



**McDonald's, Chirk
Park, Wrexham**

**Landscape and Visual
Appraisal**

Prepared by:
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On behalf of:
McDonald's Restaurants Ltd

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Executive Summary

- S1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been prepared by The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP), on behalf of McDonald's Restaurants Ltd, to inform planning proposals for the development of freestanding solar panel structures within the existing car park, two GRP enclosures and associated works, at McDonald's Chirk Park, within Wrexham County Borough Council Local Planning Authority (LPA).
- S2 The proposed development is a renewable energy scheme consisting of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels mounted on freestanding structures and associated infrastructure within an existing McDonald's Restaurant car park. The structures cover approximately 0.11 hectares (ha) and are illustrated on the Indicative Site Layout at **Appendix EDP 1**.
- S3 The site does not lie within or immediately adjacent to a nationally designated landscape although the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley National Landscape (which is hereafter referenced as the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)) as referenced in line with current management guidance) falls 1.5km to the west, as illustrated on **Plan EDP 3**.
- S4 Those receptors most likely to experience elevated effects (defined as moderate or above) are the character of the site itself and landscape and visual receptors that fall within the site boundary or within the Zone of Primary Visibility (ZPV) (see **Plan EDP 5**) and have sensitivity of medium or above, notably users of public rights of way (PRoW) and residents.
- S5 The elevated level of effect on these receptors is not due to poor design but is an inevitable result of a change in the height of the current built form across the landscape. Clearly the change of height will result in very high change to its visual and perceptual character. This fundamental change would be expected for any such development, including one with several existing detractors such as the A5 road corridor, which passes the site to the west. Such a change at the site-level, and for near sensitive receptors is unavoidable and should not, in and of itself, be a reason to raise an objection.
- S6 Across the study area, effects would reduce quickly with distance primarily as a result of existing intervening landscape features such as mature vegetation at and beyond the site boundaries.
- S7 Accordingly, this LVA concludes that the site has the capacity for the development as proposed and that there is no 'in principle' or policy landscape or visual reason why the site should not be developed.

Section 1

Introduction, Purpose and Methodology

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP) has been commissioned by McDonald's Restaurants Ltd (hereafter referred to as 'the applicant') to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) of proposals to develop freestanding solar panel structures above an existing restaurant car park, at McDonald's Chirk Park, Wrexham (hereafter referred to as 'the site'). The site falls within Wrexham County Borough Local Planning Authority (LPA) area, extends to 0.11 hectares (ha), and is briefly described in **Section 2** of this LVA.
- 1.2 EDP is an independent environmental planning consultancy with offices in Cirencester, Cheltenham and Cardiff. The practice provides advice to private and public sector clients throughout the UK in the fields of landscape, ecology, archaeology, cultural heritage, arboriculture, rights of way and masterplanning. Details of the practice can be obtained at our website (www.edp-uk.co.uk). EDP is a Registered Practice of the Landscape Institute ¹ specialising in the assessment of the effects of proposed development on the landscape.

THE SITE AND THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 1.3 **Plan EDP 1** illustrates the location of the site's boundaries and the study area for the LVA. The site context is the existing McDonald's Restaurant at Chirk Park, just east of the A5 Chirk Bypass, approximately 4km to the south-west of Ruabon and approximately 1km north-east of Chirk, within Wrexham County Borough (illustrated in **Image EDP 1.1**).

¹ LI Practice Number 1010



Image EDP 1.1: View south-west towards the site from the Black Park Roundabout.

- 1.4 The site comprises an existing McDonald's drive-thru restaurant and associated infrastructure including car parking, a seating area and access road, with the proposed solar panel structures to be installed across the car park area illustrated in **Image EDP 1.2**.



Image EDP 1.2: View across the existing restaurant car park.

- 1.5 The site is located adjacent to a tree belt and the A5 Chirk Bypass to the west, Old Black Park Road, which connects from the A5 to the B5070 to the north, a tree belt to the east and agricultural fields to the south. The site is physically well contained, the proximity to nearby road corridors and tree belts creates a visual sense of enclosure to the north, east and west, whilst to the south the site lies adjacent to further field parcels enclosed by woodland.
- 1.6 This LVA is part of a suite of documents accompanying a full planning application for the proposed development of the installation of freestanding solar panel structures within the car park, with two GRP enclosures and associated works, the proposals are illustrated on the Indicative Site Layout at **Appendix EDP 1**.

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THIS LVA

- 1.7 The purpose of this LVA is to identify the baseline conditions of the site and surrounding area and to determine those landscape and visual characteristics that might inform the design of the development proposals, including recommendations for mitigation. It then provides an assessment of the landscape and visual effects predicted to arise from development on the site with reference to the baseline analysis.
- 1.8 In undertaking the assessment described in this LVA, EDP has:
- Undertaken a thorough data trawl of relevant designations and background documents, described in **Section 2**;
 - Assessed the existing (baseline) condition and character of the site and its setting, described in **Section 3**;
 - Assessed the existing visual (baseline) context, especially any key views to and from the site (**Section 4**). The establishment of baseline landscape and visual conditions, when evaluated against the proposed development, allow the identification and evaluation of landscape effects later in the LVA at **Section 6**;
 - Described the landscape aspects of the proposed development that may influence any landscape or visual effects (**Section 5**);
 - In **Section 6**, assessed the landscape and visual effects in accordance with the approach described below;
 - Reached overall conclusions in **Section 7**; and
 - Provided an analysis of the likely landscape and visual effects of the proposed scheme, which is determined by combining the magnitude of the predicted change with the assessed sensitivity of the identified receptors. The nature of any predicted effects is also identified (i.e. positive/negative, permanent/reversible).

METHODOLOGY ADOPTED FOR THE ASSESSMENT

- 1.9 The proposed development assessed by this LVA is not subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). This LVA has, therefore, been undertaken in accordance with the principles embodied in 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – Third Edition (LI/IEMA, 2013)' (GLVIA3) and other best practice guidance insofar as it is relevant to non-EIA schemes.
- 1.10 **Familiarisation:** EDP's study has included reviews of aerial photographs, web searches, LPA publications and landscape character assessments. EDP has also obtained, where possible, information about relevant landscape and other designations such as National Landscapes (formerly Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)), conservation areas and parks and gardens, listed on Cadw's register for Historic Parks and Gardens.
- 1.11 **Consultation:** Photoviewpoint locations have been agreed with the applicant's team, via email dated 11 December 2023. Consultation with the LPA was suggested but was not successful.
- 1.12 **Field Assessment:** EDP has undertaken a comprehensive field assessment of local site circumstances, including a photographic survey of the character and fabric of the site and its surroundings, using photography from a number of representative viewpoints. The field assessment was undertaken by a qualified landscape architect in January 2024 in clear weather conditions.
- 1.13 **Acknowledgement of any shortcomings:** It is acknowledged that foliage provides additional filtering of views during certain months. This report has therefore sought to capture winter photography (January 2024) to provide a 'worst case' scenario in terms of visual screening created by foliage, resulting in a more robust landscape and visual assessment.
- 1.14 **Design Inputs:** EDP's field assessment has informed a process whereby the development proposals have been refined to avoid, minimise or compensate for landscape effects. Such measures are summarised in **Section 6**.
- 1.15 **Assessment Methodology:** Predicted effects on the landscape resource arising from the proposed development (as detailed in **Section 6** of this LVA) have been determined in accordance with the principles embedded within published best practice guidance insofar as the assessment adopts the following well-established, structured approach:
- Likely effects on landscape character and visual amenity are dealt with separately;
 - The assessment of likely effects is reached using a structured methodology for defining sensitivity and magnitude, which is contained as **Appendix EDP 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;

- As advised in GLVIA3, the Appraisal takes into account the effects of any proposed mitigation; and
- Typically, a 15-year time horizon is used as the basis for conclusions about the residual levels of effect. Fifteen years is a well-established and accepted compromise between assessing the shorter-term effects (which may often be rather 'raw' before any proposed mitigation has had time to take effect) and an excessively long time period.

STUDY AREA

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

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

Section 2

Findings of EDP Data Trawl and Policy Review

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

BACKGROUND PUBLISHED EVIDENCE BASE DOCUMENTS

- 2.3 The following documents are relevant and will be discussed as appropriate later in this report:
- National Landscape Character Area 13: Deeside and Wrexham (Natural Resources Wales (NRW), 2014);
 - Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Management Plan (2020–2025);
 - Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996–2011 (adopted February 2005); and
 - LANDMAP Character Assessment.

FINDINGS OF EDP DATA TRAWL

Landscape-related Designations and Other Considerations

- 2.4 Landscape-related designations and policy considerations within 4km of the are shown on **Plan EDP 3**. In summary:
- National landscape designations: The site itself does not lie within a nationally designated landscape. The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB is located approximately 1.5km to the west of the site, however, intervisibility experienced to and from the proposed development is limited;
 - Local landscape designations: The site does not lie within a locally designated landscape; and
 - The site does not lie within Green Belt, a Strategic Wedge, Green Wedge or Important Local Gap.

Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- 2.5 The site falls outside the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB but is within 1.5km of its boundary.

2.6 The Draft Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Management Plan (2020–2025)² sets out the special qualities in regard to Landscape Quality and Character. These comprise:

- *“Tranquillity: Tranquillity is associated with an atmosphere of calm and stillness; peace and quiet; and with dark night skies”; and*
- *“Remoteness and Wildness, Space and Freedom: Remoteness and wildness is associated with a feeling of trepidation and sometimes even danger. The sublime. Space and freedom are related to access to the landscape and the uninterrupted and extensive views from the high places within it. Bro and the link between communities and their landscape and a sense of belonging and attachment to the landscape”.*

2.7 The Management Plan then sets out the Strategic Objectives that relate to the special qualities that contribute to the overall vision of the AONB. From a landscape perspective, the following objectives are considered relevant:

- NLH01 – *“Promote and develop programmes to conserve and enhance the features that maintain the Special Qualities, landscape character and natural environment of the AONB”; and*
- NLH08 – *“Enable and encourage effective broadleaf woodland, veteran tree and hedgerow management, including strategic planting, tree protection, thinning and natural regeneration”.*

2.8 In consideration of the above, and due to the lack of intervisibility between the site and the AONB, as determined through desk- and field-based assessment, it is found that there will be no effect on the landscape character, visual amenity or key characteristics of the AONB or its setting and it is scoped out of further assessment within this LVA.

Heritage Matters

2.9 Heritage assets can influence the visual character of the landscape and enrich its historic value. This LVA addresses heritage assets only insofar as they are components of the wider contemporary landscape – not in terms of their significance and value as heritage assets, which is a matter addressed by a separate Heritage Assessment. Heritage assets across the study area are summarised below:

- There are no designated heritage assets within the site;
- There are no Scheduled Monuments within 1km of the site;
- There are no Registered Parks and Gardens (RPG) within the 1km study area; and
- There are six listed buildings that fall within 1km.

²<https://modern.gov.denbighshire.gov.uk/documents/s43568/Clwydian%20Range%20and%20Dee%20Valley%20AONB%20Management%20Plan%202020-2025%20-%20DRAFT.pdf?LLL=0> – accessed 16.01.24.

2.10 Listed buildings within 1km of the site comprise:

- Halton Former Mission Church (Grade II), which is located approximately 150m north-east of the site, to the south-west of the hamlet of Halton;
- Several buildings associated with Halton Farm approximately 500m east of the site (comprising Halton Farmhouse (Grade II), Halton Farm Mounting Block (Grade II) and the two adjoining ranges at Halton Farm (Grade II));
- Ley Farmhouse (Grade II) set back some 500m south-west of the site; and
- The Lodge (Grade II), which stands in its own grounds back from the minor road off the B5070 to the village of Halton some 800m west of the site.

Ecology Matters

2.11 A separate Ecology Assessment would consider the ecological assets on the site and within the study area. Ecological assets are summarised below:

- There are no ecological assets within the site;
- Within the 1km study area, there are two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which consist of the River Dee, and Nant-y-Belan and Prynella Woods located 1km to the north of the site at their closest point; and
- The River Dee and Bala Lake Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is located approximately 1km north of the site at the closest point.

Arboricultural Matters

2.12 A separate Arboricultural Assessment would consider the arboricultural assets on the site and within the study area. The following matters are relevant to the scope of this LVA:

- Ancient Woodland: There are no areas of Ancient Woodland within the site, but there are several areas that fall within the 1km study area. These include:
 - Within Pen-y-Park Wood to the north-west;
 - At Halton Wood to the north-east; and
 - At Chirk Green Wood to the south-west.

Public Access and Rights of Way

2.13 A review of online maps for Wrexham County Borough reveals the following public rights of way (PRoW) and open access land (OAL) within the study area:

- There are no PRoW routes that cross the site directly;

- Across the study area, there is a generally good network of PRow that links between roads, hamlets and larger settlements;
- Footpath ref. Chirk 19 runs roughly north to south-west from the A5 link road towards Chirk, west of the site and the Chirk Bypass;
- Footpath ref. Chirk 20 runs east to west towards the B5070 some 400m to the west of the site;
- Footpaths ref. Chirk 07 and ref. Chirk 08 run roughly east to west from Green Lane approximately 330m and 470m respectively south-east of the site; and
- Footpath ref. Chirk 01 runs east to west from Halton towards Pentre approximately 440m to the north.

2.14 Two Long Distance Trails cross the site context:

- The Maelor Way shared use route linking the Sandstone Trail at Grindley Brook to Offa's Dyke National Trail at Chirk; and
- The Wat's Dyke Way 40 mile Heritage Trail that links Holywell to Llanymynech.

2.15 There are no areas of OAL within the 1km study area.

PLANNING POLICY BASELINE

Local Planning Policy

Adopted Local Plan (Published)

2.16 The site is situated within Wrexham County Borough LPA and is subject to policy set out in the adopted Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996–2011³ (adopted February 2005), which includes over-arching general development policies, to which the development proposals will be tested. A review of the local planning policy circumstances is summarised below:

- Policy PS2: Broad Location of Development: *"Development must not materially detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space, or the quality of the natural environment"*;
- Policy PS3: Broad Location of Development: *"Development should use previously developed brownfield land comprising vacant, derelict or underused land in preference to the use of greenfield land, wherever possible..."*;
- Policy EC4: Hedgerows, Trees and Woodland: Development proposals should *"provide for the conservation and management of hedgerows, trees, orchards, woodland,*

³ Wrexham Unitary Development Plan - <https://www.wrexham.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-04/udp-statement.pdf>
Accessed 25.10.2023.

wildlife and other natural landscape and water features, and include new planting in order to enhance the character of the landscape and townscape”; and

- Policy PS12: Renewable Energy: *“Proposals for the generation of energy from renewable sources will be supported provided that the wider environmental benefits are not outweighed by any detrimental impacts of the proposed development (including any electricity transmission facilities needed) on the landscape, public safety, and the local environment”.*

Emerging Local Plan

2.17 The Emerging Draft Wrexham Local Development Plan (LDP) 2013–2028⁴ has gone through public consultation, however, the timeline in regard to this plan being formally adopted is currently under review by Wrexham County Borough Council. Relevant policies of relevance to this report are summarised below:

- Policy SP15: Natural Environment: *“Development will only be supported where it protects, conserves and enhances the natural environment”;*
- Policy SP19: Climate Change: *“To mitigate against the effects of climate change and adapt to its impacts, development proposals will need to demonstrate that they have taken into account ... promoting energy efficiency and increasing the supply of renewable energy”;* and
- Policy RE2: Renewable Energy Schemes: *“Proposals to generate energy from renewable and low carbon sources will be supported, with small scale and/or community-based proposals (less than 5MW) for wind, solar, biomass, energy from waste, anaerobic digestion, and hydropower and other renewable sources will be supported in appropriate locations”.*

⁴ Wrexham Local Development Plan (LDP) (2013-2028) –
https://wrexham-consult.objective.co.uk/portal/ldp/dldp/local_development_plan - Accessed 05.12.2023.

Section 3

Existing (Baseline) Conditions: Landscape Character

- 3.1 This section provides an assessment of the 'baseline' (existing) conditions in respect of the character of the site and its landscape context. It summarises any relevant published landscape assessments that contribute to a better understanding of the landscape context. 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.

NATIONAL CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

- 3.2 At a national level, the character of Wales has been classified into National Landscape Character Areas (NLCA) published by NRW. The site is located within NLCA 13: Deeside and Wrexham⁵.
- 3.3 NLCA 13: Deeside and Wrexham is described as area that *"encompasses the main concentration of built up areas that fall along the Dee and foothills of Wales. There is great contrast between the large, open estuary mouth, it's large skies and tidal ebb and flow, and the busy developed areas around Connah's Quay, Queensferry and Wrexham. The associated transport links of the A55 Expressway, the A548 coast road and the A483 and A494 trunk roads, present much traffic noise, movement and night lighting"*. The area features *"mature, lowland countryside and, in places, there is a sense of smallness and seclusion offered by agricultural enclosure and it's interplay with trees, copses, woodlands and small river valleys"*.
- 3.4 While NLCA 13 is broadly representative of the site's landscape context, such as the proximity to major trunk roads, it is likely to be a too broad a scale to reliably inform an assessment of the suitability of the development proposals. This assessment therefore includes a character assessment that is described and evaluated in further detail within the LANDMAP Character Assessment.

LANDMAP LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

- 3.5 In order to assess the acceptability of development, in landscape terms at any specific location, it is important to understand the landscape and visual amenity circumstances against which any decisions are made, based on both published Landscape Character Areas and more site specific landscape assessment undertaken through field site studies and site appraisal.
- 3.6 The landscape character of the site and the surrounding area is defined within the LANDMAP resource managed by NRW. LANDMAP is the national information system used

⁵ NLCA 13 Deeside and Wrexham - <https://cdn.cyfoethnaturiol.cymru/media/682570/nlca13-deeside-and-wrexham-description.pdf?mode=pad&rnd=131550580272430000> - Accessed 25.10.2023.

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

3.7 The site is contained within LANDMAP 'aspect areas'⁶ summarised in **Table EDP 3.1**. Each aspect area is described, assessed and assigned one of four overall grades of value below:

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

Table EDP 3.1: LANDMAP Character Assessment

Aspect Area	Area Name/Classification	Evaluation
Geological Landscape	Black Park Lowland hills and valleys/Undulating lowland hill terrain.	Moderate
Landscape Habitat	Halton Mosaic Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats/Grassland and Marsh/Improved Grassland.	Moderate
Visual and Sensory	A5 Corridor North and East of Chirk Lowland/Rolling Lowland/Open Rolling Lowland.	Moderate
Historic Landscape	Halton Rural environment/ Agricultural/Irregular Fieldsapes.	Outstanding
Cultural Landscape	A5 Corridor North and East of Chirk Lowland/Rolling Lowland/Open Rolling Lowland.	-

⁶ LANDMAP aspect areas - <https://smnr-nrw.hub.arcgis.com/apps/c7770d2881394c899123bae210afe370/explore> - accessed 05.12.2023.

- 3.8 An analysis of the LANDMAP character assessment identifies that the visual and sensory aspect layer (A5 Corridor North and East of Chirk) is evaluated to be of 'moderate' overall value. The aspect area is described within the published assessment as (with emphasis added by EDP in relation to the site and immediate context):

"An area of flat open farmland with a large to medium sized field pattern lying between industrial and settlement sprawl to the south of the study area. The aspect is typified by the presence of the two principal transport/road corridors of the area - the A5 running east/west and south and the A483 running north/south, the area also contains the Llangollen Canal and major freight and passenger rail lines."

- 3.9 The evaluation goes on to say that:

"The area has been very fragmented by differing and conflicting land uses and as a result there is no overlying or cohesive management. Areas are becoming further degraded by development expansion".

- 3.10 The LANDMAP assessment identifies that the geological landscape aspect area covering the site is identified as 'moderate'. The justification for the evaluation is that the site itself is a *"Low rounded ridge east of Chirk, elongated broadly north to south with coal measures, bedrock exposed to the west and glacial clay cover to the east"*.

- 3.11 The Landscape Habitat aspect area covering the site is evaluated as 'moderate'. The reason for this evaluation is in regard to the area being *"mainly grassland on the eastern edge of Chirk, with some arable cropping, on the more gently sloping land in a wide bend of the River Ceiriog. Much of the grassland is intensively used for silage. Fields are medium sized, with well-maintained hedges. There are small areas of woodland, in the south, the remains of an old area of parkland, dissected by the recently completed Chirk bypass. The River Ceiriog forms the eastern boundary of the area and forms an interesting habitat"*. The condition of this aspect area is identified as *"unassessed"* and is experiencing a trend of *"declining"*.

- 3.12 The Cultural Landscape aspect area has not been given an overall evaluation. However, it is identified as having the following characteristics:

- *"Weak"* in terms of sense of place/local distinctiveness;
- *"Moderate"* value in the aspect of character; and
- *"Low"* scenic quality.

- 3.13 The Historic Landscape value aspect area is indicated as having an 'outstanding' overall evaluation. It is important to acknowledge that this evaluation takes into consideration the:

"Diverse, gently- and more steeply sloping upland edge south of the river Dee and north of Chirk Castle and Park... Mixed fieldscapes including more anciently enclosed irregular fields together with more regular, straight-sided post-medieval fields probably representing late landscape reorganisation and enclosure... Field boundary types include ancient and more recent hedges and modern post-and-wire fences... Widely dispersed farms of

medieval and later origin with small modern settlement at Halton superseding former row of miners' cottages... The area includes a variety of significant archaeological remains including a cluster of early prehistoric funerary sites, a later prehistoric enclosed farmstead, a stretch of the early medieval Offa's and Wat's Dykes, a post-medieval colliery and associated mine shafts, as well as structures relating to transport history including Telford's Holyhead Road (A5), Llangollen Canal - which here is part of the Pontcysyllte World Heritage Site". This aspect area is experiencing a trend that is remaining "constant".

REVIEW OF SITE CIRCUMSTANCES AGAINST PUBLISHED DOCUMENTATION

- 3.14 A site visit took place in January 2024 in clear weather conditions. The visit was complemented by a review of aerial photography, mapping and field assessments from publicly accessible locations (e.g. from local roads and PRow).
- 3.15 The site comprises an existing McDonald's restaurant with drive thru facility and associated infrastructure including a car park, access road and outdoor seating area. To the west, the site lies adjacent to a tree belt which borders the A5 Chirk Bypass. To the north, the site is bound by a link road which connects to the A5 at Halton Roundabout. To the east, the site borders an area of woodland adjacent to Green Lane and with field parcels to the south.
- 3.16 The site is physically well contained, with the A5 road corridor and tree belt creating a sense of enclosure between the site and the surrounding context to the west. Existing road infrastructure connecting to Halton Roundabout and roadside vegetation enclose the site from the north as does woodland to the east between the site and Green Lane. To the south, the site lies adjacent to further field parcels which are enclosed by woodland.
- 3.17 Overall, the site is considered to reflect most of the key character area descriptions identified above in the LANDMAP character assessment. Specific similarities have been identified between the site and its relevant aspect areas, which are summarised below.
- 3.18 The landscape habitat aspect area is reflective of the immediate site context as it consists of *"mainly grassland on the eastern edge of Chirk, with some arable cropping...Fields are medium sized, with well maintained hedges. There are small areas of woodland"*. This is noted chiefly with the area of woodland that borders the site to the east providing visual enclosure to the site from the varying sized fields beyond. These fields appear to be mostly of managed grassland, which support areas of cattle grazing.
- 3.19 In historic landscape terms, LANDMAP evaluated the Halton aspect area to be of 'outstanding' value. In regard to the site and its immediate context, these provide limited contribution to this evaluation, given its mostly rural setting and degree of separation from other built form within Chirk. The immediate context does comprise elements including *"mixed fieldscapes"* and the *"small modern settlement at Halton superseding former row of miners' cottages"* and *"structures relating to transport history including Telford's Holyhead Road (A5)"*. Further features, however, such as the *"Llangollen Canal - which here is part of the Pontcysyllte World Heritage Site"*, which mostly constitute to the 'outstanding' value, fall beyond the immediate context of the site.

- 3.20 From a visual and sensory perspective, the site's immediate context is somewhat reflective of the evaluation provided in the LANDMAP assessment in that it comprises areas of “*flat open farmland*” and is an aspect that is “*typified by the presence of the two principal transport/road corridors of the area - the A5 running east/west and south and the A483 running north/south*”. Areas of farmland border the site to the south, and beyond the woodland to east. Fields are of mixed sizes supporting areas of intensive agricultural grazing. The presence of the Chirk Bypass to the east exerts a dominant presence within the site context, creating a visual and physical barrier to the wider landscape further west, as well as being the source of significant traffic noise within the site, which disrupts the wider rural tranquillity.

Assessing the Value of the Landscape Resource

- 3.21 GLVIA3 sets out the requirements for considering the sensitivity of landscape resources at paragraphs 5.39 to 5.47, and states that: “*Landscape receptors need to be assessed firstly in terms of their sensitivity, combining judgements of their susceptibility to the type of change or development proposed and the value attached to the landscape*”.
- 3.22 Landscape value is the ‘inherent’ component, which is independent of the development proposal, while the other component, susceptibility, is development specific.
- 3.23 When considering landscape value, GLVIA3 advocates that the starting point should be a review of existing landscape designations, including those at a local and national level, to identify what it is that is valued sufficiently to warrant a greater level of protection. In this instance, the site is not within a nationally or locally designated landscape, as confirmed on **Plan EDP 3**. GLVIA3 makes it clear that not being located within a designated landscape does not mean that the site has no value from a landscape perspective.
- 3.24 Landscape value of non-designated landscapes is informed by a range of factors as set out in the Technical Guidance Note (TGN) 02/21: Assessing landscape value outside national designations⁷. These factors assist in delivering a framework for an objective landscape assessment of value. The criteria defined within TGN 02/21 is given below in **Table EDP 3.2**, with EDP's observations alongside. These observations are based on published material and from EDP's field assessment. For each of the criteria, the site and local area is judged on the basis of a range of form, ‘good’ through ‘ordinary’ to ‘poor’, in terms of the performance against the criteria.

⁷ <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/publication/tgn-02-21-assessing-landscape-value-outside-national-designations/> - accessed 05.12.2023

Table EDP 3.2: Consideration of Landscape Value.

GLVIA/TGN Factor	The Site	The Wider Site Context
Natural Heritage: Landscape with clear evidence of ecological, geological, geomorphological or physiographic interest which contribute positively to the landscape.	Poor. The site consists of an existing McDonald's drive-thru restaurant and associated infrastructure. The limited ecological interest is confined to the areas of established hedgerows that border the site.	Good. The wider context contains greater ecological interest including woodland to the north-east, mature vegetation to the east and west and undulating topography reflective of a traditional agricultural landscape.
Cultural Heritage: Landscape with clear evidence of archaeological, historical or cultural interest which contribute positively to the landscape.	Poor. The site is somewhat limited in regard to historical and cultural context due to its setting and development function.	Ordinary. Historic field boundaries, and the pattern and scale that they provide, are present in the immediate context that surrounds the site.
Landscape Condition: Landscape which is in a good physical state both with regard to individual elements and overall landscape structure.	Ordinary. The site comprises existing development with relatively good quality boundary vegetation. There has been some hedgerow removal but there are mature landscape features present.	Good. The wider site context features woodland, robust field boundary hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees all of which add to the overall landscape structure.
Associations: Landscape which is connected with notable people, events and the arts.	Poor. There are no known associations between the site, or its wider context, and notable people, events or the arts.	
Distinctiveness: Landscape that has a strong sense of identity.	Poor. Beyond being an existing restaurant development in close proximity to major road corridor, the site has no particularly strong sense of identity or distinctiveness.	Ordinary. The wider site context is reflective of local identity with features such as the mixed sized field pattern and hedgerow field boundaries.
Recreational: Landscape offering recreational opportunities where experience of landscape is important.	Poor. The site has no recreational value and contains no PRoW or open access land.	Good. The wider site context features numerous PRoW, which provide enhanced recreational value of the landscape.
Perceptual (Scenic): Landscape that appeals to the senses, primarily the visual sense.	Poor. The tranquillity of the site is limited due to the proximity of the Chirk Bypass, which has a dominant sound impact across the site. Vehicles on the link roads to the Halton Roundabout can also be heard.	Ordinary. Agricultural activity within the surrounding context is sporadic with greater tranquillity across the wider landscape apparent.

GLVIA/TGN Factor	The Site	The Wider Site Context
Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity): Landscape with a strong perceptual value notably wildness, tranquillity and/or dark skies.	Poor. The site is close to the Chirk Bypass and other surrounding roads. As a result, the site is not wild or tranquil.	Ordinary. The wider site context features elements that add to the perceptual value of the landscape, including woodland, undulating topography and local ridgelines.
Functional: Landscape which performs a clearly identifiable and valuable function, particularly in the healthy functioning of the landscape.	Ordinary. The site serves a clear purpose which correlates to the existing restaurant development. However, this does not reflect the land use of the surrounding mostly agricultural landscape.	Ordinary. The wider site context has a mixed sense of character, which provides a diverse range of functions across the landscape.

- 3.25 Having assessed the site in accordance with TGN 02-21, overall, it is considered of no more than 'ordinary' landscape value when considered in the round, 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.

INTERIM CONCLUSIONS: LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Overall Sensitivity of the Site's Immediate and Wider Context

- 3.26 The susceptibility of the landscape and townscape resource is defined as the ability of the receptor (whether the overall character, individual fabric elements or perceptual aspects) to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation.
- 3.27 On the basis of the above considerations of susceptibility factors for the site and the wider site context, these factors correlate reasonably with those qualities described within the LANDMAP assessment. The influence of the Chirk Bypass, and the limited perceptual and functional value of the site does detract from the overall sensitivity of the site itself, in particular from a visual and sensory perspective by adding to the "*fragmented*" landscape. However, given the more scenic and rural qualities of the surrounding agricultural landscape, EDP concur with the LANDMAP evaluation in regard to most aspect areas.
- 3.28 The overall sensitivity of the site is judged to be **low**.
- 3.29 The overall sensitivity of the wider context is judged to be **medium**.

Overall Sensitivity of the Site Character

- 3.30 In summary, the main character and valuable fabric of the site itself is found along the site margins, which consist of existing mature hedgerows and trees, as the site itself is a functioning car park. In visual terms, this contrasts with the wider rural context and this therefore has an impact on the character of the site. The character of the site is degraded to different degrees, primarily due to the proximity to the Chirk Bypass, which introduces significant visual and noise intrusion. Users within the site will also experience traffic and constant change associated with the activity of the restaurant.
- 3.31 The susceptibility of change to the site itself is therefore judged to be low due to the detracting elements identified above.
- 3.32 The site, as a whole, is therefore judged to have a **low** sensitivity in regard to site character.

Section 4

Existing (Baseline) Conditions: Visual Amenity

INTRODUCTION

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

STEP ONE: DEFINING ZONES OF THEORETICAL AND PRIMARY VISIBILITY

- 4.3 The starting point for an assessment of visual amenity is a computer-generated '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 that, theoretically, may be able to experience visual change; it thus provides the basis for more detailed field assessment.
- 4.4 The ZTV is then refined by walking and driving local roads, rights of way and other publicly accessible viewpoints to arrive at a more accurate, 'field-tested' zone of primary visibility (ZPV). The ZPV is where views of the proposed development would normally be close-ranging and open, whether in the public or private domain, on foot, cycling or in a vehicle. In this instance, the field assessment was undertaken by a qualified Landscape Architect in January 2024 in clear weather conditions and therefore confidently predicts the extent of wintertime views of the proposed development.
- 4.5 Beyond the ZPV lies a zone of visibility that is less open, being either partly-screened or filtered. Views from within this zone would include the proposal – it may not be immediately noticeable, but once recognised would be a perceptible addition to the view.
- 4.6 **Plan EDP 5** illustrates the findings of the visual appraisal from which it can be seen that the ZPV extends as follows:
- To the north, views are generally limited by intervening vegetation to within some 100m of the site;
 - To the south, views towards the site are mostly limited by hedgerows and woodland to within the adjacent field parcel;
 - To the east, views are limited to within some 150m by woodland and existing built form; and

- To the west, views are mostly limited by adjacent woodland and the built form of the A5/A438 road corridor.

STEP TWO: DEFINING RECEPTOR GROUPS

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

Rights of Way Users

- 4.8 Even though there is a network of PRoW that surrounds the site, it was found that views are generally limited to those routes that cross relatively open land in close proximity to the site.
- 4.9 PRoW users are typically given a high sensitivity due to their dominant recreational usage. Users of the following PRoW routes have been considered as part of this assessment.
- 4.10 PRoW within the ZPV and wider area comprise:

- To the north, visibility towards the site is mostly restricted from PRoW (footpath ref. Chirk 01) some 500m north of the site where the route becomes less visually contained by vegetation as it crosses a bridge over the A438 road corridor as illustrated in **Photoviewpoint EDP 8**;
- Some 500m to the south-east, the context is crossed by PRoW (footpath ref. Chirk 07) from Green Lane towards a minor road at Pont Llygoden. Views from the section of this route between Green Lane and a minor road at Halton Farm afford restricted views towards the site due to dense woodland adjacent to Green Lane (represented in **Photoviewpoint EDP 5**), whilst views from the section between Halton Farm and Pont Llygoden offer less confined yet still heavily filtered views as represented in **Photoviewpoint EDP 9**;
- West of the site, views from PRoW (footpath ref. Chirk 19) are completely screened by woodland and the A5 road corridor, as shown in **Photoviewpoint EDP 6**; and
- Beyond these routes, there is limited apparent visibility between the site and other PRoW due to intervening vegetation, built form and undulating topography.

Road Users

- 4.11 Views towards the site from roads are limited to those running adjacent to or in close proximity to the site as listed below.
- 4.12 Users of A roads are typically given a low sensitivity while users of minor roads and lanes are generally given a medium sensitivity. Users of the following road routes have been considered as part of this assessment.

A-Roads

A5/A438 Chirk Bypass

- 4.13 Views towards the site from the A5/A438 road corridors are predominantly limited to the section where they run adjacent to the site and to north and west of the Halton Roundabout. Views are mostly limited by the mature tree belt west of the site. Views from the A5 are represented in **Photoviewpoint EDP 7** and the view from along the A438 road corridor is illustrated in **Photoviewpoint EDP 8**.

Minor Roads

- 4.14 Views into the site from the Old Black Park Road immediately north of the site, are mostly screened by the lining vegetation with filtered views possible through occasional gaps. Views from this route are illustrated in **Photoviewpoints EDP 1** and **2**.
- 4.15 Receptors along Old Black Park Road within Halton experience increasingly screened views due to lining hedgerows and intervening scrub vegetation. Upon approach to the roundabout, views become more frequent, however, remain filtered by vegetation adjacent to the site's north-east boundary. Views from this route are represented in **Photoviewpoint EDP 3**.
- 4.16 Views to the site from Green Lane are heavily screened by existing built form and woodland as represented in **Photoviewpoint EDP 4**, as are views from the minor road adjacent to Halton Farm (illustrated in **Photoviewpoint EDP 5**).

Residential Dwellings/Groups

- 4.17 Views from private residential properties, although likely to be of high to very high sensitivity to changes in the view, are not protected by national planning guidance or local planning policy. Accordingly, changes to the character, 'quality' and nature of private views are not a material planning consideration in the determination of a planning application. However, they remain relevant to this review in regard to the predicted extent and nature of visual change.
- 4.18 Views from residential properties are largely limited to those in close proximity to the site boundaries as listed below (numbers relate to **Plan EDP 5**). This list, and the assessment, were undertaken from publicly accessible locations and online mapping and photography.

Old Black Park Road:

- 1 – The Old Post Office.

Green Lane:

- 2 – Greenfields;
- 3 – Rockfield;
- 4 – Lyngarth;

- 5 – Tranmere;
- 6 – Greenacres; and
- 7 – The Cottage.

Black Park:

- 8 – Pen-y-Parc Farm.

STEP THREE: DEFINING REPRESENTATIVE VIEWPOINTS

4.19 Within the ZPV, there are clearly many individual points at which views towards the site are gained. EDP has selected a number of viewpoints that are considered representative of the nature of the views from each of the receptor groups. The selection of the representative viewpoints is based on the principle that the assessment needs to test the ‘worst case’ scenario, and in selecting these viewpoints, EDP has sought to include:

- A range of viewpoints from all points of the compass, north, south, east and west;
- A range of viewpoints from distances at close quarters at the site boundary and up to distant viewpoints beyond 3km from the site; and
- Viewpoints from all the above receptor groups.

4.20 The representation of views is supported by 13 photoviewpoints (PVP), the number and location of which has not been agreed with the LPA. Their location is illustrated on **Plan EDP 5**. Photographs from the selected viewpoints are contained in **Appendix EDP 4**. The purpose of these viewpoints is to aid the assessment of visual receptor(s). These viewpoints are not assessed separately.

Table EDP 4.1: Summary of Representative Photoviewpoints

PVP No.	Location	Grid Reference	Distance and Direction of View	Reason(s) for Selection and Sensitivity of Receptor
1	View south-west from Chirk Park Roundabout	330121, 339732	16m, south-west	Road users – low sensitivity
2	View south from Old Black Park Road	329958, 339749	17m, east-south-east	Road users – low sensitivity
3	View south-west from minor road	330202, 339805	122m, south-west	Road users, pedestrians – medium sensitivity
4	View west from Green Lane	330238, 339731	127m, west	Minor road users, pedestrians

PVP No.	Location	Grid Reference	Distance and Direction of View	Reason(s) for Selection and Sensitivity of Receptor
5	View north-west from PRoW (footpath ref. Chirk 07)	330524, 339478	466m, west-north-west	PRoW users – high sensitivity
6	View north-east from PRoW (footpath ref. Chirk 19)	329905, 339530	137m, north-north-east	PRoW users – high sensitivity
7	View south-east from Higher Barracks Lane	329723, 339878	271m, south-east	Minor road users – low sensitivity
8	View south from PRoW (footpath ref. Chirk 01) at A438 overbridge	329940, 340335	595m, south	PRoW users – high sensitivity
9	View north-west from PRoW (footpath ref. Chirk 07)	331136, 339228	1.3km, west-north-west	PRoW users – high sensitivity
10	View south-west from minor road at Park Farm	331489, 340971	1.9km south-west	Minor road users – low sensitivity
11	View north-east from Offa's Dyke Path	326812, 339387	3.2km east	Minor road users – low sensitivity, PRoW users – high sensitivity
12	View north-east from Chirk Castle	327017, 338313	3.2km east-north-east	PRoW users – high sensitivity
13	View north-east from PRoW (footpath ref. Chirk 48) at Rose Cottage	326336, 338947	3.7km east	PRoW users – high sensitivity

Section 5

The Proposed Development and Mitigation

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

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development is illustrated in **Appendix EDP 1**. To summarise, the development comprises a series of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels mounted on freestanding structures and associated infrastructure within an existing McDonald's Restaurant car park.

- 5.2 The proposed development would include the following equipment (approximately):

- Rows of solar PV panels;
- One Solis 60kW freestanding structure;
- One Solis 40kW freestanding structure;
- Two GRP Enclosures; and
- Associated cabling.

OVERALL LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

- 5.3 The baseline features of the site and its immediate context lend themselves to development, in the sense that the greatest assets are able to be retained. The boundary vegetation and trees are able to be retained throughout the design process, maintaining the existing visual amenity and biodiversity value. In addition, this helps to retain the enclosure of the site in views from the surrounding context.

PROPOSED LANDSCAPE MITIGATION AND ENHANCEMENT

- 5.4 The critical method of mitigation for this development is the avoidance of impact on the most valuable elements of the site itself. By ensuring that key boundary vegetation is retained where possible, this will help safeguard the baseline state of the site.

Section 6 Summary of Effects

INTRODUCTION

- 6.1 In this section, the predicted effects on landscape character and visual amenity are summarised. The assessment uses the thresholds for magnitude, sensitivity and significance defined at **Appendix EDP 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

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

PREDICTED EFFECTS ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Effects Upon the Site (Year 1 and Operation)

- 6.4 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.
- 6.5 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 site to incorporate freestanding solar structures. However, as discussed in **Section 4**, due to the enclosed nature of the site, it is unlikely that the introduction of the solar structures would have an effect on the wider area's visual character.

6.6 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 site in **Sections 1** and **3** of this LVA.

- The physical landscape: The proposed development would yield little change to the hydrological, topographical and geological structure of the site due to the nature of the proposals;
- The site's visual and sensory character: The visual and sensory character of the site would change from the baseline state, with development resulting in a change to the appearance of the existing car park due to the height of the proposed structures. The surrounding vegetated boundaries are anticipated to remain keeping the site generally well enclosed from the immediate context and therefore lowering the extent of visual change beyond the site;
- Landscape fabric and habitats: There will be minimal change to the vegetation and habitats at the perimeter of the site, which comprise the most valuable element in terms of landscape fabric, scale, pattern and ecology;
- 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 it is therefore able to accommodate the proposed development; and
- Cultural connections: There are no known cultural connections with the site that will be affected by the proposals.

6.7 On balance, therefore, the overall magnitude of change on the visual and perceptual dimension of the site character is moderated by the considerations above resulting in a medium magnitude of change. The magnitude of change combined with the low sensitivity across the site yields a **moderate/minor** adverse level of effect at Year 1 and Year 15.

PREDICTED EFFECTS ON THE CHARACTER OF THE SITE'S SURROUNDINGS

6.8 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 in the baseline was judged to be low.

6.9 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 McDonald's restaurant at Chirk Park and yield a relatively small addition to the existing built setting. Whilst the development would yield changes to the site itself, changes to the character of the site's surroundings would be low. This is due, primarily, to the nature of the

development, the retention of key characteristic elements and the limited visibility of the site from the wider landscape. Visual containment is due to existing vegetation along the site boundaries, including areas of woodland and the gently undulating topography across the wider landscape.

- 6.10 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.

PREDICTED EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY

- 6.11 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.

- 6.12 The predicted effects on visual amenity are summarised in **Table EDP 6.1**.

Table EDP 6.1: Summary of Visual Effects

Receptor	Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change		Level of Effect	
		Year 1	Year 15	Year 1	Year 15
Photoviewpoint EDP 1	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/minor	Moderate/minor
Photoviewpoint EDP 2	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/minor	Moderate/minor
Photoviewpoint EDP 3	Medium	Low	Low	Moderate/minor	Moderate/minor
Photoviewpoint EDP 4	Low	High	High	Moderate	Moderate
Photoviewpoint EDP 5	High	Very low	Very low	Moderate / minor	Moderate / minor
Photoviewpoint EDP 6	High	Very low	Very low	Moderate/minor	Moderate/minor
Photoviewpoint EDP 7	Low	Low	Low	Minor	Minor
Photoviewpoint EDP 8	High	Very low	Very low	Moderate/minor	Moderate/minor
Photoviewpoint EDP 9	High	Very low	Very low	Moderate/minor	Moderate/minor
Photoviewpoint EDP 10	Low	Very low	Very low	Minor/negligible	Minor/negligible
Photoviewpoint EDP 11	High	Very low	Very low	Moderate/minor	Moderate/minor
Photoviewpoint EDP 12	Very high	Very low	Very low	Moderate	Moderate

Receptor	Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change		Level of Effect	
		Year 1	Year 15	Year 1	Year 15
Photoviewpoint EDP 13	Very high	Very low	Very low	Moderate	Moderate

Summary of Visual Effects

- 6.13 The following paragraphs summarise the effects on the receptor groups identified within **Section 4** of this LVA.

Rights of Way Users

- 6.14 PRoW (footpath ref. Chirk 01) crosses broadly east to west some 500m north of the site. Views towards the site are mostly limited to where the route crosses over the A438 road corridor. In this location views are heavily filtered as represented in **Photoviewpoint EDP 8**.
- 6.15 Where the route is less visually contained, the magnitude of change at Year 1 would be worst where infrequent glimpsed views are possible over roadside vegetation, which would likely be very low at construction, Year 1 and Year 15. When combined with the high sensitivity of the receptor, this yields a **moderate/minor** adverse level of effect.
- 6.16 Some 500m south-east of the site, PRoW (footpath ref. Chirk 07) runs from Green Lane eastwards towards Pont Llygoden. Views from this route between Green Lane and Halton Farm (illustrated in **Photoviewpoint EDP 5**) are completely screened by intervening vegetation. The magnitude of change at construction, Year 1 and Year 15 is therefore likely to be very low, with the resultant level of effect **moderate/minor** adverse when combined with the high sensitivity of the receptor.
- 6.17 Further along PRoW (footpath ref. Chirk 07) south-east of Halton Farm, views towards the site are less confined, however, still remain heavily filtered by areas of vegetation adjacent to the site (these views are represented by **Photoviewpoint EDP 9**). The magnitude of change would be worst where filtered views towards the site are experienced through gaps in vegetation. At construction, Year 1 and Year 15 it is likely to be very low with the resultant level of effect **moderate/minor** adverse.
- 6.18 There are no apparent views towards the site from PRoW (footpath ref. Chirk 19). Therefore, the level of effect would be **negligible** at construction, Year 1 and Year 15 on the visual amenity of users.

Road Users

A-Roads

- 6.19 Views towards the site from surrounding A-roads are limited to where the roads run adjacent to the site and on approach and around the Halton Roundabout. From the section of the A5/A438 immediately west of the site, the magnitude of change would be the most apparent through gaps and over the roadside vegetation due to the elevated position of the road, where it would be very low at construction, Year 1 and Year 15. This would yield a

minor/negligible adverse level of effect when combined with the low sensitivity of the receptor.

Minor Roads

- 6.20 Views into the site from Old Black Park Road, abutting the northern site boundary are partially filtered by boundary vegetation with infrequent gaps apparent between vegetation (represented in **Photoviewpoint EDP 2**). The magnitude of change would be worst where views are experienced through the vegetation, where it would be low at construction, Year 1 and Year 15. When combined with the low receptor sensitivity, this yields a **minor** adverse level of effect.
- 6.21 Further east along this route towards Halton, views towards the site are almost completely restricted by roadside vegetation that lies to the east of the site and the changes in topography (illustrated in **Photoviewpoint EDP 3**). In this location, there is no apparent visibility towards the site, so the level of effect is judged to be **negligible** adverse.
- 6.22 South of Halton Farm along PRow (footpath ref. Chirk 07), views are almost completely screened by woodland and existing built form (**Photoviewpoint EDP 5**). There is no apparent visibility towards the site, so the level of effect is judged to be **negligible** adverse.

Residential Receptors

- 6.23 Views from residential properties, although likely to be of high to very high sensitivity, are not protected by national planning guidance or local planning policy. Accordingly, changes to the character, 'quality' and nature of private views are not a material planning consideration in the determination of a planning application. However, they remain relevant to this review of the predicted extent and nature of visual change, so are reviewed briefly below with numbers in brackets relating to locations as shown on **Plan EDP 5**.
- 6.24 The assessment of views from properties has been undertaken from online mapping resources with field observations limited to those available from the public domain. The visibility and level of effect from properties is therefore recorded as 'likely.'

Old Black Park Road

- 6.25 For representative view of properties along Old Black Park Road within Halton, refer to **Photoviewpoint EDP 3**.
- 6.26 The Old Post Office (**1**) abuts Old Black Park Road some 170m north-east of the site. The property sits within its own grounds with a north-east/south-west orientation, of which the front (south-west) overlooks the road, Halton Mission Church and onwards over the vegetation, which lies adjacent to the site's eastern boundary. Views from this property are likely to be mostly limited from the ground floor due to existing built form within Halton, however, views from upper floor windows are likely to be more open and allow for intervisibility towards the site. The magnitude of change is likely to be medium at construction primarily due to increased noise and movement, yielding a **major/moderate** adverse level of effect. At Year 1 and Year 15 this will reduce to low once the construction impacts have finished. This is therefore likely to yield a **moderate** adverse level of effect.

Green Lane

- 6.27 For representative view from properties on Green Lane, refer to **Photoviewpoint EDP 4**.
- 6.28 Properties along Green Lane include Greenfields (**2**), Rockview (**3**), Lyngarth (**4**), Tranmere (**5**), Greenacres (**6**) and The Cottage (**7**).
- 6.29 Greenfields, Rockview, Lyngarth and Tranmere property frontages abut Green Lane to the west with views from Greenfields and Rockview mostly screened by other built form within Halton (Halton Mission Church). The level of effect is likely to be **negligible** on receptors within these properties due to the lack of visibility to and from the site.
- 6.30 Views across a field parcel towards the site are apparent from Lyngarth and Tranmere. Views towards the site are mostly filtered, however, some intervisibility through gaps in vegetation is likely (**Photoviewpoint EDP 4**). The magnitude of change is likely to be medium at construction with heightened noise and movement on site. This would result in a **major/moderate** adverse level of effect. At Year 1 and Year 15 this would likely reduce to low, resulting in a **moderate** adverse level of effect.
- 6.31 Greenacres and The Cottage abut Green Lane to the east and are located some 150m east of the site. Both properties are a bungalow (single story) with views towards the site likely to be heavily screened primarily due to the orientation of the properties (front looking east) and the intervening vegetation that lies to the east of the site. The magnitude of change is therefore likely to be very low at construction and Year 1 and Year 15 yielding a **moderate/minor** adverse level of effect.

Black Park

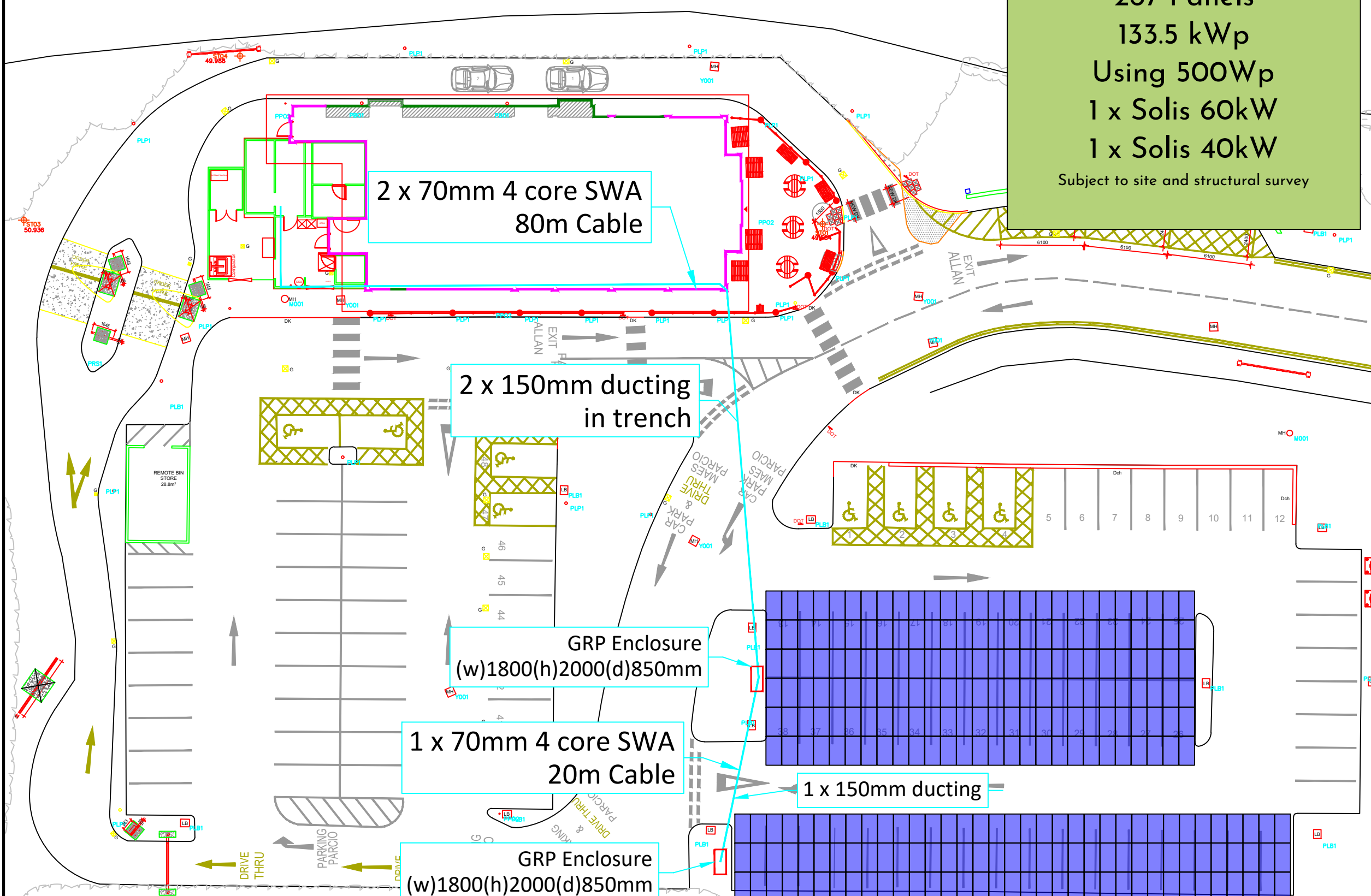
- 6.32 Residential receptors within Black Park are most likely to experience screened views towards the site due to existing built form and intervening vegetation. Where views are apparent, they are most likely to be filtered from properties at Pen-y-Parc Farm, which is located some 300m north of the site. The magnitude of change is likely to be very low at construction and Year 1 and Year 15. When combined with the high sensitivity of the receptor this yields a **moderate/minor** adverse level of effect.

Section 7 Conclusions

- 7.1 EDP is an independent environmental consultancy and Registered Practice of the Landscape Institute specialising in the assessment of developments at all scales across the UK.
- 7.2 This report has summarised the findings of a comprehensive landscape data trawl and field appraisal undertaken by EDP's landscape team (**Sections 2,3 and 4**). In **Section 5**, the proposed development is described with any proposed mitigation. **Section 6** undertakes an assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects having regard to the above and based on a combination of the thresholds set out in **Appendix EDP 2** coupled with professional judgement.
- 7.3 Those receptors most likely to experience elevated effects (defined as moderate or above) are the character of the site itself and landscape and visual receptors that fall within the site boundary or within the immediate vicinity of the site.
- 7.4 The elevated level of effect on these receptors is not due to poor design but is an inevitable result of a change in land use to incorporate the freestanding solar structures. Clearly the change of any site to include such freestanding structures will result in some degree of change to its visual and perceptual character. This fundamental change to these aspects of the site character would be expected for any such development, albeit one with existing detractors. Such a change at the site-level, and for near sensitive receptors, related to the solar structure development, is unavoidable and should not, in and of itself, be a reason to raise an objection.
- 7.5 The elevated level of effect on receptors within the ZPV is also not due to poor design, but due to the proximity to the proposed development, the sensitivity of receptors and the level of change that would be experienced when changing land use to include freestanding solar structures.
- 7.6 Accordingly, this LVA concludes that the site has the capacity for the development as proposed and that there is no 'in principle' or policy landscape or visual reason why the site should not be developed.

Appendix EDP 1

Indicative Site Layout MCD Chirk PV Layout REV.01



New PV System

267 Panels
133.5 kW_p
Using 500W_p
1 x Solis 60kW
1 x Solis 40kW

Subject to site and structural survey

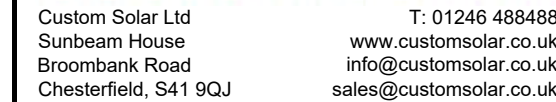
2 x 150mm ducting
in trench

1 x 70mm 4 core SWA
20m Cable



References List - Name, Version & Status:

Notes:



Client McDonalds	CS Project No. #
Title Chirk Wrexham LL14 5AZ	

File name
MCD CHIRK PV LAYOUT REV.01

Appendix EDP 2

EDP 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 (GLVIA3) (LI/IEMA, 2013);
 - An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (Natural England 2014); and
 - Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note (TNG) 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals (17 September 2019).
- 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

- A2.7 The assessment of effects on visual amenity draws on the predicted effects of the development, the landscape and visual context, and the visibility and viewpoint analyses,

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

Identifying Landscape and Visual Receptors

A2.8 This assessment has sought to identify the key landscape and visual receptors that may be affected by the changes proposed.

A2.9 The assessment of effects on landscape as a resource in its own right draws on the description of the development, the landscape context and the visibility and viewpoint analysis to identify receptors, which, for the proposed development may include, but not be limited to, the following:

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

A2.10 The locations and types of visual receptors within the defined study areas are identified from Ordnance Survey maps and other published information (such as walking guides), from fieldwork observations and from local knowledge provided during the consultation process. Examples of visual receptors may include, but not be limited to, the following:

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

Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects

A2.11 The assessment of effects on the landscape resource includes consideration of the potential changes to those key elements and components that contribute towards recognised landscape character or the quality of designated landscape areas; these

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

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

Defining Receptor Sensitivity

- A2.12 A number of factors influence professional judgement when assessing the degree to which a particular landscape or visual receptor can accommodate change arising from a particular development. Sensitivity is made up of judgements about the 'value' attached to the receptor, which is determined at baseline stage, and the 'susceptibility' of the receptor, which is determined at the assessment stage when the nature of the proposals, and therefore the susceptibility of the landscape and visual resource to change, is better understood.
- A2.13 Susceptibility indicates *"the ability of a defined landscape or visual receptor to accommodate the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences"*⁸. 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.
- A2.14 A location may have different levels of sensitivity according to the types of visual receptors at that location and any one receptor type may be accorded different levels of sensitivity at different locations.
- A2.15 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.

⁸ 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

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

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

Table EDP A2.2: Assessment of Landscape Susceptibility

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

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

A2.16 **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

A2.17 For visual receptors, judgements of susceptibility and value are closely interlinked considerations. For example, the most valued views are those that people go and visit because of the available view, and it is at those viewpoints that their expectations will be highest and thus most susceptible to change.

A2.18 **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
Very High	Designed view (which may be to or from a recognised heritage asset or other important viewpoint), or where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience. Key promoted viewpoint, e.g., interpretative signs. References in literature and art and/or guidebooks tourist maps. Protected view recognised in planning policy designation. Visual receptors with a very high susceptibility to change may include those with views from residential properties, especially from rooms normally occupied in waking or daylight hours; national PRoW, e.g. National Trails and nationally designated countryside/landscape features with public access, which people might visit purely to experience the view; and visitors to heritage assets of national importance.
High	View of clear value but may not be formally recognised, e.g. framed view of high scenic value, or destination hill summits. It may also be inferred that the view is likely to have value, e.g. to local residents. Visual receptors with a high susceptibility to change are considered to be those whose attention or interest is focussed on their surroundings and may include those with views from recreational receptors where there is some appreciation of the landscape, e.g., golf and fishing; local PRoW, access land and National

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

A2.19 **Tables EDP A1.1 to A1.4** offer a template for assessing overall sensitivity of any landscape or visual receptor as determined by combining judgements of their susceptibility to the type of change or development proposed and the value attached to the landscape as set out at paragraph 5.39 of GLVIA3. However, the narrative in this report may demonstrate that assessment of overall sensitivity can change on a case-by-case basis.

A2.20 For example, a high susceptibility to change and a low value may result in a medium overall sensitivity, unless it can be demonstrated that the receptor is unusually susceptible or is in some particular way more valuable. A degree of professional judgement applies in arriving at the overall sensitivity for both landscape and visual receptors.

Magnitude of Change

A2.21 The magnitude of any landscape or visual change is determined through a range of considerations particular to each receptor. As set out within GLVIA3 (page 39), the following steps are considered in defining the magnitude of change.

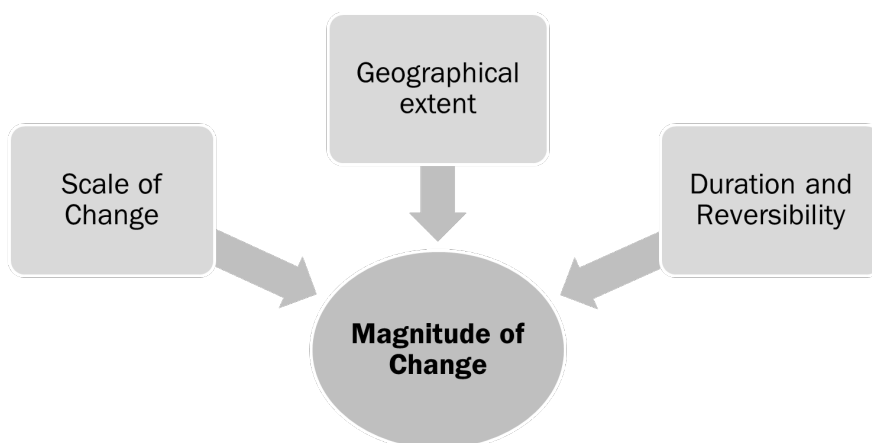


Figure EDP A2.1: Assessing the magnitude of change.

A2.22 Receptor locations from which views of the proposed development are not likely to occur will receive no change and therefore no effect. With reference to the ZTV and site survey, the magnitude of change is defined for receptor locations from where visibility of the proposed development is predicted to occur.

A2.23 **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
Large Scale 	Total loss of or major alteration to key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline condition. Addition of elements which strongly conflict with the key characteristics of the existing landscape.	There would be a substantial change to the baseline, with the proposed development creating a new focus and having a defining influence on the view.
	Notable loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline condition. Addition of elements that are prominent and may conflict with the key characteristics of the existing landscape.	The proposed development will be clearly noticeable, and the view would be fundamentally altered by its presence.
	Partial loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline condition. Addition of elements that may be evident but do not necessarily conflict with the key characteristics of the existing landscape.	The proposed development will form a new and recognisable element within the view which is likely to be recognised by the receptor.

Table EDP A2.6: Geographical Extent Criteria

A2.25 The third, and final, factor, in determining the predicted magnitude of change is duration and reversibility. Duration and reversibility are separate but linked considerations. Duration is judged according to the defined terms set out below, whereas reversibility is a judgement about the prospects and practicality of the particular effect being reversed in, for example, a generation. The categories used in this assessment are set out below.

- 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.

A2.26 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
Very High	Total loss of, or major alteration to key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline condition. Addition of elements which strongly conflict with the key characteristics of the existing landscape. The proposed development would create a new focus and have a defining influence on the view. Landscape and visual effects are typically large in scale, resulting in a permanent and irreversible change, influencing several landscape types or character areas. Visual changes would be experienced in direct, close ranging views with changes over a wide horizontal and vertical extent.
High	Notable loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline condition. Addition of elements that are prominent and may conflict with the key characteristics of the existing landscape. The proposed development would be clearly noticeable, and the view would be fundamentally altered by its presence. Direct or oblique views at close range with changes over a notable horizontal and/or vertical extent. Notable landscape and visual effects may be experienced in the medium to long-term, with possible conversion to original state, at the scale of the landscape type or character area/s within which the proposal lies.

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

Significance of Effect

A2.27 The purpose of the EIA process is to identify the significant environmental effects (both beneficial and adverse) of development proposals. Schedule 4 to the EIA Regulations specifies the information to be included in all environmental statements, which should include a description of:

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

A2.28 In order to consider the likely significance of any effect, the sensitivity of each receptor is combined with the predicted magnitude of change to determine the significance of effect, with reference also made to the geographical extent, duration and reversibility of the effect within the assessment. Having taken such a wide range of factors into account when assessing sensitivity and magnitude at each receptor, the significance of effect can be derived by combining the sensitivity and magnitude in accordance with the matrix in **Table EDP 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

A2.29 In certain cases, where additional factors may arise, a further degree of professional judgement may be applied when determining whether the overall change in the view will be significant or not. For example, in cases where a moderate effect is experienced by a high or very high sensitivity receptor, this may be considered to be significant. Similarly, where a moderate effect is experienced by a very low sensitivity receptor, this may not be considered significant. Where this occurs, further explanation is given within the assessment.

Definition of Effects

A2.30 Taking into account the levels of effect described above, and with regard to effects being either adverse or beneficial, the following table represents a description of the range of effects likely at any one receptor.

Table EDP A2.9: Definition of Effect

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

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

A2.31 Effects can be adverse (negative), beneficial (positive) or neutral. The landscape effects will be considered against the landscape baseline, which includes published landscape strategies or policies if they exist. Changes involving the addition of large-scale man-made objects are typically considered to be adverse as they are not usually actively promoted as part of published landscape strategies. Accordingly, the assessment of landscape effects as a result of these aspects of the proposed development will be assumed to be adverse, unless otherwise stated within the assessment.

A2.32 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

Site Photographs/Representative Photoviewpoints (edp8387_d008a 12 February 2024 VMS/MWi)

Photoviewpoint EDP 1: View south-west from Chirk Park Roundabout.

Photoviewpoint EDP 2: View south from Old Black Park Road.

Photoviewpoint EDP 3: View south from minor road.

Photoviewpoint EDP 4: View west from Green Lane.

Photoviewpoint EDP 5: View north-west from PRoW (footpath ref. Chirk 07).

Photoviewpoint EDP 6: View north-east from PRoW (footpath ref. Chirk 19).

Photoviewpoint EDP 7: View south-east from Higher Barracks Lane.

Photoviewpoint EDP 8: View south from PRoW (footpath. ref Chirk 01) at A438 overbridge.

Photoviewpoint EDP 9: View north-west from PRoW (footpath. ref Chirk 07).

Photoviewpoint EDP 10: View south-west from minor road at Park Farm.

Photoviewpoint EDP 11: View north-east from Offa's Dyke Footpath.

Photoviewpoint EDP 12: View north-east from Chirk Castle.

Photoviewpoint EDP 13: View north-east from PRoW (footpath ref. Chirk 48) at Rose Cottage.





To be viewed at comfortable arm's length

Approximate extent of site

Chirk Park
Roundabout

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: 330202, 339805
Date and Time: 19/01/2024 @ 10:12
Projection: Planar
Visualisation Type: 1

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

Direction of View: SW
Distance: 122m
aOD: 109m
Focal Length: 50mm

date 12 FEBRUARY 2024
drawing number edp8387_d008a
drawn by VMS
checked MWI
QA RBa

client McDonald's Restaurants Ltd
project title McDonald's Chirk Park, Wrexham
drawing title Photoviewpoint EDP 3





To be viewed at comfortable arm's length

Photoviewpoint EDP 6: View north-east from PRoW (footpath ref. Chirk 19)



Approximate extent of site

To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



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Registered office: 01285 740427
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Grid Coordinates: 329905, 339530
Date and Time: 19/01/2024 @ 12:01
Projection: Planar
Visualisation Type: 1

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

Direction of View: NNE
Distance: 137m
aOD: 125m
Focal Length: 50mm

date
drawing number
drawn by
checked
QA
12 FEBRUARY 2024
edp8387_d008a
VMS
MWI
RBa

client
project title
drawing title
McDonald's Restaurants Ltd
McDonald's Chirk Park, Wrexham
Photoviewpoint EDP 6



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



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Registered office: 01285 740427
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Grid Coordinates: 329723, 339878
Date and Time: 19/01/2024 @ 11:52
Projection: Planar
Visualisation Type: 1

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

Direction of View: SE
Distance: 271m
aOD: 123m
Focal Length: 50mm

date
drawing number
drawn by
checked
QA
12 FEBRUARY 2024
edp8387_d008a
VMS
MWI
RBa

client
project title
drawing title
McDonald's Restaurants Ltd
McDonald's Chirk Park, Wrexham
Photoviewpoint EDP 7



Halton
Roundabout

A438

To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



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Registered office: 01285 740427
www.edp-uk.co.uk
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Grid Coordinates: 329940, 340335
Date and Time: 19/01/2024 @ 11:37
Projection: Planar
Visualisation Type: 1

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

Direction of View: S
Distance: 595m
aOD: 122m
Focal Length: 50mm

date 12 FEBRUARY 2024
drawing number edp8387_d008a
drawn by VMS
checked MWI
QA RBa

client McDonald's Restaurants Ltd
project title McDonald's Chirk Park, Wrexham
drawing title Photoviewpoint EDP 8



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



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dimension partnership

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

Grid Coordinates: 331499, 340971
Date and Time: 19/01/2024 @ 12:45
Projection: Cylindrical
Visualisation Type: 1

Horizontal Field of View: 90°
Height of Camera: 1.6m
Make, Model, Sensor: Sony A7 II, FFS
Enlargement Factor: 96% @ A1 width

Direction of View: SW
Distance: 1.9km
aOD: 120m
Focal Length: 50mm

date
drawing number
drawn by
checked
QA
12 FEBRUARY 2024
edp8387_d008a
VMS
MWI
RBa

client
project title
drawing title
McDonald's Restaurants Ltd
McDonald's Chirk Park, Wrexham
Photoviewpoint EDP 10





To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length

Plans

Plan EDP 1: Site Location and Boundaries

(edp8387_d002a 12 February 2024 GYo/MWi)

Plan EDP 2: Site Character and Local Context

(edp8387_d003a 12 February 2024 GYo/MWi)

Plan EDP 3: Relevant Planning Designations and Considerations

(edp8387_d004a 12 February 2024 GYo/MWi)

Plan EDP 4: Topographical Relief

(edp8387_d006a 12 February 2024 GYo/MWi)

Plan EDP 5: Findings of Visual Appraisal

(edp8387_d007a 12 February 2024 GYo/MWi)

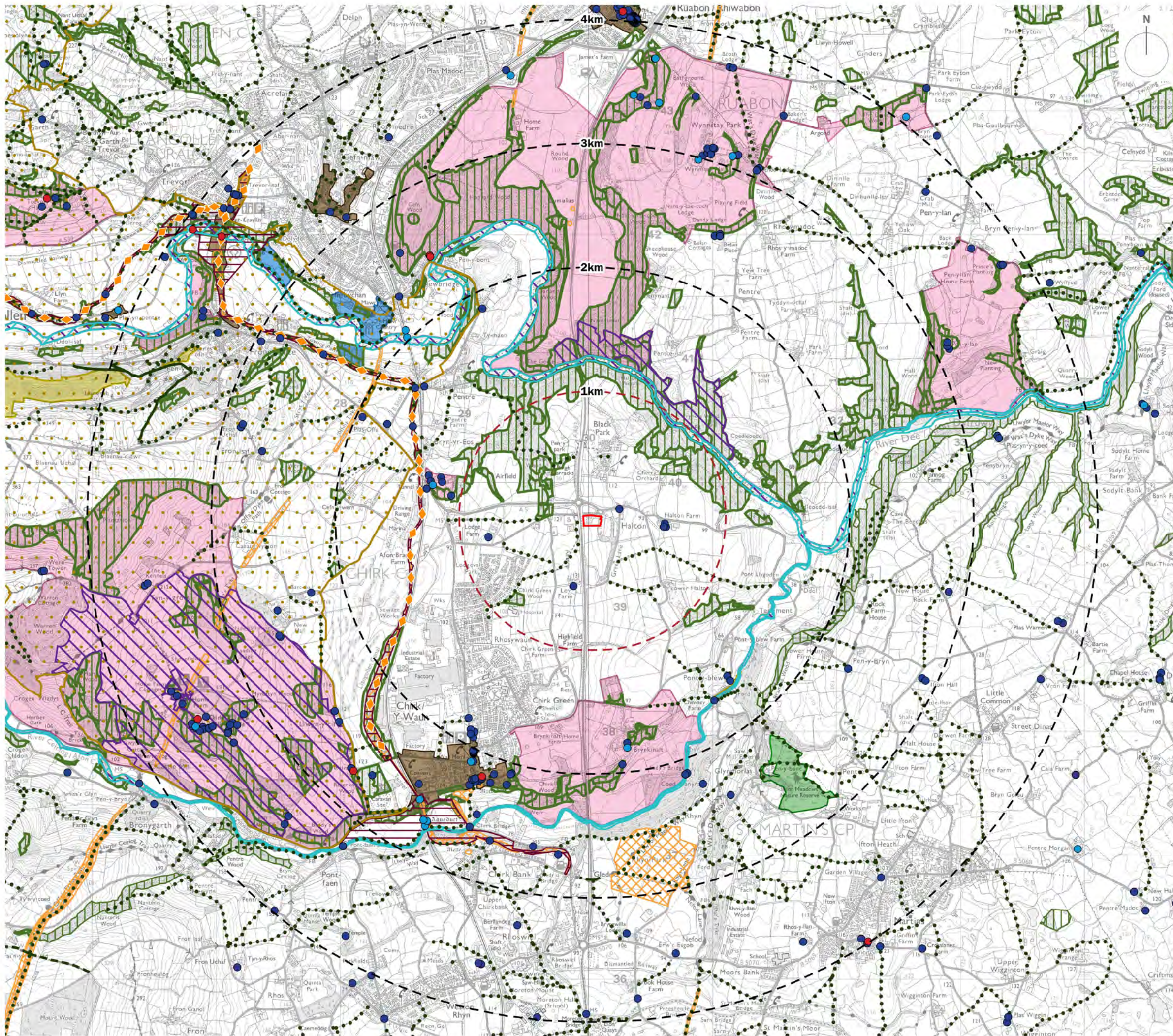


client	McDonald's Restaurants Ltd		
project title	McDonald's, Chirk Park, Wrexham		
drawing title	Site Location and Boundaries		
date	12 FEBRUARY 2024	drawn by	GYo
drawing number	edp8387_d002a	checked	MWI
scale	1:30,000 @ A3	QA	RBa



- Site Boundary
- Range Rings (at 1km intervals)
- Contours (at 10m intervals)
- Approximate Local Ridgelines
- Watercourse
- Public Right of Way (PRoW)
- A Road
- B Road

client	McDonald's Restaurants Ltd		
project title	McDonald's, Chirk Park, Wrexham		
drawing title	Site Character and Local Context		
date	12 FEBRUARY 2024	drawn by	GYo
drawing number	edp8387_d003a	checked	MWI
scale	1:8,000 @ A3	QA	RBa



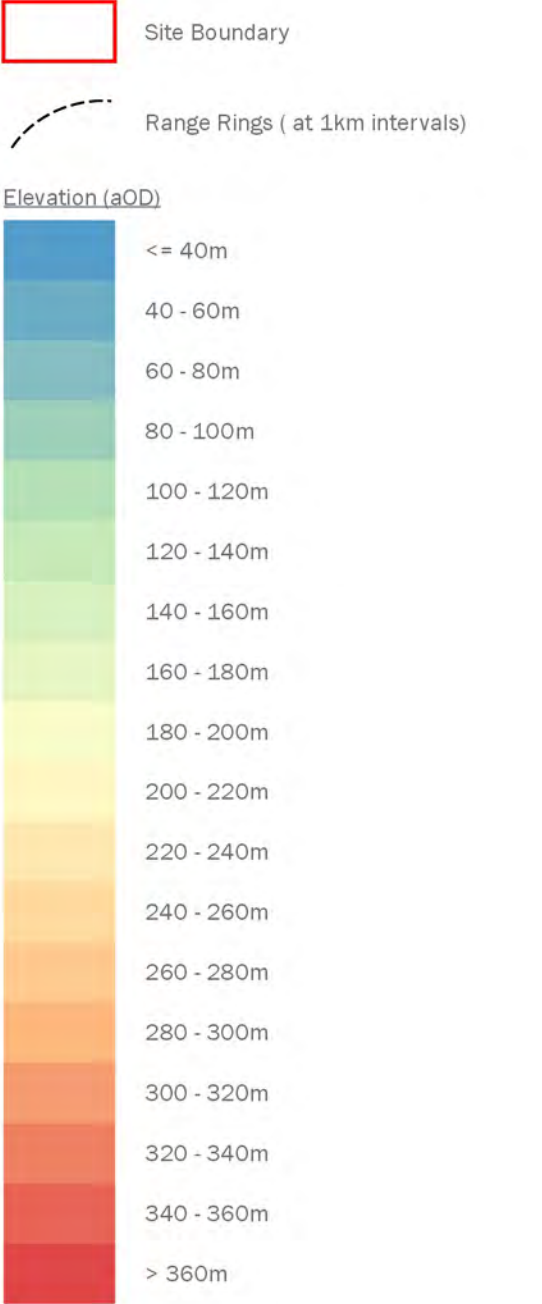
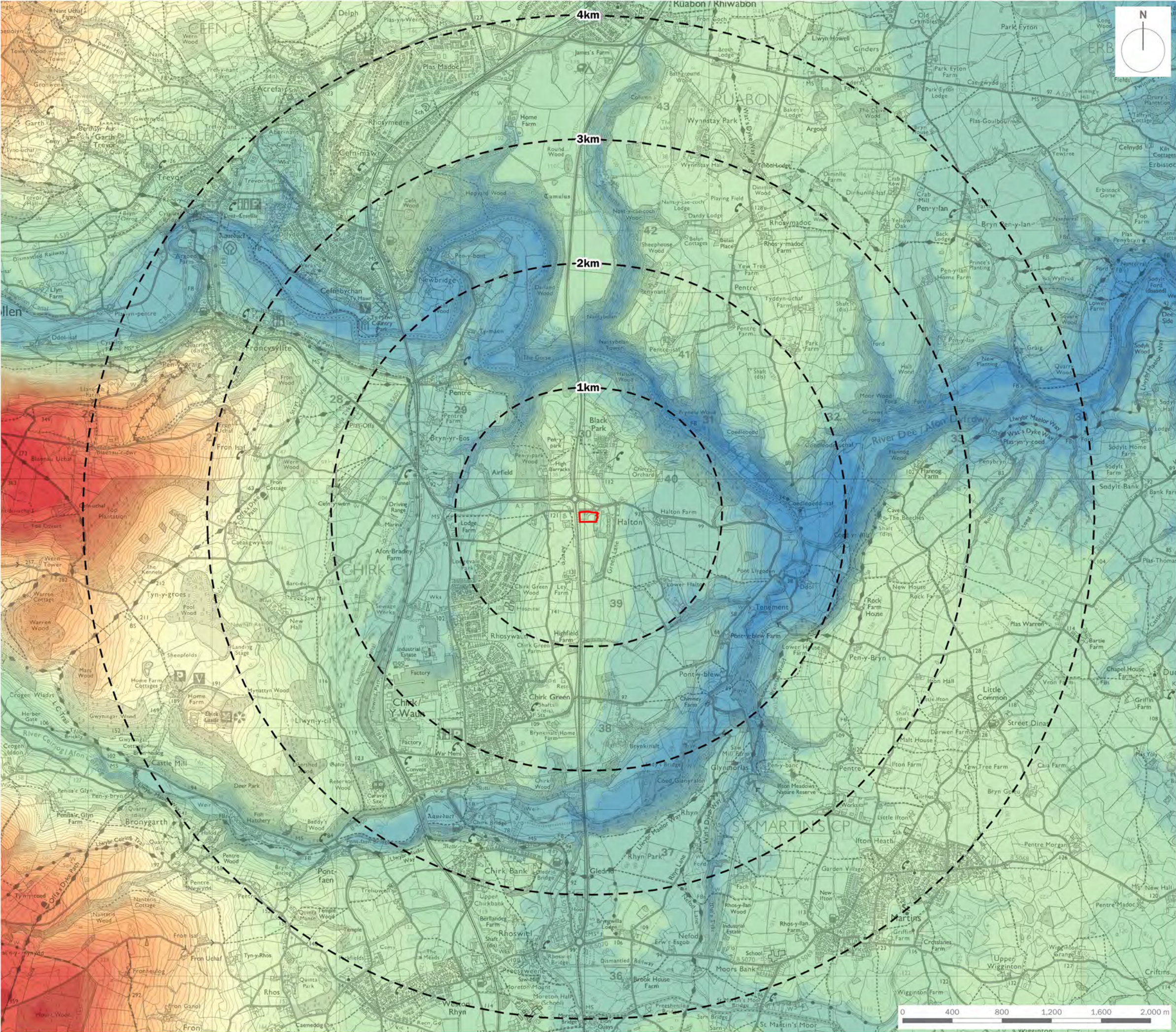
- Site Boundary
- Range Rings (at 1km intervals)
- 1km Detailed Study Area
- Landscape**
 - Natural Landscape
 - Country Park
 - Open Access Land
 - National Cycle Network
 - Footpath
 - Bridleway
 - Byway Open to All Traffic
- Heritage**
 - World Heritage Site
 - Registered Park and Garden
 - Scheduled Monument
 - Conservation Area
 - Grade I Listed Building
 - Grade II* Listed Building
 - Grade II Listed Building
- Ecology**
 - Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
 - Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
 - Local Nature Reserve
 - Ancient Woodland

client
McDonald's Restaurants Ltd

project title
McDonald's, Chirk Park, Wrexham

drawing title
Relevant Planning Designations and Considerations

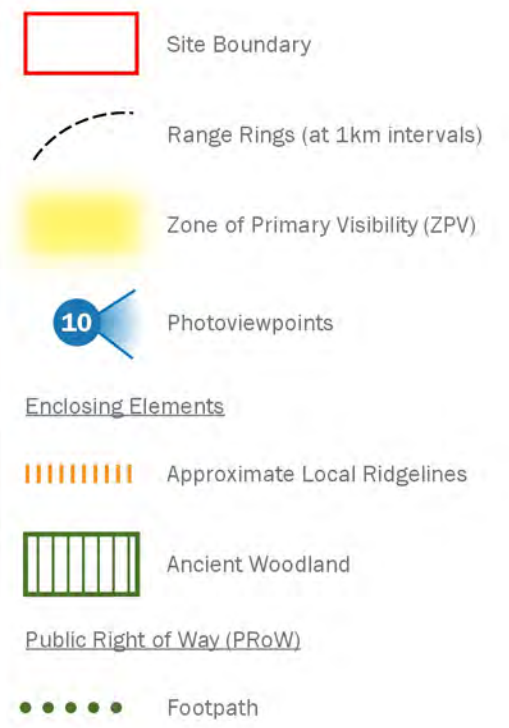
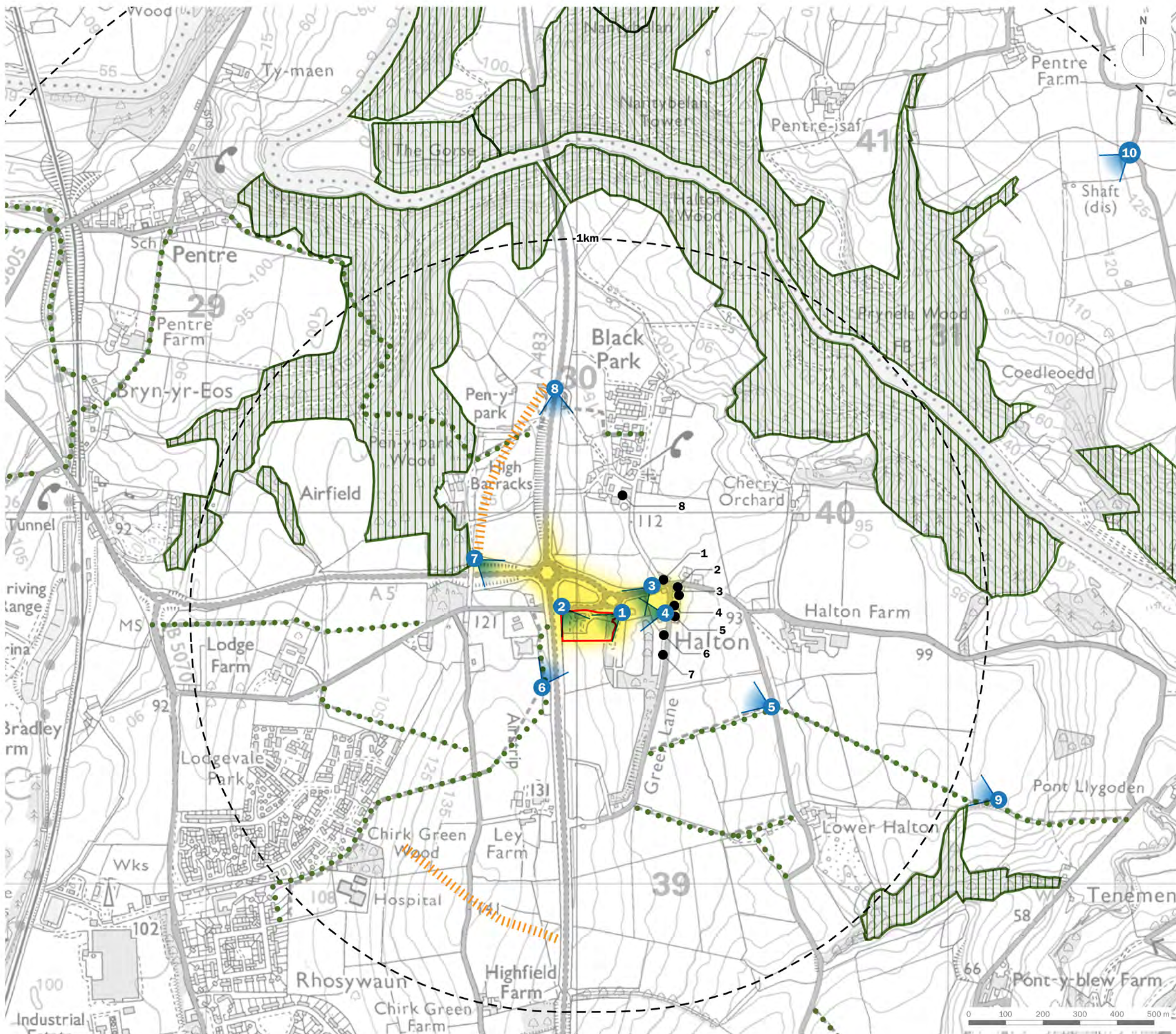
date	12 FEBRUARY 2024	drawn by	GYo
drawing number	edp8387_d004a	checked	MWl
scale	1:30,000 @ A3	QA	RBa



client	McDonald's Restaurants Ltd		
project title	McDonald's, Chirk Park, Wrexham		
drawing title	Topographical Relief		
date	12 FEBRUARY 2024	drawn by	Gyo
drawing number	edp8387_d006a	checked	MWI
scale	1:30,000 @ A3	QA	RBa



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- Residential Properties**
1. The Old Post Office
 2. Greenfields
 3. Rockfield
 4. Lyngarth
 5. Tranmere
 6. Greenacres
 7. The Cottage
 8. Pen-y-Parc Farm

client	McDonald's Restaurants Ltd		
project title	McDonald's, Chirk Park, Wrexham		
drawing title	Findings of Visual Appraisal		
date	12 FEBRUARY 2024	drawn by	GYo
drawing number	edp8387_d007a	checked	MWl
scale	1:10,000 @ A3	QA	RBa

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