

## **Woodlands Green, Coedely**

### **Landscape and Visual Impact Position Note**

#### **edp4896\_r001a\_250918**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This Landscape and Visual Impact Position Note has been prepared by The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP) in respect of land at Woodlands Green, Coedely, on behalf of Lewis Homes. The purpose of this position note is to provide an analysis of the character of the landscape surrounding the site; identify potentially sensitive visual receptors; provide a summary of potential effects of proposed development upon identified landscape and visual receptors; and, outline mitigation measures which have been put in place to address and reduce these potential effects.
- 1.2 EDP has undertaken a site visit (on 28 June 2018), carried out by a chartered Landscape Architect, to assess the baseline condition of the site and its context. A desk top data trawl of available sources has also informed our work - this includes: digital imagery; planning policy resources available at Rhonda Cynon Taff County Borough Council's (RCTCBC) website; and consideration of published landscape character assessment.
- 1.3 Given the size of the site and the scale of the proposals, this Position Note does not amount to a full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. In undertaking this note however, EDP have utilised methodology set out within the '*Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment - Third Edition*' (LI/IEMA, 2013). A summary methodology is provided at **Appendix EDP 1**.

#### **2. Baseline Landscape Character and Visual Assessment**

- 2.1 In terms of landscape and visual matters, EDP sets out the key baseline findings and considerations below, supported by **Plan EDP 1 and 2** and **Photos EDP 1 to 4**.

##### **Site Character and Features**

- 2.2 The site currently comprises two field parcels of light pastoral use (the interior of which can be seen within **Photo EDP 1 and 2**), approximately 3.2 hectares (ha) in size. It is located on the northern edge of the settlement of Coedely adjacent to residential development of The Meadows (which was under construction at the time of the site visit).
- 2.3 The site presents a southerly aspect, sloping towards the course of the River Ely, with a high point of 157m above Ordnance Data (aOD) at the site's northern-most corner and a low point of 137m aOD at the site's southern-most corner. As a result of this aspect, the site possesses attractive, clear views to the opposite valley hillsides to the south and south-east, which in turn



provides perceived contextual containment of the site within the Ely valley. Views from the interior of the site to the north are limited by the presence of boundary vegetation and landform, however from its northern-most edge (where vegetation allows) the site possesses intervisibility with the adjacent northern plateau and the high ground of Mynydd y Glyn. Variation in topography surrounding the site is demonstrated by **Plan EDP 2**.

- 2.4 Division of the site from existing built form varies; the western field parcel possesses no field boundary division (likely due to it being part of a larger field parcel prior to development) whereas the eastern field parcel is divided from built form by a belt of mature oaks and gappy hedgerow (as seen within **Photo EDP 3**). As a result of this limited division, the site character is heavily influenced by the urban edge of Coedely. The two site fields themselves are divided internally by a well-maintained native hedgerow, similar to that bounding the site to the west (as seen within **Photo EDP 4**), with the only gap present being that to allow circulation of livestock between the fields.
- 2.5 The site's eastern boundary is formed by a belt of mature trees, which provide containment of the site from the shallow valley landform and agricultural field beyond. To the north, the site is contained by a semi mature-mature tree belt, which divides the site from the course of Byway 109/1. In places this tree belt becomes gappy (notably at the western end of the site where an access point is provided) allowing for clear to filtered views into the site's interior (as seen within **Photo EDP 1**), however moving east this tree belt becomes denser and provides greater containment and separation between the site and Byway. Overall this northern tree belt provides a clear line of separation between the site and the open countryside of the plateau to the north, emphasising (alongside the sloping topography) the site's greater connection to the adjacent settlement.
- 2.6 No trees on site are identified to be covered by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) however despite this, the site's mature boundary trees and internal hedgerows continue to be considered key assets in respect of both their arboricultural and ecological value, as well as the enclosure and character which they provide as landscape features. Considering this and their generally good condition, these features should be retained, protected and, (where possible/practical) enhanced and reinforced as part of a comprehensive landscape scheme for the site.



**Photo EDP 1:** View across the site's western field from the adjacent byway, demonstrating the site's internally open pastoral nature with clear influence of existing built form.



**Photo EDP 2:** View across the site's eastern field from the access point at its eastern-most corner. As with the photo above the field parcel is internally open and a line of nearby electricity pylons form detracting features within the shallow valley to the south-east of the site. Existing built form of The Meadows continues to be seen beyond gappy site boundary vegetation.



**Photo EDP 3:** Southern boundary vegetation dividing the site's eastern field from existing built form.



**Photo EDP 4:** Field parcels of the site are divided by well-maintained internal boundary hedgerows.

- 2.7 The site is located near to the course of the River Ely, 485m to the south-west at its closest, however the presence of existing built form and intervening vegetation means that there is no visual connection between this feature and the site – it does however have significant influence upon the topography of the landscape surrounding the site. The site itself does not contain any noted watercourses, however during the site visit a ditch network was identified running along the eastern end of the site's northern boundary which, during heavy precipitation, would feed



into Nant Melyn, which runs 68m away from the site's eastern boundary. Despite this close proximity to both the River Ely and Nant Melyn, the site is not identified to be located within an area of resulting flood risk thanks to its uphill location.

2.8 No Public Right of Way (PRoW) routes pass within the site, therefore at present the site's interior provides little in the way of recreational value, however Byway 109/1 passes directly alongside the northern-most boundary. The site also does not lie within any form of national landscape designation; however, it is identified upon the proposals map of the RCTCBC Local Development Plan (adopted March 2011) as being situated within the local landscape designation of Special Landscape Area (SLA). It is worth noting at this point that SLAs are not put in place to prevent development, but to protect the visual qualities of each SLA and ensure that development proposals within these areas conform to the highest possible standards of design, siting, layout and materials appropriate to the character of the area (Policy NSA 25). These SLA designations are identified to ultimately tie back to the Landscape Assessment and Decision Making Process (LANDMAP) assessment of the local landscape character, which is considered in greater detail below. The RCTCBC Local Plan identifies that details of the SLAs are contained in the Rhondda Cynon Taf Special Landscape Area Study (2007), however a copy of this document was not available for consideration and as such the specific SLA within which the site is situated was unidentifiable.

2.9 Overall, given the presence of the site within the locally designated SLA, the good condition but limited expanse of landscape features across the site and the limited direct recreational use, the landscape of the site is considered to be of medium value. Alongside this, the site is considered to be of low susceptibility to residential development as a result of the existing influence of adjacent built form and detractors such as the nearby electricity pylons, and the strong potential for existing hedgerow and boundary vegetation features to be incorporated into future proposals. Therefore, overall the landscape character of the site is felt to be of no more than medium sensitivity.

#### ***Published Landscape Character***

2.10 In terms of published landscape character, the LANDMAP provides an assessment of the local landscape character. Having reviewed the area around the site via the online LANDMAP system, it identifies the site as lying within 'aspect layers' set out within **Table EDP 2.1** below.



**Table EDP 2.1:** LANDMAP Character Assessment.

Aspect	Unique Area ID	Aspect Area Name	Evaluation
Geological Landscape	CYNONGL032	Upper Ely (Classification: Glacial Mountain Valley)	<b>Moderate</b> Widespread Pennant sandstone succession, with regional fold structures and thrust zone; also glacial features including moraine including small section of RIGS for geomorphology and structural geology.
Landscape Habitat	CYNONLH094	(Classification: Improved Grassland)	<b>Moderate</b> The area is generally low value improved grassland but there are a number of SNCI designations that cover areas of higher habitat value and that support a number of key species.
Visual and Sensory	CYNONVS966	Bettws (Classification: Open Rolling Lowland)	<b>Moderate</b> No single defining criteria to distinguish from otherwise local importance. Scenic quality varies from high to low, with pleasant attractive views to north and unattractive views of urban area to the south.
Historic Landscape	CYNONHL649	Nant Castellau and Nant Machudd (Classification: Irregular Fieldscape)	<b>High</b> The high value assigned to this aspect area is based on two criteria: 1) the extremely well-preserved nature of the irregular fieldscape in this area; and 2) the diverse, multi-period nature of the archaeological resource containing evidence of Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman, medieval and post-medieval occupation.
Cultural Landscape	CYNONCL056	Designated Landscape Areas (Classification: Other Institutions)	<b>High</b> High as examples of policy determination to protect the natural and visual attributes of large areas of landscape from being overrun by development, and for the benefit of both people and wildlife.

2.11 As can be seen from this, the site falls within LANDMAP aspect areas evaluated as ‘moderate’ and ‘high’, identifying this area to be of regional/county to local importance (according to LANDMAP methodologies).

2.12 With consideration of the site description above, alongside the findings of the identified aspect areas, it is felt that the site’s surroundings are generally in keeping with the findings of this assessment: there is the presence of both attractive views across this area of landscape as well as the presence of detracting views of existing built form (notably upon the northern valley hillsides); the area within which the site is situated is protected by the policy lead local landscape designation of SLA; and, there is the presence of habitat based designations near to (but not within) the site.



2.13 Despite this however, it is felt that in terms of these aspect areas the features to which the site contributes to directly are valued on no more than a local level and, given the presence of a number of existing detractors in close proximity to the site, it is considered that the wider landscape character parcel within which the site is situated has capacity to accommodate additional residential development within the site without notable detrimental effect. As such, the sensitivity of the landscape character surrounding the site is considered to be no greater than medium.

**Visual Amenity**

2.14 As established during the visit, the site is reasonably well contained in terms of intervisibility with its wider context, thanks to its position amongst the undulating landform created by the course of the River Ely and the presence of the elevated plateau which runs from north to east. Five representative photoviewpoints have been provided alongside this Position Note to represent the views currently available towards the site and identify a baseline position to be assessed against in terms of visual amenity. These viewpoints are set out below within **Table EDP 2.2**.

**Table EDP 2.2:** Photoviewpoint Details.

PVP No.	PVP Name	Grid Ref	Distance and Direction of View	Receptors	Sensitivity
1	View from Byway 109/1 at the site's northern boundary	301914, 186931	On site boundary; looking south	Right of way users	High
2	View from PRoW 106/1 to the north of the site	301795, 187321	380m; looking south	Right of way users	High
3	View from Pantybrad (minor road) near its junction with PRoW 110/1	302692, 186829	510m; looking west	Right of way users, Minor road users	High/ Medium
4	View from Byway 111/1 as it joins an unnamed minor road to the south-east of the site	302669, 186320	650m; looking north west	Right of Way users, Minor road users	High/ Medium
5	View from PRoW 6/7, upon the opposite valley side	301196, 185869	1.18km; looking north east	Right of Way users	High

2.15 As demonstrated by **Plan EDP 2**, the site is well contained by surrounding landform, particularly to the north, east and south. However, given the south-westerly aspect of the site, the greatest extent of clear views towards the site is from the hillsides to the south-west.

2.16 Key visual receptor groups to be considered in terms of the site are PRoW users, minor road users and residential properties, with key locations considered as follows:



*To the north*

- Byway 109/1: This route runs directly adjacent to the northern boundary of the site before continuing south-east to join Byway 111/1. Visibility with the site varies in proximity and clarity, but is represented at its worst by **Photoviewpoint EDP 1** adjacent to the site's western field parcel. On approach to the site from the track to the west, the interior of the site is well screened from view by trackside vegetation which continues to form the site's northern boundary. As the route joins the site's western field, breaks in this adjacent vegetation belt allows for clear views into the site's interior, however these views are clearly backed by the presence of existing built form of The Meadows, providing an existing urban influence upon the view. This, and **Photoviewpoint EDP 1**, forms the clearest visibility of the site from this route. Travelling further east along the route, adjacent vegetation bordering the site becomes denser and less gappy, limiting the availability of visibility into the site to field access points such as that in **Photo EDP 2**;
- PRoW 106/1 and the northern plateau: As a result of the site's aspect and slope, current visibility of the site and its features is limited to the presence of vegetation along the site's northern boundary, as is seen within **Photoviewpoint EDP 2**. At present, along the majority of this route, the existing built form of The Meadows is screened from view by a combination of landform and vegetation, resulting in a view which is predominantly uninfluenced by built form other than the presence of the electricity pylons and mast to the south-east of the site;
- PRoW 108/1 crosses the arable fields to the north of the site. Despite being perceived as a walking link between the Byway adjacent to the site and Pantybrad upon OS mapping, it was confirmed (through site investigation) that through access was prevented by fencing, vegetation and a steep ditch system – the route was evidently not well used or readily accessible; and
- The extent of views of the site from the north are considered to extend no further than 1km across the plateau from the site boundary, however further views are likely to be available from the elevated ground of Mynydd y Gant circa 2.5km to the north-east (but despite its elevated location views are likely to remain similar to that experienced along PRoW 106/1).

*To the east*

- Views are contained within 0.7km of the site boundary as a result of the combination of elevated ground and vegetation; and
- PRoW 110/1 and Pantybrad (Minor Road); Travelling along the PRoW route from east to west, receptors experience occasional glimpsed views of the site where gaps in foreground and intervening vegetation allow. Electricity pylons cross the view and form imposing detractors within the views. Along Pantybrad (represented by **Photoviewpoint EDP 3**) open views are available towards the site, though only a small section of the eastern field is clearly visible as a result of intervening vegetation. The Byway which runs adjacent to the



site's northern boundary is identifiable alongside the site's well vegetated boundary, delineating the extent of the site. The extent of the site within these views is seen to be already influenced by existing built form, visible beyond the filtering effect of the site's southern boundary vegetation.

*To the south-east and south*

- Thanks to elevated landform to the south of the site, the extent of notable views from the south and south-east are limited to within 700m; and
- **Photoviewpoint EDP 4** represents views from this direction, notably the junction of Byway 111/1 and a minor road upon elevated ground of the ridgeline. Views of the site are available beyond intervening field boundary vegetation, with the existing built form of The Meadows also visible beyond undulating valley landform. Within this view the site is seen to be well contained from the wider plateau landform to the north as a result of mature northern boundary vegetation.

*To the south-west and west*

- Residential properties of The Meadows; Located adjacent to the southern edge of the site these recently constructed properties experience direct, close ranging intervisibility with the site (as seen in return within **Photoviewpoint EDP 1**), in places only lightly filtered by gappy boundary vegetation. This intervisibility is predominantly experienced from upper storey windows however, given the slope and aspect of the site it is expected that ground floor windows would also experience intervisibility beyond private rear gardens;
- Farm buildings of Tylcha Fach, 220m to the west of the site; given the presence of intervening vegetation to the east of the property and undulation in levels it is considered that the residential farm building of Tylcha Fach, despite its close proximity, would not experience intervisibility with the site and as such is scoped out from further consideration; and,
- PRoW 6/7; Views from this PRoW and the hillsides to the south-west and west are represented by **Photoviewpoint EDP 5**. As can be seen within this view, and likely within other views from this direction, the site is seen to form part of the backdrop for the existing extent of built form as it climbs up the hillside. The site is however clearly bordered and contained by the tree belt which forms its northern boundary, and the perceived definitive edge of development;

2.17 The sensitivity of these identified receptors varies dependent upon the perceived recreational value, the speed at which receptors are travelling and the ability of the view to accommodate new development alongside its baseline condition. PRoW and Byway routes are considered to be of high sensitivity, given that receptors are likely to be using the route for the purpose of enjoyment of the surrounding landscape, whereas minor road users (despite their rural context



in this instance) are likely to be faster moving and using the routes more so for purposes such as commuting between home and work/school. These minor road routes are therefore considered to be of medium sensitivity.

- 2.18 Views from private residential properties, although likely to be of high to very high sensitivity to changes in the view, are not protected by national planning guidance or local planning policy. Accordingly, changes to the character, 'quality' and nature of private views are not a material planning consideration in the determination of a planning application. However, they remain relevant to this review of the predicted extent and nature of visual change. Given the new-build nature of the residential receptors likely to be affected within The Meadows it is felt that such properties would be of no more than medium sensitivity to development given that receptors within the properties are unlikely to have had sufficient time to develop value of the adjacent green-field and the likely understanding of continuation of development into these fields at the point of purchase.

### 3. Proposals

- 3.1 This note informs a full planning application for permission for the development of the site for residential development. A Site Layout has been prepared by Hammond Architects Ltd (Drawing No. TP-01;Rev B), attached as **Appendix EDP 2**, which sets out the proposed building layout, access road and key levels within the proposed development.
- 3.2 The scheme comprises the construction of 76 new dwellings with associated infrastructure and landscaping, incorporating the retention of much of the existing hedgerows and mature trees. The proposed access to the site will be gained at its south-western corner through the adjacent development of The Meadows (currently under construction). This approach to access will not require any removal of existing vegetation or landscape features. An emergency access will also be provided at this south-western corner – this will require removal of a small stretch of the site's western hedgerow. The main access road through the site will also require the removal of a small section of existing internal hedgerow in order to accommodate the proposed road route – these losses (which considering the wider presence of boundary landscape features are considered to be relatively small) are to be addressed and mitigated through additional planting within the scheme as outlined below.
- 3.3 Through consultation with RCTCBC, it was noted that the greatest concern of the landscape officer in relation to this proposal was the effect of the proposed scheme upon the adjacent Byway and the plateau to the north. Through site investigation it was confirmed that the Byway currently possesses a relatively strong visual relationship with existing development in the vicinity of the site, whereas the plateau further north receives more intermittent intervisibility with existing built form and the site itself. Therefore, in relation to anticipated landscape and visual effects, and based on advice given to the design team by EDP, the proposed scheme seeks to respond to its landscape setting through inclusion of landscape mitigation outlined below:



- Retention of boundary trees and interior hedgerows, where possible, which contribute to the maturity of the site and ecological connectivity with wider off-site habitat, as well as providing screening and softening of the proposed development;
- The layout, scale, colour and use of unobtrusive materials for proposed dwellings will respect and respond to the character and appearance of surrounding built forms, taking influence from the residential scheme of The Meadows recently constructed to the south;
- Existing hedgerows and tree belts should be enhanced with predominantly native species to compliment those already present within the site's boundaries. The northern boundary is to be reinforced through creation of a landscape buffer to encompass both understorey planting to provide screening for close ranging receptors travelling along the byway and mature tree planting to strengthen the screening of built form from further afield to the north, as well as creating an attractive linear space along the course of the adjacent Byway;
- Development to be set back from the northern, eastern and southern boundaries of the site to create a circa 6m wide planted landscape buffer between the site boundary and private rear garden fencing to ensure retention of boundary trees and hedgerow. This buffer will be planted to include shrubby, spikey native species such as holly, blackthorn and hawthorn to provide an additional element of natural security to private rear gardens as well as providing reinforcement to existing boundary vegetation;
- The site's highest point has been retained as undeveloped, providing an area of public open space along the site's western boundary. In addition, the heights of properties around this open space have been selected for their lower roofline in an effort to reduce the impression of new rooflines from the surrounding landscape – notably the plateau to the north. An additional area of public open space is also provided at the sites south-eastern corner, to include a pedestrian footway and connection through to existing development to the south; and
- Establishment of a hierarchy of new medium and large sized tree planting within the street and Public Open Space, which will improve general amenity as well as provide a successional tree stock and soften the wider perception of built form into the surrounding landscape.

#### **4. Assessment of Potential Landscape and Visual Effects**

##### ***Landscape Character***

*Predicted effects upon the character of the site itself*

4.1 The proposed development will, inevitably, change the character of the site itself from that of a



green-field lying adjacent to recently built residential properties to being part of the built form itself. Such a change in onsite character occurs with the development of any site, in any location.

- 4.2 Given this, and appreciation of the influence of the existing adjacent development upon the current character of the site, it is considered that the magnitude of change upon the site itself will be high. When combined with the medium sensitivity identified for the site previously, this results in a **moderate** level of effect upon the site's landscape character, which would be perceived as long term and negative.
- 4.3 This is of course not unusual in respect of onsite effects where the degree of change often results in levels of effect of moderate or higher. The question here therefore is not whether such effects are acceptable but whether the baseline landscape condition is worthy of elevated protection which would obstruct development. In this instance, while the site is currently green-field, much of the development area is formally inaccessible to the public and already heavily influenced by the presence of adjacent built form. Whilst the site does form part of a wider SLA designation, it is considered that the site provides limited contribution and is well divided from the wider designation by the site's northern boundary, which is to be reinforced further in an effort to reduce visual impact of the proposal upon the SLAs characteristics. Furthermore the intent and ability of the proposals to retain and enhance existing site boundary and internal field boundary vegetation, and provide management, is considered to provide the necessary balance to mitigate the small losses of sections of internal boundary hedgerow proposed on site. As such it is felt that development of the site is sensitively designed and would be acceptable in terms of the existing urban edge character of the site.

*Predicted effects upon the Character of the site's surroundings*

- 4.4 The limited visual influence of the site on its surroundings curtails any potential expansive effects on the wider surrounding character, maintaining perceived effects to a small, local scale of no more than 2km from the site's boundary. Furthermore the perceived level of impact of the development of the site is also limited by the presence of existing residential development in its close vicinity and the already settled nature of the northern valley side, which means that development of residential properties upon the site would not be out of character in comparison with the baseline landscape condition.
- 4.5 In reality, the change of character of the site from pasture to a development of new homes, will only be perceived clearly and noticeably within areas of close proximity and, given the extent of the site in comparison to the wider areas described within the relevant LANDMAP aspect areas, the magnitude of change as a result of the proposal is not expected to be perceived as any greater than low, particularly with the presence of mitigation measures which would provide elements of positive impact in places.
- 4.6 Overall, with the medium sensitivity identified previously in mind, the proposal is expected to cause no more than a **minor** level of effect upon the site's surrounding landscape context. This includes effects upon the wider SLA designation within which the site is located as, even though EDP has been unable to identify which specific SLA the site is located within, it is considered



that the effects of the scheme upon the wider landscape character are sufficiently limited to protect this designation in the way that policy demands.

### **Visual Amenity**

4.7 Visual receptor groups identified who may experience a change to their visual amenity as a result of the scheme include the following:

- PRoW/Byway users;
- Minor road users; and
- Residential receptors.

4.8 **Photoviewpoints EDP 1 to 5** provide a range of 'representative views' chosen to represent the range of views available of the site which such users may experience. Conclusions in respect of visual effects, as set out below, are however based on the site work undertaken by EDP, as experienced in the field, and not on a review of the static images which the photoviewpoints offer.

4.9 Considering each of the receptor groups in turn:

#### *PRoW Users*

4.10 In terms of close ranging views from footpath routes, views from Byway 109/1 adjacent to the site's northern boundary are already influenced by the presence of built form of The Meadows (as seen within **Photoviewpoint EDP 1**). Proposals would bring the edge of development closer in proximity to this footpath route, but would retain the existing foreground boundary vegetation. Through the proposals, mitigation measures are in place with the aim of filling and reducing gaps along this northern boundary through whip and shrub planting in order to strengthen the filtering/screening of the adjacent development, particularly at the site's western end of its northern boundary. This mitigation would soften perception of built form from this route, resulting in no more than a medium magnitude of change upon receptors travelling along this byway route. Considering the change in current vegetation density dividing the site from this adjacent byway when travelling from west to east, it is anticipated that receptors along this route at the site's eastern extent would experience no more than a low magnitude of change.

4.11 Of particular note to RCTCBC Landscape Officer was the effects upon the plateau to the north of the site. This includes receptors travelling along PRoW 106/1 to the north of the site which, at present, do not experience intervisibility with existing built form of The Meadows as a result of sloping landform of the site, but do however possess intervisibility with the canopies of vegetation along the site's northern boundary (as seen within **Photoviewpoint EDP 2**). The proposed development will raise the ridgeline height in comparison to existing built form to the point that they would be partially visible beyond intervening landform and vegetation. Proposals



have however acted to limit the detrimental impact of this new addition into views from this direction and the plateau. The highest area of the site, and most sensitive area of the site in respect of this view (the northern-most corner), is to be retained as part of an area of POS and development along the northern extent of the site is to be set back from the northern boundary through a circa 6m wide landscape buffer and the presence of private rear gardens. House types have been chosen along this northern edge to be of low ridgeline height in order to keep the perception of new rooflines to within the visual envelope of the boundary vegetation. Reinforcement of the northern boundary with both understorey and mature tree species would screen and/or soften the presence of new rooflines within the view. With the above mitigation measures in mind the magnitude of change of the proposal upon baseline views is expected to be no greater than medium, reducing to low as the proposed boundary vegetation grows and matures and the rooflines become a minor and heavily filtered constituent of the overall view.

- 4.12 Within the wider landscape to the east and south-east, notably PRoW 110/1 to the east and Byway 111/1 to the south-east, the clearest views of the site are available from the highest points of these routes (represented by **Photoviewpoint EDP 3** and **4** respectively). Within these views development would not be a new, uncharacteristic feature, with the built form of The Meadows and Coedely already present beyond the filtering influence of intervening vegetation and landform. Development of the site would however extend built form in both cases, but, through mitigation measures in place, the proposal aims to assimilate itself into the well vegetated character of the existing views from this direction through the inclusion of street trees within the scheme to soften the overall perception of built form, and the strengthening of both the western and northern boundaries with whip and mature tree planting. At these high points, where views are more openly available towards the site, it is felt that the magnitude of change of the proposal will be at worst medium, reducing to low as the routes travel downhill and views towards the site become more contained and limited by intervening vegetation.
- 4.13 From PRoW routes upon the south-western valley hillsides, including PRoW 6/7, the site is already seen within the context of existing built form of The Meadows, as seen within **Photoviewpoint EDP 5**. Development of the site would be seen as a minor extension to the existing built form and rooflines of The Meadows development, contained by the presence of vegetation along the site's northern boundary. This boundary is to be strengthened further to form a defensible boundary to the extension of development. Considering the extent of The Meadows currently being constructed and the mitigation measures in place, such as internal vegetation and similarity in character of proposed properties, the magnitude of the proposed development upon receptors from the south is considered to be low, despite the clarity of views.
- 4.14 On the basis of EDP's site investigations, it is considered that effects on close-ranging pedestrian receptors immediately adjacent to the northern boundary will vary between **moderate** to **moderate-minor** dependent upon the current extent of available views through intervening boundary vegetation and will likely be perceived as negative given the close ranging experience of the site's change from pasture to residential. Wider views will also vary between **moderate** and **moderate-minor**, reducing in severity as proposed mitigation planting matures and aids assimilation of the proposal into existing views.



#### *Minor Road Users*

- 4.15 The only road users with opportunities to view the site are those travelling along Pantybrad to the east and the unnamed road along the ridgeline to the south-east.
- 4.16 There will, of course, be a change to the baseline situation when the scheme is developed, with the existing pasture fields glimpsed within views to be replaced by housing and landscaping. However, in both cases there is already housing of The Meadows present in the view to a degree. Again, this reduces the impact that the change from pasture to housing might otherwise create, however the development of the site is seen to extend the extent of built form.
- 4.17 Overall, the sensitivity of the road users here is considered to be medium (at most) and the magnitude of change is medium in those views that are available. As a result, the effect is likely to be **moderate-minor** and negative, though this will ease with time as the scheme matures, mitigation takes effect, and receptors acclimatise to the loss of the baseline position.

#### *Residential receptors*

- 4.18 Given the contained nature of the site and the unsettled nature of the higher ground from which clearer views of the site are obtained, the extent of residential development likely to experience change as a result of the proposed scheme is found to be limited to the properties associated with The Meadows (currently under construction).
- 4.19 As can be seen within **Photoviewpoint EDP 1**, intervisibility between the site and newly constructed properties is clear, with only the properties adjacent to the eastern field parcel experiencing some filtering as a result of existing field boundary oaks. Given the slope of the site and the openness of the dividing boundary, it is likely that views of the site and therefore the proposed development would be available from both upper storey and some ground floor windows.
- 4.20 Within the proposals, existing gappy southern boundary vegetation is to be retained, enhanced and extended within a circa. 6m wide buffer to run along the entirety of the site's southern edge, providing a green buffer between the existing and new properties and filtering intervisibility between the existing and proposed as vegetation matures. In all a high magnitude of change is anticipated to be experienced by residential receptors along the northern extent of The Meadows, resulting in an overall **moderate** level of effect, which would generally be perceived as long term and negative.
- 4.21 It should be noted that while visual amenity of residents within their private dwellings/curtilage is not protected within the planning system, their 'residential amenity' generally is. This relates to issues such as privacy, noise and light and, in this sense, residential amenity is unlikely affected by the scheme proposals, with plenty of space between properties proposed and those existing, together with careful plot orientation to minimise overlooking and provision of a green buffer to provide additional filtering of intervisibility.



## 5. Conclusions

5.1 Through consideration of the findings above, it is anticipated that any landscape and visual effects resulting from the addition of the proposed scheme would be localised in extent, contained within a 2km radius of the site.

5.2 With respect to landscape character:

- As expected given the change of the site from green-field to residential, a **moderate** level of effect is anticipated with regard to the site itself, however this is considered to be acceptable as a result of the site's current greater connection with the existing urban edge of Coedely than the wider landscape to the north; the retention and enhancement of the majority of existing landscape features on-site; and, the further mitigation measures which have been put in place to assimilate the development into its immediate context; and
- In terms of the wider landscape character no more than a **minor** level of effect is anticipated as a result of the proposed scheme. Development of the site for residential purposes would not be out of character within the landscape given the existing presence and influence of adjacent The Meadows development. It is expected that proposals would not have an unacceptably detrimental impact upon the characteristics of the LANDMAP aspect areas within which the site is identified to fit as a result of its scale, contained nature and greater connectivity with built form than the wider aspect areas. With this in mind the development of the site is also not considered to have an unacceptable detrimental impact upon the wider extent of the SLA, with proposals looking to provide defensible division between the site and this local landscape feature – protecting its characteristics despite the development of the site.

5.3 With respect to effects on visual amenity:

- Proposals have aimed to address and allay concerns of the LPA with regard to effects upon the northern plateau. Though the addition of proposals may incur the partial addition of rooflines within a view which is currently undisturbed by built form the proposal has aimed to reduce the extent to which these new features would 'stand out' within experienced views through the setting back of properties from the northern edge and enhancement and reinforcement of the site's northern boundary (with new tree and whip planting). These actions would ultimately aim to filter and soften the perception of new rooflines within the view. On top of this, sensitive use of materials, particularly in relation to roof colour finishes, will be incorporated in order to speed up assimilation of development into the existing landscape to the point that they would form only a small, barely noticeable constituent of available views beyond enhanced northern boundary vegetation;
- Proposals are anticipated to cause no more than a **moderate** level of effect upon PRow receptors travelling in close proximity to the site (notably those travelling directly adjacent



along Byway 109/1). This is expected to reduce to moderate-minor for PRoW within the wider landscape context (including those to the north) as a result of the limitation in views created by intervening landform and vegetation; maturation of mitigation planting along the boundaries and within proposals; and the existing influence of built form within views;

- Within the clearest long ranging views from the opposite valley hillside to the south (**Photoviewpoint EDP 5**) the site is seen to already lie immediately adjacent to existing built form and, as a result of sensitive design with respect to building character choice and incorporation of landscape mitigation, has the potential to appear as a well-integrated, continuation of the settlement – whilst also forming a defensible boundary to future development extension through reinforcement of the sites already vegetated northern boundary;
- Minor road users surrounding the site are expected to experience no more than a **moderate-minor** level of effect as a result of proposals, which is expected to ease with time as the scheme and mitigation planting matures and assimilates the proposal into the already urban influenced views currently available; and
- Residential receptors to the south of the site (The Meadows) are found to experience no more than a **moderate** level of effect in terms of visual amenity, as a result of their ‘new build’ character, close proximity and direct intervisibility. However, mitigation measures have been put in place in order to create a 6m wide landscape buffer between existing and proposed property boundaries, in order to filter available intervisibility to aid the protection of ‘residential amenity’ of both parties.

5.4 Overall it is felt that the proposal has been sensitively designed through a landscape-led approach in order to address concerns of the site in relation to landscape and visual amenity matters, and should be considered an acceptable extension to the existing settlement of Coedely which would not cause significant or wider-ranging adverse effects upon its surrounding landscape context.



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**Appendix EDP 1**  
**EDP Methodology**

## Appendix EDP 1

### Tables Defining the Thresholds and Definitions of Terminology used in this Appraisal

**Table EDP A1.1:** Defining the Sensitivity of the Landscape Baseline.

EDP Assessment Terminology and Definitions	
Landscape Baseline - Overall Sensitivity	
<b>Very High</b>	<b>Value:</b> Nationally/Internationally designated/valued countryside and landscape features; strong/distinctive landscape characteristics; absence of landscape detractors.
	<b>Susceptibility:</b> Strong/distinctive landscape elements/aesthetic/perceptual aspects; absence of landscape detractors; landscape receptors in excellent condition. Landscapes with clear and widely recognised cultural value. Landscapes with a high level of tranquillity.
<b>High</b>	<b>Value:</b> Locally designated/valued countryside (e.g. Areas of High Landscape Value, Regional Scenic Areas) and landscape features; many distinctive landscape characteristics; very few landscape detractors.
	<b>Susceptibility:</b> Many distinctive landscape elements/aesthetic/perceptual aspects; very few landscape detractors; landscape receptors in good condition. The landscape has a low capacity for change as a result of potential changes to defining character.
<b>Medium</b>	<b>Value:</b> Undesignated countryside and landscape features; some distinctive landscape characteristics; few landscape detractors.
	<b>Susceptibility:</b> Some distinctive landscape elements/aesthetic/perceptual aspects; few landscape detractors; landscape receptors in fair condition. Landscape is able to accommodate some change as a result.
<b>Low</b>	<b>Value:</b> Undesignated countryside and landscape features; few distinctive landscape characteristics; presence of landscape detractors.
	<b>Susceptibility:</b> Few distinctive landscape elements/aesthetic/perceptual aspects; presence of landscape detractors; landscape receptors in poor condition. Landscape is able to accommodate large amounts of change without changing these characteristics fundamentally.
<b>Very Low</b>	<b>Value:</b> Undesignated countryside and landscape features; absence of distinctive landscape characteristics; despoiled / degraded by the presence of many landscape detractors.
	<b>Susceptibility:</b> Absence of distinctive landscape elements/aesthetic/perceptual aspects; presence of many landscape detractors; landscape receptors in very poor condition. As such landscape is able to accommodate considerable change.

**Table EDP A1.2:** Defining the Sensitivity of the Visual Baseline.

Visual Baseline - Overall Sensitivity	
<b>Very High</b>	<b>Value/Susceptibility:</b> view is designed/has intentional association with surroundings; is recorded in published material; from a publicly accessible heritage asset/designated/promoted viewpoint; national/internationally designated right of way; protected/recognised in planning policy designation.
	<b>Examples:</b> may include views from residential properties, National Trails; promoted holiday road routes; designated countryside/landscape features with public access; visitors to heritage assets of national importance; Open Access Land.
<b>High</b>	<b>Value/Susceptibility:</b> view of clear value but may not be formally recognised e.g. framed view of scenic value or destination/summit views; inferred that it may have value for local residents; locally promoted route or PROW
	<b>Examples:</b> may include from recreational locations where there is some appreciation of the visual context/landscape e.g. golf, fishing; themed rights of way with a local association; National Trust land; panoramic viewpoints marked on OS maps; road routes promoted in tourist guides and/or for their scenic value.
<b>Medium</b>	<b>Value/Susceptibility:</b> view is not widely promoted or recorded in published sources; may be typical of those experienced by an identified receptor; minor road routes through rural/scenic areas.
	<b>Examples:</b> may include people engaged in outdoor sport not especially influenced by an appreciation of the wider landscape e.g. pitch sports; views from minor road routes passing through rural or scenic areas.
<b>Low</b>	<b>Value/Susceptibility:</b> view of clearly lesser value than similar views from nearby visual receptors that may be more accessible.
	<b>Examples:</b> may include major road routes; rail routes; receptor is at a place of work but visual surroundings have limited relevance.
<b>Very Low</b>	<b>Value/Susceptibility:</b> View may be affected by many landscape detractors and unlikely to be valued.
	<b>Examples:</b> may include people at their place of work, indoor recreational or leisure facilities or other locations where views of the wider landscape have little of no importance.

**Table EDP A1.3:** Defining the Magnitude of Change to the landscape and visual baseline.

<b>Magnitude of Change</b>	
<b>(Considers Scale of Proposal/Geographical Extent/Duration and Reversibility/Proportion)</b>	
<b>Very High</b>	<b>Landscape:</b> total loss/major alteration to key receptors/characteristics of the baseline; addition of elements that strongly conflict or integrate with the baseline.
	<b>Visual:</b> substantial change to the baseline, forming a new, defining focus and having a defining influence on the view.
<b>High</b>	<b>Landscape:</b> notable loss/alteration/addition to one or more key receptors/characteristics of the baseline; or, addition of prominent conflicting elements.
	<b>Visual:</b> additions are clearly noticeable and part of the view would be fundamentally altered.
<b>Medium</b>	<b>Landscape:</b> partial loss/alteration to one or more key receptors/characteristics; Addition of elements that are evident but do not necessarily conflict with the key characteristics of the existing landscape.
	<b>Visual:</b> the proposed development will form a new and recognisable element within the view which is likely to be recognised by the receptor.
<b>Low</b>	<b>Landscape:</b> minor loss or alteration to one or more key landscape receptors/characteristics; Additional elements may not be uncharacteristic within existing landscape.
	<b>Visual:</b> proposed development will form a minor constituent of the view being partially visible or at sufficient distance to be a small component.
<b>Very Low</b>	<b>Landscape:</b> barely discernible loss or alteration to key components; addition of elements not uncharacteristic within the existing landscape.
	<b>Visual:</b> proposed development will form a barely noticeable component of the view, and the view whilst slightly altered would be similar to the baseline.
<b>Imperceptible</b>	<i>In some circumstances, changes at representative viewpoints or receptors will be lower than 'Very Low' and changes will be described as 'Imperceptible'. This will lead to negligible effects.</i>

**Table EDP A1.4:** Determining the Predicted Levels of Effects to the landscape and visual baseline.

<b>Overall Sensitivity</b>	<b>Overall Magnitude of Change</b>				
	<b>Very High</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Very Low</b>
<b>Very High</b>	Substantial	Major	Major/- Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor
<b>High</b>	Major	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Minor
<b>Medium</b>	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/- Minor	Minor	Minor/ Negligible
<b>Low</b>	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Minor	Minor/ Negligible	Negligible
<b>Very Low</b>	Moderate/ Minor	Minor	Minor/- Negligible	Negligible	Negligible/ None

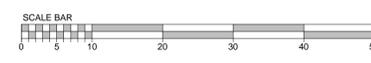
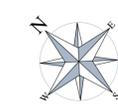
**Table EDP A1.5:** Definition of Effects.

<b>Definition of Effects</b>	
<b>Substantial:</b>	Effects which are in complete variance to the baseline landscape resource or visual amenity.
<b>Major:</b>	Effects which result in noticeable and fundamental alterations to the landscape resource or visual amenity.
<b>Moderate:</b>	Effects which result in noticeable but non-fundamental alterations to the baseline landscape resource or visual amenity.
<b>Minor:</b>	Effects which result in slight alterations to the landscape resource or visual amenity.
<b>Negligible:</b>	Effects which result in barely perceptible alterations to the landscape resource or visual amenity.
<b>None:</b>	No detectable alteration to the landscape resource or visual amenity.
<b>Consequence:</b>	Effects can be positive, adverse or neutral i.e. if no change arises
<b>Duration:</b>	Long term (20+ years); Medium-long term (10-20 years); Medium term (5-10 years); Short term (1 – 5 years); Temporary (>12 months); Construction.



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**Appendix EDP 2**  
**Site Layout (Drawing No. TP-01; Rev B; Hammond Architects Ltd)**



House Type Schedule					
House Code	Net Floor Area (ft²)	Number of Bedrooms	House Type Name	Number of Units	Total Net Area of Each Unit (ft²)
<b>Social Rented Units</b>					
211	545	1	Ground Floor Flat	3	1635
211	595	1	First Floor Flat	3	1785
CAM	668	2	Camara	6	4008
HY	927	3	Hyatt	3	2781
CAM	668	2	Camara	4	2672
HY	927	3	Hyatt	7	6489
ROCH	927	3	Rochester	10	9270
BU	944	3	Burnaby	8	7552
SH	1192	4	Shelby	12	14304
ROX	1354	4	Rowbury	11	14894
TH	1412	4	Thornbury	9	12708
<b>Total No. of Units on Site &amp; Total Net Area (ft²)</b>				<b>76</b>	<b>78098</b>

- Site Key**
- 1.8m High Close Board Fence
  - 1.8m High Brick Screen Wall
  - 1.8m Timber Gate
  - 1.2m High Post & Three Rail Fence
  - Bin collection Point
  - Private parking space
  - Proposed Trees & Planting (refer to landscape architects information)
  - Existing Trees & Hedgerows
  - Existing Hedgerow Removed
- Affordable Units**
- Affordable Rent Units (6 units)
  - Low Cost Home Ownership Units (9 Units)



REV.	DESCRIPTION	DATE
B	Affordable 211 units revised.	05.09.18
A	Plots 15/16 swapped with plots 17/18 to avoid existing trees. Plots 17 & 18 brought forward slightly. Proposed planting levels added.	24.08.18

CLIENT  
**Lewis Homes**

JOB TITLE  
**Woodlands Green**

DRAWING TITLE  
**Site Layout**

SCALE @ A1	DATE	DRAWN BY
1:500	July '18	RW
JOB NO.	DRAWING NO.	REVISION
1796	TP-01	B



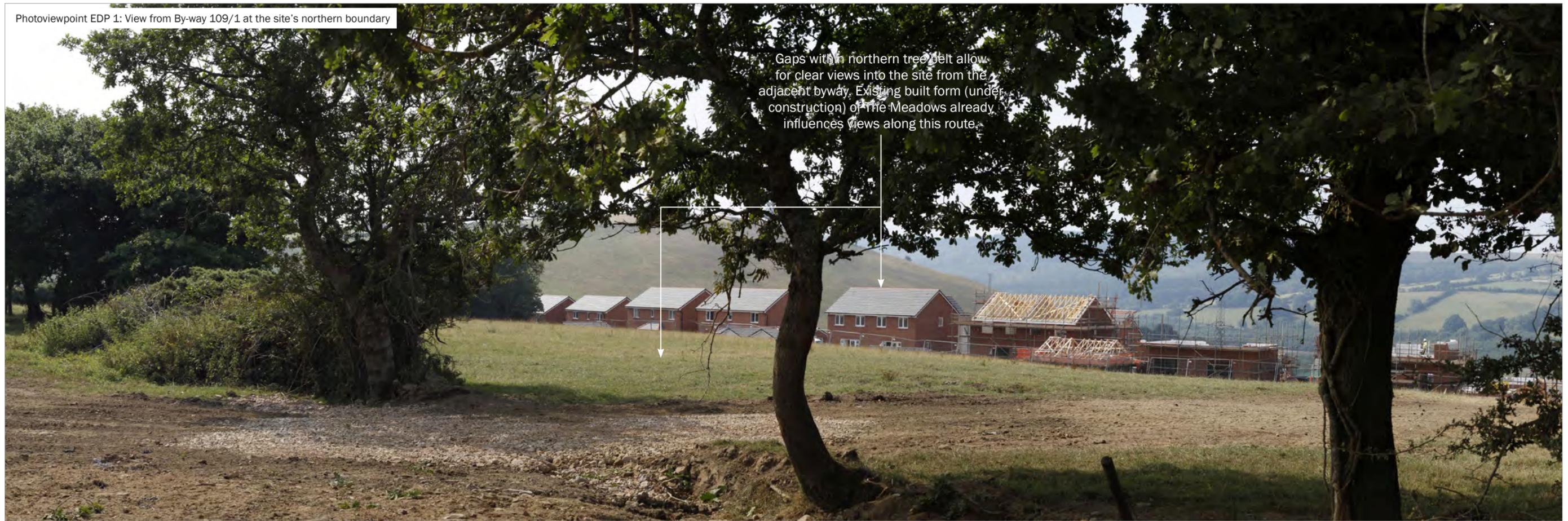
© Hammond Architectural Limited 2018  
Figured dimensions must be taken in preference to scaled dimensions and any discrepancies are to be referred to Hammond Architectural Ltd. Contractors, subcontractors and suppliers must verify all dimensions on site before commencing any work or making any workshop drawings.



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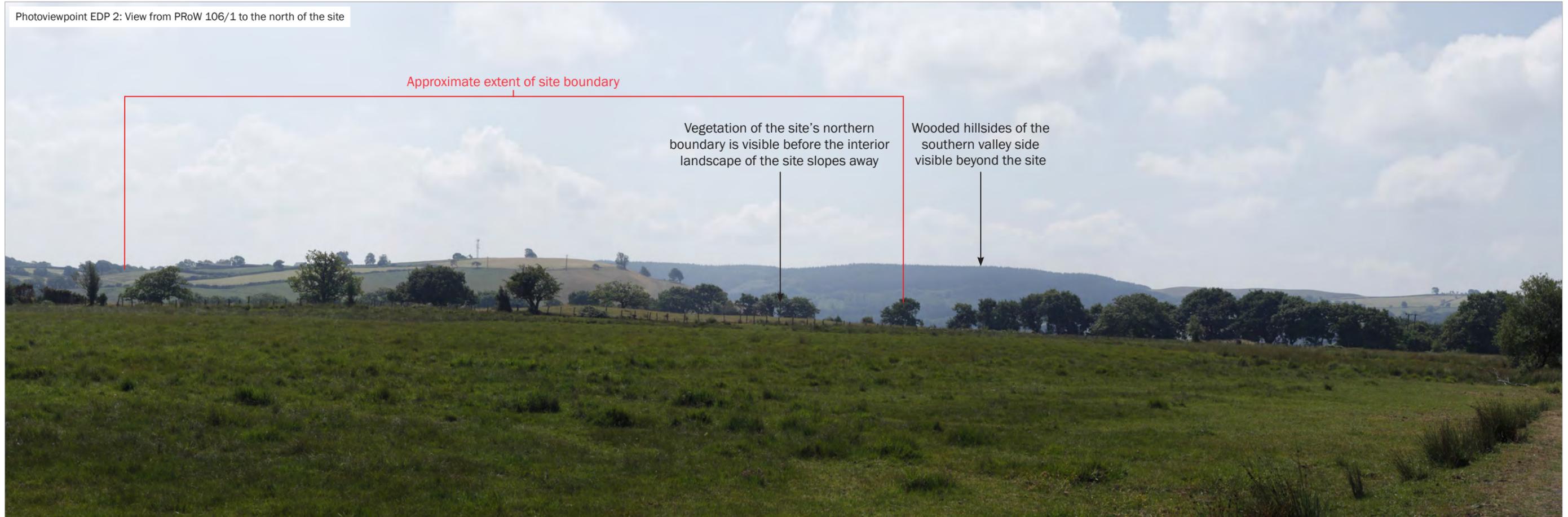
**Photoviewpoints  
(edp4986/d004a 24 September 2018 PD/EB)**

Photoviewpoint EDP 1: View from By-way 109/1 at the site's northern boundary



Gaps within northern tree belt allow for clear views into the site from the adjacent byway. Existing built form (under construction) of The Meadows already influences views along this route.

Photoviewpoint EDP 2: View from PRoW 106/1 to the north of the site



Approximate extent of site boundary

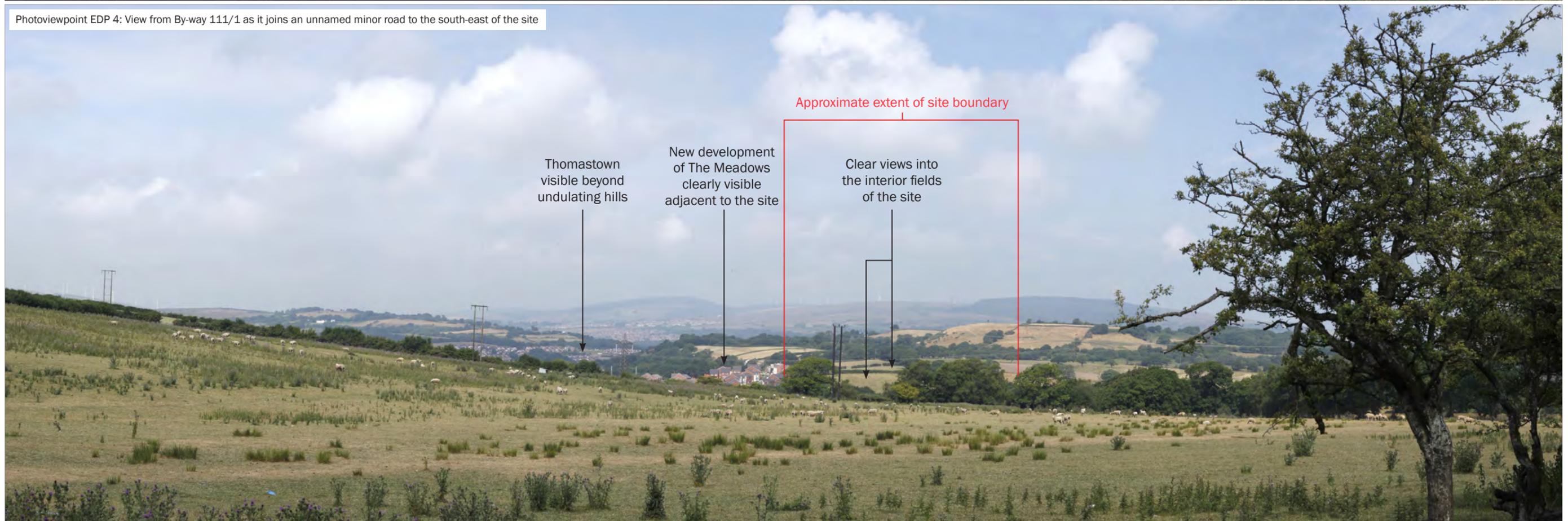
Vegetation of the site's northern boundary is visible before the interior landscape of the site slopes away

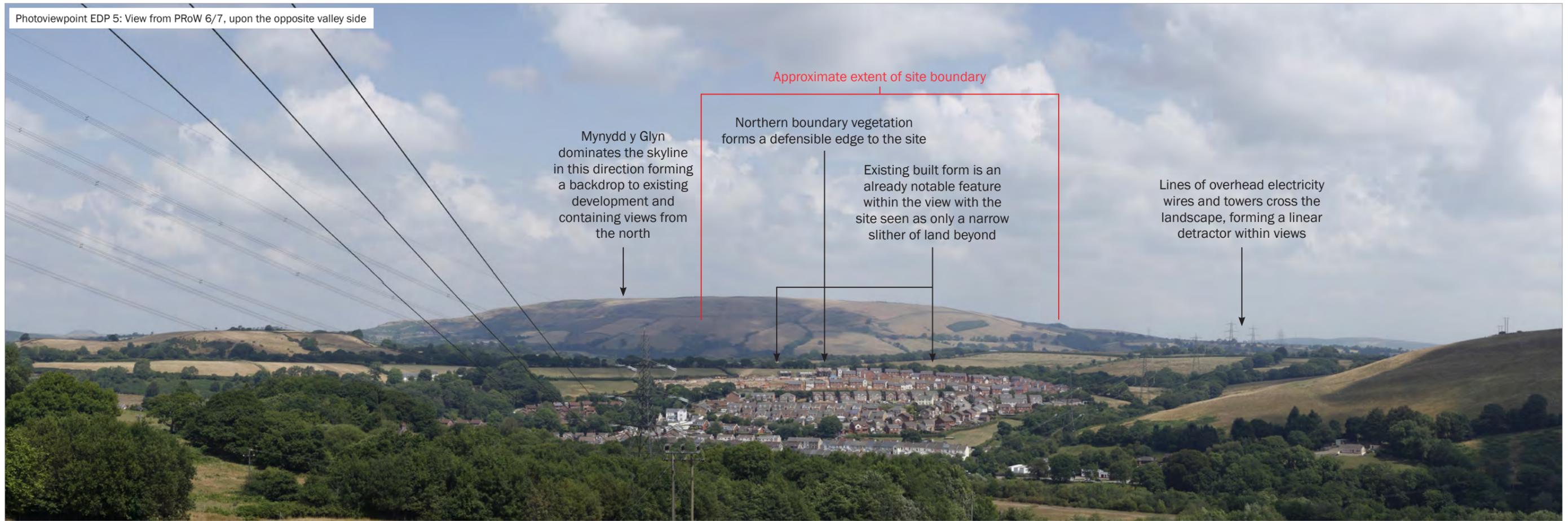
Wooded hillsides of the southern valley side visible beyond the site

Photoviewpoint EDP 3: View from Pantybrad (minor road) near its junction with PRoW 110/1



Photoviewpoint EDP 4: View from By-way 111/1 as it joins an unnamed minor road to the south-east of the site





Mynydd y Glyn dominates the skyline in this direction forming a backdrop to existing development and containing views from the north

Approximate extent of site boundary

Northern boundary vegetation forms a defensible edge to the site

Existing built form is an already notable feature within the view with the site seen as only a narrow slither of land beyond

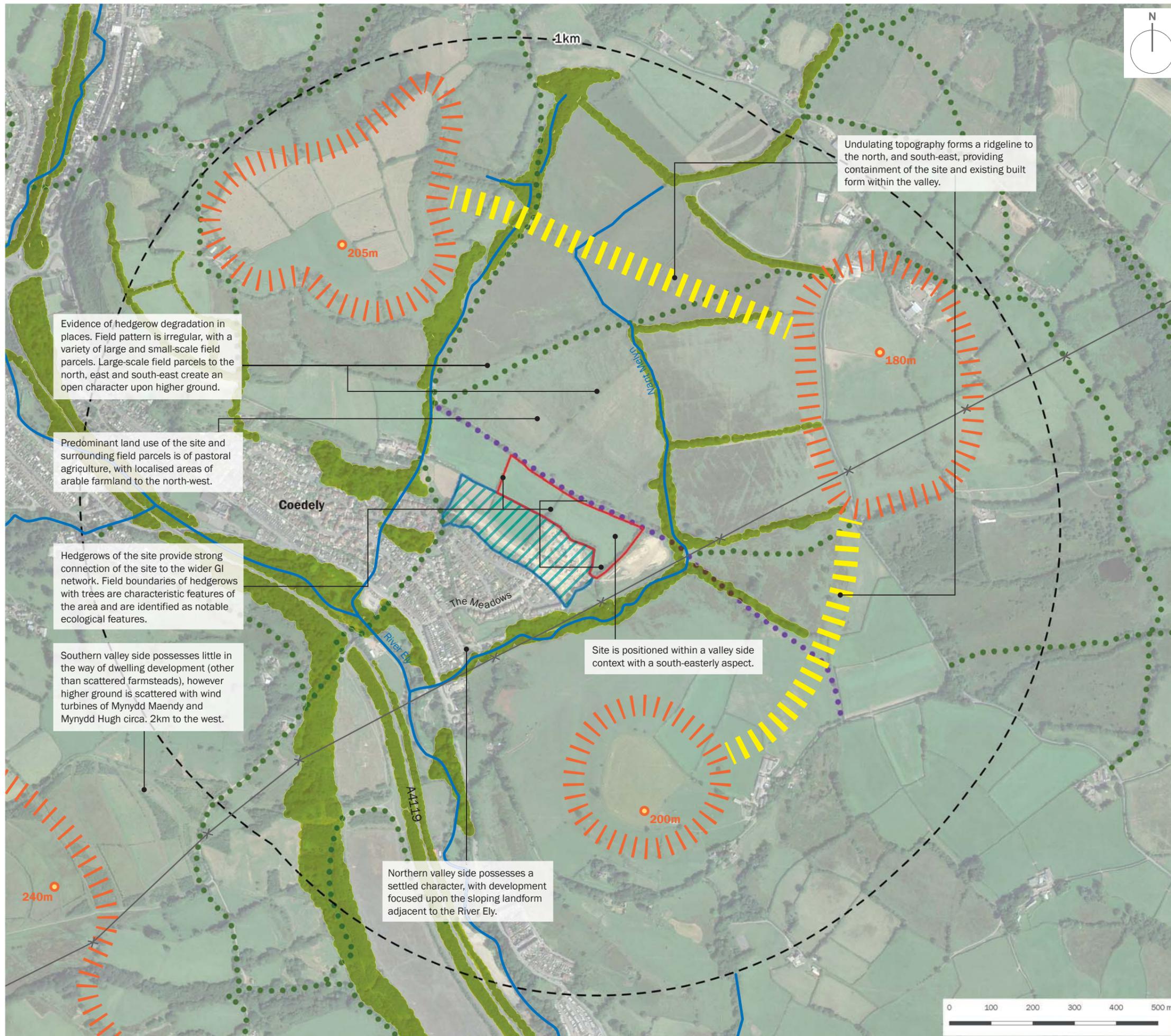
Lines of overhead electricity wires and towers cross the landscape, forming a linear detractor within views

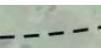


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## Plans

- Plan EDP 1** Site Character and Context  
(edp4896/d002a 24 September PD/EB)
  
- Plan EDP 2** Findings of EDP's Visual Appraisal  
(edp4896/d003a 24 September 2018 PD/EB)



-  Site Boundary
-  Development Under Construction (Planning Ref: IS/1460/16)
-  Range Rings (1km)
-  Tree Belts/Hedgerows with Trees
-  High Ground and High Point
-  Ridgeline
-  Watercourses
-  Overhead Powerlines and Towers
-  Public Right of Way
-  Public Right of Way (Byway)

client  
**Lewis Homes**

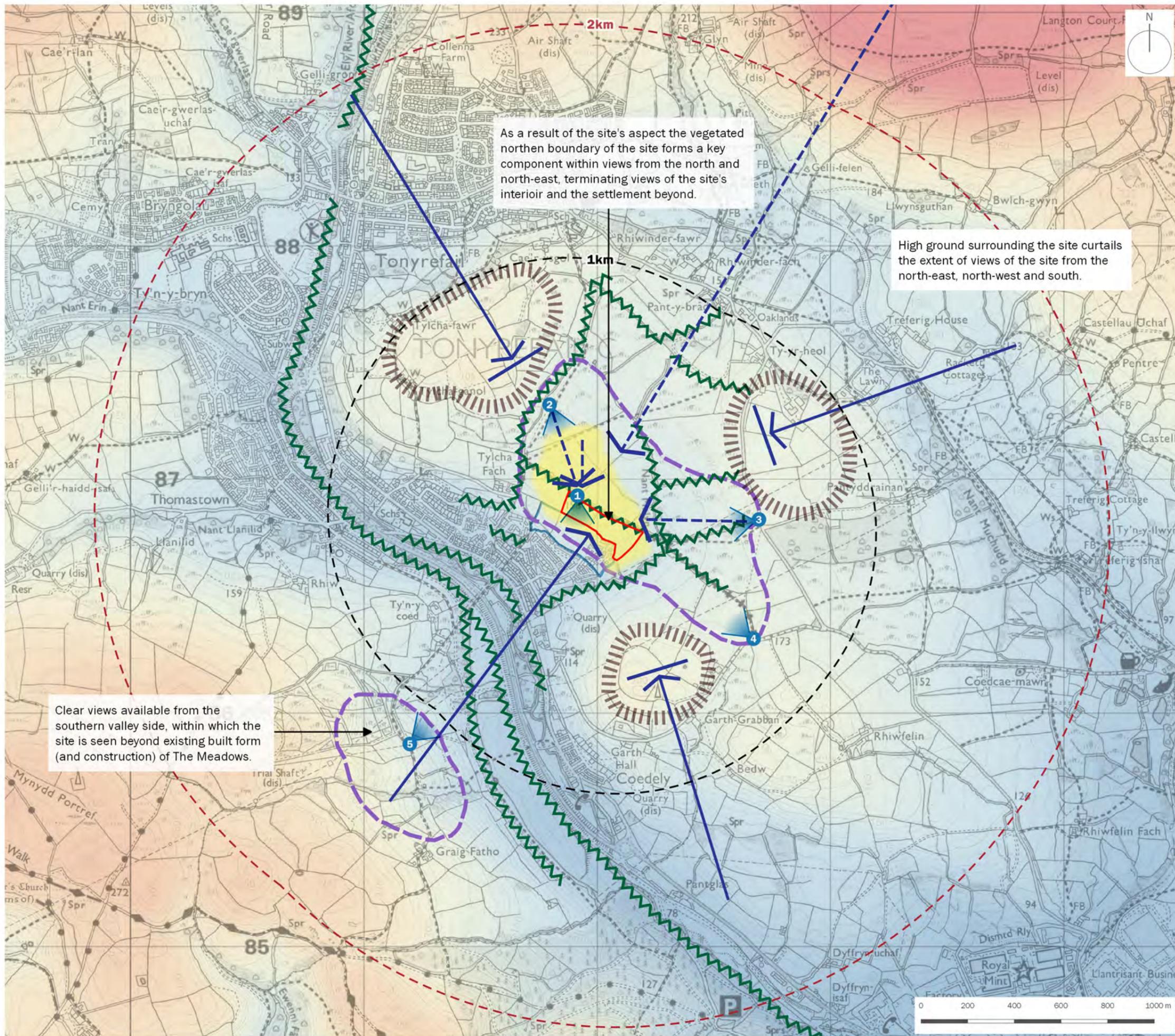
project title  
**Woodlands Green, Coedely**

drawing title  
**Plan EDP 1: Site Character and Context**

date 24 SEPTEMBER 2018 drawn by PD  
drawing number edp4896\_d002a checked EB  
scale Refer to scale bar QA GY



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Cirencester 01285 740427 Cardiff 02921 671900 Shrewsbury 01939 211190



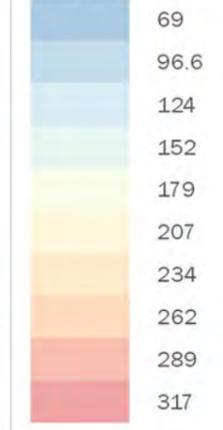
As a result of the site's aspect the vegetated northern boundary of the site forms a key component within views from the north and north-east, terminating views of the site's interior and the settlement beyond.

High ground surrounding the site curtails the extent of views of the site from the north-east, north-west and south.

Clear views available from the southern valley side, within which the site is seen beyond existing built form (and construction) of The Meadows.

- Site Boundary
- Range Rings (at 1km intervals)
- 2km Detailed Study Area
- Zone of Primary Visibility
- Zone of Visibility
- High Ground
- Photoviewpoint Locations
- Tree/Vegetation Cover
- Clear Views
- Curtailed Views
- Glimpsed Views

Topography (metres aOD)



client	Lewis Homes	
project title	Woodlands Green, Coedely	
drawing title	Plan EDP 2: Findings of EDP's Visual Appraisal	
date	24 SEPTEMBER 2018	drawn by PD
drawing number	edp4896_d003a	checked EB
scale	Refer to scale bar	QA GY



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