

RAGLAN, MONMOUTHSHIRE

LANDSCAPE STUDY

POWELLS RURAL PROPERTY PROFESSIONALS LTD

POR1215ls



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Landscape Study	
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Contents

1.0 Introduction2

2.0 Landscape and Visual Overview3

3.0 Summary and Conclusions.....14

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1.1 LVIA Ltd was appointed by Powells Rural Property Professionals Ltd in August 2021 to undertake a landscape study of the site at Raglan, Monmouthshire to understand potential landscape and visual issues.
- 1.1.2 The site is currently being considered for a residential type scheme with associated development works.
- 1.1.3 The purpose of this landscape study is to provide an initial and broad overview of the key landscape and visual considerations for the site; and to advise on the potential suitability of the site to accommodate the proposed development in landscape and visual terms.
- 1.1.4 The site falls within no areas of national landscape designation and shares no common boundary with areas of designation.

Image 1: Site Location



2.0 Landscape and Visual Overview

- 2.1.1 The site is currently formed by a field that is marginal agricultural land and bound by a combination of fences, hedgerows with trees and riparian vegetation that follows a watercourse to the west.
- 2.1.2 The site is accessed from Usk Road that runs alongside the eastern boundary of the site.
- 2.1.3 A number of busy transport corridors sit in the local landscape in the form of the A40 to the north, and the A449 to the east.
- 2.1.4 The sites northern boundary is formed by a well-managed hedgerow with intermittent trees. Part of an allotment that is split by Usk Road also sits along the sites north eastern edge.
- 2.1.5 To the east the site is partially bound by a mature linear copse that follows the busy Usk Road, with some stretches of hedgerow and ruderal vegetation that allows views into the site from some parts of the Usk Road.
- 2.1.6 The sites southern boundary is formed by a combination of well-managed hedgerow and mature tree lines.
- 2.1.7 To the west the agricultural field meets a hedgerow with trees that creates enclosure with intermittent trees and stretches of tree lines.

Openness/Enclosure

- 2.1.8 Within the site there are very few landscape features, other than the vegetation that forms the site boundaries.
- 2.1.9 The sites boundary vegetation creates a number visual barrier that reduces the potential for some views into the site from the local landscape, creating glimpsed views.
- 2.1.10 From Usk Road, views are limited and would mainly be experienced from vehicles as they pass the site.
- 2.1.11 Views of the site are limited by the surrounding undulating landform and mature vegetation that sits in the local landscape. Additionally, the existing built form that sits to the east of Usk Road creates enclosure to the east.

Perceptual Qualities

- 2.1.12 The site sits adjacent to existing residential built form, which can be partly seen from within the site in views to the east. Usk Road is busy and creates noise and vehicular movement in close proximity to the site and this, combined with the other transport corridors in the area are noticeable. These qualities mean that the site has the perception of the existing marginal agricultural land with a suburban fringe context.

Settlement - Study Area Context

- 2.1.13 The site sits adjacent to the existing built form of the settlement and road. The local area includes:
- The existing residential development of Raglan set to the east of Usk Road.

- The Usk Road is busy and this along with other transport corridors in the area create vehicular noise and movement, which is noticeable within the site.
- To the west, the landscape becomes more agricultural but is still affected by the noise and movement of the local roads.
- Mature trees and vegetation which enclose the site boundaries and reduce views into the site from the surrounding area.

Landform

2.1.14 The sites topography is gently undulating and slopes broadly from the north to the south.

Field Pattern and Scale

2.1.15 The sites internal vegetation is formed by an agricultural field of a large size with an irregular boundary shape, defined by Usk Road to the east and a watercourse to the west. Telegraph poles cross close by the site forming manmade element with a vertical emphasis on the view.

Land Cover – Study Area Context

2.1.16 The area to the east of the site comprises the built form of the settlement of Raglan.

2.1.17 To the north, a small to medium irregular shaped field sits between the sites northern boundary and the A40.

2.1.18 To the west and south the landscape is generally agricultural in nature with fields defined by hedgerows with trees and pockets of woodland.

Public Rights of Way

2.1.19 The right of way network is relatively sparse in the area local to the site, but in the wider landscape exists a good network providing access for walkers.

2.1.20 The following public rights of way are located locally to the site:

- To the south - Footpath 377/41/1 runs from Usk Road to the south west and cross the landscape to the south of the site boundary.
- To the west – Footpaths 377/43/1, 377/43/2 and 377/43/3 form a single stretch of footpath which comes from Clytha Road via bridge over the A40 and heads in a broadly south west direction along a small road and farm track.

2.2 Landscape and Visual Note

Landscape Character

2.2.1 Natural Resources Wales uses Landmap to define the landscape in their assessment of Wales provides an assessment of the landscapes character. The assessment covers a number of criteria which are to be considered as a whole. These topics and their general characteristics are defined as:

- Geological Landscape - (Raglan) Lowland till plain/field. Evaluation: Moderate
- Landscape Habitats – (Farmland W. of Raglan) Mosaic. Evaluation: Moderate
- Visual and Sensory – (Northern Raglan) Mosaic Lowland Valleys. Evaluation: High
- Historic Landscape – (Nant Olway and Nant-y-wilcae) Irregular Fieldscapes. Evaluation: High
- Cultural Landscape – (Northern Raglan) Mosaic Lowland Valleys.

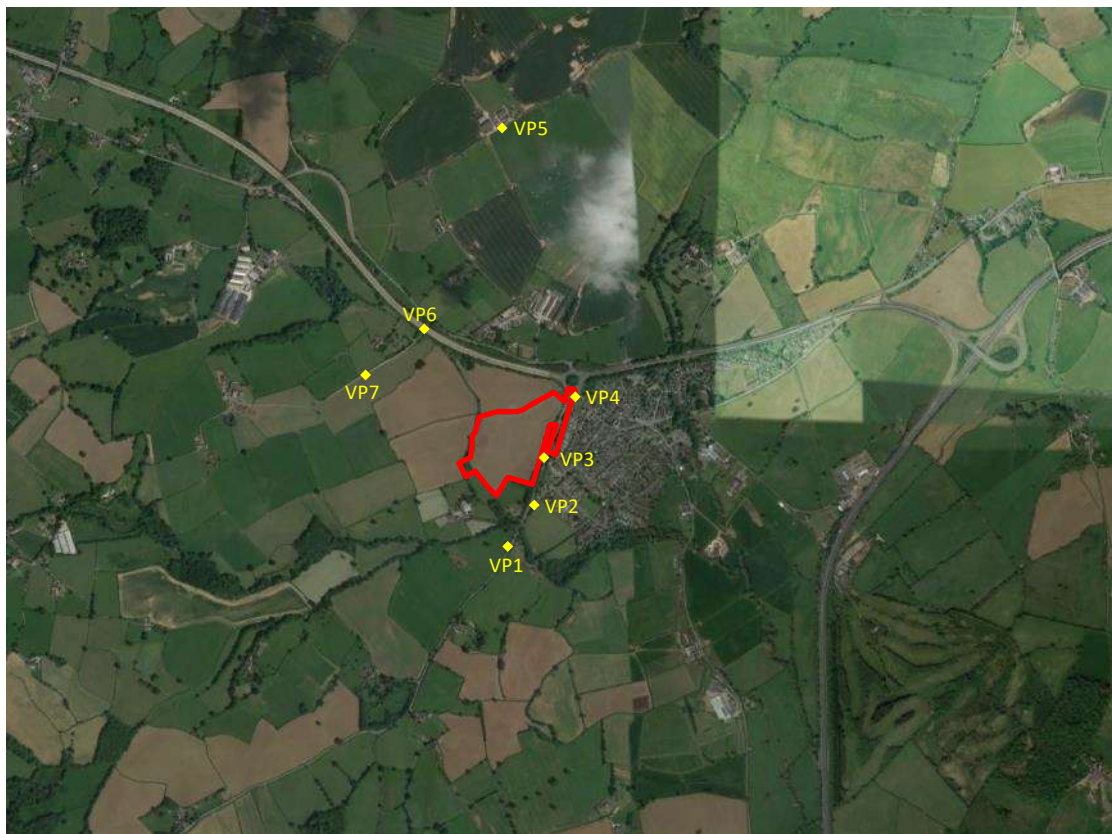
2.2.2 The adjacent urban fringe and local Usk Road and A40 have an effect on their surroundings in the form of noise and related movement, substantially reducing the sense of tranquillity one may otherwise feel in the area.

2.2.3 The existing built elements that sit in the local context to the east are noticeable from within the site and these elements give the site a link to the settlement edge.

2.2.4 The landscape to the west of the site is more agricultural in nature, with limited short range views of built form and agricultural elements available within the well vegetated landscape visible. Telegraph poles cross the landscape forming manmade elements. The local undulating topography along with the vegetation that sits in the landscape creates enclosure to some longer range views.

Site Features

Image 2: Aerial Photograph (showing illustrative image locations)



2.2.5 In summary, the sites landscape context includes:

- Gently undulating local landform which becomes more undulating in the wider landscape;
- Substantial mature hedgerow and tree planting that forms the site boundaries and sits within close proximity to the site creating a sense of enclosure to most views to the west;
- To the west of the site there is less manmade influence, with a more agricultural landscape;
- Surrounding built elements, including residential development situated to the east and transport corridors are very noticeable and provide manmade influences within the local area, reducing tranquillity.

Visual Analysis

- 2.2.6 Most local viewers of the site are likely to be vehicular and other associated users of the Usk Road but only where the mature vegetation does not form visual barriers to views;

Local Views

- 2.2.7 Due to the nature of the vegetation that sits close to the site boundary and the proximity of built form, views of the whole site are very limited in the local area.
- 2.2.8 A mature tree line with understorey vegetation runs along the sites western boundary, following a watercourse. The vegetation is dense and reduces the potential for views into the site from the west.
- 2.2.9 To the north, mature vegetation and a lack of publicly accessible locations minimises the potential for viewpoints into the site.
- 2.2.10 From the east, views from Usk Road are available in some locations where the mature vegetation allows through gaps. The road users will be travelling past the site at speed. The residents that back onto Usk Road to the east may have some very limited visual connectivity with the site, but this will be very minimal due to the intervening vegetation. Its worth noting that residential dwellings do not have a right to a view and that the viewpoints are not publicly accessible so fewer people are likely to be affected.
- 2.2.11 From the south, views into the site are prevented by mature tree lines and hedgerows that define agricultural fields.
- 2.2.12 Views into the site from the local landscape are generally limited due to the mature vegetation that bounds the site and sits in the local area and the gently undulating landform acting as visual barriers.

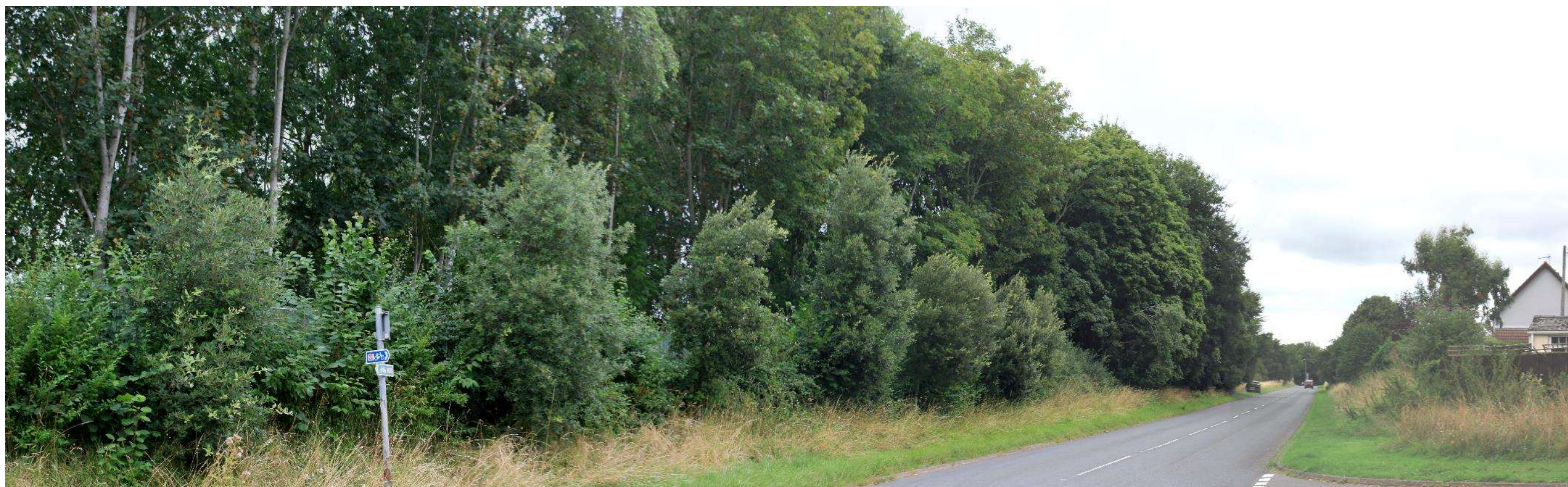
Mid-Range Views

- 2.2.13 Due to the undulating landform, the nature of the existing adjacent settlement form and presence of mature vegetation in the local landscape, views from the mid-range are generally limited although there exists the potential for some limited views from the raised landscape to the north where publicly accessible routes allow.

Viewpoint 1 – Usk Road at access to PRow 377/41/1 illustrating views from the south



Viewpoint 2 – Usk Road illustrating views from the south east



Viewpoint 3 – Usk Road illustrating views from the east



Viewpoint 4 – Usk Road illustrating views from the north east



2.2.14 The viewpoints along Usk Road illustrate the view as road users travel from the south to the north. The northern area of the sites eastern boundary is more open and allows some views into and across the site. The view is formed by gently undulating fields in agricultural use that are defined by a combination of hedgerows, trees and vegetation. Pockets of woodland sit in the wider landscape and can be seen forming enclosure to longer range views.

Viewpoint 5 – Pen y Parc Road illustrating potential views from the north



2.2.15 The view illustrates the longer range views of the landscape that are available due to the relatively elevated landform in the area. The landscape is undulating and well wooded, with built form such as the untapped brewing company visible within the vegetation. Some long range views of the landscape to the east area available, but to the south they are more enclosed by the undulating landform and vegetation. No open views of the site are available.

Viewpoint 6 – Footpath 377/43/2 on a bridge over the A40 illustrating potential views from the north west



2.2.16 The view is relatively elevated over the A40 which allows some views over the mature vegetation that follows the carriageway. The fields beyond the A40 are partly visible and laid out as fields in agricultural use. No open views of the site are available.

Viewpoint 7 – Footpath 377/43/1 illustrating potential views from the west



2.2.17 The foreground of the view is laid out as a field in agricultural use that is defined by hedgerows with occasional trees. Some longer range views of distant wooded hills are available. The tower of the Church of St Cadoc can be seen along with parts of the settlement set lower in the landscape. The rising landform prevents open views into the site.

Recommended Landscape/Green Infrastructure Principles for Enhancement and Mitigation

2.2.18 From the above landscape and visual analysis, the following landscape/green infrastructure principles are recommended to successfully accommodate residential development within the site:

- Locate built form towards the existing suburban fringe of Raglan, with less dense built form situated towards the western boundary;
- Provide tree and hedgerow planting to the sites northern, western and southern boundaries to reflect the areas well wooded character;
- Create footpath links to the local right of way network;
- Manage and enhance existing vegetation that forms the site boundaries where possible;
- New planting within site to include suitable ornamental and native species that are in keeping with the character of the area and will enhance biodiversity;
- Tree planting throughout the site which will mature to further soften the appearance of development.

Potential for Development

2.2.19 The site itself exhibits no strong landscape or visual elements that would preclude it from being developed in a comparable fashion to that of the surrounding settlement with a suitable mitigation strategy.

3.0 Summary and Conclusions

- 3.1.1 The area local to the site does not have a sensitive landscape context, being situated adjacent to the existing built form of the settlement of Raglan; with residential development and Usk Road situated to the east, land in agricultural use to the west and the A40 to the north.
- 3.1.2 Landscape and green infrastructure principles have been recommended to minimise or ameliorate any potential adverse visual effects of development of the site, which would contribute to the enhancement of the current landscape character.
- 3.1.3 A residential schemes layout and building envelopes should be sensitively designed to blend visually with its surrounding landscape.
- 3.1.4 A sensitively designed residential scheme, which incorporates the recommended landscape/green infrastructure principles as part of an integral design approach, could be successfully accommodated at the site without causing substantial harm to landscape features, landscape character or the visual baseline.
- 3.1.5 The site itself exhibits no strong landscape or visual elements that would preclude it from being developed in a comparable fashion to that of the surrounding settlement. The local landscape is generally enclosed by mature vegetation and the undulating landform which forms enclosure.
- 3.1.6 The site itself exhibits no strong landscape or visual elements that would preclude it from being developed in a comparable fashion to that of the surrounding suburban settlement that would read as part of Raglan.



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