



**Gwynfaen 2**

**DRAFT**

**Landscape and Visual  
Appraisal**

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**The Environmental Dimension  
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On behalf of:  
**Pobl Group**

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## APPENDICES

- Appendix EDP 1 Illustrative Masterplan (edp7068\_d016m 01 July 2024 OSh/DLe)
- Appendix EDP 2 EDP LVIA Assessment Methodology
- Appendix EDP 3 Photoviewpoints (edp7068\_d017 23 August 2024 RBa/MDu)

## PLANS

- Plan EDP 1: Site Location  
(edp7068\_d005b 26 October 2023 PDa/DLe)
- Plan EDP 2: Topographical Relief  
(edp7068\_d011 08 December 2021 DJ/MD)
- Plan EDP 3: Landscape Related Planning Considerations  
(edp7068\_d012a 27 August 2024 DJo/MDu)
- Plan EDP 4: Zone of Theoretical Visibility and Photoviewpoint Plan  
(edp7068\_d013a 01 May 2024 DJo/MDu)

## Section 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP) has been commissioned by Pobl Housing ('the applicant') to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) report to identify the current quality and character of the site landscape and recording a range of representative viewpoints from within its zone of visual influence. This report follows a typical Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment structure, providing a summary of these baseline conditions, identifying the receptors and giving recommendations for the design/layout of any future proposals to ensure the landscape and visual effects are minimised. Such recommendations have been fed into the masterplanning process to ensure an iterative approach to design is achieved.
- 1.2 EDP is an independent environmental planning consultancy with offices in Cardiff, Cirencester and Cheltenham. The practice provides advice to private and public sector clients throughout the UK in the fields of landscape, ecology, archaeology, cultural heritage, arboriculture, rights of way and masterplanning. Details of the practice can be obtained at our website ([www.edp-uk.co.uk](http://www.edp-uk.co.uk)). EDP is a Registered Practice of the Landscape Institute<sup>1</sup> specialising in the assessment of the effects of proposed development on the landscape.
- 1.3 This LVA is part of a suite of documents accompanying a full planning application for the proposed development summarised in **Section 6** of this LVA. The proposed development is for the construction of 50 dwellings and comprises 100% 'social rented' dwellings, constituting affordable housing as defined by Technical Advice Note 2: Planning and Affordable Housing (June 2006)<sup>2</sup>.
- 1.4 The development is being designed to cater for a specific housing need that has been identified by Swansea City Council (SCC). The scheme will include local areas of play, adjacent open space and attenuation features to meet the Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Approval Body (SAB) requirements. The proposals are contained within the Illustrative Masterplan at **Appendix EDP 1**.

### PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THIS LVA

- 1.5 The purpose of this report is to identify the baseline conditions of the site and surrounding area and to determine those landscape and visual characteristics. Following input to the design process, this baseline report will be expanded upon and an assessment of the landscape and visual effects predicted to arise from the emerging development on the site will follow with reference to the baseline analysis.
- 1.6 In undertaking the assessment described in this LVA baseline, EDP has:

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<sup>1</sup> LI Practice Number 1010

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-09/tan2-planning-affordable-housing.pdf>

- Undertaken a thorough data trawl of relevant designations and background documents, described in **Section 3**;
- Established the existing (baseline) condition and character of the site and its setting, described in **Section 4**;
- Established the existing visual (baseline) context, especially any key views to and from the site in **Section 5**. The establishment of baseline landscape and visual conditions, when evaluated against the proposed development, allow the identification and evaluation of landscape effects later in the LVA at **Section 7**;
- Described the landscape aspects of the proposed development that may influence any landscape or visual effects (**Section 6**);
- In **Section 7**, assessed the landscape and visual effects in accordance with the approach described below;
- Reached overall conclusions in **Section 8**; and
- Provided an analysis of the likely landscape and visual effects of the proposed scheme, which is determined by combining the magnitude of the predicted change with the assessed sensitivity of the identified receptors. The nature of any predicted effects is also identified (i.e. positive/negative, permanent/reversible).

#### **Methodology Adopted for the Assessment**

- 1.7 This LVA baseline has been undertaken in accordance with the principles embodied in *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – Third Edition* (LI/IEEMA, 2013) (GLVIA3) and other best practice guidance insofar as is relevant to non-EIA schemes.
- 1.8 **Familiarisation:** EDP’s study has included reviews of aerial photographs, web searches, Local Planning Authority (LPA) publications and landscape character assessments. EDP has also obtained, where possible, information about relevant landscape and other designations such as Special Landscape Areas (SLA).
- 1.9 **Consultation:** EDP sets out a methodology and a series of proposed viewpoints within this report. Swansea City and County Council (SCCC) are invited to comment on the proposed selection during the pre-application process.
- 1.10 **Assessment:** EDP has undertaken a comprehensive desktop assessment, including a google street view of the character and fabric of the site and its surroundings, using google earth views from a number of representative viewpoints. Field assessments were undertaken by a Chartered Landscape Architect in April 2024.
- 1.11 **Design Inputs:** EDP undertook a Landscape and Visual Baseline (LVB) during 2022 to understand how the scheme could be designed with character and visual impact at the centre of future decisions. The recommendations have been carried through into workshops and have played a hand in sculpting the proposals that accompany this detailed planning application. EDP’s desktop and field assessments have informed a process

whereby the development proposals have been refined to avoid, minimise or compensate for landscape effects.

1.12 **Assessment Methodology:** Predicted effects on the landscape resource arising from the proposed development (as detailed in **Section 6**) will be determined in accordance with the principles embedded within published best practice guidance<sup>3</sup> insofar as the assessment adopts the following well-established, structured approach:

- Likely effects on landscape character and visual amenity are dealt with separately;
- The assessment of likely effects is reached using a structured methodology for defining sensitivity, magnitude and significance which is contained as **Appendix EDP 2**. This framework is combined with professional judgement. Professional judgement is an important part of the assessment process; it is neither 'pro' nor 'anti' development but acknowledges that development may result in beneficial change as well as landscape harm; and
- As advised in GLVIA3, the appraisal takes into account the effects of any proposed mitigation.

#### **Study Area**

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

- First, a broad 'study area' of 5km was adopted, based mainly on desk-top study, which allowed the geographical scope of the assessment to be defined based on the extent of views to/from the site and the site's environmental planning context; and
- Second, following initial analysis and subsequent field work the broad study area was refined to 3km as close to medium range views would demonstrate the most change (worst case). The extent of this detailed study area is illustrated on **Plan EDP 3**.

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<sup>3</sup> *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition* (Landscape Institute/IEEMA, 2013)

## Section 2 The Site

- 2.1 **Plan EDP 1** illustrates the location of the site's boundaries. The site lies on hinterland located east of the Loughor Estuary. The site comprises one agricultural field parcel, which measures c.3.5 hectares (ha) in area and it is irregular in shape. In the immediate site context, the site edge abuts the existing, western settlement edge of Penyrheol, which is a conurbation of Gorseinon. The site lies north-east of the Gwynfaen Farm complex itself and is accessible via Brynafon Road. With the exception of the south-eastern corner, existing vegetation borders the majority of the site's edges. A track and a network of ditches loosely follow the alignment of the vegetated site boundaries on three sides.
- 2.2 The site's character and local context is illustrated on the google earth extract on **Image EDP 2.1**.



**Image EDP 2.1:** Aerial view extract from Google Earth showing the site (added by EDP) west of Penyrheol, north of Brynafon Road, east of the Loughor Estuary and north-east of Glanymor Park. Gwynfaen Phase 1, which is nearing completion, is adjacent to the eastern edge of the site.

- 2.3 **Plan EDP 2** shows the topographical relief of the wider site context. The site is located on a westerly facing land parcel, and levels continue to fall gently west towards to the lowest contours found in the study area, on the estuary. The highest contours on the site are found on the eastern edge at around 31m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), these fall gently and consistently towards the western edge to lows of 15m aOD. The field parcel showing adjacent to the east of the site is for the consented residential development referred to as Gwynfaen Phase I.

- 2.4 The estuary is bordered by gently rising hinterland to the east and west, and the settlement pattern is similarly concentrated in the east and the west. As the site is bordered by new development to the east and existing development to the south and south-east, it bears a partial connection to the settlement edge.



## Section 3

### Findings of Policy Review and EDP's Data Trawl

3.1 The findings of EDP's data trawl of relevant environmental and planning designations are illustrated on **Plan EDP 3**. In summary,

- The site is not constrained by any nationally or locally designated landscapes;
- The Lower Loughor Valley Estuary and Southern Part of the Burry Inlet SLA lies approximately 65m south-west of the site at its closest point; and
- The site is located adjacent to the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network, and two adjoining footpaths border the site on three sides. No paths are located within the site itself.

#### **BACKGROUND PUBLISHED EVIDENCE BASE DOCUMENTS**

3.2 The following documents are relevant and will be discussed where appropriate later in this report:

- Swansea Local Development Plan (2010–2025); and
- Review of Landscape Designations in Swansea (Rosie Carmichael, 2016).

3.3 The following landscape-related policies set out in Swansea's adopted Local Development Plan are summarised and then expanded on below:

- Policy ER 2 - Strategic Green Infrastructure Network;
- Policy ER 5 - Landscape Protection;
- Policy PS 2 – Placemaking and Place Management;
- Policy HC 1 - Historic and Cultural Environment; and
- Policy ER 12 – Trees, Hedgerows and Development.

3.4 Policy ER 2 - Strategic Green Infrastructure Network requires development to maintain or enhance the extent, quality and connectivity of the County's multi-functional green infrastructure network, and where appropriate:

- i. *“Create new interconnected areas of green infrastructure between the proposed site and the existing strategic network;*
- ii. *Fill gaps in the existing network to improve connectivity; and/or*

iii. *In instances where loss of green infrastructure is unavoidable, provide mitigation and compensation for the lost assets.”*

- 3.5 Policy ER 5 - Landscape Protection states that development would not be permitted where it resulted in significant adverse effect on the character and quality of the landscape. In particular, protected landscapes such as SLAs would be given priority.
- 3.6 The site does not lie within an SLA or any other landscape protection policy area. The closest SLA is the ‘*Lower Loughor Valley Estuary and Southern Part of the Burry Inlet*’. This SLA is separated from the site by the Gwynfaen Farm complex to the south-west. As well as a physical separation, there is no tangible, perceived connection with the SLA in this location.
- 3.7 Policy PS 2 – Placemaking and Place Management directs placemakers to deliver safe and enjoyable places to live, which are accessible to all. This comprehensive policy guides designers to prioritise health and well-being through design, use sustainable construction methods where possible and consider the local character, scale and context.
- 3.8 Policy HC 1 – Historic and Cultural Environment requires any distinctive historic and cultural associations to be preserved and enhanced. Future development can respond and accord with this policy through implementing high quality design that responds to the *genus loci* of the local environment. In addition, heritage assets and their settings should be identified and safeguarded.
- 3.9 Policy ER 11 – Trees and Development clearly states that development resulting in adverse effects on trees and woodlands with cultural value, or that serve to provide public amenity, ecosystem services would not normally be permitted.

### **FINDINGS OF DATA TRAWL**

- 3.10 Landscape-related designations and policy considerations within 3km of the site are shown on **Plan EDP 3**.

### **Public Rights of Way**

- 3.11 There are two connected PRow bordering the site:
1. PRow LC96 follows the alignment of Brynafon Road and runs along the southern site boundary. Views into the site from this route are permitted in parts, views are framed from Brynafon Road, where the site access is located, and filtered by the mature vegetation on the southern boundary as the route becomes sunken. The vegetation here is patchy and in poor condition in places; and
  2. PRow LC18 wraps around the site from the south-west to the northern corner. Boundary vegetation reduces visibility into the site and views are limited to framed, filtered and partial views. This route progresses north-east and joins PRow LC17A. No views of the proposals are anticipated from LC17A due to a change in levels where landform screens views of the site and proposed ridge heights.

- 3.12 Other PRoW in the vicinity of the site includes LC45 and LC46, which run parallel to each other, c.170m to the south of the site at the closest point. No intervisibility is anticipated towards the site from these routes due to the enclosed nature of both.
- 3.13 Further to the south-west, Bridleway LC123 is a circular loop that starts c.400m from the site at its closest point, from Gwynfaen Road and progresses into and around Glanymor Park. Views are anticipated from the most northerly extent of this route within the park, and views will be investigated in the visual appraisal to follow.
- 3.14 The Wales Coastal Path and National Cycle Route 4 lie south-west of the site and both follow the same alignment across the Loughor Bridge. These routes are approximately 1.6km from the site at the closest point. Views from the bridge may be available, but they are unlikely to be obvious or perceptible for the most part due to the oblique nature of the view, who's central focus is the estuary and the marshlands.
- 3.15 To the west of the estuary, the PRoW provides good connectivity from Bynea to Brynhyfryd/Llangennech across farmland and along minor roads. Elevations range from low, to the east of Bynea, to high around the south of Brynhyfryd/Llangennech. These north-south orientated routes which run parallel to the estuary are limited to oblique views towards the site only and these are often filtered, particularly those found along lower elevations.
- 3.16 A representative set of available views from a range of receptors will be assessed in the visual appraisal at **Section 5**.

#### **Glanymor Park**

- 3.17 Glanymor Park (and Foreshore car park) is an informal recreational park bordering the Loughor Estuary. The park is approximately 400m to the south-west of the site and includes the aforementioned bridleway and other informal walking routes. A sizeable amount of the parks northern boundary is enclosed by trees, and due to the levels as well as intervening vegetation, the majority of the park is not afforded views inland towards the site. The most northern extent of the park contains a narrow promontory, or raised promenade that overlooks the estuary and the wetlands bordering the park to the north and east. From the headland, there are views available towards the site, and these views will be investigated in the visual appraisal to follow.

#### **Loughor Castle and Conservation Area**

- 3.18 Loughor Conservation Area is located over 1.5km to the south-west of the site, and it contains Loughor Castle, a Scheduled Ancient Monument which is accessible to visitors. Both of these designations are heritage assets, and although this report does not seek to assess the heritage effects, such assets seek to serve a greater understanding of the cultural and historical associations in a given place. The castle is a tourist destination in its own right, however, and therefore any intervisibility should be considered. The data trawl exercise suggests that tourists and recreational visitors to the castle are unlikely to experience any change as a result of the intervening vegetation and landform.

3.19 **Section 4** identifies the landscape character baseline for the site and relevant published landscape character areas.

## Section 4

### Existing (Baseline Conditions): Landscape Character

- 4.1 This section provides an assessment of the ‘baseline’ (existing) conditions in respect of the character of the site and its landscape context. It summarises any relevant published landscape assessments which contribute to a better understanding of the landscape context. Such assessments provide a helpful understanding of the landscape context, but rarely deliver sufficiently site-specific or up to date information to draw robust conclusions about the significance of any change proposed by the development. Accordingly, EDP has undertaken its own assessment of the site itself, which is included in this section at paragraph 4.22 *et seq.*

#### NATIONAL CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

- 4.2 At the national level, the character of Wales has been described and classified in the National Landscape Character Area (NLCA) profiles published by Natural Resources Wales (NRW)<sup>4</sup>. The site and its surroundings fall within NLCA 38, ‘Swansea Bay’. The NLCA is summarised as:

*“A narrow coastal plain links the lowlands of Glamorgan to those of Gwendraeth. In the middle section around Port Talbot its width is constricted by the adjacent sea and steeply uplands. Extensive sandy coast is backed by dunes, with lagoons and important coastal heath. Major river estuaries issue within the area, including those of rivers Loughor, Neath and Tawe. Large parts of the area have been built on, with major docks by the Neath and Tawe estuaries. The focus of development is the city of Swansea, Wales’ second largest, but also Llanelli, Neath Port Talbot and Pyle. Character is urban and suburban with large housing and industrial estates. Heavy industries and settlement have made use of these strategically important locations, between coalfield and sea, and major ports around Swansea and the Steel Works at Port Talbot are landmark features. In that section, strange geometric apparatus and steam belching chimneys dominate the skyline as seen from busy arterial roads and railways. It is a busy, noisy, ambitious urban landscape with good road and rail links to capitals Cardiff and London.*

*The sweeping crescent of sand, is backed by dunes that have buried archaeology at Kenfig, Merthyr Mawr, as have the immediate rising hinterland. At either end of the bay there are limestone outcrops and Porthcawl and Mumbles have become the recreational destinations. Respectively, the very large caravan park, amusement centre and the Royal Porthcawl Golf Club sits at one end and the lively tourist-attracting former fishing settlement, notable pier and headland sits at the other. Many prominent figures in the world of arts hail from this coastal strip, and there is a lively local choral tradition.*

*In recent years the degree of regeneration is changing the landscape again. New urban blocks of flats and marinas are transforming redundant former docks in Swansea, whilst*

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<sup>4</sup> <https://naturalresources.wales/evidence-and-data/maps/nlca/?lang=en>

*at Llanelli the Millennium Coastal Park, the Trostre tinsplate works and the, largely avian, wildlife reserve at Pencaclyydd illustrate the range of change.”*

- 4.3 While NLCA 38 is broadly representative of the site’s landscape context, for the scale of the development proposed on the site, it is considered that the description of landscape character undertaken at the sub-regional level is more relevant in establishing the landscape resource baseline. As such, of much greater use are the LANDMAP and local area assessments discussed below.

## **LANDMAP**

- 4.4 In order to assess the acceptability of development, in landscape terms at any specific location, it is important to understand the landscape and visual amenity circumstances against which any decisions are made, based on both published landscape character assessments and more site-specific landscape assessment undertaken through field studies and site appraisal.
- 4.5 The landscape character of the site and the surrounding area is defined within the LANDMAP resource managed by NRW. LANDMAP is the national information system used to undertake an assessment of the landscape character as presented by the LANDMAP Geographical Information System.
- 4.6 LANDMAP data is the key tool recommended for use in decision-making in relation to landscape character. Planning Policy Wales (Welsh Assembly Government, 2024) Section 6.3.19 states:
- “LANDMAP is an important information resource, methodology, and monitoring baseline for the landscapes of Wales, which can help inform planning for the sustainable management of natural resources in an area. LANDMAP describes and evaluates the physical, ecological, visual, cultural and historic aspects of the landscapes of Wales, and provides the basis of a consistent, quality assured national approach to landscape assessment. LANDMAP assessments can help to inform green infrastructure assessments, SPG on landscape, development management decisions, landscape character assessment, special landscape areas (SLAs), local distinctiveness, design, and landscape sensitivity studies”.*
- 4.7 LANDMAP is a GIS-based landscape resource where landscape characteristics, qualities and influences on the landscape are recorded and evaluated into a nationally consistent data set. Data is defined by five layers or themes, the Geological Landscape, Landscape Habitats, Visual and Sensory, Historic Landscape and Cultural Landscape, forming the key landscape guidance for Wales.
- 4.8 LANDMAP is a whole landscape approach that covers all landscapes, designated and non-designated. It identifies key landscape characteristics and qualities that can be used to aid planning policy and decisions. The accompanying guidance states that it is the use of all five layers of information that promotes sustainable landscape decision-making, giving all five layers equal consideration.

- 4.9 The site is contained within 5no. LANDMAP ‘aspect areas’, as summarised in **Table EDP 4.1**. Each LANDMAP theme/layer is described, assessed and assigned one of four overall grades of value: low, moderate, high or outstanding. Summary LANDMAP descriptions are provided on the NRW website.

**Table EDP 4.1:** LANDMAP Aspect Areas Covering the Site

Aspect Area	Unique Area ID	Area Name/Classification	Evaluation
<b>Geological Landscape</b>	SWNSGL032	Loughor/Lowland hills and valleys	Moderate
<b>Landscape Habitat</b>	SWNSLH349	North of Gorseinon and Swansea/Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats	Moderate
<b>Visual &amp; Sensory</b>	SWNSVS691	NW of Gorseinon/Lowland	Moderate
<b>Historic Landscape</b>	SWNSHL571	H22 Lower Loughor and Lliw Valleys/Rural environment	Unassessed
<b>Cultural Landscape</b>	SWNSCLS083	NW of Gorseinon/Rolling Lowland	Moderate

- 4.10 Four of five aspect areas are evaluated as ‘Moderate’ by LANDMAP, while the historic aspect area has not been ascribed a value.
- 4.11 The evaluation for the Geological Landscape aspect area covering the site relates to the geomorphology of the landscape and bedrock associated with Lowland hills and valleys. This aspect area covers a relatively large area from Loughor in the south up as far as Pontilliw. Sandstone, river gullies and mineral spoils are characteristic of this aspect area, as are disused mines and significant industrial development. Any remaining features of geological or geomorphological significance should not be lost to development.
- 4.12 The Landscape Habitat aspect area covering the site is evaluated as ‘Moderate’. The justification for the evaluation is that the habitats are described as generally low in value, however areas with semi-improved grassland and woodland add value to this aspect area. The evaluation notes that there is potential for improvement.
- 4.13 The Cultural Landscape aspect area covering the site is evaluated as ‘Moderate’. There is relatively little information provided which justifies this value however LANDMAP references the Welsh language and states that nearly a quarter of the people in the aspect area speak Welsh. LANDMAP also classifies the site as Lowland Valleys.
- 4.14 Lastly, the Visual and Sensory aspect area covering the site is also evaluated as ‘Moderate’. The aspect area is described as rolling farmland ranging from 20m to 160m aOD, with mosaic pattern derived from hedges and fields. *‘Urban influence is strong in the eastern area, where the urban edge of Gorseinon and Grovesend encircles the rural area, and elements such as telecom towers and pylons are highly visible detractors’*. To the west of the aspect area, urban influences are less strong and attractive views out the estuary are noted. The M4 corridor is mentioned as a detracting feature in the northern parcel of the aspect area.

- 4.15 EDP found no references to Special Landscape Areas as part of the LANDMAP data trawl.

#### **EDP ON SITE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**

- 4.16 While the above published assessments provide a helpful contextual appreciation of the wider landscape, none provide a sufficiently site-specific assessment to allow a reliable assessment to be made of the effects of the proposed development on the landscape. In particular, published assessments tend to miss more localised influence on the landscape such as the effect of the site itself and its immediate surrounding which EDP has undertaken and is described below.
- 4.17 A review of aerial photography and mapping has been supplemented by a field assessment undertaken in April 2024.
- 4.18 Recognising that 'landscape' is a multi-dimensional concept embracing 'what we see', its time-depth and physical attributes, this LVA reviews and assesses change to landscape character in terms of the physical landscape, the site's visual and sensory character, landscape fabric and habitats, historic landscape character and cultural connections.
- 4.19 The site comprises an enclosed, irregular shaped field which is currently grazed by sheep and horses. Temporary fencing currently subdivides the site to allow for grazing. The site is bordered by mature and semi mature trees, scrub and typical successional understorey plants. Some scrub (gorse) and a few young trees are located within the northern extent of the site. Almost all of the site boundary is characterised by vegetation and fences in poor condition with the exception of the southern part of the eastern edge where two adjacent properties front onto the site, and new stock proof fencing runs the length of this edge. The site is accessible from Brynafon Road via a field gate on the southern edge, no public access is permitted, nor was any activity perceived at the time of the site visit to suggest that the site is accessed by the public.





**Image EDP 4.1:** Site access gates in poor condition along western boundary.

- 4.20 The vegetated borders vary in age, condition and structure. Also, along this edge, running from the northern extent to the south-east in an anticlockwise direction are two connecting rights of way adjacent to the site and two water courses which are culverted in part. Part of the water way on the northern edge is on the site boundary and there is a steep change in levels around this section. Partial, filtered and framed views into the site are available from parts of these routes, particularly from gateways into the field and along the northern boundary where the levels on site are similar. The PRoW along the southern edge is sunken and enclosed on both sides by vegetated hedgebanks.
- 4.21 Newly constructed development to the east (application reference 2019/2144/RES) overlooks the site in part where vegetation along the eastern boundary allows. The influence of built form somewhat desensitises the site with respect to its ruralness and tranquillity. The high quality materiality of said built form however softens the impact of the development, though its presence is certainly felt in most places on site.
- 4.22 In terms of manmade features on site, there is a small, corrugated shed in the southern part of the site which is found along the lowest elevations within the site boundary. There are overhead power lines and pylons which cut through the southern edge of the site.



**Image EDP 4.2:** Corrugated iron shed near south-western boundary.

### INTERIM CONCLUSIONS ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

4.23 GLVIA3 and the 2021 Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note (TGN) 02-21 assist in delivering a framework for an objective landscape assessment of value. The criteria defined within TGN 02-21 is reproduced in **Table EDP 4.2**, with EDP’s observations alongside, based on published material and from EDP’s field assessment. For each of the nine criteria, the site and local area is judged on the basis of a range from ‘good’, through ‘ordinary’ to ‘poor’ in terms of the performance against these criteria.

**Table EDP 4.2:** Consideration of Landscape Value

GLVIA/TGN Factor	The Site and its Context
<b>Natural Heritage:</b> Landscape with clear evidence of ecological, geological, geomorphological or physiographic interest which contribute positively to the landscape.	<b>Ordinary.</b> The site and local area contain some sensitive features of natural heritage importance.
<b>Cultural Heritage:</b> Landscape with clear evidence of archaeological, historical or cultural interest which contributes positively to the landscape.	<b>Poor.</b> There is no evidence of any cultural or historical interest within or adjacent to the site

GLVIA/TGN Factor	The Site and its Context
<b>Landscape Condition:</b> Landscape which is in a good physical state both with regard to individual elements and overall landscape structure	<b>Ordinary:</b> The main bulk of the site comprises low quality grazing land, whereas the boundaries contain woodland of varying quality.
<b>Associations:</b> Landscape which is connected with notable people, events and the arts	<b>Poor.</b> There are no associations relating to the Site and it's context.
<b>Distinctiveness:</b> Landscape that has a strong sense of identity.	<b>Ordinary.</b> The site does form a distinctive parcel of land, being an irregular field pattern of a sloping aspect towards the estuary.
<b>Recreational:</b> Landscape offering recreational opportunities where experience of landscape is important.	<b>Good.</b> PRoW routes run along the south and western edges of the site and connect well with the local network. The site is however unconnected to these routes.
<b>Perceptual (Scenic):</b> Landscape that appeals to the senses, primarily the visual sense.	<b>Ordinary.</b> The settlement edge along the majority of the southern and eastern boundary forms an abrupt line of built form which is experienced across the site and wider landscape. However, the openings in the western boundary features offer scenic views across the estuary.
<b>Perceptual (Wildness and Tranquillity):</b> Landscape with a strong perceptual value notably wildness, tranquillity and/or dark skies.	<b>Ordinary.</b> The road network to the immediate south introduces noise and movement to the site, alongside the built form at Gwynfaen I and to the south forming a visual detractor. The landscape to the north and west of the site contains a strong sense of wilderness and tempered tranquillity, though detractors are still present.
<b>Functional:</b> Landscape which performs a clearly identifiable and valuable function, particularly in the healthy functioning of the landscape.	<b>Poor.</b> The site forms a transitional landscape between a residential and wilder area, where informal routes have appeared to connect these elements.

4.24 Having assessed the site in accordance with TGN 02-21, overall, it is generally considered to be of ordinary landscape value, which equates to a medium value. Moreover, there exists no evidence (based on 'demonstrable physical attributes') to suggest that further weight should be attached to the value of the site derived from the use or enjoyment of this area by local residents (beyond that considered above), or as expressed by any other stakeholder.

4.25 With reference to the above components of the site's landscape character, the site is considered to be of a medium value. Its susceptibility to change is also judged to be

medium. Its visual qualities include it being a partially enclosed landscape with some visual containment and filtering.

- 4.26 By combining both value and susceptibility to change, a **medium** sensitivity is achieved as per **Table EDP A2.3** of **Appendix EDP 2**. The site is not covered by any local or national landscape designations. Some of the more mature landscape features on the site boundary appeared to be in poor condition and in need of management. In general, the landscape features on site are reflective of the features recognised within the county level landscape designation and the LANDMAP evaluations.

## **Section 5**

### **Existing (Baseline Conditions): Visual Amenity**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

- 5.1 Visual amenity is about the interrelationship between people's perceived experience within the landscape such as the perceived pleasantness derived from an aesthetically pleasing view. Visual effect relates more specifically to the type, number and distribution of available views which may be experienced by a given visual receptor (e.g. PROW user). An analysis of visual amenity allows conclusions to be reached about where visual effects may be experienced from, by whom; and to what degree those views would be changed by the proposed development.
- 5.2 This section identifies potential views to the site; changes to views brought by the proposed development will be analysed in **Section 6** of this LVA. An analysis of existing views and the 'visual receptors' likely to experience visual change is conducted in three steps described in turn below.

#### **STEP ONE: DEFINING ZONES OF THEORETICAL AND PRIMARY VISIBILITY**

- 5.3 The starting point for an assessment of visual amenity is a computer-generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV). The ZTV is derived using digital landform height data only and therefore it does not account for the screening effects of intervening buildings, structures or vegetation, but it does give a prediction of the areas which, theoretically, may be able to experience visual change.
- 5.4 The ZTV is then refined by more research to form the Zone of Primary Visibility (ZPV), where the site can actually be seen from. In this instance, a field assessment was undertaken by a Chartered Landscape Architect in April 2024. The topographical relief of the site and site context means that the site is not elevated or obviously identifiable in the landscape. In the immediate site context, the surrounding tree cover and settlement edge, coupled with the relatively low-lying landform of the site itself means that there are not completely open or elevated views in which the whole site can be seen from, only partial, framed or filtered views of part of the site are available.
- 5.5 Beyond the ZPV lies a zone of visibility which is less open, being either partly-screened or filtered. Views from within this zone would include the proposal; it may not be immediately noticeable, but once recognised would be a perceptible addition to the view.
- 5.6 Viewpoints have been captured to illustrate the types of views available towards the site. On site analysis has shown that the ZTV modelling in this instance requires refining to gain an accurate understanding of the visual extent. In reality, the zone of visual influence is much more discrete and limited to close range views from the site boundary itself, and some middle distance views from the west when vegetation, land form and built form does not intervene in the view.

## STEP TWO: DEFINING RECEPTOR GROUPS

5.7 Within the ZPV and wider area, the people ('receptors') likely to experience visual change can be considered as falling into a number of discernible groups which are set out below.

- Rights of Way Users;
- Road Users; and
- Residential Dwelling/Groups.

5.8 Seven photoviewpoints (PVP) have been included from a range of receptor groups to accompany this report and the details are summarised in **Table EDP 5.1**, and each of the groups likely to experience a perceptible change as a result of the proposals are expanded upon below.

### Rights of Way Users

5.9 Rights of Way users are a highly sensitive receptor group which are typically assigned a high or very high level of sensitivity due to their recreational uses. PRow likely to experience the most change have been identified in the data trawl section. Those likely to experience the worst case change as a result of future proposals have been included in the photoviewpoint selection, and 6 of the 7 representative views have been taken from a series of Rights of Way from varying directions and distances.

5.10 **Photoviewpoints EDP 1 and 2** are the closest views from PRow, in both instances, views are filtered and framed with only partial views of the site available. They both occur along the immediately adjacent footpaths to the sites boundaries. Views along these routes are transitional, however they also allow clear views into the site in places. Both photoviewpoints are relatively enclosed along their alignments with native shrubs framing the footpaths either side in the most case. Occasionally views out towards the Loughor estuary are available towards the north of the site. Residential development can be seen within both viewpoints which reiterates the urban influence of the nearby urban edge.

5.11 **Photoviewpoint EDP 3** is also taken from a Right of Way further south-west from within Glanymor Park. The site is clearly visible in a direct view from the PVP location however it is only from a small fraction of the route that the development site is available. Further south, intervening vegetation and development screens and filters views north-east. Views from this route are panoramic and wide ranging in extent. Within **Photoviewpoint EDP 3** the site can be seen at a distance and within the foreground to the newly constructed Gwynfaen I development.

5.12 **Photoviewpoint EDP 4** is a view from Loughor Bridge, National Cycle Route 4 and the Wales Coastal Path. In this view, the site is not obvious from a static position, looking north-east towards the site. Vegetation and built form merge in the view and the main focus of the view is the estuary and the marshlands. The proposals would be perceptible but they are unlikely to be a noticeable addition to this view, as the site itself makes up a small proportion of the view, and it is off centre in the middle ground. The now constructed Gwynfaen I development stands behind the site as it appears from this viewpoint. Proposals

would be nestled in the landscape fabric surrounding the site, and proposed ridgeline heights would not break the horizon line nor extend above the levels of the Gwynfaen I development.

- 5.13 **Photoviewpoint EDP 5** is from PRoW 36/121 near the level crossing located to the east of Bynea Station. Views from the PRoW are for the most part, completely obscured by protective fencing though the photoviewpoint represents the worst case scenario, in terms of intervisibility with the site. It can be seen very faintly through the immediate vegetation within the image. **Photoviewpoint EDP 4** is the only available view towards the site from this route, which also shares alignment with the Wales Coastal Path and the National Cycle Network. The site is discernible, and proposed development on the site would not be an obvious addition to the view. The baseline view is characterised by existing development on the valley slope which contains the site. This site is in the middle distance and there are detracting features in the foreground also.
- 5.14 **Photoviewpoint EDP 7** is taken from a PRoW on the south-western edge of Llangennech, which is over 2.5km from the site. This is one of the more elevated locations available from within the study area and the extent of the view far reaching. Gwynfaen Farmhouse is identifiable in the view, the site, which is located slightly left of the farmhouse, is partially screened by the vegetated boundaries which are visible on the leading edge of the site from this perspective. The proposals would be discernible from this perspective; however, the addition of built form is unlikely to yield a noteworthy change as the view is already characterised by residential development nestled within the vegetated landscape framework seen in the vicinity of the site, and the proposals would site lower than the existing ridgelines seen in the view, particularly those of the Gwynfaen I development.

#### **Roads/Rail Network and Residential Receptors**

- 5.15 Residential receptors are a highly sensitive receptor group whereas road users have varying degrees of sensitivity, more minor, rural roads with a scenic quality are more sensitive than those on more major trunk roads, or roads in built up areas for instance. Road users and residential receptors are grouped herein as generally, most residential receptors likely to be affected correspond with the road network.

#### ***Ffordd Y Coegyifinir***

- 5.16 Two newly built properties (specifically no.'s 7 and 9 of Myn Yr Aber) fronting onto the site's south-eastern edge have direct close range views into the site, and the view encompasses the southern extent of the site and vegetated southern site boundary. There is likely to be a narrow, framed view towards the site from this Cul-de-Sac also, where the gap between these properties frames a glimpsed view to the southern part of the site.

#### ***Brynafon Road/Brynafon Close***

- 5.17 Residents and road users of Brynafon Road to the south of the site are afforded a framed view into the site through the gated field access. In this view the site is seen at close range and in the context of the properties fronting onto the site as discussed above. The majority of Brynafon Road residents and road users would not experience a perceptible change to the juxtaposition of the site to the built up area, however those most likely to experience

the change are road users existing Brynafon Close. Properties bordering the southern edge of the site are unlikely to perceive a fundamental change to views from the rears of properties due to the double row of mature vegetation which separate these dwellings and the site.

#### ***Pen Coed Isaf Road***

- 5.18 To the west of the estuary, Pen Coed Isaf Road is a narrow and enclosed minor (no through) road which runs from Bynea to the banks of the estuary. This road serves 3-4 properties; the site is not easily perceived from the road (**Photoviewpoint EDP 6**), however, it is likely that some of these properties are likely to have open and elevated views across the estuary which would include views towards the site. In these views, the site is likely to only be partially seen as the boundary vegetation encloses the site.

#### ***Gwynfaen Phase 1***

- 5.19 To the east of the application site is the first phase of the Gwynfaen residential development. It can be seen from **Photoviewpoint EDP 1** and overlooks the site to an extent, given the arrangement of topography. Large boundary vegetation features however create separation, particularly in the summer from the Gwynfaen I built form. Despite this, the larger properties protrude above the hedge line and there will therefore be unobstructed views into the site from the east.

#### ***Rail Network***

- 5.20 To the west of the estuary, a rail line runs north-east from Bynea Station towards Llangennech. Upon existing Bynea, the route is set out on a wide curve which runs up to and along the banks of the estuary. Rail users are expected to have a fleeting view towards the site, which would open up after a level crossing, and as the train approaches the banks as the marshlands provide open views from the train in this location.

### **STEP THREE: DEFINING REPRESENTATIVE VIEWPOINTS**

- 5.21 Within the ZPV, there are clearly many individual points at which views towards the site are gained. EDP has selected several viewpoints which are considered representative of the nature of the views from each of the receptor groups. The selection of representative viewpoints is based on the principle that the assessment needs to test the 'worst case' scenario, EDP has sought to include:

- A range of viewpoints from all points of the compass;
- A range of viewpoints from within the site (PRoW) as well as on the site boundary, to more distant viewpoints as appropriate following refinement of ZTV modelling and on site observations; and
- Viewpoints from all the above receptor groups.



5.22 Seven photoviewpoints (PVP) have been selected. Viewpoint locations are illustrated on **Plan EDP 4** and a summary is provided within **Table EDP 5.1**. Photosheets from the selected viewpoints are contained in **Appendix EDP 4**.

**Table EDP 5.1:** Summary of Representative Photoviewpoints.

<b>PVP. No.</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Grid Reference</b>	<b>Distance and Direction of View</b>	<b>Reason(s) for Selection and Sensitivity of Receptor</b>
1	View from footpath LC96 taken on the southern boundary of the site	257795, 199232	0m north	Road users and PRoW users; High
2	View from footpath LC18 taken on the north-western boundary of the site	257712, 199404	0m south-east	PRoW users; High
3	View from footpath LC123 in Glanymor Park looking north-east towards the site	257045, 199115	650m north-east	Recreational users of country park and PRoW users; Very High
4	View from Loughor Bridge looking north-east towards the site	256060, 198067	1.9km north-east	NCR 4 users, Coastal Path users and Road users; Medium
5	View from footpath 36/121 to the west of the Loughor Estuary, looking east towards the site	255463, 199203	2.2km east	PRoW users; Medium
6	View from footpath 36/118, west of the River Lougher looking south-east towards the site	255624, 200049	2.16km south-east	Road users and PRoW users; Medium
7	View from footpath 35/33 to the west of the Loughor Estuary, looking south-east towards the site	255403, 200833	2.6km south-east	PRoW users; Medium

## Section 6 The Proposed Development

- 6.1 Having defined the baseline conditions in **Sections 4** and **5**, this report now reviews the proposed development and (in **Section 7**) undertakes an assessment of the likely effects in landscape terms.

### THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 6.2 The proposed development is contained as **Appendix EDP 1**. It consists of 50 entirely affordable, low carbon dwellings, including associated infrastructure such as adoptable highways and shared surfaces.
- 6.3 As well as the ‘hard’ elements of the scheme, it also proposes a range of green corridor/buffer areas containing attenuation features, rain gardens, public open space, an orchard, community growing areas to the north-east and formal play spaces. The DAS, supporting this development provides full details of the development proposals.

### PROPOSED LANDSCAPE MITIGATION AND ENHANCEMENT

- 6.4 The landscape and visual sensitivities of the site have influenced the proposed layout. Thus, the scheme proposals incorporate a degree of integral (or embedded) mitigation designed to avoid or reduce potential landscape and visual effects. The design process to date has been iterative - the project team have had workshops to discuss recommendations and embedded mitigation throughout the project timeline.
- 6.5 The following measures, informed by the findings of the Landscape and Visual Baseline (2022), have guided the masterplan to its current form:
- High quality design, sustainable architecture with a local vernacular and a multifunctional Green Infrastructure (GI) network will align with local policy. In addition, the placemaking objectives set out by the LPA offer a helpful and descriptive guide to all future developments;
  - In order to reduce visual effects from the south-west, most notably from Glanymor Park where there is a direct and framed view of the site, tree planting within the development has been implemented. Particularly, in front of the dwellings proposed on the highest elevations which will seek to soften and screen the proposals in this view over time;
  - Succession planting has been incorporated into the existing vegetated edge. Dead and decaying mature trees were found on the site boundary which were partially obstructing the right of way on the southern edge. The boundary will benefit from gapping up as well as maintenance to enhance the GI on site, and in the local area;

- The proposals connect to the nearby public right of way network, ensuring that it is easily accessible to the wider landscape; and
  - The proposals represent a strong sense of place through creating designed views outwards towards the estuary, in the form of a viewing platform.
- 6.6 The Illustrative Masterplan has been contained at **Appendix EDP 1** responds to and encompasses the mitigation measures presented above.

## Section 7 Assessment of Effects

### INTRODUCTION

- 7.1 In this section, the predicted effects on landscape character and visual amenity are summarised. The assessment uses the thresholds for magnitude, sensitivity and significance defined at **Appendix EDP 2** as a guide, but moderated where appropriate with professional judgement. Professional judgement is an important part of the assessment process; it is neither 'pro' nor 'anti' development but acknowledges that development may result in beneficial change as well as landscape harm. The assessment also takes account of the likely effectiveness of any proposed mitigation.

### CONSTRUCTION EFFECTS

- 7.2 Construction activities, movement of site traffic, lighting, noise and sounds will be ever-present during the construction process. This is not unusual and will be carefully controlled by a conditioned construction method statement. Recommendations for protection of retained trees and hedgerows, in accordance with relevant British Standards such as BS 5837, will ensure that the rooting areas of trees and hedgerows are not adversely affected by the construction process.
- 7.3 The magnitude of change will, however, be very high (on both the site itself and immediate context) and when combined with the medium sensitivity of the site, will result in a **major** adverse level of effect. The effect will, however, be temporary and extend only for the duration of the construction process.

### PREDICTED EFFECTS ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

#### Effects Upon the Site (Year 1 and Operation)

- 7.4 Following construction, the predicted effects take into account suitable and appropriate management of existing and proposed landscape features, undertaken in accordance with a landscape management plan or similar.
- 7.5 It is a consequence of the nature of the development proposed that the visual and sensory character of the site would change substantially as a result of implementation. The magnitude of change is not an indication of bad design but is to be expected as the result of the change of use of any green field site to residential development.

7.6 The changes predicted to occur on the dimensions that contribute to the character of the site are described below and evaluated overall. Predicted effects are structured using the same format used to describe the published character in **Section 4** of this LVA.

- The physical landscape: The development of the site will see it lose some of its physical characteristics. Although the site's general 'high' and 'low' points will remain, some localised level changes will occur (via retaining walls, for example) to support development where necessary. The site's hydrological properties will remain broadly the same, though design features such as basins and rain gardens will be additions to the physical landscape;
- The site's visual and sensory character: The site's visual and sensory characteristics will change from their current state. Development will change the use and appearance of the field itself, although the surrounding boundaries will remain for the most part. Given the site topography and these large boundary features, the site is relatively well hidden, and enclosed by built form on its southern and eastern sides, the impact on the visual and sensory character of the wider area is limited. Further distanced views are assessed separately later on in this section, however, in character terms, most of these views (from the west) are already defined by residential development to the south and east;
- Landscape fabric and habitats: The development of the application site will alter the landscape fabric of the site from grazing/pastureland to a mix of residential development and open space. The boundary vegetation will be retained and enhanced, excluding that within the access road alignment;
- Historic landscape character: Mature vegetation and trees will remain on site along the boundaries. The site's character has not been identified as being of particular historical value; and
- Cultural connections: There are no known cultural connections with the site that will be affected by the proposals. The scheme will however create a new sense of community within features such as growing areas, orchards and rain gardens, benefiting the cultural character of the site.

7.7 The magnitude of onsite change is, after consideration, deemed to be very high. This combines with the site's medium sensitivity (established within **Section 4**), resulting in an overall effect on the character of the site of **major** adverse for years 1 and 15. The physical imposition of residential development into the current greenfield state will significantly change the character of the field, when experienced on site. However, given the mature boundaries as well as the enhancements to the site's cultural connections, this effect is of limited consequence and the existing character of the site is not considered of such value or sensitivity to warrant protection from this change.

## PREDICTED EFFECTS ON THE CHARACTER OF THE SITE'S SURROUNDINGS

- 7.8 Within the baseline, the site's context and its surroundings were acknowledged to have been fairly reflected within the LANDMAP assessment on the whole. The area immediately surrounding the site will be subject to the greatest change to the defined landscape character and this is predicted to diminish quickly with distance due, primarily, to intervening vegetation and landform. The effects on the immediate area are summarised below. The overall sensitivity of the site and its context in the baseline was judged to be medium.
- 7.9 In this assessment of the effects on the landscape character of the site's surroundings, it is important to consider the scale and proportionality of the overall setting. The proposed development would adjoin the existing built form associated with the neighbouring Gwynfaen I development and would yield a relatively modest addition to the existing built setting. The development would yield changes to the site itself and would naturally impact some of the site's immediately surrounding landscape. Whilst the southern and eastern boundaries are already influenced by built form, to the west lies farmland, featuring long distance views out towards the estuary. These views and landscape characteristics will remain, when looking west, however when looking towards the site, the development will add to the already urban influence on users of the countryside and PRoW network. However, the site retains much of its visual containment, given its boundary features will be retained and mitigation measures will be in place.
- 7.10 The magnitude of change on the immediate site's surroundings is judged to be low. When this is combined with the medium sensitivity, this yields a **moderate/minor** adverse level of effect. This will reduce quickly away from the site boundary.

## PREDICTED EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY

- 7.11 For all visual receptors identified within this report, the proposed development would result in short-term construction activity and long-term visual effects. Effects upon receptors are derived through the changes to the views experienced, and through this, the change to the overall visual amenity of the study area as brought about by the proposed development.

**Table EDP 7.1:** Summary of Visual Effects

Photoviewpoint No.	Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change		Level of Effect	
		Construction and Year 1	Year 15	Construction and Year 1	Year 15
<b>Photoviewpoint EDP 1</b>	High	High	Medium	Major	Major/ Moderate
<b>Photoviewpoint EDP 2</b>	High	High	Medium	Major	Major/ Moderate
<b>Photoviewpoint EDP 3</b>	Very High	Low	Low	Major/ Moderate	Major/ Moderate

Photoviewpoint No.	Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change		Level of Effect	
		Construction and Year 1	Year 15	Construction and Year 1	Year 15
<b>Photoviewpoint EDP 4</b>	Medium	Very Low	Very Low	Minor	Minor
<b>Photoviewpoint EDP 5</b>	Low	Very low	Very low	Minor/ Negligible	Minor/ Negligible
<b>Photoviewpoint EDP 6</b>	High	Very low	Very low	Moderate/minor	Moderate/minor
<b>Photoviewpoint EDP 7</b>	Medium	Very Low	Very Low	Minor	Minor

### Summary of Visual Effects

7.12 The following paragraphs summarise the effects on the receptor groups identified within **Section 5** of this LVA.

#### **Rights of Way Users**

- 7.13 Footpath LC96 and LC18 shown within **Photoviewpoints EDP 1** and **2** respectively offer direct views into the site in parts, though the site's large boundary features will filter views of the development. Existing gaps within the boundaries will be reinforced with planting, though of course this may take time to establish.
- 7.14 Due to proximity, the magnitude of change for these extremely local footpaths for Year 1 will be high, reducing to medium for Year 15. When combined with the high sensitivity of the receptor, this yields a **major** effect for construction and Year 1, and a **major/moderate** effect for year 15, of which both are adverse impacts. The landscape strategy was developed to reduce this impact over time through boundary succession planting as well as infilling gaps where the development is most visible.
- 7.15 Bridleway LC123 is found c.650m from the site, within Glanymor Park. The site isn't visible from much of this route, however, where it reaches its most northern point, the site can be temporarily seen, as shown within **Photoviewpoint EDP 3**. The existing Gwynfaen development can be seen in the backdrop to the site and sets a precedent for residential development for users of this route. Despite this, the development will form a noticeable change to a very small part of this transitional view.
- 7.16 Where views are available, the magnitude of change will be low for Year 1 and Year 15 as it is to be considered in proportionality with the remainder of the designated right of way, of which views aren't easily available. When combined with the sensitivity of this receptor group, the overall effect is **major/moderate** and **adverse** for Years 1 and Year 15. Views along this location are generally oriented across the estuary rather than back towards land.
- 7.17 Footpath 36/121 (shown as **Photoviewpoint EDP 5**) illustrates one of the very few available views towards the site from near the level crossing. Paragraph 5.13 discusses the limited availability and obscured nature of this route, and therefore a very low magnitude

of change is applied to a medium sensitivity for years 1 and 15. The overall adverse level of effect for this route is judged as **minor adverse**.

- 7.18 Finally, footpaths 36/118 and 35/33 illustrate views taken from the western side of the Loughor Estuary. Views from this direction occur at over 2km from site and although these are often elevated, sprawling built form and detractors are common within these views. Paragraph 5.14 explains that views from this direction are already characterised by residential development and notes that development at the site would not extend above the current ridgeline. The magnitude of change attributed to this cluster of PROW network is very low, which combines with a high sensitivity. This yields a worst case **minor adverse** overall effect for years 1 and 15.

### ***Roads Network and Residential Receptors***

- 7.19 To the immediate east of the site is the Gwynfaen I residential development. Despite the overlooking topographic arrangement of it and the site, the large boundary features will somewhat reduce visibility into the site. Clear views of ridgelines and properties will be found in wintertime within a close proximity. The sensitivity of this receptor group is medium. The magnitude of change for properties on the western edge of Gwynfaen I will be medium, resulting in an overall **moderate adverse** effect for Years 1 and 15.
- 7.20 Receptors using Ffordd Y Coegylfinir will be mostly separated from the site through residential built form at Gwynfaen I and those either side of Myn Yr Aber road. Rooflines and gables may be visible through vistas in places however the existing precedent of residential development ensures that the change to these views along this road will be of little consequence to its users.
- 7.21 Brynafon Road/Close aligns properties immediately south of the site. Paragraph 5.17 of this Landscape and Visual Appraisal explains how adjacent residents and users of this road will not experience a perceptible change to the juxtaposition of the site to the built up area. The site is available very temporarily through a framed view, where footpath LC96 meets the road. It should be emphasised that receptors using the road network are transitional and this view is to be seen in proportionality with the rest of the route, where views are also not available or impacted through existing development.
- 7.22 This group of roadways will therefore experience a low magnitude of change, coupled with a low sensitivity. This equates to a **minor adverse** overall level of effect for this receptor group, for construction, year 1 and 15.
- 7.23 Identified in the baseline to have potential sight of the development were the 3-4 properties along Pen Coed Isaf Road. These relatively isolated properties currently experience long distance views over the estuary. Despite this, the precedent for residential development in the backdrop to the site, along with distance limit the impact on any residential receptors here. The magnitude of change experienced here at worst is low, coupled with a high sensitivity. This yields a **moderate adverse** overall effect on this receptor group, for all stages of development.
- 7.24 **Photoviewpoint EDP 4** illustrates a view from Lougher Bridge (A484), a four-lane wide carriageway to the south-west of the site, at 1.9km away. The route also doubles up as the



Wales Coastal Path, and National Cycle Network Route 4, though the majority of its use comes as a highway. Although the development site will be seen when heading east, it is surrounded by residential development of several periods. The site appears as a thin slither of land in the foreground to the newly built Gwynfaen I development. The main focus of the view is also the estuary and hinterland within the immediate foreground of the view. The magnitude of change attributed to the road, cycle network and coastal path users of this bridge is very low, given the scale of the change at such a distance. It is also a medium sensitivity receptor given the typical speed and transitional nature of its users along what is a busy highway connecting Swansea with the west. The overall effect on these receptors is therefore **minor** and adverse for years 1 and 15.

### ***Rail Network***

- 7.25 Rail users to the west of the site will receive a noticeable addition to the view, albeit at distance and within what is a transitional experience from within a method of public transport. The development will be seen in the foreground of the surrounding development and will not distract the receptors from the enjoyment of the estuary. The change must also be seen in proportion to the rail route and the scale of the change. The sensitivity of this receptor group is low, and the magnitude of change is very low, equating to an overall **minor/Negligible** level of effect for years 1 and 15.

## Section 8 Conclusion

- 8.1 EDP is an independent environmental consultancy and Registered Practice of the Landscape Institute specialising the assessment of developments at all scales across the UK.
- 8.2 This report has summarised the findings of a comprehensive landscape data trawl and field appraisal undertaken by EDP's landscape team (Sections 2, 3, 4 and 5). In Section 6, the proposed development is described with any proposed mitigation. Section 7 undertakes an assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects having regard to the above and based on a combination of the thresholds set out in **Appendix EDP 2** coupled with professional judgement.
- 8.3 The following effects are likely:
- The character of the site itself is deemed medium sensitivity and will be subject to a large degree of change. It's greenfield character and use as grazing/pastureland will alter to accommodate new affordable housing. This is not an indication of bad design. Instead, it is the inevitable result of introducing housing into what is currently a green field site;
  - The character of the site's immediate context and surroundings will undergo very little change, post development. The site forms an extension to the residential development present within its surroundings (adjacent both to the east and south);
  - In visual amenity terms, users of the public rights of way abutting the site boundary will experience a major change post development. This will reduce over time, as infill and reinforcement planting mature, and thus screens more of the site from these routes;
  - Routes further west, namely the other side of the Loughor Estuary, although of high sensitivity, will experience little change due to the intervening distance. The development represents an extension to the urban edge, and does not extend above the existing ridgeline of Penyrheol; and
  - There will be no considerable effects, in visual amenity terms, on nearby road users or residential receptors, given the abundant housing development surrounding the site's boundaries, and limited intervisibility with the parcel itself. Rail users to the west of the estuary will also experience very little change following development.
- 8.4 Beyond the adverse effects brought about by the development, are the enhancements and mitigation measures in place. The scheme brings about many positives in landscape terms to the character and use of the site. Although the character will largely change, new features such as reinforcement planting, attenuation basins, interactive rain gardens, community growing areas as well as formal natural play spaces which help to neutralise this change. The site will be used and enjoyed by more people, given it is a private enclosure as it stands.

New planting will create habitats for wildlife and build upon those already in place within areas of open space. The proposals aim to retain the site's most valuable features and build upon them, namely the large boundary features.

- 8.5 To conclude, having assessed the appropriateness of the proposals in landscape terms, within this setting, it is demonstrated that the development can be accommodated within this site. By including additional mitigation around the site's boundaries, it can be further integrated into its surroundings. Overall, the proposed development in the round, would not constitute an unacceptable impact in landscape and visual terms.

**Appendix EDP 1**  
**Illustrative Masterplan**  
**(edp7068\_d016m 01 July 2024 OSh/DLe)**



the environmental  
dimension partnership

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date	<b>01 JULY 2024</b>
drawing number	<b>edp7068_d016m</b>
scale	<b>1:1,000 @ A3</b>
drawn by	<b>OSh</b>
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QA	<b>PDa</b>

client	<b>Pobl Housing</b>
project title	<b>Gwynfaen 2</b>
drawing title	<b>Illustrative Masterplan</b>

## **Appendix EDP 2**

### **EDP LVIA Assessment Methodology**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

A2.1 This section provides a methodology for landscape and visual impact assessment as used by EDP.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

A2.2 The assessment methodology for assessing landscape and visual effects prepared by EDP is based on the following best practice guidance:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – Third Edition (LI/IEMA, 2013);
- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (Natural England 2014); and
- Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note (TNG) 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals (17 September 2019).

A2.3 Other reference documents used to understand the baseline position in landscape terms comprise published landscape character assessments appropriate to the site's location and the nature of the proposed development.

A2.4 The nature of landscape and visual assessment requires both objective analysis and subjective professional judgement. Accordingly, the following assessment is based on the best practice guidance listed above, information and data analysis technique, it uses quantifiable factors wherever possible and subjective professional judgement where necessary and is based on clearly defined terms.

#### **Landscape Assessment**

A2.5 Landscape effects derive from changes in the physical landscape fabric that may give rise to changes in its character and how this is experienced. These effects need to be considered in line with changes already occurring within the landscape and which help define the character of it.

A2.6 Effects upon the wider landscape resource, i.e. the landscape surrounding the development, requires an assessment of visibility of the proposals from adjacent landscape character areas, but remains an assessment of landscape character and not visual amenity.

#### **Visual Assessment**

A1.1 The assessment of effects on visual amenity draws on the predicted effects of the development, the landscape and visual context, and the visibility and viewpoint analyses,

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

### **Identifying Landscape and Visual Receptors**

A2.7 This assessment has sought to identify the key landscape and visual receptors that may be affected by the changes proposed.

A2.8 The assessment of effects on landscape as a resource in its own right draws on the description of the development, the landscape context and the visibility and viewpoint analysis to identify receptors, which, for the proposed development may include, but not be limited to, the following:

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

A2.9 The locations and types of visual receptors within the defined study areas are identified from Ordnance Survey maps and other published information (such as walking guides), from fieldwork observations and from local knowledge provided during the consultation process. Examples of visual receptors may include, but not be limited to, the following:

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

### **Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects**

A2.10 The assessment of effects on the landscape resource includes consideration of the potential changes to those key elements and components that contribute towards recognised landscape character or the quality of designated landscape areas; these

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

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

### **Defining Receptor Sensitivity**

A2.11 A number of factors influence professional judgement when assessing the degree to which a particular landscape or visual receptor can accommodate change arising from a particular development. Sensitivity is made up of judgements about the 'value' attached to the receptor, which is determined at baseline stage, and the 'susceptibility' of the receptor, which is determined at the assessment stage when the nature of the proposals, and therefore the susceptibility of the landscape and visual resource to change, is better understood.

A2.12 Susceptibility indicates *"the ability of a defined landscape or visual receptor to accommodate the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences"*<sup>5</sup>. Susceptibility of visual receptors is primarily a function of the expectations and occupation or activity of the receptor. A degree of professional judgement applies in arriving at the susceptibility for both landscape and visual receptors and this is clearly set out in the technical appendices to this assessment.

A2.13 A location may have different levels of sensitivity according to the types of visual receptors at that location and any one receptor type may be accorded different levels of sensitivity at different locations.

A2.14 With reference to Box 5.1 within GLVIA3 (Page 84), **Table EDP A2.1** provides an indication of the criteria by which the overall value of a landscape receptor may be judged. Within the assessment, further reference to the Landscape Institute's 'TGN 02-21: Assessing landscape value outside national designations' may be applied where appropriate. **Table EDP A2.2** provides an indication of the criteria by which the overall susceptibility of the landscape in relation to the type of development proposed.

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<sup>5</sup> Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition Page 158



**Table EDP A2.1:** Assessment of Landscape Value

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

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

**Table EDP A2.2:** Assessment of Landscape Susceptibility

<b>Very Low Susceptibility to Change</b>	<b>Low Susceptibility to Change</b>	<b>Medium Susceptibility to Change</b>	<b>High Susceptibility to Change</b>	<b>Very High Susceptibility to Change</b>
<b>Pattern, Complexity and Physical Susceptibility to Change to the Proposed Development</b>				
A simple, monotonous and/or degraded landscape with common/indistinct features and minimal variation in landscape pattern.	A landscape with an occasionally intact pattern and/or with a low degree of complexity and with few features in reasonable condition.	A landscape with some intact pattern and/or with a degree of complexity and with features mostly in reasonable condition.	A landscape with mostly patterned/-textured or a simple but distinctive landscape and/or with high value features and essentially intact.	A strongly patterned/-textured or a simple but distinctive landscape and/or with high value features intact.

Very Low Susceptibility to Change	Low Susceptibility to Change	Medium Susceptibility to Change	High Susceptibility to Change	Very High Susceptibility to Change
<b>Visual Susceptibility to Change to the Proposed Development</b>				
A very enclosed landscape that contains or strongly filters views, with an absence of visual landmarks and a lack of intervisibility with designated landscapes.	A predominantly enclosed landscape that contains or filters most views, with very few views of visual landmarks or intervisibility with designated landscapes.	A partially enclosed landscape with some visual containment and filtering, possible limited intervisibility with visual landmarks and designated landscapes.	An open landscape with intervisibility and limited visual filtering or enclosure. Prominent visual landmarks may be present, and/or intervisibility with designated landscapes may occur.	An open or exposed landscape with extensive intervisibility and no or very limited visual filtering or enclosure. Prominent visual landmarks are present, and/or intervisibility with designated landscapes occurs.
<b>Experiential Susceptibility to Change to the proposed development</b>				
A landscape with prominent visual and/or aural intrusion and close relationship with large scale built development/-infrastructure. A landscape that contains many light sources and essentially suffers from widespread light pollution.	A busy landscape with frequent visual and/or aural intrusion and nearby relationship with large scale built development/-infrastructure. A landscape that contains frequent light sources and suffers from light pollution.	A partially tranquil landscape with limited visual and/or aural intrusion, some relationship with built development/ infrastructure may be present. A landscape that contains some light sources.	A tranquil landscape with limited visual and/or aural intrusion, some relationship with built development/ -infrastructure may be present. A landscape that contains few light sources.	A very tranquil, wild or remote landscape with little or no sense of visual or aural intrusion. A landscape that contains very few light sources and provides dark skies.
<b>Overall Judgement of Susceptibility to Change to the proposed development</b>				
<b>Very Low susceptibility</b> – receptor largely reflects very low criteria above.	<b>Low susceptibility</b> – receptor largely reflects low criteria above.	<b>Medium value</b> – receptor largely reflects medium criteria above.	<b>High susceptibility</b> – receptor largely reflects high criteria above.	<b>Very High susceptibility</b> – receptor largely reflects very high criteria above.

A2.15 **Table EDP A2.3** provides an indication of the criteria by which the overall sensitivity of the landscape resource is judged within this assessment and considers both value and susceptibility independently.

**Table EDP A2.3:** Assessment of Landscape Sensitivity

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

A2.16 For visual receptors, judgements of susceptibility and value are closely interlinked considerations. For example, the most valued views are those that people go and visit because of the available view, and it is at those viewpoints that their expectations will be highest and thus most susceptible to change.

A2.17 **Table EDP A2.4** provides an indication of the criteria by which the overall sensitivity of a visual receptor is judged within this assessment and considers both value and susceptibility independently.

**Table EDP A2.4:** Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Category	Visual Receptor Criteria
<b>Very High</b>	<p>Designed view (which may be to or from a recognised heritage asset or other important viewpoint), or where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience. Key promoted viewpoint, e.g. interpretative signs. References in literature and art and/or guidebooks tourist maps. Protected view recognised in planning policy designation.</p> <p>Visual receptors with a very high susceptibility to change may include those with views from residential properties, especially from rooms normally occupied in waking or daylight hours; national public rights of way, e.g., National Trails and nationally designated countryside/landscape features with public access, which people might visit purely to experience the view; and visitors to heritage assets of national importance.</p>
<b>High</b>	<p>View of clear value but may not be formally recognised, e.g. framed view of high scenic value, or destination hill summits. It may also be inferred that the view is likely to have value, e.g. to local residents.</p> <p>Visual receptors with a high susceptibility to change are considered to be those whose attention or interest is focussed on their surroundings and may include those with views from recreational receptors where there is some appreciation of the landscape, e.g. golf and fishing; local public rights of way, access land and National Trust land, also panoramic viewpoints marked on maps; road routes promoted in tourist guides for their scenic value.</p>

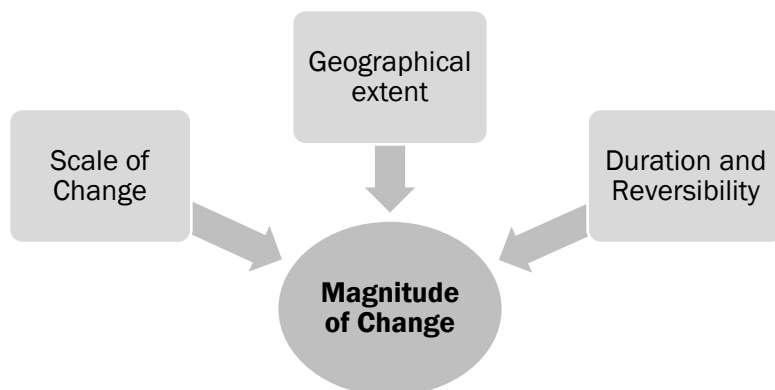
Category	Visual Receptor Criteria
<b>Medium</b>	View is not promoted or recorded in any published sources and may be typical of the views experienced from a given receptor. Visual receptors with a medium susceptibility to change may include people engaged in outdoor sport other than appreciation of the landscape, e.g. football and rugby, or road users on minor routes passing through rural or scenic areas.
<b>Low</b>	View of clearly lesser value than similar views experienced from nearby visual receptors that may be more accessible. Visual receptors with a low susceptibility to change may include road users on main road routes (motorways/A roads) and users of rail routes or people at their place of work (where the place of work may be in a sensitive location). Also views from commercial buildings where views of the surrounding landscape may have some limited importance.
<b>Very Low</b>	View affected by many landscape detractors and unlikely to be valued. Visual receptors with a very low susceptibility to change may include people at their place of work, indoor recreational or leisure facilities or other locations where views of the wider landscape have little or no importance.

A2.18 The tables above offer a template for assessing overall sensitivity of any landscape or visual receptor as determined by combining judgements of their susceptibility to the type of change or development proposed and the value attached to the landscape as set out at paragraph 5.39 of GLVIA3. However, the narrative in this report may demonstrate that assessment of overall sensitivity can change on a case-by-case basis.

A2.19 For example, a high susceptibility to change and a low value may result in a medium overall sensitivity, unless it can be demonstrated that the receptor is unusually susceptible or is in some particular way more valuable. A degree of professional judgement applies in arriving at the overall sensitivity for both landscape and visual receptors.

### Magnitude of Change

A2.20 The magnitude of any landscape or visual change is determined through a range of considerations particular to each receptor. As set out within GLVIA3 (Page 39), the following steps are considered in defining the magnitude of change:




**Figure EDP A2.1:** Assessing the Magnitude of Change

A2.21 Receptor locations from which views of the proposed development are not likely to occur will receive no change and therefore no effect. With reference to the ZTV and site survey, the magnitude of change is defined for receptor locations from where visibility of the proposed development is predicted to occur.

A2.22 **Table EDP A2.5** provides an indication of the criteria by which the size/scale of change at a landscape or visual receptor is judged within this assessment.

**Table EDP A2.5:** Landscape and Visual Receptor Size/Scale of Change Criteria

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

A2.23 **Table EDP A2.6** provides an indication of the criteria by which the geographical extent of the area affected is judged within this assessment.

**Table EDP A2.6:** Geographical Extent Criteria

	<b>Landscape Receptors</b>	<b>Visual Receptor Criteria</b>
<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center;"> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;"><b>Largest</b></div> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;">↑</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;">↕</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;">↓</div> <div><b>Smallest</b></div> </div>	Large scale effects influencing several landscape types or character areas.	Direct views at close range with changes over a wide horizontal and vertical extent.
	Effects at the scale of the landscape type or character areas within which the proposal lies.	Direct or oblique views at close range with changes over a notable horizontal and/or vertical extent.
	Effects within the immediate landscape setting of the site.	Direct or oblique views at medium range with a moderate horizontal and/or vertical extent of the view affected.
	Effects at the site level (within the development site itself).	Oblique views at medium or long range with a small horizontal/vertical extent of the view affected.
	Effects only experienced on parts of the site at a very localised level.	Long range views with a negligible part of the view affected.

A2.24 The third, and final, factor, in determining the predicted magnitude of change is duration and reversibility. Duration and reversibility are separate but linked considerations. Duration is judged according to the defined terms set out below, whereas reversibility is a judgement about the prospects and practicality of the particular effect being reversed in, for example, a generation. The categories used in this assessment are set out below.

**Duration**

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

**Reversibility**

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

A2.25 With consideration of the judgements set out above, **Table EDP A2.7** combines these judgements to provide the overall criteria by which the magnitude of change may be judged. While not all of the criteria may apply, the size/ scale, geographical extent Criteria and the duration/reversibility of effects on receptors are taken together to form a reasoned assessment of the magnitude of change. The overall magnitude of change is derived using professional judgement.

**Table EDP A2.7:** The Assessment of the Overall Magnitude of Change

Category	Receptor Criteria
<b>Very High</b>	Total loss of, or major alteration to key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline condition. Addition of elements which strongly conflict with the key characteristics of the existing landscape. The proposed development would create a new focus and have a defining influence on the view. Landscape and visual effects are typically large in scale, resulting in a permanent and irreversible change, influencing several landscape types or character areas. Visual changes would be experienced in direct, close ranging views with changes over a wide horizontal and vertical extent.
<b>High</b>	Notable loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline condition. Addition of elements that are prominent and may conflict with the key characteristics of the existing landscape. The proposed development would be clearly noticeable, and the view would be fundamentally altered by its presence. Direct or oblique views at close range with changes over a notable horizontal and/or vertical extent. Notable landscape and visual effects may be experienced in the medium to long-term, with possible conversion to original state, at the scale of the landscape type or character area/s within which the proposal lies.
<b>Medium</b>	Partial loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline condition. Addition of elements that may be evident but do not necessarily conflict with the key characteristics of the existing landscape within the immediate setting of the site. The proposed development would form a new and recognisable element within the view which is likely to be recognised by the receptor. Visual change would be experienced in direct or oblique views at medium range with a moderate horizontal and/or vertical extent of the view affected. Effects may be partially reversible to a different state, being experienced in the medium term.
<b>Low</b>	Minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline landscape. Addition of elements, largely at the site level, that may not be uncharacteristic within the existing landscape. The proposed development would form a minor constituent of an oblique view, being partially visible or at sufficient distance to be a small component at medium or long range and with a small horizontal/vertical extent of the view affected. The duration of the change may be short-term, being reversible to a similar original state.
<b>Very Low</b>	Barely discernible loss or alteration to key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline landscape. Addition of elements, experienced on parts of the site at a very localised level, not uncharacteristic within the existing landscape. The proposed development would form a barely noticeable component of the view, often being seen as a small component in a long-range view where, although slightly altered, the change would be similar to the baseline situation. Effects may be temporary and quickly reversible to the original state of the baseline context.



## Significance of Effect

A2.26 The purpose of the EIA process is to identify the significant environmental effects (both beneficial and adverse) of development proposals. Schedule 4 to the EIA Regulations specifies the information to be included in all environmental statements, which should include a description of:

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

A2.27 In order to consider the likely significance of any effect, the sensitivity of each receptor is combined with the predicted magnitude of change to determine the significance of effect, with reference also made to the geographical extent, duration and reversibility of the effect within the assessment. Having taken such a wide range of factors into account when assessing sensitivity and magnitude at each receptor, the significance of effect can be derived by combining the sensitivity and magnitude in accordance with the matrix in **Table EDP A2.8**.

**Table EDP A2.8:** Level of Effects Matrix

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

A2.28 In certain cases, where additional factors may arise, a further degree of professional judgement may be applied when determining whether the overall change in the view will be significant or not. For example, in cases where a moderate effect is experienced by a high or very high sensitivity receptor, this may be considered to be significant. Similarly, where a moderate effect is experienced by a very low sensitivity receptor, this may not be considered significant. Where this occurs, further explanation is given within the assessment.

## Definition of Effects

A2.29 Taking into account the levels of effect described above, and with regard to effects being either adverse or beneficial, the following table represents a description of the range of effects likely at any one receptor.

**Table EDP A2.9:** Definition of Effect

<b>Category</b>	<b>Definition of Adverse Effects</b>	<b>Definition of Beneficial Effects</b>
<b>Very Substantial</b>	Typically, the landscape or visual receptor is very highly sensitive with the proposals representing a very high adverse magnitude of change. The changes would be at complete variance with the landscape character and would permanently diminish the integrity of a valued landscape or view.	The removal of substantial existing incongruous landscape or visual elements and the introduction or restoration of highly valued landscape elements or built form which would reinforce local landscape character and substantially improve landscape condition and visual amenity.
<b>Substantial</b>	Typically, the landscape or visual receptor has a very high to high sensitivity with the proposals representing a very high to high adverse magnitude of change to the view or landscape resource. Changes would result in a fundamental change to the landscape resource or visual amenity.	The removal of existing incongruous landscape/visual elements and the introduction or restoration of some valued landscape or visual elements would complement landscape character and improve landscape condition and improve the local visual amenity.
<b>Major</b>	Typically, the landscape or visual receptor has a high to medium sensitivity with the proposals representing a high to medium magnitude of change. The proposals would represent a material but non-fundamental change to the landscape resource or visual amenity.	The removal of some existing incongruous landscape elements and/or the introduction or restoration of some potentially valued landscape elements which reflect landscape character and result in some improvements to landscape condition and/or visual amenity.
<b>Moderate</b>	Typically, the landscape or visual receptor has a medium sensitivity with the proposals representing a medium magnitude of change. The proposals would result in a slight but non-material change to the landscape resource or visual amenity.	Some potential removal of incongruous landscape features or visual amenity, although more likely the existing landscape and/or resource is complemented by new landscape features or built features compliant with the local landscape and published landscape character assessments.
<b>Minor</b>	Typically, the landscape or visual receptor has a low sensitivity with the proposals representing a low magnitude of change. There would be a detectable but non-material change to the landscape resource of visual amenity.	The proposals would result in minimal positive change to the landscape or visual resource, either through perceptual or physical change, and any change would not be readily apparent but would be coherent with ongoing change and process, and coherent with published landscape character assessments.

Category	Definition of Adverse Effects	Definition of Beneficial Effects
<b>Negligible</b>	Typically, the landscape receptor has a very low sensitivity with the proposals resulting in very limited loss or alteration to the landscape resource or change to the view. There would be a barely perceptible change to the landscape resource or visual amenity.	There would be a barely perceptible positive or negative change to the landscape resource or visual amenity.

A2.30 Effects can be adverse (negative), beneficial (positive) or neutral. The landscape effects will be considered against the landscape baseline, which includes published landscape strategies or policies if they exist. Changes involving the addition of large-scale man-made objects are typically considered to be adverse as they are not usually actively promoted as part of published landscape strategies. Accordingly, the assessment of landscape effects as a result of these aspects of the proposed development will be assumed to be adverse, unless otherwise stated within the assessment.

A2.31 Visual effects are more subjective as people's perception of development varies through the spectrum of negative, neutral and positive attitudes. In the assessment of visual effects, the assessor will exercise objective professional judgement in assessing the level of effects and, unless otherwise stated, will assume that all effects are adverse, thus representing the worst-case scenario.

**Appendix EDP 3**  
**Photoviewpoints**  
**(edp7068\_d017 23 August 2024 RBa/MDu)**



Approximate extent of site

To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length

Approximate extent of site



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



the environmental  
dimension partnership

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www.edp-uk.co.uk  
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Grid Coordinates: 257045, 199115  
Date and Time: 19/04/2024 @ 11:09  
Projection: Planar  
Visualisation Type: 1

Horizontal Field of View: 39.6°  
Height of Camera: 1.6m  
Make, Model, Sensor: Sony A7 II (ILCE-7M2)  
Enlargement Factor: 100% @ A3

Direction of View: NE  
Distance: 650m  
aOD: 10m  
Focal Length: 50mm

date 23 AUGUST 2024  
drawing number edp7068\_d017  
drawn by RBa  
checked MDu  
QA JTF

client Pobl Housing  
project title Gwynfaen 2  
drawing title Photoviewpoint EDP 3

Approximate extent of site



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



the environmental  
dimension partnership

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

Grid Coordinates: **256060, 198067**  
Date and Time: **19/04/2024 @ 11:25**  
Projection: **Planar**  
Visualisation Type: **1**

Horizontal Field of View: **39.6°**  
Height of Camera: **1.6m**  
Make, Model, Sensor: **Sony A7 II (ILCE-7M2)**  
Enlargement Factor: **100% @ A3**

Direction of View: **NE**  
Distance: **1.9km**  
aOD: **10m**  
Focal Length: **50mm**

date **23 AUGUST 2024**  
drawing number **edp7068\_d017**  
drawn by **RBa**  
checked **MDu**  
QA **JTF**

client **Pobl Housing**  
project title **Gwynfaen 2**  
drawing title **Photoviewpoint EDP 4**



Photoviewpoint EDP 5: View from footpath 36/121 to the west of the Loughor Estuary, looking east towards the site



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



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

Grid Coordinates: 255463, 199203  
Date and Time: 19/04/2024 @ 11:40  
Projection: Planar  
Visualisation Type: 1

Horizontal Field of View: 39.6°  
Height of Camera: 1.6m  
Make, Model, Sensor: Sony A7 II (ILCE-7M2)  
Enlargement Factor: 100% @ A3

Direction of View: E  
Distance: 2.2km  
aOD: 12m  
Focal Length: 50mm

date: 23 AUGUST 2024  
drawing number: edp7068\_d017  
drawn by: RBa  
checked: MDu  
QA: JTF

client: Pobl Housing  
project title: Gwynfaen 2  
drawing title: Photoviewpoint EDP 5



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length

Approximate extent of site



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



the environmental  
dimension partnership

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

Grid Coordinates: 255403, 200833  
Date and Time: 19/04/2024 @ 12:40  
Projection: Planar  
Visualisation Type: 1

Horizontal Field of View: 39.6°  
Height of Camera: 1.6m  
Make, Model, Sensor: Sony A7 II (ILCE-7M2)  
Enlargement Factor: 100% @ A3

Direction of View: SE  
Distance: 2.6km  
aOD: 75m  
Focal Length: 50mm

date 23 AUGUST 2024  
drawing number edp7068\_d017  
drawn by RBa  
checked MDu  
QA JTF

client Pobl Housing  
project title Gwynfaen 2  
drawing title Photoviewpoint EDP 7

## Plans

**Plan EDP 1:** Site Location

(edp7068\_d005b 26 October 2023 PDa/DLe)

**Plan EDP 2:** Topographical Relief

(edp7068\_d011 08 December 2021 DJ/MD)

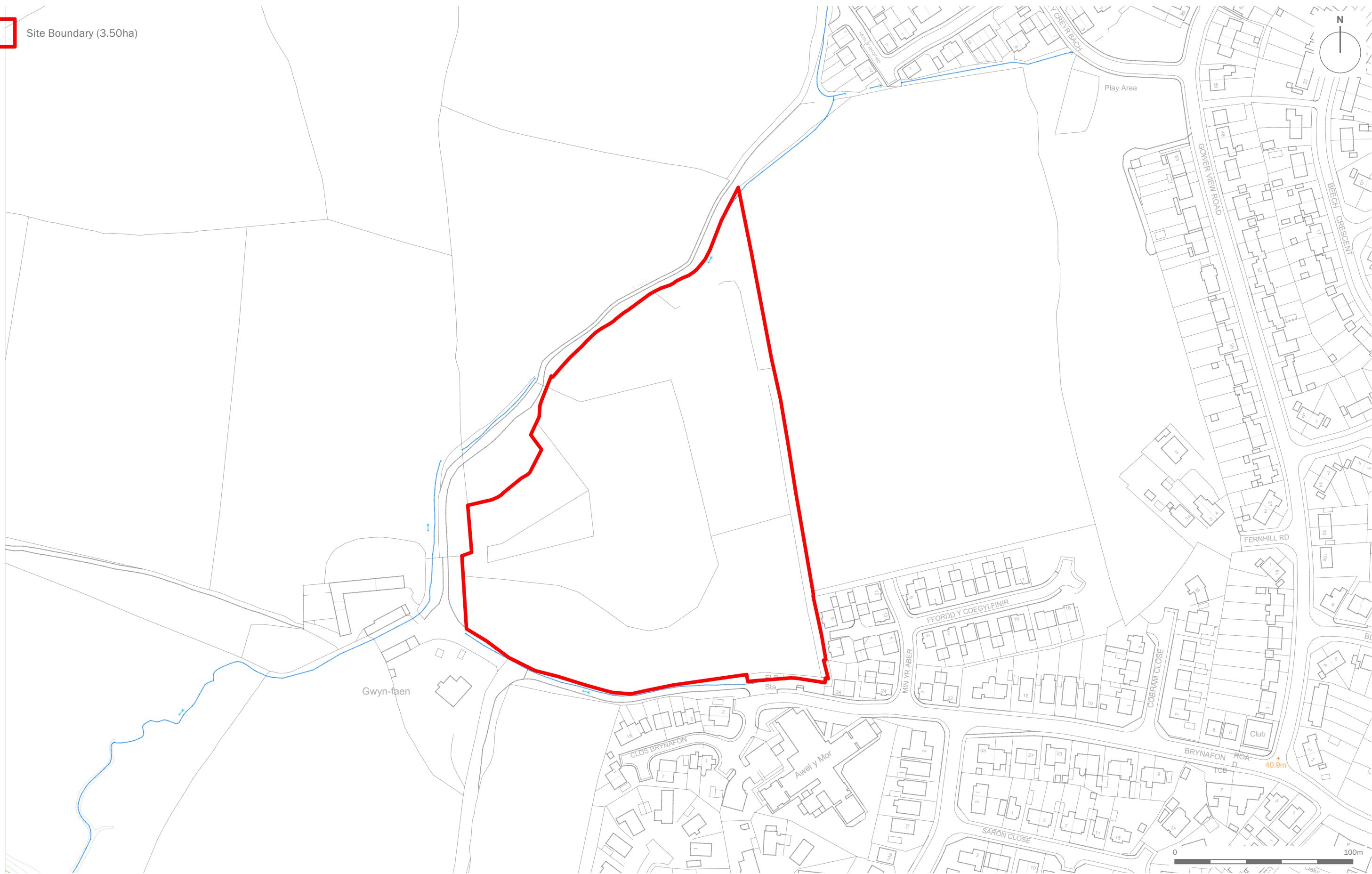
**Plan EDP 3:** Landscape Related Planning Considerations

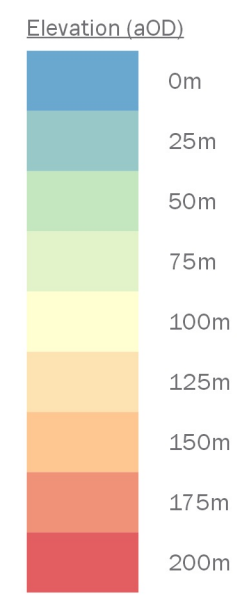
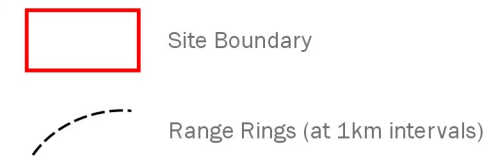
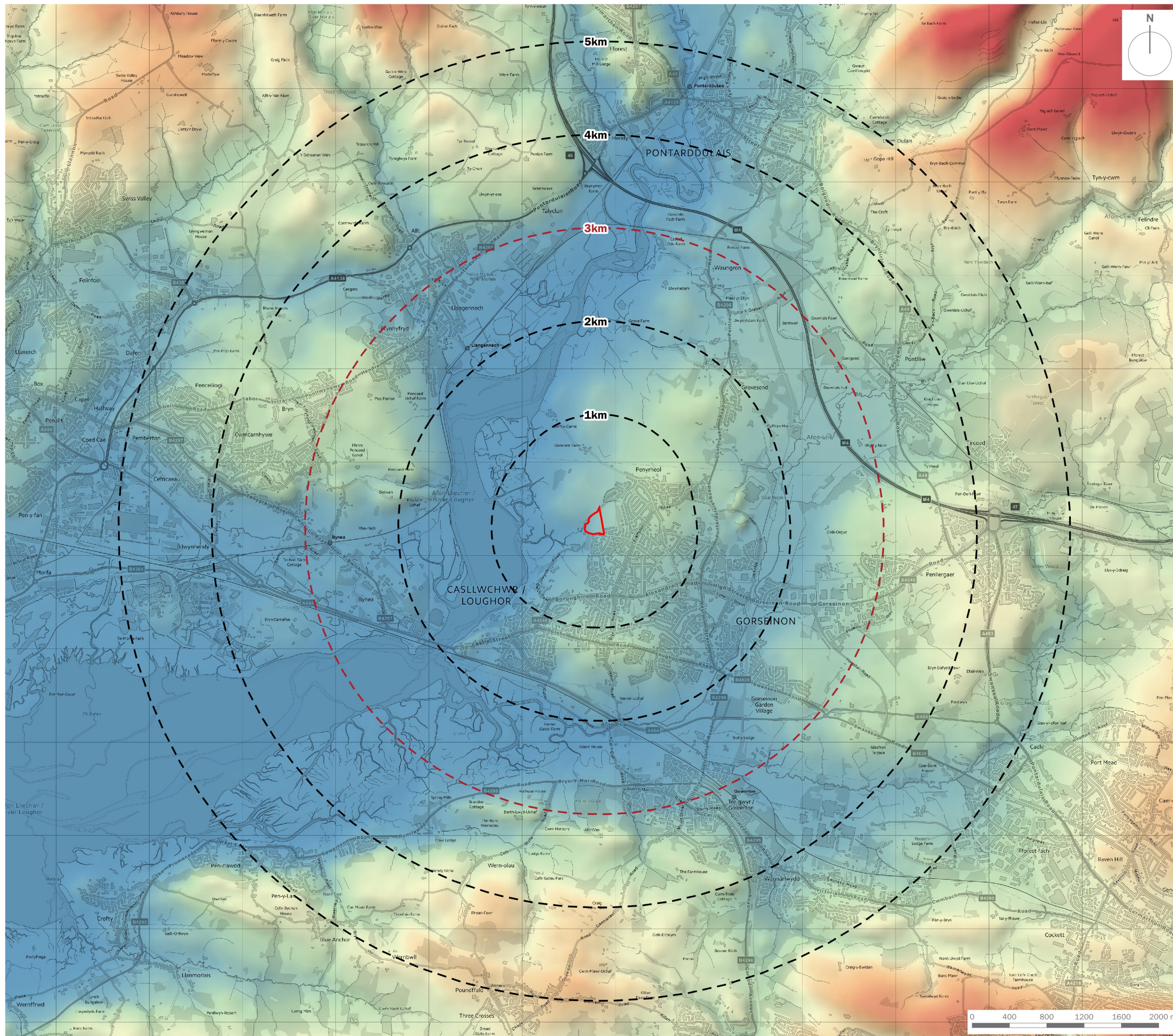
(edp7068\_d012a 27 August 2024 DJo/MDu)

**Plan EDP 4:** Zone of Theoretical Visibility and Photoviewpoint Plan

(edp7068\_d013a 01 May 2024 DJo/MDu)

Site Boundary (3.50ha)

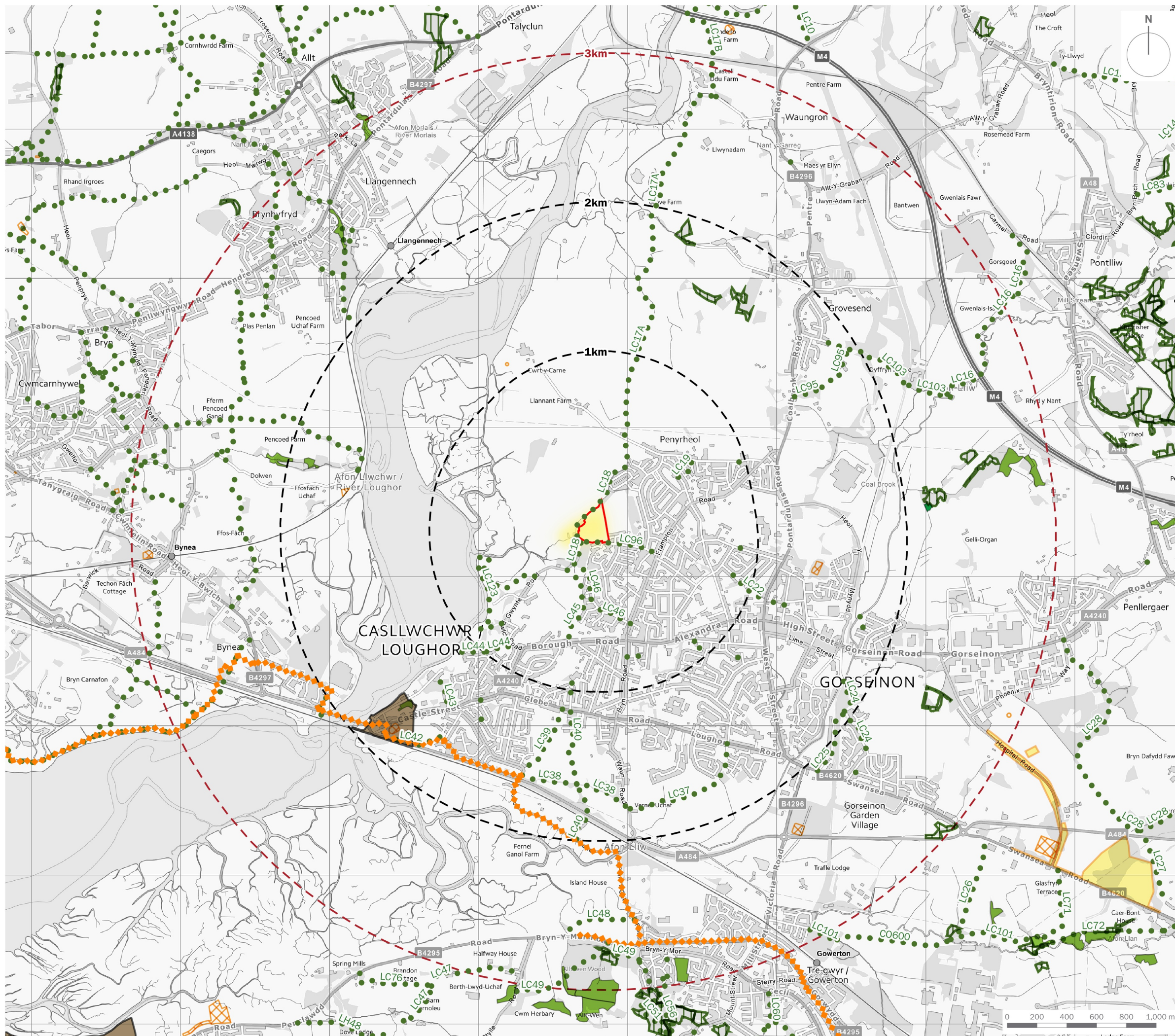




client	Pobl Housing	
project title	Gwynfaen 2	
drawing title	Plan EDP 2: Topographical Relief	
date	08 DECEMBER 2021	drawn by DJ
drawing number	edp7068_d011	checked MD
scale	1:40,000 @ A3	QA JTF



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- Site Boundary
- Range Rings (at 1km intervals)
- 3km Detailed Study Area
- Public Rights of Way (PRoW)
- National Cycle Route
- CROW Access Land
- Scheduled Monuments
- Conservation Areas
- Ancient Semi Natural Woodland
- Restored Ancient Woodland Site
- Ancient Woodland Site of Unknown Category
- Zone of Primary Visibility (ZPV)

client  
**Pobl Housing**

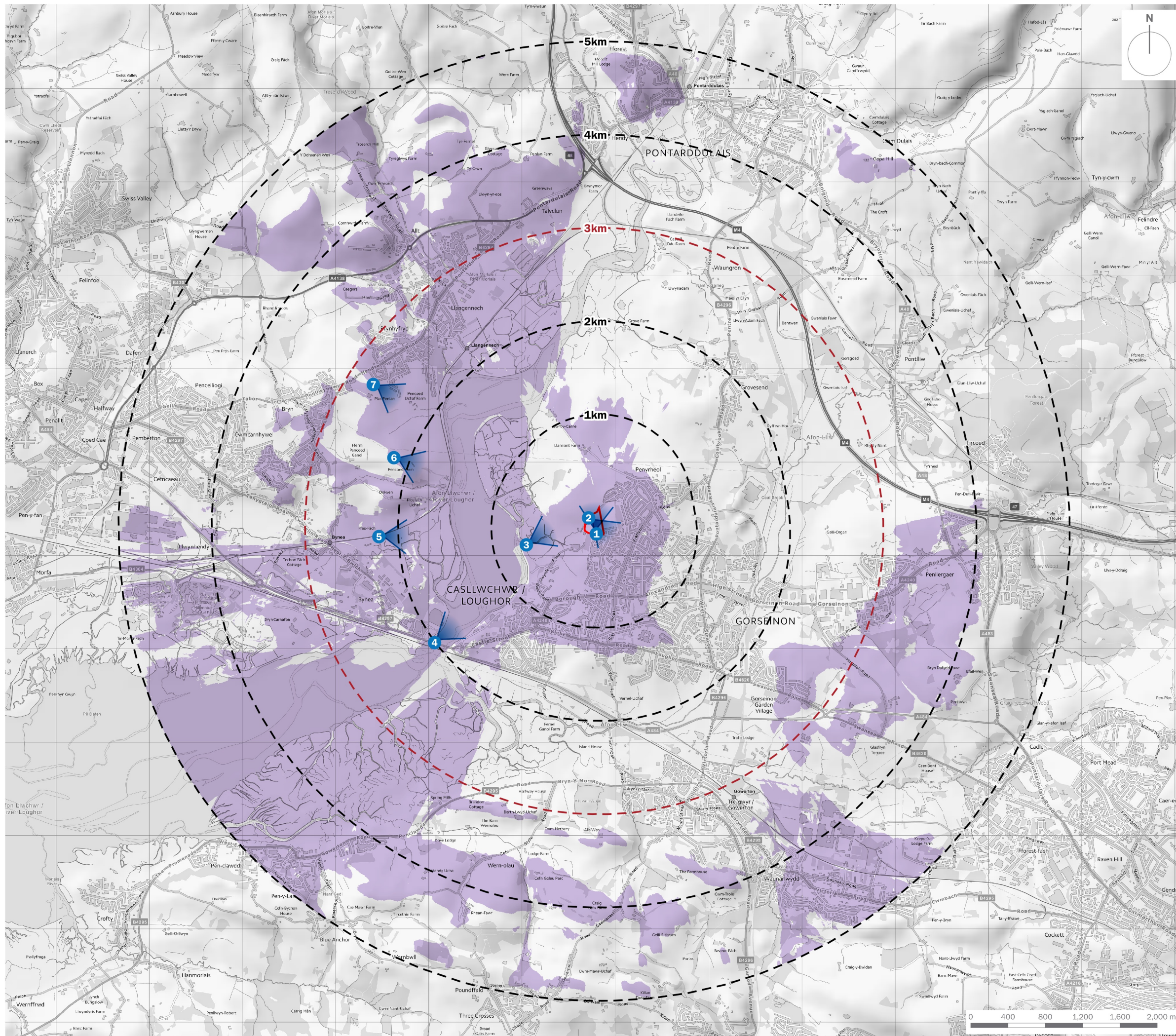
project title  
**Gwynfaen 2**






drawing title  
**Plan EDP 3: Landscape Related Planning Considerations**

date	<b>27 AUGUST 2024</b>	drawn by	<b>DJo</b>
drawing number	<b>edp7068_d012a</b>	checked	<b>MDu</b>
scale	<b>1:25,000 @ A3</b>	QA	<b>JFr</b>



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-  Site Boundary
-  Range Rings (at 1km intervals)
-  3km Detailed Study Area
-  Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)
-  Photoviewpoint Location

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

- 1.6m Receptor Elevation (Observer Height)
- 11m Proposed Development Locations (Ridge Height)
- 360 Degree Field of View
- LiDAR 2cm Digital Terrain Model (DTM) (vertical accuracy of +/- 5cm)

client

**Pobl Housing**

project title

**Gwynfaen 2**

drawing title

**Plan EDP 4: Zone of Theoretical Visibility and Photoviewpoint Plan**

date	<b>01 MAY 2024</b>	drawn by	<b>DJo</b>
drawing number	<b>edp7068_d013a</b>	checked	<b>MDu</b>
scale	<b>1:40,000 @ A3</b>	QA	<b>JTF</b>



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