



**Land North of  
Nuttall Farm,  
Much Marcle,  
Ledbury,  
HR8 2PG**

**Landscape and  
Visual Appraisal**

Prepared by:  
**The Environmental  
Dimension  
Partnership Ltd**

On behalf of:  
**Clive Boulton-  
Brooks**

November 2019  
Report Reference  
**edp1834\_r005b**

## Contents

<b>Section 1</b>	Introduction, Purpose and Methodology.....	1
<b>Section 2</b>	The Site .....	5
<b>Section 3</b>	Findings of EDP Data Trawl .....	7
<b>Section 4</b>	Existing (Baseline) Conditions: Landscape Character .....	13
<b>Section 5</b>	Existing (Baseline) Conditions: Visual Amenity.....	19
<b>Section 6</b>	The Proposed Development and Mitigation .....	25
<b>Section 7</b>	Summary of Effects .....	27
<b>Section 8</b>	Conclusions .....	33

## Appendices

<b>Appendix EDP 1</b>	Proposed Site Plan (Prepared by Savills)
<b>Appendix EDP 2</b>	Methodology: Tables Defining the Thresholds and Definitions of Terminology used in this Appraisal
<b>Appendix EDP 3</b>	Extracts from Hereford Council Landscape Character Assessment (2004)
<b>Appendix EDP 4</b>	Photoviewpoints (edp1834_d016b 06 November 2019 CLM/VP/GY)

## Plans

<b>Plan EDP 1</b>	Site Location and Local Context (edp1834_d011b 06 November 2019 GY/VP/RB)
<b>Plan EDP 2</b>	Relevant Planning Designations and Considerations (edp1834_d012b 06 November 2019 GY/VP/RB)
<b>Plan EDP 3</b>	Proposed Photoviewpoints with ZTV (edp1834_d015b 06 November 2019 GY/VP/RB)
<b>Plan EDP 4</b>	Findings of EDP's Visual Appraisal (edp1834_d013b 06 November 2019 GY/VP/RB)

*This version is intended for electronic viewing only*

	Report Ref: edp1834_r005			
	Author	Formatted	Peer Review	Proofed by/Date
r005_DRAFT	VP	HF	JBu	-
r005a	VP	HF	JBu	NG 181019
r005b	VP	NG	VP	-

*This page has been left blank intentionally*



## **Section 1**

### **Introduction, Purpose and Methodology**

#### **Introduction**

- 1.1 The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP) has been commissioned by Clive Boulton-Brooks ('the Applicant') to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) of proposals to develop an agricultural enterprise on Land North of Nuttall Farm, Much Marcle, Ledbury HR8 2PG ('the Site'). The Site falls within Hereford County Council (HCC) Local Planning Authority (LPA) area. The Site extends to 0.71 hectares (ha) and is briefly described in **Section 2** of this LVA. Full Site details are given in the Design and Access Statement (DAS) accompanying the planning application.
- 1.2 EDP is an independent environmental planning consultancy with offices in Cirencester, Cheltenham, Shrewsbury and Cardiff. The practice provides advice to private and public sector clients throughout the UK in the fields of landscape, ecology, archaeology, cultural heritage, arboriculture, rights of way and masterplanning. Details of the practice can be obtained at our webSite ([www.edp-uk.co.uk](http://www.edp-uk.co.uk)). EDP is a Registered Practice of the Landscape Institute<sup>(1)</sup> specialising in the assessment of the effects of proposed development on the landscape.
- 1.3 This LVA is part of a suite of documents accompanying a full planning application for the proposed development summarised in **Section 6** of this LVA. The proposals are illustrated on the Proposed Site Plan at **Appendix EDP 1**.

#### **Purpose and Structure of this LVA**

- 1.4 The purpose of this LVA is to identify the baseline conditions of the Site, surrounding area and to determine those landscape and visual characteristics that might inform the design of the development proposals, including recommendations for mitigation. It then provides an assessment of the landscape and visual effects predicted to arise from development on the Site with reference to the baseline analysis.
- 1.5 In undertaking the assessment described in this LVA, EDP has:
- Undertaken a thorough data trawl of relevant designations and background documents, described in **Section 3**;
  - Assessed the existing (baseline) condition and character of the Site and its setting, described in **Section 4**;
  - Assessed the existing visual (baseline) context, especially any key views to and from the Site (**Section 5**). The establishment of baseline landscape and visual conditions,

---

<sup>1</sup> LI Practice Number 1010

when evaluated against the proposed development, allow the identification and evaluation of landscape effects later in the LVA at **Section 7**;

- Described the landscape aspects of the proposed development that may influence any landscape or visual effects (**Section 6**);
- **Section 7** assessed the landscape and visual effects in accordance with the approach described below;
- Reached overall conclusions in **Section 8**; and
- Provided an analysis of the likely landscape and visual effects of the proposed scheme, which is determined by combining the magnitude of the predicted change with the assessed sensitivity of the identified receptors. The nature of any predicted effects is also identified (i.e. positive/negative and permanent/reversible).

### **Methodology Adopted for the Assessment**

- 1.6 The proposed development assessed by this LVA is not subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). This LVA has, therefore, been undertaken in accordance with the principles embodied in 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – Third Edition (LI/IEMA, 2013)' (GLVIA3) and other best practice guidance insofar as it is relevant to non-EIA schemes.
- 1.7 **Familiarisation:** EDP's study has included reviews of aerial photographs, web searches, LPA publications and landscape character assessments. EDP has also obtained, where possible information about relevant landscape and other designations such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Conservation Areas (CA), gardens and parks listed on Historic England's 'Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England' (RP&G).
- 1.8 **Field Assessment:** EDP has undertaken a comprehensive field assessment of local Site circumstances, including a photographic survey of the character and fabric of the Site and its surroundings, using photography from a number of representative viewpoints. The field assessment was undertaken by a qualified Landscape Architect in clear and dry weather conditions on 23 August 2019.
- 1.9 **Acknowledgement of any Shortcomings:** It is acknowledged that due to the timescales of the project, the Site visit and the photoviewpoints were taken during the summer time when leaves were on trees. This has been taken into account in the assessment of effects.
- 1.10 **Design Inputs:** EDP's field assessment has informed a process whereby the development proposals have been refined to avoid, minimise or compensate for landscape effects. Such measures are summarised in **Section 6**.

1.11 **Assessment Methodology:** Predicted effects on the landscape resource arising from the proposed development (as detailed in **Section 7** of this LVA) have been determined in accordance with the principles embedded within published best practice guidance insofar as the assessment adopts the following well-established, structured approach:

- Likely effects on landscape character and visual amenity are dealt with separately;
- The assessment of likely effects is reached using a structured methodology for defining sensitivity, magnitude and significance which is contained as **Appendix EDP 2**. This framework is combined with professional judgement. Professional judgement is an important part of the assessment process, it is neither 'pro' nor 'anti' development but acknowledges that development may result in beneficial change as well as landscape harm;
- As advised in GLVIA3, the appraisal takes into account the effects of any proposed mitigation; and
- Typically, a 15-year time horizon is used as the basis for conclusions about the residual levels of effect. 15-years is a well-established and accepted compromise between assessing the shorter-term effects (which may often be rather 'raw' before any proposed mitigation has had time to take effect) and an excessively long time period.

### **Study Area**

1.12 To establish the baseline and potential limit of material effects, the study area has been considered at two geographical scales:

- First, a broad 'study area' was adopted, the extent of which is illustrated on **Plan EDP 1**. Based mainly on desk-based study, this broad study area allowed the geographical scope of the assessment to be defined based on the extent of views to/from the Site, extent of landscape effects and the Site's environmental planning context; and
- Second, following initial analysis and subsequent fieldwork, the broad study area was refined down to the land that is most likely to experience landscape effects. The extent of this detailed study area is 2km from the Site boundary. Although, occasional reference may be made to features beyond this area where appropriate, this detailed study area is illustrated on **Plan EDP 1**.

*This page has been left blank intentionally*

## Section 2

### The Site

- 2.1 **Plan EDP 1** illustrates the location of the Site's boundaries and the study area for the LVA. The Site lies within an arable field in a rural locality situated approximately 2.5km north-west of Much Marcle, Herefordshire and 1.2km south-west of the hamlet of Rushall. The Grid Reference for the Site is SO 635 339.
- 2.2 The Site's character and local context is illustrated on the aerial photograph contained as **Image EDP 2.1**. The Site lies at c.170m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) on land which slopes up to the Marcle Ridge reaching a high point of 231m aOD at a trig point approximately 650m to the west. The Marcle Hill (i.e. Ridge) is a prominent feature in the local landscape consisting of a wooded escarpment with far-reaching views to the east across the Vale of Leadon towards the Malvern Hills (illustrated in the shading on **Plan EDP 1**).



**Image EDP 2.1:** Aerial of site (indicated by the Redline Boundary) and Local Surrounding Context  
© Bing Maps. Microsoft product screen shot(s) reprinted with permission from Microsoft Corporation

- 2.3 The landscape fabric surrounding the Site consists of mixed arable, pasture and orchards fields bordered by a dense network of well-maintained hedgerows.

*This page has been left blank intentionally*

## **Section 3**

### **Findings of EDP Data Trawl**

- 3.1 The findings of EDP's data trawl of relevant environmental and planning designations are illustrated on **Plan EDP 2** and summarised in this section.

#### **Background Published Evidence Base Documents**

- 3.2 The following documents are relevant and will be discussed as appropriate later in this report:
- Herefordshire Council Landscape Character Assessment SPD (adopted 2004; updated 2009);
  - Wye Valley AONB Management Plan 2015 - 2020;
  - Green Infrastructure Strategy (adopted 2010); and
  - Much Marcle Neighbourhood Development Plan 2018 - 2031 (adopted 2018).

#### **West Midlands Farmsteads and Landscapes Project 2010**

#### ***Findings of EDP Data Trawl***

##### *Landscape-related Designations and Other Considerations*

- 3.3 Landscape-related designations and policy considerations within 3km of the Site are shown on **Plan EDP 2**. In summary:
- National landscape designations: The Site does not lie within a Nationally designated landscape. The Wye Valley AONB lies c.1.3km to the west of the Site. As shown in **Plan EDP 2**, with the exception of a very small section more than 3.5km to the south of the Site, the proposed development is not predicted to be theoretically visible from the AONB due to the intervening ridgeline which would effectively screen views;
  - Local landscape designations: The Site does not lie within a Nationally designated landscape; and
  - Other landscape-related designations: The Site does not lie within Green Belt/Strategic Wedge/Green Wedge/Important Local Gap, etc.

### *Heritage Matters*

- 3.4 Heritage assets can influence the visual character of the landscape and enrich its historic value. This LVA addresses heritage assets only insofar as they are components of the wider contemporary landscape – not in terms of their significance and value as heritage assets.
- 3.5 No part of the Site lies within or adjacent to a Registered Park and Garden (RP&G). The closest is the Grade II listed Homme House, lying c.2.4km to the south-east on the edge of the settlement of Much Marcle. A section of the gardens fall within the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) and potential views from this location are illustrated in **Photoviewpoint EDP 5**.
- 3.6 The Site does not lie close to a CA, the nearest being in Much Marcle which lies c.2.5km to the south-east of the Site. The closest listed building is Caerswall Farmhouse approximately 500m to the south-east.

### *Ecology Matters*

- 3.7 A separate Ecology Assessment (prepared by EDP report ref. **edp1834\_r006**) considers the ecological assets on the Site and within the study area. The following matters are relevant to the scope of this LVA:
- No part of the Site is covered by any statutory designations. However, there are two designations within the study area, 'Orchid Bank and Winslow' Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located 1.9km to the north of the Site and Birch Wood (SSSI) located 2.3km south-west of the Site;
  - River Wye Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), SSSI and National Nature Reserve (NNR) is located approximately 4.4km to the south-west of the Site; and
  - The Site itself is not covered by any non-statutory designations; however, three Special Wildlife Sites (SWS) (designated for biological reasons) occur within 2km of the Site.

### *Arboricultural Matters*

- 3.8 No ancient woodland is located on or adjacent to the Site boundary or within the broad study area. No Tree Preservation Orders are located on or adjacent to the Site.

### *Public Access and Rights of Way*

- 3.9 A review of the definitive map reveals the following Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and open access land within the study area. A section of the public footpath which runs south from the Noggin follows the line of the eastern field boundary of the Site. Otherwise, there are no other PRoW within the immediate vicinity of the Site (refer to **Plan EDP 4**).



- 3.10 There are several PRoW within the wider surrounding area including the 'Three Choirs Way' and 'Herefordshire Trail' which are long distance footpaths that follow the Marcle Ridge of the Marcle Hill c.500m to the west of the Site. Potential views from these two paths have been illustrated in **Photoviewpoint EDP 2**.

*Adopted Local Plan (Published)*

- 3.11 The adopted Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy 2011 - 2031 (October 2015) includes over-arching general development policies, to which the development proposals will be tested. Policies that are specific to the Site in landscape and visual terms are:

- LD1 – Landscape and Townscape;
- LD3 – Green Infrastructure;
- SS6 – Environmental Quality and Local Distinctiveness; and
- SD1 – Sustainable Design and Energy Efficiency.

*Supplementary Planning Guidance*

- 3.12 There are two supporting guidance documents which were adopted by HCC to support the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (now superseded by the adoption of the Local Plan Core Strategy), these are listed below:

- Design and Development (adopted July 2004); and
- Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment (adopted in 2004, updated in 2009).

- 3.13 Other relevant local studies include: Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis (January 2010) and the Green Infrastructure Strategy (February 2010). These form part of the documented baseline and have implications for the proposed development siting, design and the assessment methodology, as appropriate.

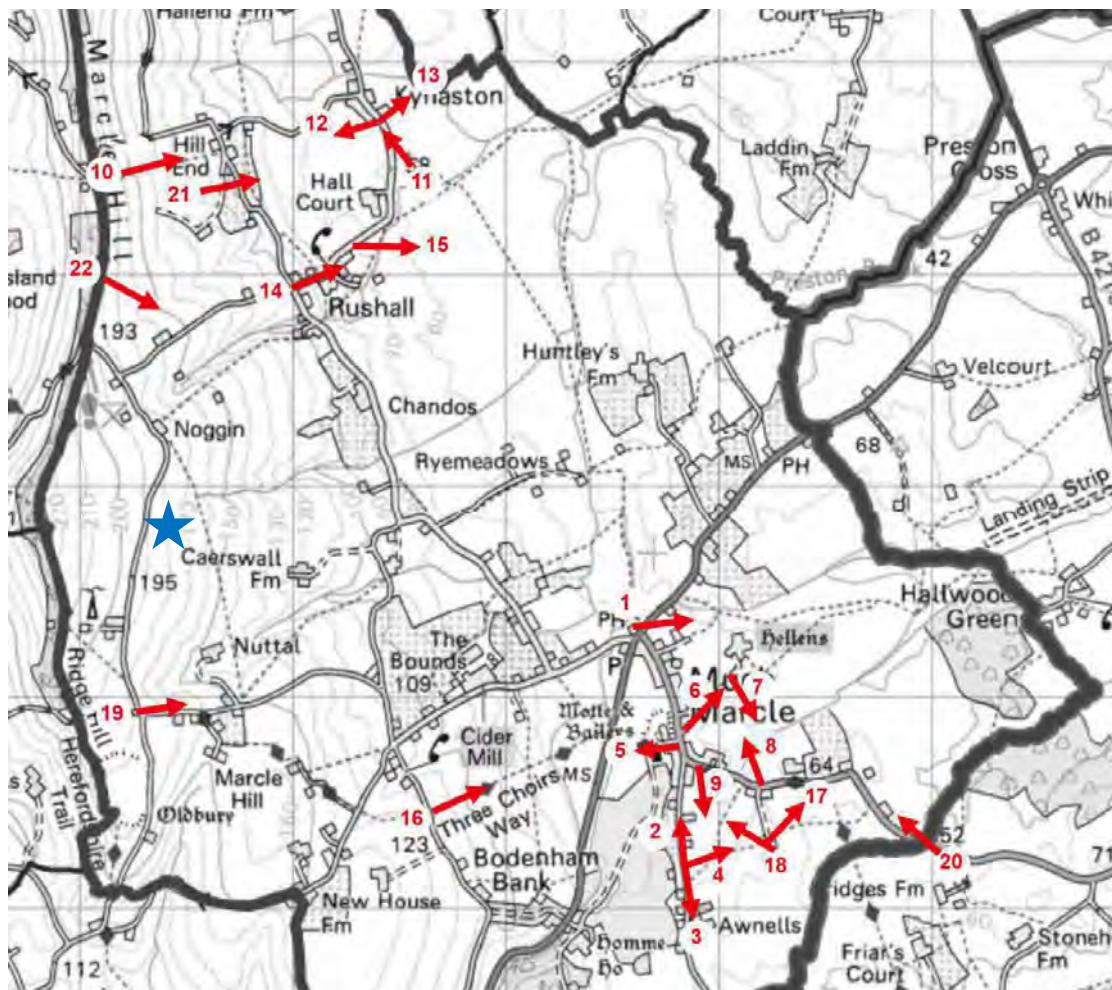
*Adopted Much Marcle Neighbourhood Development Plan 2018 - 2031*

- 3.14 The adopted Much Marcle Neighbourhood Development Plan 2018 - 2031 (2018) sets out the direction of growth in the parish and includes development policies. Policies that are specific to the Site in landscape and visual terms are:

- Policy SD1 – Sustainable Development: “All development proposals within the Neighbourhood Area should seek to achieve sustainable development.”;
- Policy EM1 - Employment and Economy: “Development proposals for agriculture, tourism and leisure, recreation, crafts, holiday accommodation, food and drink

*production will be supported where they respect local character and residential amenity”; and*

- Policy NE1 – Landscape: *“Development proposals should respect important landscape views, taking into account the list of views indicated below and on the map on page 32”. Refer to **Image EDP 3.1**.*



**Image EDP 3.1:** Extract of Landscape Views from Much Marcle Neighbourhood Development Plan (Page 23, 2018) with location of Site indicated by blue star

3.15 The objective underpinning Policy NE1 – Landscape is to *“Avoid, or mitigate (to minimise), harm to important landscape views (e.g. the Marcle Ridge and the Malvern Hills), and maintain open views to surrounding countryside”.*

3.16 The policy goes on to state that:

*“Much Marcle and the surrounding area are of high landscape value. The proximity of protected landscapes (the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and the Malvern Hills AONB), distant views to May Hill, the Forest of Dean and the Cotswolds AONB, and local landscape character within the parish mean that there are important views within, looking out and looking into each of the settlements”.*

- 3.17 None of the key views identified in **Image EDP 3.1** look directly towards the Site. However, key view 22 and 19 are located on the Herefordshire Trail on Marcle Ridge (Wye Valley AONB). Potential views from this route have been illustrated in **Photoviewpoint EDP 2**.

*This page has been left blank intentionally*

## Section 4

### Existing (Baseline) Conditions: Landscape Character

- 4.1 This section provides an assessment of the 'baseline' (existing) conditions in respect of the character of the Site and its landscape context. It summarises any relevant published landscape assessments that contribute to a better understanding of the landscape context. Such assessments provide a helpful understanding of the landscape context, but rarely deliver sufficiently Site-specific or up-to-date information to draw robust conclusions about the significance of any change proposed by the development. Accordingly, EDP has undertaken its own assessment of the Site itself which is included in this section.

#### National Character Assessment

- 4.2 At the National level, the character of England has been described and classified in the National Character Area (NCA) profiles published by Natural England<sup>2</sup>. The Site and its surroundings fall within NCA 104: South Herefordshire and Over Severn, which is described as *"An undulating landscape with some prominent rounded Old Red Sandstone hills in the west, lower rolling ground, ridges and valleys, meandering, often deeply incised rivers with narrow flood plains..."*.
- 4.3 The key characteristics of NCA 104 are relatively generic, given that they provide a broad description of a much wider area than that in which the Site lies. There are however forces which change the landscape and these can have a localised effect, five are listed, of which only the following four are considered to have a bearing on the landscape:
- The main post-war change has been the reduced height and quality of hedgerows, the loss of hedgerow trees and a continuing lack of replacements;
  - Change has also come from practices like outdoor pig rearing, growing intensive arable crops and from the need for large modern farm buildings;
  - The many small areas of parkland-style planting have particular significance in a landscape with diminishing tree cover; and
  - The commercial orchards are very different in character from the older orchards, which still survive in fragments around the hamlets and larger houses. In this open landscape, both have much to contribute to landscape character.
- 4.4 While the NCA descriptions are representative of the wider landscape, they are too generic to provide specific characterisation of the Site. This is unsurprising, as the national characterisation provides a broad framework for more detailed landscape

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles>

character assessments. For the scale of the development proposed, it is considered that the description of landscape character undertaken at the sub-regional level is more relevant in establishing the landscape resource baseline.

**County Landscape Character Assessments (Relevant Extracts Provided in Appendix EDP 3)**

- 4.5 HCC undertook an assessment of the county's landscapes, which was subsequently adopted as an SPD in 2004 and updated in 2009, with relevant sections and maps saved at **Appendix EDP 3**. As stated within the Local Plan Core Strategy, the SPD will be reviewed again during the new plan period 2011 – 2031. There are 12 'Sub Regional Character Types' which describe the landscape at a larger scale, of which the 'Woolhope Dome' area broadly describes the landscape in which the Site lies.
- 4.6 At a smaller scale, 'Landscape Description Units' were defined to describe small scale features. These were then also grouped, based on visual prominence, into 'Landscape Types' (LT). At this scale, the Site is described by the 'Wooded Hills and Farmland' LT. The key primary characteristics are listed as:
- *“Varied, sloping topography; and*
  - *Field boundary hedgerows are visually very prominent because of the topography.”*
- 4.7 The key secondary characteristic is described as:
- *“Mixed farming land use;*
  - *Ancient wooded character;*
  - *Tree cover pattern of large, discrete woods;*
  - *Medium-framed views; and*
  - *Sparsely clustered settlement pattern.”*
- 4.8 These characteristics are broadly applicable of the local landscape in which the Site lies. The defining feature is the Marcle ridgeline to the west, from which the sloping topography can be appreciated. The more extensive tree cover is particularly prevalent along the ridge line, with pockets of woodland or orchards on the lower reaches of the slopes and linear tree belts follow field boundaries generally either east-west with the slope or north-south following contours.
- 4.9 The LT description includes some further detail on the character of the 'Settlement Pattern', however, as this proposed development is for agricultural purposes, this would not result in a change to this character. A description of the 'Enclosure Pattern' refers to

*“scale of woodland clearance and historical land enclosure. Loss of hedges will disrupt this pattern, as will the addition of hedges or fences seeking to subdivide fields”.*

- 4.10 Details concerning the ‘Woodland or Tree Cover Pattern’ refer to the ‘discrete blocks of ancient semi-natural woodland’ and the typical *“strong hedgerows and wooded streams, which link the woodland blocks to each other and the surrounding landscape”.*
- 4.11 The 'Forces for Change' section focuses on the weakening of the landscape character through land use change. It describes the following issues:
- *“These landscapes often lack a strong sense of visual unity today as they are so easily compromised;*
  - *The strength and scale of this character has frequently been reduced by both the loss of elements such as hedgerows and hedgerow and streamside trees and the addition of inappropriate small-scale features; and*
  - *Previous conifer planting in some areas also contributes significantly to the loss of landscape character.”*

#### **Interim Summary on Published Landscape Character Assessments**

- 4.12 This review of published character assessments has identified that there is some consistency between the key characteristics observed on the Site and surrounding landscape. The most notable features are the sloping topography and the resulting prominent field boundary features and woodland blocks. The land use is recognised as changing the landscape and those features which are considered under threat include the hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- 4.13 With an appreciation of the wider landscape character derived from published assessments, it was necessary to gain a greater understanding of the actual Site characteristics influencing landscape character by conducting a Site visit. During the Site visit, elements of landscape character described in the published assessments were corroborate or refined if it was found that there were significant inconsistencies.

#### **EDP Site Assessment**

- 4.14 While the above-published assessments provide a helpful contextual appreciation of the wider landscape, none provide a sufficiently Site-specific assessment to allow a reliable assessment to be made of the effects of the proposed development on the landscape. In particular, published assessments tend to miss more localised influences on the landscape such as the effect of traffic or existing development on tranquillity and visual character, especially in close proximity to settlements. This requires an appropriately detailed assessment of the Site itself and its immediate surroundings, which EDP has

undertaken and is described below and should be read in conjunction with **Appendix EDP 3.**

- 4.15 A Site visit took place on 23 August 2019 in summer time and in clear and dry weather conditions. The visit was complemented by a review of aerial photography, mapping and field assessments from publicly accessible locations (e.g. from local roads and PRoW).
- 4.16 The landscape character of the Site and surrounding area are strongly influenced by the topography which has a subsequent influence on the field pattern and settlement pattern and land use.
- 4.17 The Marcle Ridge itself represents a strong linear feature within the local landscape and a dividing line between two landscape types: the 'Wooded Hills and Farmland' to the east, which includes the Site, and the 'Principal Wooded Hills' to the west of the ridgeline. The latter area is characterised by its relatively enclosed landscape with irregular fields and extensive woodland cover much of which is classified as being ancient. In contrast, to the east of the Marcle Ridge, the 'Wooded Hills and Farmland' comprise a relatively open landscape on sloping ground. The Marcle Ridge effectively prevents intervisibility between the Site and the landscape to the west. The Site therefore has a stronger visual relationship with the landscape to the east where its position on the Marcle slopes is visible from locations in the surrounding valley but set down significantly below the skyline.
- 4.18 The landscape characteristics of the Site and immediate surroundings generally fit with the 'Wooded Hills and Farmland' character type in the published assessment with minor differences noted. They consist of regular medium-sized and predominantly arable fields on sloping ground with expansive views to the east over the Leadon Vale. Settlement pattern is sparse with the local hamlets of Rushall and Knayston to the north with agricultural land use dominating.
- 4.19 In refinement of the published landscape character assessment, the slopes of the Site and surrounding fields are predominantly regular (not varied) in character with minor topographical variation from occasional small-scale and narrow dry stream valleys which bisect the slope. In addition, with the exception of the western slopes of the Marcle Ridge, there is no ancient woodland in close proximity to the Site.
- 4.20 The slopes of Marcle Hill have far-reaching views over the adjacent Leadon Vale towards the Malvern Hills. The landscape character type of the valley below the slopes, falls into the 'Principal Timbered Farmlands' which in contrast with the Site, has a more enclosed wooded character and a wider mixture of land uses including large-scale orchards, arable and pasture fields.



4.21 The following characteristics and observations in relation to the immediate landscape setting of the Site were noted:

- The substantial TV/radio mast located 600m to the south-west near to the top of the Marcle Ridge is a dominant visual feature in the local context;
- Although there are hawthorn hedges with oak/ash trees located on the northern and southern field boundaries, it is apparent that there has been localised hedgerow removal;
- There is a simplicity and uniformity to the landscape character of the Site due to the regular sloping fields, arable land and general lack of woodland and tree cover; and
- The nearest existing dwelling is the Noggin c.320m to the north, however, there is a pattern of dispersed dwellings and agricultural buildings in the local landscape.

#### **Interim Conclusions: Landscape Character**

##### ***Overall Sensitivity of the 'Wooded Hills and Farmland' LT***

- 4.22 The Site or immediate area does not fall within a statutory or non-statutory designated landscape. The nearest designated landscape is the Wye Valley AONB approximately 1.4km to the west. Predicted theoretical visibility from the AONB would be restricted to a small area around Yatton Wood, 3.5km to the south where in reality tree cover would predominantly restrict views of the Site.
- 4.23 The landscape context of the Site is not recognised by designation however, its character is predominantly rural and could potentially be negatively affected by inappropriate forms of new development. There is also a degree of visual sensitivity due to the influence of the Marcle Ridge which affords walkers expansive views and is a visually prominent feature from the valley floor. It is acknowledged that the Much Marcle Neighbourhood Plan 2018 - 2031 considers Much Marcle and the surrounding area to be of high landscape value owing to the proximity to the Wye Valley AONB and Malvern Hills ANOB, distant views and local landscape character. The presence of scattered dwellings and agricultural buildings and the large TV/Radio mast (**Photoviewpoint EDP 4**) has to some extent lowered the sensitivity to change of the local landscape character.
- 4.24 The proposals would be perceived in the context of other scattered dwellings and agricultural buildings at lower and higher levels on the slope including Firs Farm, Nuttal, Caerswell Farm, The Noggin, Hillcott and Westcott. The separation distance between the proposals and other farmsteads is consistent with the typical separation distances already established e.g. between Firs Farm and Nuttal and Caerswell Farm (refer to **Plan EDP 1**). The landscape character of the local context is assessed as being 'medium' to the type of development proposed.

### ***Overall Sensitivity of the Site Character***

- 4.25 The arable field in which the proposed development lies is unremarkable in its character and is found widely in the local context (refer to **Image EDP 2.1**).
- 4.26 The Site is located on the slopes of the Marcle Hill and is visible from open areas in the adjacent valley (refer to **Plan EDP 1**); inappropriately Sited and designed buildings therefore, have the potential to negatively affect the skyline of the Marcle Ridge as seen from the valley. However, the Site is located well below the ridgeline and would be seen back clothed by agricultural land and partially filtered by existing trees and hedgerow along the eastern boundary. The landscape character sensitivity is therefore, assessed as being medium to the type of development proposed.

### ***Overall Sensitivity of the Landscape Fabric***

- 4.27 The Site contains landscape features which are typical of its wider rural setting. The arable crops on the field represent a transient vegetation cover which is inherently less valuable and vulnerable to change than permanent pasture. The mature field boundary trees and hedgerows are features with higher sensitivity and value, however, the proposals have been designed to ensure their retention. Overall, the landscape fabric is assessed as having a low sensitivity to change.

### ***Summary of Landscape Character Issues***

- 4.28 The Site is located within a rural landscape containing character features typical of a wide area of the surrounding district. The Site is not designated for its special landscape qualities and being a working arable landscape with a simple landscape fabric, gives it a higher ability to accommodate change of the type of development proposed provided that this does not impact on the key characteristics of the 'Wooded Hills and Farmland' LT which are the sloping topography and prominent field hedges. The Site's position on the slopes of the Marcle Ridge gives it visibility from the surrounding valley, however, development of the type proposed would be back-clothed by agricultural land and consistent with the existing pattern of scattered agricultural development.

## **Section 5**

### **Existing (Baseline) Conditions: Visual Amenity**

#### **Introduction**

- 5.1 Visual amenity (as opposed to ‘visual character’ described in the previous section) is not about the visual appearance of the Site, but has to do with the number, distribution and character of views towards, from or within the Site. An analysis of visual amenity allows conclusions to be reached about who may experience visual change, from where and to what degree those views will be affected by the proposed development.
- 5.2 This section describes the existing views, changes to views wrought by the proposed development are analysed in **Section 6**. An analysis of existing views and the ‘receptors’ likely to experience visual change is conducted in three steps described in turn below.

#### **Defining Zones of Theoretical and Primary Visibility**

- 5.3 The starting point for an assessment of visual amenity is a computer-generated ZTV. The ZTV is derived using digital landform height data only and therefore, it does not account for the screening effects of intervening buildings, structures or vegetation but it does give a prediction of the areas that, theoretically, may be able to experience visual change; it thus provides the basis for more detailed field assessment (refer to **Plan EDP 3**).
- 5.4 The ZTV is then refined by walking and driving local roads, rights of way and other publicly accessible viewpoints to arrive at a more accurate, ‘field-tested’ Zone of Primary Visibility (ZPV). The ZPV is where views of the proposed development would normally be close-ranging and open, whether in the Public or private domain, on foot, cycling or in a vehicle. In this instance, the field assessment was undertaken by a Landscape Architect on 23 August 2019 in clear and dry weather conditions and therefore predicts the extent of summertime views of the proposed development. It is noted that the predicted visibility of the proposed development would be greater in winter time when trees and hedgerows have no leaves.
- 5.5 Beyond the ZPV lies a zone of visibility that is less open, being either partly-screened or filtered. Views from within this zone would include the proposal – it may not be immediately noticeable, but once recognised would be a perceptible addition to the view.

#### **Description of Existing Visual Amenity**

##### **North**

- 5.6 Close-range views of the proposals would be experienced by walkers on the public footpath which heads south between the Noggin and the eastern Site boundary. There would also be partially filtered views of the proposed buildings through roadside trees and

hedges along the minor road extending from the Noggin to Firs Farm. Views from the Noggin itself, the nearest residential property at c.320m to the north, would be predominantly filtered by garden and roadside trees.

- 5.7 No theoretical visibility is predicted from the scattered residential properties which lie between the Noggin and the Rushall road. The hamlet of Rushall and its small cluster of individual properties predominantly lies outside of the ZTV (refer to **Plan EDP 3**). However, potential oblique views would be available from certain houses within the hamlet of Kynaston to the north (see **Photoviewpoint EDP 6**) and from the adjacent public footpath and minor road network.
- 5.8 There is potential for intermittent oblique glimpses of the proposals in places from parts of the long-distance public footpaths and minor road running along the top of the Marcle Ridge, with hedgerows/trees filtering views in many places. More open medium-range views are predicted from the local public footpaths and minor roads leading downslope from the Marcle Ridge and also from isolated individual properties.
- 5.9 Between 2km and 5km north of the proposed Site, theoretical views are predicted from the minor road network, PRoW, isolated individual properties and small hamlets such as Putley and Woolhope Cockshoot. A review in the field indicates that the well-treed nature of this area would mean that the majority of views are restricted or heavily filtered.

### **East**

- 5.10 To the east, the ZTV extends over a relatively wide area towards the town of Ledbury and the Vale of Leadon. This larger area of potential visibility is a result of the elevated position of the Site in relation to the lower ground to the east.
- 5.11 The range of potential views of the Site from the east are illustrated in the series of photoviewpoints taken at near, medium and long-range distances (see **Photoviewpoints EDP 3, 7 and 8.**)
- 5.12 In summary, the ZTV (illustrated on **Plan EDP 3**) indicates theoretical views to the east of the Site from the following key receptors:
- 5.13 Near range views (to 2km):
- A small number of scattered individual properties and the western edge of Much Marcle;
  - Sections of PRoW network including the Three Choirs Way/Herefordshire Trail Long distance footpath routes; and
  - Some minor roads where hedgerows and trees are absent or insignificant and allow views.

5.14 Medium range views (2 - 5km):

- Sections of the A449, A4172, B4024 and B4215;
- The settlement of Much Marcle and smaller hamlets such as Kynaston; and
- Scattered individual properties and sections of PRoW.

5.15 Long range views (over 5km):

- The town of Ledbury and smaller settlements and hamlets including Dymock, Kempsey;
- Western margins of the Malvern Hills AONB;
- Main roads including sections of the A449; and
- Scattered individual properties and PRoW network including a section of the Herefordshire Trail.

5.16 On the lower eastern slopes of the Marcle Hill, views from minor roads (such as the one between Much Marcle and Rushall) and from the majority of the scattered residential properties would be predominantly screened as a result of dense roadside hedgerows and other intervening vegetation. **Photoviewpoint EDP 3** was taken from one of the few open locations at the base of the hill and shows the effect of intervening vegetation in filtering the views.

5.17 Further east, the screening effect of localised vegetation cover diminishes, and views of the Site become more open as indicated in **Photoviewpoint EDP 7**. This would enable medium-range views from open locations not screened by vegetation including receptors such as local PRoW, minor roads, scattered properties, farmsteads and the edges of small settlements such as Much Marcle (see **Photoviewpoint EDP 5**).

5.18 Long-range views of the proposals are possible from the edges of Ledbury and the Malvern Hills AONB. As **Photoviewpoint EDP 8** illustrates, at these distances the Site would form a very minor component of the view which would not be readily discernible.

**West**

5.19 As indicated on **Plan EDP 3**, the Marcle Ridge acts as a clear visual barrier along the western edge of the ZTV. The topography of the Marcle Ridge, in combination with the woodland cover, would screen views of the proposals from the west and there would be no intervisibility between the Site and the nearby Wye Valley AONB.

5.20 From the top of the Marcle Ridge there would be filtered downslope views of the proposals experienced by walkers along the long-distance public footpath as illustrated in **Photoviewpoint EDP 2**.

## South

- 5.21 To the south, the ZTV predicts restricted visibility due to the south-facing slopes of the Marcle Hill obstructing views from the lower land.
- 5.22 The majority of theoretical views would be located to the immediate south and largely contained within 2km where there would be views from the footpath running between the Site and Nuttal. Close-range views from the public footpath on the southern boundary of the Site are shown in **Photoviewpoint EDP 1**. In addition, there may be potential views from scattered properties such as those around Little Puckmore and the network of minor roads.
- 5.23 The arc of land around Perrystone Hill (3.5km to 5km south) is indicated as having theoretical views in **Plan EDP 3**, with a limited area falling within the Wye Valley AONB. Review in the field indicates that visibility of the proposals would be restricted by mature woodland and tree cover.

## Defining Representative Viewpoints

- 5.24 Within the ZPV, there are clearly many individual points at which views towards the Site are gained. EDP has selected a number of viewpoints that are considered representative of the nature of the views from each of the receptor groups. The selection of the representative viewpoints is based on the principle that the assessment needs to test the 'worst case' scenario, and in selecting these viewpoints, EDP has sought to include:
- A range of viewpoints from all points of the compass: north, south, east and west;
  - A range of viewpoints from distances at close quarters at the Site boundary and up to distant viewpoints at 7km and more from the Site; and
  - Viewpoints from all the above receptor groups.
- 5.25 The representation of views is supported by eight photoviewpoints. Their location is illustrated on **Plan EDP 3**. Photographs from the selected viewpoints are contained in **Appendix EDP 4**. The purpose of these viewpoints is to aid assessment of a visual receptor(s). These viewpoints are not assessed separately.

**Table EDP 5.1:** Summary of Representative Photoviewpoints

PVP No.	Location	Grid Reference	Distance and Direction of View	Reason(s) for Selection and Sensitivity of Receptor
1	South-east corner of the field	SO 63595 33675	Within the field approximately 170m from the proposed buildings.	Representative of views from the adjacent public footpath.
2	Top of the Marcle Ridge adjacent to the trig point	SO 62806 33857	c.550m to the west of the Site.	Representative of views experienced by walkers along the Marcle Ridge.

<b>PVP No.</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Grid Reference</b>	<b>Distance and Direction of View</b>	<b>Reason(s) for Selection and Sensitivity of Receptor</b>
3	Lower Walton/Watery Lane crossroads	S0 64503 33818	c.950m to the east of the Site.	Indicative of views from open area on lower slopes of Marcle Hill.
4	Public footpath east of Rushall	S0 64857 35314	c.1.9km to the northeast of the Site.	Representative of views experienced by footpath users at the base of the valley.
5	Public footpath near Much Marcle church	S0 65661 32742	c.2.3km to the southeast of the Site.	Representative of views from users of public footpath and open areas within Homme House parkland.
6	Western edge of Knayston hamlet	S0 64256 35845	c.2.05km to the northeast of the Site.	Representative of potential views from residential housing in Knayston.
7	Public footpath near A4172	S0 66966 34842	c.3.6km to the east of the Site.	Representative of views from users of public footpath in centre of Vale of Leadon.
8	A417 south of Ledbury on boundary of Malvern Hills AONB	S0 71892 34743	c.8.42km to the east of the Site.	Indicative of views from edge of Malvern Hills AONB.

*This page has been left blank intentionally*



## **Section 6**

### **The Proposed Development and Mitigation**

- 6.1 Having defined the baseline conditions in the previous two sections, this report now reviews the proposed development and (in the next section) undertakes an assessment of the likely effects in landscape terms.

#### **The Proposed Development**

- 6.2 The proposed development is illustrated in **Appendix EDP 1**. To summarise, these comprise:
- The proposed development would entail the construction of three agricultural structures: a stock building, sheep building and a silage clamp in the north-east corner of the arable field. The buildings would be linked to the minor private road which runs adjacent to the western field boundary by a 6m wide access track. The track would utilise the existing gateway in the adjoining field to the north. The development also proposes the construction of a 6m x 13.5m agricultural worker's chalet dwelling at the point where the access track enters the field. Further details of the proposals can be found in the DAS and the Architect's drawings accompanying the planning application;
  - The concrete platform upon which the three structures would be constructed would measure approximately 62m x 82m. In terms of dimensions, the height of the tallest building would be no greater than 10m to ridgeline. The roofs would be constructed from fibre cement, clad in concrete panels and timber board cladding used for the stock building; and
  - A level hardstanding platform would need to be constructed using cut and fill into the existing slope with a gentle cross-fall created to facilitate drainage. The field is located on gently sloping land (approximately 1:10 slope) with the proposed building footprint being on the most level section of the field as illustrated.

#### **Proposed Landscape Mitigation**

- 6.3 The scheme design has sought to minimise landscape and visual effects through a range of measures:
- The extent of visibility from and towards the Marcle Ridge. The preferred Site was selected due to its lower position downslope and reduced prominence below the skyline from the valley and away from the Ridge top;

- The requirements for cut and fill and their associated landscape and visual impacts. The proposed Site is located on a comparatively gentler gradient which reduces the volume of cut and fill;
- The level of existing screening and filtering provided by the hedgerows and trees and the likely quantity of planting required, the chosen Site having mature trees on its eastern boundary which help to filter views from the valley;
- The relationship of the Site to the existing built form in particular the position of any dwellings, agricultural buildings and the field pattern;
- The impact of the proposals on the existing landscape fabric with the Site chosen in order to avoid impacts on permanent pasture, mature trees and hedgerows. The preferred Site had the advantage of being located entirely on arable land and no hedgerows or trees would be adversely affected; and
- Appropriate standoff from public footpath along eastern boundary with additional planting to filter views of buildings over time.

- 6.4 Consideration was given to positioning of the buildings within the Site. The north-eastern corner of the Site was chosen because of the comparatively gentle gradient and the fact that the buildings would be Sited behind a well-established boundary of a mature hedgerow with trees to the east which would help to partially filter views of the proposals from the adjacent valley.
- 6.5 The finer details of the scheme design are expected to be finalised by reserved matters planning conditions. It is proposed that the colours of the buildings are dark and neutral in order to reduce their visual prominence from a distance.
- 6.6 The scheme design has avoided the use of visually inappropriate landscape bunds which would appear artificial. Instead, a gradient not exceeding 3:1 would be created between the edge of the hardstanding and the existing landform which would be planted with hedgerows and trees in order to blend with the surrounding landscape.

## Section 7

### Summary of Effects

#### Introduction

- 7.1 In this section, the predicted effects on landscape character and visual amenity are summarised. The assessment uses the thresholds for magnitude, sensitivity and significance defined at **Appendix EDP 2** as a guide, but moderated where appropriate with professional judgement. Professional judgement is an important part of the assessment process, it is neither 'pro' nor 'anti' development but acknowledges that development may result in beneficial change as well as landscape harm. The assessment also takes account of the likely effectiveness of any proposed mitigation.

#### Predicted Effects on the Character of the Site

- 7.2 It is a consequence of the nature of the development proposed that effects on the Site would change it completely when compared to the surrounding character area. The changes predicted to occur on the elements that form the character of the Site are described below and evaluated overall.
- 7.3 The landscape fabric of the Site is relatively simple consisting of a medium-sized arable field bordered by trees and hedges on its northern and eastern boundary. These features are undesignated and typical of the surrounding landscape and therefore, the character of the Site has been judged to be of low sensitivity to change.
- 7.4 Given that the field boundary features including the mature trees and hedgerows would be retained within the proposed development, the essential pattern of the landscape would not be altered and the magnitude of change on the landscape fabric is assessed as being medium. The Site would be changed from an open agricultural field to one which accommodates agricultural buildings, however adopting similar characteristics of built form within the Site's immediate context.
- 7.5 Some cut and fill of the existing slope would be required in order to create a level foundation base for the agricultural buildings to sit on. No artificial bunds would be created using excavated spoil which would have the undesirable effect of creating an artificial appearance. Instead, a balanced approach to cut and fill volume would be taken and the edge of the hard standing graded to a minimum 1:3 slope with native tree, shrub and grassland planting to bind the slope and help soften its edge.
- 7.6 On balance, therefore, with regard to the perceptual and sensory aspects of the Site it is assessed that during construction, the magnitude of change would be high, yielding a **moderate** adverse effect primarily due to the change of use across the Site. Through the maturation of the landscape, proposed development and reinforcement of landscape fabric, the magnitude of change in the long-term is likely to reduce to medium, as it is

deemed that the proposed development would become integrated into the local context, being perceived as part of the existing landscape, resulting in a **minor, adverse** level of effect.

#### **Predicted Effects on the 'Wooded Hills and Farmland' LT**

- 7.7 The area immediately surrounding the Site will be subject to the greatest change to the defined LT and this is predicted to diminish due to distance and intervening landform and features. Effects on the immediate surroundings and the wider area are described below. The overall sensitivity of the LT examined in the baseline was judged to be medium.
- 7.8 The primary key characteristics of this LT are its 'varied sloping topography' and visually prominent field boundary hedgerows resulting from the nature of the topography.
- 7.9 The location of the proposed buildings on the slopes of the Marcle Hill (Ridge) would make them visible in open views from the east where they would be seen against the backcloth of agricultural land and other agricultural built form (**Photoviewpoint EDP 4**). The proposed buildings constructed on a level platform would create a minor and localised impact on the 'varied sloping topography'. However, the extent of this visual impact would be restricted by the modest change in relation to the landform of the Marcle Hill and be moderated by the existing trees and proposed planting.
- 7.10 In views from the east, the proposed agricultural buildings would be seen as relatively minor components below the Marcle Ridge compared with the adjacent TV/Radio mast which has introduced a tall and artificial structure into the landscape on the skyline.
- 7.11 In addition, the intended use of the buildings for storing livestock is in keeping with the agricultural and rural character of the LT, a key characteristic of which is its 'mixed farming land use' and the development itself relates well to the existing pattern of scattered farmsteads in the locality (**Photoviewpoint EDP 6**).
- 7.12 The Site and therefore proposed development avoid skyline impacts on the Marcle Ridge and has existing trees and hedgerow to the east to filter views from the valley providing adequate separation from other dwellings. This reflects the established pattern of agricultural development in the locality.
- 7.13 With the retention of the field boundary vegetation there would be no effect on the secondary key characteristics of the LT, which are its 'ancient wooded character' and 'tree cover pattern of large discrete woods'.
- 7.14 Overall, the level of effect of the proposed development on the landscape character of the Site and surrounding area is considered to be **moderate to moderate/minor**. There would be no effect on the essential integrity of the varied sloping topography and visually prominent field boundary hedgerows, which are the primary key characteristics of the LT.

## **Predicted Effects on Visual Amenity**

### ***Receptors Using Public Rights of Way***

- 7.15 **Photoviewpoint EDP 2** represents views from the highest point along the Marcle Hill (Ridge) adjacent to the trig point at 231m aOD and along the course of the Herefordshire Trail and Three Choirs Way. The expansive view looks across the Vale of Leadon towards the Malvern Hills which are visible behind the town of Ledbury.
- 7.16 From this view the roofs and upper sections of the proposed buildings would be visible behind the tree and hedgerow vegetation along the minor road to the north of the Site. This would create a medium magnitude of change on a receptor of high sensitivity leading to a moderate level of effect which would reduce to a **moderate/minor** in the long-term upon completion of the construction and maturation of the planting.
- 7.17 **Photoviewpoint EDP 1** represents views from the south-east boundary of the field along the public footpath running between the Noggin and Nuttal. The view looks north towards the proposals. From this location it is apparent that the proposed location of the buildings would occupy a gentler slope than elsewhere within the field.
- 7.18 The mature tree line along the eastern field boundary would help to filter views from the lower ground, however, the buildings would initially appear prominent in side views from the public footpath to the north and south leading to a high magnitude of change on a receptor of high sensitivity. This would lead to a **major/moderate** level of effect on visual amenity reducing over time and with the buildings and maturation of the planting to a **moderate** effect. Localised visual effects are predicted with most new development proposals and it is noted that the type of proposals would not be uncharacteristic of the local landscape. By careful siting and design, notable visual effects have been both localised and minimised.
- 7.19 From PRoW to the east of Rushall (**Photoviewpoint EDP 4**), the majority of the proposed buildings would be heavily filtered by the tree cover along the course of the stream valley with more open views of the upper and northern building sections. There would be a medium magnitude of change on receptors of high sensitivity leading to a **moderate** level of effect diminishing with time to a **moderate/minor** level.
- 7.20 **Photoviewpoint EDP 4** represents views from the east of the hamlet of Rushall. The location was selected to represent views from a low point in the valley looking up towards the Marcle Ridge and proposed Site to the south-west. The position of the Site would be visible below the TV mast on the top of the Marcle Ridge. Similar agricultural buildings to the ones which are proposed are visible in the foreground and at the Noggin to the north of the Site.
- 7.21 Views from PRoW within the grounds of Homme House, a Grade II Registered Park and Garden are represented by **Photoviewpoint EDP 5**. The Westerns Cider Factory is visible in the foreground at The Bounds and the houses and agricultural buildings around The Row and Hill Cottage can be seen with their built forms breaking the skyline of the Marcle Ridge.

- 7.22 In this view (**Photoviewpoint EDP 5**), the Site would be located further north along the Marcle Ridge to the TV mast and only intermittent and heavily filtered oblique views of the proposed buildings would be experienced through the tree cover around the edge of the park and A449 road. The magnitude of change on receptors of high sensitivity would be medium/low and the level of effect **moderate** to **moderate/minor**.
- 7.23 Views from PRoW in open agricultural land adjacent to the A4172 are represented by **Photoviewpoint EDP 7**. From this location, the TV mast on the Marcle Ridge is visible immediately to the left of the Site and medium-range views of the proposed buildings would be possible. The intervening land is relatively open and there would be a limited amount of visual filtering from vegetation, with the exception of the mature trees along the southern field boundary which would break the outline of the lower building sections. It is assessed that there would be a low magnitude of change of a receptor of high sensitivity leading to a **moderate/minor** effect.
- 7.24 **Photoviewpoint EDP 8** is representative of views experience from one of the closest points within the Malvern Hills AONB to the Site. The viewpoint was taken from the edge of the A417 approximately 2km south of Ledbury. The view looks west across the Vale of Leadon with the Marcle Ridge seen in the background with the approximate Site position indicated by the TV mast.
- 7.25 From this distance (c.8.4km) the proposed building would be predominantly filtered by southern field boundary trees and although long-range views are possible they would form a very minor and not readily apparent component of the view. The predicted magnitude of change on a receptor of very high sensitivity (Malvern Hills AONB) would be very low and the level of effect **moderate/minor** effect.

#### ***Receptors Using Local Road Network***

- 7.26 **Photoviewpoint EDP 3** illustrates the relatively gradual nature of the gradient up to the Marcle Ridge and the regular arable fields which comprise the upper slopes. It represents an unusually open view from the lower slopes where majority of the lanes and properties are enclosed from surrounding views by tall hedge banks. In this view, the majority of the proposed buildings would be filtered by the tree cover along the southern field boundary with the upper sections visible. The magnitude of change is predicted to be medium on a receptor of low sensitivity leading to a **minor** level of effect.

#### ***Residential Dwellings/Groups***

- 7.27 Views from private residential properties, although likely to be of high to very high sensitivity to changes in the view, are not protected by National planning guidance or Local planning policy. Accordingly, changes to the character, 'quality' and nature of private views are not a material planning consideration in the determination of a planning application. However, they remain relevant to this review of the predicted extent and nature of visual change, so are reviewed briefly below.

- 7.28 **Photoviewpoint EDP 6** was taken from the edge of the western edge of the hamlet of Kynaston. It looks in a south-west direction towards the Site which is located below the TV mast.
- 7.29 From this vantage point, only glimpses of the upper levels of the buildings are predicted due to the screening effect created by the intervening tree cover, in particular the line of mature trees following the stream valley from the Noggin to Rushall. The magnitude of change on residential receptors of very high sensitivity (primary living space) is predicted to be very low leading to a **moderate/minor** effect on visual amenity.

*This page has been left blank intentionally*



## Section 8 Conclusions

- 8.1 EDP is an independent environmental consultancy and Registered Practice of the Landscape Institute specialising the assessment of developments at all scales across the UK.
- 8.2 This report has summarised the findings of a comprehensive landscape data trawl and field appraisal undertaken by EDP's landscape team (**Sections 2, 3, 4 and 5**). In **Section 6**, the proposed development is described with any proposed mitigation. **Section 7** undertakes an assessment of the likely landscape effects having regard to the above and based on a combination of the thresholds set out in **Appendix EDP 4** coupled with professional judgement.
- 8.3 The Site does not lie within close proximity to a statutorily designated landscape. The nearest designation is the Wye Valley AONB c.1.34km to the west from where the proposals are not predicted to be visible. The Site does not lie within close proximity to other features designated for their historic, landscape or archaeological value.
- 8.4 With the exception of a public footpath running close to the eastern site boundary, there would be relatively few visual receptors within the immediate surrounding area that would be affected by the proposals. The nearest property is at the Noggin (over 300m to the north) from where views would be predominantly screened.
- 8.5 Visibility of the proposals would be restricted to the west and south of the Site by the topography of the Marcle Hill. There would be a greater area of visibility on the lower-lying land to the east, however in the majority of views they would be seen alongside the adjacent Radio/TV mast which serves as a major landscape detractor.
- 8.6 The Site falls within into 'Wooded Hills and Farmland' LT of the Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment, the primary key characteristics of which are its varied sloping topography and visually prominent field boundary hedgerows. The proposed development would not alter the 'essential' landscape fabric of the Site or result in the loss of key features with the boundary features being retained and enhanced by additional planting which would contribute to meeting objectives in the Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment and Much Marcle Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 8.7 Although there would be a localised effect on the topography of the slope through the creation of a level platform to support the buildings, it is assessed that the development would have a **moderate/minor** adverse effect on the overall character of the landscape and the key characteristics of the 'Wooded Hills and Farmland' LT in the long-term.
- 8.8 Overall, this LVA concludes that the overall effects of the proposed development is not considered to create an 'unacceptable' effect in terms of landscape and visual amenity and any such effects are mostly experienced at a local level. The small scale of the proposed development, which is consistent with existing structures in the wider

landscape, would result in residual landscape and visual effects of **moderate/minor** to minor level of effect, in the context on the wider landscape and visual amenity.

**Appendix EDP 1**  
**Proposed Site Plan (Prepared by Savills)**

*This page has been left blank intentionally*



## Appendix EDP 2

### Methodology: Thresholds and Definitions of Terminology used in this Appraisal

**Table EDP A2.1:** Defining the Sensitivity of the Landscape Baseline

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

**Table EDP A2.2:** Defining the Sensitivity of the Visual Baseline

Visual Baseline - Overall Sensitivity	
<b>Very High</b>	<p><b>Value/Susceptibility:</b> View is: designed/has intentional association with surroundings; recorded in published material; from a publicly accessible heritage asset/designated/promoted viewpoint; nationally/internationally designated right of way; protected/recognised in planning policy designation.</p> <p><b>Examples:</b> May include views from residential properties; National Trails; promoted holiday road routes; designated countryside/landscape features with public access; visitors to heritage assets of national importance; Open Access Land.</p>



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

**Table EDP A2.3:** Defining the Magnitude of Change to the Landscape and Visual Baseline

Magnitude of Change	
(Considers Scale of Proposal/Geographical Extent/Duration and Reversibility/Proportion)	
<b>Very High</b>	<p><b>Landscape:</b> Total loss/major alteration to key receptors/characteristics of the baseline; addition of elements that strongly conflict or integrate with the baseline.</p> <p><b>Visual:</b> Substantial change to the baseline, forming a new, defining focus and having a defining influence on the view.</p>
<b>High</b>	<p><b>Landscape:</b> Notable loss/alteration/addition to one or more key receptors/-characteristics of the baseline; or addition of prominent conflicting elements.</p> <p><b>Visual:</b> Additions are clearly noticeable and part of the view would be fundamentally altered.</p>
<b>Medium</b>	<p><b>Landscape:</b> Partial loss/alteration to one or more key receptors/characteristics; addition of elements that are evident but do not necessarily conflict with the key characteristics of the existing landscape.</p> <p><b>Visual:</b> The proposed development will form a new and recognisable element within the view which is likely to be recognised by the receptor.</p>
<b>Low</b>	<p><b>Landscape:</b> Minor loss or alteration to one or more key landscape receptors/-characteristics; additional elements may not be uncharacteristic within existing landscape.</p> <p><b>Visual:</b> Proposed development will form a minor constituent of the view being partially visible or at sufficient distance to be a small component.</p>
<b>Very Low</b>	<p><b>Landscape:</b> Barely discernible loss or alteration to key components; addition of elements not uncharacteristic within the existing landscape.</p> <p><b>Visual:</b> Proposed development will form a barely noticeable component of the view, and the view whilst slightly altered would be similar to the baseline.</p>

Magnitude of Change	
<b>Imperceptible</b>	<i>In some circumstances, changes at representative viewpoints or receptors will be lower than 'Very Low' and changes will be described as 'Imperceptible'. This will lead to negligible effects.</i>

**Table EDP A2.4:** Determining the Predicted Levels of Effects to the Landscape and Visual Baseline

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

**Table EDP A2.5:** Definition of Effects

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



*This page has been left blank intentionally*

**Appendix EDP 3**  
**Extracts from Hereford Council Landscape Character Assessment (2004)**

*This page has been left blank intentionally*

# LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

**Supplementary Planning Guidance  
2004**



Updated 2009



Figure 8 Map of Distribution of Landscape Types

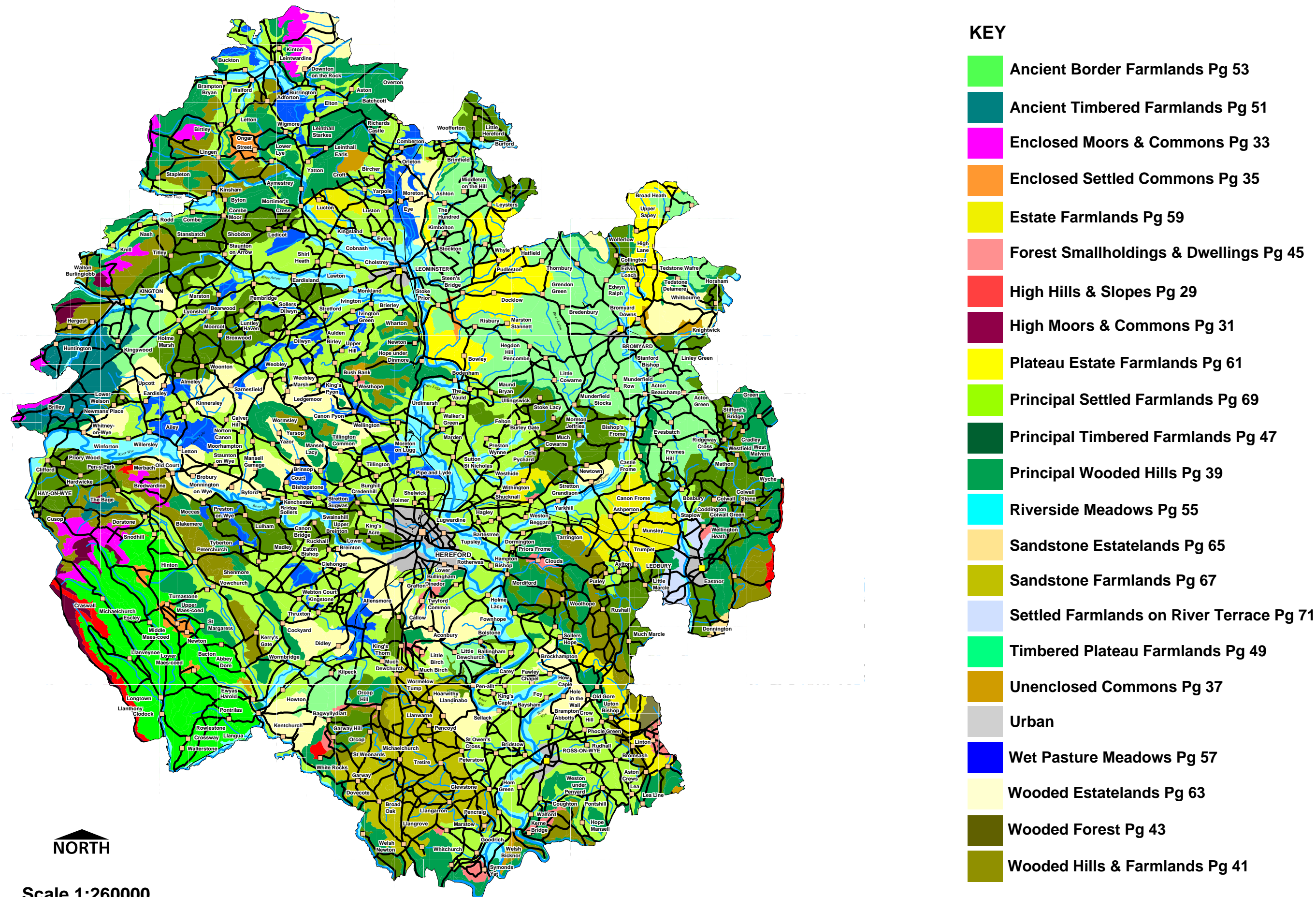
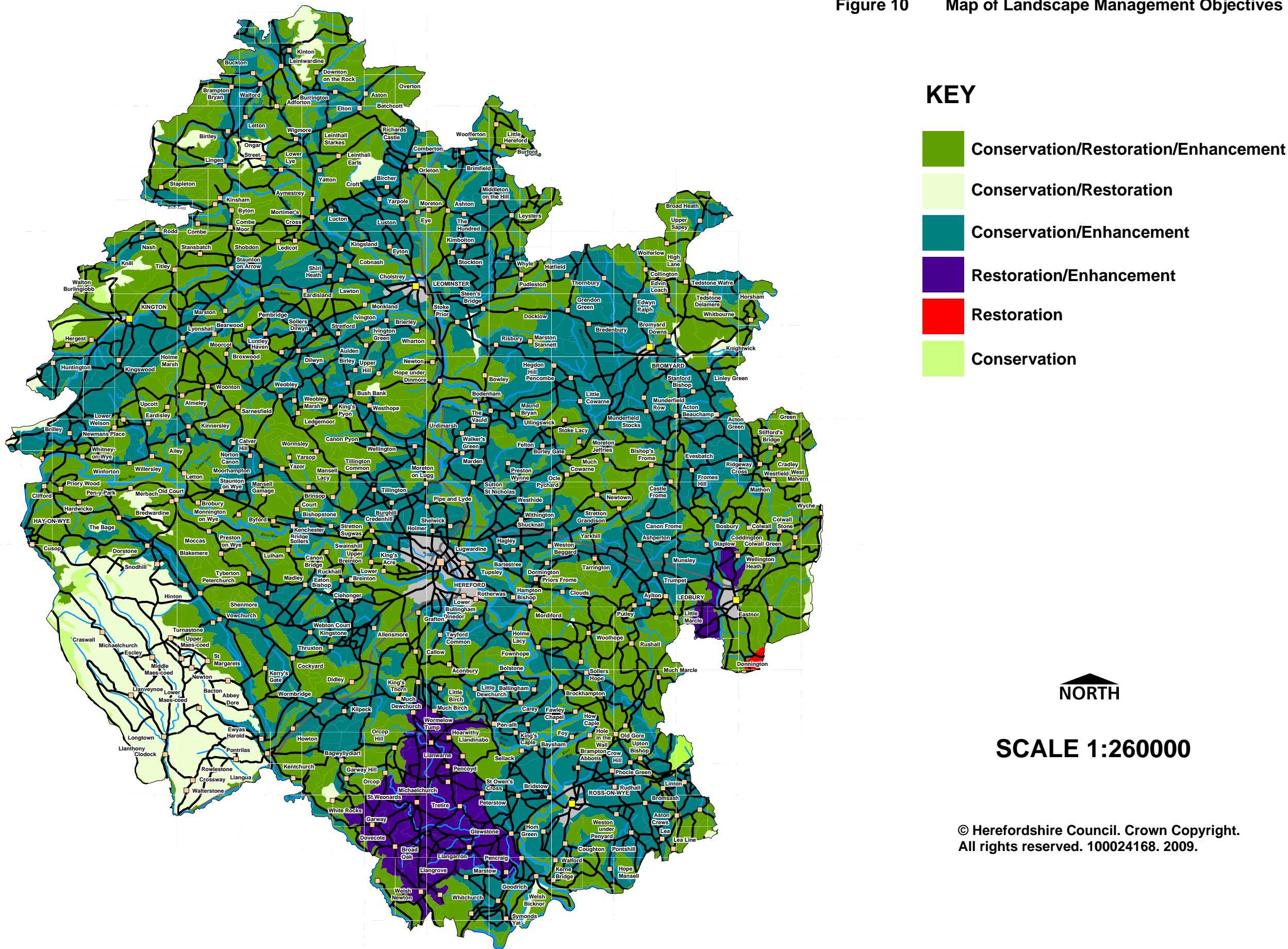




Figure 10 Map of Landscape Management Objectives







## PART TWO - DESCRIPTION OF LANDSCAPE TYPES

### PART TWO - DESCRIPTION OF LANDSCAPE TYPES





## 7.7 WOODED HILLS AND FARMLANDS

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These are medium to large scale upstanding, wooded landscapes with a sloping topography and well defined character. In Herefordshire they tend to be on a smaller scale than in some other parts of the country. They are similar to the Principal Wooded Hills, but with more of an emphasis on farmland. Here the woods tend to occur as discrete blocks separating the larger areas of enclosed hedged fields. The latter often being associated with a small village or hamlet. The steepness of slope is generally less severe than the Principal Wooded Hills and therefore has been less of a constraint for agriculture. The dominant land use is of mixed farming, interspersed with large, ancient semi-natural woods that frame the views. The hedgerow structure and streamside tree cover is particularly important in providing visual unity to these areas, linking the woodland blocks and integrating them with the areas of farmland.

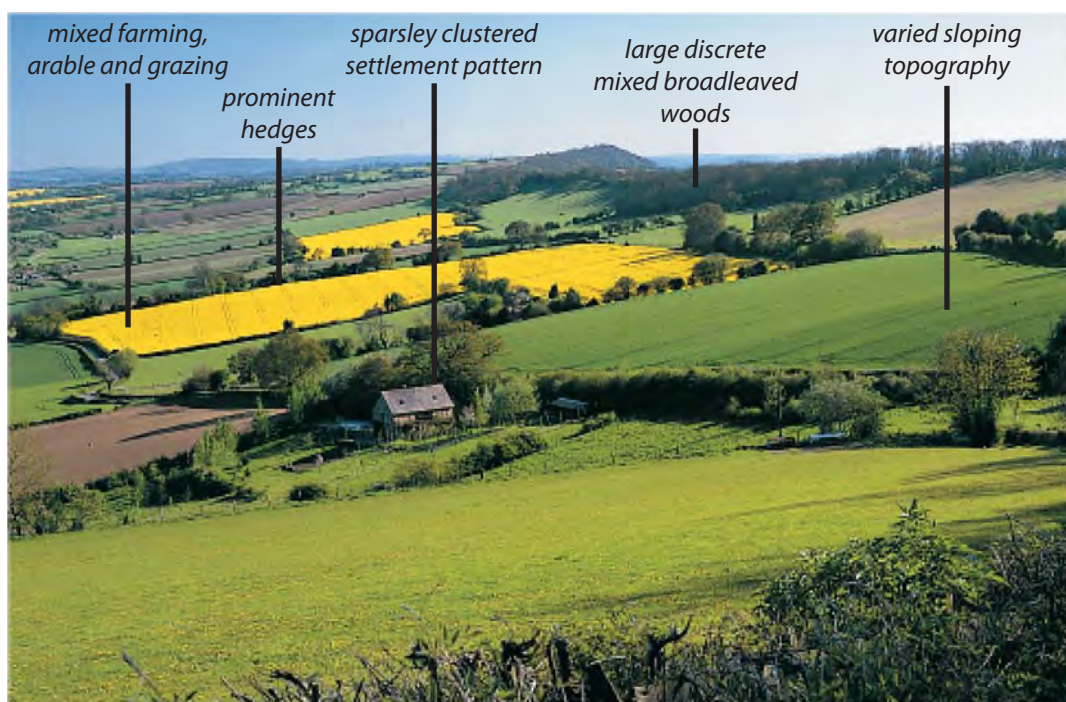
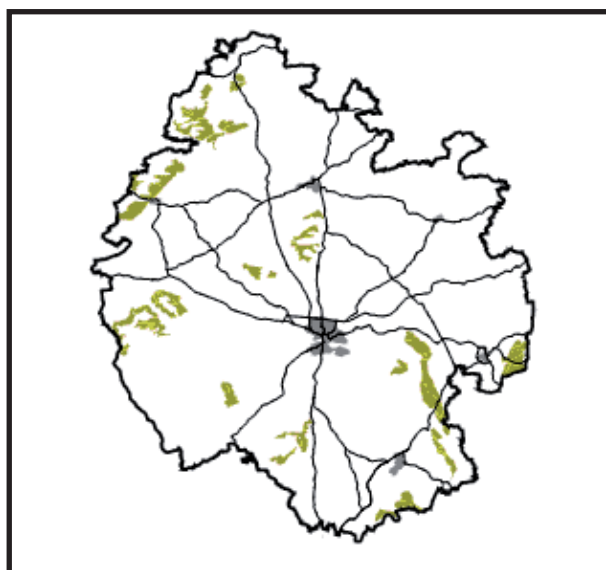
### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

#### Primary

- **varied, sloping topography**
- **field boundary hedgerows are visually very prominent because of the topography**

#### Secondary

- **mixed farming land use**
- **ancient wooded character**
- **tree cover pattern of large, discrete woods**
- **medium-framed views**
- **sparsely clustered settlement pattern**







## FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

Land use change in this Landscape Type has tended to weaken the character of the landscape and unfortunately, these landscapes often lack a strong sense of visual unity today as they are so easily compromised. The strength and scale of this character has frequently been reduced by both the loss of elements such as hedgerows and hedgerow and streamside trees and the addition of inappropriate small-scale features. Previous conifer planting in some areas also contributes significantly to the loss of landscape character.



### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Settlement in these landscapes is typically of clustered dwellings, associated with the areas of open fields. Small villages and hamlets are therefore typical but are sparsely dispersed through a landscape that does not feel well populated. Opportunities for additional housing should be in accordance with UDP policies and should respect the settlement pattern and be concentrated on the existing clustered communities in order to maintain the low settlement density.

### ENCLOSURE PATTERN

The sub-regular enclosure pattern reflects the scale of woodland clearance and historical land enclosure. Loss of hedges will disrupt this pattern, as will the addition of hedges or fences seeking to subdivide fields.

### WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

Large, discrete blocks of ancient semi-natural woodland are typical of the Wooded Hills and Farmlands. Also typical are the strong hedgerows and wooded streams, which link the woodland blocks to each other and the surrounding landscape.

## MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

The strategy for this Landscape Type should be one of mixed **conservation**, **restoration** and **enhancement**. There are opportunities for planting new large woodland blocks, particularly where there has been documented woodland clearance. However, the historical patterns of land clearance should also be respected and conserved, species rich permanent pasture being a particular feature of the upper slopes. These landscapes also offer opportunities to restore and enhance the historic patterns of linkage through strengthening hedgerow and streamside planting.

CONSERVATION	RESTORATION	ENHANCEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Conserve existing blocks of deciduous, native, woodland</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Seek to restore the ancient broadleaved woodland character as necessary</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Enhance tree cover along watercourses and hedges</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Conserve all remaining areas of species rich permanent pasture</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Seek opportunities to restore the balance of woodland cover</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Conserve and restore the historic pattern of large hedged fields, with priority being given to strengthening primary hedge lines</li></ul>		

**Appendix EDP 4**  
**Photoviewpoints**  
**(edp1834\_d016b 06 November 2019 CLM/VP/GY)**

*This page has been left blank intentionally*



Photoviewpoint EDP 1: View looking north from south-east corner of field on public footpath



Photoviewpoint EDP 2: Looking east from Trig Point on Marcle Ridge



the environmental  
dimension partnership

Registered office: 01285 740427  
www.edp-uk.co.uk  
info@edp-uk.co.uk

VP Location:	VP Bearing:	Distance to Site:	Date Taken:	Lens:	Viewing Distance:	date drawing number drawn by checked QA	06 NOVEMBER 2019 edp1834_d016b CLM VP GY
PVP 1: SO 63595 33675	330°	170m	23/08/19	50mm	300mm		
PVP 2: SO 62806 33857	50°	550m	23/08/19	50mm	300mm		

client	Clive Boulton-Brooks
project title	Land North of Nuttall Farm, Much Marcle, Ledbury HR8 2PG
drawing title	Photoviewpoints EDP 1 and 2



Photoviewpoint EDP 3: View west from crossroads at Lower Waltons/Watery Lane



Photoviewpoint EDP 4: View south-west from public footpath east of Rushall



the environmental  
dimension partnership

Registered office: 01285 740427  
www.edp-uk.co.uk  
info@edp-uk.co.uk

VP Location:  
PVP 3: SO 64503 33818  
PVP 4: SO 64857 35314

VP Bearing:  
270°  
220°

Distance to Site:  
950m  
1.9km

Date Taken:  
23/08/19  
23/08/19

Lens:  
50mm  
50mm

Viewing Distance:  
300mm  
300mm

date  
drawing number  
drawn by  
checked  
QA

06 NOVEMBER 2019  
edp1834\_d016b  
CLM  
VP  
GY

client

Clive Boulton-Brooks

project title

Land North of Nuttall Farm, Much Marcle, Ledbury HR8 2PG

drawing title

Photoviewpoints EDP 3 and 4



Photoviewpoint EDP 5: View north-west from public footpath adjacent to Much Marcle Church



Photoviewpoint EDP 6: View south-west from western edge of Kynaston



the environmental  
dimension partnership

Registered office: 01285 740427  
www.edp-uk.co.uk  
info@edp-uk.co.uk

	VP Location:	VP Bearing:	Distance to Site:	Date Taken:	Lens:	Viewing Distance:
PVP 5:	SO 65661 32742	300°	2.3km	23/08/19	50mm	300mm
PVP 6:	SO 64256 35845	210°	2.05km	23/08/19	50mm	300mm

date  
drawing number  
drawn by  
checked  
QA

06 NOVEMBER 2019  
edp1834\_d016b  
CLM  
VP  
GY

client	Clive Boulbee-Brooks
project title	Land North of Nuttall Farm, Much Marcle, Ledbury HR8 2PG
drawing title	Photoviewpoints EDP 5 and 6




Photoviewpoint EDP 7: View west from public footpath near A4172



Photoviewpoint EDP 8: View west from A417 south of Ledbury



 the environmental dimension partnership	Registered office: 01285 740427 www.edp-uk.co.uk info@edp-uk.co.uk		VP Location:	VP Bearing:	Distance to Site:	Date Taken:	Lens:	Viewing Distance:	date drawing number drawn by checked QA	06 NOVEMBER 2019 edp1834_d016b CLM VP GY	client	Clive Boulton-Brooks
	PVP 7:	SO 66966 34842	270°	3.6km	23/08/19	50mm	300mm				project title	Land North of Nuttall Farm, Much Marcle, Ledbury HR8 2PG
	PVP 8:	SO 71892 34743	270°	8.42km	23/08/19	50mm	300mm				drawing title	Photoviewpoints EDP 7 and 8



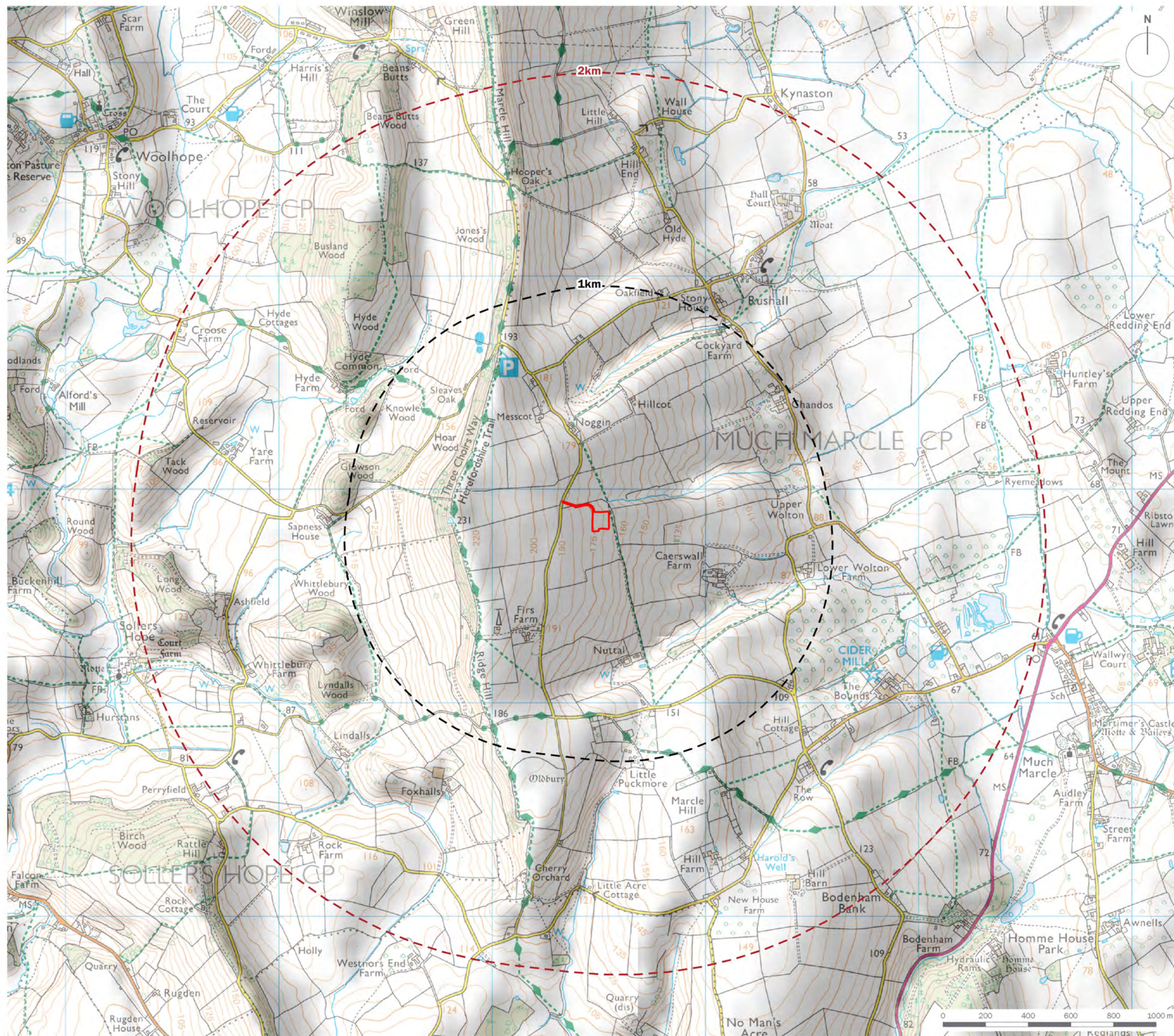
## Plans

<b>Plan EDP 1</b>	Site Location and Local Context (edp1834_d011b 06 November 2019 GY/VP/RB)
<b>Plan EDP 2</b>	Relevant Planning Designations and Considerations (edp1834_d012b 06 November 2019 GY/VP/RB)
<b>Plan EDP 3</b>	Proposed Photoviewpoints with ZTV (edp1834_d015b 06 November 2019 GY/VP/RB)
<b>Plan EDP 4</b>	Findings of EDP's Visual Appraisal (edp1834_d013b 06 November 2019 GY/VP/RB)



*This page has been left blank intentionally*





- Site Boundary
- Range Rings (at 1km intervals)
- 2km Detailed Study Area

client

**Clive Boulbee-Brooks**

project title

**Land North of Nuttall Farm, Much Marcle,  
Ledbury HR8 2PG**

drawing title

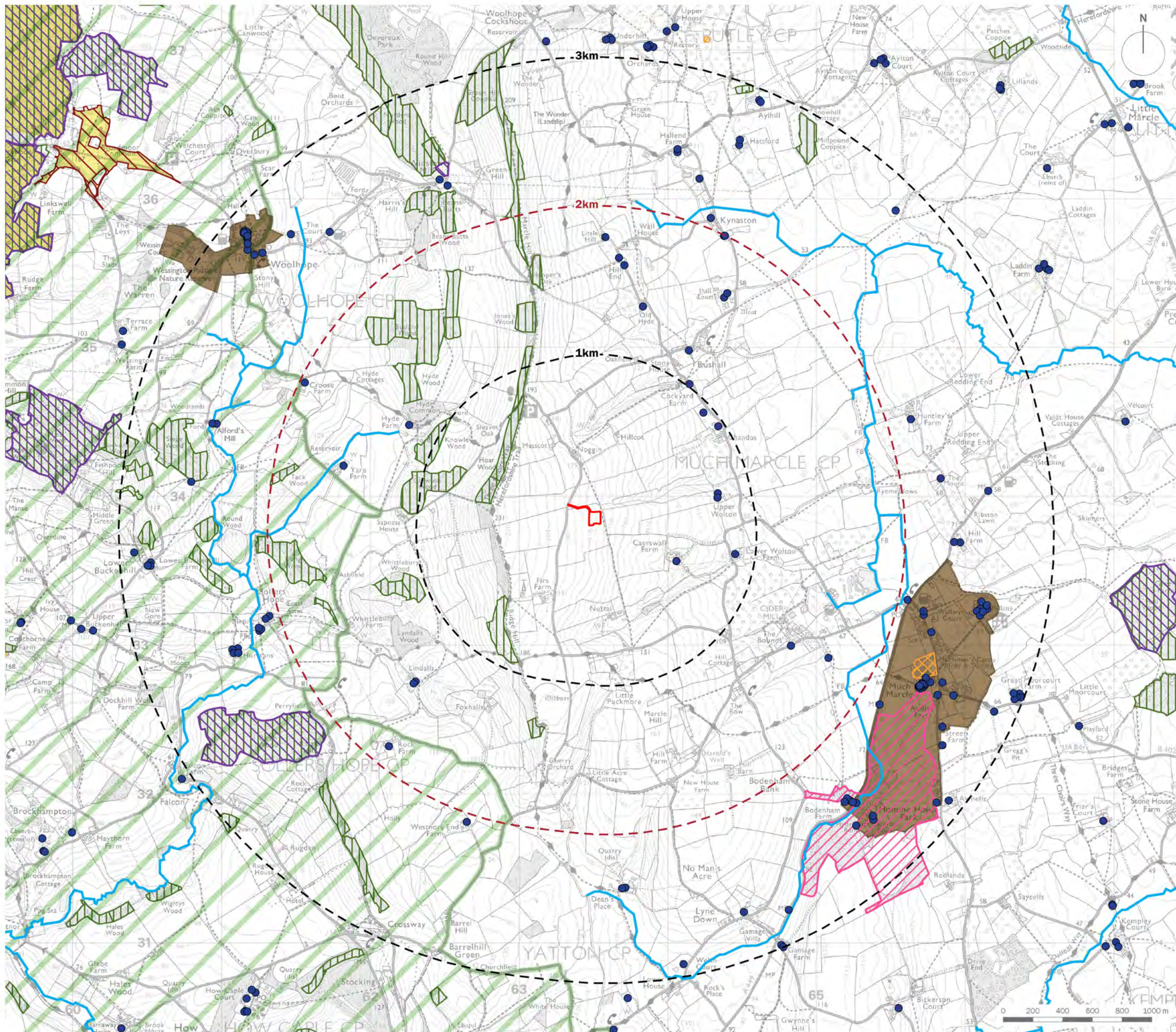
**Plan EDP 1: Site Location and Local Context**

date	06 NOVEMBER 2019	drawn by	GY
drawing number	edp1834_d011b	checked	VP
scale	1:17,500 @ A3	QA	RB

**edp** the environmental  
dimension partnership

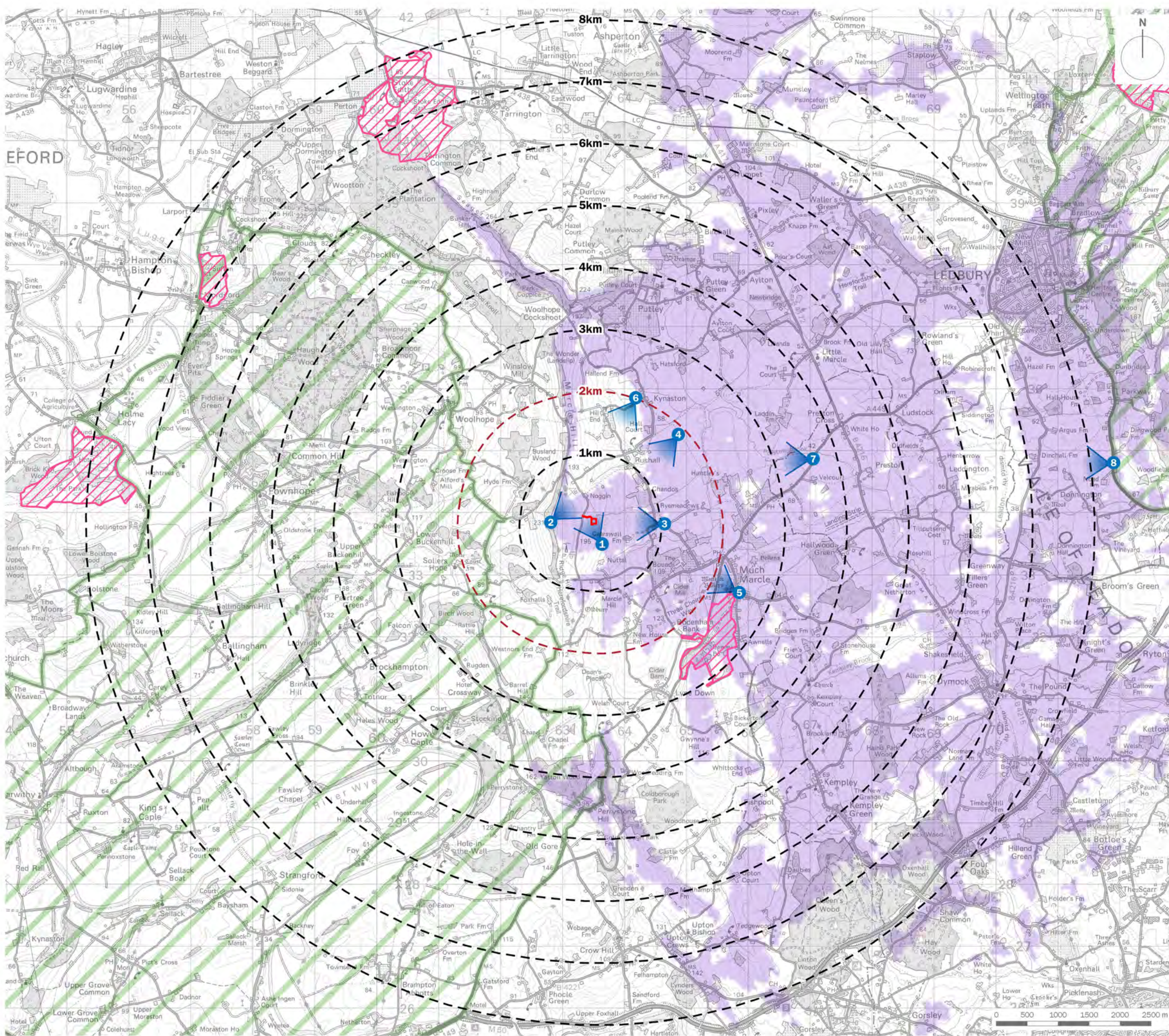
Registered office: 01285 740427 · [www.edp-uk.co.uk](http://www.edp-uk.co.uk) · [info@edp-uk.co.uk](mailto:info@edp-uk.co.uk)





client	Clive Boulbee-Brooks		
project title	Land North of Nuttall Farm, Much Marcle, Ledbury HR8 2PG		
drawing title	Plan EDP 2: Relevant Planning Designations and Considerations		
date	06 NOVEMBER 2019	drawn by	GY
drawing number	edp1834_d012b	checked	VP
scale	1:25,000 @ A3	QA	RB





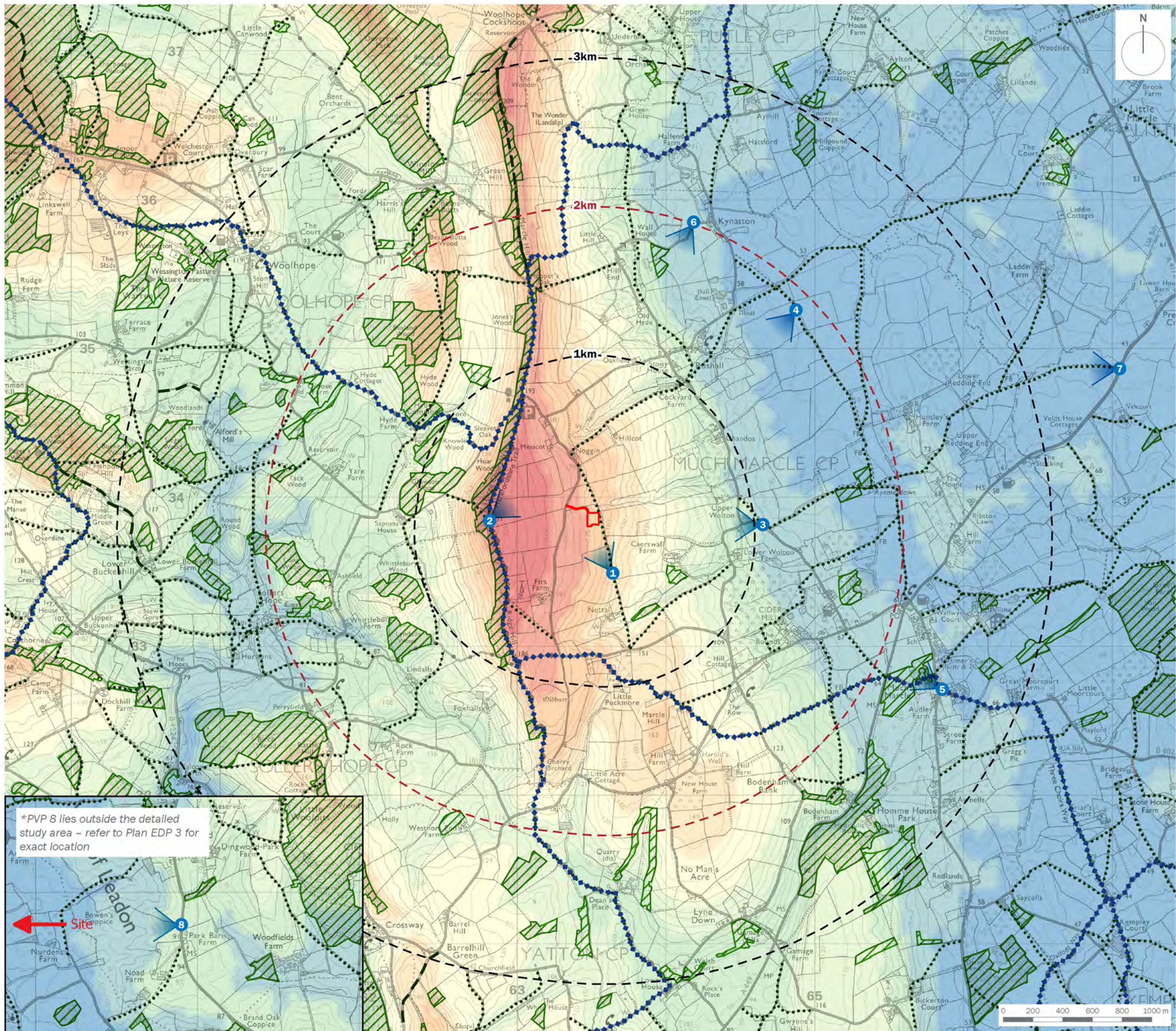
- Site Boundary
- Range Rings (at 1km intervals)
- 2km Detailed Study Area
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- Registered Park and Garden
- Photoviewpoint Location
- Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) was calculated using a spatial modelling algorithm which considers the following parameters:

- 1.6m Receptor Elevation (Observer Height)
- 9.8m Proposed Development Locations (Ridge Height)
- 360 Degree Field of View
- OS Terrain 50m Digital Terrain Model (DTM) (vertical accuracy of +/- 4m)

client	Clive Boulton-Brooks		
project title	Land North of Nuttall Farm, Much Marcle, Ledbury HR8 2PG		
drawing title	Plan EDP 3: Proposed Viewpoints with ZTV		
date	06 NOVEMBER 2019	drawn by	GY
drawing number	edp1834_d015b	checked	VP
scale	1:60,000 @ A3	QA	RB





- Site Boundary
- Range Rings (at 1km intervals)
- 2km Detailed Study Area

#### Visual Analysis

- Woodland (National Forest Inventory)

#### Height (aOD)

- <= 60m
- 60 - 80m
- 80 - 100m
- 100 - 120m
- 120 - 140m
- 140 - 160m
- 160 - 180m
- 180 - 200m
- > 200m

#### Public Rights of Way

- Promoted Route
- Footpath
- Bridleway



Photoviewpoint Location  
\*PVP 8 lies outside the detailed study area – refer to Plan EDP 3 for exact location

client

Clive Boulbee-Brooks

project title

Land North of Nuttall Farm, Much Marcle,  
Ledbury HR8 2PG

drawing title

Plan EDP 4: Findings of EDP's Visual  
Appraisal

date

06 NOVEMBER 2019

drawn by GY

drawing number

edp1834\_d013b

checked VP

scale

1:25,000 @ A3

QA RB



Registered office: 01285 740427 · www.edp-uk.co.uk · info@edp-uk.co.uk





the environmental  
dimension partnership

**CARDIFF**  
**02921 671900**

**CHELTENHAM**  
**01242 903110**

**CIRENCESTER**  
**01285 740427**

**SHREWSBURY**  
**01939 211190**

**info@edp-uk.co.uk**  
**www.edp-uk.co.uk**



**IEMA** Transforming the world  
to sustainability



The Environmental Dimension  
Partnership Ltd. Registered as a  
Limited Company in England and  
Wales. Company No. 09102431.