

Land at Chepstow Road, Raglan

Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment



February 2018

Document No. 18-10-CR01

Client: Monmouthshire County Council
Architects: Keep

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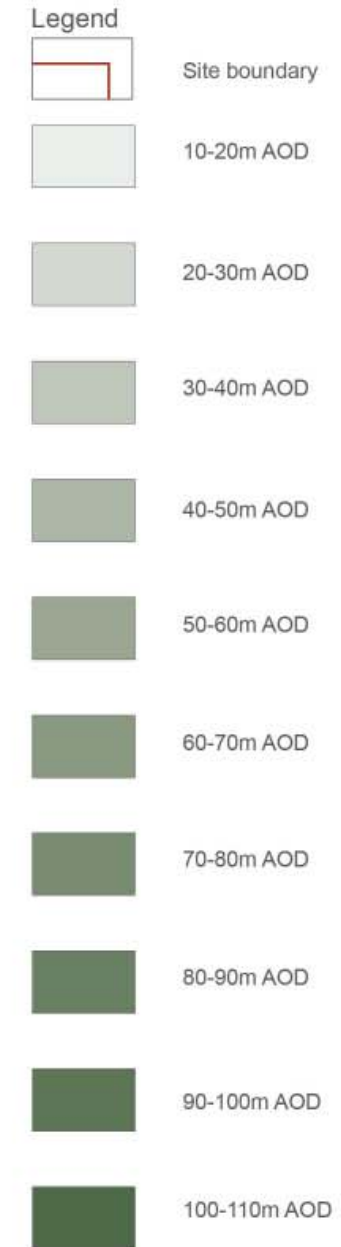
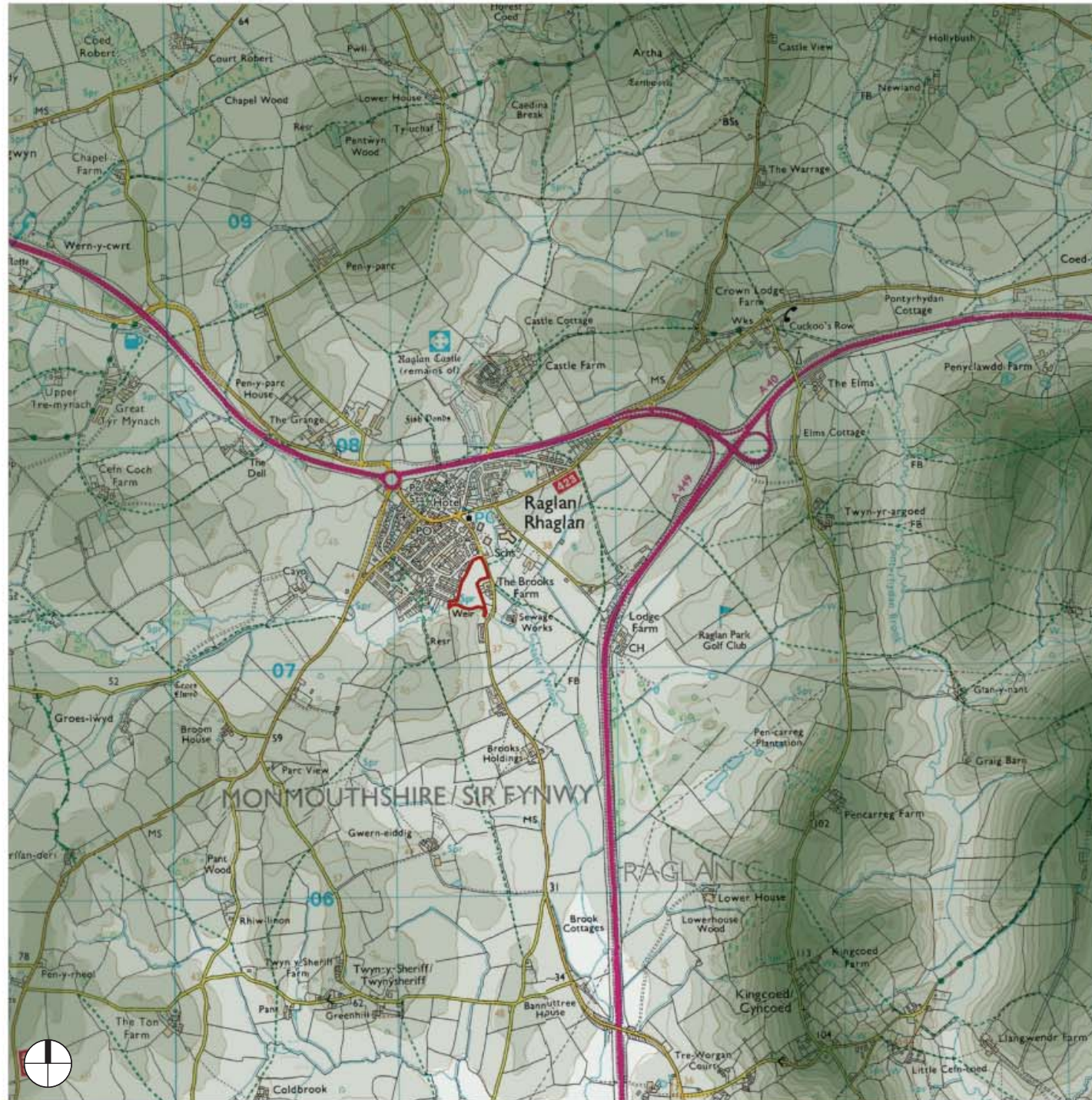
Document No 18-10-CR01 Land at Chepstow Road, Raglan			
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Approved by:	PJR	Chartered Landscape Architect	12.2.2018

Revisions				
Revision	Date	Description	Prepared by	Approved by
A	12.03.2018	Site boundary ammended	JBG	PJR

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Richards Partnership have been appointed to carry out a landscape and visual impact assessment for a proposed residential development, at land at Chepstow Road, Raglan Monmouthshire (the site). The planning application is submitted in outline, with all matters reserved except for access.
- 1.2 The site is approximately 2.18ha in area and lies adjacent to the Chepstow Road as it runs southwards out of the town.
- 1.3 The provision of a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) to accompany the application has been agreed with Monmouthshire Council's landscape officer, Colette Bosley. The locations of the photographs included within this assessment have also been agreed in advance with Ms Bosley.
- 1.4 The landscape and visual impacts referred to later in the report are assessed separately in accordance with good practice. They may be defined as follows:
- (I). Landscape character: impacts on the landscape or townscape may arise where the character of areas with a particular scenic quality or merit are modified by the development.
 - (II). Landscape features: impacts on landscape features such as hedgerows, trees or landform may arise where features are lost or substantially modified as a result of the development.
 - (III). Visual amenity: impacts on visual amenity may arise where features intrude into or obstruct the views of people, or where there is some other qualitative change to the view seen.
- 1.5 It should be stressed that the resulting effects can be changes for the better (positive effects) as well as changes for the worse (adverse effects).
- 1.6 The landscape and visual assessment was carried out through a desk study of relevant documents and by field study work undertaken during January 2018. The purpose of the site visit was to establish:
- The content and quality of the site's existing landscape features.
 - The character of the site and its immediate environs.
 - The site's visual relationship with its surroundings.
 - The contribution of the site to the wider landscape.
 - The people most likely to be affected by development on all or part of the site.
- 1.7 For ease of reference the LVIA methodology tables and diagrams showing the visual and landscape sensitivity scales and resulting significance of effects diagram are provided on the following pages.

Figure 1: Site Location and Topographical Study



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2.0 Description of the Site and its Surroundings

- 2.1 The site is located at the southern edge of the village between the existing residential area and Chepstow Road. Raglan occupies the land to the north and west, while the land to the south and east is largely given over to pastoral farmland.
- 2.2 The site occupies an area of approximately 2.18ha and comprises two fields which are divided by a post and wire fence. On the occasion on which the site was visited it was managed as rough grassland.
- 2.3 The site is broadly flat, sloping very gently from a level of 38.2m above ordnance datum (AOD) at its northern boundary down to 36.3m AOD at its southern boundary, where it meets a brook, the Nant y Wilcae.
- 2.4 Its western boundary is formed by the back gardens of houses on Fayre Oaks and The Willows. The majority of these back garden boundaries are formed by hedgerows, albeit there are also small sections of fence. The northern boundary is formed by a post and rail fence, beyond which lies Fayre Oaks and its junction with Chepstow Road.
- 2.5 The post and rail fence which runs along the northern boundary wraps around and forms part of the boundary between the site and Chepstow Road, running up to the existing vehicular access onto the site. To the south of the access the boundary is made up of an overgrown hedgerow, which precludes low level views into the site.
- 2.6 To the south of this, also abutting Chepstow Road, are three large properties, Brooks Farm, Brooklands Barn and Brooklands Lodge, the gardens of which all share a boundary with the site.
- 2.7 The southern boundary, as previously noted is formed by the Nant y Wilcae, beyond which is a very steep slope rising up to the farmland on the opposite side.
- 2.8 There are a number of mature trees on or immediately adjacent to the site (See Figure 2: Existing Site Conditions). These were the subject of an Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report by Hillside Trees Ltd in September 2017. One tree, an oak, (T9 within the report) is the subject of a tree preservation order. This tree, located along the site's western boundary, was graded within the report as a Category B tree.
- 2.9 The majority of the trees within the site are located adjacent to the boundary, the exception being a small group of hawthorn and willow located towards the southern portion of the site as it begins to slope down towards the stream.
- 2.10 A line of telegraph wires cross from the residential area to the west to meet Chepstow Road to the south of Brooks Farm.
- 2.11 There is no public access onto the site.
- 2.12 There are currently no light sources within the site, albeit the site would always be viewed in the context of the adjacent residential area.
- 2.13 The site has been the subject of a series of ecological surveys by Just Mammals Consultancy contained in their reports of September 2017. The Phase 1 Habitat Survey found the site to be of 'medium ecological value', but noted 'the riparian corridor at the southern end of the site is likely to be significant for commuting and feeding purposes for a number of species'.
- 2.14 The centre of the village is designated as a conservation area. This designation extends northwards, beyond the busy A40, and encompasses Raglan Castle, a Grade I listed building, and its grounds which are designated as an historic park and garden. Within the village itself, St Cadoc's Church is Grade II* listed. The church is located approximately 175m to the north of the site and there is an inter-visibility between the site and its tower, but not the churchyard or the lower parts of the building.



Photograph A. View looking south across the site towards the Nant y Wilcae from the existing access



Photograph B. View looking south from the boundary with Brooklands Lodge towards the Nant y Wilcae







Photograph C. View looking north-west from the southern part of the site towards Raglan.

Figure 2: Existing Site Conditions



Legend

-  Site Boundary
-  Spot Heights
-  Public Right of Way
-  Photoviewpoints

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3.0 Landscape Planning Context

- 3.1 The site lies within the administrative area of Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) and is located within the development boundary of Raglan. The site is allocated as a 'Rural Secondary Settlement Site' (Site SAH10 iii) within the Monmouthshire Local Development Plan (adopted 27th February 2014) (LDP).
- 3.2 As previously noted, one of the trees (T9) along the western boundary is the subject of a tree preservation order.
- 3.3 The boundary of the Raglan Conservation Area lies approximately 65m to the north of the site, at its nearest point.
- 3.4 Landscape/Environmental policies considered of relevance to this report are contained within the following:
- Planning Policy Wales (Edition 8, January 2016)
 - Monmouthshire County Council Local Development Plan, adopted 27 February 2014
 - Local Supplementary Planning Guidance including the Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Guidance Adopted April 2015.
 - Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study 2009
- 3.5 Monmouthshire County Council Local Development Plan: Policy S13 – Landscape, Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment** states:

“Development Proposals must:

1. *Maintain the character and quality of the landscape by:*
 - (i) *identifying, protecting and, where appropriate, enhancing the distinctive landscape and historical, cultural, ecological and geological heritage, including natural and man-made elements associated with existing landscape character;*
 - (ii) *protecting areas subject to international and national landscape designations;*
 - (iii) *preserving local distinctiveness, sense of place and setting;*
 - (iv) *respecting and conserving specific landscape features, such as hedges, trees and ponds;*
 - (v) *protecting existing key landscape views and vistas.*
2. *Maintain, protect and enhance the integrity and connectivity of Monmouthshire’s green infrastructure network.*
3. *Protect, proactively manage and enhance biodiversity and geological interests, including designated and non-designated sites, and habitats and species of importance and the ecological connectivity between them.*
4. *Seek to integrate landscape elements, green infrastructure, biodiversity features and ecological connectivity features, to create multifunctional, interconnected spaces that offer opportunities for recreation and healthy activities such as walking and cycling.*

3.6 Monmouthshire County Council Local Development Plan: Policy S17 – Place Making and Design states:

Development shall contribute to creating high quality, attractive and sustainable places. All development proposals must include and promote high quality, sustainable inclusive design which respects local distinctiveness, respects the character of the site and its surrounding in order to protect and enhance the natural, historic and built environment and to create attractive, safe and accessible places.

3.7 Monmouthshire County Council Local Development Plan: Policy LC1 New Built Development in the Open Countryside states:

“There is a presumption against new build development in the open countryside, unless justified under national planning policy and/or LDP policies S10, RE3, RE4, RE5, RE6, T2 and T3 for the purposes of agriculture, forestry, ‘one planet development’, rural enterprise, rural/agricultural diversification schemes or recreation, leisure or tourism. In such exceptional circumstances, new built development will only be permitted where all the following criteria are met:

- a) *The proposal is satisfactorily assimilated into the landscape and complies with Policy LC5;*
- b) *New buildings are wherever possible located within or close to existing groups of buildings;*
- c) *The development design is of a form, bulk, size, layout and scale that respects the character of the surrounding countryside; and*
- d) *The development will have not unacceptable adverse impact on landscape, historic/cultural or geological heritage, biodiversity or local amenity value.*

3.8 Monmouthshire County Council Local Development Plan: Policy LC5 Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Character states:

Development proposals that would impact upon landscape character, as defined by LANDMAP Landscape Character Assessment, must demonstrate through a landscape assessment how landscape character has influenced their design, scale, nature and site selection.

Development will be permitted provided it would not have an unacceptable adverse effect on the special character or quality of Monmouthshire’s landscape in terms of its visual, historic, geological, ecological or cultural aspects by;

- a) *causing significant visual intrusion;*

- b) *causing significant adverse change in the character of the built or natural landscape;*
- c) *Being insensitively and unsympathetically sited within the landscape;*
- d) *Introducing or intensifying a use which is incompatible with its location;*
- e) *Failing to harmonise with, or enhance the landform & landscape; and/or*
- f) *Losing or failing to incorporate important traditional features, patterns, structures and layout of settlements and landscapes of both the built and natural environment.”*

Particular emphasis will be given to those landscapes identified through the LANDMAP Landscape Character Assessment as being of high and outstanding quality because of a certain landscape quality or combination of qualities.

3.9 Monmouthshire County Council Local Development Plan: Policy GI1 – Green Infrastructure states:

Development proposals will be expected to maintain, protect and enhance Monmouthshire’s diverse green infrastructure network by:

- a. *Ensuring that green infrastructure assets are retained wherever possible and integrated into new development. Where loss is unavoidable in order to secure sustainable development appropriate mitigation and/or compensation of the lost assets will be required.*
- b. *Incorporating new and/or enhanced green infrastructure of an appropriate type, standard and size. Where on-site provision of green infrastructure is not possible, contributions will be sought to make appropriate provision for green infrastructure off-site.*

3.10 Monmouthshire County Council Local Development Plan : Policy DES1 – General Design Considerations states:

All development should be of a high quality sustainable design and respect the local character and distinctiveness of Monmouthshire's built, historic and natural environment. Development proposals will be required to:

- a) *ensure a safe, secure, pleasant and convenient environment that is accessible to all members of the community, supports the principles of community safety and encourages walking and cycling;*
- b) *contribute towards sense of place whilst ensuring that the amount of development and its intensity is compatible with existing uses;*
- c) *respect the existing form, scale, siting, massing, material and layout of its setting and any neighbouring quality buildings;*
- d) *maintain reasonable levels of privacy and amenity of occupiers of neighbouring properties, where applicable;*
- e) *respect built and natural views and panoramas where they include historical features and/or attractive or distinctive built environment or landscape;*
- f) *use building techniques, decoration, styles and lighting to enhance the appearance of the proposal having regard to texture, colour, pattern, durability and craftsmanship in the use of materials;*
- g) *incorporate and, where possible enhance existing features that are of historical, visual or nature conservation value and use the vernacular tradition where appropriate;*
- h) *include landscape proposals for new buildings and land uses in order that they integrate into their surroundings, taking into account the appearance of the existing landscape and its intrinsic character, as defined through the LANDMAP process. Landscaping should take into account, and where appropriate retain, existing trees and hedgerows;*
- i) *make the most efficient use of land compatible with the above criteria, including that the minimum net density of residential development should be 30 dwellings per hectare, subject to criterion l) below;*
- j) *achieve a climate responsive and resource efficient design. Consideration should be given to location, orientation, density, layout, built form and landscaping and to energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy, including material and technology;*
- k) *foster inclusive design;*
- l) *ensure that existing residential areas characterised by high standards of privacy and spaciousness are protected from overdevelopment and insensitive or inappropriate infilling.*

3.11 Monmouthshire County Council Local Development Plan : Policy SAH10 – Rural Secondary Settlements states:

The following housing allocations are made in the rural secondary settlements of Usk, Penperlleni and Raglan. Planning permission will be granted for the residential development subject to detailed planning considerations:

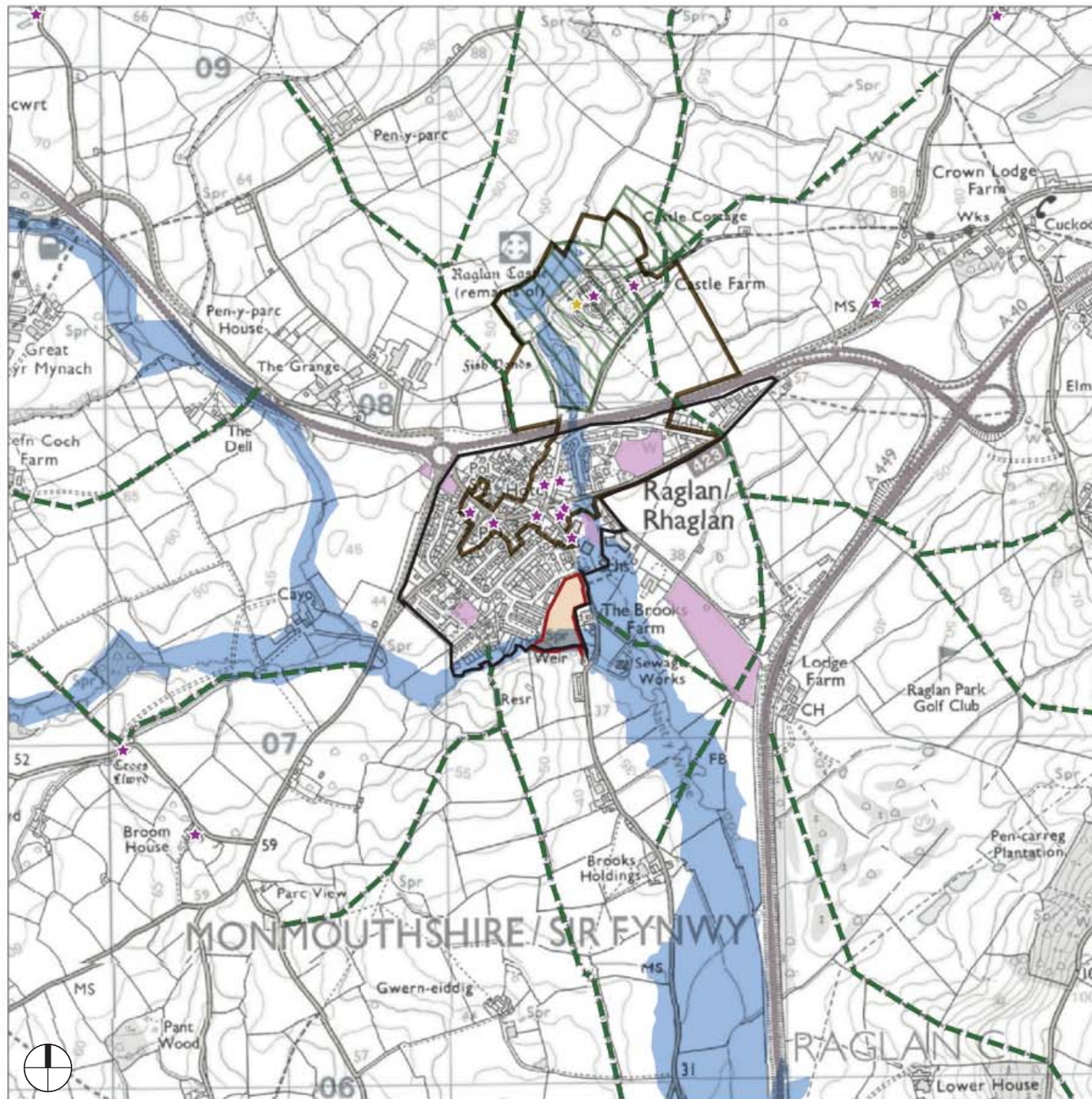
SAH 10(iii) Land at Chepstow Road, Raglan, 2.18 hectares 45 dwellings, subject to no highly vulnerable development taking place in those parts of the site that are within the designated C2 flood zone, and no other development taking place in those parts of the site that are within the designated C2 flood zone unless a flood consequences assessment has been carried out that demonstrates that the consequences of flooding in these areas are acceptable.








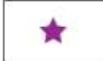

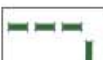
3.12 Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Guidance states:

In order to encourage best practice, developers should follow the process and principles for embedding GI into development outlining in this section of the SOG. The key steps are:

- *1: identify and map existing GI assets in and around the site*
- *2: consider how the development can contribute to local GI needs and opportunities*
- *3: incorporate proposals into development design that maintain, protect and enhance GI, ensuring connectivity with the surrounding GI network. (page 25)*

Figure 3: Landscape Planning Context



- Legend
-  Site Boundary
 -  Development Boundary
 -  Flood zone-TAN15 Development and flood risk C2
 -  Historic Park/Garden
 -  Areas of Amenity Importance
 -  Rural Secondary Settlement Site
 -  Conservation Area, South Oxfordshire Adopted Policies Map, December 2012, North East
 -  Cadw Listed Building - star represents at least one listing
 -  Cadw Scheduled Ancient Monument
 -  Public Right of Way

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4.0 Landscape and Visual Baseline Assessment

- 4.1 The site and surrounding area fall within Natural Resources Wales National Landscape Character Area 31 – Central Monmouthshire. This assessment covers the whole of Wales and is intended to identify landscape character in a way that ‘gives a distinctive sense of place that enables us to recognise it as a single area’, according to their “geological, habitats, historic, cultural and perceptual characteristics”. The summary description reads as follows:

“This is a gently undulating lowland landscape of hills, valleys and floodplains. It is in great contrast to adjacent landscapes that rise to the west. Fault aligned vales and glacial deposits give rise to the fertile alluvial deposits that are key to the prosperity of this rural, farmed area. The River Usk drains much of the south and west. The Monnow and Trothy drain the north.

Country lanes with high hedges link villages and hamlets that have a distinctive vernacular style in Old Red Sandstone and whitewashed cottages with slate roofs. In open country, whitewashed farmhouses stand out against the green backdrop of pastured fields and open woodlands.

The tranquillity belies a complex past where the rich farmland was fought over by successions of powerful land grabbers. Forts and castles were strategically placed at many vantage points, notably at river crossings, such as at Abergavenny, Usk and Monmouth. A landscape of large estates emerged after the Dissolution of the monasteries and these subsequently became the setting for mansions with planned parks and gardens, many of which remain largely intact today.

The great wealth of the land frequently led to the patronage of those with an interest in the arts and culture and Monmouthshire has many patrons, poets and chroniclers.

- 4.2 These areas have been subdivided according to five aspects by LANDMAP – the Welsh landscape baseline ‘an all-Wales landscape resource where landscape characteristics, qualities and influences on the landscape are recorded and evaluated’. These five aspects are: cultural, geological, historic, habitat and visual & sensory. These aspects may be drawn upon when undertaking landscape character assessment. The site falls within the following categories:

4.3 Cultural Landscape – Raglan – Aspect Area Code MNMTHCL004

“Raglan village owes its foundation to its proximity with the Castle and stands at a strategic crossroads. The village a (sic) castle represent a microcosm of the cultural character of middle and Upper Gwent; rich farmland controlled over time by strongholds and later large estates controlled by Welsh lords, Marcher lords, the Church

and monastic establishments and the Welsh gentry who emerged after the Dissolution. The AA is selected for the Castle’s pivotal role in influencing the history, politics, culture, society and settlement pattern of not simply Monmouthshire but South Wales also. The Castle presents a wide variety of cultural associations from the 13th century to the present day. Expert landscape research has revealed the existence of the now mostly buried Renaissance gardens. The village of Raglan is large and prosperous, with a range of perhaps unexpected retail outlets – such as a haberdashers and tailors. It is very much now a commuter settlement for a well-off middle class.”

The area is evaluated as ‘outstanding’.

4.4 Geological Landscape – Usk – Nant y Wilcae – Aspect Area Code MNMTHGL040

“Major mature river system. Higher part form W of Abergavenny towards Usk with well developed meander system, with local abandoned meanders on wider floodplain (e.g. W of Llanvihangel Gobion). NW of Usk floodplain narrower and cut into broad marginal terrace forms and then opening up south of Usk as a very broad N-S basin up to and around 1.5kms across, To the south course narrows slightly and heads SW towards Caerleon with a wide floodplain and very well developed meander belt marking the County boundary. Includes the Nant y Wilcae tributary which branches NE of Usk and also includes remarkably wide floodplain/depositional basin areas south of Raglan and a tributary in the S leading form the Llandegfedd reservoir.

The value of this area is considered to be ‘Moderate’.

- 4.5 The site falls within two Historic Landscape Aspect Areas, as follows.

4.6 Historic Landscape – Modern Raglan – Aspect Area Code MNMTHHL042

“The Aspect Area represents the extent of recent housing development to the S, E and W of the historic core of the medieval and post-medieval settlement of Raglan...Although a small town or borough appears to have been established at Raglan in the late 13th- early 14th century, documentary references suggest that the scale of the settlement remained very modest. Laurence Smyth’s plan of Raglan dated 1653 shows that the focus of settlement was centres on present-day Beauford Square with a small eastward extension along Castle Street towards the Nant-y-Wilcae brook, which effectively marked the eastern limit of the town unit the 20th century. Later documentary and cartographic records shows that the Aspect Area largely remained undeveloped farmland throughout the 18th-19th centuries, with no evidence of a major expansion of

settlement.... Topography of Aspect Area prior to the extensive housing development of the 1980s-90s, the Aspect Area represented a largely rural hinterland lying to the S, E and W of the small town of Raglan”

The area is evaluated as ‘moderate’.

4.7 Historic Landscape – Raglan – Aspect Area Code MNMTHHL026

“The Aspect Area comprises two distinct components, the small town of Raglan.. and ..the castle of Raglan with its extensive gardens and parkland. The earliest evidence of human activity...dates from the bronze age....The origins of the present settlement probably date from the early medieval period and are closely associated with its location at a strategically important crossroads...The earliest documentary record of settlement dates for the late 11th century. It has been suggested that...the Great Tower erected by William ap Thomas in the early 15th century stand on the site of the motte while the curving line of the surrounding buildings occupies the site of the baily or courtyard. In 1171-6, the manor or Raglan was granted by Richard de Clare to Walter Bloet and the estate remained in the possession of the Bloet family until the end of the 14th century. Surviving 14th century records show that the Bloets had erected a substantial complex of manorial buildings at Raglan, comprising a hall, chapel and a range of lodgings, occupying the site of the present castle and almost certainly influencing its layout. It appears that the Bloets also established a small town at Raglan, prob.

The area is evaluated as ‘moderate’.

4.8 Landscape Habitats – Central Rural Monmouthshire – Aspect Area Code MNMTHLH127

“The Aspect Area boundaries encompass an area of predominantly farmland that is typical of much of Monmouthshire... The area is distinct from the surrounding farmland in generally have a less distinct arable element amongst the dominating improved grassland.”

The area is evaluated as ‘outstanding’.

4.9 Finally, visual & sensory, with is considered central to this assessment and forms the baseline assessment.

4.10 Visual and Sensory – Upper Usk Valley – Aspect Area Code MNMTHVS046

“An open flat riparian landscape, sheltered and overlooked by the Bloreng and Sugar Loaf in the north, with the Gwehelop hills to the south... it forms the floodplan for the river Usk which meanders in broad swathes across the flat valley floor, creating spurs and ox-bow lakes... The land cover comprises of medium to large-scale fields of permanent pasture and arable crops interspersed with enclaves of unimproved and semi-improved grassland, bounded by low, intensively managed hedgerows, often replaced by post and wire fencing...Linear tree belts, and lines of willows an alder follow the river and stream courses...Mature individual field trees, parkland and orchards, are also typical of this landscape...Settlement is limited to small-scale villages often intruding onto the floodplain creating an alien visual element within an open rural landscape..”

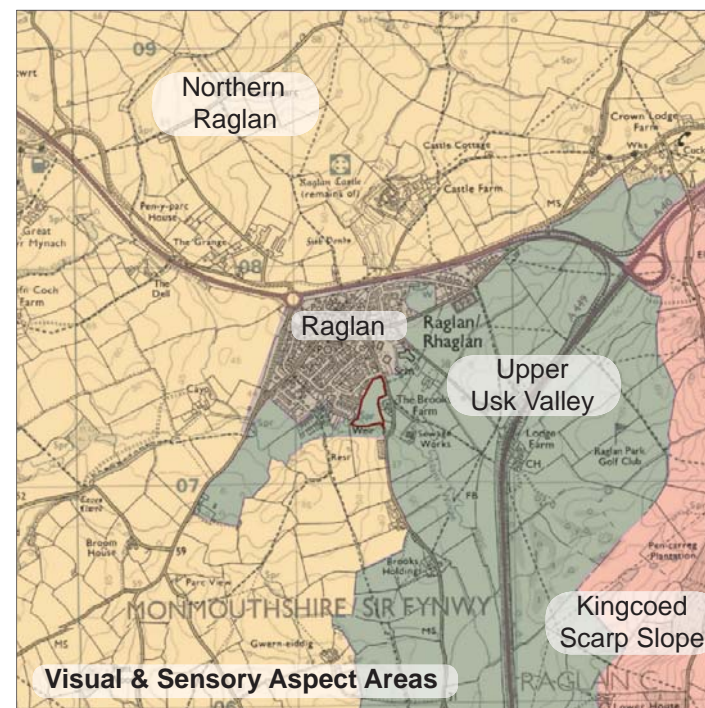
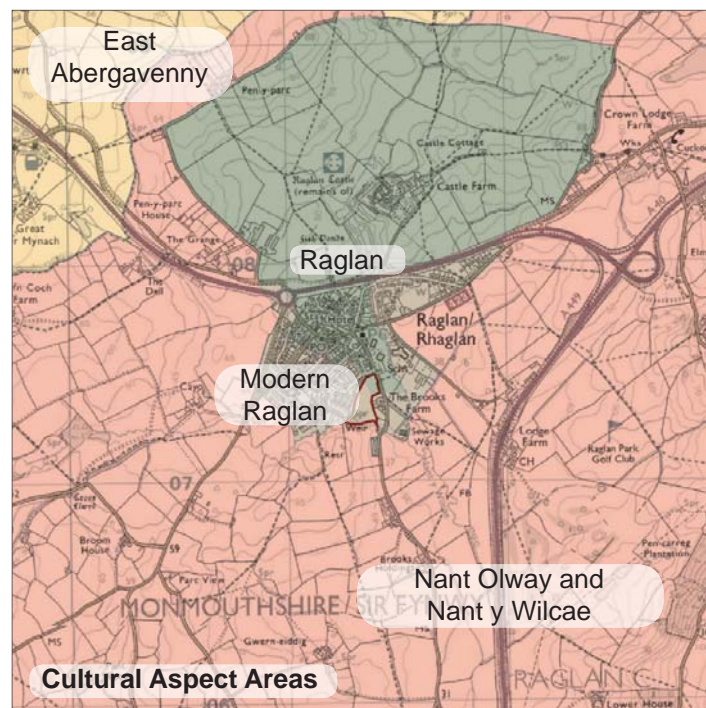
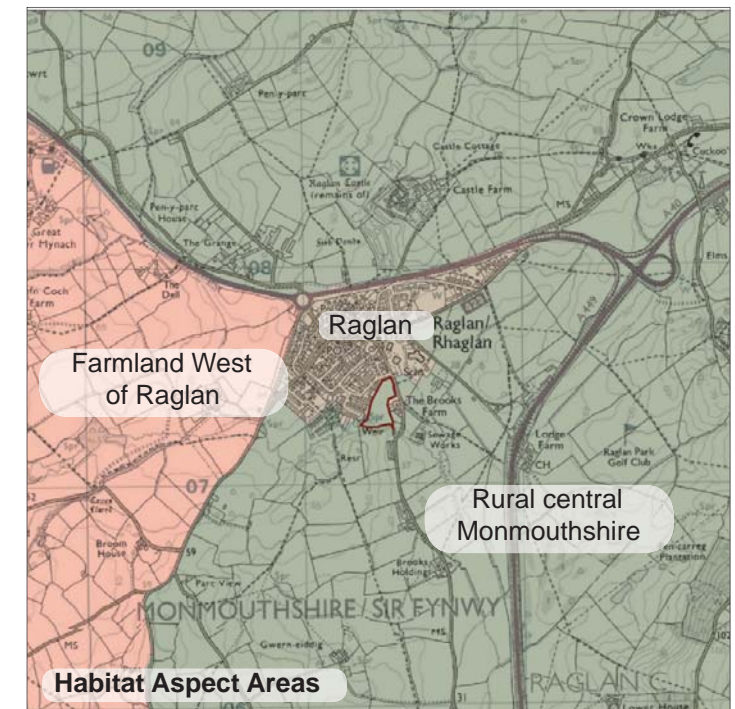
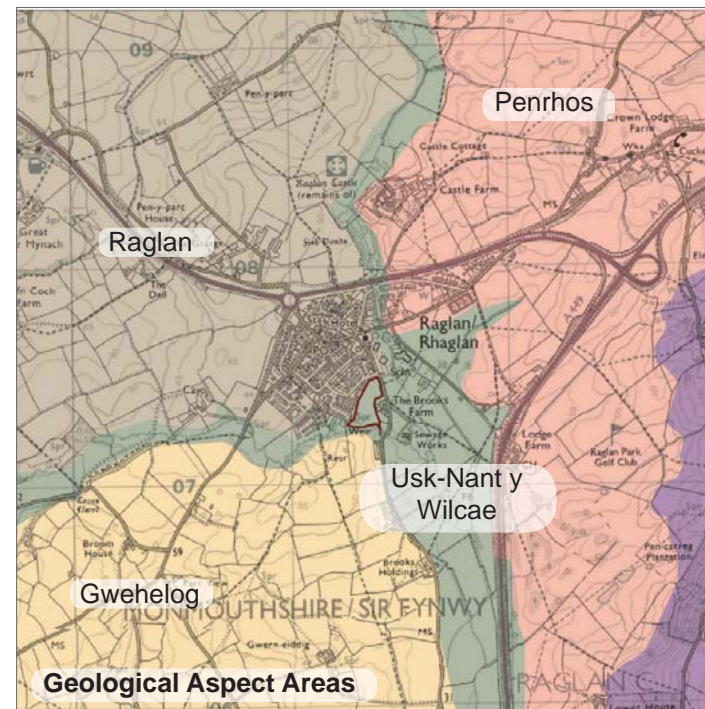
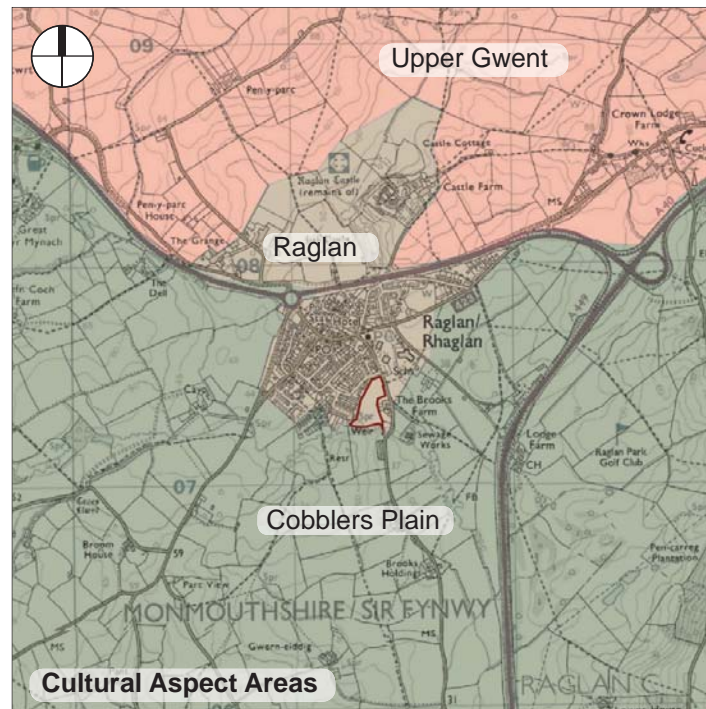
The assessment evaluates this area as ‘High’, stating:

“An attractive flat open landscape focused on the rivers with an attractive backcloth of hills and scarp slopes... the area is generally in good condition with consistent character throughout, unspoilt generally on valley floor by intrusive development. The area has a distinct and strong sense of place as an extensive valley floor focused on the sinuous River Usk... Extensive flat valley floor is very rare in Monmouthshire.”

4.11 In addition to the above Monmouthshire undertook a review of the district’s settlement edges with regards to their capacity to accommodate residential development, the Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study 2009, this included an assessment of Raglan. This report defined the site as falling within Landscape Character Area R02 and considered this area to be of ‘high/medium’ sensitivity with a ‘medium/low’ capacity for housing.

4.12 In accordance with good practice, the broad characteristics of the above aspect areas have been further refined in this study to consider the landscape character of the area immediately surrounding the site. The following section describes the local landscape character of the site and its surroundings.

Figure 4: Landmap Aspect Areas



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Figure 5: Local Landscape Character Areas



- Legend
-  The Site
 -  LLCA 1: Land to the south of the Nant y Wilcae
 -  LLCA 2: Land to the north of the Nant y Wilcae
 -  LLCA 3: Raglan

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Local Landscape Character Areas

4.13 The local landscape character areas identified around the Site are as follows (with reference to Figure 5):

LLCA 1: Land to the south of Nant y Wilcae

4.14 This LLCA, which straddles Chepstow Road to the south of Raglan is intrinsically rural. It comprises medium sized irregular shaped fields which are farmed as a mixture of both arable and pastoral. The Nant y Wilcae runs to the north of this area and the strong belt of trees along this riparian corridor form a distinct separation between this area and the land to the north. The fields are divided by well-maintained hedgerows, albeit with few individual trees along them.

4.15 The landscape is gently rolling, with long views available from higher ground and views being more curtailed on the valley floor.

4.16 The Raglan Enterprise Park, a long white brick-built shed, is located adjacent to Chepstow Road and is the only visual detractor of any note within this area, appearing a little incongruous in an otherwise attractive rural landscape.

4.17 While not designated, this is an undeniably attractive landscape. Landmap as defined this area as being of 'outstanding' cultural value and 'high' historic and visual & sensory value. Given the physical and visual separation between this LLCA and the site, it is considered that its susceptibility to the proposed development is 'low'. Therefore, on balance, it is considered to be of 'medium' sensitivity.

LLCA2: Land to the north of Nant y Wilcae

4.18 As Chepstow Road crosses the Nant y Wilcae some 270m to the south of the village edge the character of the landscape changes. The heavily vegetated riparian corridor forms a distinct point of separation as well as providing a degree of visual enclosure. To the north of the stream it immediately becomes apparent that the road is approaching the urban edge. Three properties, Brooks Farm, Brooklands Barn and Lodge are located adjacent to the road and there are filtered views towards the modern housing to the west. These, modern properties form an abrupt and somewhat unsympathetic interface between the village and the adjacent countryside.

4.19 The fields in this area are smaller than those to the south and at the time of the site visit were given over to arable or rough grassland. A small sewage works is located to the south of this LLCA, albeit this is not visually prominent. Hedgerows are a mixture of those which are well-maintained and those which have been allowed to grow unmanaged. The abundance of mature trees following the path of the brook are an attractive feature and contribute positively to the area's sense of place.

4.20 A number of footpaths traverse the area, which appear to be well used by local walkers.

4.21 The area, including the site, provides the low level setting and introduction to the southern edge of the village.

4.22 The area, while not designated, contributes to the introduction and setting of the village including St Cadoc's church which sits on slightly elevated ground at the centre of the village. Landmap has defined this area as being of 'outstanding' cultural value and 'high' visual & sensory value, with the greater part of the area falling into the 'moderate' historical value category. It does contain detractors, including the sewage works and the somewhat abrupt urban edge. However, on balance its value is considered to be 'high'. Given that the proposed development would be located within this LLCA its susceptibility is also considered to be 'high', resulting in an overall 'high' sensitivity.

LLCA 3: Raglan

4.23 Raglan centres on High Street and Chepstow Road, with St Cadoc's Church, a grade II* listed building, located at the junction of both. The centre of the village and the landscape to the north running up to and encompassing the castle are designated as a conservation area.

4.24 The character of the village has changed much over the course of the 20th Century. It is now by-passed by the A449 to the east and the A40 to the north, which runs between the core of the village and the castle. In addition there has been much residential growth, including in the land to the south and west between the conservation area and the site.

4.25 The area to the west of Chepstow Road comprises residential development that is typical of the late 20th Century. The properties are predominantly detached and located off small cul-de-sacs. Materials do not reflect a local vernacular, but are a mixture of pale brick, hanging red tiles and pale render; roof tiles are a dark brown. Many of the properties close to the urban edge are either bungalows or one and a half storey houses. Gardens are well-maintained and there is an abundance of mature vegetation.

4.26 To the east of Chepstow Road, the urban grain is more loose, with a number of larger buildings including the both the old and new Raglan Primary School and the doctors' surgery. The buildings are interspaced with open areas including car parks playing fields and play grounds. As with the housing on the opposite side of the road there is an abundance of mature vegetation which does much to screen and assimilate these larger buildings into their wider surroundings.

4.27 Raglan is an attractive historic village and this is recognised in its centre being designated as a conservation area. Landmap defines the area as being of 'outstanding' cultural value, with the historic part of the village also being of 'outstanding' historic value. These 'outstanding' evaluations relate strongly to the castle and its history, which is visually and physically separate from the site. The visual and sensory aspects of this area, along with the historic aspects of 'Modern Raglan' are defined as being of 'moderate' value. Given this LLCA comprises predominantly modern parts of the village it is considered to be of 'medium' value. The site abuts modern development on the existing urban edge, and as such this LLCA is considered to be of 'low' susceptibility. On balance this LLCA is considered to be of 'medium' sensitivity.

Landscape Character Summary

4.28 The Site is located at the southern edge of the village of Raglan, adjacent to a number of modern properties and with a limited visual relationship with the conservation area and historic buildings towards the centre of the village.

4.29 The wider area around the village comprises attractive gently rolling farmland rising from the shallow valley of the Nant y Wilcae. The landscape to the north of the brook and south of the town, within which the site sits, is relatively flat in nature and visually well contained by the village to the north and the abundance of mature trees along the brook to the south. This area forms the immediate low level setting and introduction to the southern entrance to the village.

Visual Assessment

- 4.30 The photographs within this report were taken in January 2018 when the trees were all out of leaf. They have been agreed with Monmouthshire's landscape architect as being representative of the views of the site from the surrounding area.
- 4.31 The site is located on very gently sloping ground immediately adjacent to and to the south of the village of Raglan. It is contained by existing urban development to the north and west, and a strong belt of vegetation to the south. To the east the landscape is more open, nonetheless there are a number of buildings and areas of vegetation which help to reduce the site's visual influence in the wider area.
- 4.32 A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) Study was undertaken to help inform the visual assessment. This desk based study was used as a starting point from which roads, footpaths and publicly accessible places around the site were visited to establish from where the site is either partially or wholly visible. The computer generated model, however, does not take into account intervening vegetation or built form. In this instance, the intervening vegetation and built form greatly limits the number of publicly available viewpoints.
- 4.33 From this, a selection of representative viewpoints, both close up and distant, were selected for inclusion within this assessment in order to demonstrate the visual role the site plays within its immediate surroundings and the wider landscape.
- 4.34 The visual prominence or visual inter-relationship of an area or parcel of land is a principal consideration in establishing the potential impact on its character or the experience of the area.
- 4.35 Visual impact relates to the changes that the development would have upon views as experienced by the public. The people within the study area who may be affected by a change in view or in visual amenity are referred to as 'visual receptors'. Where possible the relative number of people who experience a view or series of views are noted in the text. It is not practical to assess every viewpoint and therefore those selected for inclusion as part of this assessment are representative of those available to the public looking towards the Site from the surrounding area. They range in distance from 1.8km to immediately adjacent to and within the site, albeit in some of the more distant views it is extremely difficult to 'pick out' the site with the naked eye.

Views from Chepstow Road travelling south (Group A – Viewpoints 1 and 2)

Receptors: Motorists and Pedestrians

- 4.36 Chepstow Road runs southwards from the High Street and is one of two roads leaving the village from the south. It carries a regular stream of traffic throughout the day, with speeds restricted to 30mph as the road enters the village adjacent to Brooklands Lodge, dropping to 20mph as it approaches the doctors' surgery. There is a pavement running parallel to the road as far as the surgery beyond which there is no dedicated footway.

Viewpoint 1 – View looking south along Chepstow Road (approximately 50m from the site).

- 4.37 For those leaving the village to the south views are largely channelled by the built form adjacent to the road and, as a result, the site comes very gradually into view. Viewpoint 1 shows the view as the road approaches the junction with Fayre Oaks. From this location it is partially visible beyond the existing properties to the right of view.
- 4.38 Although the site is now in view, views to the wider countryside remain screened by the intervening built form on either side of the road and the dense vegetation along the Nant y Wilcae at the site's southern boundary which forms a strong visual screen, even in the winter months.

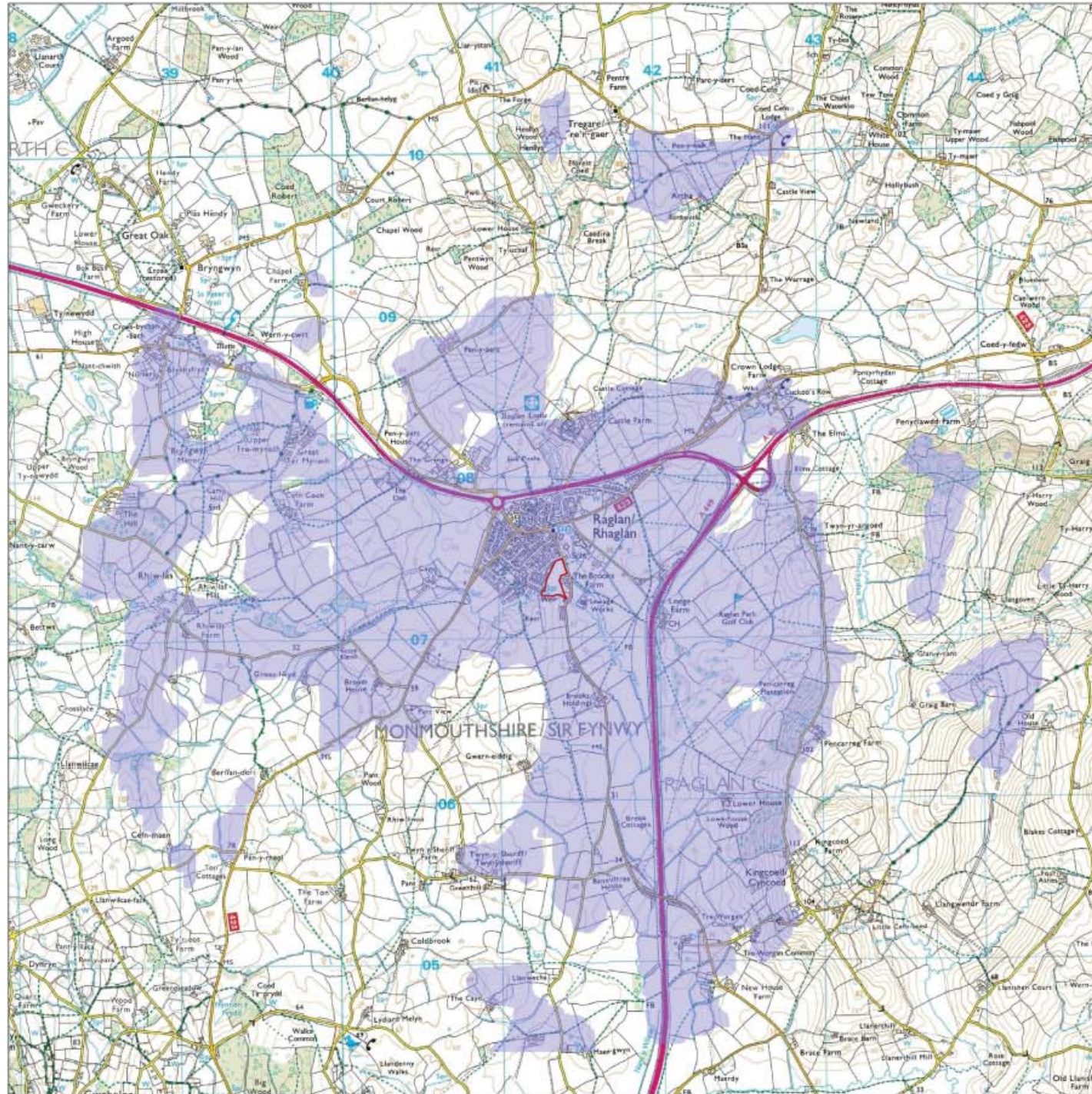
Viewpoint 2 – View looking south along Chepstow Road at the junction with Fayre Oaks (approximately 20m from the site)

- 4.39 Viewpoint 2 shows the view at the junction with Fayre Oaks is reached and the wider site becomes visible. During the winter months it is possible to discern the silhouette of the hillside beyond the brook at the southern edge of the site, however it is anticipated that in summer the trees would effectively screen this. To the right of view it is possible to see the properties which abut the site's western boundary. While the site is managed as rough grassland, there are a number of urban influences in the view. As with Viewpoint 1 views of the wider countryside are curtailed by the existing built form and the dense vegetation along the brook.
- 4.40 It is just possible to discern the outline of Brooks Farm and Brooklands Barn and Lodge in the winter months, but it is anticipated these would be effectively screened from view in the summer.

Summary of views looking south along Chepstow Road

- 4.41 Views along Chepstow Road are channelled by the existing buildings that line the road and preclude views to the wider area. As motorists and pedestrians travel southwards the site gradually comes into view and it is apparent the road is leaving the village. Nonetheless wider views remain largely contained by the dense vegetation along Nant y Wilcae.
- 4.42 The view available to those leaving the town, is channelled and comprised of a mixture modern as well as some older buildings. Both the built form and the trees in the distance curtail long views to the wider area and on balance the value of the view is considered to be 'medium'. Motorists and pedestrians moving through this are both transitory. Motorists who are moving towards the wider area are considered to be of 'low' susceptibility, while pedestrians walking towards the surgery or Fayre Oaks are considered to be of 'medium' susceptibility.
- 4.43 On balance motorists are judged to be of 'low' sensitivity and pedestrians of 'medium' sensitivity.

Figure 6: Zone of Theoretical Visibility Study



Legend

-  Site Boundary
-  ZTV for 8.5m high building based on single point.
ZTV based on an 3km radius.

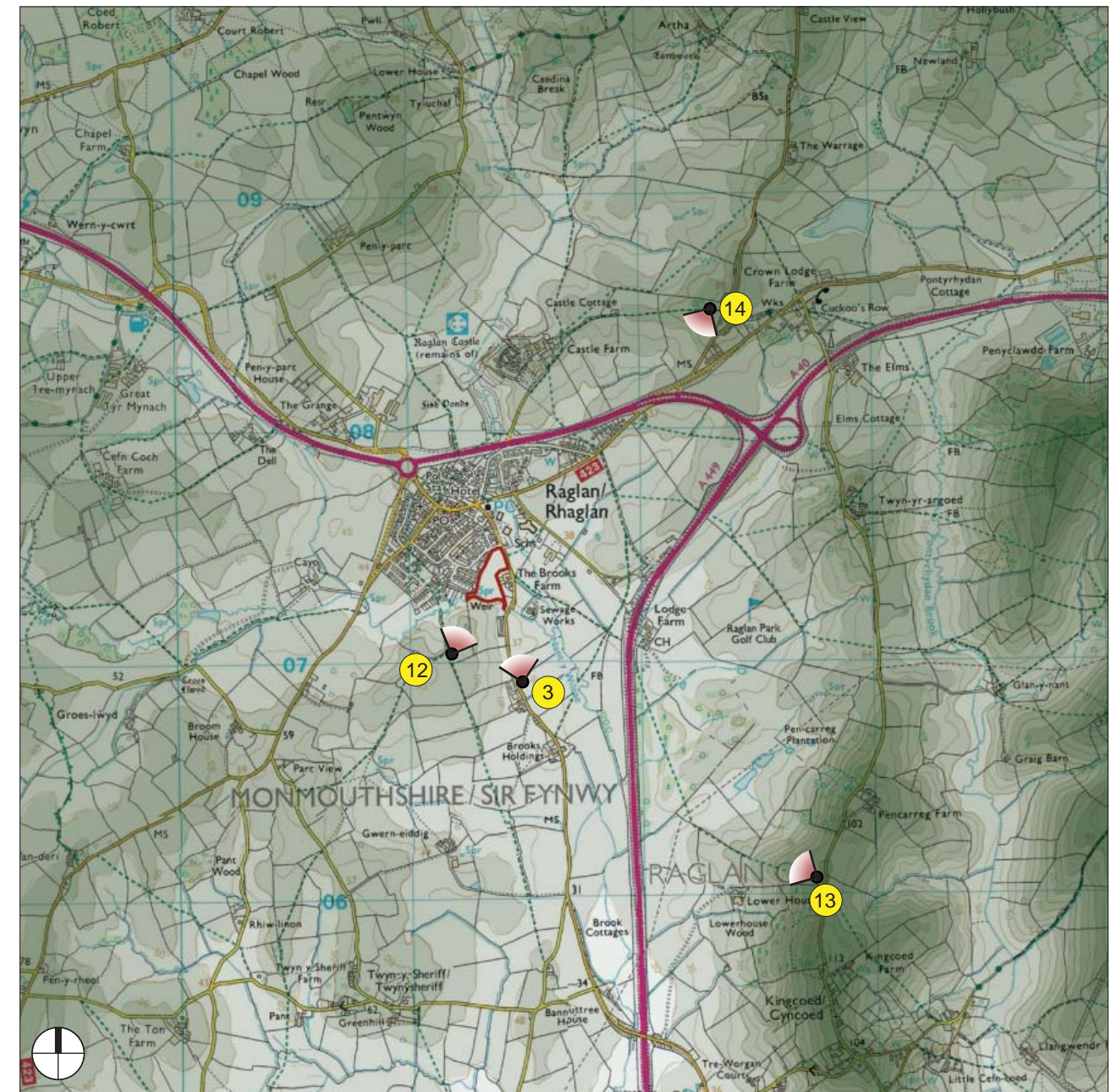
This ZTV has been generated from a Digital Terrain Model and shows the area from which a proposed 8.5m high building theoretically be visible. It treats the landscape as 'bare earth' and does not take account of screening provided by vegetation or buildings.

Figure 7: Viewpoint Locations



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Near Views



Distant Views



Viewpoint 1. View looking south along Chepstow Road approximately 50m from the site



Viewpoint 2. View looking south along Chepstow Road approximately 20m from the site.

Views looking north along Chepstow Road (Group B – Viewpoints 3, 4 and 5)

Receptors: Motorists

4.44 This busy road travels through open countryside before approaching the village. For most of its length the national speed limit applies, which reduced to 30mph as it meets the urban edge. There is no footway along this stretch of road until it comes parallel with the doctors' surgery.

Viewpoint 3 – View looking north along Chepstow Road (approximately 350m from the site)

4.45 From this location, the view is of open rural countryside. This is particularly the case in the winter months when the hedgerows have been cut back and there are clear views over the fields on either side of the road.

4.46 The Raglan Enterprise Centre is visible in the distance and forms a slightly incongruous element in an otherwise rural landscape. The trees running along the horizon are those that line the Nant y Wilcae. In winter it is just possible to discern some built form beyond them. However, in the summer months when they are in leaf they will form a strong visual screen separating the town from the village to the north.

Viewpoint 4 – View looking north-west along Chepstow Road as it crosses the Nant y Wilcae (approximately 75m from the site)

4.47 As the road crosses the brook the view changes considerably and it is immediately apparent that to motorists that they are approaching the village. Brooks Farm and Brooklands Barn and Lodge are visible in the foreground with the more modern elements of the village rising gently up the hillside in the distance to form the skyline. The tower of St Cadoc's Church at the centre of the village is clearly visible breaking the skyline.

4.48 The site itself is largely hidden from view, however, given the houses on The Willows and Fayre Oaks are visible, it can be concluded that built form coming forward on the site in the future would also be visible.

Viewpoint 5 – View looking north along Chepstow Road as it enters the village (approximately 25m from the site)

4.49 As the road passes Brooklands Lodge, views continue to be channelled by the roadside vegetation and built form. The existing hedge along the site boundary has not been recently maintained and precludes clear views into the site, albeit it is possible to discern views of the properties beyond. From this point views of the church tower, which are temporarily lost, begin to come back into view.

Summary of views from Chepstow Road travelling north

4.50 Those travelling towards the village from the south, do so through an intrinsically rural landscape with few visual detractors. On crossing the Nant y Wilcae, and passing through the belt of trees that provide such an effective screen to the south of the village it is immediately apparent that the road is approaching the urban edge and the village becomes clearly visible. St Cadoc's Church is a clear landmark in the centre of the village rising above the surrounding buildings and forming a focal point in the view.

4.51 The views available to the south of the village are considered to be of high value. As one crosses the brook, the village begins to come into view. The view towards St Cadoc's church tower is an important element in this view, albeit there are other detractors as the road travels northwards. On balance it is considered that these views are of 'medium' value. Motorists, whose attention would be on the road, are considered to be of 'low' susceptibility. Given the views of the church available to those travelling north, these receptors are considered to be of 'medium' sensitivity.



Viewpoint 3. View looking north from Chepstow Road approximately 350m from the site.



Viewpoint 4. View looking north-west from Chepstow Road as it crosses the Nant y Wilcae, approximately 75m from the site.



Viewpoint 5. View looking north along Chepstow Road approximately 25m from the site.

Views from Fayre Oaks and The Willows (Group C – Viewpoints 6, 7 and 8)

Receptors: Residents, Motorists and Pedestrians.

4.52 Fayre Oaks and The Willows are relatively quiet residential roads that serve the properties to the west of the site. In addition to views from the publically accessible roads and footpaths, there are private views from the back gardens of a number of houses that back directly onto the site.

Viewpoint 6 – View looking south from Fayre Oaks (adjacent to the site)

4.53 This viewpoint is located immediately to the north of the site and directly overlooks it; there is a dedicated bench on the opposite side of the road orientated towards the view.

4.54 In this view the site itself is clearly visible and forms the foreground. In the winter months it is possible to see the silhouette of the hillside to the south of the brook through the trees, however it is anticipated that in summer these trees would effectively screen this and curtail these views. Brooklands Lodge and Barn and Brooks Farm are visible in the middle distance, with the roofline of the farm just breaking the skyline. To the left of these properties it is possible to see the hills in the distance.

4.55 While broadly rural, there are a number of urban elements in the view which is largely curtailed by the dense vegetation to the south of the site.

Viewpoint 7 – View looking south-east along Fayre Oaks towards the site (approximately 85 m from the site)

4.56 Views from within the residential area are largely restricted by the built form. However, many of the properties are either bungalows or one and a half storey and there are opportunities to glimpse the wider area beyond and between them. In this view the site at ground level is hidden from view, however the tree on the site's western boundary is clearly visible behind the existing houses and there are also glimpses of the hillside to the east of the village.

4.57 The view is dominated by the existing properties and shows a quiet suburban area, with houses set in well-maintained gardens. Nonetheless, while not clearly visible from this location, it is still apparent that these properties sit close to the urban edge.

Viewpoint 8 – View looking east from within the site adjacent to the properties on Fayre Oaks.

4.58 This viewpoint is located within the site adjacent to the back gardens of the properties on Fayre Oaks. The boundary between the site and the houses is predominately hedgerow, which at the time of the site visit had been cut back to varying heights. From some properties

there would only be clear views from upper floors, while other would have views from the ground floor as well. This view is considered representative of the private views available to these residents.

4.59 The view from this location is predominantly rural, albeit it is possible to see the southern extents of the village. The site is located in the foreground, with Brooks Farm and Brooklands Barn and Lodge being clearly visible in the middle distance, it will also be possible to glimpse traffic as it moves along Chepstow Road.

4.60 As with the previously described viewpoints, the abundance of trees, particularly along the brook do much to screen distant views, and this would be more so during the summer months when the trees are in leaf. However, from this location there are longer views beyond to the ridgeline to the east.



Viewpoint 6. View looking south from Fayre Oaks opposite the site.



Viewpoint 7. View looking south-east along Fayre Oaks approximately 85m from the site.



Viewpoint 8. View looking east within the site adjacent to the back gardens of properties on Fayre Oaks.

Summary of views Fayre Oaks and The Willows

- 4.61 For those travelling through the streets in this quiet residential area the opportunity to view the site varies. From some locations views of the site are merely brief glimpses between existing properties. However, from the north there are clear, open views across the site towards the heavily treelined brook. For private residents, whose properties abut the site, there are also clear open views over the site with filtered views to the wider countryside beyond.
- 4.62 There are no designated elements within the view, other than the TPO tree. The value of the views from within the body of the urban area is limited by built form and is considered to be of 'low'. The views across the site to the wider countryside are more attractive, albeit largely curtailed by the strong tree line and are considered to be of 'medium' value.
- 4.63 Pedestrians and motorists who travel through this area, albeit not at speed, are considered to be of 'medium' susceptibility, while residents, especially those who back directly onto the site are considered to be of 'high' susceptibility. In consideration of the above, motorists and pedestrians are considered to be of 'medium' sensitivity and residents of 'high' sensitivity.

Views from Brooks Farm and Brooklands Barn and Lodge (Viewpoint 9)

Receptors: Residents

- 4.64 Brooks Farm and Brooklands Barn and Lodge are located adjacent to Chepstow Road with their gardens abutting the site's eastern boundary. Brooks Farm, the southernmost property, is orientated primarily southwards towards the road, and while it does have windows facing towards the site, its boundary with the site comprises a tall, unmanaged hedgerow which filters views. Brooklands Barn and Brooklands Lodge lie to the north garden areas to the rear. The Lodge is single storey, while the Barn has a single upper floor window orientated towards the site. Both gardens are bounded by managed hedgerows.
- Viewpoint 9 – View looking west from Brooklands Lodge (within the site)**
- 4.65 Viewpoint 8 is located adjacent to the boundary of Brooklands Lodge and is considered representative of the view available to residents of these properties. The site comprises the foreground of flat open rough grassland, beyond which the properties on Fayre Oaks and The Willows are clearly visible forming the skyline and precluding

longer, more distant views. To the left of view it is possible to see the treeline along the brook. Looking to the north there are filtered views towards the church tower.

- 4.66 The properties on Fayre Oaks and The Willows are somewhat garish in colour and the junction between their back gardens and the adjacent field is somewhat abrupt.
- 4.67 While the properties on Fayre Oaks and The Willows are not an especially attractive element in the view, the foreground is nonetheless open and there are oblique views to the Nant y Wilcae to the south and as such the value of this view is judged to be 'medium'. The residents of these properties who to a greater or lesser degree overlook the site are considered to be of 'high' susceptibility. On balance these receptors are considered to be of 'high' sensitivity.



Viewpoint 9. View looking west within the site adjacent to the back garden of Brooklands Lodge.

Views from the footpath network to the east (Group D Viewpoints 10 and 11)

Receptors: Walkers

4.68 To the east of Chepstow Road are two footpaths which link to the wider network to the east of the village. On the occasion on which the site was visited these appeared to be quite well used by local residents.

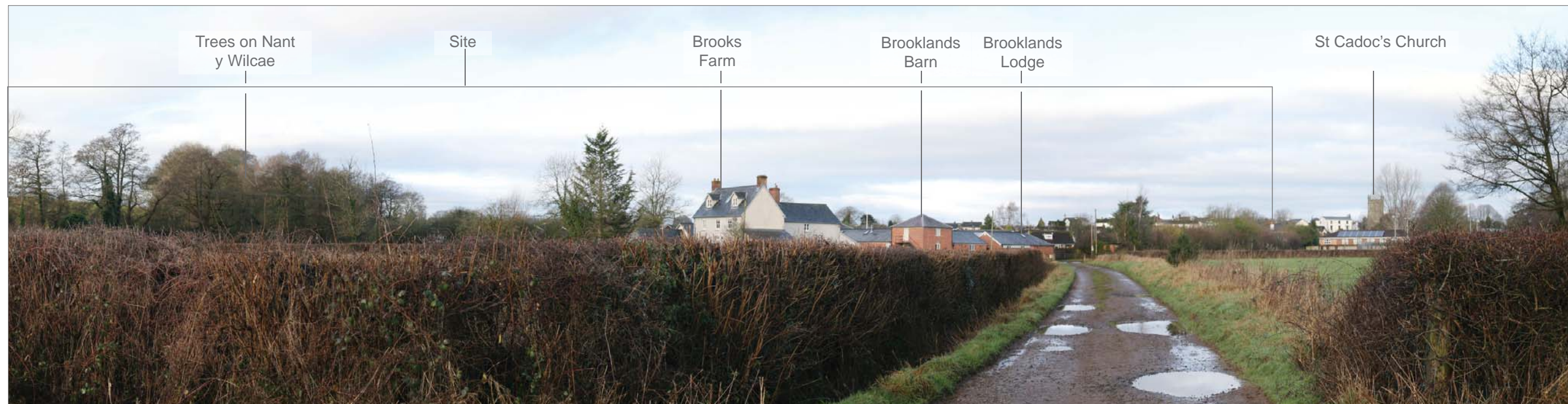
Viewpoint 10 – View looking north-west from Footpath 377/901/1 (approximately 160m from the site)

4.69 Viewpoint 9 is on the stretch of public footpath that approaches the village from the south-east. In the winter, when the field hedgerows have been cut there are open views towards the village, however, during the summer months it is anticipated that these may be much reduced.

4.70 From this location the site is largely screened from view by intervening buildings, namely Brooks Farm, Brooklands Barn and Lodge. However, it is possible to discern some of the properties on Fayre Oaks beyond the site itself. The village itself is largely screened by intervening vegetation, screening that would become stronger in the summer months. However both St Cadoc's church

and the Beaufort Hotel, which sit on slightly elevated ground, are clearly visible beyond the doctors' surgery.

4.71 The foreground comprises managed hedgerows and agricultural fields, beyond which runs the Chepstow Road and it is possible to see traffic moving along this stretch.



Viewpoint 10. View looking north-west from Footpath 377/901/2 approximately 160m from the site.

Viewpoint 11 – View looking north-west from Footpath 377/900/1 (approximately 10m from the site)

- 4.72 Further to the north the footpath network runs parallel to the road, which views to the west being heavily filtered by an intervening overgrown hedgerow, before it turns to cross the road and enter the village. Viewpoint 10 shows the view available to walkers from the gateway in the hedgerow.
- 4.73 At this point views open up clearly and the northern part of the site is directly in front of the viewer. From this location there are filtered views across the site towards the properties on Fayre Oaks as well as views of the road itself on either side. The road is the dominant element from this location before walkers cross it and enter the village.

Summary of views from the footpath network to the east.

- 4.74 A number of people were encountered using these paths, which are evidently a popular link from the village to the wider area. For those approaching the village, once they reach the sewage works, the village begins to come into view and it is evident that the paths are approaching the urban edge. In the winter the village is clearly visible, however, it is anticipated that these views would become much more heavily filtered in summer. The buildings visible within

the village vary in style and age. The church is visible in the distance breaking the skyline and the buildings around Brooks Farm are also prominent. However there are also visual detractors including the doctors' surgery and the disused tennis court.

- 4.75 The views along this stretch are largely curtailed and include some detracting elements, as such they are judged to be of 'medium' value. Walkers on the path are only able to see these views for a relatively short stretch and as such are considered to be of 'medium' susceptibility. Overall these receptors are judged to be of 'medium' sensitivity.



Viewpoint 11. View looking west from Footpath 377/900/1 where it meets Chepstow Road, approximately 10m from the site.

Views from the wider landscape.

4.76 As previously noted the site is relatively well contained in terms of its visibility and the majority of locations from which it is visible are in close proximity. The ZTV identified a number of locations in the wider landscape from which it may be possible to see the site, albeit a given the abundance of mature vegetation around the site and in the wider landscape there were limited locations from which it was visible. The following views have been included as being representative.

Viewpoint 12 from Footpath 377/68/1 (approximately 290m from the site).

Receptors: Walkers

- 4.77 The ZTV indicated a visual relationship between the site and this hillside immediately to the south, which is crossed by a public footpath. While no walkers were encountered on the site visit, the track linking to the housing immediately to the north appeared well-trodden suggesting it is well-used by local walkers.
- 4.78 From this elevated position walkers are afforded clear, panoramic views over the Monmouthshire landscape to the north. The village of Raglan is located within a shallow valley in the middle distance, its properties all sitting well below the skyline. In winter there are filtered

views of the houses, which in summer would be much reduced by the intervening vegetation. Raglan Castle some 1.2km to the north is visible beyond the settlement, its tower just touching the skyline.

- 4.79 The site while only a short distance away, is well screened, even in the winter months by the dense vegetation along the Nant y Wilcae. The view is predominantly of an attractive, managed agricultural landscape.
- 4.80 From this viewpoint there are clear, open views over this attractive landscape. While the landscape itself is not designated, Raglan Castle, which grade I listed, forms a component of it, over all this view is considered to be of 'high' value. Walkers on this path are likely to be highly attuned to their surroundings and, as such, are considered to be of 'high' susceptibility. Overall these receptors are considered to be of **'high'** sensitivity.

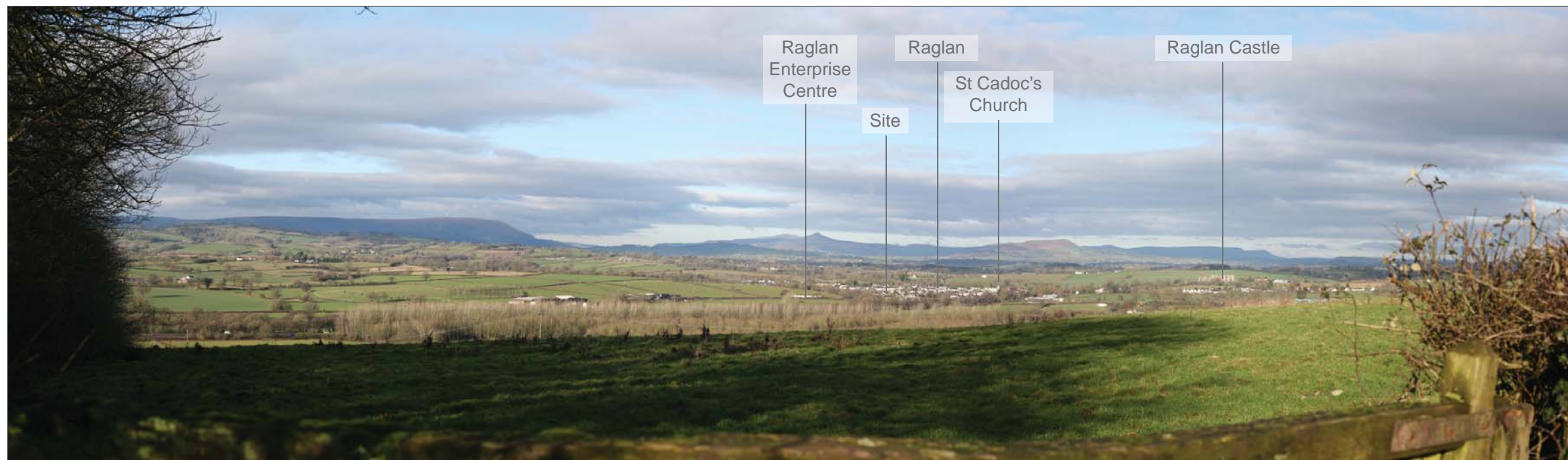


Viewpoint 12. View looking north-east from Footpath 377/68/1 approximately 290m from the site.

**Viewpoint 13 looking west from lane to the north of Kingcoed/
Footpath 377/78/5 (approximately 1.8km from the site).**

Receptors: Walkers and motorists

- 4.81 The ZTV indicated a visual relationship between the site and the ridge running north from the hamlet of Kingcoed. A narrow lane runs along the spine of the ridge, with a small number of footpaths running down from it. There are several blocks of woodland along with roadside hedgerows which inhibit many views to the east. Viewpoint 12, located in a field gateway where the footpath meets the lane is considered to be representative of views from this stretch.
- 4.82 From this elevated location there are panoramic views towards the Black Mountains to the west, which form the distant skyline. The landscape in the foreground is of a well-wooded agricultural nature, with small hamlets and farmsteads scattered across it. Raglan is visible in the middle distance, sitting low in the landscape and not breaking the skyline. To the north, and slightly separate from the village, it is possible to discern the castle.
- 4.83 It is just possible to partially discern the site in the foreground of the village, albeit this is difficult with the naked eye. The abundance of vegetation around the Nant y Wilcae and the buildings around Brooks Farm filter and screen views towards it.
- 4.84 This view forms an open attractive panoramic which encompasses The Black Mountains, which form part of the Brecon Beacons National Park and the Grade I listed castle and as such is considered to be of 'very high' value. Walkers using these paths would be highly attuned to their surroundings and are considered to be of 'high' susceptibility, while motorists, who would have less clear viewing opportunities are considered to be of 'medium' susceptibility. On balance, walkers are judged to be of **'high'** sensitivity and motorists of **'medium'** sensitivity.



Viewpoint 13. View looking west from the land north of Kingcoed/Footpath 377/78/5 approximately 1.8km from the site.

Viewpoint 14 looking south from Footpath 377/56/1 (approximately 1.4km from the site).

Receptors: Walkers

- 4.85 This footpath runs along the hillside to the north of the village. While no walkers were encountered on the path, it appeared well-trodden and links to the castle and as such is assumed to be well-used.
- 4.86 From this elevated location there are views looking southwards over the Monmouthshire countryside, with the gently rolling hills in the distance forming the skyline.
- 4.87 The village of Raglan sits in a shallow valley in the middle distance, its rooftops being partially visible in amongst the mature trees that surround it. It is envisaged that in the summer months the visibility of the village would be notably reduced. It is possible to discern part of the site at the southern edge of the village, albeit, it is difficult to do so with the naked eye.
- 4.88 The busy A40 dual carriageway is visible to the north of the village, carrying a constant stream of traffic and is a detracting element in this view. To the right of view, and separate from the village it is possible to see the castle, located beyond a cluster of farm buildings and their associated vegetation.

- 4.89 This attractive, open view across the Monmouthshire countryside is judged to be of 'high' value, similarly walkers on this path linking to the castle are considered to be of 'high' susceptibility, resulting in a 'high' level of sensitivity.

Visual Summary

- 4.90 The site lies at the southern edge of Raglan, and in terms of visual influence is relatively well contained by adjacent built form and the abundance of mature vegetation around the site and in the surrounding landscape. As a result of this the majority of available viewpoints are relatively close to the site, with fewer distant views being available. In both near and far views the site is seen in the context of the existing urban edge.



Viewpoint 14. View looking south from Footpath 377/56/1 approximately 1.4m from the site.

5.0 The Development Proposals

- 5.1 The proposal is submitted in outline and is for up to 45 new dwellings with all matters reserved except for access.
- 5.2 As shown in Figure 8: Illustrative Masterplan, the development would be accessed via the existing junction off Chepstow Road approximately 45m to the south of its junction with Fayre Oaks.
- 5.3 Development would not extend further south than the existing buildings of Brooks Farm, with the southern portion of the site, which is located within the flood plain of the Nant y Wilcae, being retained as public open space. Immediately to the north of this area, outside the floodplain, an attenuation basin would be formed as part of the SuDS system. The trees along the brook and within this southern part of the site would all be retained, and would be further supplemented with planting adjacent to the gardens of the new properties, which would help to screen and assimilate them into their surroundings.
- 5.4 The remaining vegetation on the site, which runs along its boundaries would be retained and incorporated into the proposals. There are a number of trees which sit just outside the site boundary, where these occur, development would be pulled back to ensure that it does not impact upon their root protection areas.
- 5.5 Development could face onto a central spine road, which could include a line of street trees connecting from the POS at the south of the site northwards to the smaller area of open space at the north.
- 5.6 This second area of open space would be located on the corner opposite Fayre Oaks and the doctors' surgery. Development would face onto this and there would be a pedestrian link running northwards to connect with the village. This area of open space would provide an introduction to the development when approaching from the north.
- 5.7 It is understood that there is a long term proposal for a new play area on the land to the east of Chepstow Road opposite the site. There is an opportunity to provide a pedestrian link from the site into the existing footpath network immediately to the south of the doctors' surgery, this would provide connectivity not only to the play area, but to the wider countryside network.
- 5.8 The proposed development would comprise predominantly of two storey buildings, with a maximum ridge height of 9m. The materials would be chosen to reflect those found in the local vicinity.
- 5.9 The protection of Green Infrastructure (GI) assets and their incorporation into the proposed scheme has been considered from the outset. This has included the following:
- Development would be pulled back from the Nant y Wilcae, with all the vegetation in this zone retained as part of the open space associated with the scheme.
 - The open spaces within the site have been designed to be linked by paths within green corridors and/or vegetation.
 - Existing hedgerows and trees would be retained.
 - Pedestrian links would be provided linking proposed development with the footpath network in the wider landscape to the east and to the village to the north and well as reinstating the path linking to Fayre Oaks.
 - New native planting would be incorporated into the POS at the south of the site.
 - Street tree planting would be incorporated throughout the proposed development.
 - Native structure planting would be incorporated along the boundary between the site and Brooks Farm and Brooklands Barn and Lodge.
 - The SuDS attenuation areas could be designed to double up as usable open space when not holding water.
 - The plant species selected would be predominantly native to help assimilate the scheme into its wider surroundings and enhance its character and ecological value.
- 5.10 It is assumed that future residents would plant trees within their gardens which would further 'green' the development over time.
- 5.11 As previously mentioned, there are currently no light sources within the site, albeit it would always be viewed in the context of the adjacent development. The development would inevitably introduce lighting to the night-time environment that is typical of a residential development of this type.

Figure 8: Illustrative Masterplan (Keep Architects)



1391 - F - 002 Block Plan 1:1000@A3

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 This drawing has been produced for Monmouthshire County Council for the proposed development at Chepstow Road, Raglan and is not intended for use by any other person or for any other purpose.
 Responsibility is not accepted for errors made by others in scaling from this drawing.
 All construction information should be taken from figured dimensions only.
 All omissions and discrepancies to be reported to Keep immediately.



- Key**
- Site boundary
 - Residential development
 - Land within utility easements can be used for roads and parking
 - Main frontages
 - Pedestrian links
 - Proposed green infrastructure
 - Existing trees and hedges
 - Proposed trees
 - Surface water sewer with 6m total easement (approximate location)
 - Line of existing overhead cables (assumed to be grounded)
 - Foul sewer with 6m total easement (approximate location)
 - Flood Zone C2
 - ▲ Main vehicular access

Layout amended to take into sewer	NS	SC	28/02 2018	B
Layout amended	NS	SC	12/02 2018	A
First issue	NS	SC	13/12 2017	-
Notes	DR	CH	Date	Rev



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Project
 Raglan

Drawing
 Block Plan

Drawing number
 1391 - F - 002

Scale
 1:1000 @ A3

Revision number
 B

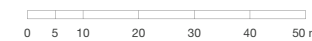









Figure 9: Green Infrastructure Plan



Legend

-  Site boundary
-  Proposed POS
-  Indicative SuDS attenuation area
-  Proposed indicative street tree planting
-  Existing retained trees/hedgerows/green corridors
-  Existing watercourses
-  Public footpaths and connections with wider area
-  Pedestrian movement through proposed development

- ① The site's southern boundary is defined by the Nant y Wilcae watercourse and its associated riparian margins. The brook is flanked by a wealth of mature trees, predominately alders, forming a strong green corridor. The Nant y Wilcae water course and riparian margin is considered to be of important ecological value. Evidence of the presence of otters has been recorded along the water course and bat activity has been recorded along the riparian margin and along the site boundaries, during ecological surveys. In response to ecology survey findings and recommendations, the development proposals entail the retention of the boundary hedgerows and riparian corridor vegetation.
- ② An area of semi-improved neutral grassland adjoining the brook at the south of the site, within the brook's flood zone, would be retained as informal public open space. A surface water attenuation measure would be located within the southern public open space on land adjoining the northern extents of the flood zone. There is an opportunity for the attenuation measure to act as a wet meadow habitat type, improving the botanical diversity of the adjoining area with species that might naturally occur in the vicinity of the watercourse flood plains.
- ③ The development proposals entail a central spine road/primary street, which would provide a pedestrian link between the POS and Nant y Wilcae brook to the south and an area of proposed POS at the northern end of the site. This, in turn, would provide connections to GI assets within the village and the wider area. There is an opportunity to introduce street tree planting along the primary street to provide a green corridor connection between the north and south areas of POS.
- ④ The Barton Brook flows in a southerly direction to the east of the site. This brook also functions as a strong green corridor, which extends through the north eastern extents of Raglan. The introduction of a new street tree canopy along the primary street would improve green infrastructure connectivity between the Nant y Wilcae Brook green corridor and the Barton Brook green corridor.

6.0 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

6.1 The purpose of mitigation is to avoid, reduce and where possible, remedy or offset any adverse impact on the environment arising from the proposed development. In terms of landscape and visual impact, mitigation may either be 'in-built' and as such effective from Year 1 or, as in the case of planting, it may become more effective over time, hence the predicted landscape and visual effects are assessed at Year 1 and Year 15, the photomontages have been generated accordingly.

Assessment of Landscape Effects

LLCA 1: Land to the south of the Nant y Wilcae – Medium Sensitivity

- 6.2 This LLCA, located to the south of the brook is physically and visually separate from the site, and as such its fabric would not be affected by the introduction of the proposed development.
- 6.3 As illustrated in the viewpoints located within this LLCA (Viewpoints 3 and 12) the strong belt of trees running along the Nant y Wilcae provides a robust screen even during the winter months. There may, however, be a slightly increased awareness of development at night, for motorists approaching from the south, albeit this would be in the context of the existing village.
- 6.4 Overall it is considered that the introduction of the proposed development would give rise of a 'very low' magnitude of effect on the character of this LLCA, which would result in a 'negligible' effect at Year 1 and Year 15.

LLCA2: Land to the north of Nant y Wilcae – High Sensitivity

- 6.5 The proposed development would be located within this LLCA and as such it would experience a change to its fabric. The development would be located in the field to the west of Chepstow Road and would not extend further south than the existing buildings that form part of Brooks Farm. Brooks Farm, Brooklands Barn and Lodge would in effect form part of the village rather than sitting separately from them, as they do at present.
- 6.6 The development has been configured to ensure that it does not impinge upon the food plain or the corridor of the Nant y Wilcae. Similarly, it has been designed to ensure the retention of the trees and hedgerows within the site and along its boundaries.
- 6.7 The proposed development would extend the village southwards by approximately 175m and would form the new introduction to the village to those approaching from the south. The area of open space at the north of the development would provide a point of separation between the existing village and the new development which would present an active frontage to the village and those leaving it.

6.8 The site itself would experience a considerable change from a field that is currently managed as rough grassland to a new urban development. However this LLCA already has a number of urban influences to it and it is considered that the introduction of the proposed development would not fundamentally change its character. As such it is considered that the development would give rise to a 'medium' magnitude of effect, which would result in a '**moderate**' adverse effect at Year 1. As the planting within the development mature and helps to assimilate the buildings into their surroundings, it is considered that this would reduce to '**minor**' adverse by Year 15.

LLCA 3: Raglan – Medium Sensitivity

- 6.9 The proposed development would not affect the fabric of this LLCA, but has the potential to affect its setting, given that the site abuts the existing urban edge.
- 6.10 As previously noted, the development would, in effect, extend the urban edge some 175m further to the south. It would abut the existing, modern, development on The Willows and Fayre Oaks and there would be a minimal visual relationship between it and the historic core of the village. There is no visual inter-relationship between it and the castle.
- 6.11 When viewed from the south, there is the potential for the church to be viewed in the context of the development, however given the existing development between the church and the site, it is not considered that this would give rise to an undue change.
- 6.12 In consideration of the above it is judged that the proposed development would give rise a 'low' magnitude of effect on the character and that this would be concentrated on the urban edge and would not extend into the village itself. As such it is judged to give rise of a '**minor**' adverse effect at Year 1 and Year 15.

Summary of Landscape Effects

- 6.13 The proposed development would be located immediately adjacent to the urban edge, which is characterised by late 20th Century development and would effectivity extend urban development some 175m further to the south along Chepstow Road. The development has been configured so that it does not extend further south than the existing buildings of Brooks Farm and would be designed to reflect existing buildings within the village.
- 6.14 Given the well-contained nature of the site, any effects associated with development on it would be localised and would not extend to the wider countryside or the village's historic core.

Assessment of Visual Effects

Views from Chepstow Road travelling south (Group A – Viewpoints 1 and 2)

Receptors: Motorists (low sensitivity) and Pedestrians (medium sensitivity)

- 6.15 For those leaving the village to the south the proposed development would gradually come into view. From Viewpoint 1 it would be possible to see the northernmost properties on the site. These would be set back from Fayre Oaks by approximately 50m and would face onto the small area of open space at the north of the site. Views to the Nant y Wilcae would be lost, but it is anticipated that the mature trees along and to the south of the brook would still be visible above the new roofline. The trees in the foreground, immediately to the north of the site boundary, would all be retained and would help to soften views of the development from the outset. From Viewpoint 2, views would open up more clearly and the properties along the western edge of the development would come into view.
- 6.16 Beyond the site access the urban form would continue for approximately 50m before the road runs level with the existing properties of Brooklands Lodge and Barn and Brooks Farm.
- 6.17 The proposed development would be clearly visible to those leaving the village, but not out of context with the existing built form. The proposed area of open space at the northern end of the site would allow for an 'active frontage' facing onto Fayre Oaks and Chepstow Road with the opportunity to supplement the existing trees with additional planting. It is considered that the introduction of the proposed development would give rise to a 'medium' magnitude of effect. This would result in pedestrians experiencing a '**moderate**' adverse effect at Year 1 and motorists experiencing '**minor**' adverse effect at Year 1. As the trees within and around the development mature and help to assimilate it into its surroundings is considered that these would reduce over time.

Views looking north along Chepstow Road (Group B – Viewpoints 3, 4 and 5)

Receptors: Motorists

- 6.18 For those travelling northwards along Chepstow Road towards Raglan the village is largely concealed from view prior to the crossing of the Nant y Wilcae, as illustrated in Viewpoint 3. From this location, it is not anticipated that there would be any noticeable change in view, even during the winter months. There may be some increased perception of lighting during the hours of darkness, but during the day the trees along the Nant y Wilcae would continue to provide a strong visual screen.

6.19 On crossing the brook, as illustrated in Viewpoint 4, the town comes into view. From this location, while the development would not be clearly visible, it would be possible to see the roof-tops of the properties which would sit beyond the outbuildings and fenceline of Brooks Farm and in the foreground of the properties on Fayre Oaks and The Willows. It is anticipated these may just touch the skyline when viewed from this location. Over time, as the structure planting beyond Brooks Farm matures, views would become further screened and filtered.

6.20 Travelling onwards, views of the development would briefly be lost as the road passes the existing properties around Brook Farm, before coming back into view. Viewpoint 5 shows the view running northwards from Brooklands Lodge; the hedge in this view would be retained and reinforced with further planting. However, it would be possible to glimpse the new properties from this location as the road draws up to the new site access prior.

6.21 For motorists travelling along this stretch, there would be little if any awareness of changes to the view prior to crossing the brook. At this point it is currently evident that the road is approaching the village and the view changes from one that is predominantly rural, to one with many urban elements. The proposed development would sit in the context of these elements and not be out of character with them. Taken as a whole it is considered that motorists travelling along this stretch of road would experience a 'low' magnitude of effect, resulting in a 'minor' adverse effect at Year 1. Over time as the planting within the development matures it would help to soften and assimilate it into its surroundings, however it is judged that it would remain 'minor' adverse.

Views from Fayre Oaks and The Willows (Group C – Viewpoints 6, 7 and 8)

Receptors: Residents (high sensitivity), Motorists and Pedestrians (medium sensitivity).

6.22 Viewpoint 6, on Fayre Oaks, directly overlooks the site and from this location the view would change notably. The area in the immediate foreground would be retained as open space. To the south of this, approximately 50m from this location the properties to the south of the new access road would be visible facing onto the green and forming an active frontage. Views to the Nant y Wilcae would be obscured by the new development, albeit some of the taller trees along the brook may be visible above the new roofline. Similarly views to Brooks Farm and the adjacent properties would also be obscured by the new development.

6.23 Further along Fayre Oak, within the development itself, as illustrated in Viewpoint 7, there are no clear views to the countryside beyond,

but glimpsed views make it apparent that this viewpoint is located close to the urban edge.

6.24 From this location it would be possible to see the rooftops of the new development beyond and in between the existing properties, giving an awareness of the extended urban area from this section of street.

6.25 Viewpoint 8, which is representative of private views from the rear of the properties backing on the site, would change completely. The existing view across the site towards the properties at and around Brooks Farm would be replaced by the new development which would occupy the foreground and form the new skyline.

6.26 The changes to the views from Fayre Oaks and The Willows which immediately about the site would change considerably and are judged to give rise to a 'very high' magnitude of effect. This would result in a 'substantial' adverse effect on residents, motorists and pedestrians in this area. This effect would endure into the long term and is considered to be 'locally significant'. However, it is not considered that it would extend beyond the immediate confines of these streets.

Views from Brooks Farm and Brooklands Barn and Lodge (Viewpoint 9)

Receptors: Residents (high sensitivity)

6.27 The view from the rear of these properties currently overlooks the site towards the existing properties on Fayre Oaks. The proposed development would occupy this land and bring development some 70m closer to this viewpoint. The new development would form the dominant element in the views to the west and would form the new skyline.

6.28 For residents of Brooks Farm, which is orientated towards the south and which would not have development extending south from it, the effects would be less notable. However, for Brooklands Lodge and Barn the development would form the key element in views from the rear. It is proposed to incorporate native tree and shrub planting along this interface to help screen views and mitigate these effects.

6.29 While the development would occupy the foreground of this view, there is already a notable urban element within the view and as such it is considered that the magnitude of effect would be 'high' rather than 'very high'. Nonetheless the resulting effect would be 'substantial'

adverse in the short term and significant for the residents of this small group of properties. Over time, as the planting matures, it would help to screen and filter views of the housing; however the view would remain substantially changed.

Views from the footpath network to the east (Group D Viewpoints 10 and 11)

Receptors: Walkers (medium sensitivity)

6.30 From Viewpoint 10 the proposed development would be partially visible beyond the properties at Brooks Farm and Brooklands Barn and Lodge running northwards towards the doctors' surgery. It is anticipated their roofline would touch the skyline in places, but would sit well below that of Brooks Farm in the foreground. Over time as the planting within the development matures it would help to soften and assimilate it into this view.

6.31 From Viewpoint 11, opposite the site, walkers would overlook the area of open space at the north of the site and would remain similar in nature to its current composition. To the left of view, the new development would be visible beyond the junction, adding further urban elements to the view.

6.32 From the footpath network to the east it is apparent that to walkers that they are approaching the urban edge and there are a number of urban elements in the view. The proposed development would sit between these existing buildings and be viewed in the context of them. Over time the associated planting would help to soften and assimilate the new built form.

6.33 In consideration of the above, the magnitude of effect is judged to be 'medium', resulting in a 'moderate adverse' effect at Year 1. It is considered that this would reduce to 'minor' adverse by Year 15.

Viewpoint 12 from Footpath 377/68/1 (approximately 290m from the site).

Receptors: Walkers (high sensitivity)

- 6.34 While Viewpoint 12 is located very close to the site, and is thus included in the assessment, the site is very well screened by the trees along the Nant y Wilcae even in the winter months. As such it is considered that any changes to the view resulting from the proposed development would be imperceptible and the magnitude of effect is judged to be **'no change'**.

Viewpoint 13 looking west from lane to the north of Kingcoed/ Footpath 377/78/5 (approximately 1.8km from the site).

Receptors: Walkers (high sensitivity) and motorists (medium sensitivity)

- 6.35 From this elevated viewpoint along the ridge to the north of Kingcoed it is possible to see Raglan in the middle distance sitting on the valley floor. The site is partially visible, however, it is difficult to discern it with the naked eye. Therefore, the proposed development would also be partially visible from this location. However, given the distance and the existing urban context it would be difficult to discern the development as a separate part of the existing village and as such the magnitude of effect is judged to be **'no change'**.

Viewpoint 14 looking south from Footpath 377/56/1 (approximately 1.4km from the site).

Receptors: Walkers (high sensitivity).

- 6.36 From this elevated location to the north of the town it is just possible to discern Brooks Farm and the site in the middle distance, albeit this is difficult with the naked eye. From this location it would be possible to discern the new development occupying the land immediately to the north of Brooks Farm. However, this would be a small part of a large panorama and in the context of the existing built form in the foreground and as such is judged to give rise to a 'very low' magnitude of effect, resulting in a **'negligible'** effect.

Visual Assessment Summary.

- 6.37 The visual assessment found that the site is well contained in terms of its visual influence. As it is adjacent to the existing urban edge the new development would be seen in the context of this and would read as a small extension to the existing village without giving rise to any significant effects. The exception to this are the visual effects anticipated to be experienced by the residents whose properties abut the site and those in the immediate vicinity whose views over the site would be replaced by built form. These receptors would experience locally significant adverse effects, however these would not extend to the wider area.
- 6.38 From distant views, the site is difficult to discern and the development would either be undiscernible or effects would be **'negligible'**.

7.0 Summary

- 7.1 The site is located at the southern edge of Raglan between the existing residential area and Chepstow Road. The village occupies the land to the north and west, while the land to the south and east is largely given over to pastoral farmland.
- 7.2 The site occupies an area of approximately 2.18ha and comprises two fields which are divided by a post and wire fence. On the occasion on which the site was visited it was managed as rough grassland.
- 7.3 The site is broadly flat, sloping very gently towards its southern boundary, where it meets a brook, the Nant y Wilcae.
- 7.4 Its western boundary is formed by the back gardens of properties on Fayre Oaks and The Willows. The northern boundary is formed by a post and rail fence, beyond which lies Fayre Oaks and its junction with Chepstow Road.
- 7.5 Along the Chepstow Road are three large properties, Brooks Farm, Brooklands Barn and Brooklands Lodge, the gardens of which all share a boundary with the site.
- 7.6 One mature oak on the site is the subject of a Tree Preservation Order.
- 7.7 The land is allocated for residential development within the Monmouth County Council Adopted Local Development Plan.
- 7.8 This LVIA is submitted as part of an outline planning application for up to 45 houses with all matters reserved except for access.
- 7.9 The proposed development would not extend further south than the existing buildings of Brooks Farm, with the southern portion of the site, which is located within the flood plain of the Nant y Wilcae, being retained as public open space.
- 7.10 Houses would face onto a central spine road, which would include a line of street trees connecting from the POS at the south of the site northwards to the smaller area of open space at the north. This second area of open space would be located on the corner opposite Fayre Oaks and the doctors' surgery.
- 7.11 The proposed development would comprise predominantly of two storey buildings, with a maximum ridge height of 9m. The materials would be chosen to reflect those found in the local vicinity.
- 7.12 The protection of Green Infrastructure (GI) assets and their incorporation into the proposed scheme has been considered from the outset. This has included the following:
- Development would be pulled back from the Nant y Wilcae, with all the vegetation in this zone retained as part of the open space associated with the scheme.
 - The open spaces within the site have been designed to be linked by paths within green corridors and/or vegetation.
 - Existing hedgerows and trees would be retained.
 - Pedestrian links would be provided linking proposed development with the footpath network in the wider landscape to the east and to the village to the north and well as reinstating the path linking to Fayre Oaks.
 - New native planting would be incorporated into the POS at the south of the site.
 - Street tree planting would be incorporated throughout the proposed development.
 - Native structure planting would be incorporated along the boundary between the site and Brooks Farm and Brooklands Barn and Lodge.
 - The SuDS attenuation areas could be designed to double up as usable open space when not holding water.
 - The plant species selected would be predominantly native to help assimilate the scheme into its wider surroundings and enhance its character and ecological value.
- 7.13 It is assumed that future residents would plant trees within their gardens which would further 'green' the development over time.
- 7.14 As previously mentioned, there are currently no light sources within the site, albeit it would always be viewed in the context of the adjacent development. The development would inevitably introduce lighting to the night-time environment that is typical of a residential development of this type.
- 7.15 This LVIA has reviewed the sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptors in the surrounding area and predicted the anticipated effects that would arise from the proposed development.
- 7.16 The Site and the land to the south fall within Natural Resources Wales National Landscape Character Area 31 – Central Monmouthshire. This assessment covers the whole of Wales and was designed to identify landscape character in a way that '*gives a distinctive sense of place that enables us to recognise it as a single area*', according to their "geological, habitats, historic, cultural and perceptual characteristics"

- 7.17 These areas have been subdivided according to five aspects by LANDMAP – the Welsh landscape baseline ‘an all-Wales landscape resource where landscape characteristics, qualities and influences on the landscape are recorded and evaluated’. These five aspects are: cultural, geological, historic, habitat and visual & sensory. These aspects may be drawn upon when undertaking landscape character assessment.
- 7.18 Accordingly, the assessment identified three Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs) in and around the site which have the potential to be affected by the proposed development.
- 7.19 Fourteen viewpoints were identified to go forward into the visual assessment. Where the viewpoints demonstrated a sequence of views these were assessed as a group, with the different visual receptors being clearly identified.
- 7.20 In consideration of the assessment, a range of measures were incorporated into the design proposals.
- 7.21 The LVIA considered the potential effects of the proposed development in the short term, (Year 1, when the development would be complete) and in the long term (Year 15 and beyond)

Summary of Landscape Effects

- 7.22 The assessment has considered the predicted effects on the three LLCAs defined for this assessment.
- 7.23 The proposed development would be located immediately adjacent to the urban edge, which is characterised by late 20th Century development and would effectivity extend urban development some 175m further to the south along Chepstow Road. The development has been configured so that it does not extend further south than the existing buildings of Brooks Farm and would be designed to reflect existing buildings within the village.
- 7.24 Given the well-contained nature of the site, any effects associated with development on it would be localised and would not extend to the wider countryside or the village's historic core.

- 7.25 The effects predicted for the LLCAs defined for this report were as follows:

- LLCA1 – Land to the south of Nant y Wilcae – Negligible at Year 1 and 15
- LLCA 2 – Land to the north of the Nant y Wilcae – Moderate adverse at Year 1, reducing to Minor at Year 15;
- LLCA 3 – Raglan – Minor adverse at Year 1 and 15.

Summary of Visual Effects

- 7.26 The visual assessment found a small number of significant adverse effects, namely those views experienced by residents, walkers and motorists within the immediate vicinity of the site for whom close views over the site would change from an open field to built form. It is not considered that these significant effects would extend beyond the locations in close proximity to the site.
- 7.27 From distant views, the site is difficult to discern and the development would either be undiscernible or effects would be negligible.
- 7.28 The centre of the village is designated at a conservation area and is also home to a number of listed buildings including the Grade II* listed St Cadoc's Church and the Grade I listed Raglan Castle. The proposed development would have no, or a very weak, visual relationship with the castle and the relationship between the site and the conservation area and church is limited. It is not considered that the proposed development would significantly impact on these designated historic assets.
- 7.29 Overall it is considered that the site at Chepstow Road, Raglan successfully accommodate development of the type proposed without giving rise to any significant effects on the landscape character of the wider area or the visual amenity of those using it.

The Richards Partnership
March 2018