

Appendix B.2 Published Evidence Extracts



National Landscape Character Areas

NLCA11: Vale of Clwyd

7.1.1 Key characteristics of NLCA11 that are of relevance to the Site's context include:

- A broad agricultural vale between adjacent upland areas;
- Broad, flat flood plain with river alluvium marking its extents;
- Distinctive line of hills forming the eastern boundary, also forming an upland-lowland boundary;
- Undulating fringe either side of vale;
- Arable and pasture, well managed hedges;
- Many hedgerow and parkland trees and some woodland blocks, and of ecological importance, some Alder woodland, swamp and rush pasture and some ash-wych elm dominated woodland; and
- Rural landscape with dispersed, scattered farms, and settlement confined to small villages and hamlets and the three towns.

7.1.2 With respect to the visual and sensory profile of NLCA11, the assessment notes:

"The gentle, open bowl of the Vale of Clwyd contrasts distinctively with the steep hillsides and ridge of the adjacent Clwydian Range of hills to the east. Their line of smooth, rounded heather-clad summits forms a distinctive setting for the Vale, providing a strong sense of visual containment and separation from other lowland areas...further east. For the most part, the vale itself is rural, lowland, and a farmed landscape with a patchwork mix of arable and pasture...There is a strong field pattern formed by numerous hedgerows. Many are well managed and include numerous hedgerow trees and occasionally parkland trees..."

Fields rise up the lower slopes of the Clwydian Range, where there are many small farms and villages, and where open views across the Vale are common".

7.1.3 Under the landscape habitats influences of NLCA11, the assessment notes:

"The more productive parts of this fertile area are distinguished by large fields and well trimmed hedges...Some of the landed estates are associated with woodland plantings, often in regular geometric blocks as shelterbelts and game cover, giving a generally wooded feel to an otherwise open and productive agricultural landscape".



NLCA09: Rhos

7.1.4 Key characteristics of NLCA09 that are of relevance to the Site's context include:

- Rural inland foothills and valleys that rise to the adjacent Denbigh Moors to the south;
- River valleys and flood plains are present;
- An undulating land form comprising a series of ridges and valleys associated with the river catchment, and a range in grades of slope;
- Sheep grazed pasture is the predominant land cover;
- Occasional woodlands, often occurring on the river valley slopes;
- Mixed field patterns, often geometric but varying widely in scale, from small to large size fields, with a denser network of mixed hedgerows with more trees in sheltered valleys, running up to sparse, windswept hedges and fences occupying areas of former moorland; and
- Sparsely settled, affording rural peace and tranquillity, with wide views from the higher points and a sense of intimacy and enclosure in the valleys close by.

7.1.5 With respect to the visual and sensory profile of NLCA11, the assessment describes a:

“quiet pastoral landscape of rolling hills and valleys...The land rises gradually to the south with the Denbigh Moors acting as a bleak southern skyline from the higher vantage points.

The river valleys...form enclosed and intimate landscapes... Fringing some of the valleys...are a series of distinctive rounded, open hills...[with] moorland heath on the tops...

The general settlement pattern...is of widely scattered, small rural farmsteads...[and] occasional parklands...

Deciduous woodland clothes the steep valley sides in many places...There are also occasional small copses...[and] rectilinear coniferous forestry plantations...”

7.1.6 Under the landscape habitats influences of NLCA09, the assessment notes that the landscape is:

“now limited to small remnants of heath and moor on the hills and in patches of wetter land. Areas of wet land and small natural lakes remain...[It is an] agricultural landscape of small fields and woods...[with] predominantly sheep-grazed pastures, set in a network of small fields, bounded by mature hedges and individual trees. Steeper slopes...[are] often covered in gorse or bracken...[and] the landscape is well wooded”.



Clwydian Range and Dee Valley National Landscape

7.1.7 The Special Qualities of the National Landscape are set out in Table 1 of the Management Plan:

- Tranquillity, an atmosphere of calm and stillness; peace and quiet; and with dark night skies;
- Remoteness and wildness, space and freedom, access to the landscape and the uninterrupted and extensive views from the high places within it;
- Heather moorland and rolling ridges, including the dramatic moorland ridges of the central Clwydian Range, expansive Llandegla and Ruabon Moors, Llantysilio and North Berwyn;
- Broadleaved woodlands and veteran trees, including Bishops Wood, Cwm and Wheeler Valley. Ash-dominated Alyn Valley woods and the small copses of the upper Alyn and upland oak woods of the Dee Valley;
- River valleys and the River Dee – the dramatic and powerful River Dee contrasted with the smaller twisting and winding River Alyn and River Wheeler’;
- Limestone grasslands, cliffs and screes, including Graig Fawr, Loggerheads and Bryn Alyn – Llanarmon yn Ial and the spectacular Eglwyseg escarpment;
- Historic settlement and archaeology, including the diverse patterns and features in the landscape left by previous generations;
- Industrial features and the World Heritage Site – limestone quarrying and lead mining, slate quarries and associated tramways and working, the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal, Horseshoe Falls;
- Historic defence features, including the dramatic chain of Iron Age hillforts of the Clwydian Range, Castell Dinas Bran and Chirk Castle and medieval motte and baileys at Tomen y Rhodwydd, Tomen y Fadde and Glyndwr’s Mount, Carrog;
- Small historic features – often unlisted or scheduled a rich mixture of small historic features that are an important part of the rich cultural layer of the landscape, including wells, village pumps, boundary stones, waymarkers, milk stands and K6 telephone boxes;
- Traditional boundaries, including drystone walls and hedges reflecting traditional skills and craftsmanship and often reflecting local styles and geology;
- Iconic visitor and cultural attractions – sites that have helped to shape the identity of the National Landscape as a visitor destination, including Loggerheads, Moel Famau, Castell Dinas Bran, Valle Crucis Abbey, the Horseshoe Pass and Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Horseshoe Falls;
- The Offa’s Dyke National Trail and Promoted Routes – stretching from Prestatyn Hillside in the north to Llangollen in the South, the National Trail makes the AONB particularly accessible. The Dee Valley Way, North Berwyn Way and a network of community paths. Together with extensive areas of Access Land the landscape of the National Landscape is particularly accessible;
- The built environment, including the villages and towns, hamlets and scattered settlements; and
- People and communities – a rich mix of culture and strong sense of community; the facilities and services that are essential to sustaining rural life.



7.1.8 Policies relating to Landscape Quality and Character include:

“PoISQ1 – Conserve and enhance the special qualities and distinctive character of the AONB’s landscape and associated features including the historical built form; [and]

PoISQ2 – Safeguard the panoramic views, tranquillity and environmental quality of the AONB for the generations of today and the future.”

7.1.9 Objectives relating to Landscape Quality and Character include:

“LQCO1 – Ensure that the natural resources and special qualities of the AONB are recognised and valued...;

LQCO3 – Minimise the cumulative impacts of small-scale change that may erode the special character of the AONB;

LQCO4 – Protect the tranquillity of the AONB and take steps where possible to reduce noise and light pollution; [and]

LQCO5 – Where possible reduce visual intrusion by screening or removing eyesores.”

7.1.10 Policies relating to Access, Recreation and Tourism include:

“PoART2 – Ensure that the attractiveness of the AONB’s landscape and views as a primary basis for the area’s tourism are retained”.

7.1.11 Policies relating to Culture and People include:

BEO1 – Ensure new development in and around the AONB is sympathetically located in the landscape, and is well designed to complement the character and appearance of the area and its setting, particularly in respect of visual impact, scale, materials and landscaping”.

Local Landscape Character Areas

LCA D/LC/6: Vale of Clwyd North

7.1.12 The key characteristics of LCA D/LC/6: Vale of Clwyd North are:

“A wide, fault bounded valley...[which] runs in a north-south direction and is bounded by the Clwydian Range on the east and by the Denbigh Hills and foothills to the west;

The northern more wooded end of the Vale is distinguished from the more open southern section;

High quality agricultural land is intensively farmed, with mostly improved grassland with some arable locally, and contains numerous scattered farms;

Although the Vale appears largely as a flat farmland landscape, glacial deposition has created a more distinct undulating valley floor;

Local variation is provided by more distinct river valleys with partly wooded slopes south of St Asaph...formed by the river Elwy;

A high quality landscape which is enhanced by the overall wooded character produced by the abundance of hedgerow trees and the wooded estates;



Important views of the Vale are seen especially from the adjoining Clwydian Hills;

Farmland is characterised by a strong pattern of hedgerows and an especially high density of hedgerow trees, predominantly of oak. The nationally scarce black poplar occurs in this area;

Although the Vale consists mostly of improved grassland and has an overall moderate biodiversity value, broadleaved woodland..., riverside corridors, remnant marshy grassland and numerous field ponds are of significance to wildlife conservation;

The Vale is an important road...corridor containing both the north-south A525 Rhyl-Wrexham road and the east-west A55(T) expressway. There are other classified roads and many minor ones also; and

The area is well populated with main towns at Rhuddlan and St Asaph and several villages as well as many farms and other dwellings”.

7.1.13 Management Objectives set out within the Strategy include:

“Maintain and enhance tree and woodland cover, protect and manage broadleaved woodland and encourage new planting, particularly of oak and occasional black poplar, to eventually replace mature and ageing hedgerow trees;

Encourage maintenance of hedgerow boundaries;

Promote their [ponds] conservation...[and] give consideration to establishment of new ponds; [and]

Protect and encourage creation of a diversity of habitat features, including linear wetland and riverside trees within farmland landscape”.

LANDMAP Aspect Areas

Geological Landscape

7.1.14 All Geological Landscape AAs overlapping with or adjacent to the Site have been retained for assessment irrespective of their evaluation:

- Bodelwyddan (DNBGHGL016). This AA is evaluated as Moderate for Rarity/Uniqueness (Q31) and Overall Evaluation (33). The entry describes a “gentle, north-facing slope of Westphalian Coal Measures with undulating topography, blanketed with Quaternary till. The slope is down from the limestone ridge in the south to the coastal plain and the alluvial Clwyd estuary”.

7.1.15 All Geological Landscape AAs adjacent to the Site have been retained for assessment irrespective of their evaluation:

- Cefn Meiriadog (DNBGHGL031). This AA is evaluated as High for Rarity/Uniqueness and Overall Evaluation. The entry describes a “north west-south east trending limestone ridge with limestone exposed at several localities. There are several caves in the limestone and a wooded limestone pavement at the southern end”.

7.1.16 All Geological Landscape AAs recording a special relationship with those Geological Landscape AAs that overlap or are adjacent to the Site have been retained for assessment irrespective of their evaluation:



- Tytywyrch (DNBGHGL015). This AA is evaluated as High for Rarity/Uniqueness and Overall Evaluation. The entry describes a *“low-lying, flat, alluvial plain on the western-side of the River Clwyd. Reclaimed, farmed land”*.
- The Roe (DNBGHGL017). This AA is evaluated as Moderate for Rarity/Uniqueness and Overall Evaluation. The entry describes a *“gently undulating flood plain on the western side of the Elwy and Clwyd rivers. This AA is draped with alluvium with some river terraces”*.
- Elwy Gorge (DNBGHGL032). This AA is evaluated as Outstanding for Rarity/Uniqueness and Overall Evaluation. The entry describes a *“northwest-southeast trending river gorge through limestone with a narrow, flat, valley bottom and steep sides with land slips”*.

7.1.17 All Geological Landscape AAs within the 5km study area, which are also indicated on the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV – see below) to have intervisibility with the Site, and which are also evaluated as Outstanding or High for Rarity/Uniqueness (Q31) and/or Overall Evaluation (Q33) have been retained for assessment:

- Henllan (DNBGHGL035). This AA is evaluated as Outstanding for Rarity/Uniqueness and Overall Evaluation. The entry describes a *“northwest-southeast trending limestone ridge, in places draped with till. Drumlins are present in the north of this AA”*.
- Waen Gloeugod (DNBGHGL019). This AA is evaluated as High for Rarity/Uniqueness and Overall Evaluation. The entry describes an *“extensive till covering the undulating and gently westward-sloping sides of the eastern side of the half-graben and glacially-widened U-shaped Vale of Clwyd. A glacial terminal moraine is cut by the River Clwyd and streams”*.

Landscape Habitats

7.1.18 All Landscape Habitats AAs overlapping with the Site have been retained for assessment irrespective of their evaluation:

- Cefn Improved Grassland (DNBGHLH023). This AA is evaluated as High for Connectivity/Cohesion (Q42) and Moderate for Overall Evaluation (Q45). The entry describes *“an intensively farmed improved grassland landscape with some arable, and a good network of hedges containing many mature trees, many small blocks of semi-natural broadleaved and planted mixed woodland, and some parkland”*.

7.1.19 No Landscape Habitats AAs are adjacent to the Site.

7.1.20 All Landscape Habitats AAs within the 5km study area, which are also indicated on the ZTV to have intervisibility with the Site, and which are also evaluated as Outstanding or High for Connectivity/Cohesion and/or Overall Evaluation have been retained for assessment:

- Bodelwyddan Lowland Parkland (DNBGHLH021). This AA is evaluated as High for Connectivity/Cohesion and Moderate for Overall Evaluation. The entry describes *“a lowland parkland landscape of improved grassland, amenity grassland and some arable with a mix of veteran trees, semi-natural broadleaved and planted mixed woodland and ponds”*.
- Vale of Clwyd North Improved Grassland (DNBGHLH017). This AA is evaluated as High for Connectivity/Cohesion and Moderate for Overall Evaluation. The entry describes a *“largely improved grassland landscape with some arable, and a good network of hedges containing numerous mature hedgerow trees mainly of Oak, pond clusters supporting great crested newt, and scattered pockets of broadleaved and conifer woodland. A major river and network of tributaries are a feature of the area”*.



Cultural Landscape Services

7.1.21 All Cultural Landscape Services AAs overlapping with the Site have been retained for assessment irrespective of their evaluation:

- Cefn Estate (DNBGHCLS030). This AA is classified as mosaic rolling lowland and with tranquillity levels being a mosaic of significant disturbance, some disturbance and undisturbed. It is noted that there are attractive views into the AA. The visual and sensory landscape evaluation is Moderate, with a Moderate sense of place / local distinctiveness, High scenic quality and Moderate character.

7.1.22 No Cultural Landscape Services AAs are adjacent to the Site.

7.1.23 All Cultural Landscape Services AAs within the 5km study area, which are also indicated on the ZTV to have intervisibility with the Site have been retained for assessment:

- Limestone Valley-Cefn (DNBGHCLS035). This AA is classified as wooded lowland valleys and with tranquillity levels being a mosaic of significant disturbance, some disturbance and undisturbed. It is noted that there are attractive views into the AA. The visual and sensory landscape evaluation is High, with a Moderate sense of place / local distinctiveness, High scenic quality and High character.
- Wooded Parkland and Parkland Remnants (DNBGHCLS033). This AA is classified as mosaic rolling lowland and with tranquillity levels being over 75% of significant disturbance. It is noted that there are attractive views into the AA. The visual and sensory landscape evaluation is High, with a Strong sense of place / local distinctiveness, High scenic quality and High character.
- Limestone Plateau-Denbigh/Henllan (DNBGHCLS037). This AA is classified as mosaic rolling lowland and with tranquillity levels being a mosaic of significant disturbance, some disturbance, undisturbed and urban. It is noted that there are attractive views into the AA. The visual and sensory landscape evaluation is Moderate, with a Moderate sense of place / local distinctiveness, Moderate scenic quality and Moderate character.
- Vale of Clwyd-North of Denbigh (DNBGHCLS029). This AA is classified as flat lowland mosaic and with tranquillity levels being a mosaic of significant disturbance, some disturbance and undisturbed. It is noted that there are attractive views both into and out of the AA. The visual and sensory landscape evaluation is High, with a Strong sense of place / local distinctiveness, High scenic quality and High character.
- Vale Wooded Estate-South of Dyserth (DNBGHCLS017). This AA is classified as flat lowland mosaic and with tranquillity levels being a mosaic of significant disturbance, some disturbance and undisturbed. It is noted that there are attractive views both into and out of the AA. The visual and sensory landscape evaluation is High, with a Strong sense of place / local distinctiveness, High scenic quality and High character.

Historic Landscapes

7.1.24 All Historic Landscape AAs overlapping with the Site have been retained for assessment irrespective of their evaluation:

7.1.25 Pentre-mawr (DNBGHHL041). This AA is evaluated as Moderate for Overall Evaluation (Q40). The entry describes *“organic enclosures south and west of St Asaph, fieldscapes which have grown up over time, a predominantly rural environment”*.



7.1.26 All Historic Landscape AAs adjacent to the Site have been retained for assessment irrespective of their evaluation:

- Bont-newydd (DNBGHHL021). This AA is evaluated as Outstanding for Overall Evaluation. The entry describes an *“area of limestone grassland and woodland which contains an important hillfort and Internationally important cave sites with early human occupation”*.

7.1.27 All Historic Landscape AAs within the 5km study area, which are also indicated on the ZTV to have intervisibility with the Site, and which are also evaluated as Outstanding or High for Overall Evaluation have been retained for assessment:

- Plas Heaton (DNBGHHL039). This AA is evaluated as High for Overall Evaluation. The entry describes an *“extensive area of parkland, designed landscape, links to the picturesque”*.
- Brynbella (DNBGHHL026). This AA is evaluated as High for Overall Evaluation. The entry describes the *“Bryn Bella designed garden built by Mrs Piozzi”*.
- Bodelwyddan Park (DNBGHHL005). This AA is evaluated as High for Overall Evaluation. The entry describes a *“well preserved 18th and 19th century landscape park with 19th century arts and crafts accretions, Arts and Crafts Garden by Thomas Mawson”*.

Visual and Sensory

7.1.28 All Visual and Sensory AAs overlapping with the Site have been retained for assessment irrespective of their evaluation:

- Cefn Estate (DNBGHVS033). This AA is evaluated as High for Scenic Quality and Moderate for Character and Overall Evaluation. The entry describes a *“wooded former estate landscape lying on the edge of St Asaph and the industrial areas surrounding Bodelwyddan. The area displays a fine array of woodland blocks and a well defined field pattern delineated by hedgerow with a high incidence of mature hedgerow trees. Settlements are limited to small hamlets/villages and scattered farmsteads although the more urban influence of St Asaph forms a definite boundary to the north and east, the area still has a relatively enclosed nature”*.

7.1.29 No Visual and Sensory AAs are adjacent to the Site.

7.1.30 All Visual and Sensory AAs within the 5km study area, which are also indicated on the ZTV to have intervisibility with the Site, and which are also evaluated as Outstanding or High for Overall Evaluation (Q50), or Moderate for Overall Evaluation but Outstanding or High for Scenic Quality (46) and/or Character (Q48), have been retained for assessment:

- Vale of Clwyd-North of Denbigh (DNBGHVS031). This AA is evaluated as High for Scenic Quality, Character and Overall Evaluation. The entry describes a *“Vale of Clwyd landscape but here displays a more wooded and stronger estate wooded character on the gently undulating flat valley floor. Hedgerow trees give the area a strong wooded effect character and provide good visual containment for views into and out of the area. A small to medium intimate field pattern gives the area a very rural agrarian appearance with the emphasis increasing on livestock rather than arable farming to the south of the area. Settlements are limited to a few small village/market towns settlements. Transport links through the area are largely relatively quiet rural roads with mature hedgerow and tree lined boundaries reinforcing the rural character, generally an attractive and settled area”*.



- Vale Wooded Estate-South of Dyserth (DNBGHVS016). This AA is evaluated as High for Scenic Quality, Character and Overall Evaluation. The entry describes an *“agriculturally improved pastoral and estate wooded landscape. Hedgerow trees give the area a strong wooded effect character and provide good visual containment for views into and out of the area. A small to medium intimate field pattern gives the area a very rural agrarian appearance with the emphasis increasing on livestock rather than arable farming to the south of the area. Settlements are isolated and limited in the main to scattered farmsteads and small hamlets/clusters of houses. Transport links through the area are largely relatively quiet rural roads with mature hedgerow and tree lined boundaries reinforcing the rural character, generally an attractive and settled area”*.

