

# Landscape and Visual Appraisal



Tyler  
Grange

Pontfaen Road, Lampeter

November 2021

13550/R02/LS/WL



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Grange**

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# 1 Introduction and Site Context

## Background

- 1.1 Tyler Grange Group Limited (TG) has been appointed by Aldi Stores Ltd to undertake an assessment of the potential landscape and visual effects associated with the erection of a new Aldi store along with access, parking and restorative enhancements to the existing sports facilities off Pontfaen Road, Lampeter, Ceredigion, SA48 7JL (hereafter referred to as the 'site'. The site is centred on National Grid Reference SN 57320 48156.
- 1.2 The report has been prepared by a Licentiate Member of the Landscape Institute (LMLI) and reviewed by a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute (CMLI) during the months of October and November 2021.

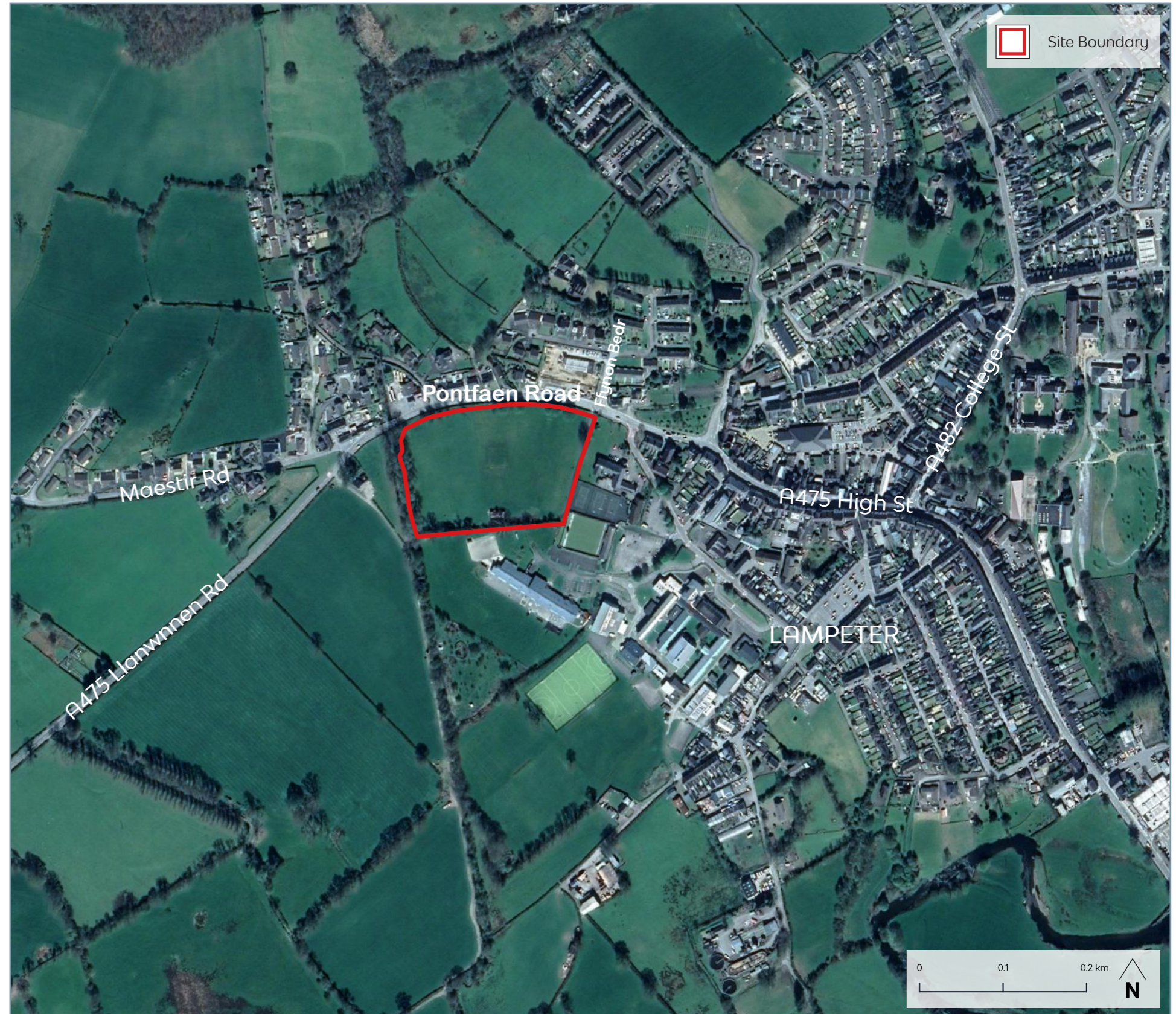
## Site Context

- 1.3 The site currently comprises an existing sports ground (Lampeter Rugby Football Club - traditionally know as "the birthplace of Welsh rugby" but since moved to a new facility at North Road) which includes sports pitches, a Grade II Listed pavilion, and associated access from the north-east corner towards car parking to the east of the pavilion.
- 1.4 The northern boundary is formed by a flailed native hedgerow along Pontfaen Road with a linear row of Horse Chesnut trees scattered along the north of the site. The western boundary is formed by a wooded stream corridor which runs to the south of the site. The southern boundary is formed by an unmanaged hedgerow and scattered mature trees. The eastern boundary is formed by a post and wire fence and stone wall with a mature group of trees towards the north.

## Site Proposals

- 1.5 A planning application is to be submitted to Ceredigion County Council for the construction of a new Aldi store, access, parking, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), rain gardens and a nature / biodiversity area. In addition, the university are to submit proposals to renovate the pavilion, construct exhibition pods and improve the grassed pitch, providing additional community recreation space.

Plan 1: Site Context (13550/P08)



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# 1 Introduction and Site Context

## Methodology

1.6 This report has been undertaken in accordance with the following guidance:

- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, Natural England, 2014; and
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA), Third Edition, Landscape Institute and IEMA, 2013.

1.7 This is a standalone report and does not constitute a landscape chapter in the context of an Environmental Statement (ES) required by an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

1.8 Table 3.1 of the GLVIA3 outlines what is required in this type of appraisal report, as a project outside of an EIA. This includes the following:

- Establishes the existing nature of the landscape and visual environment in the study area;
- Provides a description of the proposed development, identifying the main features of the proposals and the changes that will occur; and
- Systematically identifies and describes the effects that are likely to occur, including whether they are adverse or beneficial.

1.9 The approach taken in the preparation of this report is considered to be appropriate and proportional in the context of the professional guidance published by the Landscape Institute.

1.10 Professional judgement plays an important role in the landscape and visual analysis process where the analysis of landscape character and visual amenity is both a subjective and objective process. However, the analysis process seeks to provide a narrative to explain the judgement reached.

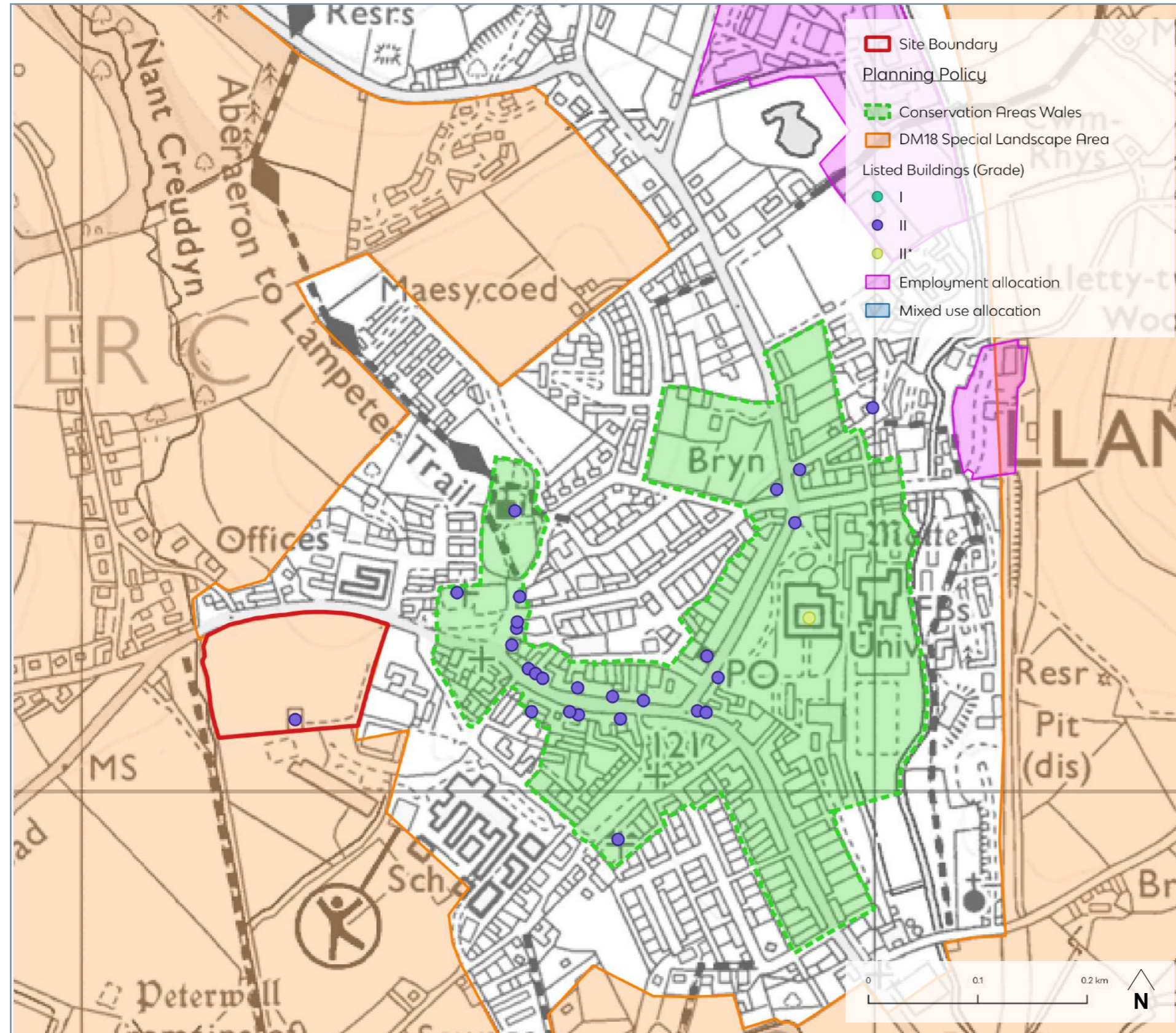




	Local Planning Policy	architectural integrity or their settings should not be significantly adversely affected.
<p>2.1 Planning Policy Wales sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. As outlined in the introduction of the PPW, its primary objective is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales</p>	<p>2.6 The site falls within the administrative remit of Ceredigion County Council. Plan 2: Landscape Planning Policy illustrates the local policies applicable to the site in relation to landscape and visual matters.</p>	<p>2.16 Where possible, development should enhance these qualities and special character.</p>
<p>2.2 The Well-being of Future Generations Act drives planning policy in Wales by providing a clear definition of sustainable development and creating improvement in the delivery all aspects of well-being. The seven well-being goals are illustrated in Figure 2 of the PPW. Legislation secures a “presumption in favour of sustainable development” to ensure social, economic, cultural and environmental issues are balanced and integrated to provide the policy framework for the effective preparation of local planning authorities development plans.</p>	<p>Ceredigion County Council Local Development Plan 2007-2022</p>	<p>Policy DM20: Protection of Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands</p>
<p>2.3 Section 3 of the PPW sets out some of the strategic and spatial choices which should be considered as part of placemaking and developing specific proposals. Design is recognised at paragraph 3.3 as being fundamental to creating sustainable places. Its not only about the design of buildings but the relationship between all elements of the natural and built environment, and between people and places.</p>	<p>2.7 The current adopted development plan covering the site is the Ceredigion County Council Local Development Plan which was adopted in 2013.</p>	<p>2.17 Development will be permitted providing it would not remove trees, hedgerows or woodlands of value unless the need of the proposed development outweighs the values. Mitigation and compensation (new trees) of native or local provenance should be included within the scheme. The site should achieve appropriate biodiversity gain.</p>
<p>2.4 Environmental and cultural components of placemaking are also considered. Paragraph 6.3.3 states “considering landscape at the outset of formulating strategies and policies in development plans and when proposing development is key to sustaining and enhancing their special qualities, and delivering the maximum well-being benefits for present and future generations as well as helping to deliver an effective and integrated approach to natural resource management over the long term”. It is noted at paragraph 6.3.4 that “where adverse effects on landscape character cannot be avoided, it will be necessary to refuse planning permission”</p>	<p>2.8 In terms of the immediate planning context, the site sits within a Special Landscape Area (SLA) and also includes several Tree Preservation Orders.</p>	<p>Ceredigion County Council SPG: Special Landscape Areas</p>
<p>2.5 LANDMAP is identified (in paragraph 6.3.20) as an important information source for the landscapes of Wales by describing and evaluating the physical, ecological, visual, cultural and historic aspects of the landscapes of Wales, and providing the basis of a consistent, quality assured national approach to landscape assessment</p>	<p>2.9 Lampeter Conservation Area is situated approximately 50-metres to the east of the site. The existing pavilion upon the site is also designated as a Grade II Listed building.</p>	<p>2.18 This SPG document was formally adopted on 24th April 2014. The main purpose of this SPG is to assist in the interpretation and application of national and local policies concerned with the protection and enhancement of landscape character within these areas.</p>
	<p>Policy DM17: General Landscape</p>	<p>2.19 Key characteristics of SLA 7 Teifi Valley of relevance to the site include:</p>
	<p>2.10 Development should not have a significant adverse effect on the qualities and character of the landscape of Ceredigion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main river valley of Ceredigion forms boundary with Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire.</li> </ul>
	<p>2.11 Where possible, development should enhance these qualities and special character.</p> <p>Policy DM18: Special Landscape Areas (SLAs)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sinuous, largely wooded valley.</li> </ul>
	<p>2.12 The site is situated within SLA 7 Teifi Valley.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Range of side valleys that contribute to the quality of the area.</li> </ul>
	<p>2.13 Proposals for development within SLAs will be assessed in relation to scale and nature of development and their ability to be accommodated without significant damage to the characteristics of the SLA.</p>	<p>2.20 Key policy and management issues of relevance to the site include:</p>
	<p>Policy DM19: Historic and Cultural Landscape</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management and enhancement of habitats and species.</li> </ul>
	<p>2.15 Development should not adversely affect landscapes or buildings which are of historical or cultural importance and make an important contribution to the character and when interest of the local area. The distinctive appearance,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ecosystem approach should be incorporated into development.</li> </ul>
	<p>Policy DM19: Historic and Cultural Landscape</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management of historic environment, encompassing both landscapes and Conservation Areas.</li> </ul>



Plan 2: Landscape Planning Policy (13550/P07)



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### Planning Policy Conclusion

#### Policy Requirements for the Development:

- Landscape-led approach to the design and siting of development, in accordance with the Special Landscape Area SPD and Policy DM17 and DM18;
- Protect and enhance the character, quality and scenic beauty of the locality, including the Conservation Area, in accordance with Policy DM17, DM18 and DM19;
- Development should not cause significant visual intrusion;
- Development should not introduce or intensify a use which is incompatible with its location;
- Development should not lose or fail to incorporate important traditional features, patterns, structure and layout of the landscape.



### 3 Landscape and Visual Baseline

#### Purpose of the Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.1 The landscape and visual baseline describes the site specific landscape character and sets this in the context of the published landscape character assessments and the landscape planning context. This forms the baseline against which the proposals and their potential impacts, in both landscape and visual terms are considered.

#### Landscape Character

3.2 The characterisation process is a non-value judgement process; therefore, classifying landscapes into distinct areas does not suggest that one character area is more sensitive than another or valued by people more or less.

3.3 The landscape character appraisal process reviews the wider landscape character type at a national level, explores more detailed character features at a district/local level and analyses site-specific land use that informs local distinctiveness and sense of place.

3.4 This landscape and visual appraisal considers the local, site specific character features and context as identified by Tyler Grange LLP through fieldwork, and informed by a review of published assessments. From this baseline information we can identify the relevant characteristic's, important site features to retain and also identify detracting features that need to be addressed within the proposals.

#### Published Landscape Character

3.5 The landscape character of the study area has been considered as a hierarchy of landscape character assessments at national, district and local level. The findings of these assessments are illustrated on Plan 4: Landscape Character.

3.6 The site is within the Teifi Valley National Landscape Character Area (NLCA 40) profile. NLCAs form the broadest scale of landscape character assessment in Wales. They are broadly strategic and have limited application at a site-specific level. Having considered the NLCA based on the desktop study and field observations at a local scale, it is of limited relevance within this application.

#### LANDMAP

3.7 LANDMAP is a national GIS based landscape database for Wales where landscape characteristics, qualities and influences on the landscape are recorded and evaluated into a nationally consistent data set. It is the formally adopted methodology for landscape assessment and is advocated by Planning Policy Wales. It comprises five datasets known as 'Aspects' which are sub-divided into geographical 'Aspect Areas', forming the equivalent of local landscape character areas. The five aspects are:

- Visual and Sensory;
- Historic Landscape;
- Cultural Landscape;
- Geological Landscape; and
- Landscape Habitats.

3.8 For each Aspect Area, important characteristics and qualities, management and an evaluation of condition, trend and value are detailed. Each of the Aspects are evaluated in order to provide an indication of their sensitivity and value. A number of 'Evaluation Criteria' are used, in order to identify an 'Overall Evaluation'. An 'Overall Evaluation Score' is then provided, defining the Aspect's importance. These are defined by LANDMAP as the following:

- Outstanding - of international or National Importance;
- High - of Regional or County Importance;
- Moderate - of Local Importance;
- Low - of little or no importance.

Table 1 - LANDMAP Aspect Areas Summaries

Aspect Area	Overall Evaluation	Notes
Visual and Sensory Lampeter	Moderate	Attractive town core with intact main streets maintaining integrity of settlement and a distinct sense of place. The edges of the settlement detract to an extent. Attractive views are possible out from the settlement along the Teifi Valley.
Historic Landscape Lampeter	Outstanding	This area scores highly in all evaluation categories. It is a good example of a small urban landscape with nationally important components
Cultural Landscape Lampeter	Moderate	This area is of moderate value in all evaluation categories.
Geological Landscape Afon Teifi	Outstanding	This area includes GCR / SSSI features of national / international importance.
Landscape Habitats Lampeter	Outstanding	The thick, species rich hedges, woodlands and large variety of wetlands, surrounding a diverse and interesting river host and wealth of species and has a national importance and outstanding evaluation.

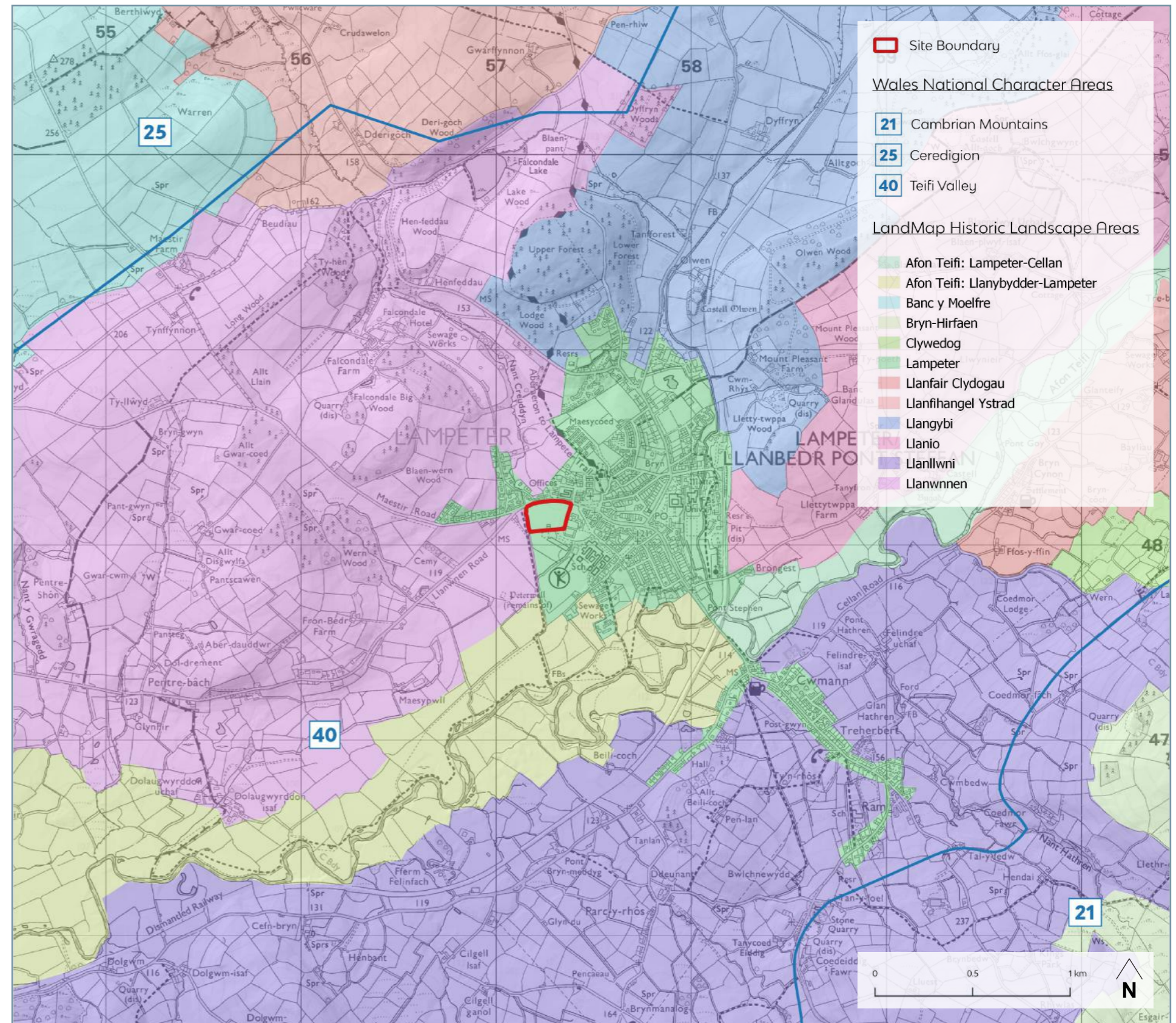


### 3 Landscape and Visual Baseline

#### Site Specific Character

- 3.9 A site-specific character analysis was undertaken on-site in October 2021. In terms of the specific landscape characteristics, they are as follows:
- 3.10 Landform
- 3.11 Relatively flat topography, typical of sports pitches, that very gently slopes towards the ditch to the west of the site. The hilly landform that surrounds the site in all directions emphasises the valley character.
- 3.12 Landcover
- 3.13 The site itself comprises a rectangular section of sports pitches with an access road from the north-eastern corner which extends along the eastern boundary. The pavilion is situated just off the centre of the southern boundary and overlooks the pitches. A tarmac car park sits to the east of this.
- 3.14 In terms of tree cover, vegetation is limited to the boundaries of the site with mature trees, hedgerow and woodland, both on-site and in close proximity, which encloses the site in all directions. The trees established to the north are a linear row of mature Horse Chestnut trees in decline (suffering from Horse Chestnut canker - see TG Arboricultural Report). A flailed hedgerow forms the northern boundary of the site.
- 3.15 The woodland to the west runs north to south along the stream towards the River Avon Teifi. This woodland comprises mature Poplar trees at the site edge which are within the site boundary. An unmanaged hedgerow runs along the southern boundary with scattered mature trees, including one veteran Ash tree to the south of the pavilion. The western boundary has limited vegetation cover but comprises a post and wire fence adjacent to the sports facilities to the east. A mature cohesive group of Poplar spp. is established both on and off the site to the north of this boundary, providing enclosure from the west.
- 3.16 Landscape Context
- 3.17 The site lies on the western edge of Lampeter settlement. Indoor and outdoor sports facilities are evident to the east and south of the site. Development along Pontfaen Road includes modern buildings used by the County Council, as well as a row of dwellings and a petrol station.

Plan 3: Landscape Character (13550/P03)



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Landscape Character Conclusion

When considering the site and its immediate environs at a local scale, it shares only a few of the characteristics of the NCLAs and character areas within which it lies or is very close to.

The site itself benefits from strong enclosing woody features that lie within a wider context of a greater vegetative network. The vegetated landscape framework, especially to the west, presents a wooded character and a dense buffer to Lampeter settled character. Existing development is present to the north, east and south, with multiple uses and building styles, both indoor and outdoor.

Characteristic features informing development:

- Improvement of Green Infrastructure will be a key driver towards development (in accordance with published guidance, policy and good practice), including:
  - Retention and enhancement of boundary features (trees, hedgerow and woodland) to create strong landscape framework;
  - Introduction of new landscape typologies and biodiversity opportunities - wildflower meadow, neutral grassland, marginal and wetland habitat in conjunction with the drainage strategy (swales and basins);
  - Planting of trees;
  - Provision of connectivity for people (footpaths) and wildlife corridors (hedgerows and grassland strips);
  - Edge interface softening in order to deliver a good landscape fit, especially along the northern and eastern boundary;
  - Minimising tree and hedgerow loss and compensation where necessary;
  - Maintaining open skies and views towards the surrounding valley landscape, especially to the south;
  - Minimising light pollution where possible.



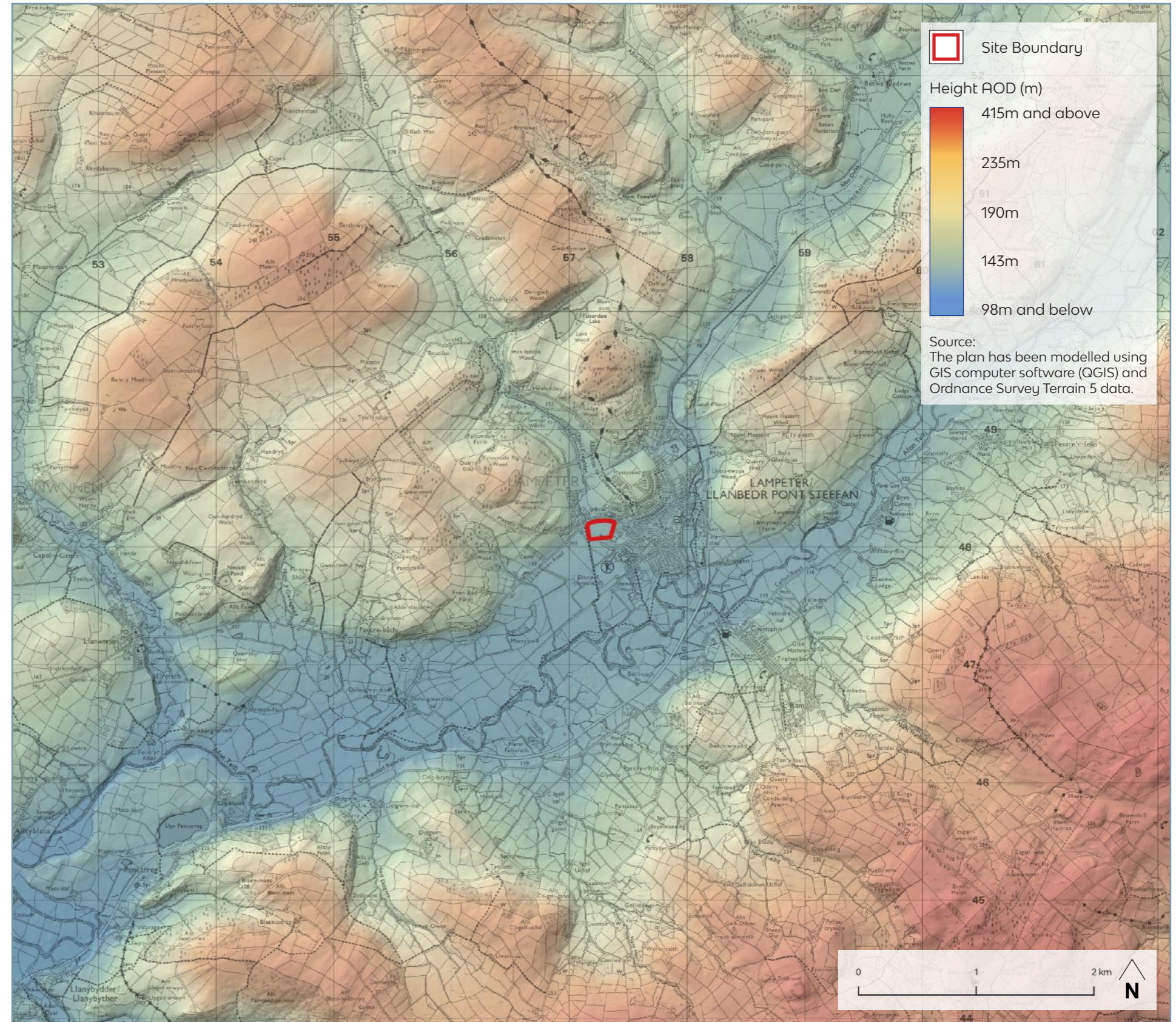


### 3 Landscape and Visual Baseline

#### Visual Context and Visual Receptors

- 3.18 In order to establish the degree of any change that may arise from future development on site and the extent to which such changes will affect identified local receptors, it is important to understand the existing situation in terms of visual amenity alongside the availability and context of views associated with the local area. Chapter 6 of the GLVIA3 sets out how the visual baseline is established. The baseline should establish the area in which the proposed development may be visible, those people who may experience views of the development, the key viewpoints representative of affected views and the nature of the views at the viewpoints.
- 3.19 This chapter considers representative views towards the site from the surrounding area. This is based on the findings of topographical mapping (Plan 5: Topography) and Geographic Information System (GIS) first sieve analysis mapping (Plan 6: Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)) and has been refined and verified through field assessment.
- 3.20 The software generated image illustrates the extent to which development of up to 8m high on the site would be potentially visible within a 5km radius to a 1.6m high receptor. The calculation is based on Ordnance Survey Terrain 5 data only, and does not take into account built form or vegetation present within the landscape. The ZTV model generated for the proposed development on the site development identifies the influence of the topography in limiting views.
- 3.21 Given the local landform and the dense woodland vegetation in the areas surrounding the site, the ZTV model indicates a larger area than in reality. The influence of built form and vegetation, including the dense vegetated site boundaries serve to limit intervisibility.
- 3.22 This first sieve exercise has been verified in the field to take into account any significant vegetation or built form which further restricts or limits the extent of visibility. Following the completion of a visit to the site, a number of representative viewpoints have been identified that illustrate the approximate extent of areas from which the site is visible. These are illustrated further on in Section 3 of this report. In accordance with GLVIA3, the visual analysis is based on views from external spaces within the public domain excluding barely discernible views, and not from inside buildings or private spaces. However, where notable views from private properties are possible, these

Plan 4: Topography (13550/P01)



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have been considered where relevant. Photographs were taken from selected viewpoints with a digital camera with an equivalent 50mm focal length lens at eye level (approximately 1600mm above ground). A total of nine representative viewpoints have been chosen from locations surrounding the site to enable the effects of the development to be assessed from all directions (see Photoviewpoints 1-9).

3.23 Whilst the views are chosen to be representative of the area, they cannot provide continuous coverage of all potential locations within the vicinity of the development. Often, views will occur as a sequence within the surrounding environment, with the most significant views assessed further within this report. Likewise, where transient or fleeting views are possible, these will also be assessed as part of the report.

3.24 The GIS ZTV model suggests that the site will be visible as far north as Upper Forest, and as far south as Pen Carreg. To the east, the ZTV suggests that the site is visible from Nant Gou and to the west suggests that it is visible from Wernfa.

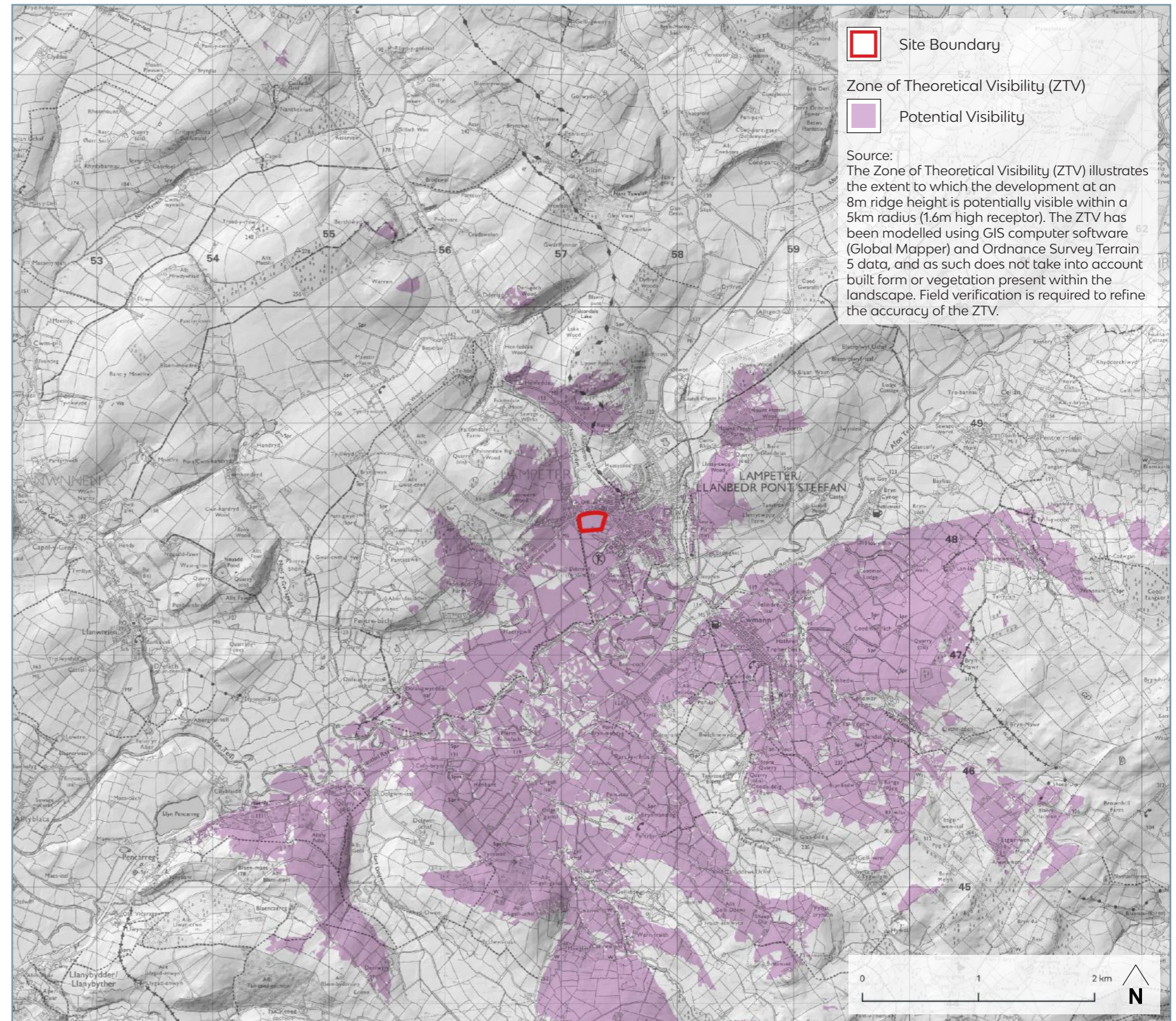
3.25 In reality, the interplay between the hilly topography that envelops the site and the vegetation and settlement that is in the immediate surroundings limits intervisibility to the close vicinity. The site itself is well enclosed by mature vegetation at the site's boundaries and built form to the north and east.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

3.26 The PRoW network that is present around the site is relatively limited to the Aberaeron to Lampeter Trail and the footpath 62.18 that runs north to south along the western edge of the wooded riparian corridor, towards the river. Other public footpaths are located close to the site as seen in Plan 6: Photoviewpoint Locations and Public Rights of Way.

3.27 Although there are locations upon elevated topography to the north, east, south and west that overlook the site and afford intervisibility, these are not publicly accessible and are mostly wooded.

Plan 5: GIS Zone of Theoretical Visibility (13550/P02)



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### 3 Landscape and Visual Baseline

#### Extent and Composition of Views

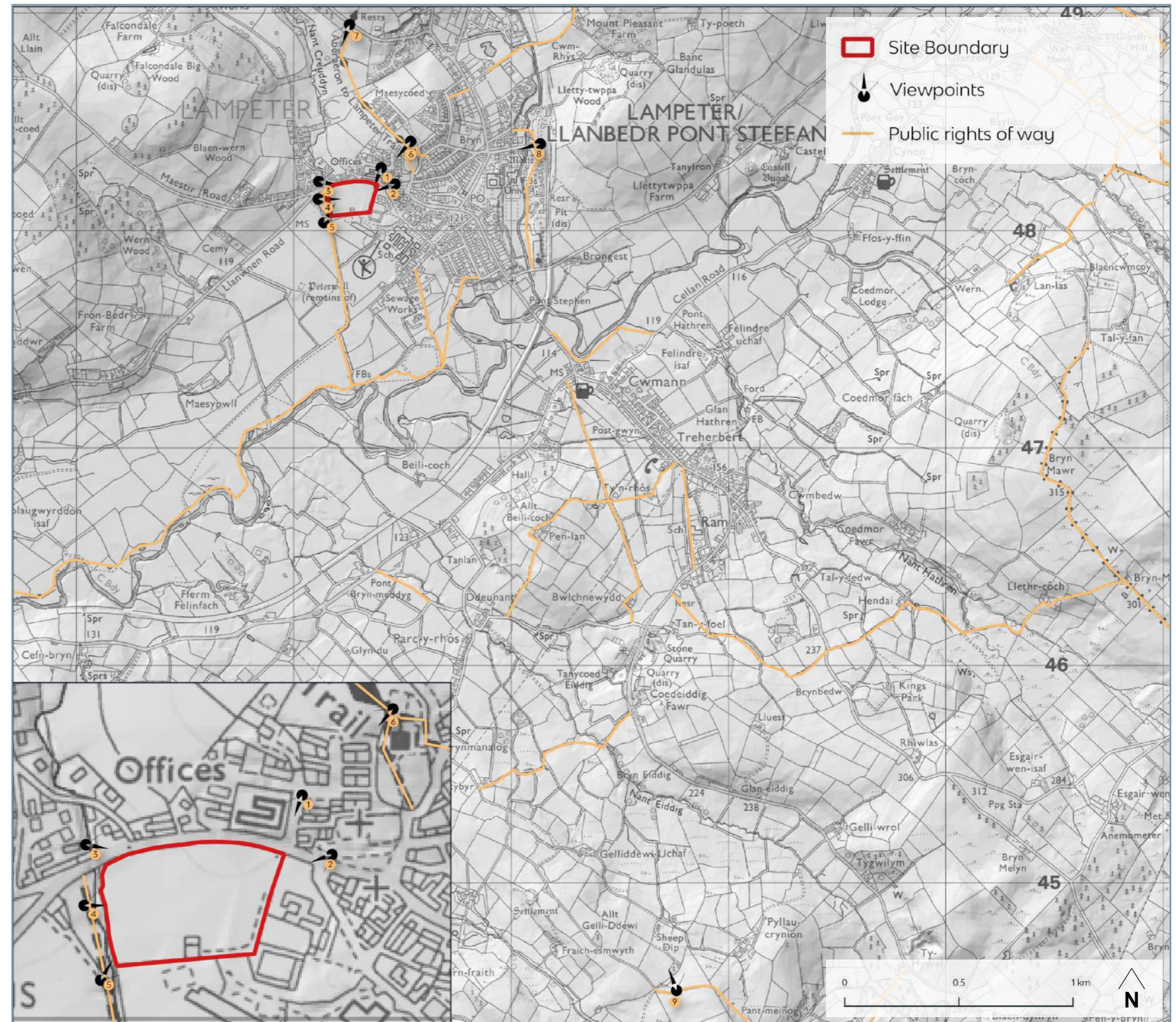
3.28 Generally, the extent of the visibility of the site is limited by the topography, presence of settlement to the north and east, and intervening vegetation (including the mature trees and woodland to the site's boundaries). The extent and composition of the views is considered further within the next section.

#### Potential Visual Receptors

3.29 The photographs included within this report are representative of individuals/groups of people that may experience visual change as a result of development on the site. The potential receptors are as follows:

- Residential properties on Pontfaen Road and Ffynon Bedr to the north of the site (see Photoviewpoint 1 and 3);
- Residential properties to the east of the site (see Photoviewpoint 2), including those within the Lampeter Conservation Area;
- Recreational users of the indoor and outdoor facilities to the east of the site;
- Recreational users of PRow Footpath 62/18, to the west of the site running towards the south of the site (see Photoviewpoint 4 and 5);
- Recreational users of the Aberaeron to Lampeter Trail, to the north of the site (see Photoviewpoints 6 & 7)

Plan 6: Photoviewpoint Locations and Public Rights of Way (13550/P09)



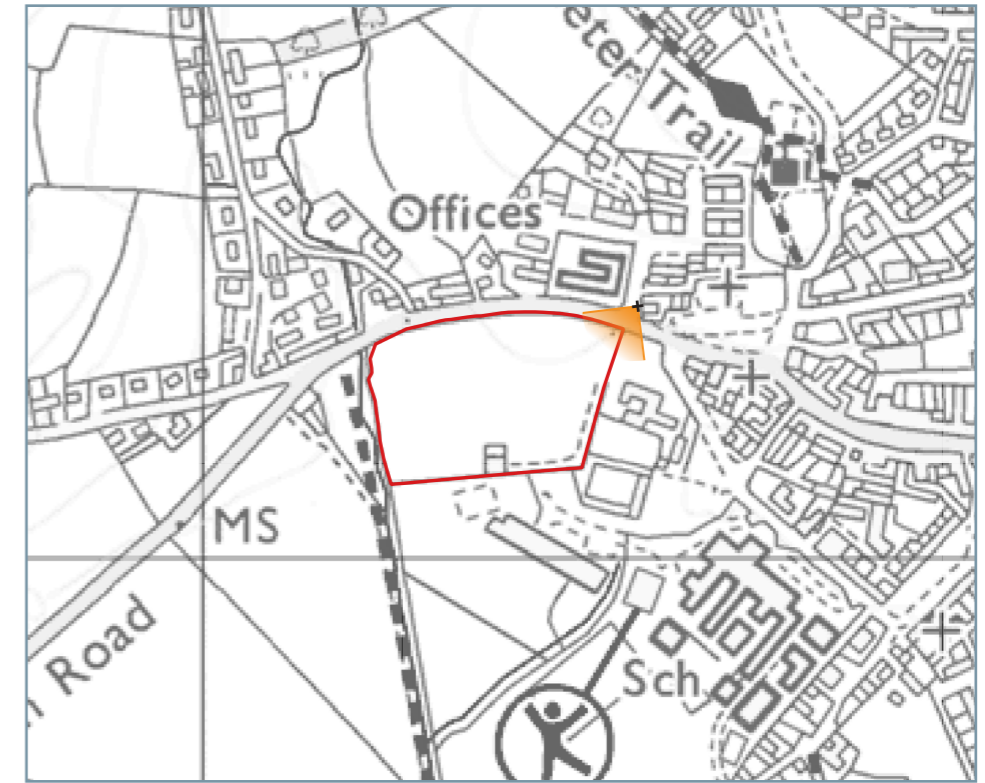
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## 4 Visual Study

Photoviewpoint 1:

- 4.1 This photoviewpoint location represent close-distance views from the north of the site, including residential properties along Pontfaen Road and Ffynon Bedr.
- 4.2 Views of the site are evident through gaps in vegetation as the photoviewpoint location is on higher ground. This gives a clearer representation above the hedgerow compared to what would be shown nearer to the northern site boundary.



Photoviewpoint 1: Taken from 'Ffynon Bedr' beyond the north-east boundary of the site looking south across the A475 and into the site

Orientation: South Distance from site: 25m



## 4 Visual Study

Photoviewpoint 2:

- 4.3 This photoviewpoint location represents close-distance views from the east, at the edge of the Lampeter Conservation Area.
- 4.4 Views of the site are filtered through multiple layers of mature vegetation on the site's northern and eastern boundary.



Photoviewpoint 2: Taken from Pontfaen Road (A475) to the east of the site.

Orientation: West Distance from site: 50m



## 4 Visual Study

Photoviewpoint 3:

- 4.5 This photoviewpoint location represents close-distance views of the site from the north-west, from Pontfaen Road.
- 4.6 Mature vegetation along the site's northern and western boundaries limits views into the site. Existing development along Pontfaen Road and around Lampeter can be seen within the context of the view.



Photoviewpoint 3: Taken from Pontfaen Road (A475) to the north-west of the site looking towards Lampeter.

Orientation: East Distance from site: 15m



## 4 Visual Study

Photoviewpoint 4:

- 4.7 This photoviewpoint location represents close-distance views from west of the site.
- 4.8 Views of the site are heavily filtered by the woodland that is established along the western boundary.



Photoviewpoint 4: Taken from PRow footpath 62/18 to the west of the site.

Orientation: East Distance from site: 10m



## 4 Visual Study

Photoviewpoint 5:

- 4.9 This photoviewpoint location represents close-distance views from south of the site, along PRow footpath 62/18.
- 4.10 Views of the site are heavily filtered by the woodland that is established along the western boundary of the site and running south.



Photoviewpoint 5: Taken from public right of way 62/18 beyond the south-west boundary of the site looking towards the site

Orientation: North Distance from site: 20m



Photoviewpoint 6:

- 4.11 This photoviewpoint location represents middle-distance views from the north of the site, along the Aberaeron to Lampeter Trail and within the ground of St Peters Church.
- 4.12 There is no visibility towards due the site due to intervening vegetation and built form.



Photoviewpoint 6: Taken from St Peters Church graveyard at the end of the Aberaeron to Lampeter Trail looking towards the site

Orientation: South-west Distance from site: 225m



## 4 Visual Study

Photoviewpoint 7:

- 4.13 This photoviewpoint location represents middle-distance views from the north of the site, along the Aberaeron to Lampeter Trail.
- 4.14 Views of the site are heavily prevented by woodland (Lodge Wood) that is present on the slopes of the hill to the north.



Photoviewpoint 7: Taken from the Aberaeron to Lampeter Trail at the edge of Lodge wood'

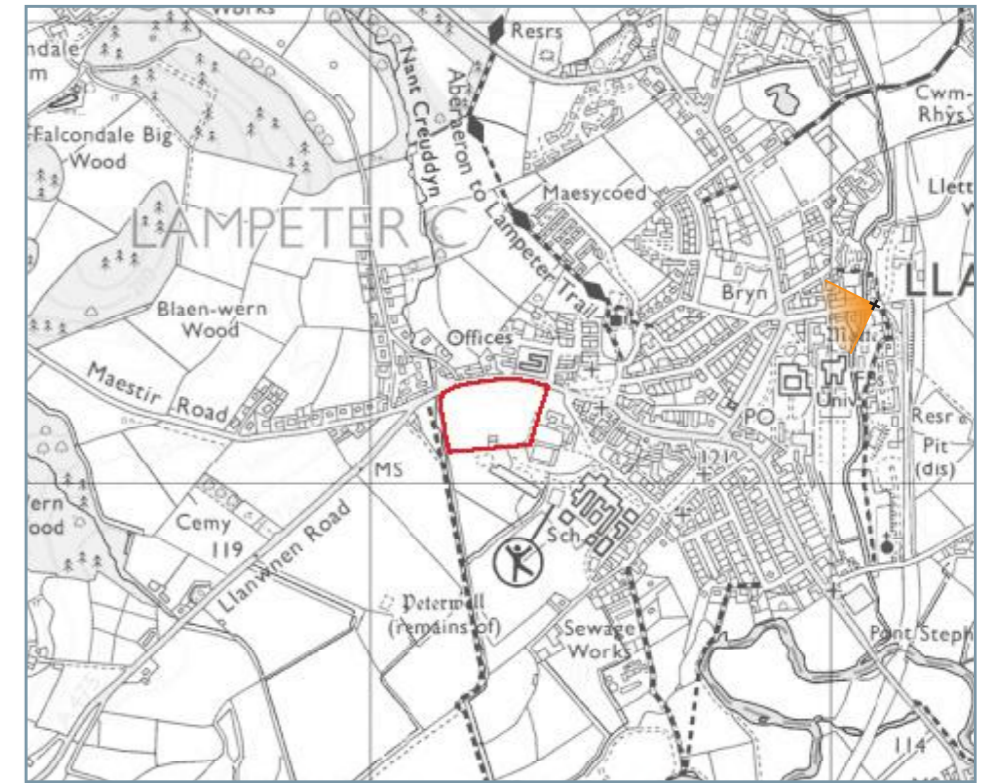
Orientation: South Distance from site: 700m



## 4 Visual Study

Photoviewpoint 8:

- 4.15 This photoviewpoint location represents middle-distance views from the east of the site, on the PRow footpath 62/16 at the eastern edge of Lampeter.
- 4.16 Views of the site are not evident due to intervening built form within Lampeter.



Photoviewpoint 8: Taken from 'Station Terrace' along public right of way 62/16 looking in the direction of the site

Orientation: West Distance from site: 750m



## 4 Visual Study

Photoviewpoint 9:

- 4.17 This photoviewpoint location represents distant views from the hills to the south of the site.
- 4.18 The site is indiscernible due to the presence of intervening vegetation, built form and topography.



Approximate Location of Site

Photoviewpoint 9: Taken from PRow Footpath 58/28

Orientation: North Distance from site: 3850m



Long Distance Views (2km - 5km)

- 4.19 The ZTV confirms that there are no long distance views of the site from the north and west due to the nature of the photography. The site is not visible in distant views to the north, east and west, as confirmed by the fieldwork, and summarised below.
- 4.20 Photoviewpoint 9 demonstrates distant views from the public footpath network on higher ground to the south. Intervening vegetation, alternating topography and built form all play a role in restricting long distance views of the site.
- 4.21 In summary, there are no long distance views of the site.

Middle Distance Views (500m-2km)

- 4.22 The ZTV indicates that the proposed development would be visible in middle distance views in all directions. However, views from this distance are generally restricted due to the alternating topography and dense vegetation that surrounds the site.
- 4.23 Photoviewpoints 6, 7 and 8 are from public viewpoints to the north and east and display no intervisibility with the site. There are no publicly accessible views within the western ZTV viewshed beyond PRoW footpath 62/18 close to the western boundary.
- 4.24 From the south, due to the decreasing topography to the river valley floor in the middle distance, no views were afforded towards the site. The dense wooded corridor and vegetation along the southern boundary restricts views from this distance, alongside this topography change.
- 4.25 In summary, there are no views of the site from the middle distance.

Short Distance Views (less than 500m)

- 4.26 The ZTV indicates that the proposed development would be visible in short distance views from all directions. However, the site is heavily filtered in most of these views by intervening vegetation and built form
- 4.27 Photoviewpoint 1, 2 and 3 demonstrates short distance views from the settlement that runs along Pontfaen Road into Lampeter, including the edge of the Conservation Area. Views experienced by these receptors are heavily

filtered by the mature vegetation that is present both on the site's northern, western and eastern boundaries, as well as the vegetation in the wider locality. Views of the site are generally glimpsed through this vegetation above the 1.5-metre high hedge line. Views from the settlement, including the Conservation Area (Photoviewpoint 2), to the east is particularly screened by multiple layers of vegetation and built form in the foreground.

- 4.28 Photoviewpoint 4 and 5 demonstrates short distance views from the west along PRoW footpath 62/18. As illustrated in the photographs, views are heavily filtered by mature wooded vegetation along the stream corridor to the west of the site. This corridor extends all the way south to the River and valley floor which restricts views from the west and south, alongside the changing topography. This, coupled with the mature vegetation along the southern boundary, limits any public views from the south.
- 4.29 In summary, views of the site are relatively restricted to the immediate vicinity and glimpsed through gaps in the vegetation that encloses the site in all directions.

Visual Conclusions

Conclusions on Views/Visibility

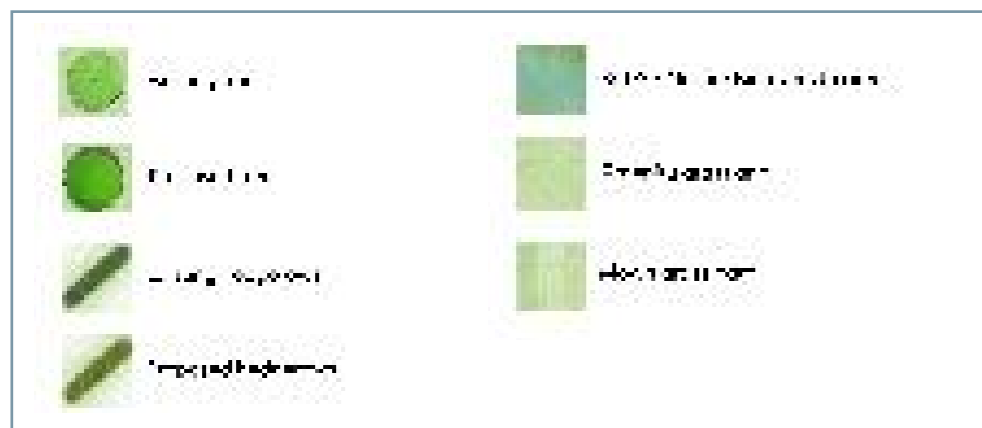
- The visual appraisal that has been undertaken has established that visibility of the site is generally restricted and heavily filtered by the surrounding topography, settlement and intervening layers of vegetation (including the mature trees to the site boundaries). Public views are only available on the immediate surroundings as the PRoW network around the site is limited.
- Development on the site would not be out of context and would not introduce any incongruous elements into the visual environment.
- By supplementing proposals with additional tree and hedgerow planting at the boundaries and within the internal landscape framework, the site proposals will be softened and visually mitigated to reduce the impact on the locality. This would provide an increase in canopy coverage to that which is already existing, with additional diversity of native species to that is already present.
- Development of this nature would dovetail into the flat settled landscape in a logical manner and the proposed retention and bolstering of existing linear features would ensure that beneficial screening is enhanced.



## 5 Proposals and Benefits

### Proposals

- 5.1 In response to the landscape and visual baseline analysis, a series of landscape objectives have been identified to ensure that the development response reflects the local circumstance and addresses opportunities for landscape enhancement.
- 5.2 A Landscape Strategy Plan for the site (see Plan 9: Landscape Strategy Plan) has been delivered to accompany the development proposals. The main benefits of the proposals are considered to be as follows:
- Delivery of a new, well-designed and attractive food store with associated car parking and access;
  - Refurbishment and renovation of a historic building (Sports Pavilion) and sports pitches (“the birthplace of Welsh rugby”) to provide cultural value and ongoing use for future generations;
  - Outdoor recreational space for the university and local community, including event space and exhibition pods;
  - Retention of the majority of trees, hedgerows and woodland within large landscape buffers, except for those that will be lost to facilitate access from Pontfaen Road;
  - Natural wildlife pond area to provide valuable habitat for a diverse range of species;
  - Introduction of native trees and hedgerows at the boundaries and within the internal framework to provide a net gain in canopy coverage and improved species diversity. This will also provide visual mitigation to nearby receptors to the north and east;
  - Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) to mitigate the effects of flooding in an environmental manner.



Plan 7: Landscape Strategy Plan (13550/P12)



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Implications of Development

6.1 Understanding the level of change associated with the landscape and visual environs and the proposed development is an important consideration when addressing the suitability of development in relation to a receiving landscape. GLVIA3 recognises the importance of the judgement of the professional undertaking the analysis to identify the nature of the change. To provide transparency to the judgements made in this LVA, the following text describes how the existing landscape, views and visual amenity of the area may be affected; predicting the implications although not their likely significance; and considering how those implications might be mitigated.

Landscape Implications

6.2 The landscape receptors within the site are defined as follows within the categories of landform and landcover.

Topography

6.3 The relative landform is generally consistent across the whole site. The implementation of the proposals would maintain the general landform with local adjustments for engineering, drainage or other design requirements.

Boundary Vegetative Features

6.4 Well-treed linear boundary features are a local characteristic and published guidelines and strategies promote their retention, enhancement and management. Apart from access into the site which requires the removal of three trees, the site features will be retained in accordance with good practice and enhanced in order to strengthen their connectivity and visual mitigation. Their maturity and continuity provides a strong framework to development which is set back and supplemented with additional new planting. The arboricultural surveys and iterative input has ensured that root protection areas and canopy spreads are respected and that the implementation of the soft landscape proposals demonstrate their enhancement, the line with the landscape strategy. Any loss will be compensated by planting within the scheme layout but moreover their longevity and improvement will be assured that provides visual screening, development edge softening, biodiversity improvement and overall GI benefits.

Visual Implications

6.5 The visual receptors identified within the area and verified in the field as having a change in view are appraised below. These receptors represent the people who will experience a noticeable change in view due to the implementation of the proposals. They are all located adjacent to the site's boundaries, or in close proximity to them. There are no noticeable views for receptors at a greater distance as evidenced in the visual analysis and accompanying photosheets.

Residential and commercial properties on Pontfaen Road and Ffynon Bedr to the north of the site (see Photoviewpoint 1 and 3)

6.6 The residents near to the site boundaries will be afforded views of the new development only in parts and not in the entirety, filtered through mature vegetation. The existing vegetated boundaries will be mostly retained, enhanced and managed, and any screening or filtering value improved. This is the case for all properties along Pontfaen Road and Ffynon Bedr. Built development has been set back from this boundary by approximately 30 metres and internal trees, hedgerow and shrubs will be included within and around the car park.

6.7 Whilst views will change, this isn't necessarily deemed to be a negative change. Given the context and well-designed nature of the scheme and execution of the new development and landscaped setting, it would be considered to be a neutral change towards this small receptor group.

Residential and properties to the east of the site (see Photoviewpoint 2), including those within the Lampeter Conservation Area

6.8 The views towards the east of the site are heavily filtered by built form and multiple layers of vegetation in the foreground. Through the introduction of additional vegetation along the eastern boundary, views will be restricted further.

6.9 Whilst views may change, these changes will be relatively minor. Given the context of the existing buildings in the foreground alongside the improved visual mitigation along the eastern boundary, this would be considered a neutral change towards this small receptor group.

Recreational users of the facilities to the east of the site

6.10 The eastern boundary vegetation is relatively limited compared to the other boundaries. This will be restocked with a native hedgerow along the existing boundary line and supplemented with additional trees. This will seek to soften views for this receptor and provide linear connectivity between the existing vegetative features.

6.11 Whilst there are likely to be some initial negative effects arising, the filtering will be increased as landscape implementation establishes.

Recreational users of PRow Footpath 62/18, to the st of the site running towards the south of the site (see Photoviewpoint 4 and 5)

6.12 The dense woodland group along the western boundary heavily filters views of the site for this receptor. This will be retained, buffered and supplemented with additional trees. The primary built development has been sited away from this feature and receptor group and therefore intervisibility has been mitigated against. For this reason, change for this receptor will be neutral.

Recreational users of the Aberaeron to Lampeter Trail, to the north of the site (see Photoviewpoints 6 & 7).

6.13 Intervisibility between the site and this receptor group has not been defined and therefore the change for this group is negligible.



### Summary and Conclusion

- 7.1 This LVA has been carried out in accordance with industry standard guidance including the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3), Third Edition (2013). It has been carried out by a Licentiate Member of the Landscape Institute and reviewed by a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute.
- 7.2 When considering the landscape and visual implications of development, it is important to recognise that any change to a greenfield site will ultimately result in landscape and visual effects. However, the extent of the effects should be considered within the local context and their proposals degree of conformance with their surroundings, as well as the social, economic and environmental balance.
- 7.3 The landscape framework shows how the scheme has taken a holistic route to development, with the inclusion of swales, wildflower meadows, wildlife ponds, recreation provision, tree management, new planting and hedgerow enhancements which all collectively add to the diversity and enrichment over the existing baseline situation.
- 7.4 In general, and as supported by the evidence of the ZTV, field verified visual envelope and visual analysis, the proposed development benefits from good visual containment. This is then heightened when married with the new landscape proposals and subsequent management that benefits both the visual environment and the landscape character. The LVA demonstrates that visual effects will be localised and limited to those views close to the site. The proposals provide a good contextual fit with the character of the area and provide a net gain in tree canopy cover.
- 7.5 Published guidance identifies a number of landscape initiatives that have been embraced within the scheme. In addition, the relationship with the surrounding area and context has been sympathetic. The character would not be adversely affected by the proposals; on the contrary, the landscape benefits arising through the delivery of the proposed scheme would accord with landscape context and would not be out of keeping with it.
- 7.6 In terms of planning policy, policy DM17, DM18 and DM19 alongside the Special Landscape Area SPD from Ceredigion County Council Local Development Plan, all recognise the character and cultural value of the area. The LVA also recognises this importance and acknowledges the constraints. Through an appropriate design response that limits the effects of built development and provides enhancements to the existing land use and features of importance, this LVA concludes that the proposals are in accordance with planning policy.
- 7.7 The improvement and enhancement of GI over and above the existing baseline demonstrates the delivery of a multi-functional GI Strategy, with the enhancement measures as set out in the Landscape Strategy. This provides accessibility, legibility and other social and economic benefits that would improve the health and well-being of the local community.
- 7.8 Finally, the LVA has shown that the issues in relation to landscape and visual matters have been mitigated against using the siting of the built form and the inclusion of the proposed soft landscaping. This report concludes that there are no issues arising with regard to landscape and visual matters which would undermine the feasibility of the scheme.