valleys being largely dominated by improved grassland. Deciduous woodland areas scattered throughout the area provide some ecological interest, as do the hedgerows that bound the fields. The two most notable woodland areas are associated with the more lowland valley slopes, being the oak woodlands at Park Mill and the beech woodlands just north of Cardiff, both of which are SAC and SSSIs. Some areas of semi-improved and marshy grassland are also present between the valleys, some of which are of considerable ecological value, most notably Llantrisant Common and Aberbargoed Grasslands

Historic Landscape influences

The Valleys reflect their coal mining and iron extraction and smelting heritage. The iron industry provided the spur for the rapid industrialisation of the whole area from c.1800. The foundation for all of this is the particular geology and land-form that provided all the materials needed for iron making in relatively accessible form. The linked exploitation of these materials and the transport systems leading to and from major works structures shaped the industrial landscape.

Long rows of former 19th century miners' terraces of stone, brick and coloured render are particularly distinctive, extending in some areas up very steep slopes and seen against a backdrop of bracken or conifers higher up the valley sides. Although the terraced house is identified as the most distinctive ingredient of settlement, in practice there is considerable variety in settlement type, including informal 'squatter' developments, planned company settlements, expanded early nuclei (Pontypool) and the developed industrial town built by many agencies but acquiring a coherent social landscape nonetheless (Blaenavon). Settlements developed either directly associated with particular industrial enterprises, or as service towns for a wider hinterland (Pontypridd). These varied histories contribute to considerable variety in present character both between and within valleys.

An often overlooked feature of the enormous manpower and economic energy of 200 years of toil are the canals dug to carry iron ore and coal from inland workings. The most prominent in terms of survival and landscape influence in this area are the Glamorgan from Merthyr to Cardiff, the Neath and Tennant Canals and that in the Swansea Valley.

Blaenavon is designated as a World Heritage Site as being one of the best surviving examples in the region of a valley head industrial community, with features from the C18th iron industry as well as the extensive coal mining activity that took place in the 19th century.

The upland plateaux are largely free from modern development aside from minor roads which cross the open commons. As a result, archaeological evidence of ancient human occupation and activity is often well preserved. Notable examples are Gelli-gaer Common near Ystrad Mynach, and Margam Mountain. The former area contains a rich diversity of archaeological sites, including Bronze Age burial and ritual monuments, a Roman road and military installations, and Capel Gwladys – an early church site. Later features include Mediaeval deserted settlements, an earthwork castle (Twyn Castle), field systems and platform houses. Margam Mountain stands above the east-west Roman road, and is distinguished by not only possessing extensive prehistoric and Mediaeval archaeological remains over a very large area of high hillside and moorland, but also as having been grazing land for the livestock of Margam Abbey.

Cultural Landscape influences

The Valleys, are internationally recognised for the rich industrial heritage of the C19th. Massive development followed the discovery of steam coal in 1855. This stimulated a so-called 'coal rush' which, for example, turned the Rhondda into the most productive coal mining area in Britain. The population exploded from a sparse agrarian society into a teeming mass of immigrant workers from rural areas, from Ireland, West Wales, Somerset, Gwynedd and the Midlands. From under 1000 in 1851, the population rose to nearly

163,000 by 1921, occupying an almost continuous conurbation for miles – albeit with jealously guarded identities in individually named settlements.

Elsewhere, every valley from the eastern Lwyd and Ebbw Vale to the far west Gwendraeth there sprang up the characteristic images of rows of terraced company houses. The iconic headframes and coal mine winding gear, public buildings, chapels and Working Men's Institutes and other infrastructure, all squeezed into the previously rural landscape of the valleys to house the massive in-migration of workers. This continued through the C20th with extensive post-war council housing estates, and latterly private estates. The Valleys and their Working Men's Institutes produced many radical, self-educated politicians, for example Aneurin Bevan, visionary founder of the National Health Service, and Neil Kinnock of Islwyn. Their radicalism was largely founded on the appalling conditions they had to work and live in.

But the industrial decline of the 1980s, the loss of 'macho' employment, and the psychological devastation of the failure of the year-long Miners' Strike in 1984 have, for many, led to cultural changes that previously would have been hard to imagine by their once-proud communities. The Strike was followed by wholesale unemployment, and although regenerative efforts continue to abound, not all are successful, and not all touch all the people. The iconic coal tips have been systematically flattened following the tragedy of Aberfan, and the once ever-present pithead winding gears have mostly gone. Those that survive best tend to form features of tourist sites, notably with Blaenavon regenerating itself as a World Heritage Site. Despite efforts to find new uses for old buildings, some of which are architecturally magnificent, the majority continue to decay. The same applies to the proliferation of multi-denominational chapels, and the Institutes, originally the social and educational as well as spiritual heart of Valleys communities.

Regeneration and more recent estates, along with new small and large-scale commercial and industrial development tend to be linked to the modern road network. Although there is still an extensive passenger railway branch line network, with plans to improve, regeneration tends to be based around car use and opportunities for much longer distance travel than traditionally. The employment opportunities elsewhere, notably in Cardiff, result in crowded trains and commuting residents clogging up M4 interchanges twice each day.

In recent years, telecommunication masts, pylons and wind turbines have appeared across the plateaux in an upland landscape otherwise devoid of development. A remarkable feature in what are recognized as deprived communities, is the incidence of satellite dishes on the roof tops and gable ends of individual dwellings in workers' terraced housing. A prominent but temporary regeneration event was the Ebbw Vale National Garden Festival in 1992, one of a series across Britain. The site has now become a popular retail centre and in recent times. The derelict Ebbw Vale Steelworks was demolished in late 2005 for the development of socially and economically mixed housing and infrastructure. The Cynon Valley is notable for the plan to create a long, linear riverside park, while much of the historic heart of Merthyr Tydfil has been lost to residential estates of non-vernacular design and materials. Similarly, vacant lots in the linear conurbations of the Ogwr and Rhondda valleys have now been transformed into low-cost housing estates for those who descend the valley roads to the ribbon-development of business and light industrial parks situated close to junctions on the M4. In the mid-west, the dead-end, and once economically and administratively important, valley of Glyncoed is enjoying an economic renaissance as a leisure destination for mountain biking and fishing, with a newly built visitor centre and 'extreme' trails.

The linking of these new ventures with the rich synthesis of history and culture that permeates the area's landscapes and the promotion of much that remains untouched and attractive, is an important aspect in the regeneration this large and remarkable area.



Blaenavon, traditional terraces. © John Briggs



APPENDIX C: LANDMAP ASPECT AREAS – RELEVANT EXTRACTS

SURVEY DETAILS FOR CYNONGL015 - 2025-02-18

Area Unique ID: CYNONGL015

Aspect: Geological Landscape

Area: Taff valley

Region: Bridgend-Caerphilly-Rhondda

Survey Date: 2000-04-24

- Level 1: Mountain and upland valley
- Level 2: Glaciated mountain terrain
- Level 3: Glacial mountain valley

Monitoring

Q1 - Date of monitoring?

- 2012-03-01

Q1a - 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 (2012-2013).

Q1b - Has this record been updated following monitoring work?

- This record has been updated following monitoring work as more up to date information is available

Q1c - Change indicated by

- OS Data, Aerial Photographs
- Satellite Imagery Interpretation
- Policies, plans & information resources
 - South Wales RIGS survey (2013); LANDMAP monitoring project (2012-2013).

Q1d - What has changed?

- Description
- Evaluation
- Condition & Trend
- Recommendations

Q1e - Has the information ever been verified in the field?

- Yes
 - Main road (A470) and adjacent areas east of Pontypridd viewed 23/2/2012.

Q2 - Does this area have a special or functional link with an adjacent area?

- No

Description

Q3 - If Classification is "Other", specify here

- N/A

Q4 - What is the geographical and topographical character of this area?

- N-S valley, glacially eroded into high-level plateau in N- and S- dipping Pennant sandstones (Upper Carboniferous) & controlled by NNW-SSE Daren Ddu Fault S of Pontypridd, Hanging tributary Nant Caer Dudwig & Nant Llan valleys. Boulder clay in hollows in high ground & beneath sand/gravel in valley floor. Alluvium extensive in terraces. Major colliery tips, some restored & several closed mine shafts. Large working Glyn Coch Pennant sandstone quarry.

Q4a - Where bedrock dominated, what is the dominant bedrock type?

- No Answer

Q4b - Where bedrock dominated, what is the age that characterises the aspect area?

- No Answer

Q4c - Where bedrock dominated, what is the major rock lithogy (-ies)?

- No Answer

Q4d - Where drift dominated, what is the dominant drift deposit?

- Alluvial
- Glacial

Q4e - Where drift dominated, what is the major sediment that characterises the area?

- Silt
- Boulder clay/till

Q5 - What is the characteristic Level 3 component of the area?

- Glacial mountain valley

Q6 - Which of the following is a significant contributor to the geological character of the area?

- Stratigraphic formation(s)
 - South Wales Pennant Fm (Upper Carboniferous)
- Superficial deposits
 - Boulder clay, glacial sand and gravel, alluvial fan, terraced sand/gravel, alluvium
- Structural features
 - NNW-SSE Daren Ddu Fault
- Active processes
 - Fluvial
- Past processes
 - Glacial

Q7 - What additional subsidiary Level 3 components are notable?

- Upland plateau
- Active upland river or stream channel system
- Ancient upland river / stream systems
- Mass movement
- Mineral workings
- Other
 - Tectonically controlled topography

Q8 - What Level 4 components are notable in this area?

- Glacial U-shaped valley
- Glacial hanging valley
- Coal / mineral spoil tips
- River channel / canal (artificial)
- River channel (natural)
- Flood plain
- River terrace
- Hill top
- Dip slope
- Opencast mine, gravel or sand pit
- Urban / industrial development

Q9 - What active geological and geomorphological processes are significant in this area?

- Fluvial
- Empty value

Q10 - Are there components of significant hydrological importance?

- Yes
 - Taff valley.

Q11 - Are there any pedological processes that are significant in the area or have had a landscape forming effect?

- Yes
 - High permeability coarse soils.

Q12 - Is there current mineral extraction?

- Yes
 - Glyn Coch Pennant sandstone quarry.

Q13 - Has there been mineral extraction in the past?

- Yes
 - Coal, sandstone.

Q14 - Are there SSSI/GCR sites here?

- No

Q15 - Are there geological SINC, 2nd tier, or RIGS sites in the area?

- Yes
 - Taffs Well Thermal Spring (RIGSID 581): Spring; Craig yr Hesg and the Berw Falls (RIGSID 586): Carboniferous (Brithdir and Hughes formations) / geomorphology (waterfalls); Cilfynydd coal waste tips (RIGSID 673): Colliery waste tip; Navigation Quarry (RIGSID 718): Carboniferous (Namurian); Gorsedd Stones Coed-pen-maen (RIGSID 792): Historical / stratigraphical.

Evaluation

Q16 - Value

- High
 - Part of extensive, dissected Pennant sandstone plateau of lower Taff valley - working quarry unassessed, but may be of at least regional geological significance. Concentration of RIGS sites (x5).

Q17 - Condition

- Good
 - Dominantly rural area with limited significant development.

Q18 - Trend

- Constant
 - Dominantly rural area with limited significant development.

Recommendations

Q19 - Existing management

- Generally Appropriate

Q20 - Existing management remarks:

- Scattered development in upland rural areas and dominant in Taff valley where river system is affected.

Q21 - Principal management recommendations

- Maintain natural systems and ensure that RIGS are safeguarded using Local Plan policies and constraint mapping and that other features of particular geological or geomorphological significance in the area are not lost/damaged due to development, forestry, etc.

Q22 - Guideline

- Long Term
 - Ensure that RIGS are safeguarded using Local Plan policies and constraint mapping.
- Long Term
 - Maintain natural systems and other features of particular geological or geomorphological significance in the area are not lost/damaged due to development, forestry, etc.

Tolerance To Change

Q23 - Are there any significant threats to the current integrity and condition of the Earth Heritage features of the area?

- Yes
 - Ensure that no significant features of geological or geomorphological significance are lost due to future development including forestry. No net loss of key geological/ geomorphological features should be considered acceptable.

Aspect Area Boundary

Q24 - To what level was this information site-surveyed?

- Level 3

Q25 - At 1:10,000, how much of the Aspect Area boundary is precise?

- None
 - Aspect Area boundaries plotted at 1:25,000.

Q26 - 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)

Q27 - If OS Data was used, what was the scale?

- 1:25,000

Q28 - What is the justification for the Aspect Area boundaries?

- AA corresponds to the lower part of a glacial valley in Pennant sandstones.

Evaluation Matrix

Q29 - Evaluation Criteria: Research Value

- High
 - Part of extensive, dissected Pennant sandstone plateau of lower Taff valley - working quarry unassessed, but may be of at least regional geological significance. Concentration of RIGS sites (x5).

Q29a - Evaluation Criteria: Educational Value

- High
 - Part of extensive, dissected Pennant sandstone plateau of lower Taff valley - working quarry unassessed, but may be of at least regional geological significance. Concentration of RIGS sites (x5).

Q30 - Evaluation Criteria: Historical Value

- Moderate
 - Part of extensive, dissected Pennant sandstone plateau of lower Taff valley - working quarry unassessed, but may be of at least regional geological significance. Concentration of RIGS sites (x5).

Q31 - Evaluation Criteria: Rarity / Uniqueness

- Moderate
 - Part of extensive, dissected Pennant sandstone plateau of lower Taff valley - working quarry unassessed, but may be of at least regional geological significance. Concentration of RIGS sites (x5).

Q32 - Evaluation Criteria: Classic Example

- Moderate
 - Part of extensive, dissected Pennant sandstone plateau of lower Taff valley - working quarry unassessed, but may be of at least regional geological significance. Concentration of RIGS sites (x5).

Q33 - Evaluation Criteria: Overall Evaluation

- Moderate
 - Part of extensive, dissected Pennant sandstone plateau of lower Taff valley - working quarry unassessed, but may be of at least regional geological significance. Concentration of RIGS sites (x5).

Q34 - Justification of overall evaluation

- Part of extensive, dissected Pennant sandstone plateau of lower Taff valley - working quarry unassessed, but may be of at least regional geological significance. Concentration of RIGS sites (x5).

Bibliography

Q35 - List the key sources used for this assessment

- 1:50 000 BGS Geological Map sheet 248 Pontypridd, S&D, 1975 1:50 000 BGS Geological Map sheet 249 Newport, SwD, 1975; 1:25 000 Explorer Map 166 Rhondda and Merthyr Tydfil; 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 Squirrell, H.C. and Downing, R.A., 1969. Geology of the South Wales Coalfield, Part I, the country around Newport, (Mon.). Memoir of British Geological Survey, Sheet 249, HMSO, 3rd edition, 333pp.; Woodland, A.W. and Evans, W.B., 1964. Geology of the South Wales Coalfield, Part IV, the country around Pontypridd and Maesteg. Memoir of British Geological Survey, Sheet 248, HMSO, 3rd edition;

Assessment

Q36 - Additional Assessments

- South Wales RIGS survey (2013); LANDMAP monitoring project (2012-2013).

Q37 - Additional Comments

- Additional Level 4 features include: Stream; Disused quarry; Natural crags and inland outcrops.

SURVEY DETAILS FOR CYNONHL290 - 2025-02-18

Area Unique ID: CYNONHL290

Aspect: Historic Landscape

Area: Llanfabon and Llanbradach

Region: Bridgend-Caerphilly-Rhondda

Survey Date: 2003-10-29

- Level 1: Rural environment
- Level 2: Agricultural
- Level 3: Irregular Fields

Monitoring

Q1 - Date of monitoring?

- 2017-03-15

Q1a - Monitoring undertaken by

- Historic Landscape change detection work completed by the relevant Welsh Archaeological Trust for this area, the planning authority have been included. Quality Assurance of change detection work was completed by Trysor.

Q1b - Has this record been updated following monitoring work?

- This record remains unchanged following monitoring work

Q1c - Change indicated by

- No Answer

Q1d - What has changed?

- No Answer

Q1e - Has the information ever been verified in the field?

- Yes
 - Level 3/ 1:10,000 and 1:25,000

Q2 - Does this area have a special or functional link with an adjacent area?

- No

Description

Q3 - If Classification is "Other", specify here

- Empty value

Q4 - Summary Description / Key Patterns and Elements

- An enclosed agricultural landscape bounded to the east by the Rhymni Valley transport corridor (CynonHL701), and to the west by the Cwm Tŷf Valley side (CynonHL448) and Pontypridd transport corridor (CynonHL977). The unenclosed moorland of Mynydd Eglwsilan (CynonHL878) defines the aspect areas southern boundary whilst the town of Nelson borders the north of the aspect area. Modern planted forestry dominates the area to the south of the aspect at Llanbradach with ancient and semi-natural woodland scattered across the area at Coed Llanbradach, Coed y Graig and Coed Pant-du Isaf. The aspect area is dominated by irregular fieldscapes and dispersed isolated Post-medieval farmsteads. A cairn cemetery and several possible Bronze Age standing stones represent the prehistoric period within this aspect area. In 1976 the RCAHMW described a group of five stony mounds at Bryn Owen Farm to the south of the aspect area; they were thought to be Bronze Age burials and considered to be "classic" examples of their type. A further mound and two standing stones recorded by Caple & Owen-John (1987) have since been discounted as a later post-medieval spoil heap and boundary markers. The Roman presence is almost unrepresented; however one coin was recovered from Fid-Gelyn, near Llanfabon. The house forms within the aspect area generally belong to the post-medieval period with many later alterations. A dominant pattern to the development of these houses is their medieval longhouse origins; many, including Bryn Owen Farmhouse, still have original medieval features attached to the properties, in this case an internal cow shed. Llechwenlydan, a two-and-a-half storey two-unit, direct-entry house built in c1600, with 18th century modifications, has the appearance of a long-house but without intercommunication, and retains a hall ceiling with corn-drying rollers above the fireplace. A genuine medieval hut platform survives to the far south of the aspect area on the slopes of Graig Wylt. Small-scale industrial activities took place in the aspect area in the form of quarries and coal Levels. A coalmine, at Llanfabon, is mentioned in a "compotus" or ministers account for the year 1281; however this claim at present remains unsubstantiated. Two Levels are recorded at Ffynnon Rhingyll, one with an arched structure is just visible beneath an over burden of soil. Penywaun boasts an airshaft and Llanbradach several small limestone quarries. During the laying of a gas-pipeline a tramroad was discovered immediately southeast of Nelson. Interestingly this aspect area would appear to represent continuity in the settlement record, in its present form, from the medieval period into the present. Although this aspect was occupied in the Bronze Age and later periods, the landscape as we see it today is the result of agricultural and, to a lesser degree, industrial activities.

Q5 - If working at level 3, the classification describes the dominant historic pattern, but which other patterns are important to the historical pattern of this area? (Tick all that apply)

- Woodland

Q6 - If working at level 4 ,which other 'details' are also significant to the historic character of this area? (Please tick all that apply)

- No Answer

Q7 - If working at level 4 only, which building types prevail in the area? (tick all that apply)

- No Answer

Q8 - If working at level 4 only, which periods prevail in the area? (tick all that apply)

- No Answer

Q9 - If working at level 4 only, which architectural types prevail in the area? (tick all that apply)

- No Answer

Q10 - If working at level 4 only, which traditional walling materials prevail in the area? (tick all that apply)

- No Answer

Q11 - If working at level 4 only, which traditional roofing materials prevail in the area? (select up to three)

- No Answer

Q12 - Which traditional boundary types prevail in the area? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Hedgerow
- ☐ Hedgerow With Trees
- ☐ Dry Stone Walls
- ☐ Post & Wire Fence
- ☐ Cut Drainage

Q13 - What is the nature of any significant archaeological interest in the area? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Buildings & Structures

Q14 - Which chronological period is dominant in the area?

- ☐ Post Medieval (1536+)

Q15 - Has a Historic Landscape Characterisation been undertaken here?

- ☐ No

Q16 - Are there SMR sites here?

- ☐ Yes

Q17 - Are there SAMs here?

- ☐ No

Q18 - Are there Listed Buildings here?

- ☐ Yes

Q19 - Are there Registered Historic Parks and Gardens here?

- ☐ No

Q20 - Are there Conservation Areas here?

- ☐ No

Q21 - Are there World Heritage Sites here?

- ☐ No

Q22 - Is the area within a Registered Landscape of Historic Interest?

- ☐ No

Evaluation

Q23 - Value:

- ☐ High
 - ☐ A reasonably well-preserved irregular fieldscape of medieval/post-medieval origin exhibiting evidence of prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval activity; the overall assessment of 'high' is based on the excellent preservation of the fieldscape and the diverse multi-period nature of the archaeological resource.

Q24 - Condition:

- Unassessed

Q25 - Trend:

- Constant

Recommendations

Q26 - Existing management

- Unassessed

Q27 - Existing management remarks:

- Empty value

Q28 - Principal management recommendations

- Empty value

Q29 - Guideline

- No Answer

Aspect Area Boundary

Q30 - To what level was this information site-surveyed?

- Level 3

Q31 - At 1:10,000, how much of the Aspect Area boundary is precise?

- All

Q32 - What baseline information source was used for Aspect Area boundary mapping?

- OS Landline

Q33 - If OS Data was used, what was the scale?

- 1:10,000 and 1:25,000

Q34 - What is the justification for the Aspect Area boundaries?

- A regular fieldscape with natural woodland that is bordered on the west by the urban area of Pontypridd (Cynon HL977); by the marginal land of Cynon HL878 to the south, and also by the built up area of Ystrad Mynach to the west and Nelson to the north.

Evaluation Matrix

Q35 - Evaluation Criteria: Integrity

- High
 - The aspect area is dominated by an irregular fieldscape and dispersed isolated farmsteads of medieval and post-medieval origin, a landscape pattern which has remained largely unchanged since the time of the OS 1st edition map, although there has been some limited encroachment by 20th century housing development on the northern and eastern edges of the aspect area.

Q36 - Evaluation Criteria: Survival

- High
 - The overall landscape pattern, characterised by an irregular, rural fieldscape and isolated, dispersed farmsteads, has survived largely intact since the late 19th century. The archaeological record in this area is diverse; several Bronze Age cairn sites have been identified on the SE periphery of the aspect area at Bryn Owen, near Llanbradach (GGAT PRN 00967m), while Heol Fawr, extending NW-SE from Nelson towards Llanbradach, has been suggested as forming part of a Roman road alignment, although this identification has been challenged (Savory, 1954). A number of possible medieval field systems have been identified at Ton-Teilwr (NPRN 24334) and Pen-y-Waun to the NE of Llanfabon, where the parish church of St Mabon (GGAT PRN 00677m) is probably early medieval in origin, although there is little evidence of a settlement focus in this vicinity. At least two farmhouses in the area retain medieval features or fabric, namely Bryn Owen (GGAT PRN 02195m) and Llechwenlydan (GGAT PRN 02198m) while two particularly well-preserved 16th-17th century houses survive within the aspect area, at Llanbradach Fawr (GGAT PRN 01382m) and Taranymwrthwl (GGAT PRN 01380m) (Newman, 2000, 373-4).

Q37 - Evaluation Criteria: Condition

- Moderate

Q38 - Evaluation Criteria: Rarity

- Moderate
 - Of moderate rarity as one of two surviving areas of extensive irregular field enclosure within the SE corner of the Caerphilly/RCT historic landscape (the others being Cynon HL308 and HL448).

Q39 - Evaluation Criteria: Potential

- High
 - This area has not been subject to a detailed historic landscape characterisation; consequently, there is significant potential for further investigation of the origins and development of this multi-period landscape, both in terms of field survey and desk-based research (aerial reconnaissance, documentary study). The settlement pattern, characterised by substantial, isolated farmhouses of medieval/post-medieval date, particularly merits detailed study.

Q40 - Evaluation Criteria: Overall Evaluation

- High

Q41 - Justification of overall evaluation

- A reasonably well-preserved irregular fieldscape of medieval/post-medieval origin exhibiting evidence of prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval activity; the overall assessment of 'high' is based on the excellent preservation of the fieldscape and the diverse multi-period nature of the archaeological resource.

Bibliography

Q42 - List the key sources used for this assessment

- Newman, J, 1995, The Buildings of Wales: Glamorgan. University of Wales Press, Penguin Books, London. Ordnance Survey, 1884/5, First Edition 6' Map. Ordnance Survey, 1900/1, Second Edition 6' Map. Ordnance Survey, 1921, Third Edition 6' Map. Ordnance Survey, 1998, Rhondda and Merthyr Tydfil. 1:25000, Explorer 166. Southampton.

Assessment

Q43 - Additional Assessments

- Empty value

Q44 - Additional Comments

- Empty value

SURVEY DETAILS FOR CYNONLH133 - 2025-02-18

Area Unique ID: CYNONLH133

Aspect: Landscape Habitats

Area: N/A

Region: Bridgend-Caerphilly-Rhondda

Survey Date: 2000-07-03

- Level 1: Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats
- Level 2: Grassland & Marsh
- Level 3: Improved Grassland

Monitoring

Q1 - Date of monitoring?

- 2012-07-01

Q1a - Monitoring undertaken by

- Environment Systems Limited

Q1b - Has this record been updated following monitoring work?

- This record has been updated following monitoring work as more up to date information is available

Q1c - Change indicated by

- Phase 1 Habitat Survey & Seasonal Change Maps

Q1d - What has changed?

- Description
- Condition & Trend
- Recommendations
- Boundaries

Q1e - Has the information ever been verified in the field?

- Yes

Q2 - Does this area have a special or functional link with an adjacent area?

- No

Q3 - What is the total land area within the boundary (in hectares)?

- 2295 Hectares

Description

Q4 - What are the dominant soil types? (specify up to 3 types)

- No Answer

Q5 - What Phase 1 habitat types are present? Only select the five most dominant types and, for each of these, specify below what percentage of the Aspect Area is made up of these.

- Arable
 - 4%
- Semi-natural Broadleaved Woodland
 - 6%
- Dense Scrub
 - 8%
- Semi-improved Neutral Grassland
 - 24%
- Improved Grassland
 - 48%

Q6 - Does the area contain habitats of international importance?

- Yes

Q7 - If yes, which habitats of international importance?

- Blanket Bog

Q8 - Does the area contain BAP habitats?

- Yes

Q9 - If yes, which BAP habitats?

- Purple Moor Grass & Rush Pastures
- Blanket Bog

Q10 - Does the area contain protected sites?

- Yes
 - SSSI(27.23ha) Local Wildlife Site(186.67ha)

Q11 - If yes, which ones?

- SSSI
- Local wildlife site

Q12 - Approximately what proportion of the Aspect Area is within the protected site?

- 1-10%
 - 9.58%

Q13 - Does the area support important species?

- Yes

Q14 - If yes, which species? (for each of the species, also note the source of information)

- Species include (Plantago media) Hoary Plantain, (Coenonympha pamphilus) Small Heath, (Cirsium dissectum) Meadow Thistle, (Antichaeta analis) , (Allodia embla) , (Euphydryas aurinia) Marsh Fritillary, (Hipparchia semele) Grayling, (Hipparchia semele) Grayling, (Chiroptera) Unspecified Bat, (Inachis io) Peacock butterfly, (Zonitoides nitidus) Shiny Glass Snail, (Genista anglica) Petty whin, (Tipula marginata) , (Chilodes maritimus) Silky Wainscot, (Acronicta menyanthidis) Light Knot Grass, (Pilaria meridiana) , (Gallinago gallinago) Common Snipe, (Triturus cristatus) Great Crested Newt, (Anthocharis cardamines) Orange Tip, (Pyrrhosoma nymphula) Large Red Damselfly, (Accipiter nisus) Eurasian Sparrowhawk, (Drepanocladus vernicosus) Slender Green Feather-moss, (Carex montana) Soft-leaved Sedge, (Libellula depressa) Broad-bodied Chaser, (Coenagrion puella) Azure Damselfly, (Boloria selene) Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary, (Sympetrum striolatum) Common Darter, (Hyacinthoides non-scripta) Bluebell, (Berberis vulgaris) Barberry, (Dactylorhiza maculata) Heath Spotted Orchid, (Lepus europaeus) Brown Hare, (Arvicola terrestris) Water Vole, (Falco tinnunculus) Common Kestrel, (Pipistrellus sp.) Pipistrelle sp., (Falco tinnunculus) Common Kestrel, (Plecotus auritus) Brown Long-eared Bat, (Ischnura elegans) Blue-tailed Damselfly, (Boloria selene) Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary, (Hypericum hirsutum) Hairy St. John's-wort, (Lepus europaeus) Brown Hare, (Phragmites australis) Common Reed

Q15 - Are there any significant threat species present in abundance? (Field visit required)

- Not known

Q16 - What other features significantly influence the biodiversity in this area?

- Ponds
- Hedgerows

Q17 - Are any of these features in a very good condition? (Field visit required)

- Some
 - Some hedgerows contain mature tree specimens.

Q18 - Are any of these features in a poor condition? (Field visit required)

- None

Q19 - What are the main land management activities taking place in the area? (Field visit required)

- Stock grazing

Q20 - Do any of the above appear to have an appreciable positive impact on biodiversity? (Field visit required)

- None

Q21 - Do any of the above appear to have an appreciable negative impact on biodiversity? (Field visit required)

- Some
 - Stock grazing will prevent the grassland from reaching higher levels of ecological value.

Q22 - Is the biodiversity in the area in any way threatened?

- Not known

Q23 - Are there clear opportunities to improve the biodiversity aspect of this area?

- Yes
 - Introduction of Glastir scheme would enhance area.

Q24 - Summarise the key features that define this area's biodiversity character

- Small field pattern, hedgerows with mature trees & patches of broadleaved woodland. Includes Nelson Bog SSSI (open water), Wan Rid (blanket bog/molinia/heath), unimproved/semi-improved & marshy pastures.

Evaluation

Q25 - Value

- High
 - Difficult to assess as much of area is improved grassland which is relatively low value. There are many hedgerows and a large variety of other valuable habitats present in small patches which greatly enhance value of area.

Q26 - Condition

- Unassessed

Q27 - Trend

- Declining
 - Some expansion in industrial work in the aspect

Recommendations

Q28 - Existing management

- Unassessed

Q29 - Existing management remarks:

- Empty value

Q30 - Principal management recommendations

- Encourage appropriate management of notable habitat.

Q31 - Guideline

- Long Term
 - Ensure that valuable habitats are not lost.
- Medium Term
 - Try to introduce Glastir scheme.

Aspect Area Boundary

Q32 - To what level was this information site-surveyed?

- Level 3

Q33 - At 1:10,000, how much of the Aspect Area boundary is precise?

- Most

Q34 - What baseline information source was used for Aspect Area boundary mapping?

- Other
 - OS raster, OS landline, Phase 1 habitat.

Q35 - If OS Data was used, what was the scale?

- 1:10,000

Q36 - What is the justification for the Aspect Area boundaries?

- They encompass an area of improved grassland which has significant amounts of more valuable habitats scattered throughout. update 2012
Urban area excluded

Evaluation Matrix

Q37 - Evaluation Criteria: Priority Habitats

- Moderate
 - Improved grassland dominate with small areas of priority habitat

Q38 - Evaluation Criteria: Significance

- Moderate
 - Improved grassland is of low significance the other habitats are more significant

Q39 - Evaluation Criteria: Opportunity

- Moderate
 - Introduction of Glastir scheme.

Q40 - Evaluation Criteria: Expansion rates

- Moderate
 - Improved grassland is not declining but many of the habitats present scattered throughout aspect area are much declined habitats as they are converted to improved grassland.

Q41 - Evaluation Criteria: Sensitivity

- Moderate
 - SSSI are should be safe but other areas of habitats could easily be lost within improved grassland.

Q42 - Evaluation Criteria: Connectivity/Cohesion

- Low
 - Areas of semi-improved and marshy grassland are fragmented within the wider improved grassland landscape, particularly in lowland areas.

Q43 - Evaluation Criteria: Habitat Evaluation

- Moderate
 - Improved grassland is relatively low value, other habitats and hedgerows are all of value so given high value.

Q44 - Evaluation Criteria: Importance for key species

- High
 - A number of key species are present.

Q45 - Evaluation Criteria: Overall Evaluation Habitat and Species

- High

Q45a - Justification of overall evaluation

- Despite the area being largely improved grassland there are numerous small areas of valuable habitat present, a number of which are Priority habitat, a SSSI is present and a number of key species are present.

Bibliography

Q46 - List the key sources used for this assessment

- Relevant LBAP 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

Q47 - Additional Assessments

- A difficult area to assess as much of area is improved grassland but there are many small areas of high value habitat throughout.

Q48 - Additional Comments

- NVC data available. SINC ref: 45, 48, 49, 51, 54, 55-57, 116, 119, 120.

SURVEY DETAILS FOR CYNONVS143 - 2025-02-18

Area Unique ID: CYNONVS143

Aspect: Visual and Sensory

Area: Llanfabon

Region: Bridgend-Caerphilly-Rhondda

Survey Date: 2004-06-01

- Level 1: Upland
- Level 2: Hills, Lower Plateau & Scarp Slopes
- Level 3: Hillside & Scarp Slopes Mosaic

Monitoring

Q1 - Date of monitoring?

- 2013-01-01

Q1a - 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.

Q1b - 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

Q1c - Change indicated by

- OS Data, Aerial Photographs
- Satellite Imagery Interpretation

Q1d - What has changed?

- Description
- Boundaries

Q1e - Has the information ever been verified in the field?

- Yes
 - 1:25000

Q2 - Does this area have a special or functional link with an adjacent area?

- No

Q2a - During which season(s) was fieldwork carried out?

- Winter

Description

Q3 - Summary Description

- A pleasant landscape, with some attractive rolling farmland away from the built form urban edges of Nelson, Blackwood and Treforest. This incongruous mix of combination of elements of rural field patterns, isolated settlements/farmsteads and built form urban edge and pylons/masts leads to a complex overall character., essentially rural with upland feel.broad views across valleys , and up to upland hills/outliers of Mynydd Eglwysias and Meio that dominate inward views.Maturing managed vegetation on restored land at Penallta Community Park.

Q4 - Physical Form And Elements: Topographic Form?

- Hills/Valleys

Q5 - Physical Form And Elements: Landcover Pattern?

- Field Pattern/Mosaic

Q6 - Physical form and elements: Settlement pattern

- Scattered Rural/Farm

Q7 - Physical form and elements: Boundary type

- Mixture

Q8 - Aesthetic Qualities: Scale?

- Medium

Q9 - Aesthetic Qualities: Sense of Enclosure?

- Open

Q10 - Aesthetic Qualities: Diversity?

- Simple

Q11 - Aesthetic Qualities: Texture?

- Coarse

Q12 - Aesthetic Qualities: Lines?

- Angular

Q13 - Aesthetic Qualities: Colour?

- Moderate Contrasts

Q14 - Aesthetic Qualities: Balance?

- Balanced

Q15 - Aesthetic Qualities: Unity?

- Neutral

Q16 - Aesthetic Qualities: Pattern?

- Regular

Q17 - Aesthetic Qualities: Seasonal Interest?

- None

Q18 - Other Factors: Level of Human Access?

- Infrequent

Q19 - Other Factors: Night Time Light Pollution?

- Question 19 night time light pollution data has been moved to question 56. Additional dark skies data is available from questions 57 and 58.

Q20 - Other Factors: Use of Construction Materials?

- Generally Appropriate

Q21 - What materials? Give Details:

- stone

Q22 - There are attractive views...

- ...both in and out
 - uplands and pleasant rolling farmland

Q23 - There are detractive views...

-out
 - urban edge

Q24 - Perceptual and Other Sensory Qualities

- Other
 - pleasant rural feel

Q25 - What is the sense of place/local distinctiveness

- Moderate
 - common yet typical characteristics rolling farmland hedges, fences with upland feel

Evaluation

Q26 - Value:

- Moderate
 - see notes

Q27 - Condition:

- Good
 - no decline evident

Q28 - Trend:

- Constant
- no decline evident

Recommendations

Q29 - Existing management

- No Answer

Q30 - Existing management remarks:

- agriculture

Q31 - Principal management recommendation:

- prevent overgrazing

Q32 - Guideline

- Medium Term
 - hedge maintenance
- Medium Term
 - restrict urban spread/soften urban edge
- Medium Term
 - manage developing woodland and other vegetaiton ar Penallta Community Park

Q33 - Define the key qualities that should be conserved:

- pleasant rolling rural feel

Q34 - Define the key qualities that should be enhanced:

- n/a

Q35 - Define the key qualities that should be changed:

- influence of urban edge

Q36 - Define the key elements that should be conserved:

- field pattern

Q37 - Define the key elements that should be enhanced:

- boundaries

Q38 - Define the key elements that should be changed:

- sharp urban edge, pylons, masts

Tolerance To Change

Q39 - Are there any significant threats to the current integrity and condition of the visual & sensory features of the area?

- Not known

Aspect Area Boundary

Q40 - To what level was this information site-surveyed?

- Level 3

Q41 - At 1:10,000, how much of the Aspect Area boundary is precise?

- Most

Q42 - What baseline information source was used for Aspect Area boundary mapping?

- OS Raster

Q43 - If OS Data was used, what was the scale?

- 1:25,000

Q44 - What is the justification for the Aspect Area boundaries?

- land form land cover field/mosaic, and urban edges to east south and west well defined. Minor expansion of urban edges at Penyrheol and Abertridwr has changed/reduced aspect area, at change detection monitoring.

Evaluation Matrix

Q46 - Evaluation Criteria: Scenic quality

- Moderate
 - some attractive views ,but detractive views over urban result in mod overall

Q47 - Evaluation Criteria: Integrity

- Moderate
 - borderline mod/high, detractors shrap urban eges and pylons/masts result in mos

Q48 - Evaluation Criteria: Character

- Moderate
 - moderate sop and visual unity

Q49 - Evaluation Criteria: Rarity

- Moderate
 - n/a

Q50 - Evaluation Criteria: Overall Evaluation

- Moderate
 - without any notable quality, but parts of this area ceratinly have high scenic quality and integrity

Q51 - Justification of overall evaluation

- all criteria are moderate, although scenic quality and integrity are borderline mod/high, therefore of strong local importance

Bibliography

Q45 - List the key sources used for this assessment

- os data, photos

Assessment

Q52 - Additional Assessments

- n/a

Q53 - Additional Comments

- n/a

LMP 14 & 09

Q54 - LANDMAP derived landscape types (LMP14)

- Upland, exposed plateau, valleys, hillsides and scarp slopes (wooded 20-50%)

Q55 - LANDMAP derived landscape types (LMP09)

- Upland >20% wooded

Dark Skies

Light Pollution Percentage

< 0.5	0.5 - 1	1 - 2	2 - 4	4 - 8	8 - 16	16 - 32	> 32
0.0	0.0	56.6	31.7	10.9	0.8	0.0	0.0

Data has been classified into eight colour bands of brightness values (nw/cm2/sr). <0.5 (darkest); 0.5 - 1; 1 - 2; 2 - 4; 4 - 8; 8 - 16; 16 - 32 and > 32 (brightest). Lower values equate to lower light pollution and darker skies. Questions 57a - 57h collectively provide colour band data by %.

Further information: [11365 Wales Dark Skies \(arcgis.com\)](https://11365.wales.gov.uk/arcgis.com). Green C, Manson D, Chamberlain K 2021. Tranquillity and Place - Dark Skies. NRW Report No: 514, 70pp. Data download from Lle/DataMapWales.

Data source: December 2019 composite image of monthly average night light produced by the Earth Observation Group at Colorado School of Mines. Derived from Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite (VIIRS) Day/Night Band (DNB) sensor from Suomi National Polar-orbiting Partnership (Suomi NPP) satellite, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Light Pollution km²

< 0.5	0.5 - 1	1 - 2	2 - 4	4 - 8	8 - 16	16 - 32	> 32
0.0	0.0	26.0	14.6	5.0	0.4	0.0	0.0

Data has been classified into eight colour bands of brightness values (nw/cm2/sr). <0.5 (darkest); 0.5 - 1; 1 - 2; 2 - 4; 4 - 8; 8 - 16; 16 - 32 and > 32 (brightest). Lower values equate to lower light pollution and darker skies. Questions 58a to 58h collectively provide colour band data by km2.

Further information: [11365 Wales Dark Skies \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com). Green C, Manson D, Chamberlain K 2021. Tranquillity and Place – Dark Skies. NRW Report No: 514, 70pp. Data download from [Lle/DataMapWales](#).

Data source: December 2019 composite image of monthly average night light produced by the Earth Observation Group at Colorado School of Mines. Derived from Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite (VIIRS) Day/Night Band (DNB) sensor from Suomi National Polar-orbiting Partnership (Suomi NPP) satellite, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Q56 - Night Time Light Pollution

- Slight
 - urban edges Consultant led night time light pollution assessment conducted at time of survey record or survey update

Q57a - % in brightness colour band <0.5

- 0.0
 - Data has been classified into eight colour bands of brightness values (nw/cm2/sr). <0.5 (darkest); 0.5 - 1; 1 - 2; 2 - 4; 4 - 8; 8 - 16; 16 - 32 and > 32 (brightest). Lower values equate to lower light pollution and darker skies.

Q57b - % in brightness colour band 0.5-1

- 0.0
 - Data has been classified into eight colour bands of brightness values (nw/cm2/sr). <0.5 (darkest); 0.5 - 1; 1 - 2; 2 - 4; 4 - 8; 8 - 16; 16 - 32 and > 32 (brightest). Lower values equate to lower light pollution and darker skies.

Q57c - % in brightness colour band 1-2

- 56.6
 - Data has been classified into eight colour bands of brightness values (nw/cm2/sr). <0.5 (darkest); 0.5 - 1; 1 - 2; 2 - 4; 4 - 8; 8 - 16; 16 - 32 and > 32 (brightest). Lower values equate to lower light pollution and darker skies.

Q57d - % in brightness colour band 2-4

- 31.7
 - Data has been classified into eight colour bands of brightness values (nw/cm2/sr). <0.5 (darkest); 0.5 - 1; 1 - 2; 2 - 4; 4 - 8; 8 - 16; 16 - 32 and > 32 (brightest). Lower values equate to lower light pollution and darker skies.

Q57e - % in brightness colour band 4-8

- 10.9
 - Data has been classified into eight colour bands of brightness values (nw/cm2/sr). <0.5 (darkest); 0.5 - 1; 1 - 2; 2 - 4; 4 - 8; 8 - 16; 16 - 32 and > 32 (brightest). Lower values equate to lower light pollution and darker skies.

Q57f - % in brightness colour band 8-16

- 0.8
 - Data has been classified into eight colour bands of brightness values (nw/cm2/sr). <0.5 (darkest); 0.5 - 1; 1 - 2; 2 - 4; 4 - 8; 8 - 16; 16 - 32 and > 32 (brightest). Lower values equate to lower light pollution and darker skies.

Q57g - % in brightness colour band 16-32

- 0.0
- Data has been classified into eight colour bands of brightness values (nw/cm2/sr). <0.5 (darkest); 0.5 - 1; 1 - 2; 2 - 4; 4 - 8; 8 - 16; 16 - 32 and > 32 (brightest). Lower values equate to lower light pollution and darker skies.

Q57h - % in brightness colour band >32

- 0.0
- Data has been classified into eight colour bands of brightness values (nw/cm2/sr). <0.5 (darkest); 0.5 - 1; 1 - 2; 2 - 4; 4 - 8; 8 - 16; 16 - 32 and > 32 (brightest). Lower values equate to lower light pollution and darker skies.

Q58a - km2 in brightness colour band <0.5

- 0.0
- Data has been classified into eight colour bands of brightness values (nw/cm2/sr). <0.5 (darkest); 0.5 - 1; 1 - 2; 2 - 4; 4 - 8; 8 - 16; 16 - 32 and > 32 (brightest). Lower values equate to lower light pollution and darker skies.

Q58b - km2 in brightness colour band 0.5-1

- 0.0
- Data has been classified into eight colour bands of brightness values (nw/cm2/sr). <0.5 (darkest); 0.5 - 1; 1 - 2; 2 - 4; 4 - 8; 8 - 16; 16 - 32 and > 32 (brightest). Lower values equate to lower light pollution and darker skies.

Q58c - km2 in brightness colour band 1-2

- 26.0
- Data has been classified into eight colour bands of brightness values (nw/cm2/sr). <0.5 (darkest); 0.5 - 1; 1 - 2; 2 - 4; 4 - 8; 8 - 16; 16 - 32 and > 32 (brightest). Lower values equate to lower light pollution and darker skies.

Q58d - km2 in brightness colour band 2-4

- 14.6
- Data has been classified into eight colour bands of brightness values (nw/cm2/sr). <0.5 (darkest); 0.5 - 1; 1 - 2; 2 - 4; 4 - 8; 8 - 16; 16 - 32 and > 32 (brightest). Lower values equate to lower light pollution and darker skies.

Q58e - km2 in brightness colour band 4-8

- 5.0
- Data has been classified into eight colour bands of brightness values (nw/cm2/sr). <0.5 (darkest); 0.5 - 1; 1 - 2; 2 - 4; 4 - 8; 8 - 16; 16 - 32 and > 32 (brightest). Lower values equate to lower light pollution and darker skies.

Q58f - km2 in brightness colour band 8-16

- 0.4
- Data has been classified into eight colour bands of brightness values (nw/cm2/sr). <0.5 (darkest); 0.5 - 1; 1 - 2; 2 - 4; 4 - 8; 8 - 16; 16 - 32 and > 32 (brightest). Lower values equate to lower light pollution and darker skies.

Q58g - km2 in brightness colour band 16-32

- 0.0
- Data has been classified into eight colour bands of brightness values (nw/cm2/sr). <0.5 (darkest); 0.5 - 1; 1 - 2; 2 - 4; 4 - 8; 8 - 16; 16 - 32 and > 32 (brightest). Lower values equate to lower light pollution and darker skies.

Q58h - km2 in brightness colour band >32

- 0.0
- Data has been classified into eight colour bands of brightness values (nw/cm2/sr). <0.5 (darkest); 0.5 - 1; 1 - 2; 2 - 4; 4 - 8; 8 - 16; 16 - 32 and > 32 (brightest). Lower values equate to lower light pollution and darker skies.

Tranquillity & Place

Q59a - % in visually tranquil category 1

- 0.00
- Sourced from the nationally consistent Tranquillity & Place Visually Tranquil Areas 2022 (rural themes 1, 2 and 3 combined). The visually tranquil categories range from 1 (least visually tranquil) to 10 (most visually tranquil). For further information, t

Q59b - % in visually tranquil category 2

- 0.00
- Sourced from the nationally consistent Tranquillity & Place Visually Tranquil Areas 2022 (rural themes 1, 2 and 3 combined). The visually tranquil categories range from 1 (least visually tranquil) to 10 (most visually tranquil). For further information, t

Q59c - % in visually tranquil category 3

- 0.00
- Sourced from the nationally consistent Tranquillity & Place Visually Tranquil Areas 2022 (rural themes 1, 2 and 3 combined). The visually tranquil categories range from 1 (least visually tranquil) to 10 (most visually tranquil). For further information, t

Q59d - % in visually tranquil category 4

- 0.00
- Sourced from the nationally consistent Tranquillity & Place Visually Tranquil Areas 2022 (rural themes 1, 2 and 3 combined). The visually tranquil categories range from 1 (least visually tranquil) to 10 (most visually tranquil). For further information, t

Q59e - % in visually tranquil category 5

- 2.32
- Sourced from the nationally consistent Tranquillity & Place Visually Tranquil Areas 2022 (rural themes 1, 2 and 3 combined). The visually tranquil categories range from 1 (least visually tranquil) to 10 (most visually tranquil). For further information, t

Q59f - % in visually tranquil category 6

- 29.29
- Sourced from the nationally consistent Tranquillity & Place Visually Tranquil Areas 2022 (rural themes 1, 2 and 3 combined). The visually tranquil categories range from 1 (least visually tranquil) to 10 (most visually tranquil). For further information, t

Q59g - % in visually tranquil category 7

- 58.63
- Sourced from the nationally consistent Tranquillity & Place Visually Tranquil Areas 2022 (rural themes 1, 2 and 3 combined). The visually tranquil categories range from 1 (least visually tranquil) to 10 (most visually tranquil). For further information, t

Q59h - % in visually tranquil category 8

- 9.76
- Sourced from the nationally consistent Tranquillity & Place Visually Tranquil Areas 2022 (rural themes 1, 2 and 3 combined). The visually tranquil categories range from 1 (least visually tranquil) to 10 (most visually tranquil). For further information, t

Q59i - % in visually tranquil category 9

- 0.01
- Sourced from the nationally consistent Tranquillity & Place Visually Tranquil Areas 2022 (rural themes 1, 2 and 3 combined). The visually tranquil categories range from 1 (least visually tranquil) to 10 (most visually tranquil). For further information, t

Q59j - % in visually tranquil category 10

- 0.00
- Sourced from the nationally consistent Tranquillity & Place Visually Tranquil Areas 2022 (rural themes 1, 2 and 3 combined). The visually tranquil categories range from 1 (least visually tranquil) to 10 (most visually tranquil). For further information, t

Q59k - Data Source

- Sourced from the nationally consistent Tranquillity & Place Visually Tranquil Areas 2022 (rural themes 1, 2 and 3 combined). The visually tranquil categories range from 1 (least visually tranquil) to 10 (most visually tranquil). For further information, the report and webapp, visit the Storymap available from <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/865c1876d9f64280a3dfc6e2769a46a5>

SLAs

Q60 - List the Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) in this local authority or region

- Yes
- For Bridgend - Foel y Dyffryn, Northern Uplands, Bryngarw Country Park, Merthyr Mawr Warren, Kinfig Burrows, Porthcawl Coast, Mynydd y Gaer, Western Uplands, Laleston For Caerphilly -Mynyddislwyn, North Caerphilly, South Caerphilly, Upper Rhymney Valley, Gelligaer, Mynydd Eglwysilan For Rhondda Cynon Taf - Cwm Orci, Mynydd y Cymmer, Llwyncelyn Slopes, Talygarn Surrounds, Efail Isaf, Garth & Nantgarw Western Slopes, Craig yr Allt, Brecon Beacons Edge at Llwydcoed, Ely Valley at Miskin, Rhondda Fawr Northern Cwm & Slopes, Mynydd Troed y Rhiw Slopes, Cynon Valley Northern Slopes, Treforest Western Slopes, Hirwaun Common, Cwm Dare & Cwm Aman, Taff Vale Eastern Slopes, Mynydd y Glyn & Nant Muchudd Basin, Mynydd Hugh & Llantrisant Forest, Llanharry Surrounds, Llantrisant Surrounds, Coed yr Hendy and Mwyndy, Cwm Clydach

Q61 - SLA policy and resources

- For Bridgend - Local Plan Policy EN3 Special Landscape Areas & supporting study. <https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/media/2026/sd87.pdf> For Caerphilly - Local Plan Policy NH1 Special Landscape Areas (Appendix 1) Local Plan Policy NH2 VILLS (Visually Important Local Landscapes) (Appendix 2) <http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/CaerphillyDocs/LDP/Appendices-to-Written-Statement.aspx> For Rhondda Cynon Taf - Local Plan Policy NSA25 & SSA23 Special Landscape Areas. <https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Resident/PlanningandBuildingControl/LocalDevelopmentPlans/LDPEvidenceBaseLibraryandAnnualMonitoringF> The Special Landscape Areas GIS dataset is available from DataMapWales https://datamap.gov.wales/layers/geonode:nrw_special_landscape_area

Visible Settings

Q62 - Visible settings of LANDMAP V&S areas

- [View a map image showing the visible setting of the area](#)

This is a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), calculated using a 30 metre Digital Terrain Model (DTM), using multiple observer points scattered across the area, 1.5m above ground level, and taking into account the Earth's curvature. The data does not extend beyond 35km from an observer point, meaning that more distant views may also be possible.

- [Read user guidance](#) that explains the map image
- [Bulk download](#) the map images for Wales.
- [Read a detailed technical report](#) which explains the data calculations

Q63 - Visible Settings of Designated Landscapes

- [View map images showing the visible setting of each National Park and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.](#)
 - These are Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), as per Q62, but applied to Designated Landscape areas. Also, for areas not visible, colour-steps show the Height of an object before it would become visible (HOBV), up to 350m high. See Q62 to access the user guidance and a technical report.

Q64 - Key views into or out from Designated Landscapes

- [View map images showing the ZTV and HOBV of a selection of key views for each National Park and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in or affecting Wales](#)
 - These are Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), as per Q62, but applied to selected key views into or out from Designated Landscapes. Also, colour-steps show the Height of an object before it would become visible (HOBV), up to 350m high. It is not an exhaustive key view list. See Q62 to access the user guidance and a technical report.



APPENDIX D: SLA 10: TAFF VALE EASTERN SLOPES – RELEVANT EXTRACTS

TAFF VALE EASTERN SLOPES

LOCATION and BOUNDARIES:

Along eastern edge of RCT, from Nantgarw in the south to A472 in the north, with the edges of the settlements and roads in the Taff Vale forming the western boundary.

STRATEGIC CRITERIA:

NEED:

LANDMAP	Open Cefn Eglwysilan = moderately important value Fields above Cilfynydd tips = moderately important value Remainder of area = less important value
Prominence	Hillsides and tops are prominent from A470, and all the settlements of Taff Vale Cilfynydd tips in north are particularly prominent from A470
‘Unspoilt’	Mainly pre-industrial patterns of farmland and open tops, immediately adjacent to busy Taff Vale
Vulnerability	Incremental developments on edges of settlements Unsuitable recreational uses

COHERENCE:

Continuous stretch of main valley side plus hilltops.

CONSENSUS:

Includes three existing SLAs

Adjoins Caerphilly’s proposed Mynydd Eglwysian SLA

PRIMARY LANDSCAPE QUALITIES & FEATURES

- Long stretch of rural hillsides in contrast to densely developed valley floor and valleys to west.
- All area plays important role in overall impression of the South Wales Valleys as gained from the A470, the major north/south route through Wales.
- Gradation of small-scale irregular fields and woods on lower slopes, to larger fields on shallower mid slopes, to open land on tops, linked by steep winding lanes.
- High point of Cefn Eglwysilan with prominent masts on skyline acting as landmarks.
- Various earthworks relating to historically important medieval estate of Senghenydd on ridge top
- Prominent Cilfynydd tips in north overlook Taff Vale. Unreclaimed and steep with sculptural forms, they are an important reminder of industrial past, now becoming attractively covered with gorse and heather.
- In places the upper edge of the valley settlements are starting to creep up the hillside intrusively.
- Taff Trail cycleway passes through lower part of the area

KEY POLICIES AND MANAGEMENT:

- Conserve skyline
- Protect/preserve/conserv e historic features relating to Senghenydd

- Bracken control on open common land
- Introduction of Tir Gofal for conservation of grasslands
- Restrict edge of settlement developments, especially on steep sites
- Recreational and other rural developments to be in keeping with conspicuous hillside location.
- Conserve Cilfynydd tips in generally unreclaimed condition for historic/cultural and visual value.

TAFF VALE EASTERN SLOPES LANDMAP DATA

Aspect	A.A. no.	Location/comments	Overall evaluation
VS	143	All slopes and extensive area eastward	Mod
	317	Mynydd Eglwysilian and eastward	High
LH	097	Lower slopes in north	Mod
	098	Lower slopes in south	Mod
	141	Mynydd Eglwsilian	High
	133	Higher slopes in north	High
GL	015	All Taff Vale	Mod
HL	448	Most of slopes	-
	878	Mynydd Eglwysilian	-
	290	Upper slopes in north	-
	977	Cilfynydd Tips	-
CL	056	All SLA and wider	High



APPENDIX E: ILLUSTRATIVE LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN

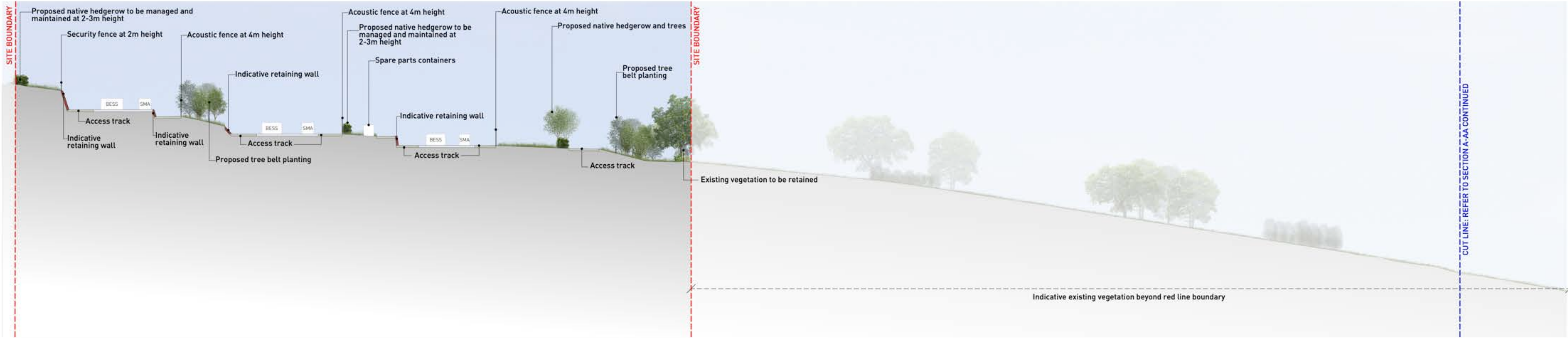


LAND NORTH AND SOUTH OF NATIONAL ROAD, CILFYNYDD – INDICATIVE LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN

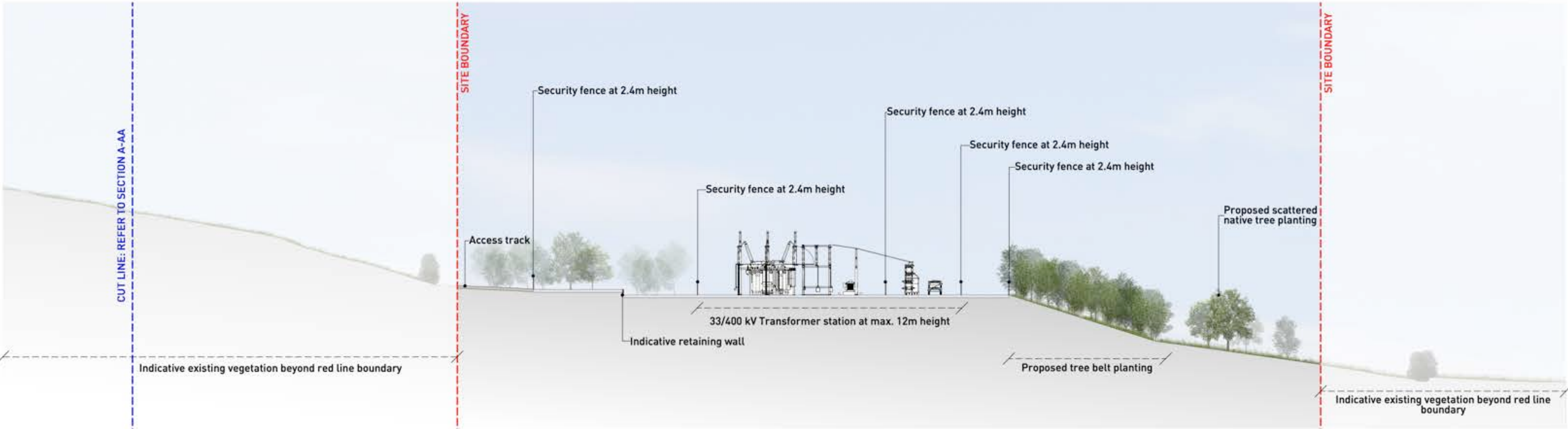
| PEGASUSGROUP.CO.UK | TEAM/DRAWN BY: VK | APPROVED BY: AMS | DATE: 14/02/2025 | SCALE: 1:1250@A0 | DRWG: P22-2733_EN_04B | CLIENT: REWE 2 LTD |



APPENDIX F: ILLUSTRATIVE LANDSCAPE SECTIONS



SECTION A-AA



SECTION A-AA CONTINUED



LOCATION PLAN (NTS)

17/02/2025	D	Notes amended to client comments
12/02/2025	C	1 no. additional retaining wall added to suit revised plan
07/01/2025	B	Retaining wall amended
18/12/2024	A	Retaining wall detailed added; client name updated
DATE	NO	REVISION NOTE

ILLUSTRATIVE LANDSCAPE SECTION

LAND NORTH AND SOUTH OF NATIONAL ROAD, CILFYNYDD

CLIENT
REWE 2 LTD

DATE
17/02/2025

SCALE
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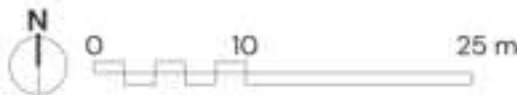
TEAM
VK/IBD

APPRVD
AMS

DRAWING NUMBER

P22-2733_EN_05D

PEGASUS
GROUP



Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

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