

**Solar Park and Battery Storage Facility at
Land to the North of Maelor Gas Works, Marchwiel,
Wrexham, LL13 0UN**

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

Prepared for
Novus Renewable Services Ltd
by
Corylus Planning & Environmental Ltd.

February 2021



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Solar Park and Battery Storage Facility at Land to the North of Maelor Gas Works, Marchwiel, Wrexham, LL13 0UN

LANDSCAPE & VISUAL APPRAISAL

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References / Bibliography

Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment - *Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 3rd Edition 2013.*

Wrexham LANDMAP (*Natural Resources Wales*).

Wrexham LANDMAP – Welsh Maelor 13a (*Natural Resources Wales*).

OS Explorer Map 256 – Wrexham/Wreccsam & Llangollen – *Ordnance Survey*

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Corylus Planning and Environmental Ltd. has been commissioned by Novus Renewable Services Ltd to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) in support of a planning application for a solar park development at Land to the North of Maelor Gas Works.
- 1.2 The application seeks planning consent in for a solar park and Battery storage facility comprising a 5.7 MW solar farm and battery storage with 16 MW of import/export capacity, with associated development covering an area of 13.1 hectares.
- 1.3 The site is located on the southern fringe of Wrexham Industrial Estate, approximately 5km from the Wrexham town centre. The site, and the land to the east of the site, is predominantly rural in character, but is enclosed by the Industrial Estate to the north and Maelor gas works to the south, with an existing solar farm sited to the immediate west.

2 Scope of the Report and Assessment Methodology

- 2.1 This landscape and visual appraisal has been undertaken by a landscape architect and supervised by a Chartered Landscape Architect (CMLI) and is in accordance with the *'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 3rd Edition 2013)*.
- 2.2 The report makes reference to published landscape character assessments and other authoritative publications, in order to seek consensus and minimise subjectivity in the assessment of the existing landscape.
- 2.3 Baseline studies were undertaken to determine the significance of the development site in the context of the local landscape and to establish a benchmark against which any potential changes in landscape character and visual amenity could be measured. The baseline studies included a desktop review of relevant designations, planning policies, published character assessments and historic maps relating to the site and surrounding area. In addition, an assessment was carried out to establish the potential zones of visual influence of the site and to identify potential visual receptors by an analysis of landform and surface features using 1:25,000 scale Ordnance Survey maps and aerial photographs.
- 2.4 A study area extending over a 1.5km radius from the site has been judged as an appropriate limit from which visual receptors may be impacted by the proposed development.
- 2.5 Field surveys were carried out to verify and expand upon information gathered during the desktop assessment. Walk-over surveys and assessments of the site and the surrounding landscape were undertaken in July 2020. The visit occurred during a spell of relatively bright sunny weather that provided clear visibility.

- 2.6 The field studies comprised a landscape assessment to identify and analyse the physical elements and features within the landscape which contribute to the quality and character of the site and that of the wider landscape setting; and a visual assessment to record the extent and nature of views into the site from a range of visual receptors at varying distances within a potential zone of visual influence.
- 2.7 As part of the field assessment, a photographic survey was carried out to record representative views of the site from selected receptors including settlements, residential properties, roads and public access areas. Where direct access to residential properties was not available, photographs of the site area were taken from nearby roads or footpaths in order to provide a similar representative view. In all instances, photographs were taken using a digital SLR camera with a 50mm lens (or a lens of equivalent focal length in digital format) and fitted with an integral GPS device to pinpoint the location of the photographs taken.
- 2.8 The full methodology can be read in Appendix A of this report.

3 Site Context

- 3.1 The development site is located across four actively grazed, medium scale pastoral fields c.5km to the south-east of Wrexham town centre. The site is gently undulating and descends from a high point of c.33m AOD on its southern boundary to a low point of c.24m AOD on the site's northern boundary where it meets the river Clywedog.
- 3.2 The site is generally well enclosed from all aspects. Its northern boundary is defined by the meandering river Clywedog, which is lined on both sides with a thicket of mature trees, predominantly Willow, Alder and Poplar. The eastern and southern boundaries to the site are generally well vegetated with only occasional gaps. They mostly comprise of mature native mixed species hedgerows and mature/veteran Oak trees. The site's western boundary is met with an existing small scale solar farm that has been in operation for approximately 5 years.
- 3.3 The core of the site is composed of grazed pastureland and is broadly open. Six dilapidated World War Two (WW2) era single storey, red brick buildings are scattered across the site, with some connected by a degraded tarmac track. A mature hedgerow spanning c.180m on an east-west alignment separates the northern most field (1A) from the rest of the site. In addition, eleven mature/veteran oak trees are dotted around the fields 1B and 1C. Field 2 is separated from the rest of the site and positioned to its west.
- 3.4 The northern half of the study area is predominated by Wrexham Industrial Estate, its southern edge defined by the river Clywedog. Its presence has slowly grown since its inception in the second half of the 20th century, now covering some 550 hectares and providing employment for over 7000 people. Whilst it is mostly comprised of factories and warehousing, sizable pockets of woodland and scrubby vegetation remain and are woven into its urban fabric. The addition of HM Prison Berwyn, the UK's largest prison, in 2017 has further extended the Estate's sprawl further south.

- 3.5 Conversely, the southern half of the study area remains rural in nature and relatively intact. A blend of rectilinear pasture land and arable fields, all delineated with robust hedgerows and mature Oak and Ash trees are spread either side of the B5130 that dissects the study area on an east-west alignment. Small copses, wooded stream courses and field ponds break up the field patterns and feature readily across the area. Aside from a couple of dispersed farmsteads, a small settlement in Cross Lanes, c.1350m south west of the development site comprises the only residential development within the study area.
- 3.6 Public Access to the site and its vicinity is relatively limited. An unnamed road leads north from the B5130 and provides access to a public right of way (ABE/19) that traces the site's eastern boundary before heading north east and re-joining the site's eastern boundary at its northern corner. This footpath ultimately connects to Redwither road within the Industrial Estate.
- 3.7 Published landscape character assessments for the site and the local landscape are contained within the LANDMAP data sets for the local area, compiled by Natural Resources Wales. The relevant data sets are summarised in Section 6 of this report.
- 3.8 The site is not located within any statutory or non-statutory landscape designations and neither are there any within the 1.5km study area. A Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI) covering the River Dee is approximately 2km away from the sites south eastern boundary but shares no intervisibility with the site.

4 Planning Policy

- 4.1 At a national level, planning policies for Wales are set out within Planning Policy Wales Edition 10 (PPW). It is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes Welsh Government Circulars, and policy clarification letters, which together with PPW provide the national planning policy framework for Wales.
- 4.2 Paragraph 6.3.3 of PPW states that "All the landscapes of Wales are valued for their intrinsic contribution to a sense of place, and local authorities should protect and enhance their special characteristics, whilst paying due regard to the social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits they provide, and to their role in creating valued places".
- 4.3 The adopted local plan is the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1999-2011 (adopted in 2005). The policies that are of particular relevance to the consideration of the application are those that relate to renewable energy and biodiversity.
- Strategic Policy PS2 (The Broad Location of Development) seeks to guide the location of development to locations where it would not materially detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space, or the quality of the natural environment
 - Strategic Policy PS12 (Renewable Energy) supports renewable energy developments providing that environmental benefits are not outweighed by any detrimental impact of the development.

- Policy GDP1 (Development Objectives) sets out a number of objectives for new developments, including the need for new development to accord with the character of a site and makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality
- 4.4 The adopted Local Plan is due to be replaced by a new local plan the “Wrexham Local Plan 2013-2028”. The draft Local Plan was submitted by the LPA to the Welsh Government and public examination has been undertaken. At the time of writing this statement, the LPA is awaiting the Inspector’s Report. The draft policies that are relevant to the consideration of this application have been considered by the Planning Inspector and further evidence is not required. Those policies are:
- Objective SO10 of the emerging local plan is to “Reduce carbon emissions and maximise our resilience to and mitigate and adapt to the impact of climate change” which will be achieved in part through the support of the use of renewable energy resources and low carbon technology
 - Policy RE2 (Renewable Energy Schemes) supports the generation of energy from renewable and low carbon sources
 - Policy SP15 (Natural Environment) is also relevant. Development will only be supported where it protects, conserves and enhances the natural environment including protected species and their habitats
 - Policy SP19 (Climate Change) of the emerging local plan requires developments to mitigate against the effects of climate change by taking into account a reduction in carbon emissions and the promotion of increasing the supply of renewable energy.

5 The Proposed Development

- 5.1 The development is for the installation of a solar farm which will generate approximately 5.7 MW of electricity. The development comprises solar arrays occupying four fields (or separate compartments) over an area of approximately 13.3 hectares, together with the battery storage facility and associated development.
- 5.2 The entire site will be enclosed and secured with a c.2m high deer fence typical of an agricultural setting. The panels are arranged in rows facing south to maximise their energy generating potential and will be mounted on frames with a maximum height of 3.1m, supported by a single stanchion.
- 5.3 The Battery Storage facility will provide 16 MW of import/export capacity. The compound comprises of eight battery storage containers that sit atop concrete plinths as well as a switchroom building and the power conversion units, all contained within a palisade fence. The battery containers will be c.3.5m high including the concrete footings making them only marginally taller than the PV panels.
- 5.4 In addition, the site will require various small scale ancillary features including substations, a transformer, ISO storage containers, CCTV and a grid connection. None of these components exceed 3m in height and are unlikely to be visually significant in consideration with the primary elements of the proposed development.

- 5.5 The series of small, single storey WW2 era brick buildings on site are to be retained in their entirety. The robust boundary vegetation that encloses the site's northern, eastern and southern perimeter is to be retained without loss. In addition, the selection of veteran oak trees interspersed around the core of the site are to be retained and have been given generous stand offs from the proposed development to ensure their long term viability.
- 5.6 The site's operational length is 40 years, after which time the development will be dismantled, removed from site and recycled. The site will return to its current state with minimal long term scarring.
- 5.7 Proposed soft landscaping works included within this application will provide ecological enhancement and help to mitigate some of the landscape and visual effects of the development. Details of these improvements are outlined in section 8 of this report.

6 Landscape Character Assessment (LANDMAP)

- 6.1 In Wales, LANDMAP is the formally adopted approach for landscape assessment and is advocated by Planning Policy Wales for use in undertaking landscape and visual assessments to inform local plan policy, planning guidance and the determination of planning applications.
- 6.2 LANDMAP (produced by Natural Resources Wales) is a complete all-Wales GIS (Geographical Information System) based landscape resource where landscape characteristics, qualities and influences on the landscape are recorded and evaluated into a nationally consistent dataset.
- 6.3 LANDMAP comprises five spatial dataset layers or map layers covering five separate landscape study topics, comprising:
- Visual Character
 - Geological Character
 - Ecological Character
 - Historical Character
 - Cultural Character
- 6.4 The proposed development site and all of the recorded viewpoints fall within the Welsh Maelor landscape character area. The guidance adopted in 2007 summarises the area as follows:
- *"Undulating, mainly pastoral lowland farmland."*
 - *"Well-managed hedges with hedgerow trees and small woodlands."*
 - *"Historic designed estates influence a large proportion of this area."*
 - *"Field ponds abundant on areas with clay soils."*
 - *"Historic settlement pattern with remnants of medieval ridge and furrow."*
 - *"Erddig estate important for tourism, recreation, nature conservation and heritage."*

- *“Patches of valuable semi-natural habitats, especially in Clywedog valley.”*
 - *“Affected by urban pressures and economic changes to farming.”*
- 6.5 The visual character of Welsh Maelor identified by the assessment that pertains to this development site is summarised as follows:
- *“Undulating estate farmland with mosaic of farmland and trees.”*
 - *“Generally an abundance of well managed hedgerows and hedgerow trees.”*
- 6.6 The geological character of Welsh Maelor identified by the assessment that pertains to this development site is summarised as follows:
- *“Glacial till (boulder clay) covers a large part of the character area, with glacial sands and gravels found mainly in the area immediately to the south of Wrexham town, and in the river terrace on which Eyton Grange is situated.”*
 - *“The area drains to the Clywedog in the north and to the River Dee in the east and south.”*
- 6.7 The ecological character of Welsh Maelor identified by the assessment that pertains to this development site is summarised as follows:
- *“The River Clywedog valley south of Wrexham town has a diverse range of valuable semi-natural habitats including wet woodlands, lowland meadows and nationally important wetlands (especially for invertebrates) with areas of fen sedge, herb-rich swamp and rush pasture.”*
 - *“Although most grassland is improved, remnants of high value neutral grassland survive in the central and northern areas.”*
 - *“The Welsh Maelor has valuable remnants of estate parkland or wood pasture with mature and veteran trees – a Biodiversity Priority Habitat.*
 - *“Field ponds are frequent, and valuable for wildlife.”*
- 6.8 The historical character of Welsh Maelor identified by the assessment that pertains to this development site is summarised as follows:
- *“Widespread evidence of medieval open fields – ridge and furrow remnants of the Wrexham Lowlands.”*
 - *“Remnants of former ordnance depot at Parkey area south of Wrexham Industrial Estate.”*
- 6.9 The cultural character of Welsh Maelor identified by the assessment that pertains to this development site is summarised as follows:
- *“Still predominantly agricultural, with dispersed farms.”*
 - *“High level of recreational use in Erddig and Clywedog Valley, and extensive network of small lanes and rights of way.”*

- 6.10 The assessment considers the Welsh Maelor landscape to be sensitive, commenting that it is *“very vulnerable to continuing development and recreational pressures, to economic changes which threaten traditional farming, and from land use practices and development which do not take historical landscape features into account.”*
- 6.11 The overall management strategy for Welsh Maelor enclosed within the character assessment provides a series of aims that can assist in retaining and enhancing the inherent character of the area. Objectives that are pertinent to the application area and can be achieved through the proposed development include:
- *“Maintain high pond density, restore and enhance ponds. Protect species associated with ponds, e.g. bats, newts, water vole, lesser silver diving beetle.”*
 - *“Enhance and expand wood-pastures and retain veteran trees and fallen timber.”*
 - *“Develop green networks to link fragmented habitats and species.”*
 - *“Maintain, expand and link fragmented native woodlands.”*
 - *“Replace coniferous trees with native broadleaved trees in woodlands and increase diversity in woodland structure and retain old/dead standing or fallen trees.”*

7 Landscape and Visual Mitigation for the Proposed Development

- 7.1 As part of the proposed scheme, the following additional landscape works have been proposed to mitigate the potential landscape and visual effects of the extended development:
- Two blocks of native mixed species woodland planting totalling 0.1Ha.
 - Bare earth bund hibernaculum with scrub planting.
 - Wildflower meadow covering 0.18Ha.
 - Wetland wildflower meadow covering 0.23Ha.
 - A small pond with marginal aquatic planting.
- 7.2 In the medium to long term, screening benefit will be achieved from one of the two woodland blocks that is sited on the eastern boundary and the soil bund with scrub planting on the southern boundary. Both proposals will effectively filter and restrict some views from the unnamed road/PROW.
- 7.3 Aside from this, the screening benefit achieved from the other proposals included in this application is likely to be quite limited due to the low profile of the meadow planting and the siting of the second woodland block. Despite this, the cumulative benefit to the site’s biodiversity will be substantial over the long term once established. All planting will comprise of locally indigenous trees and shrubs and be of good provenance.

8 Potential Landscape Effects of the Proposed Development

- 8.1 The potential landscape effects of the proposed development have been assessed against the character area themes of *Welsh Maelor* provided by LANDMAP Wrexham. The inherent qualities of the site and wider landscape that are recognised in the guidance as well as other landscape elements have been considered.
- 8.2 The table identifies the sensitivity values for the character themes, the potential landscape effects anticipated and the magnitude of those effects.

Table 1: Breakdown of Landscape Effects:

Character Type	Sensitivity	Potential Landscape Effect of the Development Proposals	Magnitude of Effect
Visual (ref. 6.5)	Low	Temporary change of landscape from agricultural to energy production for a fixed period will dramatically change the appearance of the site. However, the site is relatively small and well contained by existing vegetation and development to the north.	Negligible adverse
Geological (ref. 6.6)	Low	The site's topography, drainage and neighbouring watercourses are not directly effected by the proposed development.	No effect
Ecological (ref. 6.7)	Moderate	All boundary vegetation and veteran trees are to be retained and adequately protected from the construction and operation of the development. Soft landscaping works proposed by this application will enhance the site's biodiversity over the long term.	Moderate Benefit
Historical (ref. 6.8)	Moderate	Unlisted WW2 era buildings on site will be retained and protected for the duration of the proposed site's lifetime. It is likely that they will appear marginally less visible in the wider landscape compared to the existing baseline due to the screening effect of the proposed development.	Negligible adverse

Character Type	Sensitivity	Potential Landscape Effect of the Development Proposals	Magnitude of Effect
Cultural (ref 6.9)	Low	The agricultural nature of the site will be reduced whilst it is producing energy over its 40 year lifetime. The proximity to an existing solar park and Wrexham Industrial Estate means that the historic agricultural nature of this small area has already been partially degraded. Public access to the site and the surrounding area will not change as a result of this development.	Slight adverse

- 8.3 Whilst the *Welsh Maelor* landscape character area is judged to be sensitive to “*continuing development and ... to economic changes which threaten traditional farming*”, the overall scale of the proposed development, its proximity to existing small scale solar parks and other light industry to the north and south, as well as its enclosed nature means it is likely to be less sensitive to change than other more rural areas assessed within the character area.
- 8.4 It is anticipated that all of the site’s physical assets, including: veteran trees, hedgerows, its undulating pastoral topography, stream courses and the WW2 era buildings will be retained as beneficial features of the site and left undisturbed by the proposed development.
- 8.5 Whilst the visual and cultural character of the site will be altered slightly, the proposed development is only permitted for a period of 40 years, meaning it will be able to return to its prior use at the end of the site’s lifetime. Soft landscaping works included within the application will improve the site’s ecology beyond the operational lifetime of the solar park.

9 Site Visibility, Visual Receptors and Potential Visual Effects of the Proposed Development (With ref. to Fig 3 & 4)

- 9.1 The table below provides a summary of those effects and a benchmark for assessing the effects of the extended development:
- 9.2 The desktop studies and field surveys Appraisal identified 7 viewpoints which were considered to be representative of the range of views and visual receptors for the proposed development. The selected viewpoints were not intended to cover every single possible view but were representative of a range of visual receptor types e.g. walkers on public footpaths and road users from different directions and distances from the site. The photo viewpoints and their locations are presented in on Figures 3 and 4.

- 9.3 From the survey and assessment work undertaken, it has been concluded that the site's zone of visual influence is generally restricted to an area within 0.5km of the site, mostly to the east and south-east (see Figure 3). Views of the proposed development are mainly limited to public rights of way, although some heavily restricted and distant views may be gained from a limited number of residential properties and industrial units.
- 9.4 Sensitive visual receptors in the vicinity of the site are confined to the following locations:
- Users of the unnamed road leading to and residents of Parkey Lodge c.190m to the south-east of the site (represented by Viewpoint 2).
 - Recreational users of footpath ABE/19 connecting the B5130 in the south to Redwither road in the north, c.5m-150m to the east of site (represented by Viewpoints 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7).
- 9.5 Potential views of the site from the upper storeys of HMP Berwyn to the site's north have not been obtained or assessed but may still exist. Although it is likely that they will be minimal and heavily filtered.
- 9.6 Similarly, views from Flogas Wrexham to the site's immediate south may exist but have not been assessed. Although it is likely that the range of views will be heavily restricted and filtered.

Table 2: Description of the Photographic Viewpoints and Potential Visual Effects of the Development:

Viewpoint Location and Description	Receptors and Sensitivity	Distance from Site	Potential Visual Effect of the Development Proposals.
Photo Viewpoint 1: Northerly view from the B510, c.600m from the southern edge of the site. Views of the site are not possible due to the numerous layers of dense intermittent vegetation.	Views of the development site are not possible from this location N/A	The viewpoint is c.600m south of the development site.	Views of the development site are not possible from this location or anywhere on the B510, resulting in there being no visual effect.
Photo Viewpoint 2: Northerly view from an unnamed road leading north towards the site, c.190m from its southern boundary.	Vehicular users of the unnamed road, Parkey Lodge and footpath users. Visual sensitivity: High .	The viewpoint is c.190m south of the development site.	This viewpoint demonstrates the limited visibility of the development site from the southern end of the unnamed road/PROW. It is possible that 'Parkey Lodge'

Viewpoint Location and Description	Receptors and Sensitivity	Distance from Site	Potential Visual Effect of the Development Proposals.
The redundant WW2 buildings on the site's boundary are partially visible but views beyond are heavily filtered by the robust boundary vegetation.			may have some distant and heavily filtered views from its second storey. It is predicted that the overall visual impact of the development from this location will be negligible .
Photo Viewpoint 3: North westerly view of the site from the PROW that connects the B5130 in the south to Redwinter Road in the North. The site is effectively screened by scrubby vegetation and farmyard detritus, its only recognisable feature is the redundant WW2 building in its south eastern corner.	Footpath users. Visual sensitivity: High .	The viewpoint is c.50m east of the development site.	This viewpoint demonstrates the limited visibility of the development site from the unnamed road/PROW. It is predicted that the overall visual impact of the development from this location will be negligible .
Photo Viewpoint 4: Westerly view towards the site, c.30m from its eastern boundary. Taken from the PROW that connects the B5130 in the south to Redwinter Road in the North. The site's eastern boundary consists of mature trees and other vegetation, occasional gaps allow filtered views into the site.	Footpath users. Visual sensitivity: High .	The viewpoint is c.30m east of the development site.	Intermittent breaks in the boundary vegetation adjacent to the public footpath will allow some middle-distance views of the proposed development site. It is predicted that the overall visual impact of the development from this location will be slight .
Photo Viewpoint 5: South westerly view towards the site, c.100m from its eastern boundary.	Footpath users. Visual sensitivity: High .	The viewpoint is c.100m north east of the development site.	This viewpoint demonstrates the limited visibility of the proposed development site from the PROW due to the site's

Viewpoint Location and Description	Receptors and Sensitivity	Distance from Site	Potential Visual Effect of the Development Proposals.
Taken from the PROW that connects the B5130 in the south to Redwinter Road in the North. Mature trees and shrubby vegetation provide robust screening along the eastern boundary, with only heavily filtered views of the site possible.			mature boundary vegetation. Some heavily filtered middle-distance views of the proposed development site will be possible, particularly when the vegetation has defoliated over winter. Additional woodland planting proposed in this application is sited on its eastern boundary, further limiting views into the site over the medium to long term. It is predicted that the overall visual impact of the development from this location will be negligible.
Photo Viewpoint 6: Westerly view towards the site, c.150m from its eastern boundary. Taken from the PROW that connects the B5130 in the south to Redwinter Road in the North. Mature trees and shrubby vegetation provide effective screening along the eastern boundary, with views of the site heavily restricted.	Footpath users. Visual sensitivity: High.	The viewpoint is c.150m north east of the development site.	This viewpoint demonstrates the limited visibility of the proposed development site from the PROW due to the site's mature boundary vegetation. Some heavily filtered middle-distance views of the proposed development site will be possible, particularly when the vegetation has defoliated over winter. Additional woodland planting proposed in this application is sited on its eastern boundary, further limiting views into the site over the medium to long term. It is predicted that the overall visual impact of the development from this location will be negligible.

Viewpoint Location and Description	Receptors and Sensitivity	Distance from Site	Potential Visual Effect of the Development Proposals.
Photo Viewpoint 7: Southerly view towards the site, on its northern boundary. Taken from the PROW that connects the B5130 in the south to Redwinter Road in the North. This view shows a rare gap in the hedgerow vegetation that lines the site's eastern boundary, allowing continuous views across the site through to the river on its opposite boundary.	Footpath users. Visual sensitivity: High.	The viewpoint is c.5m north of the development site.	Intermittent breaks in the boundary vegetation adjacent to the public footpath will allow some middle-distance views of the proposed development site. It is predicted that the overall visual impact of the development from this location will be slight.

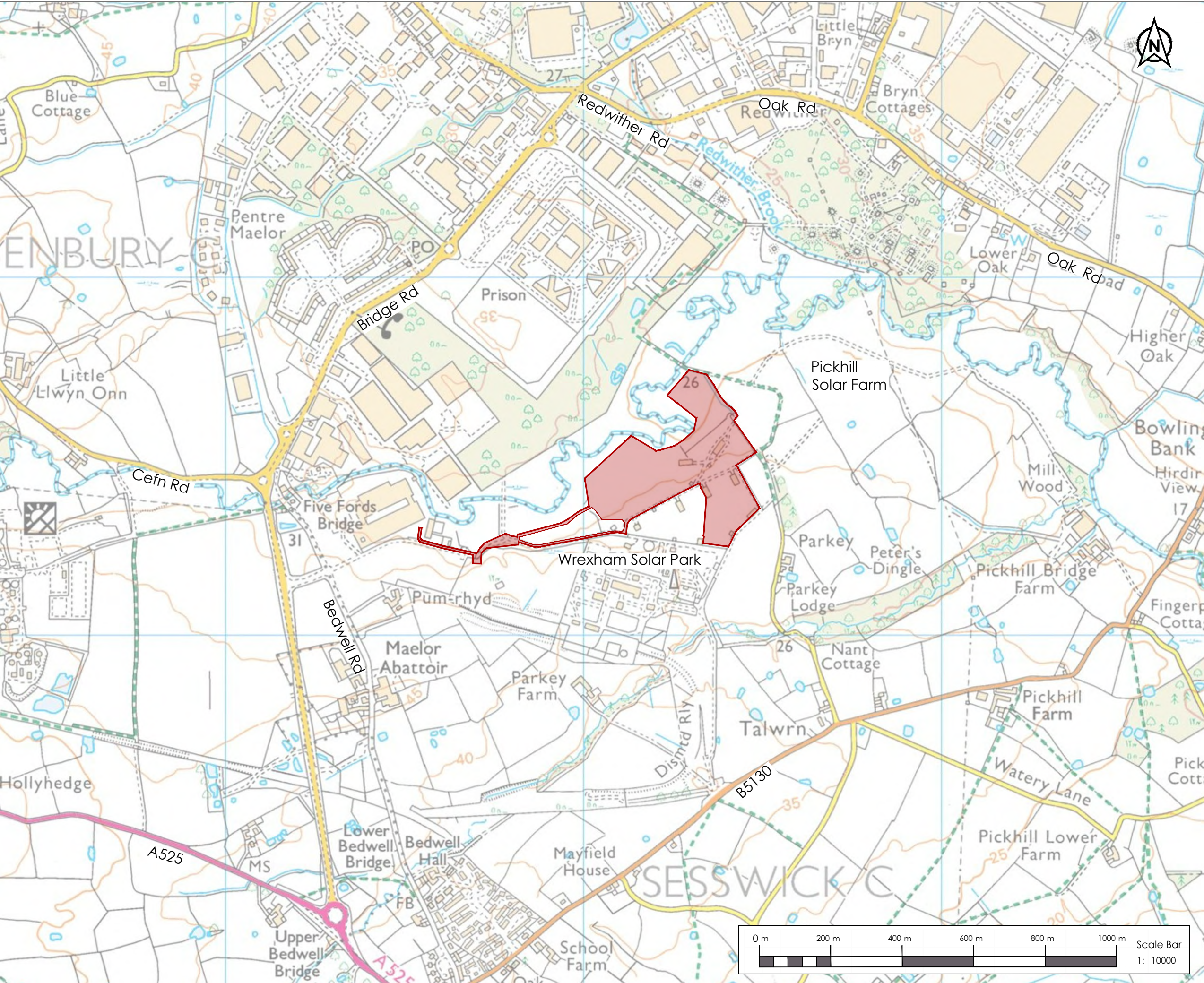
- 9.7 The potential visual effects of the proposed development are highlighted in Table 2 above. For the most part, views of the development will be entirely screened or heavily filtered by mature vegetation. Where direct views do exist, it is anticipated that the scale and character of the proposed development will have only Slight or Negligible visual effects upon the identified viewpoints. Some beneficial landscape and visual enhancement will be achieved through the proposed woodland planting on the site's eastern boundary.

10 Summary

- 10.1 This report provides an assessment of the potential landscape and visual effects that would be associated with a proposed solar farm development on Land north of Maelor Gas Works, c.5km to the south-east of Wrexham town centre.
- 10.2 The development site is located across four actively grazed, medium scale pastoral fields. It is generally well enclosed from all aspects. Its northern boundary is defined by the meandering river Clywedog, which is lined on both sides with a thicket of mature trees. Similarly, the eastern and southern boundaries to the site are generally well vegetated with only occasional gaps. Public Access to the site and its vicinity is limited with only a single PROW and an unnamed road sharing visual connectivity with the proposed development.
- 10.3 The proposed development comprises of a 5.7MW solar park and 16MW battery storage facility as well as other small scale associated development.
- 10.4 In terms of landscape effects, the proposed development is unlikely to have any significant impact upon the physical landscape. It is anticipated that all of the site's physical assets, including: veteran trees, hedgerows, its undulating pastoral topography, stream courses and the WW2 era buildings will be retained as beneficial features of the site and left undisturbed by the proposed development. In addition, a range of soft landscaping proposals will enhance the site's bio-diversity beyond its 40 year lifespan.
- 10.5 The site is enclosed by Wrexham Industrial Estate to the north, an existing solar park to the immediate west and the gas works to its immediate south, resulting in some partial degradation to the character of the local landscape as it has transitioned from a predominantly rural landscape, to urban industrial fringe entwined with retained rural landscape features over the last century. Considering the site's small scale, it is likely that the proposed development will only have a negligible effect on the character of the wider landscape.
- 10.6 Visually, the proposed development shares little intervisibility with the wider landscape. The visual influence of the proposed development is thought to be within a 0.5km range of the site and only effects one public right of way (ABE/19) to the site's east and an unnamed road that joins its southern end. The study has found that the proposed development is likely to have only a negligible or slight effect on its small number of visual receptors. This is mostly as a result of the robust boundary vegetation enclosing the site that screens or heavily filters the majority of the publicly accessible views into and across the site.
- 10.7 This report concludes that the proposed development can be successfully assimilated into the local area with negligible adverse impact upon visual amenity and landscape character.

Figures 1 - 5:

- Figure 1: Location Plan
- Figure 2: The Development Proposals
- Figure 3: Photo-Viewpoint Plan
- Figure 4: Photo Viewpoints 1-9
- Figure 5: Landscape Designations



Key:

Proposed Planning Application Boundary

FIGURE 1

rev: A	date: 01/02/21	details: SD Red line update
corylus Planning & Environmental Ltd. The Old Dairy Yanworth Chellenham Gloucestershire GL54 3LQ tel: 01285 721072		
client: Novus R S Ltd		
project: Wrexham PV Extension		
title: Location Plan		
scale: 1:10000	date: 02/12/20	drawn by: SD
project ref: 258	checked by: HD	size: A3
	drawn no: WR-EX-258-08	rev: -

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FIGURE 2

Key:

Proposed Ecological Features

	Pond water surface area		Proposed Scrub
	Marginal planting		Woodland block
	Soil Bund		Wetland Wildflower Mix
	Post and wire fencing to be installed		Meadow Wildflower Mix
	Five bar gate x 4		Hibernaculum

General

	Proposed Planning Application Boundary		Existing Building
	Existing Hedgerow		Battery store
	Public Right of Way		Proposed Access Road
	Deer fencing		Existing site roads
	CCTV		Palisade fence
	Shallow ditch		Attenuation Swale

rev:	D	date:	04-02-21	details:	(JLB) Layout updated, pond and ECO area adjusted
	C		19-12-21		(JLB) Annotations removed
	B		16-11-20		(JLB) revisions ECO enhancements and red line
	A		12-11-20		(JLB) revisions to road and red line

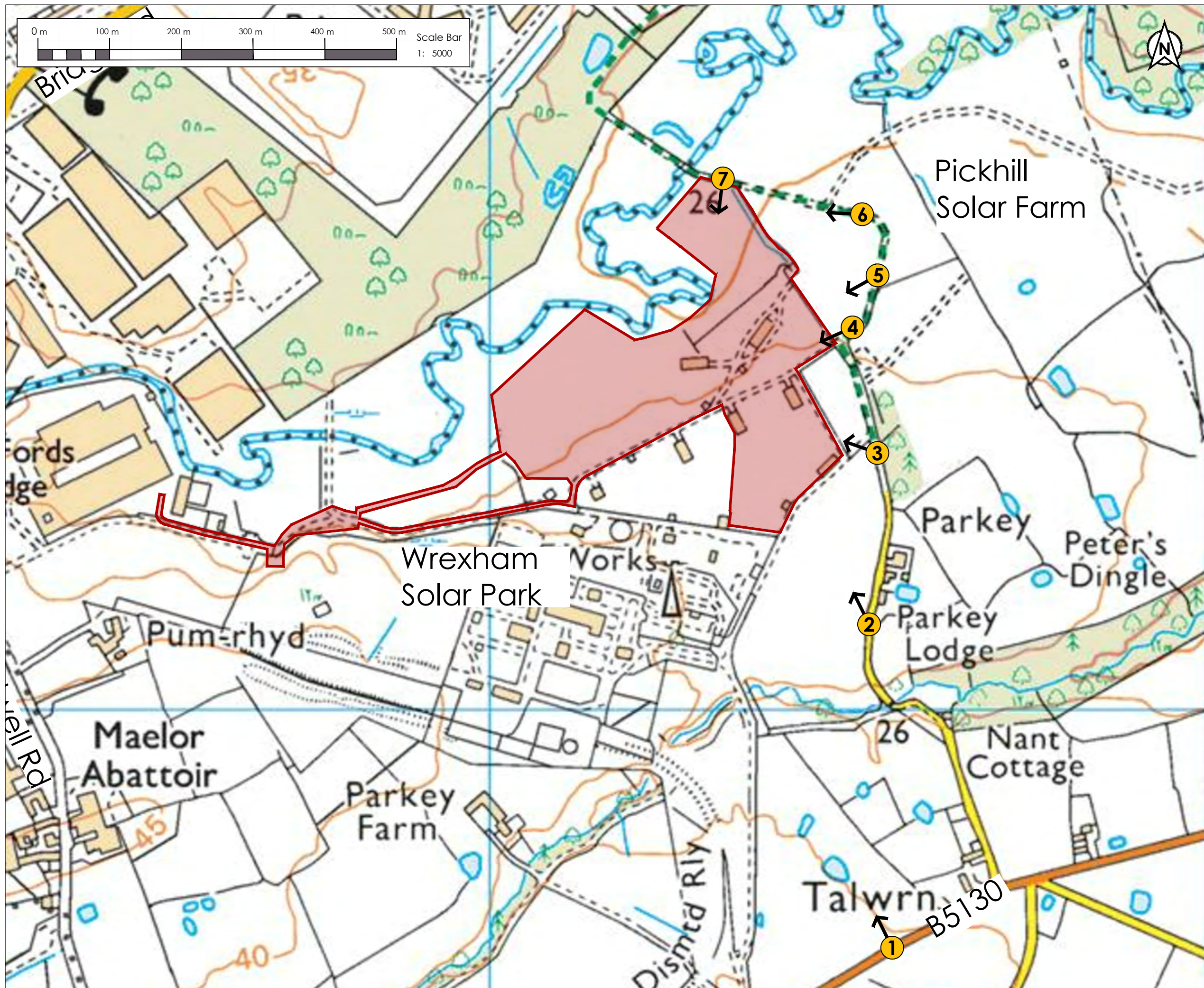
The Old Dairy
Yanworth
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL54 3LQ
tel: 01285 721072

client: Novus R S Ltd

project: Wrexham PV Extension

title: Ecological Mitigation Plan

scale:	1:2000	date:	03/11/20	drawn by:	JLB	checked by:		size:	A3
Project ref:	258	drawn no:	WR-EX-258-07	rev:	D				



Key:

- Proposed Planning Application Boundary
- ← Locations of Viewpoints 1-7

FIGURE 3

rev: -	date: -	details: -
 corylus Planning & Environmental Ltd. The Old Dairy Yanworth Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL54 3LQ tel: 01285 721072		
client: Novus R S Ltd		
project: Wrexham PV Extension		
title: Photo Viewpoints		
scale: 1:5000	date: 10/02/21	drawn by: WP
checked by: AW	size: A3	
Project ref: 258	draw no: WR/EX/258/15	rev: -

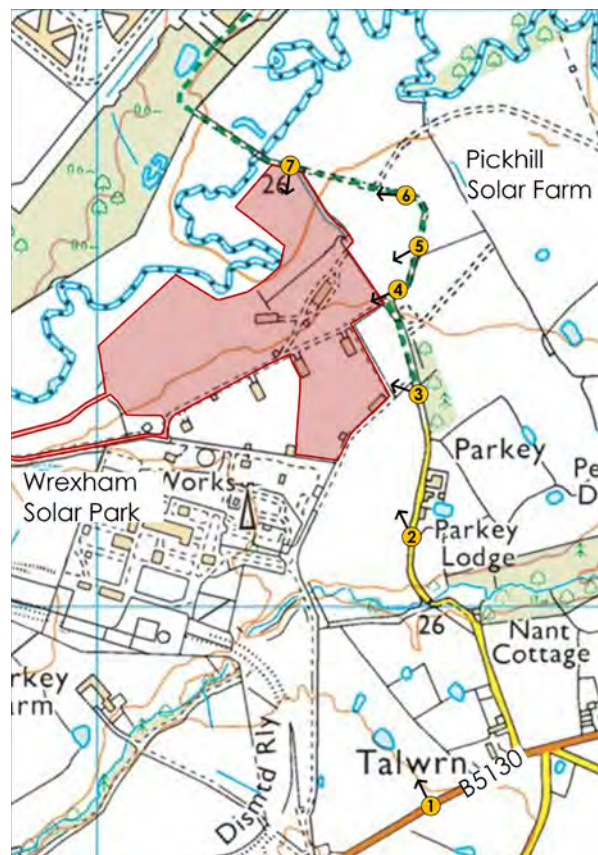
Solar Park and Battery Storage Facility
Land to the North of Maelor Gas Works, Marchwiel, Wrexham, LL13 0UN

FIGURE 4
Photoviewpoints 1-7

Approximate Extents of Proposed Development



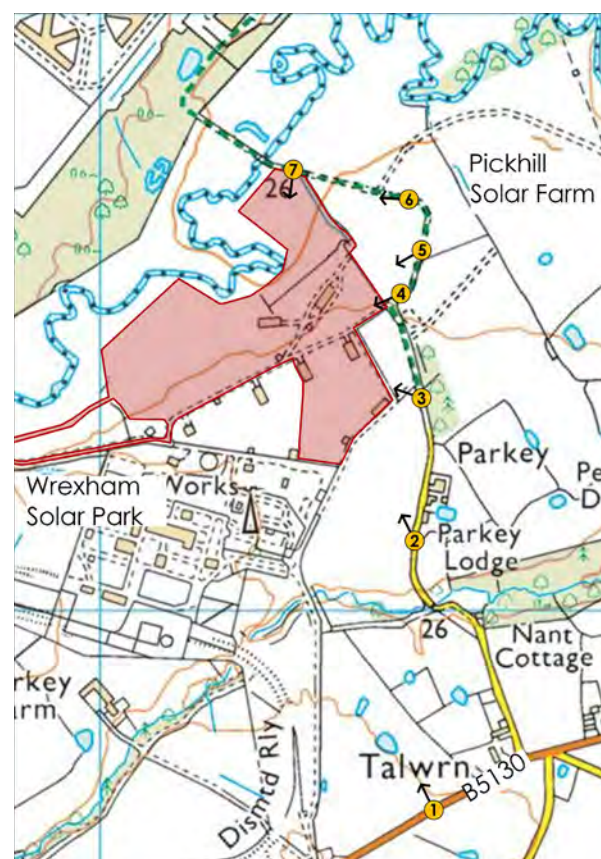
Photo Viewpoint 1: Northerly view from the B510, c.600m from the southern edge of the site. Views of the site are not possible due to the numerous layers of dense intervening vegetation.



Solar Park and Battery Storage Facility
Land to the North of Maelor Gas Works, Marchwiel, Wrexham, LL13 0UN



Photo Viewpoint 2: Northerly view from an unnamed road leading north towards the site, c.190m from its southern boundary. The redundant WW2 buildings on the site's boundary are partially visible but views beyond are heavily filtered by the robust boundary vegetation.



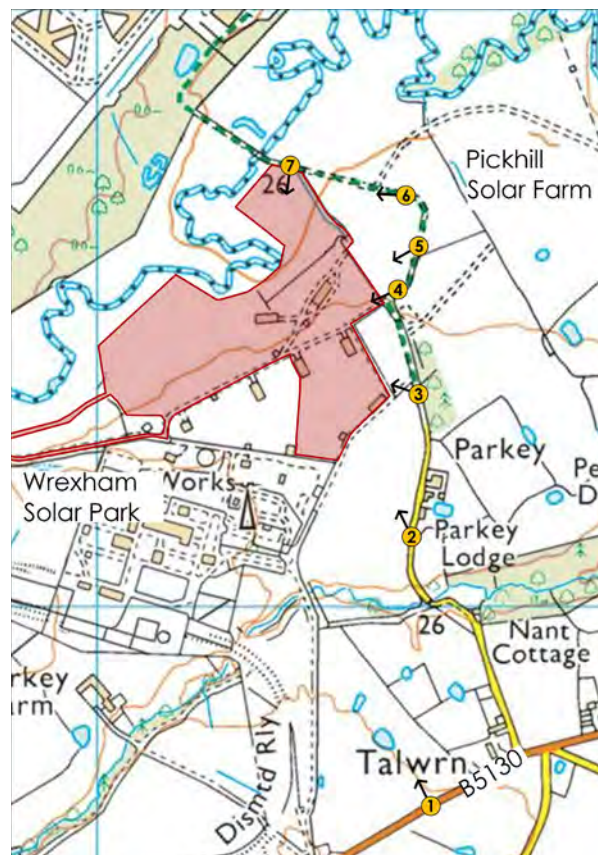
Solar Park and Battery Storage Facility
Land to the North of Maelor Gas Works, Marchwiell, Wrexham, LL13 0UN



Approximate Extents of Proposed Development



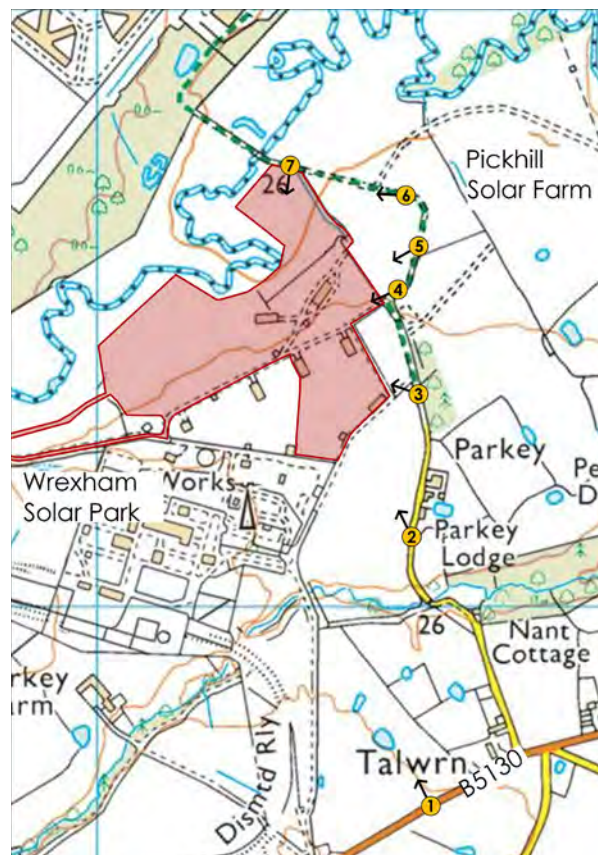
Photo Viewpoint 3: North westerly view of the site from the PROW that connects the B5130 in the south to Redwinter Road in the North. The site is effectively screened by scrubby vegetation and farmyard detritus, its only recognisable feature is the redundant WW2 building in its south eastern corner.



Solar Park and Battery Storage Facility
Land to the North of Maelor Gas Works, Marchwiell, Wrexham, LL13 0UN



Photo Viewpoint 4: Westerly view towards the site, c.30m from its eastern boundary. Taken from the PROW that connects the B5130 in the south to Redwinter Road in the North. The site's eastern boundary consists of mature trees and other vegetation, occasional gaps allow filtered views into the site.



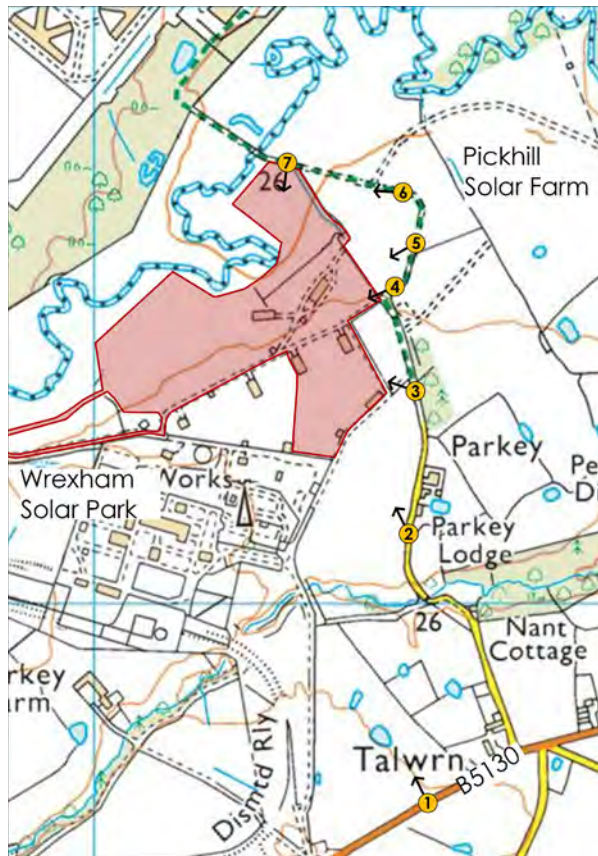
Solar Park and Battery Storage Facility
Land to the North of Maelor Gas Works, Marchwiell, Wrexham, LL13 0UN



Approximate Extents of Proposed Development



Photo Viewpoint 5: South westerly view towards the site, c.100m from its eastern boundary. Taken from the PROW that connects the B5130 in the south to Redwinter Road in the North. Mature trees and shrubby vegetation provide robust screening along the eastern boundary, with only heavily filtered views of the site possible.



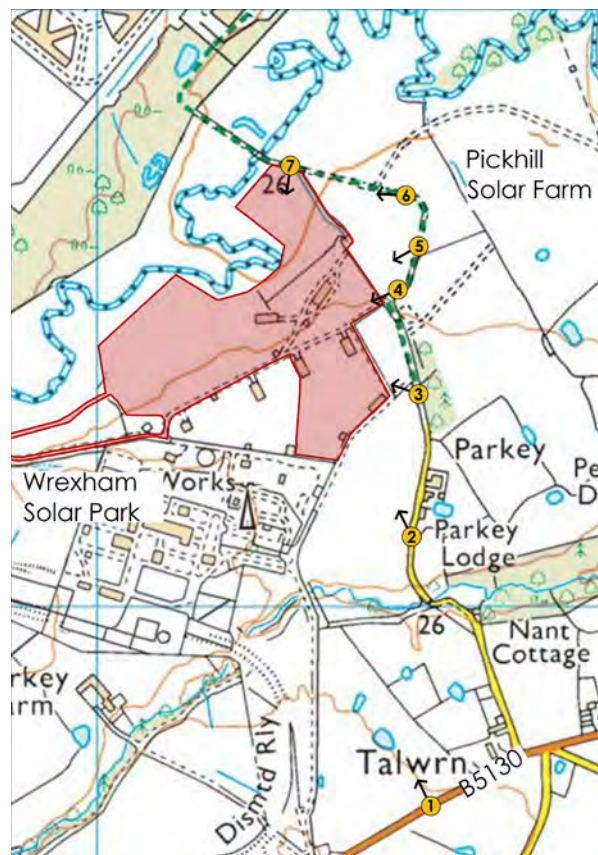
Solar Park and Battery Storage Facility
Land to the North of Maelor Gas Works, Marchwiell, Wrexham, LL13 0UN



Approximate Extents of Proposed
Development



Photo Viewpoint 6 : Westerly view towards the site, c.150m from its eastern boundary. Taken from the PROW that connects the B5130 in the south to Redwinter Road in the North. Mature trees and shrubby vegetation provide effective screening along the eastern boundary, with views of the site heavily restricted.

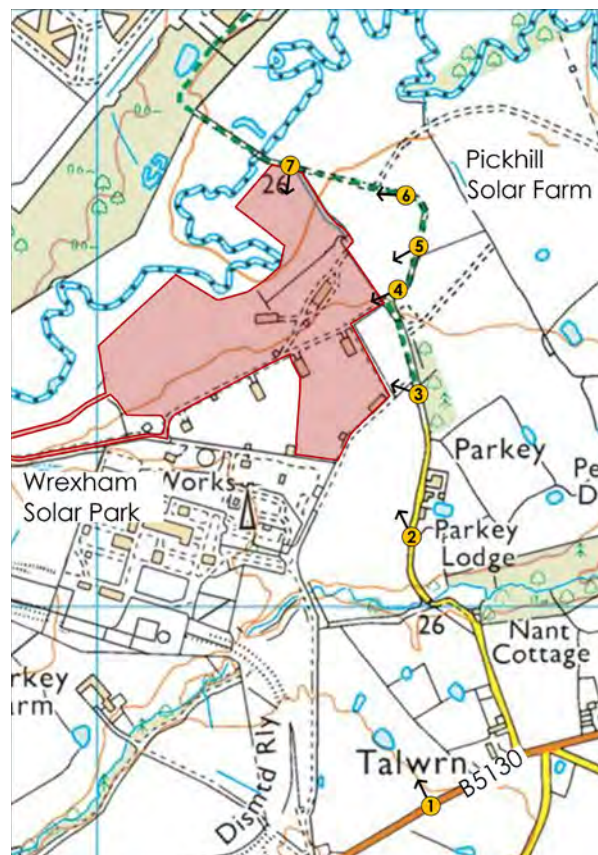


Solar Park and Battery Storage Facility
Land to the North of Maelor Gas Works, Marchwiel, Wrexham, LL13 0UN

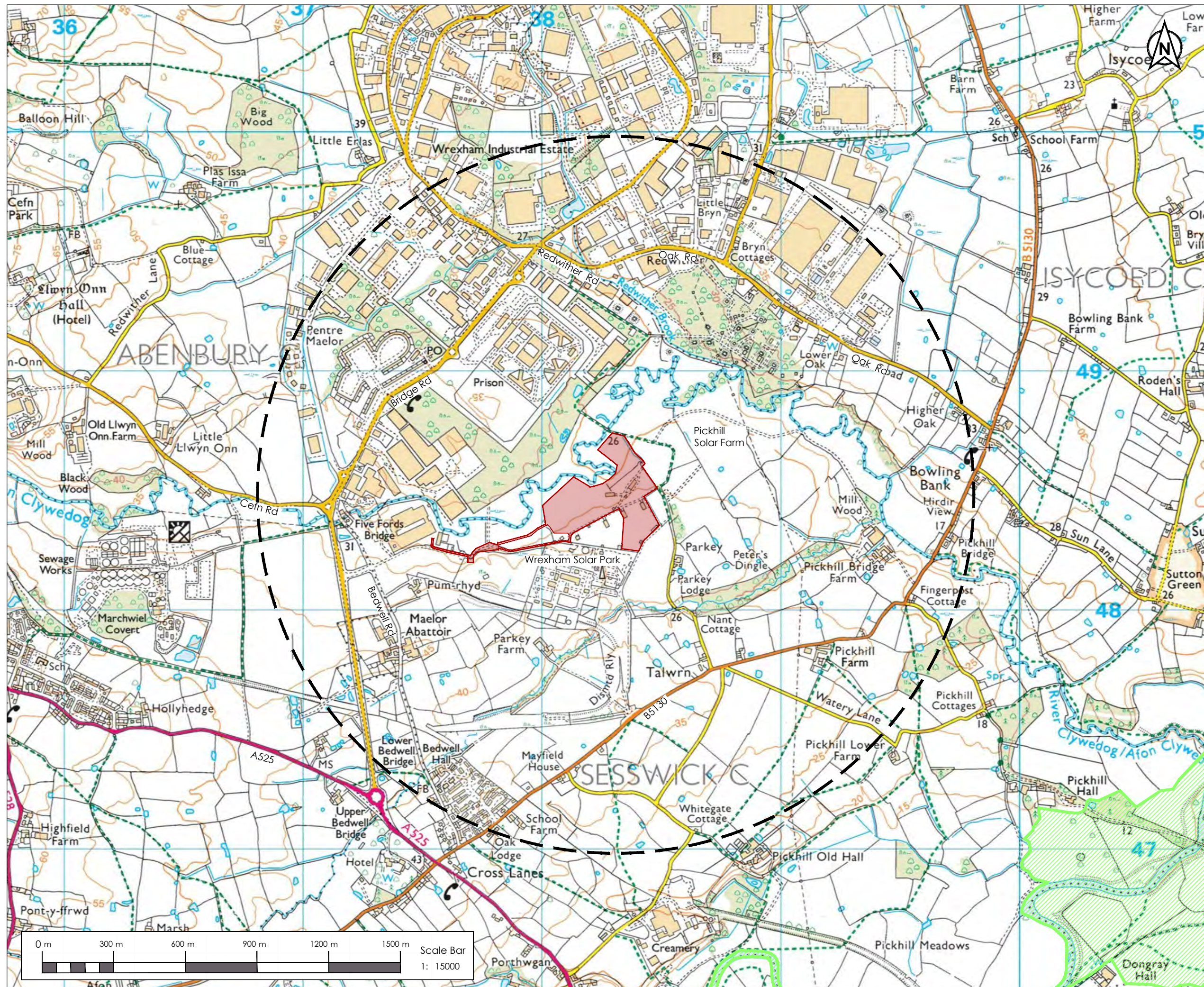




Photo Viewpoint 7: Southerly view towards the site, on its northern boundary. Taken from the PROW that connects the B5130 in the south to Redwinter Road in the North. This view shows a rare gap in the hedgerow vegetation that lines the site's eastern boundary, allowing continuous views across the site through to the river on its opposite boundary.



Solar Park and Battery Storage Facility
Land to the North of Maelor Gas Works, Marchwiell, Wrexham, LL13 0UN



Key:

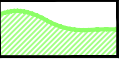
-  Proposed Planning Application Boundary
-  1.5km study area
-  SSSI

FIGURE 5

rev:	date:	details:
 Planning & Environmental Ltd.		
client: Novus R S Ltd		
project: Wrexham PV Extension		
title: Landscape Designations		
scale: 1:15000	date: 08/02/21	drawn by: WP
project ref: 258	checked by: AW	size: A3
	drawn no: WR/EX/258/8	rev: -

Appendix 1:

Methodology

Introduction

Landscape and visual impacts are independent but inter-related issues. Landscape impact assessment aims to determine the likely changes in the physical landscape resulting from a given development and to evaluate the significance of these changes in relation to their effects upon both the quality and character of the landscape. Visual impact assessment predicts the appearance of these physical changes within the landscape and their effects upon specific viewpoints or visual receptors, such as the occupants of residential properties and the users of roads, public rights of way or other public open spaces.

In summary, the objectives of Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) are to:

- describe and evaluate the existing landscape resource and visual amenity of the site and the surrounding area that may be affected by a given development proposal;
- determine the sensitivity of the existing landscape resource and its capacity to accept change;
- identify and determine the nature and extent of any direct effects of the development upon physical components within the landscape, the introduction of new or uncharacteristic features into the landscape and the effect of these changes upon the landscape character and quality of the site and surrounding area;
- determine the extent to which the development will be visible in the wider landscape;
- locate the key visual receptors, determine the sensitivity of these receptors and assess the likely changes in views that may result from the development;
- evaluate the magnitude and significance of effects upon both visual receptors and the overall character and quality of the landscape;
- determine and evaluate any cumulative impacts that may be caused by the proposed development in relation to other known developments of a similar nature in the surrounding area;
- determine potential measures to reduce or mitigate the impacts of the proposed development;

The methodology set out below draws upon a variety of existing and emerging publications, the most relevant being the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (*Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 3rd Edition 2013*).

Landscape Assessment

Landscape assessment involves an identification and analysis of various factors pertaining to the site and surrounding area. These factors include:

- **physical resources** - such as geology, landform, trees, hedgerows, built structures, land use etc.;
- **landscape quality or condition** – the physical state of the landscape, its state of repair or its intactness from a visual, functional and ecological perspective.
- **landscape character** – the distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements (or physical resources) within the landscape that makes one landscape different from another. Character can be defined by particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use, field patterns and human settlement, but may also be influenced by the condition or management of the landscape. The landscape character of a particular area can be determined through published character assessments or by undertaking a site specific character assessment in accordance with the 'Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland' (*Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage 2002*);
- **landscape value** – the relative importance or value of the landscape as expressed through national or local designation, or by consensus or public recognition. The value of a particular landscape may be defined through its unique character, scenic beauty, quality, rarity, tranquillity, cultural and historic associations or through biodiversity and conservation interest.

The baseline landscape assessment is undertaken through a combination of desktop research and analysis and subsequent field assessment. The desk based assessment will involve a review of relevant designations, planning policy and existing landscape assessments, plus an analysis of Ordnance Survey maps and aerial photographs. The field work will verify and expand upon information gathered through the desktop exercise, with particular consideration of the existing landscape elements in and around the site and how these contribute to the overall character of the local landscape. Judgemental assessments can also be carried out in the field to reflect upon issues such as landscape condition, visual amenity, psychological perceptions and how people are perceived to use or value the site or local area.

The landscape impact or significance of a particular development can be evaluated by assessing the sensitivity of the existing landscape resource in combination with the likely magnitude of landscape change brought about by the development.

Landscape Sensitivity

Landscape sensitivity is the extent to which a landscape can accommodate change of a particular type without unacceptable adverse effects upon its character, value or quality. The determination of the sensitivity of the landscape resource is based upon an evaluation of each of the key elements or characteristics of the landscape likely to be

affected by a development. The evaluation will reflect such factors as the quality and value of various components within the landscape and their contribution to landscape character, and the degree to which particular elements or characteristics can be replaced or substituted.

In most instances landscape sensitivity can be evaluated based on criteria set out in Table 1 below:

Sensitivity	Criteria	Example
High	A landscape of particular distinctive character or highly valued for its scenic quality or rarity. A landscape where the intrinsic character may be sensitive or very sensitive to change or where valued landscape elements are deemed to be irreplaceable.	Designated landscapes such as World Heritage Sites, National Park, AONB, AGLV or landscapes with nature conservation designations such as SSSIs and SACs. Landscapes that are valued for their historical or cultural associations or are deemed to possess unique features or character.
Moderate	A landscape of valued characteristics of medium importance, scenic quality or rarity. A landscape that may be reasonably tolerant to moderate changes without adversely affecting its intrinsic character.	Undesignated landscapes but value perhaps expressed through existing landscape assessment, planning policy, non-official publications or through its demonstrable use or appreciation by the public. Landscapes that exhibit a relatively positive and attractive character, but may have evidence of alteration to, or degradation of some inherent landscape features.
Low	A landscape of low importance which is not particularly valued for its scenic quality or rarity and is potentially tolerant of substantial change without causing significant harm, or where regeneration or landscape enhancement may significantly improve its quality / condition.	Areas that are deemed to have few, if any, valued landscape features, possibly identified for improvement or regeneration through planning policy. Or where the presence of urban or uncharacteristic features has significantly degraded the intrinsic quality and character of the landscape.

Table 1: Landscape Sensitivity Criteria

However, landscapes can vary in their capacity to accommodate different forms of development. Sensitivity is thus not absolute, but is likely to vary according to specific

characteristics of an individual site or landscape area, the nature of the proposed development and the type of change being considered.

Magnitude of Landscape Effects

In the assessment of landscape impacts, the magnitude of landscape change brought about by a development can be determined by a combination of the following factors:

- The scale or extent of the landscape effect
- The duration of the effect – whether short term, long term or permanent
- The nature of the effect – whether adverse or beneficial (negative or positive) or neutral.

Example criteria for the evaluation of the magnitude of landscape change are given in Table 2 below. However, it is important to qualify or substantiate the scale of change with reference to the nature and duration of effects. For example a ‘substantial’ temporary effect may be considered to be less significant than a permanent ‘moderate’ scale effect.

Magnitude of Effect	Typical Criteria
Substantial	A major change in landscape character over an extensive area or a very intensive change over a more limited area. A total loss or alteration to key elements/features/characteristics or the introduction of significant alien/uncharacteristic features.
Moderate	Prominent but not extensive changes to landscape character over a limited area. Partial loss or alteration to key elements/features/characteristics or the introduction of new / uncharacteristic features that are not perceived to have a significant impact upon the wider landscape character.
Slight	Minor changes in landscape character. Minor loss or alteration of key elements/features/characteristics or introduction of new elements that are not substantially uncharacteristic of the receiving landscape.
Negligible	Virtually imperceptible change in landscape character. Very minor loss or alteration to key elements/features/characteristics or introduction of new elements that are not uncharacteristic of the receiving landscape.

Table 2: Criteria for the Magnitude of landscape effects

Visual Assessment

Visual Assessment involves identifying locations where a given development will be visible from, and an evaluation of the visual effect the development will have upon individual receptors. Visual receptors include the occupants of residential properties and settlements, places of work, users of roads and public footpaths and public vantage points.

In order to identify available views and potential visual receptors it is necessary to define a 'zone of visual influence' (ZVI). The ZVI represents an area from which all or part of the proposed development would potentially be visible and defines the area for the visual assessment. A theoretical zone of visual influence (sometimes known as a 'zone of theoretical visibility' – ZTV) can be established by the use of specialist computer software in conjunction with digital terrain data, but this assumes a bare earth situation and does not take into account the screening potential of existing vegetation, buildings or other elements within the landscape. Consequently the use of computerised terrain modelling to establish a ZVI is not always accurate or effective and any desk based assessment should always be verified by undertaking a field survey in order to establish a more accurate zone of visibility and to assess the specific nature and sensitivities of individual visual receptors.

The visual impact or significance of a development on a particular visual receptor can be evaluated by assessing the sensitivity of the visual receptor in combination with the likely magnitude or scale of visual change brought about by the development.

Visual Sensitivity

The sensitivity of visual receptors is influenced by factors such as the location and context of the viewpoint, the extent of available views, whether a view is recognised for its special scenic qualities, the numbers of viewers affected or the interests of viewers in their environment. For example, open views of a proposed development site from residential properties or from a valued landscape are regarded as being less able to accommodate change than views from an industrial site where viewers may have limited interest in their external environment.

Table 3 below defines example ratings and criteria for visual sensitivity:

Sensitivity	Criteria	Example
High	Views experienced by people with a propriety interest in their environment or viewers with prolonged viewing opportunities or where many viewers are affected. Or where views are deemed to be 'special' due to historical or cultural references or scenic quality.	• Occupiers of residential properties or residential communities • Users of public rights of way and public open spaces or valued landscapes. • Viewpoints / views within a landscape that has important references to historical events, cultural heritage or the arts, or where views are valued for their scenic qualities.
Moderate	Views experienced by people who only have a moderate or relatively short term interest in their environment.	• People engaged in outdoor sporting activities • Schools

		Motorists or passengers travelling in cars or trains through the landscape.
Low	Views experienced by people having a passing or momentary interest in their environment or where the viewers are engaged in activities which limit their appreciation of the environment.	- Motorists travelling at speed on main roads or motorways. - People at work in commercial or industrial premises

Table 3: Visual Sensitivity Criteria

However, the classification of the sensitivity of visual receptors involves a degree of professional judgement and will be site (or receptor) specific. The hierarchy of the examples given in Table 3 above is not totally rigid, since the sensitivity of one type of visual receptor may vary according to specific circumstances. For example, some motorists may decide to drive on a specific route for its scenic qualities or may regularly use a particular road which is local to their home. Under these circumstances the motorist may have a higher sensitivity to visual changes within the landscape.

Magnitude of Visual Effects

In the evaluation of the effects on views and visual amenity of the identified receptors, the magnitude of visual change is determined by reference to the following factors:

- The distance of the receptor from the development;
- The duration, nature and type of the effect, whether temporary or permanent, adverse or beneficial;
- The angle of the view of the receptor;
- The extent of the area over which the changes would be visible;
- The scale of change in the view with respect to loss or introduction of features, changes in composition;
- The degree of contrast or integration of new features in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour and texture;
- Seasonal effect (i.e. changes in views or visibility through the seasons due to deciduous vegetation or other factors such as weather conditions).

Example criteria for the magnitude (or scale) of visual change are given in Table 4 below. Again, it is important to qualify or substantiate the scale of effects with reference to the nature of effects (adverse, beneficial or neutral) and their duration (short term, long term, permanent).

Magnitude	Typical Criteria
Substantial	The development (or associated changes in landscape composition) forms a dominant large scale feature (or change) and is immediately apparent within the view.

Moderate	The development (or associated changes in landscape composition) may form a visible and recognisable new or changed element within the general scene and may be readily noticed by the observer, but is not over dominant within the landscape.
Slight	The development (or associated changes in landscape composition) forms only a minor component of the wider view, which might be missed by the casual observer.
Negligible	The development integrates into the existing environment and as such scarcely affects the overall view.
None	No part of the development, or activity associated with development, is discernible.

Table 4: Criteria for the magnitude of visual change

Impact Significance

The significance of landscape impacts is evaluated by taking into consideration the following factors:

- The sensitivity and value of the landscape or its ability to accept change caused by a particular type of development;
- The magnitude of that change on the landscape (the nature, scale and duration of the landscape effect brought about by a development).

Similarly, the significance of visual impacts can be evaluated by considering:

- The sensitivity of the visual receptor (dependant on the conditions under which the site is viewed, the interests of the viewer(s), the extent of available views and the number of viewers affected);
- The magnitude of visual effects (type and nature of visual effects, duration and distance of the receptor from the development).

Assessment of the significance of landscape and visual impacts is on a qualitative basis and does not avoid subjectivity. Therefore, the assessment of significance involves a degree of professional judgement in balancing the relationship between the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of effects brought about by the development.

A matrix system can be employed to grade impact significance as shown in Table 5, but this should only be employed as a general guideline, and does not eliminate the need to make a more explicit and qualified judgment in the light of a more complex series of variables.

		Sensitivity		
		High	Moderate	Low
Magnitude/Scale	Substantial	Major	Major	Moderate
	Moderate	Major	Moderate	Moderate
	Slight	Moderate	Moderate	Minor
	Negligible	Minor	Minor	Negligible

Table 5: Impact Significance Grading

Appendix 2:

LANDMAP

Wrexham LANDMAP

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Summary Document

Introduction

This Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) is one of a series of guidance notes which support the policies of the adopted Unitary Development Plan. The UDP seeks the conservation and enhancement of the landscape and its natural and built features of significance and planning applications need to demonstrate how they have achieved this. This guidance forms a material consideration in the determination of all planning applications which could affect the form, appearance and setting of the built and natural landscape and its features.

Wrexham has a diverse and varied landscape

Landscape, whether rural or urban contributes greatly to our every day experience of where we live and work, and influences our perception of an area, sense of identity and well being. The LANDMAP study has been undertaken to identify the key elements and features which make up the landscape within the Wrexham Borough. It is clear from the study that the landscapes of Wrexham are diverse and varied, as demonstrated by the identification of 27 different Landscape Character Areas.



Information is presented in the following format

Map of LANDMAP Character Areas

The centre spread map provides an introduction and overview to the landscapes of Wrexham and:

- Categorises and groups areas within 4 common broad landscape types (i.e. areas with broadly similar features such as settlement or landform) into Rural/Urban villages, Uplands, Urban, and Rural lowlands
- Sub-divides the area further into 27 detailed landscape character areas
- Introduces Key Landscape Issues for each landscape type

Landscape Character Area sheets

Seperate sheets are available for each of the 27 landscape character areas. These sheets present concise information for Visual, Geology, Ecology, History, and Cultural aspects within each character area. The format of information provides:

- Maps indicating the location of the character area within the authority and the character area boundary

A brief statement of:

- Landscape Character - a mental image of the landscape, its landform, features, openness or enclosure

- Area summary - indication of important qualities or attributes

- Landscape context - location within the authority, relationship with other landscape types both within the authority and beyond

- Key characteristics of Visual, Geology, Ecology, History, and Cultural character

- Landscape sensitivity - the pressures and threats upon landscape

- Management Guidance - aims and guidelines to achieve the management strategy for the area

Glossary & Bibliography

Provides clarification of the technical terms used and information resource referred to

Background

The LANDMAP summary document SPG has been produced to provide a consolidated and simplified version of the Wrexham LANDMAP -Technical Appendices adopted in November 2004. The Technical Appendices should be refereed to where information about the assessment methodology and assessment valuations for each aspect is required.



Methodology and Status

This document has been prepared using the LANDMAP methodology devised by the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) to describe and evaluate the Visual, Geology, Ecology, History, and Cultural aspects of the landscape and provide a basis for a consistent Wales-wide approach to landscape assessment.

The Welsh Assembly Government's Planning Policy Wales March 2002 recognises that LANDMAP 'is an important information resource upon which local planning authorities can draw in making landscape assessments needed to inform local policy, guidance and decision making in this field.

Wrexham Council takes the view that a proposed development, which does not conserve or enhance the landscape / townscape, or its natural and built features considered to be of significance, is unlikely to be approved.



Further Information

For further information please contact:

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LL11 1AR

Tel: 01978 292019
Fax: 01978 292502
e-mail: planning@wrexham.gov.uk

All our information is available available in accessible formats

Visit our website:
www.wrexham.gov.uk/planning



RURAL/URBAN VILLAGES

Wrexham urban villages are associated with past coal mining, and located on the edge of the uplands and to the north of Wrexham town. The villages are set among farmland, wooded valleys and regenerating or restored landscapes. This complex character area contains main roads, railways and canal, as well as Offa's Dyke and prehistoric hill forts, reflecting Wrexham's history on the border between Wales and England, upland and lowland.

Detailed Character Areas

- 7a Chirk
- 7b Cefn Mawr
- 7c Rhosllanerchrugog, Rhostyllen, Ruabon, Pen y Cae
- 7d West Wrexham Ridges and Valleys
- 8 Gwersyllt, Llay, Gresford, Borrass
- 9a Clywedog Valley
- 9b River Alyn Valley
- 9c Ffrith Valley
- 9d Froncysyllte to Newbridge

UPLANDS

Ruabon/Esclusham Mountain is an open moorland plateau with remnants of former quarrying and mining. Much of the area is uninhabited, but there are scattered farmsteads on the eastern slopes, and to the north, the highest village in Wales - Bwlchgwyn.

Ceiriog Valley/Berwyn Mountain is a rural upland area consisting of the enclosed River Ceiriog Valley, and surrounding hills. The higher hills are open moorland, and the lower areas contain a mixture of small farms and woodlands, with villages along the valley floor.

Detailed Character Areas

- 1a Berwyn Mountain
- 1b Ruabon/Esclusham Mountain
- 2 Ceiriog Forest
- 3 Berwyn Foothills
- 4a Ceiriog Valley Slopes
- 4b Ceiriog Valley Corridor
- 5a Chirk Estate and above Froncysyllte
- 5b Eastern slopes of Ruabon Mountain
- 6 Minera, Gwynfryn, Bwlchgwyn



LANDMAP Character Areas

Rural/Urban Villages : Key Landscape Issues

- The future of 'urban fringe' landscapes
- The potential for urban forestry
- Impact of new housing on traditional community identity
- Maintenance of local distinctiveness
- The future of Bersham tip
- The need for footpath and cycle links
- The long-term impact of sand and clay quarries and landfill
- Preservation of local history and industrial archaeology



Upland : Key Landscape Issues

- Impact of development in remote and wild areas
- Effects on agricultural land use of economic changes and conservation constraints
- Impact on cultural identity of rural villages and farms of commuters and incomers
- Landscape protection - potential Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty designation
- Management of tourism and recreation

Rural Lowlands : Key Landscape Issues

- Impact on rural character of commuter pressure
- Conservation and management of historic parks, gardens and boundary walls
- Hedgerow and hedgerow tree conservation and restoration
- Impact of flooding defence measures
- Impact on historic landscape features of agricultural changes
- Effects of economic diversification and recreation in the countryside
- Footpath and cycle links between town and country
- Impact on landscape and wildlife by farm building conversions to housing

URBAN

Wrexham town is the main residential, commercial and social centre, and is of regional importance, performing many of the functions of a city in North Wales. The Wrexham Industrial Estate is a very large employment area of national importance, set within open countryside and containing many habitats and species of high biodiversity value.

Landscape Character Area

- 10 Wrexham Town
- 11 Wrexham Industrial Estate



Urban : Key Landscape Issues

- Impact of cumulative development on wildlife and green space within urban areas
- Impact of long term expansion of urban areas into surrounding countryside
- Protection and enhancement of urban character areas



RURAL LOWLANDS

The Eastern lowland areas of Wrexham are largely rural and agricultural and share many characteristics of the neighbouring Cheshire and North Shropshire landscape. The general area also includes the River Dee floodplain and flat river terraces, and Fenn's Moss, an extensive area of heathland and bog. There are scattered farmsteadings, attractive small villages, and historic landscape features including medieval ridge and furrow and moated sites.

Detailed Character Areas

- 12a Dee/Ceiriog Wooded Valley
- 12b Wych Valley
- 13a Welsh Maelor
- 13b English Maelor
- 13c Dee Terraces
- 14 Dee Floodplain
- 15 Fenn's Moss



