

LAND EAST OF LLANRWST ROAD, GYFFIN, CONWY

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

For

**BEECH DEVELOPMENTS (NW) Ltd.
on behalf of
ADRA (TAI) Cyf.**

December 2025

3337/LVA

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1 Llys Clwyd, Cwrt Y Dderwen, Ffordd Celyn, Ruthin, Denbighshire LL15 1NJ
email: rml@rmlconsult.com web: www.rmlconsult.com
Tel: +44(0)1824 704366
Registered in England and Wales No. 1848683 VAT Reg No. 401 424 313



LAND AT LLANRWST ROAD, CONWY· Landscape and Visual Appraisal

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Landscape and Visual Appraisal

This is a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) that describes the likely landscape and visual effects of a proposed residential development on land east of Llanrwst Road near to Gyffin in Conwy. The development proposals are for 95 No. affordable homes and associated infrastructure on a greenfield site land currently used for grazing sheep and horses off the B5106.

1.2 Legislation and Policy Framework

A review of topic specific published landscape policies has been carried out to inform this appraisal. The following section summarises the relevant legislation and policy context.

Relevant Legislation

The following legislation, including subsequent amendments, is relevant to the project:

- a) The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000.
- b) Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
- c) The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.
- d) Well-Being of Future Generations Act 2015.
- e) Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

National Planning Policy

The current land use planning policies for the Welsh Government are set out in Planning Policy Wales Edition 12 (February 2024)¹. The principal chapter of relevance to LVA is Chapter 6 *Distinctive and Natural Places*, which includes policies relating to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity, which must be considered alongside the need to meet social and economic objectives and the need of local communities.

The LANDMAP information system is formally recognised in Planning Policy Wales (PPW) as the starting point for landscape assessment in Wales. LANDMAP provides baseline information for all of the landscapes of Wales.

PPW is supplemented by a series of topic based Technical Advice Notes (TANs). TANs relevant to this project are presented in Table 1.

¹ <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2024-07/planning-policy-wales-edition-12.pdf>

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Table 1 Relevant TANs

TAN	SUMMARY
TAN 12 DESIGN	Local Planning Authorities are required to evaluate the character of the landscape, considering its visual and sensory attributes. It is important to consider this landscape character when creating a strong and cohesive planning framework. This approach aims to ensure that developments are located in areas that can best support them, which helps to minimize negative impacts and preserve landscape diversity. TAN 12 recommends utilizing LANDMAP to guide decisions on the most suitable locations for development from a landscape perspective.
TAN 16 SPORT, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE	Provides advice in making provision for informal open spaces in urban and rural areas.

Procedural guidance relevant to LVA is provided in Welsh Government Circulars:

- Circular 5/93 *Public Rights of Way* (Department of the Environment, Welsh Office 1993).
- Circular 60/96 Planning and the Historic Environment: Archaeology (Welsh Office 1996).
- Circular 30/01 *Countryside and Rights of Way Act* (National Assembly for Wales 2000).

*Local Planning Policy***Local development plan**

Conwy County Borough Council (CCBC) adopted the *Conwy Local Development Plan (2007-2022)* in October 2013, which will be considered within this report.

Table 2 Relevant policies

POLICY	SUMMARY
STRATEGIC POLICY NTE/1	The Natural Environment The Council will seek to regulate development so as to conserve and, where possible, enhance the Plan Area's natural environment, countryside and coastline. The Plan Area's landscapes are safeguarded through protection and enhancement of designated sites and seeking to minimise the loss of good to moderate quality agricultural land to new development.
POLICY NTE/4	The Landscape and Protecting Special Landscape Areas Conwy Valley is designated as a Special Landscape Area (SLA). To protect Special Landscape Areas, development proposals must carefully consider the area's character to minimize impact. Development is permitted only if it integrates well with the landscape. Some proposals may require a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment to assess potential effects. All proposals will be evaluated based on Development Principles and policies focused on safeguarding the environment and landscape character.

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POLICY	SUMMARY
STRATEGIC POLICY CTH/1	Cultural Heritage The Council is committed to protecting and, where appropriate, enhancing its cultural and heritage assets by ensuring that new development will not have a significant adverse impact upon heritage assets and seeking to preserve and, where appropriate, enhance conservation areas, Conwy World Heritage Site, historic landscapes, parks and gardens, listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments and other areas of archaeological importance.
POLICY CTH/2	Development Affecting Heritage Assets Development proposals which affect a heritage asset and/or its setting, shall preserve or, where appropriate, enhance that asset.

Background Papers and Supplementary planning guidance

Background Papers (BP) provide an evidence base to set out reasoning and justification for the formulation of policies in the Local Development Plan (LDP). Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) documents provide detailed advice on a range of development issues and topics to support the use of the adopted LDP.

Table 3 Relevant BPs/SPGs

BP/SPG	SUMMARY
BP27	Special Landscape Areas Provides an overview of processes involved in identifying the SLAs using LANDMAP within the Plan Area and the reasoning and justification for the criteria set out in Policy NTE/4 of the LDP. The Conwy Valley SLA is recognized as a locally significant and notable for its quality and concentration. It faces challenges from occasional rural development, particularly from inadequately located static caravan and chalet projects. This area serves as a crucial entry point to Eryri National Park, especially along the Conwy Valley. It is essential to maintain the views and handle the landscape with care to prevent any deterioration of its current attributes and scenic perspectives.
SPG40	Trees and Development Trees and hedgerows form an important part of the Plan Area's environment and in the delivery of sustainable development, the retention and the planting of new trees and hedges is crucial. Development that damages or improperly removes significant trees and hedgerows is generally not allowed. The design process should focus on planting new trees with appropriate species and locations while ensuring future maintenance. It is crucial to protect valuable existing trees and hedgerows, especially those that are mature, visually appealing, or ecologically and historically significant. If any trees or hedgerows are removed, new plantings must at least match the number or canopy cover lost.

2 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction to the LVA Methodology

The LVA has been carried out in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Third Edition 2013) (GLVIA3), published by the Landscape Institute (LI) and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA).

GLVIA3 defines Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment as a:

‘...tool used to identify and assess the significance of, and the effects of change resulting from development on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people’s views and visual amenity.’

GLVIA3 refers to the European Landscape Convention (ELC) and its definition of a landscape:

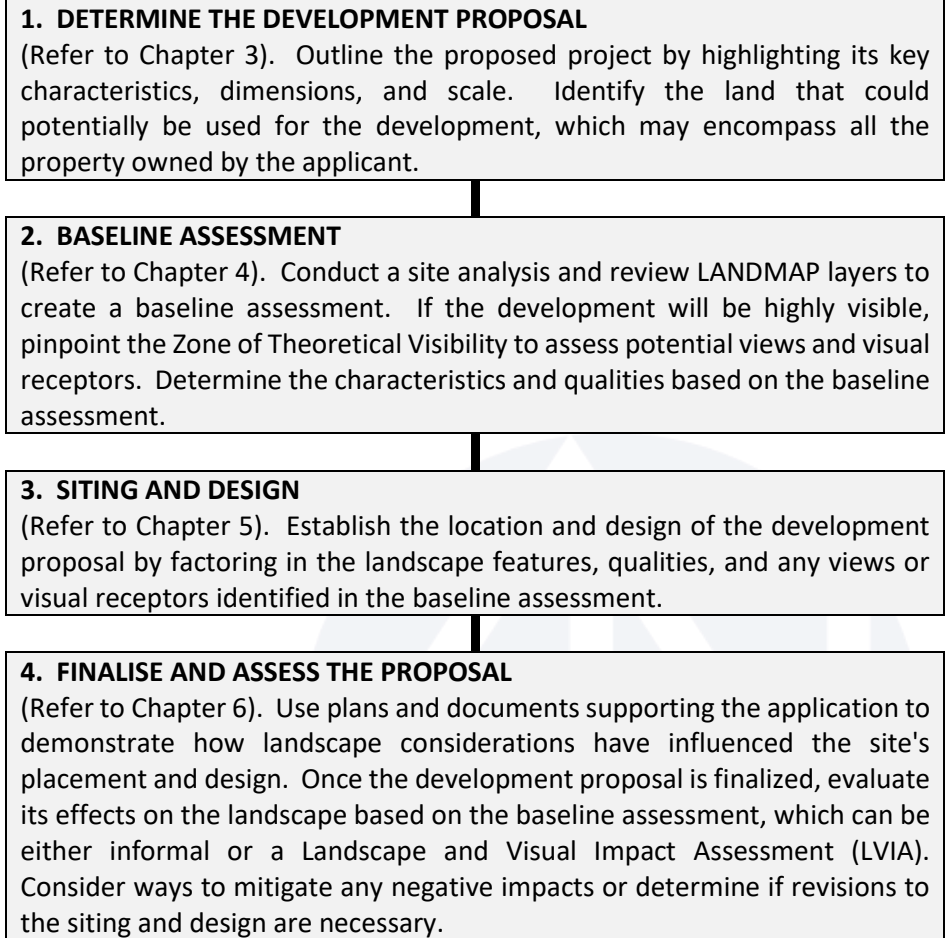
‘Landscape is an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.’

LVA may be carried out formally as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), or informally as is the case here in this report, as a contribution to the appraisal of development proposals and planning applications. The principles and processes of LVIA can be used to assist in the appraisal of development and changes in land use that fall outside of the requirements of the EIA Directive and Regulations.

The purpose of this LVA is to carry out an assessment of the landscape and visual baseline, site analysis, development design, and then an assessment of the

proposal. The methodology for this appraisal is set out in Appendix A and summarised in Table 4.

Table 4 Steps in LVA

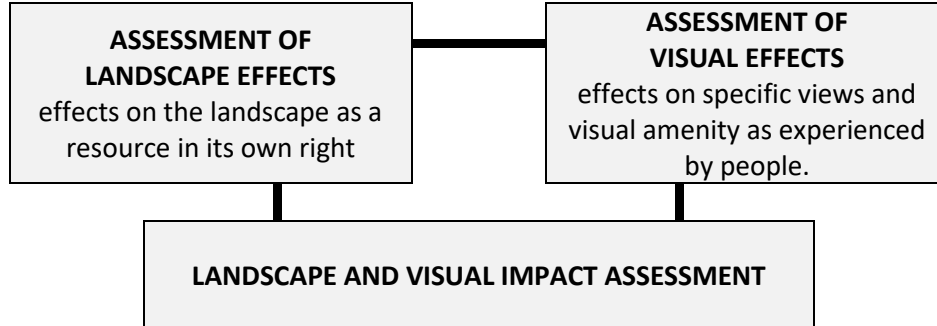


An assessment of the landscape and visual baseline will provide a record at a fixed point in time that potential impacts can be assessed against. It is generally accepted that the two criteria that combine to determine the significance of effect are the scale or magnitude of change, and the sensitivity of the receptor (be it a receiving landscape or people).

The appraisal of landscape and visual effects are separate but related processes. They are distinguished as:

- a) Landscape - effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right.
- b) Visual – effects on specific views and visual amenity as experienced by people.

Table 5 Landscape and visual difference/relation



3 DETERMINING THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

3.1 Description of the Development

Refer to Figure 1

Beech Developments (NW) Ltd (the Applicant) are acting on behalf of Adra (Tai) Cyf, a North Wales housing association providing quality, energy efficient homes.

The development proposals for the site at Llanrwst Road is for 95 affordable homes. House types would be a mixture of detached, semi-detached, terrace and apartment block units with 1 to 5 bedrooms (90 of the dwellings would be 1-3 bedroom). The majority of units would be two-storey (there is 1 single-storey unit that would accommodate 2 dwellings as a semi-detached bungalow).

Vehicular access would be created from the B5106 Llanrwst Road opposite the property Plas Glorian. The main spine road would branch into a series of cul-de-sacs access groups of dwellings. Off-street parking would be provided as bays in front of and adjacent to dwellings, or as parking courts where there is room.

An active-travel route would be provided connecting the main access with Bryn-Seiri Road through Isgoed, utilising the location of an existing field access. This would provide an alternative to existing pedestrians using Llanrwst Road where there is no separate footpath.

3.2 Size and Scale

The application site boundary measures about 5.31 ha. Of this, approximately 2.8 ha would be developed as residential dwelling space and access, with the remainder being retained and enhanced for amenity use and biodiversity benefits.

3.3 Landform

Refer to Figure 2

The proposal site occupies sloping ground to the north-western side of a solitary hill located between the Afon Gyffin and Afon Conwy valleys. The hill has a broad north-south ridge with outcrops and reaches an elevation of about 210 m Above Ordnance Datum (mAOD). The ground levels at the site range from about 22 m at the field access off Isgoed in the northernmost point to about 78 m near to the woodland edge at the southernmost point. The slope faces north-westward towards a small watercourse in a wooded area that divides the site from Llanrwst Road. Views of Conwy Town walls, Mount Pleasant residential areas, the uplands to the west of the Henryrd community and Conwy Mountain, are visible from the higher parts of the site.

3.4 Access

Refer to Figure 1

The main access to the residential development would be directly from Llanrwst Road (SH 77650 76480). This spine road would be 5.5 m wide and surfaced with tarmac. Branches from the spine road would be of the same width and be surfaced with tarmac and permeable concrete block paving.

Proposed road profiles generally follow natural ground levels, but there are locations where the road surface would be 2-3 m above or below natural ground to achieve an adoptable road standard. In these locations graded slopes would be required to tie-in the road edge/verge with the surrounding ground. Where there is insufficient room for grading the ground would be retained with a proprietary wall system.

The active-travel path would be 3 m wide and connect Llanrwst Road to Isgod and follow the site's north-western boundary. There would also be a 2 m wide footpath next to roads where directly accessed by dwellings.

3.5 Existing Vegetation

Refer to Figure 3

The site occupies three pastoral fields.

The lower field is located adjacent to residential areas in Gyffin. Its boundaries include a small watercourse with mature trees along the north-western edge, a mixture of native and ornamental trees along the north-eastern side overlooked by nearby houses, and a watercourse originating from a well near Bryn Seiri Farm. The south-eastern boundary consists of Bryn Seiri Road, grazed oak woodland, and dense gorse scrub, while the south-western boundary is marked by a remnant hedge and mature oak trees that separate it from the middle field.

The middle field's south-eastern boundary is formed by the continuation of the oak woodland. The south-western boundary is a mechanically clipped stockproof hedge with mature oak and sycamore trees that forms the boundary with the upper field. The north-western boundary is formed of a steep bank

with mature oak, beech, ash and sycamore trees. Water springs at the toe of this bank and drains into the small watercourse.

The upper field has been quartered into paddocks, and the proposed development would occupy only part of the two northernmost. The paddocks are divided by stockproof fencing. The south-eastern boundary is a continuation of the grazed oak woodland. The north-western boundary is formed from post and rail fence where it shares its boundary with the access to Pen-y-Bryn Farm, and a mechanically clipped hedge and ditch where it shares its boundary with Llanrwst Road. A solitary veteran oak tree stands next to the hedge to the field side of the ditch.

The lower field is a semi-improved pasture grassland. The herbal ley is not intensively grazed and is allowed to develop into hay. The middle field is also a semi-improved pasture but slightly more intensively grazed by sheep. The upper field paddocks are more intensively grazed by horses and sheep.

The proposed development would involve the removal of a section of remnant hedgerow between the lower and middle field, the removal of a section of mechanically clipped hedge and sycamore trees between the middle and upper field and a section of mechanically clipped hedge between the upper field and Llanrwst Road. The layout has been designed to retain and protect the veteran oak tree.

The landcover of the surrounding area south of Conwy and Gyffin is a mosaic of predominantly pastoral farmland with mechanically clipped hedge boundaries, blocks of semi-natural deciduous woodland and mixed plantations, scattered rural settlements and farms, gorse scrub on hilltops and holiday park complexes.



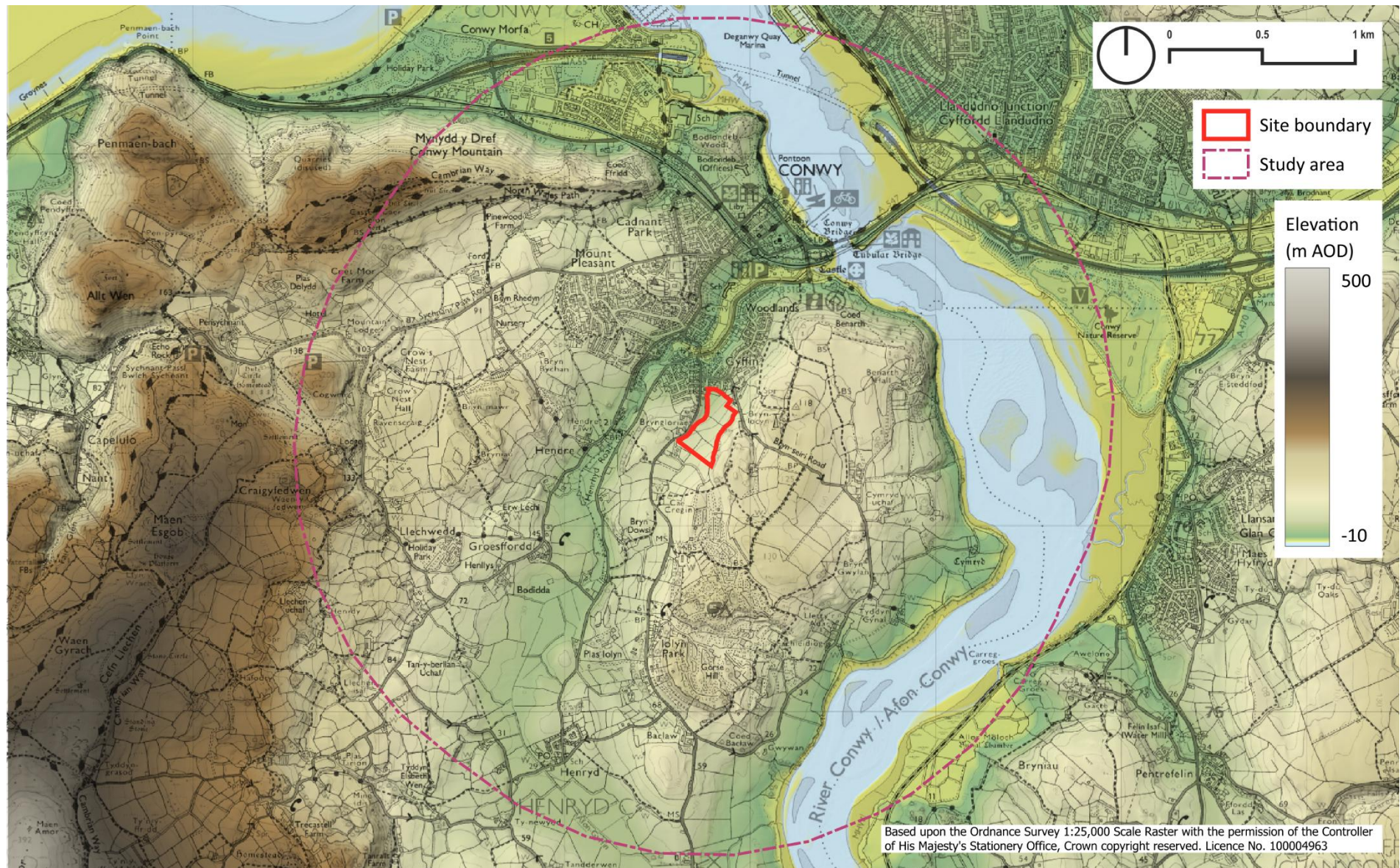


Figure 2 Landform



Figure 3 Landcover

4 BASELINE ASSESSMENT

4.1 Landscape Baseline

The first step in the assessment of landscape effects is to establish the baseline landscape condition. The information collated forms the basis for the assessment. The following are considered:

- a) Review of statutory and non-statutory designated landscapes.
- b) National and local character area assessment including LANDMAP.
- c) Description of landform and surface elements that contribute to the character of the landscape.
- d) Establish a landscape value taking into consideration landscape designations, landscape quality and condition.
- e) Establish the susceptibility of the landscape to the change proposed.

The baseline landscape is defined as that which exists immediately before the implementation of the proposal, together with any other consented or proposed developments that would be implemented before the projected completion of this proposal.

Landscape Designations

Refer to Figure 4

Eryri National Park

The proposal site is about 1 km from Eryri National Park at its closest point along Sychnant Pass Road. This extensive rural upland area is home to notable mountain ranges, including the Wyddfa massif and Carneddau mountain range,

which is the tallest peak in both England and Wales. The region includes 15 mountain peaks in Wales that exceed 3,000 feet, alongside various glacial features like ridges, lakes, bogs, rivers, and waterfalls. The steep landscape creates travel difficulties, with the main routes generally traversing valley floors and high passes. Additionally, the area is geologically diverse and holds historical importance in the advancement of geology as a scientific field.

Landscape Character and Context.

National Landscape Character Areas (NLCA)

The proposal site is located within NLCA07 Conwy Valley². It serves as a natural boundary between northeastern and northwestern Wales. This valley, shaped by glacial activity and faults, features extensive flood plains and estuary zones. The southernmost section of the valley feels enclosed by the rising land, particularly the steep, wooded slopes of Eryri to the west, where several small rivers flow through narrow gorges. The central part of the estuary meanders leisurely past fertile pastures and Bodnant estate, renowned for its gardens that attract many visitors. In contrast, the lower estuary is livelier, filled with boating activities, bordered on the west by the historic town of Conwy, home to a prominent Anglo-Norman castle (a UNESCO World Heritage Site), and on the east by the modern town of Deganwy. Despite the presence of towns like Conwy and Llanwrst and various villages, the region maintains a rural charm, characterized by lush hedgerows, green fields, and a striking mountain landscape, contributing to its picturesque quality.

² <https://cdn.cyfoethnaturiol.cymru/682558/nlca07-conwy-valley-description.pdf?rmode=pad&v=1d35c8cf7b6b740>

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Key characteristics include:

- a) A deep, major fault guided glaciated valley.
- b) Abrupt, steep, wooded edge adjacent to Eryri uplands.
- c) Rolling pastoral hills within a meandering estuary.
- d) Lowland pastures and meadows.
- e) Strategic transport corridor with historic road and railway bridges.
- f) Regular and irregular shaped fields bounded by hedges and stone walls.
- g) Conwy Castle and town walls World Heritage Site.
- h) Settlements to lower valley sides out of Afon Conwy flood plain.
- i) Contained valley creating natural north-south transport links.

The area is divided into three distinct sections, beginning in the south near Betws-y-Coed, where steep, wooded hills meet a broad, flat valley floor contrasting sharply with the rising Eryri mountains. Here, streams cascade from hanging valleys, and industrial features like hydro-electric pipelines coexist with the rural landscape. Moving north, the middle section presents a gentle, rolling valley characterized by an expansive inter-tidal estuary, which reveals mudflats at low tide, dotted with small villages and designed landscapes such as Bodnant gardens. The mountains of Eryri serve as a scenic backdrop throughout, while the estuary becomes more prominent as it nears its mouth at Conwy, where boating activities and urban development are prevalent. Conwy, known for its historic castle and beautiful vistas, contrasts with the more suburban development on the east bank, which is oriented towards North Wales' coastal resorts.

NLCA6 *Snowdonia*³ overlaps the study area. It is characterised as an extensive rural upland area largely overlaps with Eryri National Park. It features

prominent mountain ranges, including the Wyddfa massif, which is the highest peak in England and Wales. This region boasts Wales's 15 mountain peaks over 3,000 feet and various glacial features such as ridges, lakes, bogs, rivers, and waterfalls. The steep terrain poses travel challenges, with main routes typically following valley bottoms and high passes. Geologically diverse, the area has historical significance in the development of geology as a science.

Beyond its wild character, the area embodies the spirit of Welsh independence, with towns like Dolgellau and Bala reflecting its rich heritage. The Welsh language remains prevalent among residents. Blaenau Ffestiniog, a well-preserved Victorian town, originated during the industrial revolution due to slate demand, leaving marks from various mining activities. Hill farming and forestry predominantly cover non-mountainous land, with stone being the main building material. Today, the region is a popular tourist destination, with sites like Yr Wyddfa's summit attracting many visitors, especially in the summer.

Key characteristics include:

- a) Mountainous topography.
- b) Sharp ridges and high peaks.
- c) U-shaped glacial valleys and corries carved through mountains.
- d) Upland character to land cover elements.
- e) Substantial areas of moorland and blanket bog.
- f) Numerous rivers, lakes and waterfalls.
- g) Woodland fringed estuaries and sandy coasts.
- h) Prehistoric ritual and funerary sites.
- i) Deserted Iron Age, Roman, Medieval and Industrial settlements and field systems.

³ <https://cdn.cyfoethnaturiol.cymru/682556/nlca06-snowdonia-description.pdf?rmode=pad&v=1d35c8cd1b233d0>

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- j) Slate mining heritage.
- k) Copper, gold, zinc and manganese mining heritage.
- l) Sparsely populated with few large settlements.
- m) Transport routes limited by strongly undulating terrain.
- n) Highly picturesque and dramatic visual landscape.
- o) Stronghold of Welsh language and culture.
- p) Visited by thousands of tourists.

Eryri is renowned for its distinctive and dramatic landscapes, characterized by high, angular mountain peaks and a variety of geological, hydrological, and historical features. Visitors traverse the area along roads that wind through deep river valleys, high mountain passes, and picturesque coastal fringes, revealing a striking contrast between enclosed woodland and sandy estuaries. The region encompasses multiple mountain massifs, including the renowned Yr Wyddfa, and showcases diverse environments, from rugged peaks to tranquil forests like Gwydir. With over a hundred lakes, rushing rivers, and numerous waterfalls, the landscapes also bear marks of past industrial activities, particularly in places like Blaenau Ffestiniog and Corris. Despite its popularity as a tourist destination, many quiet areas remain, preserving traditional farming lifestyles amidst the area's natural beauty.

NLCA8 *North Wales Coast*⁴ also overlaps the study area. It is characterised by the limestone hills that line much of the northern coastline between the Great Orme and Point of Ayr. In the western part, these steep hills approach the coast, restricting flat land for seaside resorts and transport links, which have expanded into the hills. The central region sees the hills recede, allowing the Vale of Clwyd to extend to the sea, with the distinctive Clwydian Range to the

east, where the river flows between Rhyl and Towyn. This coastal area has been heavily developed for tourism, featuring Victorian resorts like Llandudno, Colwyn Bay, and Rhyl, along with country hotels and more casual holiday facilities. Historically popular with visitors from northwestern England, these seaside destinations continue to adapt to changing vacation trends. Inland, estates and wooded parks include Bodysgallen, Gloddaeth, Bodelwyddan, Kinmel, Gwyrch Castle, and Bodrhyddan. The Great Orme is noteworthy for its ancient significance; evidence of habitation dating back to the Upper Palaeolithic era and features historic Bronze Age copper mines that are now a tourist attraction.

Key characteristics include:

- a) Carboniferous hills and coastal headlands.
- b) Mouth of the Vale of Clwyd.
- c) Seaside resort towns.
- d) Steep sided backdrop to coastal towns.
- e) Generally, a man-made coastal edge.
- f) Limestone quarrying.
- g) Hinterland away from the coast.
- h) Ecologically important sites such as Great Orme.
- i) Archaeologically significant sites such as Great Orme.
- j) Strategic castles and historic parklands.
- k) Iconic image of historic Llandudno and its famed natural setting.

This vibrant coastal region blends bustling seaside developments with quieter areas, such as the undeveloped dunes at Gronant. Steep foothills of the Clwydian Hills south of Prestatyn offer panoramic views, while rocky limestone

⁴ <https://cdn.cyfoethnaturiol.cymru/682560/nlca08-north-wales-coast-description.pdf?rmode=pad&v=1d35c8d8794dae0>

hills restrict resort and transport developments to a narrow coastal corridor, including the A55 Expressway and the Chester and Holyhead railway. Llandudno exemplifies the unique character of the area with its historic seaside resort and dramatic limestone headlands, the Great Orme and Little Orme. Inland, the landscape contrasts sharply, featuring rolling hills, limestone outcrops, and small valleys that provide tranquillity and seclusion just a short distance from the coast. This region acts as a gateway to Wales, marking the transition from the urban surroundings of Merseyside to a distinctly Welsh landscape with the Vale of Clwyd and Eryri in the distance.

National Marine Character Areas (NMCA)

The tidal zone of the Conwy Estuary is part of NMCA3 Red Wharf and Conwy Bays⁵. This NMCA extends from Great Orme's Head in the east to Moelfre headland on Anglesey's eastern coast in the west. It encompasses Conwy, Red Wharf, and Dulas Bays, as well as the tidal sections of Afon Conwy. The offshore boundaries are determined by water depth (up to 30 m) and sediment geology, including important sand banks. The Isle of Anglesey provides shelter and influences the NMCA's offshore limits, which conclude at the entrance of the Menai Strait (NMCA10). Additionally, the NMCA contains marine components of several local Anglesey Special Conservation Areas, including Conwy Estuary, Conwy Bay, Traeth Lafan, Penmon, Red Wharf Bay to Moelfre, and Dulas Bay.

Key characteristics include:

- a) Comprise sand flats punctuated by prominent cliffs and headlands.
- b) Extensive intertidal area.

- c) North-easterly aspect of the bays in the west.
- d) Varied coastal geology of cliffs and beaches.
- e) Limestone cliffs host a variety seabird.
- f) Mosaic of seabed types.
- g) Significant designated area within Liverpool Bay Special Protection Area and Menai and Conwy Bay Special Area of Conservation.
- h) Sheltered bays
- i) Long history of human occupation.
- j) 12th Century castles of King Edward I at Beaumaris and Conwy.
- k) Nationally important Bronze Age copper workings at Great Orme.
- l) A number of shipwrecks.
- m) Popular tourist destination.
- n) Wales Coast Path, AONB and National Park designation.
- o) Puffin Island.
- p) Telford's suspension bridge and Stephenson's tubular rail bridge.

Eryri National Park's dramatic mountains and foothills create a striking landscape for the NMCA, enhancing the sense of place and providing impressive views from both the mainland and Anglesey across Conwy Bay. Key visual features include the steep headlands at Great Orme, Penmaen-bach, and Penmaen Mawr, as well as the intricate patterns of intertidal areas visible at low tide. Puffin Island distinctly separates the eastern and western bays, contributing to the area's busy seascape filled with activities like sailing and jet skiing, particularly in summer. Despite these recreational pursuits and the presence of offshore wind farms, some regions maintain a sense of wildness and remoteness. Visual landmarks such as radio masts and church spires assist navigators on the water, while the area's rich heritage has long inspired artists,

⁵ https://cdn.cyfoethnaturiol.cymru/674481/mca-03-red-wharf-and-conwy-bays_final.pdf?rmode=pad&v=1d330922fbc3ba0

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resulting in notable landscape paintings. Overall, the NMCA offers a complex aesthetic appeal characterized by rugged textures, unique landforms, and dynamic environmental interactions.

LANDMAP

(Refer to Appendix B).

LANDMAP is an all-Wales landscape baseline resource administered by National Resources Wales. It contains records and evaluations of landscape characteristics, qualities and influences on the landscape in a nationally consistent data set. It is composed of five aspect layers:

- a) Geological Landscape
- b) Landscape Habitats
- c) Visual and Sensory
- d) Historic Landscape
- e) Cultural Landscape Services.

LANDMAP aspect areas that overlap the study area are presented in Appendix B. Table 6 presents the character areas in which the proposal site resides.

Table 6 LANDMAP aspect layers.

ASPECT	UNIQUE ID	NAME	REGION	CLASSIFICATION
GEOLOGICAL LANDSCAPE	CNW-GL-028	Gyffin	Conwy CBC	Undulating lowland hill terrain
LANDSCAPE HABITATS	CNW-LH-031	Henryd grasslands	Conwy CBC	Improved grassland

ASPECT	UNIQUE ID	NAME	REGION	CLASSIFICATION
VISUAL AND SENSORY	CNW-VS-067	Conwy valley sides and hills	Conwy CBC	Hill and lower plateau mosaic
HISTORIC LANDSCAPE	CNW-HL-062	Groesffordd and Iolyn	Conwy CBC	Irregular fieldscapes
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE SERVICES	CNW-CLS-098	Conwy valley sides and hills	Conwy CBC	Hill and lower plateau mosaic

LANDMAP evaluations reflect the area's designation as a Special Landscape Area and protected status of adjacent areas. They are generally positive with scores of moderate to outstanding accorded across characteristics such as geological rarity, habitat diversity, and scenic quality.

Conwy LDP 2007-2022 - Special Landscape Areas (August 2012)
(Refer to Appendix C)

The background paper is part of a series of documents that support the Revised Deposit Local Development Plan (LDP). It explains how the Council developed its policies based on the available evidence at that time. Specifically, this background paper presents the reasoning and justification for the designations of Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) outlined in Policy NTE/5. Additionally, it provides an overview of the processes used to identify the SLAs through LANDMAP within the Plan Area, as well as the rationale for the criteria established in Policy NTE/5 of the LDP.

The proposal site is within the Conwy Valley SLA. The area is recognized as a locally significant landscape that merits designation due to its unique qualities

and importance, particularly as a key access point to Eryri National Park through the Conwy Valley. Challenges such as poorly placed static caravans and chalets threaten its integrity, highlighting the need for stronger landscape protection amidst existing designations like the Coastal Zone policy and SSSI status for the Conwy estuary. Designation safeguards its character and scenic views from inappropriate development, preserving this valued landscape near Conwy town and the World Heritage site of Conwy Castle, which has limited capacity for further change.

Landscape and Seascapes of Eryri SPG (July 2014)
(Refer to Appendix C)

The SPG is important in planning application decisions. Developers must evaluate the landscape impact of their proposals on Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) and consider mitigation for any negative effects. This assessment should be documented in the Design and Access statements or as a separate landscape impact analysis. The guidance supplemented the policies of the Eryri LDP (2007-2022) and the National Park Management Plan (2010-2015), both of which emphasize the "Special Qualities" of Eryri—unique characteristics that define and distinguish the National Park. The LDP has since been replaced by the Eryri LDP (2016-2031), but this SPG is still relevant.

The proposal site is about 1 km from Landscape Character Area (LCA) 1 Ucheldir y Gogledd, which represents the first major upland landscape in the northern section of the National Park. It features a range of peaks, including Moel Wnion, Drosogl, Foel Ganol, Pen y Castell, Drum, Carnedd Gwennlian, Tal y Fan, and

Conwy Mountain, all rising between 600 and 940 mAOD. This area stretches from Bethesda, which is located just outside the National Park's boundaries in the west, to the western slopes of the Conwy Valley in the east. Additionally, it includes the northern outskirts of Conwy, providing an immediate backdrop to the coast.

International Dark Sky Reserve

The Obtrusive Lighting (Light Pollution) SPG (October 2016)⁶ was published as an interim SPG following Dark Sky Reserve status being awarded to the whole of Eryri National Park in 2015. The proposal site is not located within the Dark Sky Reserve, nor is it near to one of the core areas, the nearest being Core Zone 1 which encompasses Yr Wyddfa and the Glyderau massifs. The buffer to the Core Zone 1 encompasses the Carneddau uplands. The proposal site sits within a rural area that is a relatively dark outer suburban location and lies close to a suburban area that is a well inhabited location.

Conwy Conservation Area

Conwy's history dates back to the late 13th Century when Edward I commissioned the construction of the castle and fortified town to exert control over Wales, with the castle built between 1283 and 1287 under Master James of St George. The town features impressive walls stretching about 1.3 km, supported by 21 towers and three gateways, and, along with Conwy Castle, is part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site "Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd," recognized for its architectural significance. Notably, Conwy is one of the best-preserved walled towns in Europe, maintaining its medieval

⁶ <https://eryri.gov.wales/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Supplementary-Planning-Guidance-14-%E2%80%93Obtrusive-Lighting-Light-Pollution.pdf>

layout and atmosphere since it largely retained its original boundaries until the 19th Century.

The Conwy Conservation Area includes the walled town and surrounding sites that enhance its historical significance. The area's character is defined by various features, including its original medieval street layout, numerous historic listed buildings, intact town walls and gates, the historic quayside linking to its maritime past, 19th Century road and rail bridges, and protected vistas both within and beyond the town. This architectural character reflects a rich evolution of Welsh building styles, from medieval timber-framed homes to Georgian and Victorian structures. A standout example is Plas Mawr, a late 16th Century townhouse recognized as one of the finest surviving Elizabethan houses in Britain, highlighting the wealth of the town's mercantile history.

4.2 Visual Baseline

The baseline visual assessment of the site and surrounding area have been established through a combination of desk-based studies and field work. Field visits were undertaken during summer and autumn of 2025.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

Refer to Figure 7.

The baseline study for visual effects establishes the general area from which the proposed development may be visible, the different groups of people who may experience views of the development, and the nature of views from certain viewpoints.

A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) is prepared using Ordnance Survey terrain data and specialist GIS software. The software calculates where the proposed

works may be visible. A bare earth terrain model is used, which takes no account of surface features such as substantial vegetation and buildings that may interrupt views. This represents a worst-case scenario. As the proposal site occupies the western flank of a hill, views of the development from the surrounding area are limited, and field work tests the ZTV output to confirm this.

The ZTV illustrates that the hillside and rolling lowland valley landform limit the views of the proposed development. To the west a section of the Carneddau foothills and a series of ridges formed by Cefn maen Amor, Cefn Llechen and Maen Esgob limit the view to east facing slopes and valley sides of Henryd community. Conwy Mountain limits part of the southward view to the ridge and south facing slopes north of Sychnant Pass Road. From Conwy town, the town walls interrupt the view from the medieval core and Coed Benarth interrupts the view from the Castle. Views are available to suburban settlements in Mount Pleasant and from St Agnes Road. From across the Conwy estuary views would be available from the plateau and outcrops near Deganwy.

Potential Visual Receptors and Visual Baseline

Potential visual receptors, a description of their visual baseline and a judgment of their sensitivity are presented below. Photographic viewpoints have been selected to represent the visual baseline, they are presented in Appendix D, and their location is shown in Figure 6.

Cogwrn Summit

Refer to Appendix D Viewpoint A

Intermediate distance view (between 0.5 and 2 km) from rock outcrops at the summit of Cogwrn, a small hill accessible from Sychnant Pass Road. The view

LAND EAST OF LLANRWST ROAD, GYFFIN, CONWY · Landscape and Visual Appraisal

of the proposal site is partially interrupted by a lowland hill and blocks of deciduous woodland located between Sychnant Pass Road and Hendre Road. The top of the upper field is visible.

The summit offers commanding views of the Henryd Community and the Afon Conwy valley, the Penmaenbala summits of Allt Wen, Penmaen-bach and Conwy Mountain, Conwy Castle, Conwy Cob and the southern outskirts of Mount Pleasant and Gyffin. Across the Conwy estuary is Llandudno Junction, which is flanked by the outcrops of Deganwy Castle and backed by Bryn Pydew. Gyffin is backed by Coed Benarth and Bryn-Seiri's western flank, which is covered with a mosaic of oak woodland, gorse scrub and pasture. The southward view includes the steep western sides of Conwy valley and the summit of Tal y Fan/Cefn Maen Amor.

The location is exposed and there is intermittent activity and distraction from vehicles using Sychnant Pass Road. Visual detractors include Rhyl Flats Offshore Wind Farm and Iolyn holiday parks. Visual receptors include visitors to the National Park engaging specifically in the enjoyment of views of Conwy, the valley, estuary and surrounding hills. The sensitivity of the visual receptor is assessed as **Very high**.

Conwy Mountain

Refer to Appendix D Viewpoint B

Long distance view (more than 2 km) from a section of the inland Wales Coast Path on the southern flank of Conwy Mountain towards Bryn Seiri and the rolling hills of Conwy county beyond. A view of the three proposal site fields is attainable flanked by the residential area of Gyffin. Maes Y Llan and Llanrwst Road ribbon development only slightly interrupt the view of the fields.

A broad and uninterrupted view of Conwy Castle, Conwy Cob and part of the estuary, southern outskirts of Conwy between Sychnant Pass Road and St Agnes Road is available from this location.

The location is exposed and there is frequent activity from walking and farming activities. Very few visual detractors but include the telecom mast at Bryn Iocyn and the Iolyn holiday parks. Visual receptors include visitors to the National Park and users of the Wales Coast Path engaging specifically in the enjoyment of views of Conwy, the valley, estuary and surrounding hills. The sensitivity of the visual receptor is judged as **Very high**.

Gorlan Playing Fields

Refer to Appendix D Viewpoint C

Intermediate distance view (between 0.5 and 2 km) from the northern boundary of the playing field near to the access from Pen Garth towards Gyffin backed by the woodland and pastoral farmland of Bryn-Seiri.

The site's three fields are visible behind Gyffin residential areas and ribbon of properties along Llanrwst Road. Distant views of the Carneddau mountains are available from this location, but the view is predominantly one of suburban residential areas.

The location is sheltered and there is frequent activity from residents. Visual receptors include residents of a populated residential area. The sensitivity of the visual receptor is judged as **Medium**.

Plas Glorian**Refer to Appendix D Viewpoint D**

Near distance view (less than 0.5 km) from the entrance apron to Pen-y-Bryn Farm opposite Plas Glorian, a terrace of dwellings converted from traditional farm buildings.

A view of the middle and upper fields of the proposal site is attainable, the roadside hedge is mechanically flailed and kept to a low height and does not impede the view of pastoral farmland backed by woodland.

The location is active with frequent access from road users. Visual receptors include transient views from road users and static views from less populated residential areas. The sensitivity of the receptor is judged as **Medium**.

Public Footpath east of Cae Cregin**Refer to Appendix D Viewpoint E**

Near distance view (less than 0.5 km) from Public Footpath Conwy 61, which connects Llanrwst road near to Cae Gregin to the hillside of Bryn-seiri. The path passes through pastoral farmland, holiday park and deciduous woodland.

The view of the proposal site is filtered by the canopy of mature trees within relict hedgerow field boundaries and interrupted by the rising landform. The view is of the Afon Gyffin pastoral valley side above Hendre backed by the upland grazing of Conwy Mountain. Residential areas of Lon Caer Seion and Parc Sychnant stand out due to their white rendered walls, as does Acrau Hirion with its red tiled roofs. The residential areas of Mount Park and St Agnes Road are also visible.

The location is tranquil with intermittent disturbance from Llanrwst Road. Visual receptors include transient views from users of Public Footpaths and countryside workers. The sensitivity of the receptor is judged as **Medium**.

Maes Gwerfyl/St Agnes Road**Refer to Appendix D Viewpoint F**

Near distance view (less than 0.5 km) from St Agnes Road at the junction with Maes Gwerfyl.

A view of the lower, middle and upper fields is available flanked by Gyffin residential areas accessible from Bryn-seiri road and Llanrwst Road ribbon development. The deciduous woodland of and gorse scrub covered outcrops of Bryn-seiri form the background.

The location is sheltered and there is frequent activity from residents. Visual receptors include transient views from road users and static views from residential areas. The sensitivity of the receptor is judged as **Medium**.

Mill Hill**Refer to Appendix D Viewpoint G**

Near distance view of (less than 0.5 km) from Mill Hill at the junction with the access track to St Benedict's Church.

A view of the lower and part of the middle field is available, partially interrupted by residential buildings of Gyffin. The woodland and gorse scrub outcrops of Bryn-eiri form the background.

The location is sheltered and there is frequent activity from residents. Visual receptors include transient views from road users and users of institutional

buildings and their outdoor areas. The sensitivity of the receptor is judged as **Medium**.

Isgoed

Refer to Appendix D Viewpoint H

Near distance view (less than 0.5 km) from the field access gate to the lower field at Isgoed.

View is limited to that of the lower field by vegetation along the small watercourses that form the north-western and north-eastern boundaries to the proposal site.

The location is sheltered and there is infrequent activity from residents. Visual receptors include views from countryside workers and static views from residential areas. The sensitivity of the receptor is judged as **Medium**.

Town Walls

Refer to Appendix D Viewpoint I

Intermediate distance view (between 0.5 and 2 km) from the town walls between the Upper Gate and the westernmost tower.

A view of the proposal site's three fields is available next to Gyffin residential areas accessible from Bryn-seiri Road, Llanrwst Road and Maes Y Llan. The backdrop of the view is formed by the western side of Bryn-seiri with Coed Benarth woodland and its mosaic of oak woodland, gorse scrub and pastoral farmland and a distant view of the Carneddau mountains. In the foreground is Upper Gate Street near its junction with St Agnes Road and the Afon Gyffin valley that features private gardens and public parks, Conwy Cemetery and Ysgol Porth-y-Felin.

The location is exposed and there is frequent activity from visitors. Visual receptors include static views of visitors to the World Heritage Site engaged in the enjoyment of town and wider countryside. The sensitivity of the receptor is judged as Very high.

Upper Gate Street

Refer to Appendix D Viewpoint J

Intermediate distance view (between 0.5 and 2 km) from Upper Gate Street outside of the town walls and near to its junction with St Agnes Road.

A view of the proposal site's three fields is available next to Gyffin residential areas accessible from Bryn-seiri Road, Llanrwst Road and Maes Y Llan. The backdrop of the view is formed by the western side of Bryn-seiri with Coed Benarth woodland and a mosaic of oak woodland, gorse scrub and pastoral farmland with a glimpse of the Carneddau mountains. In the foreground is parkland on the western side of the Afon Gyffin valley featuring private gardens and Ysgol Porth-y-Felin.

The location is sheltered and there is frequent activity from visitors and residents. Visual receptors include transient views from visitors to the historic town and road users. The sensitivity of the receptor is judged as **High**.

Bryn-Seiri Public Footpath

Refer to Appendix D Viewpoint K

Near distance view (less than 0.5 km) from Public Footpath Conwy 59, which forms part of a circuit around Bryn-seiri Farm and around the summit connecting with Bryn-seiri Road. The path passes through oak woodland and pastoral farmland.

The view of the proposal site is filtered by groups of oak woodland on the slopes of Bryn-seiri. The ribbon development along Llanrwst Road and residential areas at Lon Caer Seion/Parc Sychnant are visible through the tree canopies. The proposal site is below eye level, but parts of the middle and upper field are visible.

The location is sheltered and there is infrequent activity from users of the public footpath. Visual receptors include transient views from users of the footpath and countryside workers. The sensitivity of the receptor is judged as **Medium**.

Bryn-seiri Public Footpath

Refer to Appendix D Viewpoint L

Near distance view (less than 0.5 km) from Public Footpath Conwy 59, which forms part of a circuit around Bryn-seiri Farm and around the summit connecting with Bryn-seiri Road. The path passes through oak woodland and pastoral farmland.

The view of the proposal site is partially interrupted by oak woodland and the undulating ground of Bryn-seiri. Residential areas at Parc Sychnant and Acrau Hirion are visible through the tree canopies. The proposal site is below eye level, but part of the middle field is visible.

The location is sheltered but offers a view of Conwy town walls, Conwy estuary, Great Orme and Deganwy Castle framed by oak woodland. There is infrequent activity from users of the public footpath. Visual receptors include transient views from users of the footpath and countryside workers. The sensitivity of the receptor is judged as **Medium**.

Tan Benarth

Refer to Appendix D Viewpoint M

Near distance view (less than 0.5 km) from Bryn Castell residential street at the junction with Tan Benarth cul-de-sac.

A view of the proposal site's three fields is available with the lower field being nearest to the view and flanked by dwelling on Bryn Castell, Bryn-seiri Road and Allt Y Coed cul-de-sac.

The location is sheltered but busy with residential activity. Visual receptors include static views from residential areas. The sensitivity of the receptor is judged as **Medium**.

Bryn Iocyn Trig Point

Refer to Appendix D Viewpoint N

Near distance view from the Bryn Iocyn trig point, a northern outcrop of Bryn-seiri.

The landform interrupts the view of the proposal site, but the location offers a commanding view of the Conwy estuary, historic town and modern extensions, Conwy Mountain, Cefn maen Amor and the Carneddau mountain range.

The location is sheltered but tranquil with agricultural activity. Visual receptors include users of public footpaths and countryside workers. The sensitivity of the receptor is judged as **High**.

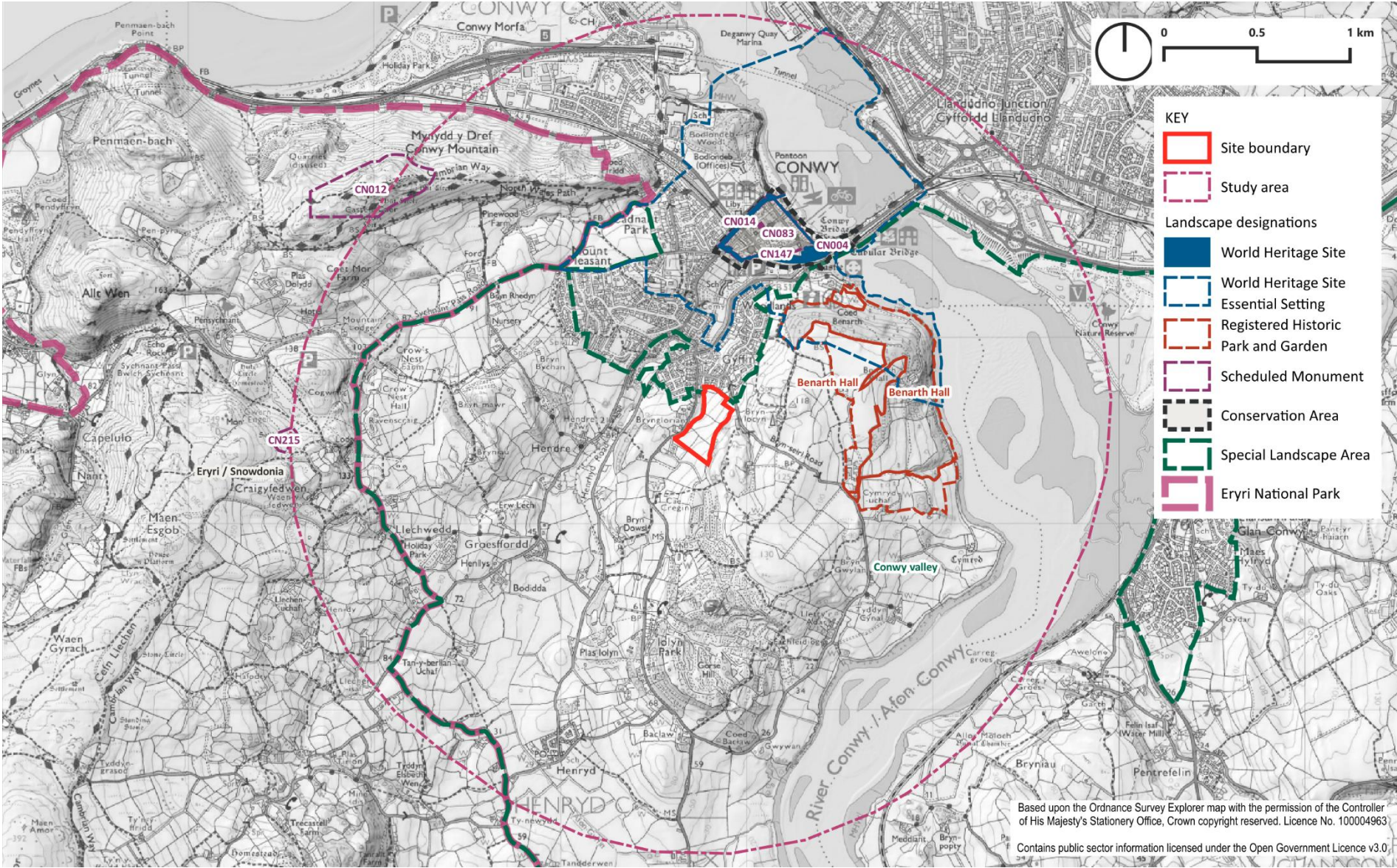


Figure 4 Landscape Designations

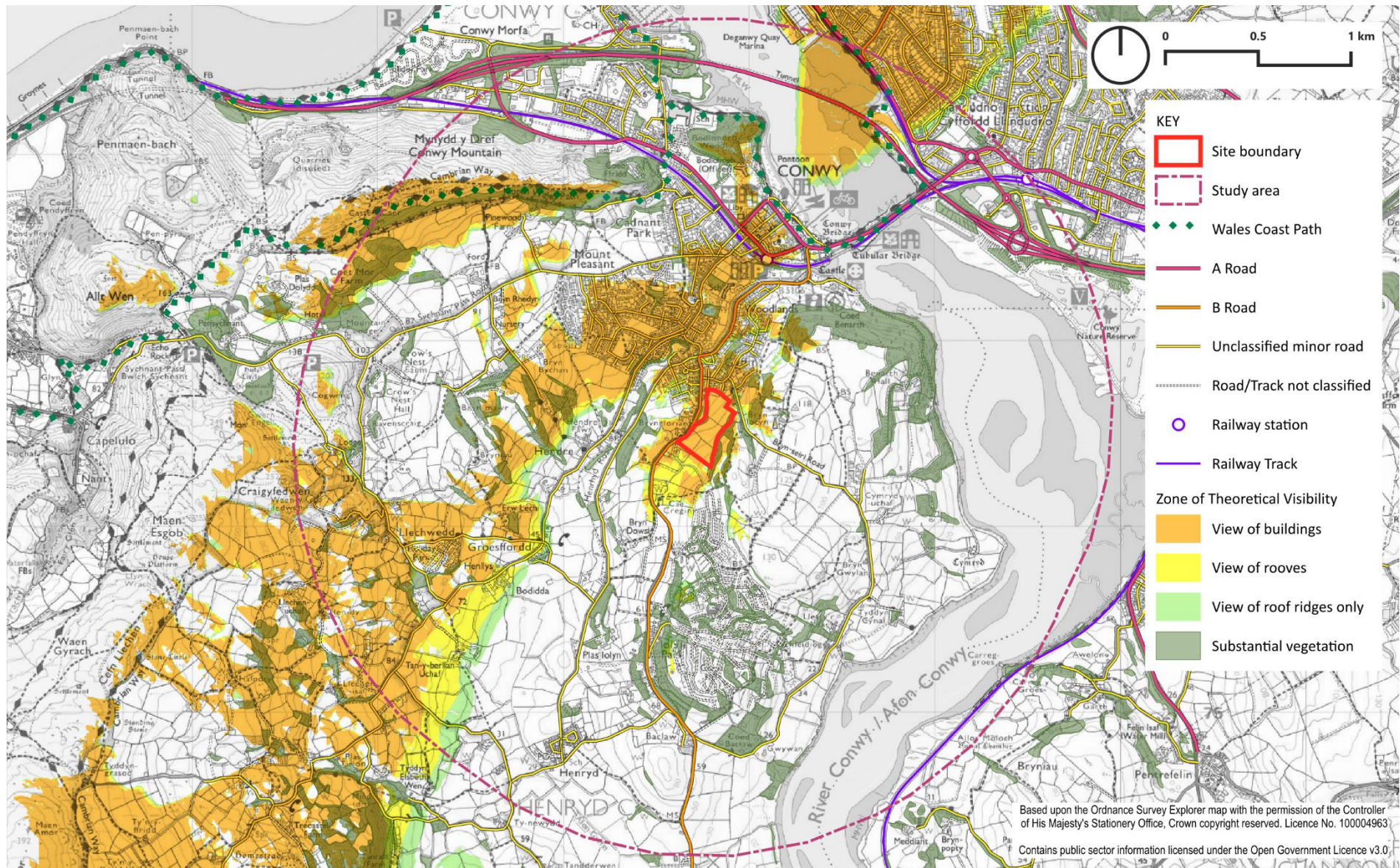


Figure 5 Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

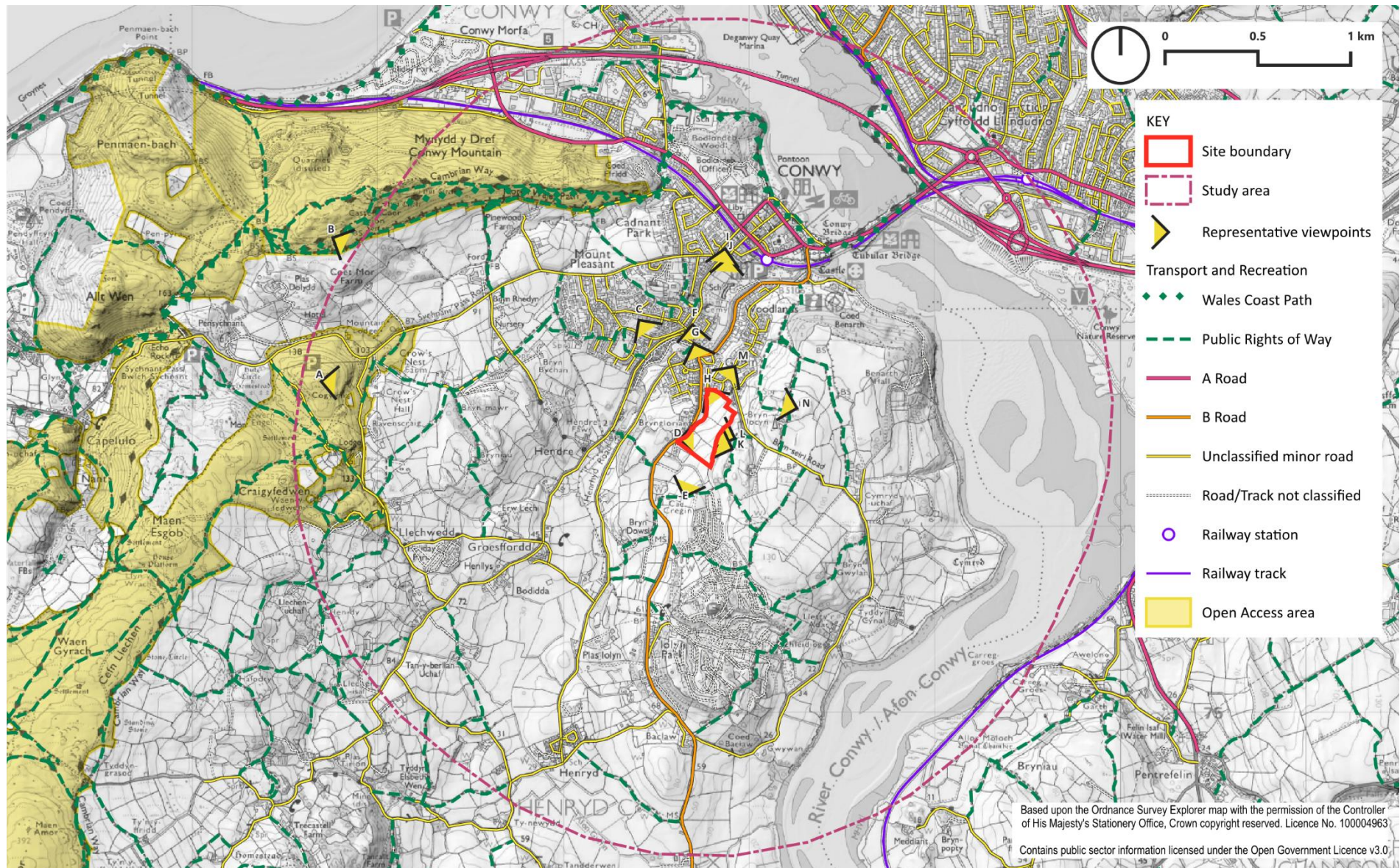


Figure 6 Transport and recreation routes and location of representative viewpoints

5 SITING AND DESIGN

5.1 Requirements

The development proposals for the site at Llanrwst Road is for 95 affordable homes. House types would be a mixture of detached, semi-detached, terrace and apartment block units with 1 to 5 bedrooms (90 of the dwellings would be 1-3 bedroom).

Terraces would be constructed on the sloped site to form platforms for the buildings. The floor levels of the homes will differ, with elevated levels in the lower western regions and lower levels in the eastern, higher parts. Terraces would be supported with proprietary retaining structures.

Vehicular access would be created from the B5106 Llanrwst Road near to Plas Glorian. The main spine road would branch into a series of side streets to enable access to groups of dwellings. Off-street parking would be provided as bays in front of dwellings, bays adjacent to dwellings or as parking courts where there is room.

An active-travel route would be provided connecting the main access with Bryn-Seiri Road through Isgoed, utilising the location of an existing field access. This would provide an alternative to existing pedestrians using Llanrwst Road where there is no separate footpath. The majority of units would be two-storey (there is 1 single-storey unit that would accommodate 2 dwellings as a semi-detached bungalow).

5.2 Proposals

The development proposal includes:

- a) 95 dwellings comprised of 32 separate buildings.
- b) 600 m of 5.5 m wide residential street with private off-street parking.
- c) 385 m of 3 m wide active-travel route.
- d) 1,290 m of retaining wall.
- e) 4,370 m² total private garden area for 95 dwellings.
- f) 495 m² equipped play area.
- g) 7,925 m² of amenity space with planting/SuDS areas.
- h) 19,910 m² of pasture retained and managed as wildflower meadow with additional tree planting and linear belts of shrubs to provide habitat connectivity and diversity.

Houses would be finished with a mix of materials to correspond with a varying material palette and styles found in Gyffin, Henryd and Mount Pleasant and visible from Conwy town walls. The lower field nearest to Gyffin would feature rendered houses with sections of red brick cladding and plinths. Progressing southward and uphill, sections of render with buff brick and render with timber cladding would be included, gradually changing to render with natural stone cladding to better fit in with more traditional buildings at Plas Glorian. Roofing tiles would be in keeping with the local palette that is a mixture of brown tile and grey slate.

6 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

6.1 Landscape Appraisal

Conwy Valley Sides and Hills (Bryn-seiri)

Landscape Receptor Sensitivity

This LCA covers the solitary hill located in-between the Afon Conwy and Afon Gyffin valleys, immediately south of Conwy. It includes the proposal site, a section of Llanrwst Road from the outskirts of Gyffin to Iolyn Park, Bryn-seiri Road and the Bryn Iocyn trig point, settlements distributed along Llanrwst Road, scattered rural farms and holiday parks.

This is a landscape of medium scale with an open aspect, predominantly pastoral farmland bounded by managed hedges and stockproof fences. There are blocks of woodland and plantations to the hill side and areas of gorse scrub and rock outcrops near to the summit. Outside of woodland areas attractive panoramic views of the Conwy estuary and Gyffin valley are available. Llanrwst Road follows the Afon Gyffin valley side and Bryn-seiri Road climbs from Gyffin, crosses a saddle between Bryn Iocyn and Bryn-seiri, and descends to follow the Afon Conwy valley side.

The LCA is evaluated as being of outstanding geological rarity⁷, moderate habitat connectivity, high scenic quality and landscape character, moderate historic interest, tranquil and a mosaic of predominantly disturbed land and undisturbed areas. The landscape sensitivity of this LCA is assessed as Medium.

⁷ Justified by inclusion of Cadnant Geological SSSI, however the designated site is within an adjacent Geological Landscape aspect area (https://landmap-portal.naturalresources.wales/view_survey.php?survey_id=12122).

It is of local or regional importance and appreciated locally and able to accommodate some change. Holiday parks serve main tourist destinations in the wider region.

Magnitude of Impact

Direct impact. Construction work would involve earthworks to create development platforms served by access roads within the sloping ground.

Road profiles generally follow natural ground levels, but there are locations where the road surface would be 2-3 m above or below natural ground to achieve an adoptable road standard. In these locations graded slopes would be required to tie-in the road edge/verge with the surrounding ground.

Terraces would be established on the sloping site to create building platforms. Floor levels of the dwellings will vary, being higher than natural ground in the lower western areas and lower in the eastern, higher areas. Where there is not enough space to grade the difference in levels, proprietary wall systems (such as crib lock) will be used to retain slopes.

Development platforms served by access roads have previously been created for the Holiday Parks to the south of Gyffin and to the east of the B5106. Existing residential areas within Gyffin occupy sloping ground where platforms and roads have to be divided by retaining walls.

The magnitude of impact is judged as Minor detriment, there would be a slight loss of the lowland hill terrain and pastoral farmland and its replacement with

a suburban residential development, which is characteristic of the southern outskirts of Conwy.

Significance of Landscape Effect

Combining Medium sensitivity and Minor detriment magnitude of impact, the significance of effect is assessed as Moderate Adverse, and can be considered to be a significant consideration in the decision-making process.

Conwy Valley Sides and Hills (Bryn-mawr)

Landscape Receptor Sensitivity

This LCA covers an undulating plateau and hill side that forms a buffer between the Conwy settlement and the unenclosed upland of the National Park. Recent residential development at Lon Caer Seion has ceded part to Conwy LCA, the fields to the north part of the Conwy valley farmland (Cadnant valley) LCA have been included.

This is a landscape of medium scale with an open aspect, predominantly pastoral farmland bounded by dry stone walls and hedgerows. Fields are irregularly shaped. There are blocks of woodland and plantations throughout, areas of bracken/heather heath near to the boundary with the unenclosed upland and patches of gorse scrub on ridges and outcrops. Settlement is scattered along minor roads. There are attractive views of the Penmaenbala summits, the northernmost of the Carneddau mountains and the Conwy estuary and valley.

The LCA is evaluated as being of moderate geological rarity, moderate habitat connectivity, high scenic quality and landscape character, moderate historic interest, . tranquil and a mosaic of predominantly disturbed land and undisturbed areas. The landscape sensitivity of this LCA is assessed as Medium.

Magnitude of Impact

No direct landscape impact. Visual influence of the proposals available to west facing slopes of Afon Gyffin valley side uphill of Hendre Road.

The magnitude of impact is judged as No change.

Significance of Landscape Effect

Combining High sensitivity and No change magnitude of impact, the significance of effect is assessed as Neutral.

Conwy

Landscape Receptor Sensitivity

This LCA covers the built up areas of Conwy including medieval castle, quay and town walls with medieval grid street layout, 19th and 20th Century residential extensions into Cadnant Park, Mount Pleasant and Gyffin, and 20th Century residential, institutional and business developments along A547 Bangor Road.

This is a landscape of medium scale and an aspect confined by natural features and man-made buildings, an urban area within a dramatic coastal landscape. There are attractive views of the Conwy estuary setting, Great Orme and Penmaenbala outcrops, Carneddau mountains and Afon Conwy valley.

The LCA overlaps several Geological Landscape aspect areas including depositional coastline, undulating lowland terrain and lowland river flood plain and are evaluated as moderate or outstanding geological rarity. Habitat connectivity is evaluated as low, scenic quality and landscape character are assessed as high, historic interest evaluated as outstanding and is significantly disturbed land. The landscape sensitivity of this LCA is assessed as High.

Magnitude of Impact

No direct landscape impact. Visual influence of the proposals available to residential areas to west and east facing slopes of Afon Gyffin valley side and southern town wall and towers. The proposal site is immediately adjacent to Isgoed and Allt Y Coed cul-de-sacs accessible from Bryn-seiri Road in Gyffin. The character of the proposal site would change from pastoral farmland to residential and be added within the Conwy LCA.

The magnitude of impact is judged as Minor detriment.

Significance of Landscape Effect

Combining High sensitivity and Minor detriment magnitude of impact, the significance of effect is assessed as Moderate Adverse, and can be considered to be a significant consideration in the decision-making process.

6.2 Visual Appraisal*Viewpoint A – Cogwrn Summit***Visual Receptor Sensitivity**

The location is exposed and experiences occasional disturbances from vehicles traveling along Sychnant Pass Road. Notable visual intrusions consist of the Rhyl Flats Offshore Wind Farm and Iolyn holiday parks. Although not a promoted viewpoint, visual receptors are primarily visitors to the National Park who appreciate the scenic views of Conwy, the valley, estuary, and adjacent hills. The sensitivity of the visual receptor is judged as Very high.

Magnitude of Change in View

A glimpse of dwellings 11-15 in the upper field dwelling 60 in the lower field, and part of the retaining structures behind them is theoretically available but

the view would be interrupted by woodland at Bryn-mawr. The magnitude of impact is judged as No change.

Significance of Visual Effect

Combining Very high sensitivity and No change magnitude of impact, the significance of effect is assessed as Neutral.

*Viewpoint B – Conwy Mountain***Visual Receptor Sensitivity**

The area is open and sees regular activity from walkers and farming. There are only a few visual intrusions, notably the telecommunications mast at Bryn Ior cyn and the Iolyn holiday parks. Visual receptors include visitors to the National Park and users of the Wales Coast Path, who specifically appreciate the views of Conwy, the valley, estuary, and the nearby hills. The sensitivity of the visual receptor is judged as Very high.

Magnitude of Change in View

A view of the entire development is theoretically available. Existing properties and small blocks of woodland next to Llanrwst Road would limit the view to that of dwellings 11-29 in the upper field and 49-87 in the lower field. The view of access roads would likely be screened by proposed buildings. The retaining walls west of dwellings 16-29 would likely be visible, as would parts of the easternmost retaining wall behind dwellings 11-60 where gaps in-between buildings allow.

There would be a reduction of pastoral farmland in the view and its replacement with residential land use. The development would be perceptible but appear

as being a part of Gyffin. The magnitude of impact is judged as Negligible detriment.

Significance of Visual Effect

Combining Very high sensitivity and Negligible detriment magnitude of impact, the significance of effect is assessed as Slight adverse.

Viewpoint C – Gorlan Playing Fields

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

The area has a sheltered aspect and often experiences residential activities. Visual observers consist of individuals living in the residential area with static views of the proposal site. The sensitivity of the visual receptor is judged as Medium.

Magnitude of Change in View

Dwellings 46 to 87 sited in the lower field would be prominent in the view as would the retaining wall east of dwellings 46 to 60 and part of the main spine road between dwellings 49 and 87. Existing buildings along Llanrwst Road and mature trees within private gardens would interrupt the view of the active travel path and retaining wall and private gardens to the west of dwellings 82-87.

The view of dwellings 30-45 and 88-95 sited in the middle field would likely be screened by a combination of buildings and mature vegetation. A view of dwellings 30-45 filtered by tree canopies may be available during winter months.

The view of dwellings 1-29 sited in the upper field would be partially interrupted by buildings and mature vegetation. Dwellings 1-10, 14/15, 16-23 and 28/29,

rooves of 11-13 and a section of retaining wall in the gap between 14/15 and 16/17 would likely be visible.

There would be a reduction of pastoral farmland in the view and its replacement with residential land use. The development would be perceptible and an increase in residential use noticeable. The magnitude of impact is judged as Minor detriment.

Significance of Visual Effect

Combining Medium sensitivity and Minor detriment magnitude of impact, the significance of effect is assessed as Moderate adverse.

Viewpoint D – Plas Glorian

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

The location experiences regular traffic from road users. Visual receptors include transient views from passing motorists and fixed views from the surrounding rural dwellings. The sensitivity of the receptor is judged as Medium.

Magnitude of Change in View

There would be a clear and uninterrupted view of the main access to the site, dwellings 1-4 overlooking Llanrwst Road, and dwellings 24-29 and 88-95 would be prominent. The first floor and rooves of dwellings 30-45 and dwellings 48-71 looking north-eastward and 5-3 looking south-eastward would also be visible but boundary fences and planted trees would help break up the view of newly built elements. The magnitude of impact is judged as Moderate detriment.

Significance of Visual Effect

Combining Medium sensitivity and Moderate detriment magnitude of impact, the significance of effect is assessed as Moderate adverse.

*Viewpoint E – Public Footpath east of Cae Cregin***Visual Receptor Sensitivity**

The location is tranquil, occasionally disrupted by traffic on Llanrwst Road. Visual receptors include those using public footpaths and individuals working in the countryside, who have fleeting glimpses of the surroundings. The sensitivity of the receptor is judged as Medium.

Magnitude of Change in View

Theoretical view of dwellings 1-4 and rooves of 5-23. The view would be interrupted by an accumulation of field boundary hedgerows and the canopies of mature trees. A glimpse of the development may be available during winter months filtered by tree canopies. The magnitude of impact is judged as Negligible detriment.

Significance of Visual Effect

Combining Medium sensitivity and Negligible detriment magnitude of impact, the significance of effect is assessed as Slight adverse.

*Viewpoint F – Maes Gwerfyl/St Agnes Road***Visual Receptor Sensitivity**

The location is sheltered and there is frequent activity from residents. Visual receptors include transient views from road users and static views from residential areas. The sensitivity of the receptor is judged as Medium.

Magnitude of Change in View

Dwellings 52-60, 69-71, 72-79, 82-87 sited in the lower field would be noticeable in the view as would parts of the retaining wall east of dwellings 46 to 60. Rooves of dwellings 46-51, 61-68 and 80-81 may also be visible. Existing buildings in Isgoed and along Llanrwst Road and mature trees within private gardens would interrupt the view of the active travel path and retaining wall and private gardens to the west of dwellings 82-87.

The view of dwellings 30-45 and 88-95 sited in the middle field would likely be screened by a combination of buildings and mature vegetation. A view of dwellings 30-45 filtered by tree canopies may be available during winter months.

The view of dwellings 1-29 sited in the upper field would be interrupted by buildings and mature vegetation.

There would be a reduction of pastoral farmland in the view and its replacement with residential land use. The development would be perceptible and an increase in residential use noticeable. The magnitude of impact is judged as Minor detriment.

Significance of Visual Effect

Combining Medium sensitivity and Minor detriment magnitude of impact, the significance of effect is assessed as Moderate adverse.

*Viewpoint G – Mill Hill***Visual Receptor Sensitivity**

The location is sheltered and there is frequent activity from residents. Visual receptors include transient views from road users and users of institutional

buildings and their outdoor areas. The sensitivity of the receptor is judged as Medium.

Magnitude of Change in View

Dwellings 46, 60, 70-71, 72-79, 82-87 sited in the lower field would be noticeable in the view as would parts of the retaining wall east of dwellings 59 to 60. Rooves of dwellings 53-59 and 80-81 may also be visible. Existing buildings in Isgoed and along Llanrwst Road and mature trees within private gardens would interrupt the view of the active travel path and retaining wall and private gardens to the west of dwellings 82-87.

The view of dwellings sited in the middle and upper fields would likely be screened by a combination of buildings and mature vegetation.

There would be a reduction of pastoral farmland in the view and its replacement with residential land use. The development would be perceptible and an increase in residential properties would appear as part of Gyffin. The magnitude of impact is judged as Negligible detriment.

Significance of Visual Effect

Combining Medium sensitivity and Negligible detriment magnitude of impact, the significance of effect is assessed as Slight adverse.

Viewpoint H – Isgoed

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

The location is sheltered and there is infrequent activity from residents. Visual receptors include views from countryside workers and static views from residential areas. The sensitivity of the receptor is judged as Medium.

Magnitude of Change in View

View limited to development within the lower field. Dwellings 81 and 82-87, the retaining walls to their west and the active travel path would be prominent. Dwellings 81-87 and the retaining structures would interrupt the view of the remaining buildings within the lower field.

The view parts of the development in the middle and upper fields would be interrupted by mature trees within private gardens of dwellings next to Llanrwst Road but accessible from Isgoed.

There would be a removal of pastoral farmland in the view and its replacement with residential land use. A small part of the development would be apparent to the receptor. The magnitude of impact is judged as Moderate detriment.

Significance of Visual Effect

Combining Medium sensitivity and Moderate detriment magnitude of impact, the significance of effect is assessed as Moderate adverse.

Viewpoint I – Town Walls

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

The location is exposed and there is frequent activity from visitors. Visual receptors include static views of visitors to the World Heritage Site engaged in the enjoyment of town and wider countryside. The sensitivity of the receptor is judged as Very high.

Magnitude of Change in View

Dwellings 46-60, 61-71, 72-79 and 82-87 sited in the lower field would be perceptible as would parts of the retaining wall east of dwellings 46 to 60. Existing buildings in Isgoed, Allt y Coed, Bryn-seiri Road and along Llanrwst Road

and mature trees within private gardens would interrupt the view of the active travel path and retaining wall and private gardens to the west of dwellings 82-87.

There would be a view of dwellings 30-45 sited in the middle field and the spine road serving them. Dwellings 88-95 would likely be screened by a combination of buildings and mature vegetation.

Dwellings 5-29 sited in the upper field may be discernible, partially filtered by the canopies of mature trees. The view of dwellings 1-4 would likely be interrupted by buildings along Llanrwst Road and mature vegetation.

There would be a reduction of pastoral farmland in the view and its replacement with residential land use. The development would be noticeable if looked for and appear as part of Gyffin residential area and Llanrwst Road ribbon development. The magnitude of impact is judged as Minor detriment.

Significance of Visual Effect

Combining Very high sensitivity and Minor detriment magnitude of impact, the significance of effect is assessed as Moderate adverse.

Viewpoint J – Upper Gate Street

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

The location is sheltered and there is frequent activity from visitors and residents. Visual receptors include transient views from visitors to the historic town and road users. The sensitivity of the receptor is judged as High.

Magnitude of Change in View

Dwellings 46-60, 61-71, 72-79 and 82-87 sited in the lower field would be perceptible as would parts of the retaining wall east of dwellings 46 to 60.

Existing buildings in Isgoed, Allt y Coed, Bryn-seiri Road and along Llanrwst Road and mature trees within private gardens would interrupt the view of the dwelling 80-81, active travel path and retaining wall and private gardens to the west of dwellings 82-87.

There would be a view of dwellings 30-45 sited in the middle field and the spine road serving them. Dwellings 88-95 would likely be screened by a combination of buildings and mature vegetation.

The view of dwellings 5-29 sited in the upper field would be partially filtered by the canopies of mature trees. The view of dwellings 1-4 would likely be interrupted by buildings along Llanrwst Road and mature vegetation.

There would be a reduction of pastoral farmland in the view and its replacement with residential land use. The development would be perceptible and appear as part of Gyffin residential area and Llanrwst Road ribbon development. The magnitude of impact is judged as Negligible detriment.

Significance of Visual Effect

Combining High sensitivity and Negligible detriment magnitude of impact, the significance of effect is assessed as Slight adverse.

Viewpoints K and L – Bryn-seiri Public footpath

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

The location is sheltered and there is infrequent activity from users of the public footpath. Visual receptors include transient views from users of the footpath and countryside workers. The sensitivity of the receptors is judged as Medium.

Magnitude of Change in View

There is a theoretical view of dwellings 61-71 and 72-87 sited in the lower field and 1-29 sited in the upper field. The rooves of dwellings 30-60 are also theoretically visible as the floor levels of these building would be set below natural ground levels with their eastern aspect screened from view by the landform and native shrub planting.

The accumulation of trees within the wooded areas partially interrupts the view, there may be glimpses available where there is a line of sight in-between tree trunks, limbs and canopies. The magnitude of impact is judged as Negligible detriment.

Significance of Visual Effect

Combining Medium sensitivity and Negligible detriment magnitude of impact, the significance of effect is assessed as Slight adverse.

*Viewpoint M – Tan Benarth***Visual Receptor Sensitivity**

The location is sheltered but busy with residential activity. Visual receptors include static views from residential areas. The sensitivity of the receptor is judged as Medium.

Magnitude of Change in View

A view of dwellings 61-71, 72/73, 82-87 and the main spine road serving them would appear as a continuation of Allt Y Coed cul-de-sac. Existing buildings to the western and downhill side of Allt Y Coed would interrupt the view of dwellings 72-81.

A gap in-between existing buildings to the eastern and uphill side of Allt Y Coed and Bryn-seiri Road would enable a view of dwellings 48-60, the retaining wall to their east and the branch road that serves them. Two mature trees on the field boundary between 15 Allt Y Coed and the lower field would help filter this view.

The mature trees on the boundary between the lower and middle fields would be removed to accommodate the active travel path, which in turn would increase the visibility of dwellings located in the middle and upper fields. Dwellings 34-39 and the part of the spine road sited in the middle field are likely to be visible, with only the rooves of 24-26 sited in the upper field, 42-45 sited in the middle field and 46-47 sited in the lower field, the building faces being blocked by neighbouring buildings.

The view of dwellings 1-10 and 88-95 would be interrupted by substantial vegetation, and 11-23 by proposed buildings. The view of dwellings 27-33 would be filtered by tree canopies at the edge of the block of woodland.

There would be a reduction of pastoral farmland in the view and its replacement with residential land use. The development would be a prominent feature and appear as an extension of the Bryn-seiri Road residential area. The magnitude of impact is judged as Moderate detriment.

Significance of Visual Effect

Combining Medium sensitivity and Moderate detriment magnitude of impact, the significance of effect is assessed as Moderate adverse.

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*Viewpoint N – Bryn Iocyn Trig Point***Visual Receptor Sensitivity**

The location is sheltered but tranquil with agricultural activity. Visual receptors include users of public footpaths and countryside workers. The sensitivity of the receptor is judged as High.

Magnitude of Change in View

The view would be interrupted by the landform and substantial vegetation. No change.

Significance of Visual Effect

Combining High sensitivity and No change magnitude of impact, the significance of effect is assessed as Neutral.

Table 7 Summary of visual effects

Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Significance
A – Cogwrn Summit	Very high	No change	Neutral
B – Conwy Mountain	Very high	Negligible detriment	Slight adverse
C – Gorlan Playing Fields	Medium	Minor detriment	Moderate adverse
D – Plas Glorian	Medium	Moderate detriment	Moderate adverse
E – Cae Cregin Footpath	Medium	Negligible detriment	Slight adverse
F – Maes Gwerfyl /St Agnes Road	Medium	Minor detriment	Moderate adverse

Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Significance
G – Mill Hill	Medium	Negligible detriment	Slight adverse
H – Isgoed	Medium	Moderate detriment	Moderate adverse
I – Town Walls	Very high	Minor detriment	Moderate adverse
J – Upper Gate Street	High	Negligible detriment	Slight adverse
K – Bryn-seiri Footpath	Medium	Negligible detriment	Slight adverse
L - Bryn-seiri Footpath	Medium	Negligible detriment	Slight adverse
M – Tan Benarth	Medium	Moderate detriment	Moderate adverse
M – Bryn Iocyn Trig Point	High	No change	Neutral

7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Beech Developments (NW) Ltd, representing Adra (Tai) Cyf, a North Wales housing association, proposes a development east of Llanrwst Road comprising 95 affordable homes. The housing types will include a mix of detached, semi-detached, terrace, and apartment units with 1 to 5 bedrooms, primarily 1-3 bedroom units. Access would be created from B5106 Llanrwst Road, leading to a spine road that branches into side streets with off-street parking options. An active-travel route would connect the main access to Bryn-Seiri Road, providing a safe alternative for pedestrians.

The site spans approximately 5.3 ha, with around 2.8 ha allocated for residential development and the remainder preserved for amenity use and biodiversity. Most units would be two-storey, with one single-storey semi-detached bungalow.

The site is situated on sloping ground near a hill between the Afon Gyffin and Afon Conwy valleys, ranging in elevation from 22 m to 78 m. It offers views of local landmarks from its higher points.

The main access would be a 5.5 m wide spine road from Llanrwst Road, with branches designed to follow natural terrain, including graded slopes where needed. There will also be a 3 m wide active-travel path and a 2 m wide footpath along the roads.

The development would occur across three pastoral fields with existing boundaries including watercourses, mature trees, and hedges. Some vegetation, such as sections of hedgerows and trees, would be removed for the project, but the layout aims to protect a notable veteran oak tree. The

surrounding area consists of a mix of pastoral farmland, woodland, and rural settlements.

The proposed site is approximately 1 km from Eryri National Park, an area known for its rugged uplands, including the tallest peak in England and Wales, Wyddfa, and is characterized by various geological features.

The site is situated within NLCA07 *Conwy Valley*, defined by its glaciated valleys, flood plains, the scenic Conwy River, and proximity to significant historical sites like Conwy Castle (a UNESCO World Heritage Site). Despite urban elements, the area retains a rural quality with lush landscapes.

The study area also overlaps with NLCA6 *Snowdonia* and NLCA8 *North Wales Coast*, both showcasing distinct features. NLCA6 encompasses mountainous landscapes and historical significance in geology, complemented by traditional communities and significant tourist attractions. NLCA8 is marked by limestone coastal hills and heavily developed tourist areas, retaining a dynamic coastal environment.

The Conwy Estuary is part of NMCA3, comprising key ecological and geological features like sand flats, cliffs, and important conservation areas.

LANDMAP, administered by Natural Resources Wales, provides detailed evaluations of landscape characteristics across five aspects: geological, habitats, visual and sensory, historic, and cultural landscape services. The proposal site is part of several LANDMAP aspect areas.

The site falls within the Conwy Valley SLA, crucial for preserving its unique landscape qualities and as an access point to Eryri National Park.

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The baseline visual assessment was conducted via desk studies complemented by fieldwork. The Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) indicates limited visibility of the development, constrained by terrain features.

Various viewpoints were identified, assessing the visual impact on different receptors such as:

- a) Cogwrn Summit and Conwy Mountain: Critical views from a popular hiking area, sensitive due to the recreational value.
- b) Conwy Town Walls: Offers panoramic views of the Conwy valley and estuary, sensitive due to its heritage status.
- c) Local Residential Areas: Multiple viewpoints indicating medium sensitivity, where residential activity reduces aesthetic experiences.
- d) Public Footpaths: Users experience filtered views, highlighting an overlap with countryside character.

Overall, the landscape and visual assessments have established that while the proposed development is situated within an area of significant landscape value, the topographical constraints limit its visibility, thus influencing potential impacts on the surrounding visual environment.

The development at Llanrwst Road will consist of 95 affordable homes with a variety of building types,. Due to the sloped nature of the site, terraces will be designed to create platforms, with varying floor levels—higher than natural ground in the eastern parts and lower in the western parts. Supporting retaining structures will be utilized for the terraces.

Vehicular access will be established from B5106 Llanrwst Road, with a main spine road branching into side streets for resident access. Off-street parking will include bays in front of and adjacent to homes and designated parking courts.

A new active-travel route will connect the main access point to Bryn-Seiri Road, providing a pedestrian alternative to the existing, footpath-less Llanrwst Road.

The majority of homes will be two-storey, plus one single-storey bungalow accommodating two dwellings.

The homes will feature a mix of materials reflecting the local character, with rendered houses and red brick cladding near Gyffin. Transitioning materials like buff brick and timber cladding. Natural stone cladding for traditional integration at Plas Glorian. Roofing materials will harmonize with the local palette of brown tiles and grey slate.

7.1 Summary of Landscape Effects

Conwy Valley Sides and Hills (Bryn-seiri)

This area encompasses a solitary hill between the Afon Conwy and Afon Gyffin valleys, south of Conwy. It includes the proposal site, Llanrwst Road, Bryn-seiri Road, and other settlements. Characterized by medium-scale pastoral farmland, with woodlands and panoramic views of the surrounding valleys. Rated for its geological rarity (outstanding), scenic quality (high), moderate habitat connectivity, and moderate historic interest. Overall, the sensitivity is assessed as Medium, indicating ability to accommodate some change.

Construction impacts would involve earthworks and road construction, creating development platforms. Roads would follow natural contours but may require grading in some areas. The impact is assessed as Minor detriment, due to slight loss of natural landscape from suburban development.

The combination of Medium sensitivity and Minor detriment results in a Moderate Adverse landscape effect, necessitating consideration in decision-making.

Conwy Valley Sides and Hills (Bryn-mawr)

Comprises an undulating plateau acting as a buffer between Conwy and the National Park. Features predominantly pastoral farmland, scattered settlements, and notable views of the surrounding mountains and estuary. Evaluated for moderate geological rarity and habitat connectivity, with high scenic quality and landscape character. The sensitivity is assessed as Medium.

No direct impacts anticipated; only visual influences from the proposals will affect certain viewpoints. The impact is assessed as No change.

Combining High sensitivity with No change results in a Neutral significance effect.

Conwy

Encompasses the urban areas of Conwy, including historical structures and modern developments. Features a confined aspect, with high scenic quality and significant historic interest. The sensitivity is assessed as High.

No direct landscape impact is expected, but there will be visual influences noted from residential areas and Conwy Town Walls. The magnitude is classified as Minor detriment due to the change from pastoral farmland to residential setting.

The combination of High sensitivity with Minor detriment yields a Moderate adverse significance, marking this as an important consideration in decision-making.

7.2 Summary of Visual Effects

Viewpoint A – Cogwrn Summit

Sensitivity: Very high; exposed location frequented by visitors to the National Park with views of the surrounding landscape.

Magnitude of Change: No change; glimpses of a few dwellings are interrupted by woodland.

Significance of Effect: Neutral.

Viewpoint B – Conwy Mountain

Sensitivity: Very high; open area with regular visitor activity appreciating scenic views.

Magnitude of Change: Negligible detriment; partial views of the development affected by existing properties and vegetation.

Significance of Effect: Slight adverse and not significant.

Viewpoint C – Gorlan Playing Fields

Sensitivity: Medium; residents have static views of the proposal site.

Magnitude of Change: Minor detriment; dwelling visibility affected by nearby buildings and vegetation.

Significance of Effect: Moderate adverse.

Viewpoint D – Plas Glorian

Sensitivity: Medium; regular traffic and residential views in the area.

Magnitude of Change: Moderate detriment; clear views of residences and access points.

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Significance of Effect: Moderate adverse.

Viewpoint E – Public Footpath east of Cae Cregin

Sensitivity: Medium; tranquil site experiencing occasional traffic disruptions.

Magnitude of Change: Negligible detriment; limited views due to vegetation.

Significance of Effect: Slight adverse and not significant.

Viewpoint F – Maes Gwerfyl/St Agnes Road

Sensitivity: Medium; sheltered area with frequent resident activity.

Magnitude of Change: Minor detriment; visibility of lower field dwellings reduced by surrounding trees and buildings.

Significance of Effect: Moderate adverse.

Viewpoint G – Mill Hill

Sensitivity: Medium; frequent resident and visitor activity.

Magnitude of Change: Negligible detriment; most upper and middle field dwellings screened by vegetation.

Significance of Effect: Slight adverse and not significant.

Viewpoint H – Isgoed

Sensitivity: Medium; infrequent residential activity with limited views.

Magnitude of Change: Moderate detriment; lower field developments visible, with some interruptions from trees.

Significance of Effect: Moderate adverse.

Viewpoint I – Town Walls

Sensitivity: Very high; frequent visitor activity at the World Heritage Site.

Magnitude of Change: Minor detriment; parts of the development visible but largely interrupted by existing structures and trees.

Significance of Effect: Moderate adverse.

Viewpoint J – Upper Gate Street

Sensitivity: High; regular activity from visitors and residents.

Magnitude of Change: Negligible detriment; visibility of various dwellings obstructed by existing structures and vegetation.

Significance of Effect: Slight adverse and not significant.

Viewpoints K and L – Bryn-seiri Public Footpath

Sensitivity: Medium; infrequent activity along the footpath.

Magnitude of Change: Negligible detriment; limited visibility due to trees.

Significance of Effect: Slight adverse and not significant.

Viewpoint M – Tan Benarth

Sensitivity: Medium; busy area with residential views.

Magnitude of Change: Moderate detriment; development visible but obstructed by existing structures and vegetation.

Significance of Effect: Moderate adverse.

Viewpoint N – Bryn Iocyn Trig Point

Sensitivity: High; tranquil agricultural area.

Magnitude of Change: No change; views significantly obscured.

Significance of Effect: Neutral.
