



Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Hanmer Arms, Hanmer Wrexham, Flintshire

for

Carlton Holdings

MAN.244.002.LA.R.001.00



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1	Introduction	4
1.1	Background	4
1.2	The Application Site	4
1.3	The Proposed Development	5
1.4	Structure of the Study	5
1.5	Structure of the Report	5
2	Method	6
2.1	Introduction to Method	6
2.2	Distinction between Landscape and Visual Effects	6
2.3	Published Guidance	6
2.4	Approach to the LVIA	6
2.5	Sensitivity of Receptors, Magnitude of Change and Significance of Effects	7
2.6	Study Area	7
2.7	Visual Envelope	7
2.8	Representative Viewpoints	8
2.9	Temporal Scope	8
2.10	Desk Studies	8
2.11	Field Studies	9
3	Desk Based Study	10
3.1	Introduction to Policy Review	10
3.2	European Landscape Convention, Council of Europe, 2000	10
3.3	Welsh Government Planning Policy	10
3.4	Local Planning Policy	10
3.5	Public Rights of Way	13
3.6	Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings	13
3.7	Statutory Designations	15
4	Landscape and Visual Baseline Description	17
4.1	Baseline Landscape Character	17
4.2	Published Landscape Character Assessment	17
4.3	Local Landscape Character	18
4.4	Landscape Overview	20
4.5	Landscape Receptors	22
4.6	Visual Baseline	22
5	Assessment of Effects	25
5.1	Landscape Effects	25
5.2	Visual Effects	27
5.3	Summary of Visual Effects	30

6	Mitigation	32
6.1	<i>Mitigation Generally</i>	32
6.2	<i>Inherent Mitigation</i>	32
6.3	<i>Secondary Mitigation</i>	32
7.1	<i>Residual Effects Generally</i>	34
7.2	<i>Residual Landscape Effects</i>	34
7.3	<i>Residual Visual Effects</i>	34
8	Summary and Conclusions	35
8.1	<i>Summary</i>	35
8.2	<i>Conclusions</i>	35
9	References	36
	Appendix A – Methods of Assessment	37
	Appendix B –Landscape and Visual Assessment Tables	43
	Appendix D -Drawings and Images	52
	MAN.244.002.L.D.001 – Existing Site Conditions	
	MAN.244.002.L.D.002 – Landscape Strategy Design [Masterplan]	
	MAN.244.002.L.D.003 – Linework [Contours]	
	MAN.244.002.L.D.004 – Cut and Fill Plan	
	MAN.244.002.L.D.005 - Zone of Theoretical Visibility [ZTV]	
	MAN.244.002.L.D.006 – Viewpoint Location Plan	
	MAN.244.002.L.D.007 – Viewpoint 1	
	MAN.244.002.L.D.008 - Viewpoint 2	
	MAN.244.002.L.D. 009 - Viewpoint 3	
	MAN.244.002.L.D.010 - Viewpoint 4	
	MAN.244.002.L.D.011 - Viewpoint 5	
	MAN.244.002.L.D.012 - Viewpoint 6	
	MAN.244.002.L.D.013 - Viewpoint 7	
	MAN.244.002.L.D.014 - Viewpoint 8	
	MAN.244.002.L.D.015 - Viewpoint 9	
	MAN.244.002.L.D.016 - Viewpoint 10	
	MAN.244.002.L.D.017 - Viewpoint 11	

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Enzygo Limited [Enzygo] has been commissioned by Carlton Holdings to prepare a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment [LVIA] in support of a planning application for a proposed lodge development on the outskirts of the village of Hanmer, Flintshire, 9.5 km west of Whitchurch, centred on national grid reference [NGR] SJ 45434 39973¹.
- 1.1.2 The development has been subject to a previous outline application [Ref. HANP/2018/0965] which was refused by the local planning authority Wrexham County Borough Council [WCBC] in January 2019 on the following landscape and visual grounds:

Reason for Refusal No.2

“The proposal would introduce a significant amount of built form to the site, altering the character of the site and locality, which would be exacerbated by virtue of the sites prominence in the landscape. The proposal as a result is considered would harm existing visual amenities of the area. Insufficient information has been submitted with the application to demonstrate otherwise. The proposal would conflict with UDP Policy GDP1 and CLF9.”

- 1.1.3 The information contained in the reasons for refusal have been taken into account in preparing this assessment and a landscape strategy for the site, [see **Appendix C**].

1.2 The Application Site

- 1.2.1 The site is in the county of Clwyd approximately 8.5km west of Whitchurch [England] and 16.0km southeast of Wrexham [Wales]. The site is centred approximately on National Grid Reference [NGR] SJ 45434 39973. The site location is shown on the figures accompanying this report.
- 1.2.2 The site adjoins the existing Hanmer Arms country inn, which is located on the northern edge of Hamer village on Striga Lane. The propose development extends north of the existing inn car park and Hanmer Bowls Club towards the A539.
- 1.2.3 The site occupies a single agricultural pasture field which slopes northwards which currently comprises grassland with scattered groups of semi mature trees in the central parts, fenced off from livestock with timber post and rail fencing. The site boundaries are formed by:
- A mature hedgerow with hedgerow trees to the northwest between the site and the A539;
 - A mature hedgerow and trees along a ditch along the northeast boundary;
 - A small pond, surrounded by an immature hedge and timber fence is located beyond the eastern corner of the site;
 - An intermittent hedgerow and line of trees on the southwest boundary; and
 - A timer post and three [3] rail fence and access road [to inn car park and Hanmer Bowls club] on the south-eastern boundary.

¹ Latitude: 52.954341 Longitude: - 2.8136569

1.3 The Proposed Development

1.3.1 The outlined planning application is for a holiday lodge development and relates to the land immediately north of the existing Hanmer Arms Inn and Bowls Club. The work to establish the site as a lodge development would include:

- Creation of hardstanding plots for 19No. lodges;
- A reception building;
- Associated private access roads, footpaths and car parking;
- General amenity greenspace, landscaping and areas for SuDS; and
- Servicing such as provision of gas, water and electricity to plots.

1.3.2 A feasible indicative layout for the site is provided with the application [**Figure 2 – MAN.244.002.L.D.002**], proposals including approximate building footprints, access roads and services. The final layout of the site will be determined at a later date in accordance with any requirements under the applicant's licence to operate the caravan park.

1.4 Structure of the Study

1.4.1 The aim of this study is to appraise the likely effects of the development on the landscape and views as a result of the proposed development. The study will identify the existing landscape character and visual amenity resource, identify the likely effects of the proposals on this baseline situation and determine the residual effects of the proposals on landscape character and visual amenity of the proposed development.

1.5 Structure of the Report

1.5.1 **Section 2** describes the method and approach taken in the assessment.

1.5.2 **Section 3** presents information from desk-based study such as landscape planning policy relevant to the site.

1.5.3 **Section 4** describes the baseline conditions, existing landscape features, landscape character, views of the study area.

1.5.4 **Section 5** describes the effects of the development on the landscape and visual resource identified in Section 4.

1.5.5 **Section 6** describes the landscape mitigation proposed is described

1.5.6 **Section 7** summarises residual effects.

1.5.7 **Section 8** provides a summary and conclusion to the assessment.

1.5.8 **Section 9** provides a list of the references.

1.5.9 A method for the assessment has been included at **Appendix A**, landscape and visual effects are summarised in tables at **Appendix B**.

1.5.10 Information provided to the local planning authority as part of consultation has been included at **Appendix C**.

1.5.11 **Appendix D** includes maps and plans and images supporting the assessment.

2 Method

2.1 Introduction to Method

2.1.1 The LVIA considers the potential effects of the development on:

- Individual landscape features and elements;
- Landscape character and quality [condition]; and
- Visual amenity and the people who view the landscape.

2.1.2 Further details about the LVIA method are included at **Appendix A**.

2.2 Distinction between Landscape and Visual Effects

2.2.1 Landscape and visual effects are two distinct but related areas, which are assessed separately in accordance with the approach outlined below. Landscape and visual effects do not necessarily coincide and can be beneficial or adverse. A distinction will be drawn between landscape and visual effects as follows:

- **Landscape** - relates to the effects of the proposals on the physical and other characteristics of the landscape and its resulting character and quality.
- **Visual** - relates to the effects on views experienced by visual receptors e.g. people including residents, footpath users, tourists.

2.3 Published Guidance

2.3.1 The LVIA was undertaken by qualified Landscape Architects with experienced in undertaking such assessments and in accordance with best practice outlined in published guidance:

- *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*, 3rd Edition [2013] Landscape Institute and the Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment;
- *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland* [2002]; The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage; and
- *Guidelines for Environmental Impact Assessment* [2004]; Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment.

2.4 Approach to the LVIA

2.4.1 The LVIA was broadly undertaken in the following stages:

- Baseline data collection via desk-top study, consultation and fieldwork;
- Description of the baseline landscape character and visual amenity of the site and surrounding area which identify the relevant landscape and visual receptors [including representative viewpoints] and determining their sensitivity to change;
- Description of the magnitude of change in the landscape and visual amenity as a consequence of the proposals;
- Description of the potential landscape and visual effects arising; and
- Development of strategic mitigation proposals to assist in reducing adverse landscape and visual effects or provide compensation where unavoidable and where possible enhancements.

- 2.4.2 Baseline information regarding landscape features and sensitive visual receptors and the likely change in the landscape character and visual amenity of the site and its surroundings was used to identify potential effects and inform the final scheme as appropriate.
- 2.4.3 Strategic mitigation measures were developed in tandem with the proposed layout to minimise adverse effects as part of an iterative design process. Options for mitigation measures such as screening components will be investigated and included as appropriate.
- 2.4.4 Criteria thresholds for assessing the degree of change as a result of the development will be established and reviewed to ascertain the magnitude of change in the landscape and in views. Landscape and visual effects relating to historic environment features of interest may also need to be considered.

2.5 Sensitivity of Receptors, Magnitude of Change and Significance of Effects

- 2.5.1 The significance of effects on both the landscape and visual receptors within the study area are ascertained by cross-referencing the sensitivity of the baseline landscape or visual receptor and the magnitude of change as a result of the development.
- 2.5.2 The sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors is judged as high, medium or low. The magnitude of change is also judged to be high, medium, low or negligible. Significance of effects is expressed as either slight, moderate or substantial, which may be either beneficial or adverse, or neutral.

2.6 Study Area

- 2.6.1 For the purposes of this assessment, a 2.5km radius study area from the centre of the site was used as starting point to assess identifying potential effects. 2.5km has been used in acknowledgement of the scale of the proposals, the nature of the local topography and the extent of vegetation cover within the immediate environs [see **Figure 5 – MAN.244.002.L.D.005**].

2.7 Visual Envelope

- 2.7.1 The visual envelope of a scheme defines the broad area from within which it may be possible to see the whole or part of the proposed development and helps to establish the potential for visual receptors. The development is not considered to be visible outside this area or would be very difficult to perceive, except for example from occasional higher elevations. However, there will still be locations within the visual envelope from which there are no views of the study area, due to the local screening effects of vegetation and topography or other features such as buildings. Landscape features, which form visual barriers and restrict views towards parts of the study area, such as landform, settlements and woodland can then be evaluated, and significant barriers identified to refine the baseline visibility of the development. [see **Figure 5 – MAN.244.002.L.D.005**]

2.8 Representative Viewpoints

2.8.1 It would not be practical to illustrate the visual effects on every individual visual receptor inside the visual envelope and therefore representative viewpoints were used. These viewpoints were chosen to assess the effects of the proposed development on a typical range of views in the study area.

Table 1 –List of Representative Viewpoints

No.	Description and Location	Receptors/Users	NGR
1	Hanmer Arms Entrance/Car Park	Inn/Restaurant	SJ 45484 39820
2	'Little Green Flowers' Florist Shop Car Park	Road Users and Florists	SJ 45519 39955
3	Footpath WCBC HAN/1	PRoW	SJ 45564 39862
4	St Chads Church Yard [Northern Entrance]	Graveyard/Church	SJ 45457 39749
5	Striga Lane/Hanmer Mere	PRoW/Road users	SJ 45394 39652
6	Footpath WCBC HAN/4	PRoW/Mere House	SJ 54274 39750
7	Brook Lane	PRoW/Road Users	SJ 54144 40091
8	Junction of Brook Lane and A539 Whitchurch Road	Road Users	SJ 45492 40095
9	Access road to Hanmer Arms and Bowling Club Car Parks	Inn/Restaurant/Bowls Club	SJ 45480 39925
10	Striga Lane	PRoW/Road users	SJ 45503 40028
11	Hanmer Estate Road/Footpath WCBC HAN/5	PRoW/Road users	SJ 45264 38514

2.9 Temporal Scope

2.9.1 2019 has been taken as the baseline year for defining the existing landscape. The relevant effects of the development will be assessed at the following times:

- During construction;
- Year 1: - [Opening Year] to assess the effects on completion; and
- Year 15: - [Design Year/In operation] to allow for any mitigation planting and to mature to give the intended effect.

2.10 Desk Studies

2.10.1 The baseline landscape and visual assessment comprised a desktop study of on-line and ordnance survey mapping together with research of statutory and non-statutory designations and relevant planning policy. See **Chapter 9** for data sources. This includes:

- Ordnance Survey Explorer Map at 1:25,000 scale;
- The Google Earth website;
- Natural Resources Wales [NRW] website;
- CADW [Welsh Government's historic environment service] website; and
- Wrexham County Borough Council website.

2.10.2 The study area for the landscape assessment comprises the regional context of the area surrounding the site [but ultimately limited by a 2.5km radius from the centre of the site as appropriate reference to consider the context in sufficient detail]. The study area for the visual assessment is defined by the visual envelope and is derived following an analysis of landscape features such as topography, significant vegetation and built form [see **Figure 5**].

2.11 Field Studies

2.11.1 The site has been visited on a number of occasions in Autumn and Winter 2018 and the last time on 6th August 2019 to obtain the following data:

- Photographs from proposed representative viewpoints and generally of the landscape surrounding the site;
- A corroboration of the findings of the desktop review; and
- To obtain additional information about the landscape and features, seasonal views and localised screening barriers.

2.11.2 Site surveys were all undertaken during periods of clement weather from public highways, Public Rights of Way [PRoW] and publicly accessible areas, including public open space.

3 Desk Based Study

3.1 Introduction to Policy Review

3.1.1 In this section policy and designations of relevance to the landscape are identified.

3.2 European Landscape Convention, Council of Europe, 2000

3.2.1 The context of landscape policy in the UK can be placed within the broad framework provided by the European Landscape Convention [ELC]. The ELC was signed by the Government in February 2006 and signals a commitment to support the aims of the Convention which include promoting landscape protection, management, and planning. It suggests that “Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factor” and covers rural and urban situations.

3.3 Welsh Government Planning Policy

3.3.1 The most relevant source of Welsh Government landscape policy guidance is as follows:

- Planning Policy Wales [PPW] December 2018.

3.3.2 The PPW sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. It is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes [TANs], Welsh Government Circulars, and policy clarification letters, which together with PPW provide the national planning policy framework for Wales.

3.3.3 The primary objective of PPW 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, as required by the Planning [Wales] Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations [Wales] Act 2015 and other key legislation.

3.3.4 The Distinctive and Natural Places theme of planning policy topics covers historic environment, landscape, biodiversity and habitats, coastal characteristics, air quality, soundscape⁹⁹, water services, flooding and other environmental [surface and sub-surface] risks.

3.3.5 The special and unique characteristics and intrinsic qualities of the natural and built environment must be protected in their own right, for historic, scenic, aesthetic and nature conservation reasons. These features give places their unique identity and distinctiveness and provide for cultural experiences and healthy lifestyles.

3.3.6 There are no specific TAN’s dealing with landscape and visual impact.

3.4 Local Planning Policy

3.4.1 The application site is in the administrative area of Wrexham County Borough Council [WCBC] in the County of Clwyd. The current development plan for Wrexham is:

- Wrexham Unitary Development Plan [UDP];

3.4.2 The UDP 1996 - 2011 was adopted by Wrexham County Borough Council on the 14th February 2005. The Plan covers the administrative area of the WCBC and supersedes the previously adopted development plans; namely, the Wrexham Maelor Local Plan: Forward to 2001, the Glyndwr District Local Plan, and the Clwyd Structure Plan: First Alteration.

3.4.3 WCBC are currently preparing the Local Development Plan [LDP] which will replace the current adopted UDP. The LDP will be a long-term land use and development strategy focused on achieving sustainable development and will:

- guide development for housing, employment, retail and other uses;
- set out policies that will be used to decide planning applications; and
- safeguard areas of land requiring protection or enhancement.

Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 2005

3.4.4 Part 1 of WCBC's UDP outlines the Council's broad intention for development in the area and provides a framework for more specific policies and proposals. In this instance the strategic policies that affect the landscape and visual resource are, as follows:

Policy PS2: *"Development must not materially detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space, or the quality of the natural environment"*

Policy PS4: *"Development should use previously developed brownfield land comprising vacant, derelict or underused land in preference to the use of greenfield land, wherever possible, particularly so where greenfield land is of ecological, landscape or amenity value, or comprises agricultural land of grades 1, 2 or 3a quality."*

3.4.5 Part 2 of the plan identifies specific policies as follows:

Policy GDP1: All new development should:

a] Ensure that built development in its scale, design and layout, and in its use of materials and landscaping, accords with the character of the site and makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality.

f] Ensure the safety and amenity of the public and safeguard the environment from the adverse effects of pollution of water, land or air, hazards from industry and quarrying, and associated noise, odour or vibration arising from development."

Policy EC4: *Development proposals should provide for the conservation and management of hedgerows, trees, orchards, woodland, wildlife and other natural landscape and water features, and include new planting in order to enhance the character of the landscape and townscape. Development which results in the loss or significant damage to valuable trees, important hedgerows or ancient woodland sites will not be permitted.*

Policy EC5 *Within Special Landscape Areas, priority will be given to the conservation and enhancement of the landscape. Development, other than for agriculture, small-scale farm-based and other rural enterprises, and essential operational development by utility service providers, will be strictly controlled.*

Development will be required to conform to a high standard of design and landscaping, and special attention will be paid to minimising its visual impact both from nearby and distant viewpoints.



12. Hanmer

Inset Plan Notation / Nodiadau Map Mewnoscodiad

	County Boundary / Ffin y Sir		Walking/Cycling Route / Lwybr Cerdded/Beicio - T10
	Settlement Limit / Ffin Anheddiad - PS1		Protection of Mineral Resources / Diogelu Adnoddau Mwynau - MW9
	District Shopping Centre / Canolfan Siopa Cych - S5		
	Employment / Gwaith - E1		
	Commercial Offices / Swyddfeydd Masnachol - E7		
	Green Barrier / Ffin Gwyrdd - EC1		
	Special Landscape Area / Ardal Tirlun Arbenning - EC5		
	Biodiversity Conservation / Cadwraeth Bioamrywiaeth - EC6		
	Conservation Area / Ardal Cadwraeth - EC7, EC8		
	Development and Flood Risk / Datblygiad a Perygl Llif - EC12		
	Land Reclamation / Adfer Tir - EC16		
	Community and Leisure Facilities / Cyfleusterau Cymunedol ac Adoliant - CLF2		
	Housing / Tai - H1		
			Other Settlement Policies / Polisiau Anheddiad Eraill. PS3, PS4, PS5, PS6, PS7, PS8, H2, H7, H11, H12, E4, S4, S8, CLF1, CLF3, CLF5.
			Other Countryside Policies / Polisiau Cefn Gwlad Eraill. PS2, EC2, EC3, EC4, H3, H5, H6, H8, H10, E5, E6, PS9, S7, MW1, MW2, MW3, MW4, MW5, MW6, MW8, MW9.
			Other County Borough-Wide Policies / Polisiau Bwrdeistref Sirol Eraill. GDP1, GDP2, EC9, EC11, EC13, EC14, EC15, H4, PS10, PS11, PS12, CLF4, CLF6, CLF8, CLF9, CLF10, T1, T6, T8, T9, S8, S9, MW7, MW10, MW11, MW12, MW13, MW14.
			Scale / Graddfa 1:10000

Diagram 1: Conservation Area and Special Landscape Area

Policy EC7 Within, and in close proximity to, conservation areas, the priority will be to preserve and/ or enhance those buildings, structures, streets, trees, open spaces, archaeological remains, views, and other elements which contribute to the unique character of the area. New buildings and alterations or additions to existing buildings in conservation areas, whether listed as of special architectural or historic interest or not, must reflect the design and character of the area as a whole and the form, scale, detailing and materials of existing buildings.

3.5 Public Rights of Way

3.5.1 WCBC is the Highway Authority responsible for Public Rights of Way [PRoW] and the definitive map for the county. The location of PRoW can be found on the council's website:

https://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/leisure_tourism/prow/definitive_map.htm

3.5.2 There are no PRoW's within the site boundaries that would be affected by the proposed development. There are however a number of PRoW in the immediate vicinity these include:

- Footpaths – HAN/1, HAN/3, HAN/4, HAN/5 and HAN/12 within the vicinity of the site; and
- Adopted Roads – A539 Whitchurch to Overton Road and C-Class Striga Lane that runs through the village.



Diagram 2: Extract from Wrexham County Borough Council On-line Public Rights of Way Map.



Site Location



PRoW: Footpath

3.6 Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings

3.6.1 The Site is not located within a Conservation Area nor are there any scheduled ancient monuments [SAM] or listed buildings present on the Site.

3.6.2 The Site is however located adjacent to 'Sub Area 1' [The Main Village Street and Glendower Place] of the Hanmer Conservation Area, which contains a number of landmark, listed and visual interest buildings.

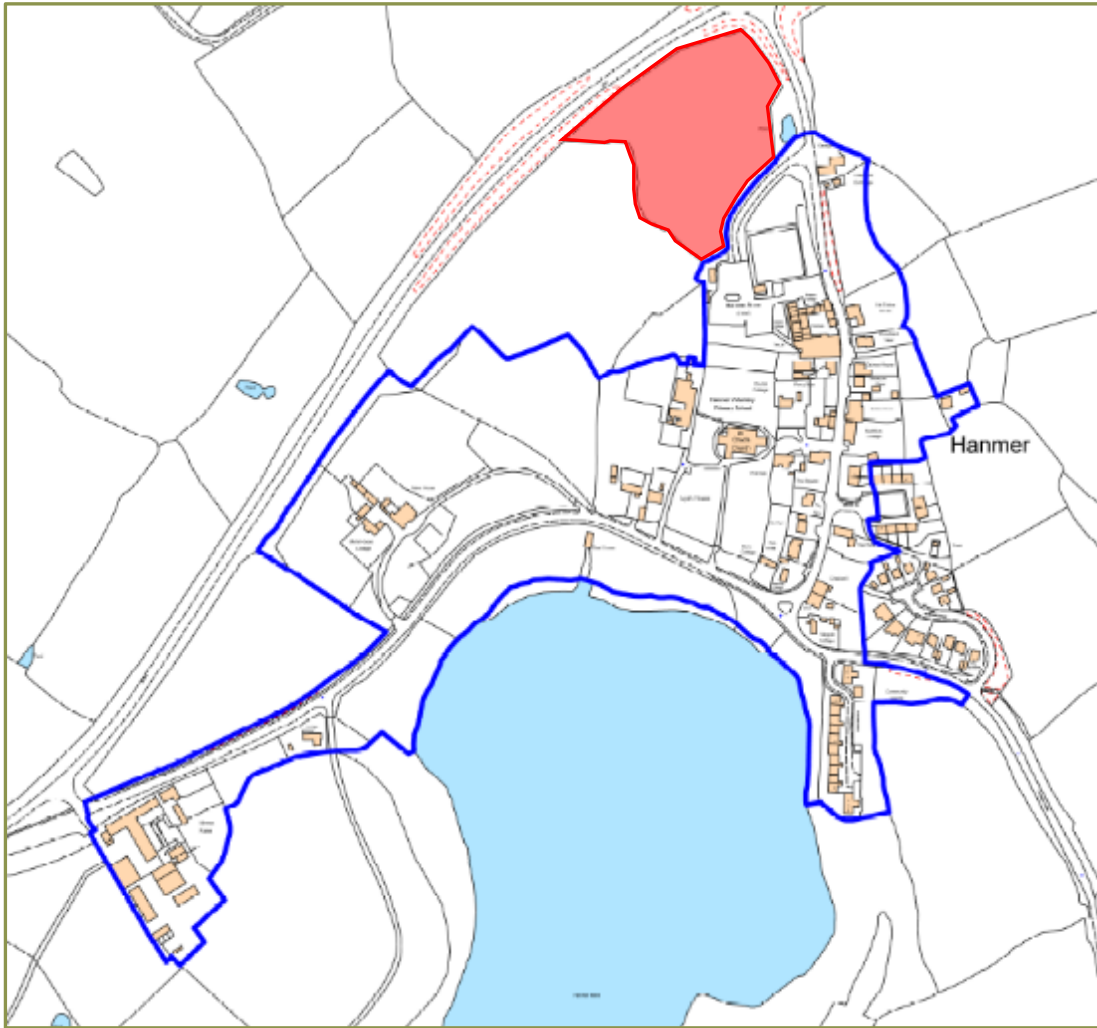


Diagram 3: Hanmer Conservation Area Map from WCBC website

- 3.6.3 There are some 47 [forty-seven] listed buildings within the parish of Hanmer. However only 16 [sixteen] are located within proximity to the Site four [4] of which one is Grade II* with the remainder being Grade II. The closest listed buildings are the Grade II Hanmer Arms and the Grade II* Church of St Chad some 105m and 164m southeast of the site respectively [for further details see the Heritage Impact Assessment Ref. SHF.244.001.L.R.001].

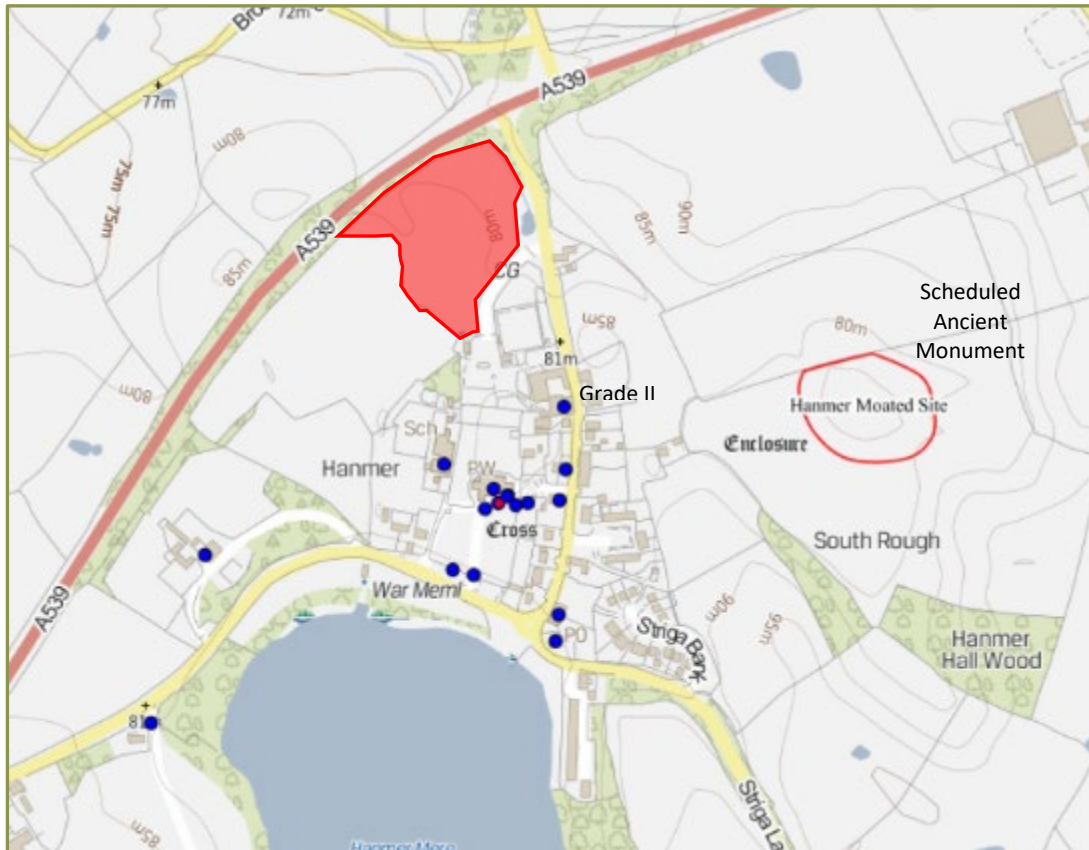


Diagram 4: Listed Buildings [excerpt from CADW website]

3.7 Statutory Designations

Landscape Designations

- 3.7.1 The site does not lie within a statutorily designated landscape nor are there any within the study area. Within the emerging Local Development Plan [2013 – 2028] there is a non-statutory Special Landscape Area located to the south of Hanmer.



12. Hanmer

Diagram 5: Excerpt from Map 4 of the Emerging LDP

Scheduled Monuments

- 3.7.2 There is one scheduled ancient monuments [SAM] in close to proximity to the site, namely “*a well-preserved medieval moated homestead located near to Hanmer Church on the northern side of a pasture field*”, located approximately 300m southeast of the site. There is one other SAM within the study area, namely Cop Castle Mound the remains of a motte and ditch, dating to the medieval period located approximately 2km northeast of the site [See **Diagram 4**]

Section Summary

- 3.7.3 Although the site itself does not lie within any statutory or non-statutory designation its proximity to non-statutory designations means that the landscape of the study area is partially constrained and therefore considered to be of a local level importance. There are local planning policies that are relevant to the application site and surroundings, which will be taken into account by limiting effects on the environment through careful design and in making recommendations for any landscape mitigation.

4 Landscape and Visual Baseline Description

4.1 Baseline Landscape Character

- 4.1.1 The following published landscape character assessment documents are considered to be relevant to this assessment:

4.2 Published Landscape Character Assessment

Landmap

- 4.2.1 In Wales LANDMAP is the landscape resource where landscape characteristics, qualities and influences on the landscape are recorded and evaluated.
- 4.2.2 LANDMAP includes the following five [5] nationally consistent, quality assured spatial datasets:
- Geological Landscape;
 - Landscape Habitats;
 - Visual and Sensory;
 - Historic Landscape; and
 - Cultural Landscape.
- 4.2.3 Within each data set are a series of maps that classifies each unique landscape, describes their key characteristics, qualities and components, evaluates their importance from a national to local scale and recommends locally appropriate management guidelines.
- 4.2.4 The area around Hanmer are as described below:

Geological Landscape

- 4.2.5 Geological Lowland hills and valleys/Lowland glacial and fluvio-glacial depositional terrain/Lowland glacial outwash plain/field. The area is considered to be of **high** geological value in good condition as a result of it being a “*dominantly rural area with limited significant development*”. The management recommendations are to “*ensure that no significant geological or geomorphological features are lost or damaged [e.g. due to development, forestry, etc.].*”

Landscape Habitats

- 4.2.6 The overall evaluation of the habitats and species within this aspect are considered to be high. In that this is a high biodiversity landscape that supports some important national and international species giving a high overall value. However, the site itself does not contain any national or internationally habitats or species. The Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Protected Species Assessment Report prepared by EVR Ecology and dated August 2018 it concludes that “*in respect of habitats the conservation value of the site is classified as low*”.

Visual and Sensory

- 4.2.7 The ‘English Maelor’ aspect area is described as “*an attractive archetypal rolling farming landscape with elements of estate farming and a pleasant mix of small to medium field patterns and woodland blocks and copses. There is gentle variation in topography, with small wooded valleys, and higher areas overlooking Dee valley. Subtle differences, shown by CPAT assessment of Maelor Saesneg [2003]. Main land use is agriculture with the emphasis on dairy*”

farming, some arable. Field boundaries are generally well defined with mature hedges and hedgerow trees [- often oaks] and small lanes. The area feels relatively settled and safe with a low proportion of out of scale or modern development. The area forms the southern and eastern border of the county and therefore the Welsh/English border. Visually and physically the area feels far more closely associated with the English landscape of North Shropshire and Cheshire than the "typical" or "archetypal" Welsh landscape, with the result that the area feels quite separate from the remainder of the county and country and is an uncommon landscape type for Wales.. The aspect is the transition zone and border between England and Wales." The overall evaluation considers that the aspect is **Moderate**.

- 4.2.8 The management recommendations include the preservation of the existing field and woodland patterns, though conservation and enhancement where possible and maintaining historic and traditional landscape features and rural tranquillity.

Historic Landscape

- 4.2.9 *The Historic Landscape is described as "an undulating landscape of irregular mostly hedged fields, occasional small blocks of woodland and scattered farms, with an early nucleated church settlement at Hanmer and a handful of later ""green"" and roadside settlements. A number of these farms have medieval origins, and many are associated with earthworks such as moated sites and mottes and the remnants of ridge and furrow field systems. Earlier activity is attested by a handful of Bronze Age burial mounds and a scattering of prehistoric and Roman finds, and a large number of Anglo-Saxon place names. Later activity by the ubiquitous remains of post medieval agriculture."* The overall evaluation is considered to be **high** as the area is a large area exhibiting medieval and later agricultural patterns and content typical of Maelor Saesneg but also rather diffuse compared to its neighbours.

Cultural Landscape

- 4.2.10 The Cultural Landscape aspect is described as a predominantly farming area, "effectively part of the economy of Shropshire rather than of Wales; recent changes such as the ploughing out of field boundaries precluded inclusion in the Register." It has been evaluated as being **high** because it is "a border culture with rich farming traditions, and with a wealth of late medieval archaeology."

4.3 Local Landscape Character

Wrexham Landscape Character Assessment

- 4.3.1 Hanmer and the site are located within the 'English Maelor' Landscape Character Area No. 13b which, by virtue of its border location is similar to the adjacent Cheshire and North Shropshire Plain and is characterised by a mixture of both English and Welsh influences.
- 4.3.2 The English Maelor is sub-divided into two main areas, with Hanmer located within the eastern part which has areas of lighter, sandy soils, and more of it is in arable cultivation. It is generally more variable in character, particularly near Fenn's Moss and Bettisfield. The key characteristics which are relevant to the site and its immediate surroundings are:

Visual Character:

- Gently undulating lowland farmland between 10 and 100 m above sea level, with small linear woodlands along streams;

- Enclosure by abundant, usually well-managed hedges and hedgerow trees, and by landform, but good views from higher ground towards western hills;
- **Gredington** [*our emphasis*], Bettisfield, Iscoyd and Emral Parks form enclosed private areas, but estate influence is widespread; and
- Small rural villages.

Geological Character:

- Landform reflects deep deposits of materials left after the Ice Age, over Triassic sandstones;
- Meres and mosses with glacial origin, including Hanmer Mere;
- Soils derived from glacial till are slow draining and heavy;
- Areas of glacial sands and gravels are more hummocky and dissected, such as the area around Eglwys Cross. Deep and well drained sandy loam soils are found in these areas; and
- Drainage is to the River Dee, via the Emral and Wych Brooks.

Ecological Character:

- Mainly 'improved' grassland and farmland, but with valuable hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Abundant field ponds derived from marl pits or clay pits;
- Other aquatic habitats of high value including canal, meres and streams;
- Areas of parkland and wood pasture with mature and veteran trees of high value; and
- Broadleaved, conifer and mixed plantation woodlands.

Historic Character:

- Extensive areas of medieval-strip fields and ridge and furrow with associated moated sites, preserved under pasture;
- Designed parkland/gardens on Cadw Register of Parks and Gardens [Bettisfield Hall Park, **Gredington Park**, Iscoyd Park] and others not on Register [Emral, Bryn-y-Pys];
- Settlements of medieval origin - Overton, Penley, Hanmer, Worthenbury, Bronington;
- Widespread occurrence of English place names with 'green' [Tallarn Green, Horseman's Green, Lightwood Green];
- Former Ellesmere and Whitchurch railway and Shropshire Union Canal, with associated settlement at Bettisfield; and
- Site of Gwernheylod Banks Iron Age promontory fort near Overton.

Cultural Character:

- On Welsh border with strong links to Whitchurch, Malpas and Ellesmere;
- Pre-1974, a detached part of Flintshire;
- Predominantly agricultural landuse, but many farmsteads undergoing conversion to residential use
- Network of footpaths and minor roads throughout the area, including Maelor Way; and
- Penley Polish Hospital was an adapted WW2 US army hospital, now in industrial or residential use.

4.3.3 The overall management strategy for the landscape is to **conservation** and **sustainable rural development**. The aims are stated as:

- Preserve and restore historic designated landscapes;
- Preserve local distinctiveness;
- Conserve landscape pattern;
- Preserve geological features;
- Conserving wetland habitats;
- Retain, manage and expand woodland habitats;
- Enhance ecological value of farmland;
- Respect historic landscape character and historic landscape features; and
- Support cultural heritage.

4.3.4 The landscape sensitivity of this landscape is considered to be vulnerable to *“economic changes which threaten traditional farming, and to development of land use practices which do not take historical landscape features into account.”*

4.4 Landscape Overview

Existing Land Use and Land Cover

4.4.1 The site is broadly rectangular in shape and consists of one field. The site is adjacent to and north of the existing pub access [lit], car park and a bowling club, separated by a post and rail fence. The site principally comprises pasture grassland enclosed on three sides by trees hedges and a ditch on the north-eastern boundary. The south-eastern boundary of the site is defined by the Hanmer Arms drive and fence as described above.

4.4.2 The site occupies a single agricultural pasture field which slopes northwards which currently comprises grassland with scattered groups of semi mature trees in the central parts, fenced off from livestock with timber post and rail fencing. The site boundaries are formed by:

- A mature hedgerow with hedgerow trees to the northwest between the site and the A539;
- A mature hedgerow and trees along a ditch along the northeast boundary;
- A small pond, surrounded by an immature hedge and timber fence is located beyond the eastern corner of the site;
- An intermittent hedgerow and line of trees on the southwest boundary; and
- A timber post and three [3] rail fence and access road [to inn car park and Hanmer Bowls club] on the south-eastern boundary.

4.4.3 Land use beyond the site in the wider area is predominantly agricultural. It comprises generally an irregular mix of small to large size fields which are used for almost exclusively for pasture.

4.4.4 There is an existing field entrance at the southernmost corner of the site which connects to the pub car park and access road.

Landform and Drainage

4.4.5 The site slope in a north easterly direction, from a high point at approximately 82.5m AOD on its south-western boundary to approximately 75m AOD at the ditch which runs along the north-eastern boundary. A ridge of relatively flat land [at approximately 82m AOD] runs in a northerly direction from the southern corner of the site towards the northern corner, before falling away. [The existing site levels are illustrated on **Figure 3 – MAN244.002.L.D.003**].

- 4.4.6 A small pond and stream/ditch are located beyond the on the north-eastern site boundary, both of which are located within the Hanmer Mere Site of Special Scientific Interest [SSSI]. Although, site inspections [and historical research] have been unable find a physical or hydrological link between the features and the Mere [see **Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment Report Ref. MAN.244.002.HY.R.001**] one cannot be ruled out.
- 4.4.7 Two further ponds are illustrated on the Ordnance Survey maps. The first is shown to be in the southern corner of the field, although there is no evidence of a pond of this nature on site, and for the purpose of this report it has been assumed that it has been infilled. A second pond is located in the western corner of the field. This pond is a seasonal pond, drying out during summer months, and is not linked to any other drainage features within the site of local environs.
- 4.4.8 The site and study area are all located on the OS Explorer Map [No. 241] of Shrewsbury [Wem, Shawbury and Baschurch at 1:25 000 scale]. The landform of the study area, and the landscape beyond, is undulating, with levels generally of between 60 and 100m AOD. The high points [Circa. 100m AOD] to the south include locations within Bettisfield Park, Merehead and Gredington. Land to the north tends to be lower as it gradually falls towards the River Dee and its network of tributaries, including Emral and Wych Brooks to the north and west. [see **Figure 3 – MAN244.002.L.D.003** and **Diagram 6**].

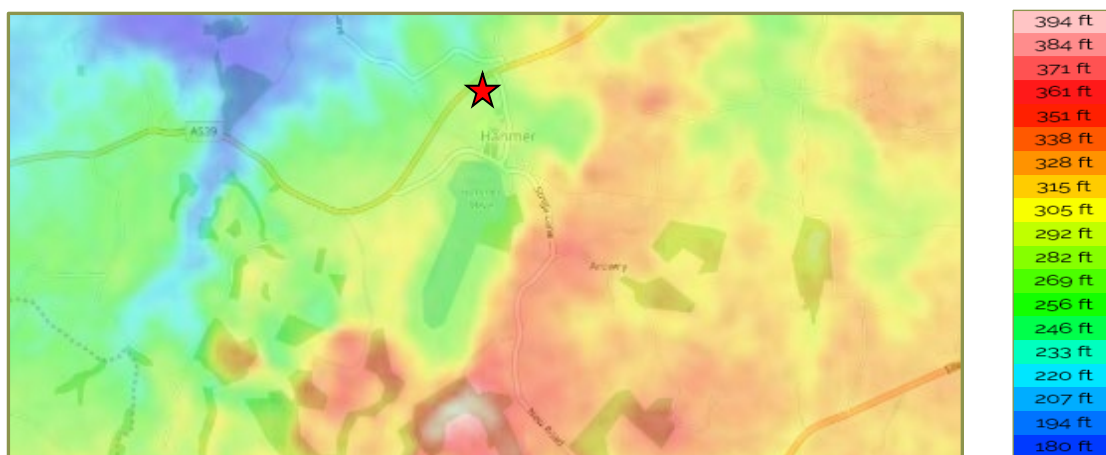


Diagram 6: Elevation Map

- 4.4.9 Ponds, Meres and watercourses are characteristic features of the study area. There are a ditches and ponds present on the site and in the immediate surroundings. However, the principal hydrological feature within the study area is Hanmer Mere [lake] located within Gredington Park estate.

Settlement Pattern

- 4.4.10 The site is located on the northern edge of the village of Hanmer between the Hanmer Arms and the A539 Whitchurch Road. South of the village is Hanmer Mere beyond which is the Gredington Park estate.
- 4.4.11 There are a few small settlements within the study area; including, Horsemans Green [1.54km north-west]; Little Arowry [0.8km north-east] and Arowry [0.9km south-east]. The larger settlements, such as Penley [3.5km west] and Bronnington [3.1km east] all lie outside the

study area. Other settlements include Eglwys Cross, Little Green and Three Fingers to the north and Breadon Heath to the south.

4.4.12 The landscape contain a number of scattered farmsteads and isolated properties.

4.5 Landscape Receptors

4.5.1 To assess the potential impacts on the landscape resulting from the proposed development the main landscape features within and adjacent to the site have been identified and include:

- Land cover, trees and hedges;
- Land use/pattern;
- Landform; and
- Overall landscape character published character areas and or types.

4.6 Visual Baseline

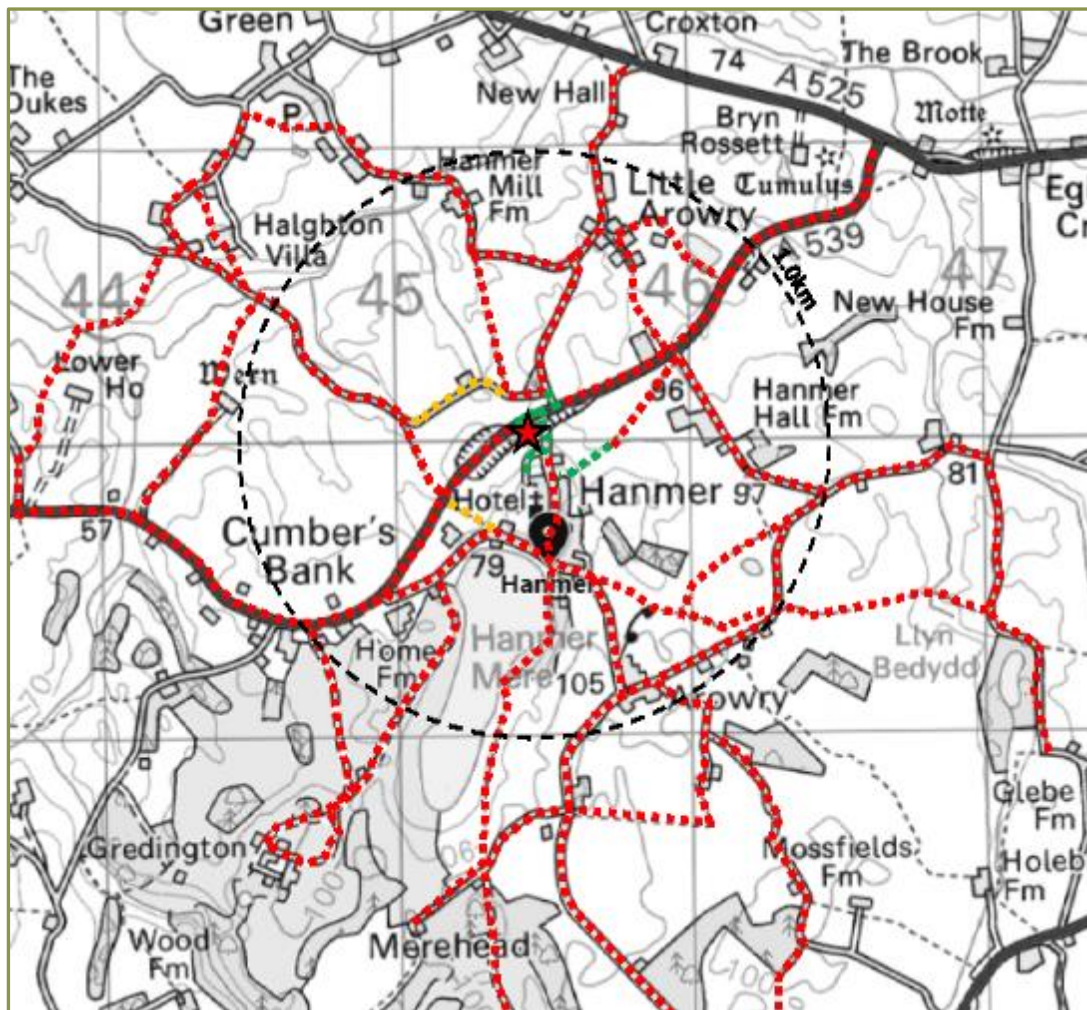
Visual Envelope

4.6.1 The visual envelope of the site is significantly limited by factors including:

- Mature trees and hedgerows alongside the A539 Whitchurch Road to the immediate north of the site which extends along a curved line to the northeast;
- Existing mature hedgerows and tree planting on the northeast, northwest and southwest site boundaries;
- Existing 2-2.5m high evergreen hedgerows within the Hanmer Arms carp part to the south of the site;
- Existing hedgerows and woodlands within the study area, notably those associated with Hanmer mere and Gredington Park to the south;
- The undulating topography, increasing in height to the south; and
- The built form of Hanmer Village and Conservation Area.

4.6.2 A ZTV plan is included with this assessment see drawing ref **Figure 5** [drawing no. MAN.244.002.L.D.005] which shows the theoretical extent of visibility of the proposed development in the study area with and without some visual obstructions.

Diagram 7 PRow and Public Roads



Legend

- Red No view or heavily screened views of the Site.
- Amber Filtered, limited or partial views of the site.
- Green Open or lightly screened view of the site.
- ★ Site Location

4.6.3 The ZTV also assisted in identifying the location of representative and contextual viewpoints, whilst the on-site surveys allowed these locations to be verified. **Diagram 7** [above] illustrates the PRow and public roads which were surveyed by foot and vehicle in considering locations and illustrates the limit of the visual envelope when viewed from these locations.

Visual Receptors

4.6.4 The principal groups of visual receptors identified within the study area include:

- Residents of nearby houses;
- Users of PRow, footpaths, local roads; and
- Visitors to village amenities [including the adjacent Inn, Hotel and Bowls club].

Representative Viewpoints

- 4.6.5 Representative viewpoints have been selected to exemplify views experienced by receptors in the area surrounding the proposed development. The locations of these viewpoints are illustrated on **Figure 6** [drawing no. MAN.244.002.L.D.006 - Viewpoint Location Plan].
- 4.6.6 These are identified in Table 1 above [see **Section 2.8**] and in **Appendix B** – Assessment Tables and on **Figures 7 to 18** [drawing nos. MAN.244.002.L.D.007 - MAN.244.001.L.D.018]. Photographs of the local area are also included within the report for context and to illustrate the character of the area.

5 Assessment of Effects

5.1 Landscape Effects

Landform

- 5.1.1 The area surrounding the site is defined by an undulating landform of between 60 and 100m AOD. The landform on the site is typical of the surrounding environment in that it also undulates between 75 and 82m AOD. Levels on the site would require some modification to facilitate the development [see **Figure 5**]; however, the changes are relatively minor and as such are not considered to be significant. It is anticipated that minor earthworks would be required to create access paths, drives, hardstanding areas for placing lodges and for creating drainage ditches. The scale of the proposed earthworks is low and would not be noticeable on site or form the surrounding area. The sensitivity of landform to the proposed type of development is low and the overall effect on this receptor arising from the proposed development is expected to be **neutral**.

Land Cover, Trees and Hedgerows

- 5.1.2 The land cover of the site is open grassland and trees, bounded by hedges and ditches on site boundaries, all of which will be retained as part of the development. This principal change would be to the extent of grassland. The proposed changes in landcover on the site as a result of the development will be limited in the context of the wider surroundings, the site is enclosed limiting effects beyond the site boundaries.
- 5.1.3 There will be little in the way of adverse effects on landscape features. Trees and hedges could be sensitive to change although this development proposes to retain and protect these existing features. There is significant scope to include some soft landscaping as part of the project for enhancement, this will include new planting to the site boundaries. The magnitude of change will be low and overall effects will be **slight adverse**.

Land Use and Pattern

- 5.1.4 The proposed development will not result in any change to the existing field pattern. A new boundary will be established on the south-eastern boundary of the site and will comprise fencing, hedging and trees. The site is not highly sensitive to the proposed changes being closely associated with similar land uses in close proximity, the magnitude of change is expected to be low on the site and will be hardly perceptible from the wider surroundings therefore the effect will be at worst **slight adverse**.

English Maelor' Landscape Character Area

- 5.1.5 The local landscape character is considered to be vulnerable to economic changes which threaten traditional farming and land use practices and sets out nine [9] management and conservation aims [see Para. 4.3.3 above]. In terms of these aims we consider the proposed development against these aims, as follows:
1. *"Preserve and restore historic designated landscapes"*: The site does not lie within any historic designated landscape.
 2. *Preserve local distinctiveness*; The development would result in a change in the local environment; however, it would be seen as a natural extension to an area currently characterised by the modern Bowling Green, large car park and the access road.

3. *“Conserve landscape pattern”*: The development will not affect the local landscape pattern and landscape proposals will both conserve [retaining existing hedgerows] and enhance [introduce new hedgerows and ‘gap-up’ the existing] the existing field pattern.
4. *“Preserve geological features”*: There development will not impact on any geological features, any landform changes required to accommodate the lodges would be minor.
5. *“Conserving wetland habitats”*: The development will have no direct or indirect impact on the adjacent wetland habitats during construction or operation of the site [see Enzygo ecology reports Ref. MAN.244.001.EC.R.001 and 002].
6. *“Retain, manage and expand woodland habitats”*: The development will retain, enhance and manage in perpetuity the existing trees, woodlands and hedgerows [defined in the ECR Ecology Report 2018 as ‘species poor’, page 10] on the site as well as providing additional tree and shrub planting as part of a conditioned landscape proposals.
7. *“Enhance ecological value of farmland”*: The existing field is a ‘poor semi improved pasture’ [page 10, see EVR Ecology Report 2018], the development proposals provide an opportunity to manage areas of grassland for a broad range of wildlife habitats.
8. *“Respect historic landscape character and historic landscape features”*: The key component of the historic landscape is identified as a landscape dominated by irregular field patterns and scattered farms, with an early nucleated church settlement at Hanmer and a handful of later ‘green’ and roadside settlements [see HIA Ref. SHF.244.001.LA.R.001]. As discussed above there would be no impact on the landscape pattern. There would be no direct or indirect impact on any historic features or on the Conservation Areas [see HIA Page 10, Paras. 9.3-9.4].
9. *“Support cultural heritage”*: Not considered as a landscape character issue.

Overall Effects on Landscape Character

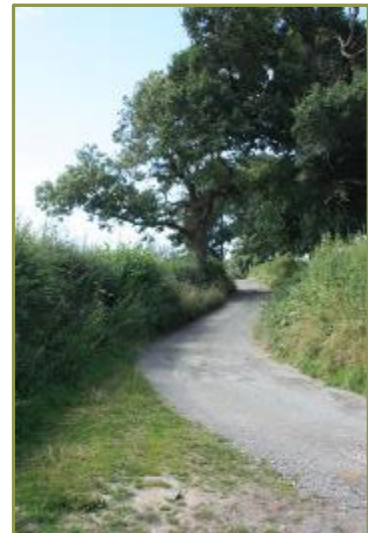
- 5.1.6 As described at Section 4 of this report, at county and local level the site and surrounding areas are placed ‘English Maelor’ Landscape Character Area [No. 13b].
- 5.1.7 The site is situated in a landscape that is consistent with published assessment although the site itself is not typical as it is influenced by the development to the south and road networks that separate it from the wider landscape/townscape. The site is considered to be of lower sensitivity to the proposed change than the surrounding landscape and that it can be accommodate this form of development without adverse effects on the general landscape character of the area. The resultant effects of development are expected to be limited on the wider landscape and townscape [including the Conservation and Special Landscape Areas] and therefore no significant effects are predicted on the English Maelor Landscape Character Area.
- 5.1.8 The site is situated in a landscape that is consistent with published assessment although the site itself is not so typical as it is affected by previous management and existing development which separate it from the wider landscape. The site is considered to be of lower sensitivity to the proposed change that would result from the proposed development, which can be accommodated without adverse effects on the general landscape character of the area. The overall effect on wider landscape character will be **slight adverse/neutral**.

5.2 Visual Effects

- 5.2.1 The identification of effects is considered during construction, at Year 1 [Opening Year] following implementation of any proposed landscape mitigation but prior to its establishment and at Year 15 where mitigation planting is established and is maturing. The representative viewpoints used to assess visual effects are included at Table 1 and described at **Appendix A**. also shown on **Viewpoints 1 to 11** [drawing REF. MAN.24.002.L.D.00.007 – 017].
- 5.2.2 The visual envelope of the proposed development is described in part in **Section 4** above and has been used to inform the choice of viewpoints which aids in the assessment of visual effects. Photographs for context are included to support the assessment and to illustrate for example the typical nature of views from certain locations and the extent of visibility, therefore the proposed development may not be visible from some of these locations.
- 5.2.3 In general, there are few locations in the surrounding area from where the site is visible due to the enclosure provided by intervening topography, built form and vegetation; including, hedges and trees on the site boundaries [see **Figure 5**]. Views of the site are limited to locations in close proximity to the development and the site cannot be openly viewed from the wider area. Views toward the site from public ally accessible locations tend to be glimpsed and are often heavily filtered by the intervening topography, built form, mature trees and hedgerows.

Views from the North and West

- 5.2.4 Views from the north and west are represented by viewpoint no's 7 and 8.
- 5.2.5 Beyond the site to the north the immediate surrounding encompasses the villages of Horseman's Green, to the north east and Little Arowry to the north west. The land is typical of the area in that it is undulating, predominantly pastoral lowland farmland with well-maintained hedgerows interspersed with small woodlands. Field size varies considerably but tends to be irregular and the clay soils means that there are a significant number of small ponds. There are few visual detractors within the landscape other than large scale farmsteads and their agricultural structures, such as Hanmer Mill Farm. There are number of PROW.
- 5.2.6 Views of the site are limited to locations in close proximity and even then views are typically foreshortened by trees and hedges along the A539 corridor. Views from longer distances are such that the site is not visible, screened by the rolling nature of the landscape and the mature, well maintained field and roadside boundary hedges and trees [see **Context View 1**].



Context View 1: Brooks Lane
[View looking north illustrating the nature of the local hedgerows]

5.2.7 Views of the site from the two PRoW's [HAN/2 and HAN/3] to the north are entirely screened by the intervening topography, hedgerows and the woodland associated with the A539 [see **Context Views 1 and 2**]. Footpath HAN/2 loops from the A539 via Little Arowry before returning to the A5239 further east, HAN/3 links Brooks Lane to Halghton View [C Class Road] and Hanmer Mill Farm further north.



Context View 2: Brooks Lane

[View looking north-east along Brooks Lane towards St Chads Well]

5.2.8 The proposed development would be visible during construction and on completion [year 1] from viewpoints in very close proximity [**Viewpoint 8**]. Beyond this, even from views relatively close to the site [**Viewpoint 7**], and from more distant views from the north the development is not anticipated to be visible. In future years the development is anticipated to be screened almost entirely following the establishment of new planting on the site boundary. Effects on views are predicted to be at worst **slight adverse** reducing to **neutral** with the establishment of new planting.

Views from the South

5.2.9 Viewpoints in this direction include nos. 1, 4, 5, 6 and 11. These viewpoints are from a range of public footpaths, local roads, and form semi-public areas including HAN/4, Striga Lane, the Hanmer Arms Car Park/Garden and St Chads Churchyard.



Context View 3: St Chads Churchyard

[View looking south from the church porch towards Hanmer Mere and Gredington House and Park].

5.2.10 The landform to the south initially increases in elevation [by approximately 5m to 86m AOD] to Hanmer village and St Chads Church before descending to Hanmer Mere [by approximately 11m to 75m AOD]. The landscape to the south of Hanmer village is defined by Hanmer Mere which forms part of the setting of Gredington Park, a mature parkland setting.

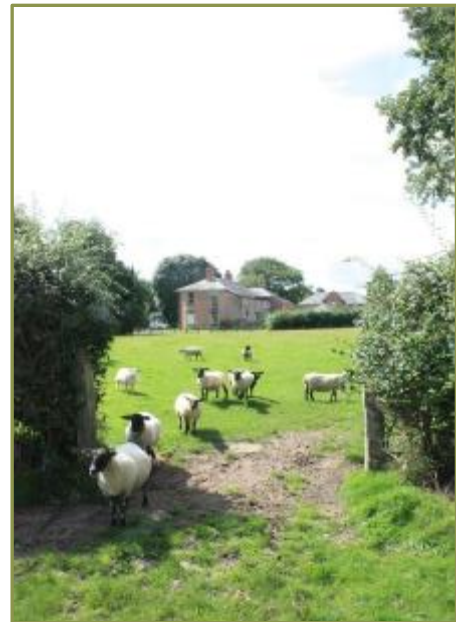
5.2.11 A small part of the site may be glimpsed through a break in hedge and field entrance from **Viewpoint 1** [Hanmer Arms Car Park] although the majority of the site would be entirely screened by the intervening vegetation and timber structures.

5.2.12 Views from middle distant **Viewpoints 4 and 5** [St. Chads Churchyard and Striga Lane] are almost entirely screened by the intervening topography, built form and vegetation. Viewpoint 4 [St Chads church] is taken from the north entrance door, the principal entrance is to the south, facing the Mere and main graveyard, see **Context View 3**. There is some potential for glimpsed and heavily filtered views of the development from **Viewpoint 6** [PRoW HAN/4] during construction and in Year 1; however, proposed mitigation would screen any views by

Year 15. The Effects on mid-distant views from the south are predicted to be at worst **slight adverse** reducing to **neutral** with the establishment of new planting.

- 5.2.13 More distant views from higher land within Gredington Park south of the Hanmer Mere are represented by **Viewpoint 11** [PROW HAN/5]. This view is a relatively expansive view north over a well wooded landscape. Hanmer Village is almost entirely screened by the intervening vegetation with the exception of St Chads Church which rises above the surrounding vegetation and Lych Hose on the edge of the Mere. The site is not visible from this location, although you can make out Hanmer Mill Farm on higher land beyond.

- 5.2.14 Effects on views from the south are predicted to be at worst **moderate/slight adverse** [depending on the sensitivity of the viewer] reducing to **neutral** with the establishment of new planting.



Context View 5: Mere House
[View from Footpath HAN/4 looking towards Mere House through an open field Gate]

Views from the Conservation Area

- 5.2.15 Views of the development site from within the Conservation Area are limited to the few locations immediately adjacent to the site, such as the Hanmer Arms access drive, the Bowling Club, and the Hanmer Arms Car Park. There is the potential for partial and oblique views of the eastern portion of the development site from the upper storey windows of the Hanmer Arms,. However, these would be seen in the context of the Car Park and modern Bowls Club [including the timber structures and flood lighting], which would make up much of the foreground. Views from elsewhere within the Conservation Area including locations adjacent to the Grade II* St Chads Church would be entirely screened by the intervening topography, built form and vegetation [see **Viewpoints 4, 5 and 11** and **Context View 6**].

Views from the East

- 5.2.16 Viewpoints in this direction include viewpoint no's 2, 3, 9 and 10 which are representative of views experienced by users of the local road network, footpath HAN/1 which runs from Hanmer village towards Hanmer Hall Farm and Hanmer Access road.

- 5.2.17 To the east the site adjoins the Hanmer Village road, which runs partially in cutting as it rises to village in the south [see **Context View 5**] and joins the A539 to the north. Beyond the road the pastoral landscape rises gently up towards Hanmer Hall Farm at approximately 96m AOD.



Context View 5: South towards Village
[View looking up the cutting towards Hanmer Village. The site located to right of the view; the Hanmer Arms is the building at the top of the road].

5.2.18

- 5.2.19 Mid and distant views of the site from the east, as represented by **Viewpoint 3** and not unlike those from elsewhere around the site, are often screened by the topography, the significant mature vegetation along road and field boundaries and adjacent to the Bowling Club and Hanmer Arms as well as the built form, including the Hanmer Arms, the Hammer Bowling Club and the cottages to the east of the road. Where there are views of the site these tend to be glimpsed, partial views of a small part of the development.



Context View 6: From Hanmer Village

[View looking north-west towards the site from the centre of the village].

- 5.2.20 The site would be visible, in varying degrees, from the public road network immediately adjacent to the site as illustrated by **Viewpoints 2** and **10**. The hedge and vegetation associated with the pond and stream on the sites eastern boundary provide some screening into the Site. However, elements of the site will be visible through the hedge, albeit they would be heavily filtered, particularly during the summer months and during daylight. The effects in winter and at night are likely to marginally greater, albeit the principal areas of development are on the southern and northern boundaries furthest from the viewer. There would be a clear view of the eastern portion of the site up the Hanmer Arms access drive from its junction with Hanmer Village road. However, the majority of the site, notably the most developed areas on the northern boundary would not be visible from this location by virtue of the local topography.
- 5.2.21 Views of the site from the private access driveway to the Hanmer Arms and Bowling Club, directly adjacent to the site [see **Viewpoint 9**] would be similar to those of views from Viewpoint 2, albeit the development on the southern and northern boundaries would be far more evident in the view, specially before mitigation has matured.
- 5.2.22 Effects on views from the east are predicted to be at worst **substantial/moderate adverse** on private receptors immediately adjacent to the site reducing to **moderate/slight adverse** with the establishment of new planting. Effects on receptors from publicly accessible locations [PRoW/Local Roads etc.] would be, at worst **moderate/slight adverse** reducing to **neutral** once mitigation planting matured.

Views from the West

- 5.2.23 Viewpoints from the west are dealt with above under paragraphs 5.2.4 to 5.2.7. There is unlikely to be any change in views from the west as a result of the proposed development.

5.3 Summary of Visual Effects

- 5.3.1 There are very few locations in the area surrounding the site from where the development would be openly viewed, and these tend to be immediately adjacent to the site, no significant adverse effects on views is predicted from publicly accessible locations. The broadly triangular site is enclosed by mature trees and hedges on two boundaries and by the vegetation on

adjoining greatly limiting visibility. The undulating, rolling landscape and location of Hanmer Village to the south further assist in screening views of the site.

- 5.3.2 The existing trees and hedges on the site boundaries [north and south] as well as the two small copses within the site and any vegetation associated with the adjacent pond would be retained in their entirety as part of the development. Glimpses of the development through breaks in hedges and trees are predicted from locations that are close and immediately adjacent to the site and for the development to be more notable [although still to a limited extent] during winter months when leaves have fallen from deciduous trees and shrubs. There is scope to include landscaping in the form of new hedge and tree planting on the eastern boundary [where there is currently none] to provide additional screening. Landscape and ecological mitigation, and enhancement, within the development will also provide screening and softening of the development.

6 Mitigation

6.1 Mitigation Generally

6.1.1 Mitigation is required where there is a need to reduce effects resulting from impacts associated with development. Mitigation can be 'built-in' to the project which is an ideal way to minimise environmental effects known as inherent or primary mitigation and includes methods such as careful siting, avoidance and retention of sensitive features. Secondary mitigation is in addition and is necessary to reduce unavoidable effects of the development. In some cases, the need for secondary mitigation may be avoided if inherent mitigation is effective and sufficient.

6.2 Inherent Mitigation

6.2.1 The proposed development is of modest scale and involves limited construction activities to establish the lodge development. The layout of the site can be designed to avoid affecting perimeter trees and hedges thereby retaining features that currently are of benefit for screening thereby minimising effects and the need for extensive secondary mitigation.

6.2.2 Furthermore, the proposed lodges can be designed of materials which complement the surrounding environment and make them inconspicuous.

6.3 Secondary Mitigation

6.3.1 The proposed development would result in few adverse effects on landscape character and although mitigation following the principles set out below will ensure the long-term screening of the site and integration of the development into the local landscape. The design principles respond to the local environment and setting and include:

- The retention and protection of existing mature trees and hedgerows on the site boundaries;
- Establishment of a new mixed native species hedge to the eastern site boundary;
- Use of indigenous tree and shrub species which are typically found in the site and surrounding area.
- Provide additional strengthening of vegetation to the boundaries through new planting, where appropriate;
- Provide a maintenance regime to ensure that vegetation and grassland are managed for landscape and ecological benefit in perpetuity; and
- Provision of amenity space and new features such as, informal footpaths, open drainage channels for surface water and a pond.

6.3.2 Indicative landscape proposals and site layout are shown at drawing SHF.244.001.L.D.002 – Landscape Strategy Design which shows a feasible site arrangement, areas of green/ecological space and areas of soft landscaping [subject to detailed design].

6.3.3 The proposed layout takes account of existing trees and shrubs and their root protection areas [RPA] in accordance with BS 5837:2012.

6.3.4 The retention of existing mature trees on, and within, the site boundaries provides screening and maintains them as a long-term feature whilst conserving the enclosed character of the site and restricts effects on the wider landscape. Existing trees will be protected during construction and the siting of new lodges and access roads will avoid damage by siting outside

the RPA. A new access road will be constructed from the existing Hanmer Arms access driveway and will not require the removal of any vegetation. No dig construction methods may be required for the new access road adjacent to trees/hedge subject to further consultation with a qualified arboriculturalist at detailed design stage.

- 6.3.5 The existing pond and stream on the eastern boundary as well as the small seasonal pond on the southern boundary, will be retained and it is anticipated that additional drainage features [ditches and ponds] may be installed [subject to detailed drainage design] if practical in the eastern portion of the site.
- 6.3.6 The proposed amenity space will be designed to enhance biodiversity. The majority of planting will comprise native trees and shrubs although some planting may be ornamental and for general amenity purposes to the internal parts of the site. These will include species which have flowers and fruits to encourage pollinators and birds. Where possible site boundaries will be managed as meadow encouraging tall grasses and wild flora. Other grassed areas such as footpaths and general open spaces will be close mown.

7 Residual Effects

7.1 Residual Effects Generally

- 7.1.1 Residual landscape and visual effects are considered fifteen years after opening [year 15] to allow sufficient time for any specific mitigation planting and other landscape works to mature and achieve their intended effect.

7.2 Residual Landscape Effects

- 7.2.1 There are no anticipated further changes in landform, land cover and use at year 15 and therefore the effects will be the same as year 1.
- 7.2.2 New planting areas will be laid out as part of the development at year 1 and will have established by year 15 and will supplement existing landscape features such as perimeter hedges.

Overall Landscape Character

- 7.2.3 The proposed development would have few effects on the landscape and landscape features. The development would have no further effects on the character of the English Maelor character area beyond those identified at year 1, which are limited.

7.3 Residual Visual Effects

- 7.3.1 By year 15 views of the proposed development will be almost entirely screened by existing and new planting on the site. There will be very few residual visual effects, where the development is seen it will comprise the occasional glimpse of lodges on the edge of the site seen from the closest receptors, the majority of which are located on private land [i.e. Hanmer Arms drive, Hanmer Arms Inn etc.].

8 Summary and Conclusions

8.1 Summary

Summary of Effects on Landscape Character

- 8.1.1 The landscape surrounding the site is generally consistent with the descriptions in the published LANDMAP assessment and the Wrexham Landscape Character Assessment [the English Maelor character area].
- 8.1.2 The site is situated in a landscape that is consistent with published assessment although the site itself is not typical as it is influenced by the development to the south and road networks that separate it from the wider landscape/townscape. The site is considered to be of lower sensitivity to the proposed change than the surrounding landscape and that it can be accommodate this form of development without adverse effects on the general landscape character of the area. The resultant effects of development are expected to be limited on the wider landscape and townscape [including the Conservation and Special Landscape Areas] and therefore no significant effects are predicted on the English Maelor Landscape Character Area.

Summary of Effects on Views

- 8.1.3 There are few publicly accessible locations in the area surrounding the site from where the development would be openly viewed, where views are possible these tend to be glimpsed partial views of a small portion of the site. No significant adverse effects on views is predicted. The site is enclosed by mature trees and hedges on adjoining land and site boundaries, which limit visibility, along with the existing built form of Hanmer Village to the immediate south of the site which further obscures views. The existing trees and hedges on the site boundaries [north and south] would be retained as part of the development. Glimpses of the development through breaks in hedges and trees are predicted from locations that are close and immediately adjacent to the site and for the development to be more notable [although to a limited extent] during winter months when leaves have fallen from deciduous trees and shrubs. There is significant scope to include landscaping in the form of new hedgerows and tree planting on the site as part of the development which will provide additional screening and will establish a new field boundary hedge to enclose the eastern boundary.

8.2 Conclusions

- 8.2.1 National and local level planning policy encourages sustainable development in suitable locations that do not have significant effects on the landscape, the proposed development supports this in that it is on a site on which landscape and visual effects will be minimised. It is considered that the site has capacity to accommodate the proposed development and that any resultant effects on landscape and views would be slight and hardly perceptible from the surrounding area.

9 References

References and Data Sources

- *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*, 3rd Edition [2013] Landscape Institute and the Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment;
- *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland* [2002] Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage;
- *Guidelines for Environmental Impact Assessment* [2004] Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment;
- The Google Earth website at www.earth.google.com;
- National Resources Wales website at: <https://naturalresources.wales/>;
- CADW website <https://cadw.gov.wales/>;
- Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust website: <https://cpat.org.uk/>;
- Hanmer Conservation Area Assessment and Management Plan;
- English Maelor Landscape Character Area 13b;
- Welsh Government:
<https://gweddill.gov.wales/topics/health/nhswales/circulars/policy/?lang=en>;
- Landmap website <https://landmap-maps.naturalresources.wales/default.aspx>;
- Wrexham Council Borough Council:
https://www.wrexham.gov.uk/top_navigation/search/index.htm?q=planning

Appendix A – Methods of Assessment

METHOD FOR LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Introduction

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment [LVIA] considers the potential effects of the development on:

- Individual landscape features and elements;
- Landscape character and quality [condition]; and
- Visual amenity and the people who view the landscape.

Distinction between Landscape and Visual Impacts

Landscape and visual effects are two distinct but related areas, which will be assessed separately in accordance with the approach outlined below. Landscape and visual impacts do not necessarily coincide and can be beneficial or adverse. A clear distinction will be drawn between landscape and visual impacts as follows:

- Landscape impacts relate to the effects of the proposal on the physical and other characteristics of the landscape and its resulting character and quality; and
- Visual impacts relate to the effects on views experienced by visual receptors [e.g. residents, footpath users, tourist's etc.] and on the visual amenity experienced by those people.

Guidance

The LVIA of the proposed scheme will be undertaken by Landscape Architects with experience of preparing assessments for similar types of development. The assessment was undertaken in accordance with best practice outlined in published guidance:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition [2013] Landscape Institute and the Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment;
- Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland [2002] The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage; and
- Guidelines for Environmental Impact Assessment [2004] Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment.

LVIA Method

The LVIA will be undertaken in the following stages:

- Baseline data collection via desk-top, consultation and fieldwork;
- Description of the baseline landscape character and visual amenity of the site and surrounding area which identify the relevant landscape and visual receptors [including representative viewpoints] and determine their sensitivity to change;
- Description of the magnitude of change in the landscape and visual amenity as a consequence of the proposal;
- Description of the potential landscape and visual impacts arising from the proposal; and
- Development of strategic mitigation proposals to assist in reducing adverse landscape and visual effects or provide compensation where unavoidable, and where possible enhance and safeguard beneficial effects.

Baseline information regarding landscape features and sensitive visual receptors, and the likely change in the landscape character and visual amenity of the site and its surroundings, will be used to identify potential impacts and inform the final scheme as appropriate.

Strategic mitigation measures will be developed in tandem with the proposal to minimise adverse impacts as part of an iterative design process. Options for screening various components of the scheme will be investigated and adopted as mitigation measures where appropriate.

Criteria thresholds for assessing the degree of change as a result of the scheme will be established and the final layout of the scheme will be reviewed to ascertain the magnitude of change in the landscape and in views. Visual impact on historic features of interest may also need to be assessed.

Sensitivity of Receptors, Magnitude of Change and Significance of Effects

The significance of effects of the proposal on both the landscape and visual receptors within the study area are ascertained by cross-referencing the sensitivity of the baseline landscape or visual receptor and the magnitude of change as a result of the development.

The sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors is judged as high, medium or low. The magnitude of change is also judged to be negligible, low, medium or high. Significance of effects is expressed as either slight, moderate or substantial, which may be either beneficial or adverse, or neutral.

Study Area

For the purposes of this LVIA, a 2.5km study area from the centre of the site has been used as a boundary to assess the effects of the proposals. 2.5km has been considered in acknowledgement of the scale of the proposals, the undulating nature of the local topography and the extent of vegetation cover within the immediate environs. This is not to say that there will not be views of the site from outside this study area; however, it is considered that more distant views are likely to be limited and in any event the development would only be seen as a small element of a wider panorama.

Visual Envelope and Zone of Theoretical Visibility

The visual envelope of a scheme defines the broad area from within which it may be possible to see the whole or part of the proposed development and helps to establish the potential for sensitive visual receptors. The site is not considered to be visible outside this area or will be very difficult to perceive, except from occasional higher elevations. There will however still be pockets within the visual envelope from which there are no views of the study area, due to the local screening effects of vegetation and topography or other features such as buildings. Landscape features, which form visual barriers and restrict views towards parts of the study area, such as landform, settlements and woodland, can then be evaluated and significant barriers identified to refine the baseline visibility of the proposal.

A preliminary zone of theoretical visibility [ZTV] was defined to identify an estimated visual envelope and potential receptors/viewpoints.

Representative Viewpoints

Within the extent of the visual envelope, it would not be practical to illustrate the visual impact on every individual visual receptor affected by a scheme. Therefore, representative viewpoints will be used to assess the impacts on the different range of views towards the site. Viewpoints will be illustrated photographically using a 50mm lens digital SLR camera and the site location and significant features will be identified together with landmarks and features in the surrounding area. All

photography carried out as part of this assessment is in accordance with LI Advice Note 01/11 [March 2011].

For this assessment, photographs were taken during summer and winter months, in order to show a comparison in views shown at different times of the year. For summer views, photographs were taken using a Canon digital SLR camera. All pictures were taken using a high-quality setting of >12-megapixel resolution.

Each of the viewpoints presented in the report is made up of several photographs which have been stitched together using photo-stitching software. Pictures are taken using a minimum of 50% overlap, and the software ensure that each photo has between 30-50% overlap with all other adjacent photograph. This process avoids the distortion that can occur at the edges of pictures. During the stitching process, none of the photographs were distorted in terms of scaling.

At the time the baseline photographs are taken co-ordinates of the viewpoints were recorded using a GPS. Height [AOD] at the viewpoints was also recorded. Photographs were taken at approximately 1.5m above ground level [i.e. eye level].

Temporal Scope

2018 has been taken as the baseline year for defining the existing landscape. The relevant impacts of the development will be assessed at the following times:

- During construction;
- Year 1: - one year after opening [Opening Year] to assess the impacts once the major construction is complete; and
- Year 15: - fifteen years after opening [Design Year] to allow for any mitigation planting and other landscape schemes to mature to give the intended effect.

Desk Studies:

The baseline landscape and visual assessment comprised a desktop study of data sources including the following and as detailed in References Section 9 of the report:

- The Google Earth website at www.earth.google.com;
- National Resources Wales website at: <https://naturalresources.wales/>;
- CADW website <https://cadw.gov.wales/>;
- Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust website: <https://cpat.org.uk/>;
- Hanmer Conservation Area Assessment and Management Plan;
- English Maelor Landscape Character Area 13b;
- Welsh Government:
<https://gweddill.gov.wales/topics/health/nhswales/circulars/policy/?lang=en>;
- Landmap website <https://landmap-maps.naturalresources.wales/default.aspx>;
- Wrexham Council Borough Council:
https://www.wrexham.gov.uk/top_navigation/search/index.htm?q=planning

Field Studies:

The site was visited in 2019 to obtain the following data:

- Photographs from proposed viewpoints;
- A corroboration of the findings of the desktop review; and

- To obtain additional information on landscape features, views and to gather any additional local information that may not be apparent from desk-based study.

All site surveys were undertaken during periods of clement weather from public highways, public rights of way [PRoW] and publicly accessible areas, including areas of public open space.

Method for Landscape Assessment

Landscape Sensitivity

A judgement regarding landscape sensitivity will be made based on the following general criteria:

Table 1: Landscape Sensitivity Criteria

Sensitivity	Criteria
Low	A landscape of few positive characteristics, poor condition or one that is not particularly valued for its scenic quality. The character of the landscape, existing land use, pattern and scale are tolerant of change and offer considerable opportunities for successful mitigation and landscape enhancement. The landscape may be a poor example of a locally abundant landscape type.
Medium	A landscape that exhibits some distinctive characteristics but may have been slightly degraded or one that is moderately valued despite its alteration. The character of the landscape, land use, pattern and scale offer some opportunities for successful mitigation and landscape enhancement. The landscape may be a poor example of a locally scarce landscape type or a good example of a locally abundant landscape type. Locally designated landscapes.
High	A landscape of particularly distinctive characteristics maintained in a good condition or one that is particularly valued for its scenic quality. The character of the landscape, existing land use, landscape features, pattern and scale are intolerant of change and offer few opportunities for successful mitigation or landscape enhancement. The landscape may be a good example of a locally scarce landscape type. Nationally designated landscapes.

Magnitude of Landscape Change

A judgement regarding the magnitude of change to landscape features and character will be made based on the following general criteria:

Table 2: Magnitude of Landscape Change Criteria

Magnitude of Change	Criteria
High	Total loss of or severe damage to key characteristics, features or elements of the landscape Introduction of highly unnatural or unattractive features into the landscape which do not fit well with the existing character Major improvement or removal of several notable existing features or characteristics that significantly detract from the existing character Introduction of major new features or elements into the landscape which significantly improve the existing character
Medium	Partial loss of or damage to key characteristics, features or elements of the landscape Introduction of some unnatural features into the landscape but which may be accommodated without major detriment to the existing character. Moderate improvement or removal of some existing features or characteristics that currently detract from the existing character Introduction of some new features or elements into the landscape which moderately improve the existing character

Magnitude of Change	Criteria
Low	Minor loss of or alteration to one or more key characteristics, feature or elements of the landscape Introduction of minor unnatural features into the landscape which do not detract significantly from the existing character Minor improvement or removal of a small existing feature or characteristic that slightly detracts from the existing character Introduction of minor new features or elements into the landscape which slightly improve the existing character
Negligible	No notable loss or alteration of any key characteristics features or elements of the landscape No notable new features introduced into the landscape

Method of Assessment – Visual Amenity

Visual Sensitivity

The sensitivity of visual receptors will depend on a number of factors including: the location and context of the viewpoint, the expectations and occupation of the visual receptor, the number of receptors being represented by the viewpoint and distance from the scheme. The extent of visual intrusion by any existing development may also affect the sensitivity of visual receptors in this vicinity. A judgement will be made regarding the sensitivity of baseline receptor views based on a combination of these factors. The sensitivity of the following visual receptors is given as a guide only and other factors may also affect their sensitivity:

Table 3: Visual Sensitivity Criteria

Sensitivity	Criteria
Low	Users of industrial sites, offices and commercial properties. Users of A and B roads [except on key tourist trails]. Users of active recreational and leisure facilities where the focus is on the activity and not the landscape. Community buildings in an urban location.
Medium	Residential properties with restricted views, distant and panoramic views, oblique views, limited/partially screened views towards the scheme or surrounded by urban development. Community buildings with a rural view. Users of Public Rights of Way and local 'C' class roads, unclassified lanes, tracks used by non-motorised users and users of outdoor recreational facilities and public open space with restricted views towards the scheme, distant views or with views of existing urban development. Users of local and regional tourist routes ['A' and 'B' class roads].
High	Residential properties with predominantly open rural views from the curtilage, ground floor and upper floors directly towards the scheme. Users of Public Rights of Way and local 'C' class roads, unclassified lanes, tracks used by non-motorised users which traverse open countryside with predominantly open views towards the scheme. Users of recognised vistas and designated viewpoints. Users of outdoor recreational facilities and public open space with open views towards the scheme at close proximity.

Magnitude of Visual Change

A judgement regarding the magnitude of change to views will be made based on the following general criteria:

Table 4: Magnitude of Visual Change Criteria

Magnitude	Criteria
High	A significant deterioration or improvement in the existing view
Medium	A noticeable deterioration or improvement in the existing view
Low	A barely perceptible deterioration or improvement in the existing view
Negligible	No discernible deterioration or improvement in the existing view

Evaluation of Landscape and Visual Impact Significance

The evaluation of residual impact significance will take into account all agreed landscape and visual mitigation measures. The significance of impacts will be graded by relating the sensitivity of the baseline landscape or view to the magnitude of change as a result of the proposed development. The following matrix outlines approximately how the significance of adverse and beneficial impacts will be determined. The criteria thresholds are for approximate guidance only, the assessment of landscape and visual impact significance will rely upon clearly explained professional judgement.

Table 5: Significance of Landscape/Visual Impacts

Sensitivity of Landscape / View	Magnitude of Change in the Landscape / View			
	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
High	Substantial	Substantial/ Moderate	Moderate/Slight	Neutral
Medium	Substantial/ Moderate	Moderate	Slight	Neutral
Low	Moderate/ Slight	Slight	Slight	Neutral

Appendix B –Landscape and Visual Assessment Tables

Summary of Landscape Assessment

Landscape Receptor	Nature of Impact	Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Impact Significance
Landscape Features				
Landform	<p>Existing: The site is in an area that is undulating in nature. The landform on the site is typical of the surrounding environment in that it is undulating with streams, drainage ditches and small ponds quite prevalent.</p> <p>Proposed: Levels on the site would not be changed significantly on the site as a consequence of the lodge development. It is anticipated that minor earthworks would be required to create access paths, drives, hardstanding areas for placing lodges and for creating drainage ditches. The scale of the proposed earthworks is limited and would not be perceived from the surrounding area.</p>	Low	Low	Slight adverse
Land use, land cover, trees and hedges	<p>Existing: The land cover of the site is a single grassland field, incorporating two groups of trees and bounded on three sides by mature hedges, trees and a pond and stream, all of which will be retained as part of the development. The third open boundary is located adjacent to the Hanmer Arms and Bowling Club entrance drive and car parks. The site is enclosed and is immediately adjacent to an existing car park.</p> <p>Proposed: The principal change resulting from the development would be in the loss of grassland cover to lodge development. The proposed changes would be limited in the context of the wider surroundings, the site is enclosed [by hedgerows and built form] greatly limiting effects beyond the site boundaries and there will be little in the way of adverse effects on characteristic landscape features. The proposed development will not result in any change to the existing field pattern. A new boundary will be established on the south-eastern site boundary comprising fencing, hedging and trees. Although the site is located adjacent to the Hanmer Conservation and Special Landscape Areas there visual links are limited and the proximity of the existing public house, bowling club and car parks as well as the road infrastructure enclosing two sides of the site suggests that the site is not highly sensitive and the proposed change would not be substantial. There is significant scope to include soft landscaping as part of the project, including planting within and to the site boundaries to retain enclosure and enhance existing character.</p>	Medium	Medium	Moderate adverse
Overall landscape character	<p>Existing: The landscape surrounding the site is noted in published assessment [Wrexham Landscape Character Assessment] to be a gently undulating landscape located within the 'English Maelor' Landscape Character Area which, by virtue of its border location is similar to the adjacent Cheshire and North Shropshire Plain and is characterised by a mixture of both English and Welsh influences. The landscape surrounding the site is</p>	Medium	Medium /Low	Moderate/ Slight Adverse

Landscape Receptor	Nature of Impact	Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Impact Significance
	<p>mostly consistent with the characteristic elements that are described in the published assessments. The site also shares some of the principle characteristic such as the undulating landform with streams and ponds, although it is predominantly enclosed with very little or no visual connection with the surrounding area, including the Conservation and Special Landscape Areas. It is immediately adjacent to existing development at an established Inn, Restaurant and Hotel as well as a Bowling Club which influences its character and is different to the largely undeveloped agricultural land in the wider landscape. The site and land adjacent land to the north and south-west are in agricultural use for pasture. The sensitivity of the landscape varies depending on the particular aspect with Historical and Cultural being of High sensitivity, Geological and Habitat being Low and Visual and Sensory Medium.</p> <p>Proposed: The site is situated in a landscape that is consistent with published assessment although the site itself is not typical as it is influenced by the development to the south and road networks that separate it from the wider landscape/townscape. The site is considered to be of lower sensitivity to the proposed change than the surrounding landscape and that it can be accommodate this form of development without adverse effects on the general landscape character of the area. The resultant effects of development are expected to be limited on the wider landscape and townscape [including the Conservation and Special Landscape Areas] and therefore no significant effects are predicted on the English Maelor Landscape Character Area.</p>			

Summary of Visual Assessment

Ref	Visual Receptor Locations	Existing Description of View and Effect	Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Significance of Effect
Representative Viewpoints [Distances and measurements are approximate]					
1	Hanmer Arms Entrance/Car Park Inn/Restaurant. NGR. SJ 45484 39820 84m AOD, 60m. south east of site. Receptors: Hanmer Arms and Bowling Club	Existing: Viewpoint 1 shows the view experienced from the car park and garden of the Grade II Hanmer Arms south of the site and within the Conservation Area. The views of the site, which is located north of the car park are obscured and heavily filtered by existing trees and hedges on the land between the site and the Listed Building and Conservation Area. There are typically trees and shrubs immediately adjacent to the path on the north side. Viewpoints 1 and 1a are taken from locations where there are breaks. This viewpoint is not technically located in a publicly accessible location. Viewpoint 1 is located on the footway south of the car park leading to the rear entrance of the Inn, adjacent to the Inn rooms. A very small part of the site may be glimpsed through the existing field gate access into the site, although the majority of the site would be entirely screened from view.	High [Conservation Area and Listed Building] Low [Car Park and Bowling Club]		
		Construction: Although receptors will be relatively close to the site due to the screening provided by the intervening trees and hedges construction activities will be at worst glimpsed through gaps in, and above the vegetation, more notable during the winter [if construction takes place out of summer season]. Potential slight temporary disruption to a relatively quiet semi-rural environment will be noted through the movement of machinery/vehicles and noise.		Low	Moderate/ Slight Adverse
		Year 1: As for construction changes to views will not be prominent and the experience for the Inn, and Car Park users will be much the same as existing. Lodges on the site may be glimpsed between trees and roofs extend above hedges. Views of the development will not be possible from the majority of the locations within the Inn and Car Park. The nature of the location in close proximity to the car park suggests that any additional traffic would have no discernible effect on the tranquillity of the location.		Low	Moderate/ Slight Adverse
		Year 15: As for Year 1 but effects greatly lessened due to establishment of new soft landscaping on the south-eastern boundary.		Negligible	Neutral
2	View Hanmer Village Road/Little Green Flowers - Florist	Existing: Viewpoint 2 is located on the Florists [Little Green Flowers] car park opposite the existing site access and its junction with Hanmer Village Road on the edge of the Conservation Area [Sub Area 1] looking west towards the site. The eastern portion of the site can be viewed beyond the access road and post and rail fence in the mid ground, although the south and western portions of the site are screened behind the rising topography. The mature Weeping Willow trees and	High [Conservation Area] Low		

Ref	Visual Receptor Locations	Existing Description of View and Effect	Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Significance of Effect
	SJ 45519 39955 81m AOD, 10m, east of site. Receptors: Road users, pedestrians and the Conservation Area.	landscaped entrance [including the line of reproduction Victorian style lamps] to the Inn are a prominent feature within this view as are the two clusters of trees within the eastern portion of the site.	[Road Users]		
		Construction: Construction activities, particularly within the eastern portion of the site, would be clearly visible from this viewpoint. Views of the development's construction within the western portion of the site would be predominantly screened by the rising topography. Views from the road would for the most part be transitory and short-lived.		Low	Moderate/ Slight Adverse
		Year 1: New lodges and access roads have been sited on the southern and western boundaries leaving the eastern and central portions of the site largely undeveloped. The exception of this is the small reception building and site access. From this location the majority of the new lodges would be screened from view by the existing topography. The new access off Hanmer Arms access road, reception building and a small number of and lodges will be visible against the existing hedgerow to the southern corner of the site		Low	Moderate/ Slight Adverse
		Year 15: Once the proposed hedge and hedge trees proposed along the western boundary [which is currently defined by a fence] and landscaping to the site itself, views into the site would be greatly screened.		Low/ Negligible	Neutral/ Slight Adverse
3	Footpath HAN/1 SJ 45564 39862 84m AOD, 110m, east of site Receptors: PRow users	Existing: Views toward the site are greatly obscured by vegetation associated with the Hanmer Arms access road, the Hanmer Bowls Club and the trees around the pond. The mature Weeping Willows by the pond can be seen to the right of the midground beyond which is the northern portion of the site which would remain predominantly undeveloped. The telephone exchange building and roof of the florists are visible to the right foreground as is the bowling green to the left midground.	High		
		Construction: Construction activity would be predominantly screened by the intervening vegetation. There is some limited potential for the construction equipment being visible through the vegetation particularly during winter months, but in any event these would be limited and short-lived.		Low	Slight Adverse
		Year 1: The majority of the development would not be visible. However, the upper portion so the most northerly lodges [Circa. 3no.] would be partially visible above the intervening vegetation and against the backdrop of the vegetation associated with the A539.		Low	Slight Adverse
		Year 15: As for Year 1 the development albeit additional boundary and internal plantings would greatly assimilate the development into the landscape.		Negligible	Neutral

Ref	Visual Receptor Locations	Existing Description of View and Effect	Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Significance of Effect
4	St Chads Church Yard [Northern Entrance] TR 26325 62947 86m AOD, 130m, south of the site Receptors: Church and Graveyard	Existing: Views of the site are entirely screened by the intervening topography, which rises slightly to the graveyard wall, and by the intervening vegetation, notably the 2.0m high evergreen hedgerows and vegetation located within the Hanmer Arms car park [see left of Viewpoint 1 for context] and field boundary hedge beyond the graveyard wall.	High [Conservation Area and Listed Building]		
		Construction: Views of the construction activities would be entirely screened.		Negligible	Neutral
		Year 1 The development would not be visible.	Low [Car Park and Bowling Club]	Negligible	Neutral
		Year 15: As for Year 1.		Negligible	Neutral
5	Striga Lane/Hanmer Mere SJ 45394 39652 7m AOD, 231m south of site Receptors: Local road and Hanmer Mere	Existing: Views toward the site obscured the intervening built form [including St Chars Church, the Primary School and Lych House] all of which are located on higher ground and the existing trees and hedgerows between the viewer and the site. Although the site is located on higher-lying ground than the viewpoint the intervening topography completely screens any view of the site. .	High [Conservation Area]		
		Construction: From this location construction activities will not be visible.		Negligible	Neutral
		Year 1: There will be no change in views from this location.	Medium [Local Road]	Negligible	Neutral
		Year 15: As for Year 1		Negligible	Neutral
6	PRoW Footpath HAN/4 Llwybr Maelor Way SJ 54274 39750 84m AOD, 192m south-west of site Receptors: PRoW users	Existing: This viewpoint is from a public footpath [within the Special Landxape Area] and long distant path [Llwyby Maelor Way] which lies immediately north of the listed Mere House and Mere House Cottage and is relatively close to the site [within 200m A small portion of the site is just visible in the view; however, the majority of the site is screened by the intervening topography [which forms a slight ridge] and vegetation associated with field boundaries [hedgerows, and hedge trees]. Although there was no public access to either of the properties [Mere House, Mere House Cottages] it is assumed that even upper storey views would be screened by the significant woodland and tree planting which surround the properties.	High [Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and Long Distant Path]		
		Construction: The anticipated changes in views during this phase would be limited to the movement of brightly coloured plant and machinery and reflection from shiny surfaces, likely to be restricted to activities taking place in the southern part of the site glimpsed above the intervening. Activities will be noticeable in the winter although largely screened during the summer except for any taller plant and machinery which may be glimpsed above hedges.		Low	Slight Adverse

Ref	Visual Receptor Locations	Existing Description of View and Effect	Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Significance of Effect
		Year 1: The development will be predominantly screened by the intervening trees and hedges. Lodges will be set back from existing mature trees on the southern boundaries although those closest to the northern boundary may be glimpsed. The remainder of the development is unlikely to be seen beyond the northern edge.		Low	Slight Adverse
		Year 15: As for Year 1 but less visible the proposed new planting will have matured providing further screening and filtering of views.		Negligible	Neutral
7	Brook Lane SJ 54144 40091 77m AOD, 217m, west of site Receptors: Road and PRoW users	Existing: The view from this location looks though a field access across a single arable field beyond which is the A539 Whitchurch Road. Views of the site are entirely screened by the significant vegetation either side of the A539 which is in cutting as passes the site. Heavily filtered and glimpsed views of the western portion of the site may be possible during winter months, although it is anticipated that this unlikely. Views towards site from Brook Lane are limited to glimpsed views across the intervening farmland though the few gaps in the vegetation. Views towards the site form Brook Lane Farm are also limited to glimpsed views through the intervening vegetation form upper storey windows – there are no anticipated views form lower level windows.	Medium		
		Construction: Construction activities at ground level will not be visible. There is a small potential for glimpses of any tall construction equipment [such as cranes] but their use would be temporary.		Negligible	Neutral
		Year 1: The development is not anticipated to be visible from this location, at worst glimpses of very small parts of the development between trees may be possible during winter months or at night-time.		Negligible	Neutral
		Year 15: As for Year 1, but glimpses increasingly unlikely as additional planting and better management regimes would improve screening on the western boundary.		Negligible	Neutral
8	Junction of Brook Lane and A539 Whitchurch Road SJ 45492 40095 81m AOD, 50m north of site	Existing: Transient, glimpsed and oblique view of the site though a gap in the roadside and site boundary vegetation when travelling south-west from passing vehicles [cars and bicycles] utilising the A539 Whitchurch Road. There would be no view of the site from vehicles travelling north and east due to its location. The view for pedestrians utilising the grassed verges would be similar albeit longer lasting. A large proportion of the site is screened from view from the road and verges of the A539 by the roadside and site boundary vegetation. The glimpsed view from the junction includes views of the north-western portion of the site through the vegetation gap on the site northern corner.	Low [Road Users] Medium [Pedestrians or Cyclists]		

Ref	Visual Receptor Locations	Existing Description of View and Effect	Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Significance of Effect
	Receptors: Road users	The nature of the viewer is such that their concentration is likely to be either on the road ahead or on the junction with Hanmer Village Road.			
		Construction: Construction activities within the north-western portion of the site would be visible from this location, although the view would be short lived even for slower moving pedestrians and cyclists.		Low	Neutral/ Slight Adverse
		Year 1: The north western extent of the site would be visible though the gap in the vegetation, albeit the view would be glimpsed and fleeting.		Low	Neutral/ Slight Adverse
		Year 15: Once mitigation on the northern boundary had matured, effectively filling the existing gap in the vegetation, then views of the development would be entirely screened.		Low	Neutral/ Slight Adverse
9	View Hanmer Arms access road SJ 45480 39925 82m AOD 11m south-west of site Receptors: Private road users, Conservation Area	Existing: View from the verge of the Hanmer Arms/Hanmer Bowls Club access road immediately adjacent to the site looking west. The view encompasses the southern and eastern portion of the site bounded by the post and rail fence and two small copses of trees. Much of the northern part of the site is screened by the intervening ridgeline, beyond which you can see the top of the trees along the A539. The most significant element of the view is the access road its manicured landscape and the avenue of reproduction Victorian lamps. This view is technically not a publicly accessible location and would be limited to users of the Hanmer Arms and Bowls Club.	Low [Private Access Users] Medium [Conservation Area]		
		Construction: Construction activities associated with the development would be clearly visible from this location, notably the construction of the access and internal roads and the lodges on the northern boundary. Views of lower level construction activities beyond the ridge would be screened.		High	Medium/ Substantial Adverse
		Year 1: The development on the southern boundaries, the reception building, and internal road layout would be visible from this location against the backdrop of the boundary vegetation.		High	Medium/ Substantial Adverse
		Year 15: Once mitigation and enhancement planting had matured views of the development would be partially screened and greatly softened.		Medium	Slight/ Moderate Adverse
10	Striga Lane/Hanmer Village Road	Existing: A heavily screened and filtered view of the eastern portion of site from the verge of the local road leading up to Hanmer Village through the relatively dense roadside and boundary vegetation. Views of the northern and southern boundaries where the development is proposed	Medium		

Ref	Visual Receptor Locations	Existing Description of View and Effect	Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Significance of Effect
	SJ 45503 40028 83m AOD, 18m east of site Receptors: Road Users	would also be screened by the ridge within the central portion of the site. Views into the site would be more accessible during winter months when leaf coverage is limited.			
		Construction: If the works are undertaken during the summer months then the majority of the construction activities, which are limited to the distant boundaries, would be screened from view. If the works are undertaken in Winter months then there would be glimpses of the machinery through the dense hedgerow.		Negligible /Low	Neutral/ Slight Adverse
		Year 1: The fact that the development is restricted to the southern and northern boundaries and the retention of the hedgerows and hedgerow trees mean that all but glimpsed and heavily filtered view of the lodges would be visible even during winter months and at night-time.		Negligible	Neutral
		Year 15: Once mitigation and enhancement planting had matured and had been appropriately managed, those glimpsed and filtered views would be fewer.		Negligible	Neutral
11	Hanmer Estate Road/Footpath WCBC HAN/5 SJ 45264 38514 108m AOD, 1.36km south of site Receptors: PRow Users and Historic Parkland	Existing: Distant view from an elevated position from within Gredington Park Estate and the Special Landscape Area looking north across Hanmer Mere and the parkland landscape towards the village of Hammer. The site is located beyond the Church of St Chads and the village, which can be seen in the distance and whose tower just breaks the skyline. The other significant feature in the view is the red brick of Lych House which can be seen to the left of and below St Chads Church. The view illustrates the gently rolling and heavily wooded nature of the landscape to the south of the site and the limited opportunities for views of the site.	High		
		Construction: The development is not anticipated to be visible from this location.		Negligible	Neutral
		Year 1: The development is not anticipated to be visible from this location		Negligible	Neutral
		Year 15: As Year 1.		Negligible	Neutral

Appendix C - Consultation



In pursuance of its powers under the Acts and Orders referred to below, the County Borough Council as Local Planning Authority, hereby determines your application in accordance with the particulars and plans comprising the application



Applicant	MR SCHOLFIELD CARLTON HOLDINGS	Code No	HAN P /2018 /0965
Agent	RICHARD LEE PROJECT PLANNING MR RICHARD LEE 29 CLONNERS FIELD NANTWICH CW5 7GU	Date Received	14/11/2018
		Decision Date	09/01/2019

Town and Country Planning Act, 1990

Location of application

HANMER ARMS, HANMER VILLAGE ROAD, HANMER, WHITCHURCH, SY13 3DE

Description of application

APPLICATION FOR OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION FOR 19 NO. HOLIDAY LODGES, RECEPTION BUILDING AND ANCILLARY WORKS

In reaching this decision the Council has had regard to the relevant policies in the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan which are as follows:-

CLF9	Visitor accommodation outside settlement limits
EC6	Biodiversity Conservation
EC7	Conservation Areas
EC9	Listed buildings of special architectural or historic interest
GDP1	Development objectives
PS2	Development and the environment

Particulars of decision that Outline Planning Permission be REFUSED

Applicant	MR SCHOLFIELD CARLTON HOLDINGS	Code No	HAN P /2018 /0965
Agent	RICHARD LEE PROJECT PLANNING MR RICHARD LEE 29 CLONNERS FIELD NANTWICH CW5 7GU	Date Received	14/11/2018
		Decision Date	09/01/2019

Reason(s)

1. The proposal, by virtue of its proximity away from the existing serviced accommodation of the Harmer Arms, as well as its self-servicing nature, is not considered to comprise an extension to the existing serviced accommodation, but would form new visitor accommodation outside a settlement limit, to which UDP Policy CLF9 presumes against. The principle of development is considered to be unacceptable.
2. The proposal would introduce a significant amount of built form to the site, altering the character of the site and locality, which would be exacerbated by virtue of the sites prominence in the landscape. The proposal as a result is considered would harm existing visual amenities of the area. Insufficient information has been submitted with the application to demonstrate otherwise. The proposal would conflict with UDP Policy GDP1 and CLF9.
3. The application has not adequately defined and analysed the setting of the historic assets in the vicinity which includes the Hanmer Conservation Area, St Chads Church and the Hanmer Arms, in order to evaluate the potential impacts of change upon their setting. The proposal would conflict with UDP Policies EC7 and EC9 as well as the provisions set out within CADW Guidance 'Managing Setting of Historic Assets in Wales'.
4. Insufficient information has been submitted to enable an assessment of the impact of the development on the Hanmer Mere. The proposal would fail to accord with UDP Policy EC6.



Officer Appointed for this purpose

Refer to the Statement of Applicant's Rights and General Information Enclosed

Head of Environment and Planning

Refer to Statement of Applicant's Rights and General Information on our planning web site at:-

http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/planning_portal/publications/info_sheets.htm

PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks outline planning permission for 19 no. holiday lodges, reception building and ancillary works.

HISTORY

P/2012/0854 – Change of use from hotel bedrooms to 7 x 1 bedroom and 2 x 2 bedroom residential apartments. Approved 24/01/2013.

P/2005/0652 - LBC for conversion of visitor accommodation. Granted 3.1.2006

P/2005/0653 – Planning app for conversion of visitor accommodation to residential. Committee resolution to grant subject to a revocation order for P/1999/0135 which was never completed. Application deemed disposed.

P/1999/0135 Proposed Chalet Block. Granted 7.2.2000.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Site is located within designated open countryside as identified on Policy Map 4 INSET 12. Conservation Area is directly south and Special Landscape Area lies directly west. UDP Policies EC7, PS2, GDP1, EC4, EC6 and CLF9 apply.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Chapter 4 – Planning for Sustainability
Technical Advice Note (TAN) 23 – Economic Development

CONSULTATIONS

CAWD: No impact to the scheduled ancient monument.

Welsh Water: Condition recommended to secure a scheme for foul and surface water drainage.

Highway Authority: Further information required, which is considered could be covered by condition.

NRW: Insufficient information submitted having regard to means from drainage from the site and the implications on this on the Hanmer Mere.

Public Protection: No concerns raised.

CPAT: No objection and no further archaeological intervention.

Ecology: Additional info required in regards to the drainage of the site and the need to assess the proposal in relation to its impact on the Hanmer Mere, prior to determination.

Community Council: Concerns raised in terms of visual impacts to the locality, drainage and sewerage impacts, nowhere for emergency vehicles to turn, increase in noise and light pollution,

Local Member: Notified.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Principle:

Local Plan Policy

Wrexham UDP Policy CLF9 permits visitor accommodation outside settlement limits, provided amongst other criteria, it involves extensions to existing serviced or self-serviced accommodation.

The application has not included any information in regards to the current levels and number of visitor accommodation units at the Hanmer Arms site.

A planning history search on the Councils system reveals that planning permission was granted in 2013 for the change of use of part of the visitor accommodation on the site to residential use, under P/2012/0854.

This entailed changing the use of the entire chalet block surrounding the hotel courtyard from 16 no. visitor accommodation units to 9 no. residential apartments.

The existing visitor accommodation would have been fully utilised at this stage, however it appears there was no demand for this type of accommodation given the change of use application which was submitted and approved for residential use.

No information has been put forward by the agent to demonstrate that the 9 no. flats granted planning permission under P/2012/0854 are all in use, or indeed, whether, the remaining visitor accommodation within the hotel are also continuously at capacity.

No information has been put forward as to how many units of visitor accommodation is on the Hanmer Arms site presently.

No information has been put forward to demonstrate if there are any available buildings on the site which are capable of adaptation or conversion.

No information or evidence has been put forward in terms of annual visitor numbers to the existing visitor accommodation and why there is a need for the proposed 19 no. new holiday lodges.

Little information has been put forward as to how the application site is linked to the existing serviced accommodation at the Hanmer Arms.

UDP Policy CLF9 goes on to state that extensions to serviced or self-serviced accommodation will only be permitted where existing buildings are fully utilised and incapable of further adaptation and the proposal is appropriate in scale and design to the existing building and does not have an adverse impact on the local landscape.

Having regard to the above, the proposal has not sufficiently demonstrated that the existing visitor accommodation associated with the application site is fully utilised and that the existing buildings associated with the site are not capable of adaptation to accommodate the proposed development. Furthermore, little evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that there is a

justifiable need for an additional 19 no. holiday lodges to serve the existing visitor accommodation.

Notwithstanding the above, the application site is located north of the Hanmer Arms on the other side of the access road serving the pub and hotel, and in this respect, is not considered to be particularly well linked or connected to the existing serviced accommodation.

Furthermore, the proposal would involve self-serviced accommodation, whereas the existing accommodation is serviced, further reinforcing the difference and degree of separateness between one another.

Therefore, the proposal is considered would be treated as new visitor accommodation in the open countryside, as opposed to comprising an extension to the existing serviced accommodation, being the hotel itself.

In this regard, the proposal would conflict with UDP Policy CLF9.

There is a policy presumption against the development.

Material Considerations

S.38(6) of the Planning Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan in force in the area, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

National Policy & Guidance

Planning Policy Wales is a material consideration in the determination of this application.

Planning Policy Wales indicates that appropriate tourist-related commercial development in new destinations, should be encouraged.

The chapter goes on to state that in rural areas, development should be sympathetic in nature and scale to the local environment and the needs of visitors and the local community.

Local Planning Authorities should further consider the impact of proposals on the environment and local community.

Therefore the need for the development must be balanced against the impact to the countryside and landscape and this will be discussed further in the report below.

Visual Impact on open countryside and landscape: The site topography is undulating and generally slopes downwards in an easterly/southerly direction.

The site is prominent when viewed from the highway and is fairly open on the north eastern corner/boundary.

The addition of a new access road and 19 no. new lodges is considered would result in a significant change to the character and appearance of the landscape and general visual amenity of this area, eroding the open nature of the site when travelling along the A525 and when approaching or exiting Hanmer village itself.

The land form would make it difficult for the development to be effectively screened without eliminating views into the village.

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has not been submitted to accompany the application.

No information has been submitted to demonstrate the amount of proposed engineering work required to accommodate the lodges, given the site topography, which may also result in an unnatural and discordant looking development proposal.

The number of holiday lodges is considered to be significant and would create a significant additional amount of built mass in this prominent location.

UDP Policy CLF9 states that extensions to serviced accommodation will only be permitted where it will not have an adverse effect on the local landscape. UDP Policy GDP1 states that built development in its scale, design and layout accords with the character of the site and makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the locality.

The application has not sufficiently demonstrated this and it is considered that the proposal would harm the local landscape character conflicting with UDP Policy CLF9 and GDP1.

The proposal would introduce a significant amount of built form to the site, altering the character of the site and locality, which would be exacerbated by virtue of the sites prominence in the landscape. The proposal as a result is considered would harm existing visual amenities of the area. Insufficient information has been submitted with the application to demonstrate otherwise. The proposal would conflict with UDP Policy GDP1 and CLF9.

Impact on setting of listed building: The application site bounds the northern edge of Hanmer Conservation Area and is accessed from the entranceway to the Grade II listed Hanmer Arms.

The application should be considered based on its impacts upon the setting of nearby historic assets in particular the Hanmer Conservation Area and Grade I listed Church of St Chads.

A full assessment of the impacts of the development upon setting has not been undertaken as part of the HIA or a LVIA which is considered to be inappropriate.

The Conservation Officer raises significant concerns over the nature and density of development, the associated engineering work, hard landscaping and lighting and their resultant impacts on landscape character in this sensitive location on the approach to the village and within the foreground of the Conservation Area and St Chads Church.

The application has not adequately defined and analysed the setting of historic assets in order to evaluate the potential impacts of change upon their setting and therefore based on the information submitted, the Conservation Officer objects to the application.

Design and Layout: The holiday lodges would be centred around an access road.

They would have the appearance of typical timber clad lodges.

No information has been submitted as to how the lodges would be accommodated on the site, given its undulating nature. It is unknown therefore whether any excavation is intended would take place as part of the proposal and if so, the amount and resultant impact this would have on the landscape.

It is considered that insufficient information has been put forward to justify the impact of the proposal on the surrounding visual amenities of the area.

Residential Amenity: No identified impacts would result to existing levels of residential amenities.

Highway Safety: Visibility at the existing access serving the Hanmer Arms is adequate.

A recommended 2m wide footway should be constructed up to the access serving the lodges.

The internal access road serving the lodges should be 4.8m wide.

Sufficient clearance of 6m needs to be provided for driveways/parking bays and should be shown on a site layout plan.

A suitable turning facility is required within the site and this should be constructed as per the standards set out in the WCBC Highways Note in order for it to be adopted. A swept path analysis should be provided.

The above comments are considered could be covered by condition if necessary.

Ecology: NRW request that additional drainage information is submitted to allow an assessment of the proposal on the Hanmer Mere.

Insufficient information has been submitted to enable an assessment of the impact of the development on the Hanmer Mere. The proposal would fail to accord with UDP Policy EC6.

Trees: No comments received at the time of writing.

CONCLUSION

The proposal, by virtue of its proximity away from the existing serviced accommodation of the Hanmer Arms, as well as its self-servicing nature, is not considered would comprise an extension to the existing serviced accommodation, but would form new visitor accommodation outside a settlement limit, to which UDP Policy CLF9 presumes against. The principle of development is considered to be unacceptable.

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Insufficient information has been submitted to enable an assessment of the impact of the development on the Hanmer Mere. The proposal would fail to accord with UDP Policy EC6.



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