



Land adjacent to Llanellen Court Farm, Llanellen

Landscape and Visual Statement

R01

13 December 2023

Prepared on behalf of Trustees of Morspan
Pension Scheme Ltd.

Land Adjacent to Llanellen Court Farm, Llanellen

Landscape and Visual Statement



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Scope

- 1.1.1 Tir Collective is instructed by the Trustees of Morspan Pension Scheme Ltd. to prepare this Landscape and Visual Statement (LVS) which relates to the promotion of residential development on the Land adjacent to Llanellen Court Farm, Llanellen. The site is defined by the boundary as shown on **Figure LA.04**.
- 1.1.2 A wider 1km study area has also been considered for this LVS as the area where landscape and visual effects may arise from the potential residential development within the site.
- 1.1.3 The LVS is illustrated by plans and photographs in **Appendix 1**, as follows:
- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Figures LA.01 | Designations |
| Figure LA.02 | Public access |
| Figures LA.03 | LANDMAP |
| Figure LA.04 | Site context |
| Figures LA.05 | Appraisal Photographs |
| Figure LA.06 | Green Infrastructure Strategy |

1.2 Statement methodology

- 1.2.1 The methodology used for reviewing the landscape character and visual amenity of the study site and surrounding area is broadly based on the recommendations in **Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition**, published by The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment in 2013 (GLVIA3).
- 1.2.2 The Landscape and Visual Statement process comprises high-level desk studies and field surveys. A Chartered Landscape Architect from Tir Collective visited the site and surrounding area on 24th November 2023 during dry weather with good visibility.

Guidance

- 1.2.3 In addition to GLVIA3, the Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note, **Visual Representation of Development Proposals**, September 2019¹ was referred to.
- 1.2.4 Relevant policy, landscape character assessments, and other contextual information sources were also referred to, including:
- NRW LANDMAP assessment information and Guidance Note 46

¹ The Landscape Institute Guidance Note, Visualisation of development, September 2019, on LI website: <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/visualisation/>

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- Policies relevant to the landscape and visual amenity in national and local policy including the Monmouthshire County Council Local Development Plan (LDP) 2011-2021.

2.0 Landscape Policies and Designations

2.1 National planning policy

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

2.1.1 Future Wales: The National Plan 2040, published 24 February 2021, sets out the development plan for Wales, influencing “all levels of the planning system in Wales and will help shape Strategic and Local Development Plans.”² The plan promotes development that enhances our wellbeing and our quality of life³ and embeds the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The plan sets out development policies for Wales, dividing it into 4 regions: The North, Mid Wales, The Southwest, and The Southeast, the site is located in the southeast region.

2.1.2 The key policies that are of relevance to the proposed development include:

- **Policy 2 – Shaping Urban growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking** states “The growth and regeneration of towns and cities should positively contribute towards building sustainable places... and integrated with green infrastructure.”
- **Policy 9 – Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure aims** “To ensure the... provision of green infrastructure, the Welsh Government will work with key partners to:
 - [...]
 - identify opportunities where existing and potential green infrastructure could be maximised as part of placemaking, requiring the use of nature-based solutions as a key mechanism for securing sustainable growth, ecological connectivity, social equality and well-being.
 - ... In all cases, action towards securing the maintenance and enhancement of... green infrastructure assets must be demonstrated as part of development proposals through innovative, nature-based approaches to site planning and the design of the built environment.”

Planning policy Wales

2.1.3 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 11 published 24 February 2021 sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. Its primary objective is to ensure that the

² <https://gov.wales/future-wales-national-plan-2040-0>

³ Page 4, Future Wales The National Plan 2040

planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation and resultant duties such as the Socio-economic Duty.

2.1.4 PPW translates The Welsh Government's commitment to sustainable development into the planning system, to be taken into account when preparing development plans, so that it can play an appropriate role in moving towards sustainability. The key policies that are of relevance to the development include:

- **Chapter 2 People and Places, paragraph 2.1** states that "Everyone engaged with or operating within the planning system in Wales must embrace the concept of placemaking... in order to achieve the creation of sustainable places and improve the well-being of communities."

Paragraph 2.17 states ... the creation of sustainable places and in recognition of the need to contribute to the well-being of future generations in Wales through placemaking, development plans and development proposals must seek to deliver developments that address the national sustainable placemaking outcomes."

Paragraph 2.27 states "Planning authorities should ensure that social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits are considered in the decision-making process... to implement the Well-being of Future Generations Act and the Sustainable Development Principle." A key factor is environmental considerations, which are listed as:

- "will important features of the natural and built environment be protected and enhanced;
 - are the environmental impacts of development on... amenity limited to acceptable levels...;
 - is environmental protection for people and natural resources, property and infrastructure maximised and environmental risks prevented or appropriately managed;
 - [...]
 - will the causes and impacts of climate change be fully taken into account through location, design, build, operation...
 - [...]"
- **Chapter 3 Strategic and Spatial Choices paragraph 3.9** states "The special characteristics of an area should be central to the design of a development. The layout, form, scale and visual appearance of a proposed development and its relationship to its surroundings are important planning considerations."

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Paragraph 3.10 goes on to state “In areas recognised for their particular landscape or historic character and value, it can be appropriate to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness. In those areas, the impact of development on the existing character, the scale and siting of new development... will be particularly important.”

In relation to healthier places, **paragraph 3.23** states “Green infrastructure can be an effective means of enhancing health and well-being, through linking dwellings, workplaces and community facilities and providing high quality, accessible green spaces.”

- **Chapter 6 Distinctive & Natural Places, paragraph 6.0.2** states “The special and unique characteristics and intrinsic qualities of the natural and built environment must be protected in their own right, for historic, scenic, aesthetic and nature conservation reasons.”

Section 6.2 Green infrastructure, paragraph 6.2.5 states “The quality of the built environment should be enhanced by integrating green infrastructure into development through appropriate site selection and use of creative design.”

Section 6.3 Landscape, paragraph 6.3.3 states “All the landscapes of Wales are valued for their intrinsic contribution to a sense of place, and local authorities should protect and enhance their special characteristics, whilst paying due regard to the social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits they provide, and to their role in creating valued places.” **Paragraph 6.3.4** goes on to state “Where adverse effects on landscape character cannot be avoided, it will be necessary to refuse planning permission.”

2.1.5 Following consultation between 09 March and 31 May 2023, chapter 6 was updated on 11 October in advance of version 12 of PPW being published later in 2023. The changes to chapter 6 address the need to keep up momentum on fulfilling Wales' our COP15 obligations and the Biodiversity Deep Dive recommendations.

2.1.6 The main changes to chapter 6 of PPW are as follows:

- **Net Benefit for Biodiversity and the Step-wise Approach:** detail is provided on securing net benefit for biodiversity through the application of the step-wise approach. The use of the green infrastructure statement as a means of demonstrating the stepwise approach is made explicit.
- **Protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest:** strengthened approach to the protection of SSSIs.
- **Trees and Woodlands:** there is closer alignment with the stepwise approach and promotion of tree planting as part of development.

- **Green Infrastructure:** there is stronger emphasis on a proactive approach to green infrastructure and the submission of proportionate green infrastructure statements with planning applications and signposting Building with Nature standards.

2.1.7 With regards to the need for signposting Building with Nature standards. The **Building with Nature Standards** Framework 2.0⁴ involves twelve Standards, arranged across four groups. There are six Core Standards and three themes, Wellbeing, Water and Wildlife, containing two Standards in each:

CORE Standards

- Standard 1 Optimises Multi functionality and Connectivity
- Standard 2 Positively Responds to the Climate Emergency
- Standard 3 Maximises Environmental Net Gains
- Standard 4 Champions a Context Driven Approach
- Standard 5 Creates Distinctive Places
- Standard 6 Secures Effective Place-keeping

WELLBEING Standards

- Standard 7 Brings Nature Closer to People
- Standard 8 Supports Equitable and Inclusive Places

WATER Standards

- Standard 9 Delivers Climate Resilient Water Management
- Standard 10 Brings Water Closer to People

WILDLIFE Standards

- Standard 11 Delivers Wildlife Enhancement
- Standard 12 Underpins Nature's Recovery

2.1.8 Planning Policy Wales is supplemented by 21 topic based Technical Advice Notes (TANs), of which the key elements of relevance to the landscape and visual aspects of the development are set out below:

TAN 12 Design

2.1.9 TAN 12 advocates a holistic approach to design, to meet the objectives of good design, set out in Figure 1, which include:

[...]

⁴ <https://www.buildingwithnature.org.uk/standards-form>

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- Character: Sustaining or enhancing local character; Promoting a successful relationship between public and private space; Promoting innovative design; Promoting legible development; Promoting quality, choice and variety;

[...]

- Environmental Sustainability: Achieving efficient use and protection of natural resources; Enhancing biodiversity; Designing for change;

[...]"

2.1.10 "Understanding the site and its immediate and wider context is the basis for a meaningful and sustainable design response", including appraising "character", including landscape character, skylines and vistas, prevailing uses, natural and cultural resources and locally distinctive features (4.3 - 4.8). The TAN makes reference to the information available in LANDMAP, in addition to detailed site appraisals.

2.1.11 Paragraph 5.5.2, the TAN recognises that "good design will almost always be dependent on working within the natural constraints and the historic character of the landscape ... The aim should be to achieve good design solutions which maximise the natural landscape assets and minimise environmental impact on the landscape. It is particularly important that proposals to amend or create new landscape are not considered as an afterthought and that the long-term impact of development on the landscape is fully understood. The quality of implementation and the long- term management of changes implicit in planting schemes are fundamental to a scheme's success".

Local planning policy

2.1.12 The site lies within Monmouthshire County Council. Planning policy for the area is provided by the Monmouthshire County Council Local Development Plan (LDP) 2011-2021, adopted February 2014. The Council are currently in the process of producing the Replacement LDP up to 2033. Policies relevant to the site and the potential residential development and include:

Monmouthshire County Council Adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) 2011-2021, February 2014

- Policy **SP1 The Spatial Distribution of New Housing Provision** states that the main focus for new housing development is within or adjoining the Main Towns of:
 - Abergavenny, Chepstow and Monmouth

[...]

Some sites are allocated for small scale residential development (up to a maximum of 15 dwellings) in identified Main Villages with the primary aim of providing affordable housing to meet local needs. The identified Main Villages are:

- ...Llanellen

Outside the main settlements listed above open countryside policies will apply..."

- **Policy S13 Landscape, Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment** states that "Development proposals must:
 1. Maintain the character and quality of the landscape [...]
 2. Maintain, protect and enhance the integrity and connectivity of Monmouthshire's green infrastructure network
 3. Protect, positively manage and enhance biodiversity and geological interest...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...
- **Policy S17 Placemaking 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 environments and to create attractive, safe and accessible places."
- **Policy LC1 New Built Development in the Open Countryside** states "There is a presumption against new built development in the open countryside, unless justified under national planning policy and/ or LDP policies..."
- **Policy LC3 Brecon Beacons National Park** states that "Development in the vicinity of the Brecon Beacons National Park will only be permitted where it would:
 - a) Preserve or enhance the landscape setting, as defined through the LANDMAP process;
 - b) Have no serious adverse effect on significant views into and out of the National Park.
- **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 and site selection."

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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 and 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".

- **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 individual green assets are retained wherever possible and integrated into new development. Where loss of green infrastructure 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."
- **Policy NE1 Natural Conservation and Development** states that "Development proposals that would have a significant adverse effect on a locally designated site of biodiversity and / or geological importance, or a site that satisfies the relevant designation criteria, or on the continued viability of priority habitats and species, as identified in the UK or Local Biodiversity Action Plans or Section 42 list of species and habitats of importance for conservation of biological diversity in Wales, will only be permitted where:
 - a) the need for the development clearly outweighs the nature conservation or geological importance of the site; and
 - b) it can be demonstrated that the development cannot reasonably be located elsewhere.

[...]

Development proposals shall accord with nature conservation interests and will be expected to:

- i) Retain, and where appropriate enhance, existing semi-natural habitats, linear habitat features, other features of nature conservation interest and geological features and safeguard them during construction work;
 - ii) Incorporate appropriate native vegetation in any landscaping or planting scheme, except where special requirements in terms of purpose or location may dictate otherwise;
 - iii) Ensure the protection and enhancement of wildlife and landscape resources by appropriate building design, site layouts, landscaping techniques and choice of plant species;
 - iv) Where appropriate, make provision for on-going maintenance of retained or created nature conservation interests.
- **Policy MV3 Public Rights of Way** states “Development that would obstruct or adversely affect a public right of way will not be permitted unless satisfactory provision is made which maintains the convenience, safety and visual amenity offered by the original right of way and this will be reflected in the layout and conditions / obligations on any permission granted.
 - **Policy MV4 Cycleways states SP6 Placemaking** states “Development that would obstruct or adversely affect a cycleway will not be permitted”.
 - **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”.

2.2 Designations

2.2.1 Designations provide an indication of landscape value. They are areas that have been recognised for the scenic beauty and recreational potential of the landscape. Designations are shown on **Figure LA.01**.

Bannau Brycheiniog National Park Statutory Designation

2.2.2 The nearest statutory designated landscape is Bannau Brycheiniog National Park, which is located approximately 310m to the west of the site boundary at its nearest point. The National Park covers the western part of the study area and extends further westward over a large area, beyond the limited of the study area.

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Ancient Woodland

- 2.2.3 There are several areas of **Ancient Semi Natural Woodland** located within the study area, as shown on **Figure LA.01-1**. The nearest one is located approximately 450m to the west of the site at its nearest point, on the lower northern slopes of Graig Syddi and extending northward in fragmented pockets.
- 2.2.4 A further small area of Ancient Semi Natural Woodland is located at the southern limit of the study area, immediately to the north of Ochram Farm, approximately 805m from the site boundary at its nearest point.
- 2.2.5 On the southern slopes of Graig Syddi and Coed y Prior there is a larger area of plantation on Ancient Woodland Site, extending from approximately 440m west of the site boundary across the southwestern part of the study area, with a small pocket of Restored Ancient Woodland at its centre.

Historic and cultural landscape designations

- 2.2.6 The setting of historic and cultural designations is a consideration during the preparation of this LVS as these features inform the overall landscape character, quality and value of the area. This LVS does not address the effects on heritage assets however it considers the contribution these features make to landscape value and scenic quality.
- 2.2.7 Relevant historic and cultural designations are shown on **Figure LA.01-2**.

Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest

- 2.2.8 **The Blaenavon Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest** is located circa 310m to the west at its nearest point. The landscape is described as “the only sizeable, abandoned, multiple period, opencast mineral working in South Wales”⁵. The Blaenavon Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest covers the western edge of the study area and extends westward beyond the study area over a large area.

Conservation areas and listed buildings

- 2.2.9 There are no Conservation Areas within the 1km study area and they are therefore scoped out of further consideration within this LVS.

Listed buildings

- 2.2.10 There are no listed buildings within the site. The nearest listed building to the site is the **Grade II Listed Parish Church of St Helen**, located approximately 160m to the north within the settlement of Llanellen. On the northern fringes of the settlement of Llanellen, a Grade II

⁵ [Historic Landscapes - Full Report - Heritage Bill Cadw Assets - Reports \(cadwpublic-api.azurewebsites.net\)](#) (accessed November 2023)

Listed bridge spans the River Usk, at a distance of approximately 330m from the site boundary at its nearest point. There are a further three listed bridges on the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal to the west - **Bridge 89**, **Bridge 90** and **Bridge 92**, all Grade II listed.

- 2.2.11 There are three listed dwellings/ farmsteads within the study area. These include Grade II Listed **Oak Cottage**, approximately 353m to the south, Grade II Listed **Orchard Farmhouse**, approximately 280m to the east and Grade II Listed **Glan Usk Farmhouse**, approximately 970m to the east.

Scheduled Monuments

- 2.2.12 There are no Scheduled Monuments within the 1km study area and they are therefore scoped out of further consideration within this LVS.

Ecological designations

- 2.2.13 Ecological designations, although not specifically related to landscape amenity and not assessed within this report, are an indication of landscape value. There are no SINCs within the site and within the 1km study area and are therefore scoped out from further consideration in this LVS.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

- 2.2.14 There are no SSSIs within the site. The nearest SSSI to the site is the **River Usk**, which is located circa 362m to the south at its nearest point. It is designated for its value as a "river running over sandstones and for its associated plant and animal communities"⁶

Public access

- 2.2.15 Public rights of way and access land are shown on **Figure LA.02**.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

- 2.2.16 There are no public footpaths within the site. The wider study area contains a number of public footpaths, generally concentrated in the southern and western parts of the study area, linking with Llanellen and surrounding farm dwellings and following the ridge landform in the west.

National Cycle Route (NCR)

- 2.2.17 At its nearest point **NCR 49** is located circa 290m to the west of the site at its nearest point. The route follows the Brecon and Monmouthshire canal tow path, transecting the study area in a north to south direction.

⁶ [CYNGOR CEFN GWLAD CYMRU \(lercwales.org.uk\)](http://CYNGOR.CEFN.GWLAD.CYMRU.lercwales.org.uk) (accessed November 2023)

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Long Distance Footpaths (LDFP)

- 2.2.18 The Usk Valley Walk follows the northern boundary of the site, at close distance, running along residential streets within the southern part of the settlement of Llanellen. The route lies approximately 12m from the site boundary at its nearest point and runs east west through the central and eastern part of the study area before turning northward where it meets the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal. Beyond the study area, the route continues to follow the course of the canal to the northwest and the river to the southeast.

Open access land

- 2.2.19 A small area of Open Access Land at Ffrwd Wood extends into the northwestern fringes of the study area, approximately 825m from the site boundary at its nearest point.

3.0 Landscape baseline

3.1 LANDMAP

- 3.1.1 The landscape baseline is a description and analysis of the existing landscape. The landscape is described, first, by reference to landscape character assessments for the area in which the site is located, at national and local levels, and then, from site-specific surveys and analysis carried out for the purposes of this study.
- 3.1.2 Landscape Assessment, following the LANDMAP methodology, has been undertaken for Monmouthshire. The assessment uses the Natural Resources Wales (NRW) / Wales Landscape Partnership Group approach which separates the defining aspects of the landscape into five categories, or aspect layers: Geological Landscape, Landscape Habitats, Historic Landscape, Cultural Landscape Services, and Visual & Sensory. It considers the relationship that exist between people and places; how people have given meaning to places through time and how the physical landscape has shaped their actions, or how their actions have shaped the landscape.
- 3.1.3 Summarised descriptions for the most relevant aspect areas to the study site and its context are outlined below for all five aspect layers. The findings of the LANDMAP studies have formed the basis of the landscape and visual baseline within this LVS. **Table 1** below defines the criteria that LANDMAP uses for evaluating each aspect area.

Table 1 Criteria for evaluating LANDMAP Aspect Areas⁷

LANDMAP Evaluation	Definition
Outstanding	of international or national importance

⁷ LANDMAP Methodology Overview, June 2017 <https://cdn.naturalresources.wales/media/681752/landmap-methodology-overview-2017-eng.pdf?mode=pad&rnd=131547814890000000>

LANDMAP Evaluation	Definition
High	of regional or county importance
Moderate	of local importance
Low	of little or no importance
Unassessed	insufficient information exists to evaluate

- 3.1.4 Characteristics of particular relevance to the site and its context are highlighted in bold. LANDMAP aspect areas for Historic Landscape and Visual and Sensory aspect layers are illustrated on **Figures LA.03**.

Geological Landscape

- 3.1.5 **The site** is located within aspect area **Llanfoist** (MNMTHGL044)⁸, which is classified as **Other** (Level 3) and **Lowland glacial and fluvioglacial depositional terrain** (Level 2). The geographical and topographical character of the area is described as (question GL4) "**Broad, locally gently uneven terrace-like feature** formed mainly of fluvioglacial sand and gravel on the S side of the Usk valley between Gilwern and N of Llanover. Includes several areas of **significant urban development**." The rarity/uniqueness (question GL31) of the area is evaluated as **low** and the overall evaluation (question GL33) for the area is **moderate**, due to "No notable sites/landforms recorded and geomorphology typical of feature/process and not known to be exceptional or is widespread."
- 3.1.6 The site is located adjacent to the east of aspect area **Llanover** (MNMTHGL045)⁹, which is classified as Other (Level 3) and **Lowland glacial and fluvioglacial depositional terrain** (Level 2). The geographical and topographical character of the area is described as (question GL4) "**Broad, undulating, stream-dissected terrain** S and W of the Usk valley in the Llanover-Penperlleni area. **Dominated by glacial clays over Lower Old Red Sandstone Group mudrocks** (Upper Silurian-Lower Devonian). Includes a small section of the Usk Silurian inlier E of Penperlleni and the lower gentle slopes of the major Lower Old Red Sandstone escarpment to the W." The rarity/ uniqueness (question GL31) of the area is evaluated as **high** and the overall evaluation (question GL33) for the area is **high**, as "although mainly glacial drift at **surface area includes part of the famous Usk Silurian Inlier** and a **significant number of Geodiversity Audit sites**...including potential geological SINC's."
- 3.1.7 The site is located adjacent to the west of aspect area **Usk-Nant y Wilcae** (MNMTHGL040)¹⁰, which is classified as **Active lowland river-flood plain system** (Level 3). The geographical and topographical character of the area is described as "Major mature river system. Higher

⁸ [Landmap Portal \(naturalresources.wales\)](https://naturalresources.wales) (accessed November 2023)

⁹ [Landmap Portal \(naturalresources.wales\)](https://naturalresources.wales) (accessed November 2023)

¹⁰ [Landmap Portal \(naturalresources.wales\)](https://naturalresources.wales) (accessed November 2023)

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part from W of Abergavenny towards Usk with well developed meander system, with local abandoned meanders on wide 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 around 1.5 km 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 from the Llandegfedd reservoir". The rarity/uniqueness (question GL31) of the area is evaluated as **low** and the overall evaluation (question GL33) for the area is **moderate**, as "no notable sites/ landforms recorded and geomorphology typical of feature/ process and not known to be exceptional or is widespread."

Landscape Habitats

- 3.1.8 **The site** is located within aspect area **Farmland to W. of Llanover** (MNMTHLH067)¹¹, which is classified as **Mosaic** (Level 3). The key features that define the area's biodiversity character (question LH24) are described as "An area **of improved grassland dominated farmland on sloping ground**. There are some **smallish blocks of woodland** present within the Aspect Areas and **more significant wooded areas border this Aspect Area on higher ground** to the west. **The Mon.-Brec. Canal flows through the Aspect Area.**"
- 3.1.9 The overall evaluation (question 45) for the area is **moderate**, for the "presence of **hedgerows** and a principally because of the **pockets of broad-leaved woodland** present, the **Monmouthshire-Brecon Canal** and a number of **key species**".
- 3.1.10 **The site** is located **adjacent** to the northwest of aspect area MNMTHLH064 (**Farmland to E. of Llanover**)¹², which is classified as **Improved Grassland** (Level 3). The key features that define the area's biodiversity character (question LH24) is the "Dominance of improved grassland with arable land also in a field system."
- 3.1.11 The **overall evaluation** (question 45) for the area is **moderate**, as the area "could easily be evaluated as low as the habitat is evaluated as low but the **key species** and **small areas of more valuable habitat** increase the value to moderate".

Historic Landscape

- 3.1.12 **The site** is located within aspect area **Usk Valley** (MNMTHHL061)¹³, which is classified as **Irregular Fieldscapes** (Level 3). The aspect area is described as (question HL4) "The Usk River Valley, a **largely agricultural area made up predominantly of irregular fieldscapes, with a**

¹¹ [Landmap Portal \(naturalresources.wales\)](https://naturalresources.wales) (accessed November 2023)

¹² [Landmap Portal \(naturalresources.wales\)](https://naturalresources.wales) (accessed November 2023)

¹³ [Landmap Portal \(naturalresources.wales\)](https://naturalresources.wales) (accessed November 2023)

variety of settlement types. The Usk Valley has **functioned since the prehistoric era** as a **natural communication route** between the coastal lowlands of Gwent and the uplands of Powys and **later as a political frontier**, marking the division between the early medieval Welsh kingdoms of Gwynllwg and Gwent. In view of its evident importance, it is not surprising that the Usk Valley is a **well settled, multi-period landscape, with evidence of occupation dating back to the Mesolithic period.**"

- 3.1.13 The overall evaluation (question HL40) for the area is **high**, as "the area scores high in terms of **integrity, survival, condition and potential** and is outstanding in terms of its **rarity**, the area has been assessed as having overall evaluation of at least high...This is **in spite of recent road building schemes...**"

Cultural Landscape Services

- 3.1.14 Cultural Landscape Services (CLS) now supersedes the Cultural Landscape aspect layer, which was updated in 2020. CLS responds to "Recent environment and well-being legislation and developments in current thinking relating to culture suggest the dataset would benefit from a different approach to mapping if revisited..."¹⁴ The data for CLS uses data from the other four aspect layers and provide no overall evaluations for each aspect area.
- 3.1.15 Refer to the Visual and Sensory aspect areas below for further detail.

Visual & Sensory

- 3.1.16 **The site** is located in aspect area **Goytre Lowland** (MNMTHVS042)¹⁵, which is classified as **Mosaic Rolling Lowland** (Level 3). The aspect area is described as (question VS3) "A **gently undulating lowland landscape**, sheltered by the scarp slopes of Mynydd Garn-fawr and Garnclochdy to the west, gradually merging with the **floodplain of the River Usk** to the east... It is an **enclosed landscape** with **large irregular blocks of mixed deciduous and coniferous woodland, parkland and medium to large-scale fields** of permanent pasture and arable crops, **becoming smaller and more irregular to the south...** These fields are **enclosed by a strong structural network of traditional field boundaries, individual field trees and hedgerow trees** and often interspersed with **streams, tributaries and ponds...** It is a **domesticated landscape** with numerous **large farmsteads, traditional cottages, country estates and small-scale linear settlements...** It is crossed by a **network of narrow roads** as well as the **main A4042(T)** and the Newport to Hereford **railway...**"
- 3.1.17 The scenic quality (question VS46) of the area is evaluated as **high**, character (question VS48) is evaluated as **moderate**, and the overall evaluation (question VS50) for the area is also **high**, as "**An attractive rolling lowland landscape extensively viewed from the Bloreng and**

¹⁴ LANDMAP Cultural Landscape Services, Report No 336, prepared by E.K Naumann, Dr K Metcalf, Environmental Systems, Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru/Natural Resources Wales

¹⁵ [Landmap Portal \(naturalresources.wales\)](https://landmapportal.naturalresources.wales) (accessed November 2023)

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the scarp slopes of Mynydd Garnlochdy and with views of these as a backcloth. The area is in **good condition** with **consistent character** throughout and **generally unspoilt** by visually intrusive development. The area is character is defined primarily by the **Llanover estate** buildings and the **ever-present scarp slope to the west**. The estate character is **relatively rare in Monmouthshire.**"

3.1.18 The site is located adjacent to aspect area **Upper Usk Valley** (MNMTHVS046)¹⁶, which is classified as **Flat Open Lowland Farmland** (Level 3). The aspect area is described as a (question VS3) "An **open flat riparian landscape, sheltered and overlooked by the Blorenge and Sugar Loaf** in the north, with the Gwehelog hills to the south... It forms the **floodplain 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 willow and alder** follow the river and stream courses... **Mature individual field trees, parkland and orchards**, are also typical of this landscape... **Golf courses, tennis courts and informal public open spaces** are scattered along the course of the floodplain, the former often unsympathetic in design, layout, materials and planting... **Settlement is limited to small-scale villages often intruding onto the floodplain creating an alien visual element within an open rural landscape**, as at Llanfoist and Gilwern... **Country estates and large farmsteads** historically well established, are interconnected by the **B4598, A49(T)** and the Newport to Hereford **railway line**... Change detection 2014: Llanfoist has enlarged and therefore removed from this aspect area to 099."

3.1.19 The scenic quality (question VS46) of the area is evaluated as **high**, character (question VS48) is evaluated as **high**, and the overall evaluation (question VS50) for the area is also **high**, as it is "an **attractive flat open landscape focussed on the river** with an **attractive backcloth** of hills and scarp slopes...The area is generally in **good condition** with **consistent character** throughout, **unspoilt generally** on the 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**...."

LANDMAP Summary

3.1.20 Table 2 below summarises the evaluations for each aspect area that the site is located in (overall evaluations are not provided for the Cultural Landscape Services Aspect Layer):

¹⁶ [Landmap Portal \(naturalresources.wales\)](https://landmap.naturalresources.wales) (accessed November 2023)

Table 2 Summary of LANDMAP

Aspect Layer	Aspect Area name and Unique ID	Classification (Level 3)	Overall Evaluations
Geological Landscape	Llanfoist UID: MNMTHGL044	Other	Moderate
	Llanover UID: MNMTHGL045		High
	Usk-Nant y Wilcae UID: MNMTHGL040	Active lowland river-flood plain system	Moderated
Landscape Habitats	Farmland to W. of Llanover UID: MNMTHLH067	Mosaic	Moderate
	Farmland to E. of Llanover UID: MNMTHLH064	Improved Grassland	Moderate
Historic Landscape	Usk Valley UID: MNMTHHL061	Irregular Fieldscapes	High
Cultural Landscape Services	Goytre Lowland UID: MNMTHCL048	Mosaic Rolling Lowland	N/A
Visual and Sensory	Goytre Lowland UID: MNMTHVS042	Mosaic Rolling Lowland	High
	Upper Usk Valley UID: MNMTHVS046	Flat Open Lowland Farmland	High

3.2 Site-specific review

3.2.1 The following paragraphs provide descriptions of the site and should be read alongside Site Context **Figure LA.04** and Appraisal Photographs **Figures LA.05**.

The landscape, features, character, and aesthetics of the site

3.2.2 The site is located to the south of Llanellen, approximately 5km south of Abergavenny, in the County of Monmouthshire. The site comprises a single, large field enclosure of agricultural pasture, as shown by the redline boundary of **Figure LA.04**. Landform within the site rises from a low point of approximately 50m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) in the northeast corner

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of the site to approximately 62m AOD in the west corner. Landform in the site and study area is shaped by east facing slopes, with topography rising to the flanks of the prominent ridgeline of Graig Syddi to the west, which overlooks the site and the surrounding landscape. The sloping landform within the setting of the site gradually merges with the River Usk floodplain to the east.

- 3.2.3 The field boundaries of the site are mixed. The eastern boundary of the site is with the well-trafficked A4042 (Usk Road) and is marked by a trimmed hedgerow. The northeastern site boundary is formed by a mature hedge, which divides the site from the adjoining field to the north and contains a small grouping of mature trees at its western end. The northern boundary of the site where it meets the settlement edge of Llanellen is formed by a more broken mix of hedge, garden vegetation, panelled fencing and post and wire fencing, with open views into the site in places. To the west of the site lies Llanellen Court Farm, where a mature hedge marks the site boundary. A prominent linear group of mature conifers is located adjacent to the western site boundary. The southern site boundary with Llanellen Court Farm is more open, delineated by a maintained hedgerow. A single mature tree oak is located in the centre of the site, forming a notable reference point within views.
- 3.2.4 The site field is typical of the LANDMAP visual and sensory Aspect Area Goytre Lowland (MNMTHVS042)¹⁷, with perceptual and other sensory qualities described as “attractive”, “sheltered” and “settled”. The site is situated at the edge of the existing settlement of Llanellen, set against the upland backcloth to the west and within the transition to the River Usk floodplain.

4.0 Visual baseline

- 4.1.1 The visual amenity review has involved desk study and field survey analysis work to identify and record views of the site from publicly accessible locations within the surrounding landscape. These are to illustrate the nature of the views available for several types of receptors, see Appraisal Photographs **Figures LA.05** and **Figure LA.04** for the photo locations. Photographs were also taken from within the site to show features of the site such as boundary vegetation, topography, and its context within the wider landscape.
- 4.1.2 The topographic pattern of the area, when combined with surface screening features, creates a relatively contained visual envelope. In broad terms, the visual envelop is shaped by the River Usk valley, with Graig Syddi containing views to the west and the rising land on the eastern side of the River Usk limiting views to the east. The site is located in the valley floor and therefore field boundary vegetation combined with shallow topography in the Usk floodplain limits views from lower elevation locations within the valley floor. There are some

¹⁷ [Landmap Portal \(naturalresources.wales\)](https://landmap.naturalresources.wales.gov.uk/)

near private views available to residential properties on the southern edge of Llanellen. Four viewpoints have been selected to represent visibility within the 1km site:

- Near views for road users and pedestrians on A4042
- The southern settlement boundary and users of Usk Valley Walk in Llanellen
- Footpath users in the valley floor to the east
- Users of Usk Valley Walk and National Cycle Network on the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal

Visual receptors

- 4.1.3 The following is a review of the viewers (the visual receptors) and the views towards the site that are available to them at the selected representative locations.

Near views for road and pedestrian users of A4042

- 4.1.4 The A4042 is a key vehicular route locally, which follows the eastern boundary of the site before meeting the existing settlement of Llanellen. A pedestrian footway runs along the eastern side of the road and there are several connecting Public Rights of Way in the locality. Views from the route are therefore representative of road users and footpath users.
- 4.1.5 Open views are available into the site over the maintained hedgerow that bounds the site. The existing settlement edge of Llanellen is visible beyond the site field, comprising a mix of housing types, forms and boundary treatments. The field that forms the site is also seen within the context of Llanellen Court Farm to the west. Views are characterised and dominated by the upland backdrop - formed by Graig Syddi to the west and crested peaks which overlook Abergavenny to the north, including Twyn-yr-Allt, Bryn Arw and Ysgryd Fach.
- 4.1.6 **Appraisal Photograph A (Figure LA.05-1 and Figure LA.05-2)** illustrates that overall visual character is settled valley floor, containing settlement within the context of the upland ridge backdrop. The field that forms the site is consistent with the existing settlement line of Llanellen - encroachment into the lower flanks of Graig Syddi is comparable to that of the existing settlement boundary.
- 4.1.7 The relationship of the site to the A4042 to the site is currently open and therefore the treatment of this boundary would be important to integrate the development in close proximity views and within the River Usk valley floor.

The southern settlement boundary and users of Usk Valley Walk in Llanellen

- 4.1.8 The southern settlement edge of Llanellen overlooks the site, with a mixture of boundary treatments, ranging from established hedge at its eastern end to a mixture of panelled and post and wire fencing, low garden vegetation/ hedge and several trees at the western end.

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Properties generally back onto the site boundary, with rear gardens facing toward the site. A number of properties at the eastern end of the settlement boundary are single storey and are bounded by a dense hedgerow, suggesting that views into the site from these properties would be limited. To the western end of the settlement boundary, properties are generally two storey and there are several which may have more open views into the site, particularly from upper floors. Typical visibility from accessible locations such as from the Usk Valley Walk is limited, with only partial glimpses of the site potentially available between and framed by buildings. **Appraisal Photograph B (Figure LA.05-3)** illustrates a framed view, available from a selected location where there is a gap between buildings and boundary treatments. Elsewhere, views from the Usk Valley Walk along the settlement edge are more limited.

- 4.1.9 Sensitive treatment of the settlement boundary would assist with the softening of resident's views – particularly at the western end of the settlement boundary where the existing boundary is mixed and more open in places and properties are taller. A consistent and denser vegetated boundary could be created through appropriate hedgerow and/ or tree matrix planting with some larger specimen trees scattered along its length, with the aim of visual screening and softening.

Footpath users in the valley floor to the east

- 4.1.10 Several footpaths cross the valley floor to the east of the site, on low-lying and relatively level ground. As a result of the fairly flat topography, surface vegetation limits the range of views and visibility of the site. The upland ridge backdrop of Graig Syddi is characteristic in west facing views, forming a prominent backdrop. The distinctive profile of Sugar Loaf mountain and the nearby peaks form a recognisable feature when looking north. Where visible, the existing settlement of Llanellen appears as a mix of roof forms and profiles within the valley floor, partially screened by hedgerow, particularly at lower level. The farm buildings at Llanellen Court Farm are larger scale and are somewhat prominent, along with the nearby conifer trees. Where views of the site are available, the site field is sandwiched between Llanellen Court Farm and the existing settlement of Llanellen.
- 4.1.11 **Appraisal Photograph C (Figure LA.05-4)** illustrates the view from the public footpath within the field immediately to the east of the site, on the opposite side of the A4042. The view from this location is close distance and relatively open, although it is possible that from elsewhere on footpaths within the valley floor, surface vegetation would limit views. The view available illustrates that the site is surrounded by existing development on its northern and southern side. The characteristic backdrop dominates the view. The eastern edge of any proposed development within the site could provide opportunities for visual softening through hedge and buffer planting and the breaking up of roof profiles through specimen tree planting.

Users of Usk Valley Walk and National Cycle Network on the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal

- 4.1.12 The Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal lies approximately 300m to the west of the site, on the elevated flanks of Graig Syddi. The canal tow path on its eastern side forms National Cycle Route 49 and the Usk Valley Walk to the north. The canal is typically lined by mature trees on both sides, providing enclosure which limits views. For walkers and cyclists along the route, views are generally directed down the canal rather than toward the site to the east. When looking east of the canal, out of the main view direction, visibility of the site and the wider landscape is generally limited, with views occurring as glimpses only where there are gaps between trees.
- 4.1.13 **Appraisal Photograph D (Figure LA.05-5)** illustrates a glimpsed view from a gap in vegetation immediately west of the site. From this elevated location, views face across the Usk Valley, which contains a well-treed fieldscape, and the settlement of Llanellen at close distance within the valley floor. The settlement contains a mixture of building forms and profiles. The site to the south is partially visible, broken by the prominent conifer trees on its western boundary. The largescale farm buildings at Llanellen Court Farm lie to the south and overlook the site field. The A4042 is also visible on the east side of the site. The overall visual character of the view is that of a settled valley floor, containing development within the wider landscape setting.
- 4.1.14 Views from the canal are generally limited and any development within the site field would not be incongruous with the existing overall visual character.

5.0 Green Infrastructure Strategy

- 5.1.1 The landscape and public open space proposals at land adjacent to Llanellen Court Farm, Llanellen aim to create a simple hierarchy of spaces focused around existing and proposed green infrastructure. Existing mature trees and hedgerows have been identified within a tree survey undertaken by Treecare Consulting. A Category A Oak tree, reference T4, was confirmed in the central part of the site, which was defined as 'Veteran'. There is also a Category B Oak tree, reference T2. Mixed native hedges around the site boundary are Category B, reference G3 and G4. Other vegetation at the site is 'Category C or U'. Other than a short section of hedge at the bus stop on the A4042, all existing vegetation at the site is being retained.
- 5.1.2 The landscape strategy for the site complements existing retained green infrastructure through tree and hedgerow planting to improve connectivity. Naturalistic green spaces are proposed to provide an attractive setting for the development and help to integrate built form sympathetically into the landscape. The analysis undertaken as part of the LVS has informed the proposals, incorporating landscape and visual mitigation measures such as

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boundary retention, strengthening and specimen tree planting to address key views of the development from the wider landscape.

5.1.3 Views from proposed houses include street trees and other green infrastructure elements to create connections to nature and seasonal changes in the landscape. The design of the green streets creates an attractive public realm, with planting to increase biodiversity and filter intervisibility between dwellings. Tree planting will include native fruiting and flowering species and combine with mixed shrub and perennial planting to provide a source of nectar for bees and other insects.

5.1.4 The landscape proposals include the following green spaces:

- Green Streets
- Central Green
- Parkland

Green Streets

5.1.5 The streets will include planting within widened verges / shrub planting areas/ SuDS, wherever possible. This approach will allow sufficient root volumes for street trees within soft landscape.

5.1.6 The streets have a pedestrian focused character provided by fruiting trees and planting beds with edible herbs and perennials. Different tree species will include native and ornamental fruiting and flowering species, which will also support placemaking and contribute to legibility. A veteran oak tree is retained where the street frontages are pulled back to create a Central Green. The streets are multi-functional with biodiversity, activity, drainage and amenity functions.

Central Green

5.1.7 The Central Green provides space for the retained veteran oak tree which recognises its importance as a focus for the development. A pedestrian route and opportunities for children's play will be provided at the edge of the space outside the root protection area of the Oak tree. A variable mowing regime will provide biodiversity benefits and will also increase the amenity value of the grass areas with annuals or wildflowers being introduced.

Parkland

5.1.8 The park incorporates the SuDS attenuation basin and swale along a proposed pedestrian link to the bus stop. The grassland areas within the park will be a variable mowing regime will provide biodiversity benefits and increase the amenity value of the grass areas. Parkland tree planting of native species is proposed around the edges of the space. The open grassed

area provides space to picnic and a variety of play including a kick-about area. Landscape based play could be introduced with a softer naturalistic edge to the space.

- 5.1.9 The parkland provides an appropriate transition to development within the valley floor, providing a naturalistic setting in keeping with the wider landscape context and pulling development back from the A4042.

6.0 Summary and Conclusions

6.1 Scope

- 6.1.1 Tir Collective is instructed by the Trustees of Morspan Pension Scheme Ltd. to prepare this Landscape and Visual Statement (LVS), which relates to the promotion of housing development on Land adjacent to Llanellen Court Farm, Llanellen.
- 6.1.2 The methodology used for reviewing the landscape character and visual amenity of the site and surrounding area is broadly based on the recommendations in **Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition**, published by The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment in 2013 (GLVIA3).

6.2 Summary of findings

Landscape review

- 6.2.1 Desk studies reviewed landscape designations, public access, and referred to LANDMAP assessments and relevant national and local policy information. The studies confirmed that the site is not located within a designated landscape, however a number of designations are relevant to the study area, including the Bannau Brycheiniog National Park which is located at a distance of approximately 310m to the west of the site boundary. The same part of the study area is also designated as Blaenavon Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest. A number of Public Rights of Way cross the study area, including the Usk Valley Walk, which runs at close distance to the northern boundary of the site and connects to the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal nearby. There are several areas of Ancient Semi Natural Woodland within the study area, the nearest located approximately 450m to the west. There are also several Listed Buildings within the study area, located within Llanellen and at farm dwellings.
- 6.2.2 In relation to LANDMAP, the site lies within the Visual and Sensory aspect area Goytre Lowland, which has High overall value as an "attractive rolling lowland landscape extensively viewed from the Blorenges and the scarp slopes of Mynydd Garnlochdy and with views of these as a backcloth". Historic Landscape evaluations are also high, describing the area as "a largely agricultural area made up predominantly of irregular fieldscapes, with the variety of

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settlement types". The area "scores high in terms of integrity, survival, condition and potential and is outstanding in terms of its rarity".

- 6.2.3 Overall evaluations for Geological Landscape and Landscape Habitats aspect layers are moderate. The geological landscape of the site is described as "Broad, locally gently uneven terrace-like feature...including several areas of significant urban development". Its rarity/uniqueness in geological terms is low and overall evaluation of moderate is due to "no notable sites/ landforms recorded..." The Landscape Habitat is 'Mosaic' within the Farmland to W. of Llanover aspect area. Moderate overall evaluation is attributed to the "presence of hedgerows and principally because of the pockets of broad-leaved woodland present, the Monmouthshire-Brecon Canal and a number of key species".
- 6.2.4 The site-specific landscape review confirmed the location of the site to the south of Llanellen, approximately 5km south of Abergavenny in the County of Monmouthshire. The single, large field enclosure that forms the site rises from a low point of approximately 50m in the northeast corner to 62m in the west corner. The landform of the site and study area is shaped by the rising topography of the ridgeline to the west which gradually merges with the River Usk floodplain to the east.
- 6.2.5 Field boundaries are mixed, with trimmed hedgerow along the site's most visible boundary with the A4042. The northern eastern boundary is formed by dense, mature hedge, which divides the site from the adjoining field to the north. The northern boundary of the site where it meets the settlement edge of Llanellen is more mixed, containing hedge, garden vegetation, panelled fencing and post and wire fencing, with open views into the site in places. The west boundary with Llanellen Court Farm is marked by a mature hedge and an adjacent prominent linear group of mature conifers. A single mature tree oak is located in the centre of the site, forming a notable reference point within views.
- 6.2.6 The "attractive", "sheltered" and "settled" qualities of the site are typical of the LANDMAP visual and sensory Aspect Area Goytre Lowland. The site is situated at the edge of the existing settlement of Llanellen, set against the upland backcloth to the west and within the transition to the River Usk floodplain.
- 6.2.7 In landscape terms, the potential residential development would be in the context of the adjacent settlement of Llanellen. It is considered that any development within this site would need to be supported by a landscape led approach that is sympathetic to the existing features of the site such as trees and vegetation along field boundaries, and the relationship with the existing settlement edge. There could also be opportunities to enhance green infrastructure along existing field boundaries and public footpath links to the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal/ Usk Valley Walk to reinforce existing patterns, a key characteristic of the area, and introduce appropriate management to improve habitat resilience and longevity.

6.3 Visual amenity review

- 6.3.1 To confirm the baseline studies of designations and public access mapping and site visit, four appraisal photographs were selected to illustrate the study site and its appearance in publicly available views, see **Figures LA.04** for photograph locations.
- 6.3.2 The visual envelop is shaped by the River Usk valley, contained by Graig Syddi to the west and rising land on the east side of the River Usk containing views to the east. Vegetation within the flat valley floodplain limits views from lower elevation locations within the valley floor.
- 6.3.3 There are near views for users of the A4042, which is a well-trafficked route locally and follows the eastern boundary of the site before meeting the existing settlement of Llanellen. A pedestrian footway runs along the eastern side of the road, connecting with several Public Rights of Way in the locality. Views for road users and pedestrians are illustrative of the overall local visual character, which is a settled valley floor, containing settlement within the context of the upland ridge backdrop. The field that forms the site is consistent with the existing settlement line of Llanellen in terms of encroachment into the lower flanks of uplands to the west. The relationship of the site to the A4042 is currently open and therefore the treatment of this boundary would be important to integrate the development in close proximity views and within the River Usk valley floor.
- 6.3.4 The southern settlement edge of Llanellen overlooks the site, with the mixture of boundary treatments. Properties generally back onto the site boundary, with rear gardens facing toward the site. Typical visibility from accessible locations such as the Usk Valley Walk is limited to partial glimpses of the site potentially visible between and framed by buildings. Sensitive treatment of the settlement boundary would assist with the softening of resident's views – particularly at the western end of the settlement boundary where the existing boundary is mixed and more open in places and properties are taller. A consistent and denser vegetated boundary could be created through appropriate hedgerow and/ or tree matrix planting with some larger specimen trees scattered along its length, with the aim of visual screening and softening.
- 6.3.5 Several footpaths cross the valley floor to the east of the site, on low-lying and relatively level ground. As a result of the fairly flat topography, surface vegetation limits the range of views and visibility of the site. The upland ridge backdrop of Graig Syddi is characteristic in west facing views, forming a prominent backdrop. Where views of the site are available, the site field is sandwiched between Llanellen Court Farm and the existing settlement of Llanellen. The eastern edge of any proposed development within the site could provide opportunities for visual softening through hedge and buffer planting and the breaking up of roof profiles through specimen tree planting.
- 6.3.6 For users of the Usk Valley Walk and National Cycle Network on the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal, views are generally enclosed by mature trees on both sides and directed down the canal rather than toward the site to the east. Visibility of the site and wider landscape is

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typically limited to glimpses only where there are gaps between trees. Where available, visual character within views is that of a settled valley floor, containing development within the wider landscape setting. As such, views from the canal are generally limited and any development within the site field would not be incongruous with the existing overall visual character.

- 6.3.7 Overall, the potential development proposals within the site would be relatively visually contained due to the surrounding Usk Valley topography and vegetation within the flat valley floor. The retention and enhancement of vegetation on boundaries and within the site, along with sensitive landscape and Green Infrastructure proposals, would assist with the assimilation of the development within the landscape setting. Any views of the development proposals would be viewed in context to the existing settlement of Llanellen and the largescale buildings at Llanellen Court Farm to the north and south. Development on the site would be visually contained within the context of the existing settlement and would not encroach beyond the existing western or eastern line of settlement into the upland flanks or Usk Valley floor. Appropriate treatment of these western and eastern boundaries would visually contain the development and maintain separation with the countryside beyond.

6.4 Green Infrastructure Strategy

- 6.4.1 The main aims of the green infrastructure strategy are:

- Retain existing trees and supplement with native species to improve resilience to climate change.
- Create biodiverse green streets.
- Create green spaces and corridors with SuDS, habitats, play and edible landscape.
- Additional landscape buffer planting to improve green infrastructure connectivity.
- A naturalistic design which will reduce maintenance requirements compared to a more formal design.
- Prioritise tree planting root zones within soft landscape to avoid the need for root crates.
- Integrate SuDS as part of a diverse and resilient landscape.
- Create green corridor along public footpath link to make walking convenient.
- Establish a setting for informal play and landscape-based exercise which is attractive and provides interaction with nature.
- A landscape that changes with the seasons to increase amenity.

- 6.4.2 The landscape proposals make a good contribution towards the six placemaking principles of The Placemaking Wales Charter, which cover the range of considerations that contribute to establishing and maintaining good places. The proposals also contribute well to the 12

Standards of Building with Nature, creating well connected, multi-functional green infrastructure.

6.5 Conclusions

- 6.5.1 This Landscape and Visual Statement concludes that the site represents an opportunity to accommodate potential residential development. The topography of the site and surrounding area, combined with field boundary vegetation and trees and to provide enclosure and restrict views from the wider area.
- 6.5.2 Development proposals on the site would need to be designed through a landscape-led approach, which would seek to retain and enhance existing features and green infrastructure that form key characteristics of the site. The potential development proposals would be in context to the existing settlement of Llanellen and largescale buildings at Llanellen Court Farm. Where the development is viewed as additional built form beyond the current settlement edge, it would be visually contained by field boundaries around the site to maintain separation from the countryside beyond. It would also appear consistent with the existing line of settlement along the flanks of Graig Syddi and the Usk Valley.



Appendix 1 - Figures

Figures LA.01	Designations
Figure LA.02	Public access
Figure LA.03	LANDMAP
Figure LA.04	Site context
Figure LA.05	Appraisal Photographs
Figure LA.06	Green Infrastructure Strategy

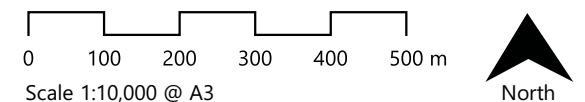


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Designations LA.01-1

Key

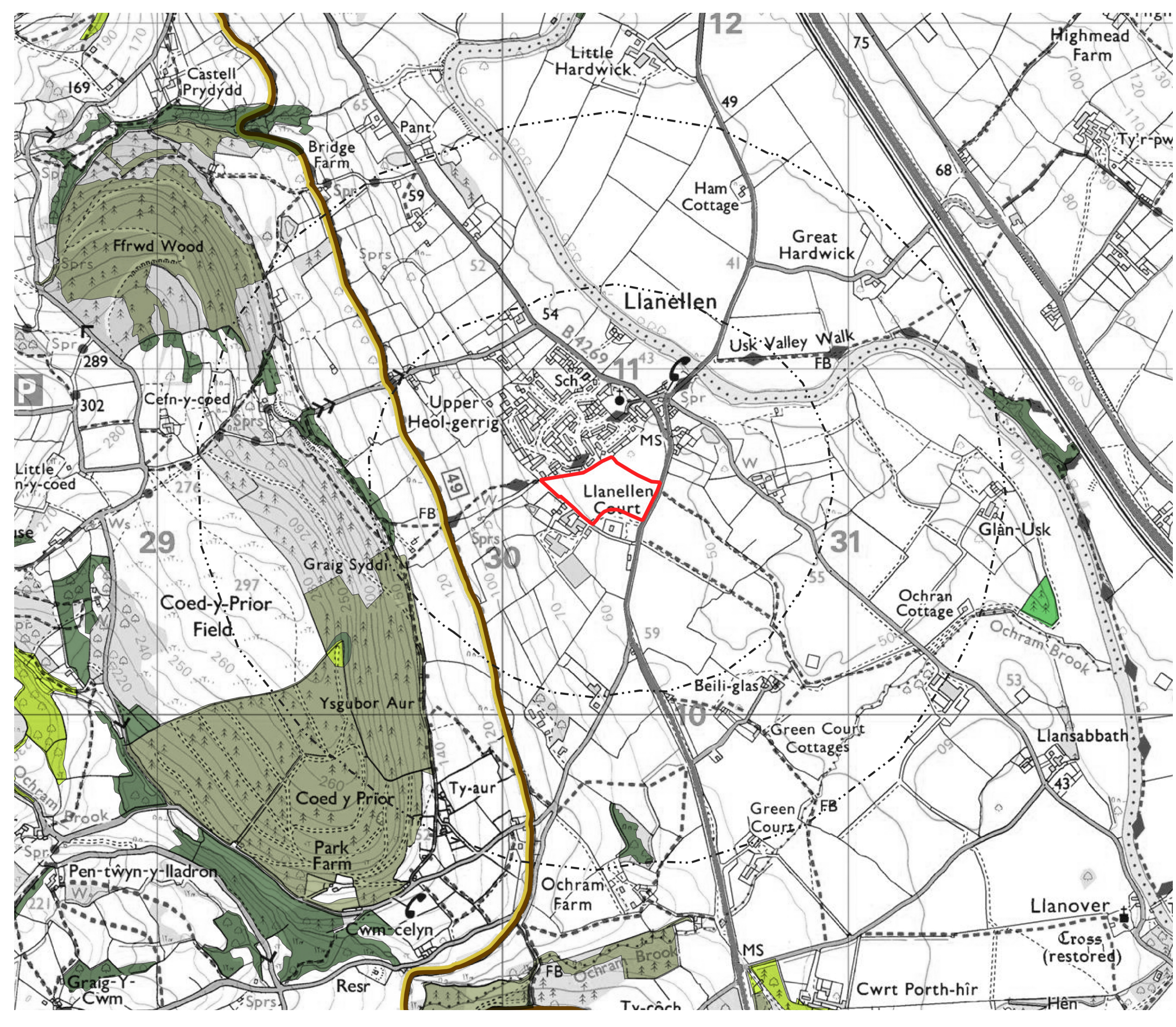
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- 500m buffers from the site boundary
- Bannau Brycheiniog National Park
- Ancient Woodland sites:
 - Ancient Semi Natural Woodland
 - Ancient Woodland Site of Unknown Category
 - Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site
 - Restored Ancient Woodland Site



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


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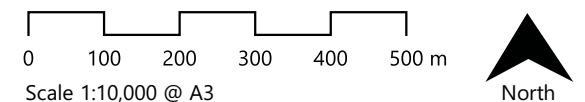


Land adjacent to Llanellen Court Farm, Llanellen

Designations: Historic and cultural, and Ecology LA.01-2

Key

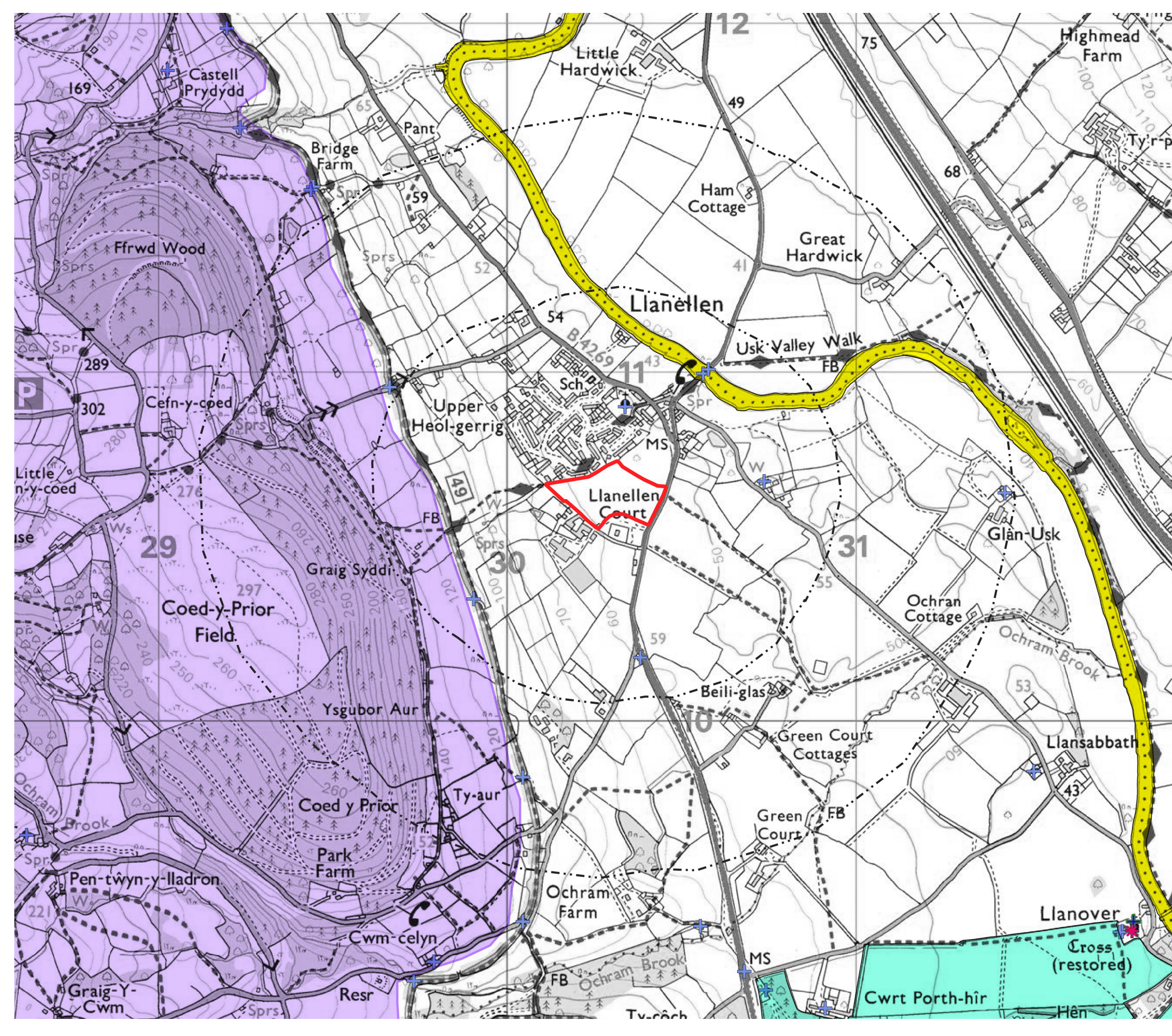
-  Site boundary
-  500m buffers from the site boundary
-  Grade II
-  Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest
-  Registered Historic Parks and Gardens (beyond 1km of the site)
-  Sites of Special Scientific Interest



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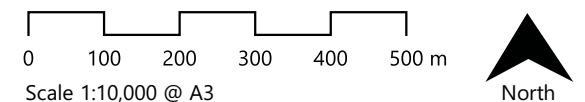


Land adjacent to Llanellen Court Farm, Llanellen

Public access LA.02

Key

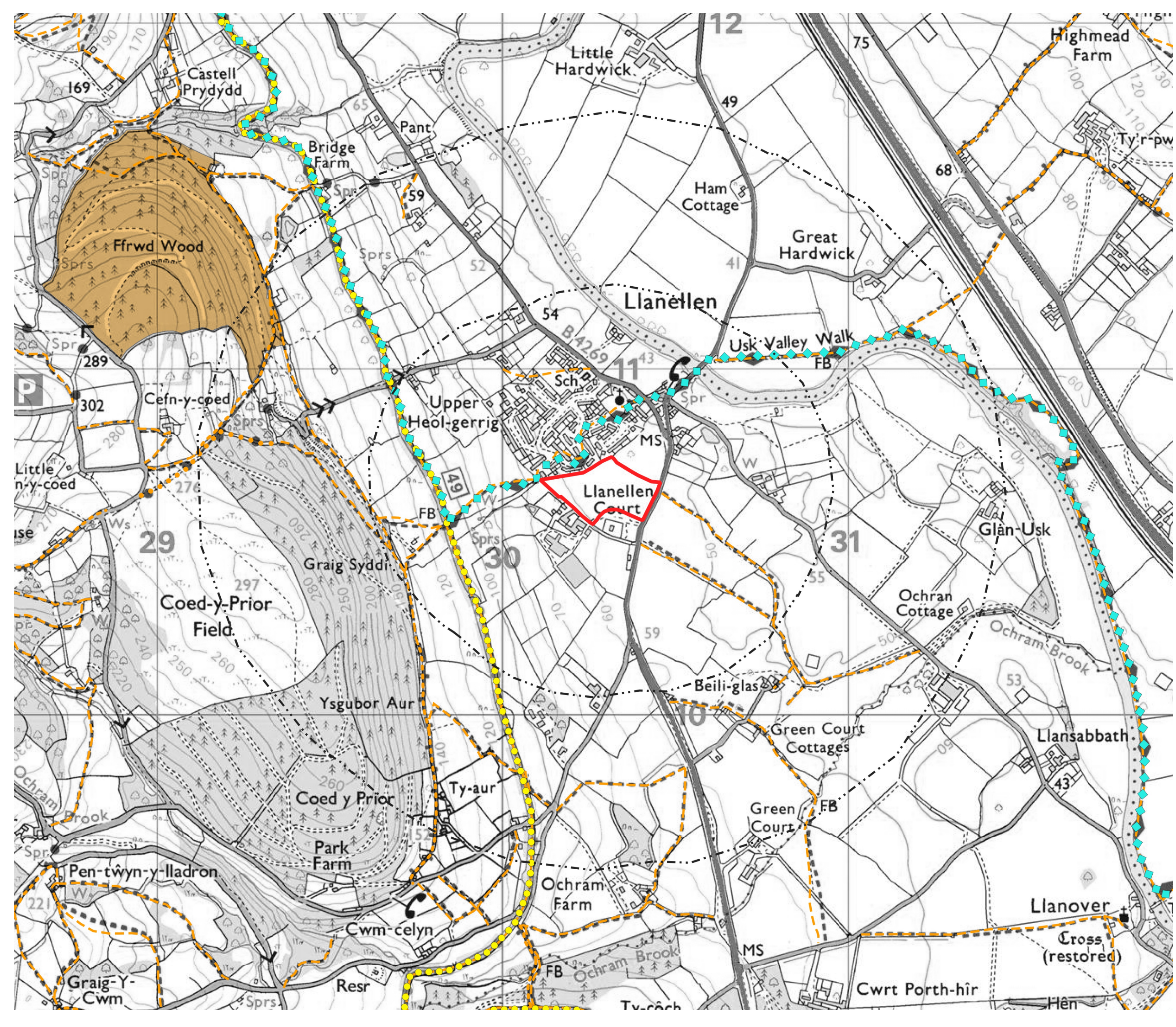
- Site boundary
- 500m buffers from the site boundary
- Public Rights of Way:
- Footpath
- Bridleway
- Rupp
- Permissive route
- ◆◆◆◆ Usk Valley Walk
- National Cycle Route
- CROW access land



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Land adjacent to Llanellen Court Farm, Llanellen

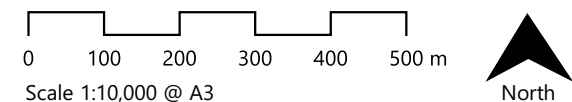
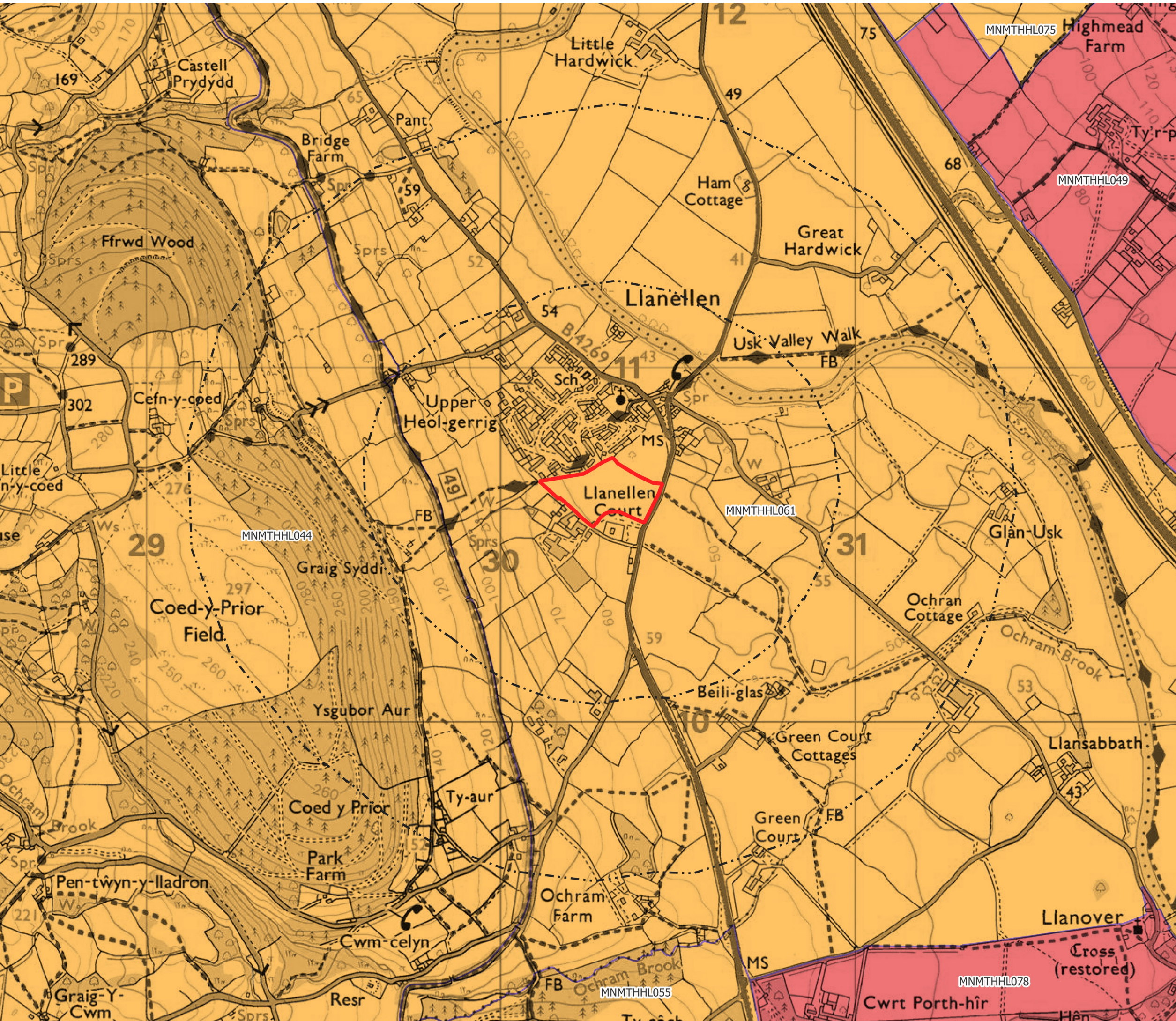
LANDMAP: Historic Landscape LA.03-1

Key

- Site boundary
- 500m buffers from the site boundary

Overall evaluations:

- Outstanding
- High
- Moderate
- Low



Scale 1:10,000 @ A3

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Land adjacent to Llanellen Court Farm, Llanellen

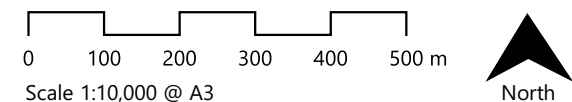
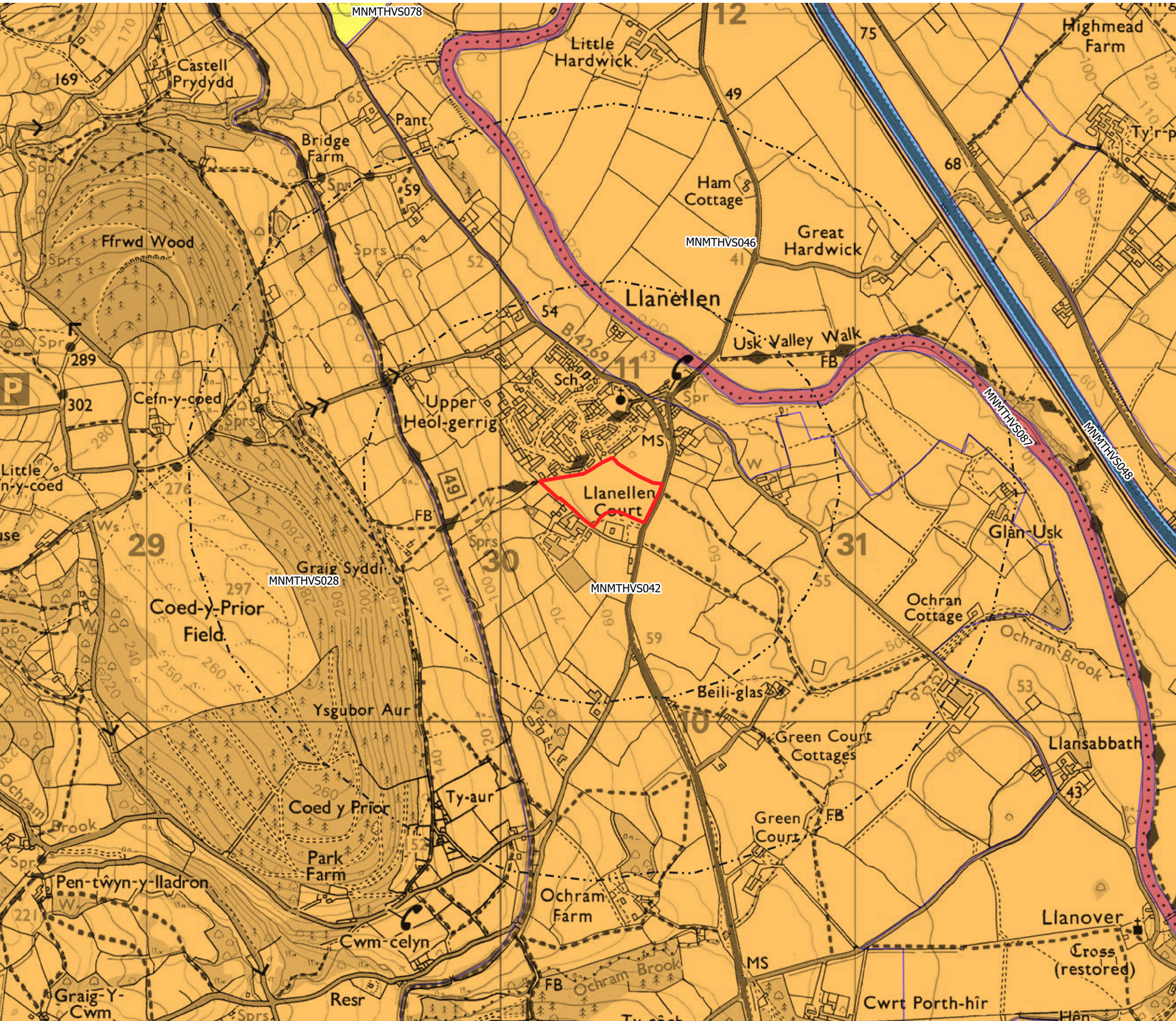
LANDMAP: Visual & Sensory LA.03-2

Key

- Site boundary
- 500m buffers from the site boundary

Overall evaluations:

- Outstanding
- High
- Moderate
- Low



Scale 1:10,000 @ A3
TC23194 Llanellen.qgz
December 2023

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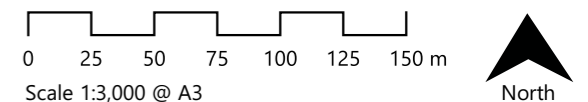
Land adjacent to Llanellen Court Farm, Llanellen

Site Context

LA.04

Key

-  Site boundary
-  500m buffers from the site boundary
-  Bannau Brycheiniog National Park
- Listed Building**
-  Grade I
-  Grade II
-  Grade II*
-  Blaenavon Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest
-  Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Public Rights of Way:**
-  Footpath
-  Bridleway
-  Usk Valley Walk
-  National Cycle Route
-  Appraisal Photograph Location



TC23194 Llanellen.qgz December 2023



Site extents

Two-storey properties

Settlement edge of Llanellen

Church of St Helen

Twyn-yr-allt

Single-storey properties

Bryn Arw

Mature northeastern boundary hedgerow

Ysggyryd Fach

Maintained hedgerow that bounds the site with A4042

A4042

Pedestrian footway

Baseline Photograph

View flat at a comfortable arm's length

Viewpoint information:
 OS reference: E330404 N210564
 Ground level: 57m AOD
 Direction of view: 330°
 Distance to site: 1m

Horizontal field of view: 90° (cylindrical projection)
 Vertical field of view: 27°
 Enlargement factor: 96%
 Principal distance: 812.5mm
 Paper size: 840 x 297mm (extended A3)

Correct printed image size: 820 x 250mm
 Camera: EOS 5D Mk III
 Lens: 50mm (Canon EF 50mm f/1.8)
 Camera height: 1.5m AGL
 Date and time: 23/11/2023 16:03



Project no. TC23194 December 2023

Appraisal Photograp A (Part 1): A4042, site boundary looking northwest

Land adjacent of Llanellen Court Farm, Llanellen

LA.05-1





Graig Syddi

Llanellen Court Farm

Prominent mature conifers

Site extents

Oak tree within site

Existing settlement edge of Llanellen

Two-storey properties

Baseline Photograph

View flat at a comfortable arm's length

Viewpoint information:
 OS reference: E330404 N210564
 Ground level: 57m AOD
 Direction of view: 290°
 Distance to site: 1m

Horizontal field of view: 90° (cylindrical projection)
 Vertical field of view: 27°
 Enlargement factor: 96%
 Principal distance: 812.5mm
 Paper size: 840 x 297mm (extended A3)

Correct printed image size: 820 x 250mm
 Camera: EOS 5D Mk III
 Lens: 50mm (Canon EF 50mm f/1.8)
 Camera height: 1.5m AGL
 Date and time: 23/11/2023 16:01



Project no. TC23194 December 2023

Appraisal Photograph A (Part 2): A4042, site boundary looking west

Land adjacent to Llanellen Court Farm, Llanellen

LA.05-2





Baseline Photograph

View flat at a comfortable arm's length

Viewpoint information:
OS reference: E330109 N1210682
Ground level: 67m AOD
Direction of view: 117°
Distance to site: 2m

Horizontal field of view: 90° (cylindrical projection)
Vertical field of view: 27°
Enlargement factor: 96%
Principal distance: 812.5mm
Paper size: 840 x 297mm (extended A3)

Correct printed image size: 820 x 250mm
Camera: EOS 5D Mk III
Lens: 50mm (Canon EF 50mm f/1.8)
Camera height: 1.5m AGL
Date and time: 23/11/2023 16:06

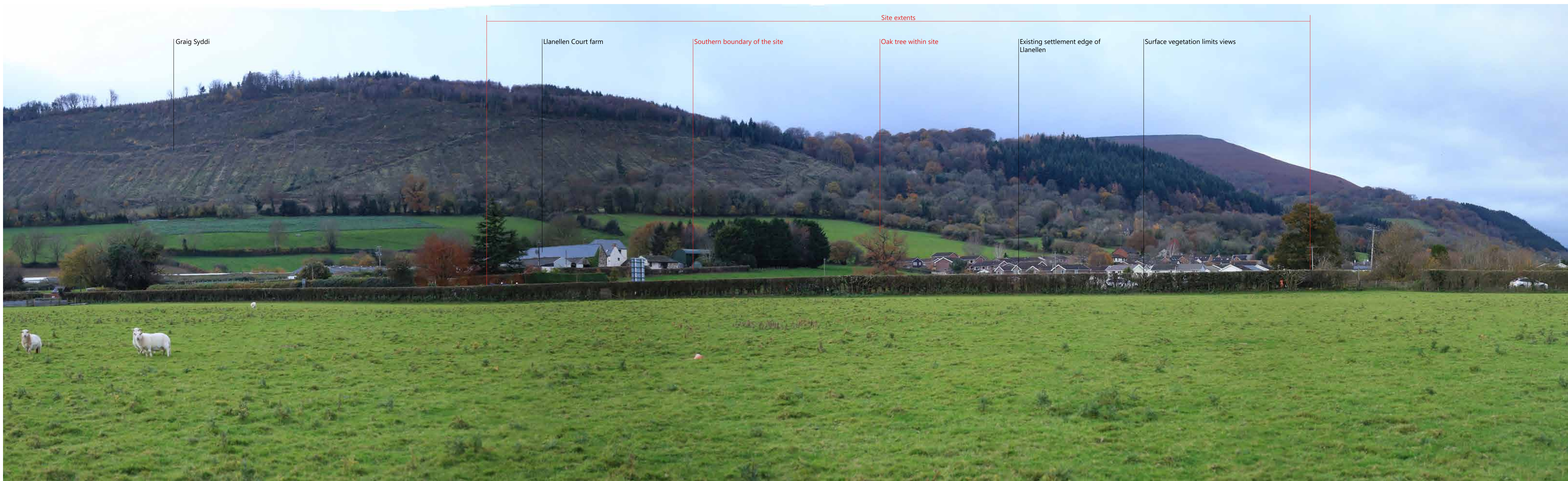
Project no. TC23194 December 2023

Viewpoint B: Usk Valley Walk, Llanellen, looking southeast

Land adjacent to Llanellen Court Farm, Llanellen

LA.05-3





Site extents

Graig Syddi

Llanelen Court farm

Southern boundary of the site

Oak tree within site

Existing settlement edge of Llanelen

Surface vegetation limits views

Baseline Photograph

View flat at a comfortable arm's length

Viewpoint information:

OS reference: E330533 N210625
 Ground level: 53m AOD
 Direction of view: 280°
 Distance to site: 128m

Horizontal field of view: 90° (cylindrical projection)

Vertical field of view: 27°
 Enlargement factor: 96%
 Principal distance: 812.5mm
 Paper size: 840 x 297mm (extended A3)

Correct printed image size: 820 x 250mm

Camera: EOS 5D Mk III
 Lens: 50mm (Canon EF 50mm f/1.8)
 Camera height: 1.5m AGL
 Date and time: 23/11/2023 16:21

Project no. TC23194

December 2023

Appraisal Photograph C: Public footpath to east of the site, looking west

Land adjacent to Llanelen Court Farm, Llanelen

LA.05-4





Baseline Photograph

View flat at a comfortable arm's length

Viewpoint information:
 OS reference: E329831 N210553
 Ground level: 114m AOD
 Direction of view: 297°
 Distance to site: 313m

Horizontal field of view: 90° (cylindrical projection)
 Vertical field of view: 27°
 Enlargement factor: 96%
 Principal distance: 812.5mm
 Paper size: 840 x 297mm (extended A3)

Correct printed image size: 820 x 250mm
 Camera: EOS 5D Mk III
 Lens: 50mm (Canon EF 50mm f/1.8)
 Camera height: 1.5m AGL
 Date and time: 23/11/2023 16:09

Project no. TC23194 December 2023

Appraisal Photograph D: Usk Valley Walk, Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal, looking east toward the site

Land adjacent of Llanellen Court Farm, Llanellen

LA.05-5





- Key**
- Site boundary
 - Existing trees retained
 - Existing hedgerows retained
 - Proposed street tree planting to include native and ornamental fruiting and flowering species
 - Parkland tree planting including native species
 - Proposed rear garden fruiting and flowering trees
 - Proposed native scrub landscape buffer along northern boundary
 - Shrub planting areas to include native and ornamental fruiting and flowering species
 - SuDS - attenuation basins
 - SuDS - swales
 - Annual or wildflower areas within grass
 - Proposed species rich grass within parkland with variable mowing regime to create long grass margins
- 1** Central green with retained veteran oak tree and childrens' play space
 - 2** Green space with SuDS along access route to bus stop on A4042
 - 3** Linear green space along link to public footpath
 - 4** Link to Monmouthshire and Canal
 - 5** Native scrub planting to provide habitat connectivity
 - 6** Roadside hedgerows to be retained with gaps planted

Multi-functional buffer to settlement edge of Llanellen provides visual screening and biodiversity connectivity

Supplement with native tree planting to improve biodiversity value

Existing hedgerow retained and strengthened and specimen tree planting to break up profile of development in views from the east



