

# **Powys Local Development Plan (2011-2026)**

## **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

### **Landscape**

**April 2019**



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## 1. Introduction

1.1 This guidance supplements the landscape related policies of the Powys Local Development Plan (LDP) (2011-2026), which was adopted by Powys County Council on the 17th of April 2018, and has been prepared to assist decision-making on planning applications within the Powys LDP area. This guidance does not apply to areas of the County of Powys located within the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority area (BBNP).

1.2 This Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) is intended to be read alongside the relevant policies of the LDP (see section five), along with any other related adopted SPG.

1.3 The Powys landscape has a distinctive and special character comprising of a varied topography of upland plateau, rolling ridges and hills with sharply incised valleys that lead down to narrow twisting valley floors. The LDP area has numerous dispersed settlements consisting of rural hamlets, villages and small market towns which are linked by transport corridors running through the valleys. The valley sides are generally populated by small farmsteads, while, importantly to their character and unlike many other areas outside of Powys, the plateaux and high moorland areas have little or no modern development but frequently contain historic landscape features.

1.4 While there are clear variations in the landscape character across the area, the landscape is unified by its dramatic topography, high level of intactness, strong sense of rurality and substantive areas of relatively high landscape value. This SPG has been prepared to provide information and guidance on how, through implementation of the policies in the LDP, development proposals should ensure that the landscape is appropriately considered, ~~protected and where feasible enhanced~~.

## 2. Purpose of the guidance

2.1 The purpose of this guidance is to:

- Supplement the policies set out in the LDP by providing more detailed guidance.
- Assist and guide those proposing and designing new developments and submitting a planning application. To ensure development proposals are successfully integrated within the landscape; and to prevent development proposals from having ~~a negative~~ **an unacceptable adverse** impact on the valued characteristics and qualities of the Powys landscape.
- Provide detail on what needs to be considered and submitted for varying types of development proposal, in order for the Council to establish landscape and visual impact in the determination of planning applications against LDP policy.

2.2 This SPG provides guidance on:

- What landscape is and the Powys landscape.
- Relevant LDP policies relating to landscape.

- How policies in the LDP relating to landscape should be implemented.
- What is required to be submitted as part of a planning application for different scales / types of development.
- Monitoring and review processes associated with the LDP and SPG relating to landscape.

### 3. Status of the guidance

3.1 This SPG has been produced to support the policies in the Powys LDP (2011 – 2026). The guidance within the SPG has had regard to relevant national planning policy and other available guidance and information.

3.2 This SPG has been prepared in accordance with the Council's approved Protocol for Preparation and Adoption of SPG (June 2018), which includes a Community Involvement Scheme. It has been subject to a six-week public consultation stage undertaken from the 14th January to 24th February 2019. A summary of the responses received to the public consultation along with an explanation as to how the responses have been addressed can be found within the Consultation Statement. This SPG was adopted by the Council on the xxxxxx. *To be completed.*

~~3.3 While only policies in the LDP have special status in the determination of planning applications, this SPG will be taken into account as a material consideration in the planning decision making process.~~

3.3 This SPG is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

#### 4. What landscape is and the Powys landscape

4.1 The term landscape can be applied to a range of different concepts **however with regards to planning and land use it refers primarily to the visual appearance and sensory qualities of the land**, including its remoteness, tranquillity, shape, patterns, form, land uses, vernacular, textures and colours. It **also** reflects the way in which these various components interact together to create specific characteristics that are distinctive to particular localities. Landscape character relies heavily on physiography and its history so is not just a visual phenomenon. Therefore, in addition to the visual dimension of landscape there are a range of other dimensions including geology, ecology, history, architecture, soils and cultural associations. All of these factors influence the way landscapes are formed and continue to affect the way landscapes are experienced and valued.

4.2 The European Landscape Convention defines 'Landscape' as: *"An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors."*

4.3 It is therefore important to recognise that the policies in the LDP relating to landscape require development proposals to address both the effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right and any effects on views and visual amenity.

4.4 The Powys landscape is part of the County's identity and an important asset, with areas of local and national significance (as demonstrated in LANDMAP section eight). It attracts tourism, enables outdoor recreation and provides local employment opportunities. It also delivers benefits to the health and well-being of the residents of Powys **(and a wider range of people, including visitors)**, forms the basis of the natural environment and gives a sense of place and a sense of history which in turn contributes to individual, local and national identity. These factors highlight the importance of the LDP policies and this guidance when it comes to managing the impacts of development proposals on the Powys landscape.

4.5 Planning policy in the Powys LDP area takes a comprehensive approach to the Powys landscape which does not include the designation of Special Landscape Areas (SLAs). This does not mean that the landscape is less valued or sensitive, but rather that all Powys landscapes are of high value and part of this value is their interconnectivity. Each development proposal needs to consider the value, characteristics and qualities of the landscape on a case by case and site by site basis.

#### **Resources and publications on the value, characteristics and qualities of the Powys landscape.**

4.6 The following resources and publications provide more information on the value, characteristics and qualities of the Powys landscape:

- **LANDMAP**
- **National Landscape Character Areas**
- **Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales**
- **Powys Renewable Energy Assessment: Landscape Sensitivity Study for Solar Farm Development (ENPLAN May 2017)**
- **Lle website**

- **Archwilio.**

Further detail is provided in paragraphs 4.7 to 4.18 below.

- **LANDMAP**

4.7 LANDMAP (Landscape Assessment and Decision Making Process) is an all-Wales landscape resource where landscape characteristics, qualities and influences on the landscape are recorded, evaluated and collated into a nationally consistent Geographical Information System based dataset. LANDMAP is intended to help sustainable decision-making and natural resource planning at a range of levels from local to national while ensuring transparency in the decision-making process.

4.8 Further information on LANDMAP is provided in section eight of this guidance, the LANDMAP resource can be accessed through the Lle portal (see 4.17 below) and Archwilio (see 4.16 below) or through <https://landmap-maps.naturalresources.wales/>. Natural Resources Wales have produced step by step instructions on how to use the resource in [GN2 Accessing LANDMAP Information](#).

- **National Landscape Character Areas**

4.9 National Landscape Character Areas (NLCAs) have been defined at a broad landscape scale throughout Wales by NRW. Using LANDMAP data 48 NLCAs have been identified across Wales with descriptive profiles highlighting what distinguishes one landscape from another. Within each profile reference is also given to regional distinct natural, cultural and perceptual characteristics.

4.10 The Powys LDP area is split between 13 of the NLCAs, appendix 3 contains a map identifying the boundaries of the NLCAs. Full landscape descriptions are available on the NRW website <https://naturalresources.wales/evidence-and-data/maps/nlca/?lang=en>.

- **Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales**

4.11 To recognise the value of historic landscapes, and raise awareness of their importance, Cadw, in partnership with the former Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS UK), compiled a Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales. The register identifies 58 landscapes of outstanding or special historic interest, that are considered to be some of the best examples of different types of historic landscapes in Wales.

4.12 The purpose of the Register is to provide information to decision makers and landscape managers, to help ensure that the historic character of the landscape is sustained, and that where change is contemplated, it is well-informed. A good practice guide explains how the Register should be used in assessing the effect of major developments on the historic landscape. Maps of the registered areas can be accessed through the Lle portal, the Archwilio website or through 'The guide to good practice' at

[https://cadw.gov.wales/docs/cadw/publications/LandscapesRegisterGoodPractice\\_EN.pdf](https://cadw.gov.wales/docs/cadw/publications/LandscapesRegisterGoodPractice_EN.pdf).

4.13 There are currently nine Registered Historic Landscapes either entirely within or partly within the LDP area, see appendix 2.

- ***Powys Renewable Energy Assessment: Landscape Sensitivity Study for Solar Farm Development (ENPLAN May 2017)***

4.14 The Landscape Sensitivity Study (2017) was conducted to assess the likely impact of solar photovoltaic energy development on the landscape in 33 distinct areas. **Previous to the Landscape Sensitivity Study** The 33 areas were defined in the Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Energy Assessment (AECOM, 2017) as potential Local Search Areas (LSAs). The LSAs were identified and considered in the Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Energy Assessment (2017) to be the least constrained areas of the LDP area within which it would be possible for solar PV farms to be accommodated.

4.15 Following the identification of the LSAs it was recognised that one of the main planning considerations yet to be addressed was the effect of solar development proposals on the landscape. To resolve this the Landscape Sensitivity Study was undertaken to provide strategic guidance and to form an information base for development management purposes in assisting to direct solar development to the right areas and in the right quantum. The study also sought to advise on the main landscape and visual issues associated with solar development likely to arise within any specific LSA location.

4.16 The study concluded that the landscape sensitivity of the LSAs ranged from 'Very High' sensitivity through to 'Low' sensitivity and that due to landscape impacts 11 of the 33 LSAs had no potential for solar farm development. The methodology and recommendations from this study can be viewed on the Council's website:

[https://customer.powys.gov.uk/media/5413/ED060\\_REA\\_Landscape\\_Sensitivity\\_Study\\_for\\_Solar\\_Farm\\_Development\\_NoAppendix\\_12May2017/pdf/ED060\\_REA\\_Landscape\\_Sensitivity\\_Study\\_for\\_Solar\\_Farm\\_Development\\_NoAppendix\\_12May2017.pdf](https://customer.powys.gov.uk/media/5413/ED060_REA_Landscape_Sensitivity_Study_for_Solar_Farm_Development_NoAppendix_12May2017/pdf/ED060_REA_Landscape_Sensitivity_Study_for_Solar_Farm_Development_NoAppendix_12May2017.pdf)

- ***Lle website***

4.17 The Lle Geo-Portal has been developed as a partnership between Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales. Lle serves as a hub for data and information covering a wide spectrum of topics, but primarily around the environment. There are two elements to the website; a catalogue for downloading datasets and a map where environmental data can be viewed. The site contains a number of WFS and WMS feeds which can be used to supply data directly into individual GIS systems. Whilst, the map <http://lle.gov.wales/map#m=-3.159,51.47832,7&b=euroapa> is particularly useful when looking at how proposals will impact on a range of natural and built heritage designations, the LANDMAP datasets can also be viewed and downloaded from here <http://lle.gov.wales/home>.

- **Archwilio**

4.18 Archwilio provides public access to the historic environment records (HERs) for each local authority area in Wales. It includes (or provides access to) information on tens of thousands of historic sites or investigative work across Wales. The HERs are maintained on behalf of the Welsh Ministers by the four regional Welsh Archaeological Trusts and in fulfilment of the requirements of the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016. In addition to providing access to the historic environment records, the website also gives access to information on scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas, historic parks and gardens, registered historic landscapes and the historic landscape layer of LANDMAP. See: <https://www.archwilio.org.uk/arch/>.

## 5. Local Planning Policy relating to Landscape

5.1 The aims of the LDP with regards to landscape are set out in Objective 13. To achieve this objective, the plan contains detailed strategic and development management policies. Each of the policies in the LDP is supported by a reasoned justification that contains an explanation behind the policy, provides guidance, and or expands on the purpose of the policy or its aims. The reasoned justification to each of the policies listed below has not been repeated in this guidance; users should refer to the LDP where the reasoned justification should be considered alongside the policy to inform the development proposal.

### **LDP Objective 13 – Landscape and the Historic Environment Landscape**

- i. To protect, preserve and/or enhance the distinctive landscapes of Powys and adjoining areas, including protected landscapes.....

5.2 Strategic Policy SP6 (Distribution of Growth across the Settlement Hierarchy) while not being explicitly a landscape policy provides an important mechanism to protect the plan area's landscape by directing development away from the open countryside and into the larger more sustainable settlements. Paragraph 3.3.35 of the reasoned justification states that *"all new development in the open countryside should respect the character of the surrounding area and be of an appropriate scale and design."*

5.3 Strategic Policy SP7 safeguards the plan area's important strategic resources and assets which are identified and listed within the policy. The policy lists two assets of particular interest to this guidance; 'Registered Historic Landscapes' and 'The valued characteristics and qualities of the landscape throughout Powys'.

### **Strategic Policy SP7 - Safeguarding of Strategic Resources and Assets**

To safeguard strategic resources and assets in the County, development proposals must not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the resource or asset and its operation.

The following have been identified as strategic resources and assets in Powys:

1. Land designated at international, European and/or national level for environmental protection.
2. Historic environment designations, including:
  - i). Registered Historic Landscapes
  - ii). Registered Historic Parks and Gardens
  - iii). Scheduled Ancient Monuments and other archaeological remains
  - iv). Listed Buildings and their curtilages
  - v). Conservation Areas
  - vi). Historic Assets of Special Local Interest
 AND the setting of designations i), ii,) iii), iv) and v).

### **3. Recreational Assets, including:**

- i) National Trails
- ii) Public Rights of Way Network
- iii) Recreational Trails
- iv) National Cycle Network.

4. The valued characteristics and qualities of the landscape throughout Powys.....

5.4 Development Management Policy DM4 is the specific, topic based policy in the plan in relation to landscape. It requires development proposals (individually or cumulatively) not to have an unacceptable adverse effect on the valued characteristics and qualities of the Powys landscape. All proposals should be appropriate and sensitive in how they are designed and integrated within the landscape and must have regard to visual amenity, LANDMAP, Registered Historic Landscapes, adjacent National Parks and adjacent Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The policy applies to the whole of the plan area with a focus on land outside of the settlements identified in Strategic Policy SP5. Further guidance on the implementation of this Policy is provided in section six of this SPG.

#### **Policy DM4 – Landscape**

**Proposals for new development outside the Towns, Large Villages, Small Villages and Rural Settlements defined in the Settlement Hierarchy must not, individually or cumulatively, have an unacceptable adverse effect, on the valued characteristics and qualities of the Powys landscape. All proposals will need to:**

- 1. Be appropriate and sensitive in terms of integration, siting, scale and design to the characteristics and qualities of the landscape including its: topography; development pattern and features; historical and ecological qualities; open views; and tranquillity; and**
- 2. Have regard to LANDMAP, Registered Historic Landscapes, adjacent protected landscapes (National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and the visual amenity enjoyed by users of both Powys landscapes and adjoining areas.**

**Proposals which are likely to have a significant impact on the landscape and/or visual amenity will require a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment to be undertaken.**

5.5 To achieve the successful integration of development proposals into the landscape Policy DM13 – Design and Resources is key; this policy requires that all development proposals demonstrate good quality design with regard to the qualities and amenity of the surrounding area. This policy should be implemented alongside Policy DM4 with attention being paid to the detailed design of the proposal.

#### **Policy DM13 – Design and Resources**

**Development proposals must be able to demonstrate a good quality design and shall have regard to the qualities and amenity of the surrounding area, local infrastructure and resources.**

**Proposals will only be permitted where all of the following criteria, where relevant, are satisfied:**

- 1. Development has been designed to complement and/or enhance the character of the surrounding area in terms of siting, appearance, integration, scale, height, massing, and design detailing.**
- 2. The development contributes towards the preservation of local distinctiveness and sense of place.....**

5.6 There are further policies in the LDP that protect specific elements of the Powys landscape, Policy DM2 (The Natural Environment) aims to protect the natural environment, DM3 (Public Open Space) protects open spaces, of particular relevance to landscape are the accessible natural green spaces on the edge of settlements; and Policy DM7 (Dark Skies and External Lighting) prevents unacceptable levels of light pollution especially in the countryside. Policy DM7 also recognises in the reasoned justification that Powys has some of the darkest skies in the country as evidenced from the Tranquil Areas Map (2009). This is an important element of landscape protection that needs to be taken into consideration when assessing development proposals.

5.7 Whilst all proposals especially those in the Open Countryside need to take landscape into consideration, there are specific developments that commonly take place in the Open Countryside where landscape is referred to within the policy for that topic. This includes Policy H8 - Renovation of Abandoned Dwellings, Policy TD1 – Tourism Development, Policy W2 – Waste Management Proposals and Policy M4 – Mineral Proposals. Development proposals falling within these topics will still need to have regard to the Strategic and Development Management Policies especially SP7, DM4 and DM13.

5.8 Development proposals in the Open Countryside that fall within topics where landscape has not been mentioned within the detailed topic policy will still need to take landscape into consideration through the Strategic and Development Management Policies especially SP7, DM4 and DM13.

5.9 This SPG is part of a suite of SPGs that supplement the policies in the Powys LDP. Whilst this landscape guidance does **necessitate** **give** reference to the natural and historic environment, renewable energy and residential design this is only in the context of the landscape. The specific SPG for these topics should be read alongside this guidance to inform the development proposal.

## 6. Landscape Policy Implementation

6.1 LDP Policy DM4 has a particular emphasis on the management of development proposals outside of settlements as defined in the LDP settlement hierarchy. Land outside of these settlements is what the LDP defines as Open Countryside and includes a small area of undeveloped coast. For all developments outside of the settlements, sections 6.8 to 6.40 of this guidance applies.

6.2 All development proposals within or outside of settlements need to be designed to complement and/or enhance the surrounding area which includes the landscape or townscape. All such proposals must avoid any unacceptable adverse effects on the valued characteristics and qualities of the Powys landscape and should contribute towards the preservation of local distinctiveness and sense of place to comply with Policies SP7, DM4 and DM13.

### ***Development Proposals Within Settlements***

6.3 Development proposals within settlements as identified within the LDP settlement hierarchy should be sensitively designed to ensure that the proposal complements and/or enhances the characteristics and qualities of the surrounding area.

6.4 The LDP proposals map, Lle catalogue, Archwilio, LANDMAP and other local resources and studies can assist in providing an overview of the planning context. The historic and natural environment designations (and their setting where relevant) listed in Policy SP7, will need to be considered and their conservation requirements understood, together with the amenity value of Tree Preservation Orders, amenity spaces and other natural environmental features.

6.5 A site visit is necessary (by the applicant and the individual responsible for the design of the development), to identify the townscape/settlement characteristics and features of the site and location of local views. This will assist in establishing the local context of the site and help to identify any place responsive patterns, materials, vernacular details, open space, trees, boundaries and key frontages.

6.6 Special attention should be made to the appearance and integration of development on rural edges, within prominent streetscape locations and at gateways into settlements.

6.7 Major development, development within visually prominent locations and development with a wide visual influence that can be seen from neighbouring national designations such as National Parks and Areas of Outstanding National Beauty will need to avoid adversely affecting the setting and outlook of these statutory designated landscapes.

### ***Development Proposals Outside Settlements (The Open Countryside)***

6.8 Figure 1 below identifies the steps which should be followed for all developments, **except householder and change of use with no external alterations**, within the Open Countryside to demonstrate compliance with LDP Policy DM4.

**Figure 1. Step by step process for showing how to implement Policy DM4.**

#### **STEP 1 - DETERMINE THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**

Determine the development proposal - description of the proposed development identifying main features, scale and size. Determine the land that may be available to site the development, this may be all the land in the applicant's ownership. It is not the red line area to be submitted as the planning application site. Contact the Council for Pre-Planning Application Advice. Determine if LVIA required.

#### **STEP 2 – BASELINE ASSESSMENT**

Carry out **site analysis** (see Section 7) and look at **LANDMAP** (see Section 8) layers to form a **baseline assessment**. If the development is going to be prominent, identify the Zone of Theoretical Visibility to determine views and visual receptors. Identify characteristics and qualities from baseline assessment.

#### **STEP 3 – SITING AND DESIGN STAGE**

Determine the **siting and design** of the development proposal. This should take into consideration the landscape characteristics, qualities and any views / visual receptors identified in Step 2.

All schemes need to be appropriate and sensitive in terms of integration, siting, scale and design to the characteristics and qualities of the Powys landscape.

Consideration needs to be given to all elements of the proposal including access, construction and restoration phases.

#### **STEP 4 – FINALISE AND ASSESS THE PROPOSAL**

Use the **Design and Access / Planning statement** and site layout plans to illustrate how landscape has been considered as part of the **siting and design** process.

Finalise the development proposal and then **assess** its impact on the landscape using the information from Step 2 (this may be an **informal assessment** or a **LVIA** in line with section six). Look at how impacts can be mitigated or whether the scheme needs to go back to Step 3 - **siting and design** stage.

#### **STEP 5 - SUBMIT THE PLANNING APPLICATION**

## ***Outside Settlements (The Open Countryside)***

### **STEP 1 - DETERMINE THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**

6.9 To successfully integrate development proposals into the landscape, consideration must be given to the **siting and design** and how it fits with the landscape from the outset. In the first instance applicants should put together a description of the proposed development identifying the main features, uses, scale and size. The land that is available to site the development should then be determined; this may be all the land in the applicant's ownership, it is not the red line area to be submitted as the planning application site (this should be determined in Step 3). This is the stage where the Council should be contacted for pre-planning application advice. For larger developments consideration maybe needed as to whether a **Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)** will be required as part of the process in line with Step 4. **Householder developments are required to consider how the proposal relates to the landscape in the design process but will not be required to submit the additional information outlined in Steps 4 and 5 below.**

### **STEP 2 - BASELINE ASSESSMENT**

6.10 All developments, **(other than householder and change of use (with no external alterations))** in the Open Countryside will require a **baseline assessment**, this should be proportionate to the scale of the development, and should include a site assessment accompanied with information from Ordnance Survey maps, aerial photographs and any other local studies or resources (this will form the **site analysis**).

6.11 **The site analysis** should identify the landscape features, characteristics and qualities of the site and the locations of local and wider views from where the development is likely to be seen.

6.12 It is useful to illustrate this information on an annotated topographical site plan, supplemented with **site analysis** text and photographs to illustrate views of the site, as well as the features of the site itself. For minor developments (further clarification on what is defined as major or minor development can be found in paragraph 6.29) such as replacement dwellings, barn conversions, small agricultural buildings and holiday chalets, this information can be included within the site layout plan and a **Planning Statement**.

6.13 For larger developments such as residential exception sites of ten or more dwellings, large employment and agricultural developments (of over 1000m<sup>2</sup>) this information should be included within the **Design and Access Statement** as part of the site context analysis. Visiting and spending time at the site and its surrounding area is an essential part of this process. Section seven provides more information on how to undertake a **site analysis** to identify landscape characteristics and qualities.

#### ***Developing a place responsive planning proposal***

6.14 The process of **site analysis** and describing the site and its context, provides a sound basis for developing a place **response responsive** planning proposal. **The Design and Access Statement / Planning Statement** should clearly summarise the site's main features and characteristics and how the planning proposal has responded to them. This may include:

- The site's topography, including the orientation of contours and location of steep slopes.
- The location of trees and hedgerows. Note their importance for character, amenity and heritage; their ability to enclose and integrate the development; their species, condition and useful life expectancy; the need for management, replacement and supplementary planting. (These features don't have to be protected by a Tree Preservation Order or important under the Hedgerow Regulations to be valuable to local character and development integration).
- Surface water drainage, storage, soil characteristics and site discharge points. This will assist in the planning of Sustainable Drainage Schemes (SuDS) and help to align the SUDS approval application with the planning application.
- Features such as gullies, dips, mounds and structures which could be historic artefacts.
- Built heritage designations such as Registered Historic Landscapes, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Historic Parks and Gardens.
- Surrounding buildings, their uses, scale, materials, colour, textures and vernacular.
- Skylines and backdrops.
- Views in and out of the site, highlighting visual receptors. (Visual receptors are individuals and/or groups of people who have the potential to be affected by the proposal.)
- Landmarks within or seen from the site.
- Perceptual qualities – scenic quality, sense of place, remoteness, tranquillity and wildness. The absence, or presence of intrusive or inharmonious human activity or noise.
- Night time character – if the proposed development will introduce new lighting.
- Cultural or historical features that characterise the area.

6.15 **LANDMAP** summary's assessment of value, **LANDMAP** provides a summary for each aspect area that gives an assessment of value, the features and qualities that contribute to this value, and the area's management recommendations, provide important landscape baseline information for a site and its context. All five **LANDMAP** layers should be referred to. The aspect areas of each layer, that cover the site and its visual context (this being the extent to which views of the development could be possible – also known as the zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) must be assessed (see Figure 1).

6.16 The value awarded to the aspect areas within **LANDMAP** should be used to supplement the information within the **baseline assessment**. A cross reference between the survey reports in **LANDMAP** and the **site analysis** will assist in identifying the characteristics and qualities which are of importance in the wider landscape and are relevant at the local scale. If the **LANDMAP** information is considered insufficient then the **site analysis** can be used to demonstrate local variations at the site level. Section eight provides more information on how to use **LANDMAP** to identify landscape characteristics and qualities.

6.17 Characterisation studies have been carried out on the Registered Historic Landscapes, for development proposals within or impacting on a Registered Historic Landscape. The relevant characterisation study should be referred to.

### STEP 3 – SITING AND DESIGN STAGE

6.18 Once the features, characteristics and qualities of the landscape have been identified then consideration can be given as to how (or if) the development proposal can be **sited and designed** so that it is appropriate and sensitive in terms of its integration, siting, scale and overall appearance within the landscape and available views. In order for planning applications to be approved, development proposals will need to be successfully integrated within the landscape without having an unacceptable adverse effect.

6.19 The **siting and design** of the proposal should work with the landscape to successfully integrate the development. This should be done using the **baseline assessment (site analysis plus LANDMAP data)** and an analysis of the opportunities and constraints. This will identify the planning issues that prevent or enable successful integration of the development proposal and where the scheme may need to be developed or amended. Factors that may assist landscape integration include (but are not limited to):

- Siting the proposed development next to existing development (where appropriate) to avoid proliferation within the open countryside.
- Placing the development below the skyline.
- Locating development away from the focus and orientation of prevailing views.
- In some cases, locating development next to strong patterns of landform, trees and hedgerows.
- Considering the scale, height and density of surrounding buildings – should the development proposal be the same or is there the potential to deviate? - It is not appropriate to replicate poor quality design.
- Utilising a prevalent building form, architectural character and/or material within the proposal.
- Retention and the incorporation of landmarks and specific features within the design.
- Consideration of how the development proposal including access roads can be located away from remote, wilder areas.
- Reduced lighting, consider designing to Dark Skies standard.
- Attention to colour – how it blends into the landscape, considering seasonal changes.
- Maintaining and enhancing distinctiveness where it has been identified as a quality.

6.20 **Siting and design** considerations should always be given to avoiding sensitive landscapes and views, maintaining distinctiveness and sense of place and for development to make a positive contribution to the locality.

### STEP 4 - FINALISE AND ASSESS THE PROPOSAL

6.21 The development proposal can then be finalised and the planning application site (the red line area) determined. All planning submissions should provide a clearly set out

understanding of the site and its landscape and visual context and how the development proposal has been planned and designed to address the issues. (Section 6.19 outlines the range of considerations). For major applications, this information should be provided in the **Design and Access Statement** and for minor applications a **Planning Statement**.

6.22 Once the development proposal has been planned with its knowledge of the landscape and visual context, then its potential impact on the landscape will need to be assessed. The assessment should be proportionate to the scale of the development and use the information from the **baseline assessment** prepared in Step 2. All development proposals in the Open Countryside will need to be assessed to determine whether the proposal ~~will have~~ **is likely to have** any **unacceptable** adverse impacts on the landscape. This may be an **informal assessment** or in some cases, a **Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment / Appraisal (LVIA)**. Further detail on when a **LVIA** is required is provided in paragraphs 6.25 to 6.35 below.

6.23 Where the **LVIA** or the **informal assessment** identifies that the development proposal will have a **likely significant adverse effect** ~~an unacceptable adverse impact~~ on the landscape, then ~~either~~ **the developer should consider** mitigation measures ~~should be undertaken (where possible)~~, or the development proposal should be taken back to the **siting and design** stage (Step 3); ~~not doing this may result in the planning application being refused~~. Where mitigation measures are used or the development proposal has had to revisit the **siting and design** stage this should be documented in the **Design and Access / Planning Statement**. All assessments should take into consideration the cumulative impact of developments. Discussions will need to take place with the Council as to whether the assessment should consider examples of the same type of development and/or other types of development. **The Council acknowledges that landscape is one of a wide range of considerations that may influence the siting and design of development, the Design and Access / Planning Statement provides an opportunity to explain how the different components which includes landscape have been considered.**

6.24 Consideration will also need to be given as to the impact of the development proposal on any adjacent National Parks, Areas of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB) and Registered Historic Landscapes. Where the development impacts on a Registered Historic Landscape there may also be a need to include an Assessment of the Impact of Development on Historic Landscapes” (ASIDOHL2). The need for an ASIDOHL assessment for such developments will be determined by Cadw in consultation with the Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust, NRW and the Council.

### **Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments / Appraisals (LVIA)**

- ***As Part of an Environmental Impact Assessment***

6.25 The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017 include a requirement for certain types of development proposals to undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) before planning permission can be approved. The aims of the regulations are to prevent, reduce or offset the significant adverse environmental effects of development proposals, and enhance positive ones.

6.26 The EIA Regulations set out the types of project for which an EIA is always required, known as Schedule 1 development. The Regulations also include a further list of projects in Schedule 2, which may require an EIA if they are likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as size, nature or location. The requirement for EIA in these circumstances is determined through a Screening Opinion carried out by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) **or a Screening Direction carried out by the Welsh Ministers.**

6.27 Where landscape has been identified ~~(by the LPA)~~ within the Scoping Opinion (this will take place for Schedule 1 and 2 developments) as an issue to be considered, (then as part of the EIA) a **LVIA** should be carried out to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both the landscape as a resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity. It is important that where development proposals do undertake a **LVIA** as part of the EIA that it covers both of these components.

6.28 This guidance focusses on where **LVIA**s are required outside of settlements, this does not preclude the fact that a **LVIA** may be required as part of an EIA within a settlement.

- ***Other Developments with Likely Significant Landscape Impacts, Outside Settlements***

6.29 Paragraph 4.2.33 of the reasoned justification to LDP Policy DM4 requires an **LVIA** for all development proposals which could have a significant impact on the landscape and/or visual amenity. This includes all wind energy proposals (excluding anemometry masts) and most major developments.

**Major development is defined in article 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012 as:**

'major development' means development involving any one or more of the following -

- (a) the winning and working of minerals or the use of land for mineral-working deposits;
- (b) waste development;
- (c) the provision of dwellinghouses where—
  - (i) the number of dwellinghouses to be provided is 10 or more; or
  - (ii) the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of 0.5 hectares or more and it is not known whether the development falls within sub-paragraph (c)(i);
- (d) the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000 square metres or more; or,
- (e) development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more.

6.30 Proposals for major development that have the potential to change the landscape and are outside of a settlement as defined in the LDP settlement hierarchy will be required to undertake a **LVIA**. Development considered to have the potential to cause landscape change includes but is not limited to proposals that encompass new structures, excavation works, changes to topography or the removal of key landscape features. Proposals considered as 'major development' but are not required to undertake a **LVIA** are those where the structure is already an integral part of the landscape such as a barn conversion.

6.31 In some cases, there may already be a requirement for an **LVIA** to be carried out as part of an EIA (see paragraph 6.25); where this is not the case the **LVIA** (known as a **Landscape Visual Impact Appraisal**) should still identify and assess the **significance of the effects of change** resulting from development on both the landscape as a resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity.

6.32 In **consistence compliance** with Policy DM4 the Council may request a **LVIA** for minor development proposals which have the potential to have a significant impact on the landscape and/or visual amenity.

- **Undertaking a LVIA**

6.33 The **LVIA** should be conducted by an independent, suitably qualified and experienced professional following the '*Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition*' (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) or any subsequent updates. The scope of the **LVIA** should be proportionate to the scale of the development.

6.34 National Planning Policy formally recognises the importance of using **LANDMAP** in landscape assessments in Wales. The **LVIA** should therefore make use of and include information from **LANDMAP** (collated in Step 2 above), particularly to inform the understanding of baseline conditions. Natural Resource Wales have produced "Guidance Note 3: Using **LANDMAP** for **Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment** of Onshore Wind Turbines" which should be referred to for wind energy proposals. The guidance highlights the importance of using all five layers not just the Visual and Sensory Layer.

6.35 Applicants following the '*Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*' still need to be mindful that the development proposal meets the policy requirements of the LDP. This includes making sure proposals are **sited and designed** to be integrated within the landscape (as per Step 3 above), are appropriate and sensitive, take into consideration cumulative impacts, and don't have an unacceptable adverse effect on the valued characteristics and qualities of the Powys landscape (these should be identified as part of the **baseline assessment**).

### **Landscape Assessment for Developments that do not Require a LVIA**

6.36 LDP Policy DM4 requires all proposals not to individually or cumulatively have an unacceptable adverse effect on the valued characteristics and qualities of the Powys landscape. To **demonstrate identify that if there are no unacceptable any** adverse effects minor development proposals, **including residential developments of less than ten units and other developments of less than 1000 metres<sup>2</sup> or a hectare (where a EIA is not required)**, will be expected to undertake an **informal landscape assessment**.

6.37 Consideration will need to be given as to how the development proposal will impact on the characteristics and qualities identified in Step 2. Where landscape features are to be removed and the character of the area altered the contribution these characteristics and qualities make to the wider landscape will need to be assessed. This should include looking at how such characteristics and qualities contribute to **LANDMAP** aspect areas evaluated as high or outstanding, or any other designation such as registered historic landscapes, the

setting of listed buildings, conservation areas and registered historic parks and gardens. The assessment should also consider the visual effects of the development on ‘visual receptors’ Visual receptors should include popular view points and public rights of way within the zone of theoretical visibility.

6.38 Appropriate planning and location within the landscape should avoid areas of high sensitivity; these are areas of high/ outstanding value that are **more** likely to be harmed by the development proposal. Different development proposals may be suited to different landscape types, a proposal that can be successfully integrated within one landscape type may be detrimental to another. Where the **informal assessment** identifies that the development proposal will have an **unacceptable** adverse impact on the landscape, then either mitigation measures should be undertaken, or the development proposal should be taken back to the **siting and design** stage. **Consideration needs to be given as to whether the development proposal meets the requirements of Policy DM4.**

6.39 The results from the assessment should be presented within the **Design and Access or Planning Statement**.

#### STEP 5 - SUBMIT THE PLANNING APPLICATION

6.40 Following Steps 1 to 4, above the planning application is ready to be submitted:

- Accompanied with evidence of how the development proposal has been integrated into the landscape (either as part of the **Design and Access Statement** or **in a Planning Statement** accompanied with annotated site layout plans).
- Accompanied by a **LVIA** where the development proposal may have a significant impact on the landscape and/or visual amenity (as per Step 4). Measures taken to mitigate adverse impacts should be documented.
- Applications that fail to demonstrate that the development proposal does not individually or cumulatively, have an unacceptable adverse effect on the characteristics and qualities of the Powys landscape may be refused. In addition to failing to comply with LDP Policy DM4, Planning Policy Wales (edition 10) states “*where adverse effects on landscape character cannot be avoided, it will be necessary to refuse planning permission*”.

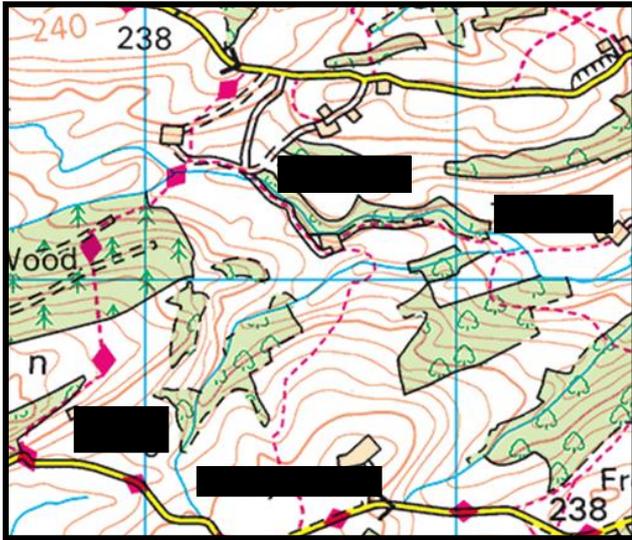
- ~~Section nine – Figures 2 and 3 provide an outline of the process through flow charts.~~

**6.41 Section 9 contains Figures 2 and 3 which provide an outline of the process using flow charts. Whilst the table below details the level of information expected to be submitted as part of the planning application for different types of development proposal.**

## Details of Information to be Submitted for Different Development Types if the Proposals Fall Outside of a Settlement.

TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO BE SUBMITTED
<p><b>Householder</b></p> <p><b>Change of Use - (with no external works)</b></p>	<p><b>NO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</b> <i>(however design will still need to comply with Policies DM4 and DM13 and should reflect local context where appropriate).</i></p>
<p><b>Developments that are less Likely to Have Significant Landscape Impacts, Outside Settlements</b></p>	
<p><b>All Conversions (with external works)</b></p> <p><b>Residential – where less than 10 dwellings</b></p> <p><b>Employment, Retail and Tourism – where floor space is 1000 square metres or less, or the site area is less than one hectare</b></p> <p><b>Agricultural Buildings – where floor space is 1000 square metres or less, or the site area is less than one hectare</b></p> <p><b>Renewable Energy Schemes - where site area is less than one hectare and are NOT for wind energy</b></p> <p><i>Anemometry masts fall within this category.</i></p>	<p><b>PLANNING STATEMENT – which includes detail of how the development proposal has been sited and designed to be integrated into the landscape and an informal landscape assessment that demonstrates compliance with Policy DM4, using the baseline assessment (site analysis plus LANDMAP).</b></p> <p><i>Some of the developments in this category may be required to undertake a LVIA under the EIA regulations. This will be instead of the informal landscape assessment and should be used to inform the Planning Statement.</i></p>
<p><b>Any Other Developments – With a site area of less than one hectare and floorspace of less than 1000m.</b></p>	<p><i>The LPA may request a LVIA for any of the development proposals falling within this category when there is the potential for significant impact on the landscape and/or visual amenity.</i></p>
<p><b>Developments with Likely Significant Landscape Impacts, Outside Settlements</b></p>	
<p><b>Residential – new build where ten dwellings or more</b></p> <p><b>Employment, Retail, Tourism, Agricultural Buildings and other developments – where floor space is 1000 square metres or more, or the site area is one hectare or more.</b></p> <p><b>Wind Energy Proposals (excluding anemometry masts)</b></p> <p><b>Any Other Developments – Where the LPA has concerns that development proposals have the potential for significant impact on the landscape and/or visual amenity</b></p>	<p><b>LVIA –</b> Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment where EIA Or Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal where non EIA</p> <p><b>DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT – which includes detail of how the development proposal has been sited and designed to be integrated into the landscape and that demonstrates compliance with Policy DM4, using the baseline assessment (site analysis plus LANDMAP) and the LVIA.</b></p>

## 7. How to undertake a Site Analysis to identify landscape characteristics and qualities



A Site Analysis should be carried out for the land available to accommodate the development of the proposal (this information will assist in the siting).

Applicants should refer to:

- OS Maps
- Aerial Photographs
- Other relevant studies or resources
- Site Assessment

**OS Maps** assist in identifying:

- Topography
- Visual Receptors (Rights of Way, roads, dwellings, viewpoints)
- Buildings, landmarks and features

**Aerial photographs** assist in identifying:

- Land use
- Field and hedgerow patterns and shapes

**Other relevant studies or resources:**

Information on any local designations (including the Natural and Historic Environment) should also be recorded. This can be found on the Lle portal and the Archwilio website, together with any characterisation studies for Registered Historic landscapes. Where the proposal is within a Local Search Area the Landscape Sensitivity Study should be referred to.

**Site Assessment** should be used to confirm what has been identified on maps and aerial photographs and should record:

- Skylines
- View lines
- Local materials and textures
- Local vernacular
- Colours
- Hedgerows and trees
- Existing buildings and uses
- Noise levels, sense of place, remoteness, tranquillity and wildness
- Landmarks

## 8. How to use LANDMAP to identify landscape characteristics and qualities

8.1 As set out in paragraph 4.7, LANDMAP is an all-Wales landscape resource where landscape characteristics, qualities and influences on the landscape are recorded, evaluated and collated into a nationally consistent Geographical Information System based data set.

8.2 LANDMAP comprises of five spatial datasets (layers), each dataset is geographically split into what are called ‘Aspect Areas’ these are polygons that are identified by their own landscape characteristics and qualities, which are different to those of adjacent areas. For each aspect area that has been identified, data is collected and a survey report completed. These reports describe and document the landscape character, qualities and features, whilst also giving management recommendations and an overall evaluation score. The evaluation score allows comparisons between areas and highlights areas of varying importance.

### The five spatial datasets that make up LANDMAP:

- **Visual and Sensory**
- **Cultural Landscape**
- **Landscape Habitat**
- **Historic Landscape**
- **Geological Landscape**

8.3 All aspect areas have a single overall evaluation score. The overall score ranges from the local to the international scale of importance. The overall evaluation score for each aspect area is derived from the individual scores given to the specific evaluation criteria for that LANDMAP layer, see below:

<b>LANDMAP Layer</b>	<b>Specific Evaluation Criteria</b>
Visual and Sensory	Scenic quality, Integrity, Character, Rarity
Cultural Landscape*	Recognition, Period, Rarity, Documentation, Group Value, Survival, Vulnerability, Complexity, Potential
Landscape Habitat	Priority habitats, Significance, Opportunity, Expansion rates, Sensitivity, Connectivity/cohesion, Habitat evaluation, Importance for key species
Historic Landscape	Integrity, Survival, Condition, Rarity, Potential
Geological Landscape	Research value, Educational value, Historical Value, Rarity/uniqueness, Classic Example

\* The overall evaluation score for the cultural landscape aspect area is derived from a general assessment that considers all the specific evaluation criteria. Each of the individual criterion do not have a single overall evaluation score like in the other LANDMAP layers.

Overall evaluation score*	Definition of importance to the LANDMAP layer
Outstanding	International or national
High	Regional or county
Moderate	Local
Low	Little or no importance

\* In some instances the value may have been recorded as unassessed.

8.4 The following paragraphs consider how the data and evaluations for each of the five LANDMAP layers can be used to help identify the valued characteristics and qualities of the Powys landscape. This data can assist when it comes to identifying features and characteristics that should be retained and/or integrated within the design process of the development proposal. It should also be used to assess the impact a specific development proposal may have on the landscape. For more detailed information regarding the methodology used to collate and assess the LANDMAP data refer to the NRW website at <https://naturalresources.wales/guidance-and-advice/business-sectors/planning-and-development/evidence-to-inform-development-planning/landmap-the-welsh-landscape-baseline/?lang=en>.

Some of the Aspect Areas cover a large area, particularly when compared to the site of the development proposal. It is therefore important to recognise that not all of the characteristics and features identified in LANDMAP will be present or impacted upon. Paragraph 6.4 of this guidance requires applicants to undertake a **site analysis baseline assessment** to identify the landscape features and characteristics within the site and those wider afield that are affected by the development proposal. The **site analysis baseline assessment** can then be cross referenced with the LANDMAP data to identify the value of those characteristics and features recorded within the assessment, and to discount those characteristics and features identified in LANDMAP that are irrelevant to the site.

- **Visual and Sensory**

8.5 The Visual and Sensory LANDMAP layer identifies those landscape qualities that are perceived through the senses. It deals with the physical attributes of landform and land cover, as well as their visual patterns of distribution and sensory characteristics, and the relationships between these in a particular area.

8.6 Each visual and sensory aspect area has its own survey report which provides a structured summary of the key characteristics with an evaluation of its significance and a summary of its management requirements. When identifying the characteristics and values for an area the survey report should be referred to. The information is gathered within the survey report from the point of view of an observer within the aspect area considering both visual and other sensory information.

8.7 The survey report for the visual and sensory aspect layer consist of 53 questions that start with a description of the area. The description identifies the broad physical form and elements which make up the features of the landscape including the topographic form, land cover pattern, settlement pattern and boundary type. The description continues with

questions relating to the aesthetic factors which include pattern, colour, textures and scale. Other factors then considered include the amount of night time light pollution, use of materials, attractive/detractive views, perceptual and other sensory qualities (noise, smell, tranquillity, remoteness) and the sense of place/local distinctiveness. Within the survey report is a summary description which brings together a description of the most important qualities of the aspect area. The description of the area should be used to identify features that contribute to the character of the area, this will include identifying features which may be impacted upon and identifying features that can be taken into consideration in the design process so that the development proposal can be successfully integrated within the landscape.

8.8 Within the report is an assessment of the visual and sensory landscape value and qualities that are based on the specific evaluation criteria which have been scored as Outstanding, High, Moderate and Low.

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Guidance outlined in LANDMAP Methodology Visual and Sensory (2016)</b>
Scenic Quality	The extent to which the area has scenes which are of a picturesque quality, demonstrating aesthetically pleasing elements in composition.
Integrity	The extent to which the area is in good condition, with consistent character throughout, and is generally unspoilt by large-scale, visually intrusive or other inharmonious development.
Character	The extent to which a distinct and recognisable pattern of elements, features and qualities occurs within the Aspect Area, to give a clear sense of place.
Rarity	The extent to which the area's visual and sensory character and/or features or qualities are rare/representative locally, regionally or nationally/internationally.
<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>The overall evaluation is based on an assessment of the four evaluation criteria above.</b>

8.9 Rather than just looking at the overall evaluation for an aspect area to assess landscape quality it is useful to understand what gives the landscape its qualities. This should be done by referring to the justification given for the overall evaluation together with the values for each of the evaluation criteria.

8.10 There may be instances where the scoring for one or more of the evaluation criteria is higher than the overall evaluation, this will need to be taken into consideration when looking at the sensitivity of the landscape to the specific development proposal.

8.11 Within each survey report there is useful section on recommendations that identifies key qualities and elements of the landscape that should be conserved and enhanced, it would be a useful exercise to consider how the development proposal fits with these

recommendations, and where possible to incorporate the recommendations within the scheme.

8.12 When considering the visual and sensory aspect of the landscape care and attention should be paid to all stages and aspects of the development proposal. Factors such as increased traffic movements, and external lighting may have a detrimental effect on the tranquillity and remoteness of the landscape.

8.13 As stated in paragraph 8.6 the evaluation of this layer is subjective to the individual assessor completing the survey report in the field. It is important therefore that any data used from this layer is verified within the **site baseline** assessment and during planning officer site visits, particularly when giving reference to the overall evaluation criteria. Further work is required when assessing the visual effects of a proposal to identify and assess the impact on visual receptors, this should form part of the site analysis rather than come from LANDMAP.

- ***Cultural Landscape***

8.14 In LANDMAP, culture is generally taken to include any kind of human activity that can be related to today's landscape. This includes noticeable expressions of human activity in the landscape, such as the choice of vernacular building materials. It also includes intangible literary or artistic expressions such as associations with folklore and poetry, or the representation of landscape in art or film.

8.15 The Cultural Landscape layer identifies and records where the landscape has been, or is being, shaped by a particular cultural activity or process, or where it has been directly represented, depicted or described, it identifies cultural patterns that are keeping the landscape alive today, rather than what sustained it in the past. This is defined in LANDMAP as the contemporary cultural essence based on an evident link between human culture and landscape.

8.16 As stated in LANDMAP Guidance Note 4: LANDMAP and the Cultural Landscape (2016) the intention in the Cultural Landscape layer is to focus on mapping the landscape where it has been, or is being;

- visibly and recognisably fashioned by a particular cultural activity or process (cultural influences) or
- directly represented, depicted or described in art, literature, folklore, or similar (cultural associations)

8.17 As with the visual and sensory layer the survey report provides a structured summary of the key characteristics of each identified aspect area, together with an evaluation of its significance. This enables the valued characteristics and qualities of the Powys cultural landscape to be identified.

8.18 The information detailed in the survey report provides an opportunity to link and work with the cultural landscape in order to design developments that can be made more 'fit for place' and better attuned to the 'sense of place'. This will assist in fulfilling the requirements

of LDP Policy DM13 (2) whereby development proposals are required to contribute towards the preservation of local distinctiveness and sense of place.

8.19 When viewing the survey report attention should be paid to the recommendations to determine whether the development proposal is in alignment with the recommendations for the aspect area, it may also help to identify issues which could be proactively addressed at an early stage in the design process.

8.20 Although the Cultural layer does have evaluation criteria the overall evaluation score for the cultural landscape aspect area is derived from a general assessment that considers all the characteristics and qualities, rather than a single overall evaluation score for each evaluation criteria. This can be used to identify the quality value of the Cultural landscape.

- ***Landscape Habitat***

8.21 This LANDMAP layer focuses on recording landscape habitat information at a scale that is broadly comparable to other evaluated Aspects from the other LANDMAP layers. The incorporation of the Landscape Habitat layer within the assessment of development proposals does not replicate or take away the requirement for development proposals to be in accordance with LDP Policy DM2 – The Natural Environment. Further information on how development proposals need to take the Natural Environment into consideration and where to access local data can be found in the [Biodiversity and Geodiversity SPG \(2018\)](#).

8.22 The Landscape Habitats information collected via LANDMAP is collected at various levels, from the very broad to the relatively small scale. The benefits of including this layer within landscape assessments is that it helps to identify features from the natural environment that contribute to landscape character and quality, at the same time looking at habitat information as part of the design process will enable consideration to be given to green infrastructure within the development.

8.23 Policy DM2 requires development proposals to demonstrate how they protect, positively manage and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity interests including improving the resilience of biodiversity through the enhanced connectivity of habitats within, and beyond the site. Identifying where the development proposals sits within the wider landscape habitat will improve the success and quality of any green infrastructure proposals incorporated within the scheme as part of the wider picture.

8.24 The survey report for the landscape habitats aspect layer consist of 49 questions that start with a description of the area. The description includes details on soil types, phase 1 habitat type, protected sites, habitats and species and land management activities. Within the survey report is a summary of the key features that define the aspect area's biodiversity character. The description of the area should be used to identify features that contribute to the character of the area, this will include identifying features which may be impacted upon and identifying features that can be taken into consideration in the design process so that the development proposal can be successfully integrated within the landscape. The characteristics and qualities identified from the survey report can be supplemented with any information identified in detailed ecological reports

8.25 Within the report is an assessment of the landscape habitats value and qualities that are based on the specific evaluation criteria which have been scored as Outstanding, High, Moderate and Low.

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Guidance outlined in LANDMAP Methodology Landscape Habitats 2016</b>
Priority habitats	In particular, those most characteristic of the area, rarity in national context. Priority Habitats are explained in terms of those habitats most characteristic of the area, although where there are significant areas of high quality habitats for example SSSI's these are described:
Significance	This addresses the issue of whether the Aspect Area contains a high % of national resource e.g. Is a habitat confined to the area or does the area have a high proportion of the national resource?
Opportunity	Opportunity is scored according to how easy it would be to enhance any existing moderate, high or outstanding habitats
Expansion rates	Increases in the semi-natural and valuable habitats and species assessed over the last 25 years
Sensitivity	How sensitive the area is to changes in land management and other practices that could adversely affect the biodiversity.
Connectivity / cohesion	Describes how well the Aspect Area functions in terms of interconnection networks and corridors for native habitats, which will allow for species movements and protect and enhance biodiversity.
Habitat evaluation	Based on the six evaluation criteria above
Importance for key species	Is the area known to be of special significance for one or more important species?
<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>An overall assessment of how important the area is for both Habitats and species based on the evaluation criteria above.</b>

8.26 Rather than just looking at the overall evaluation for an aspect area to assess landscape quality it is useful to understand what gives the landscape its qualities. This should be done by referring to the justification given for the overall evaluation together with the values for each of the evaluation criteria.

8.27 There may be instances where the scoring for one or more of the evaluation criteria is higher than the overall evaluation, this will need to be taken into consideration when looking at the sensitivity of the landscape to the specific development proposal.

8.28 The information in LANDMAP does not substitute the need for an ecological survey where required. The information from an ecological survey may supplement the LANDMAP

information to identify landscape habitat characteristics and qualities however the information in LANDMAP should not be used in the ecological survey – this needs to be carried out a local level.

- **Historic Landscape**

8.29 This LANDMAP layer focuses on how archaeological and historical sites relate to each other and the surrounding landscape, identifying landscape qualities that depend upon key historic land uses, patterns and features and are structurally prominent and contribute to the overall historic character of the present landscape. They reflect the beliefs, attitudes, traditions and values of the past, which include the physical remains of all aspects of human activities (above and below ground) and our interpretation and understanding of them.

8.30 The Historic Landscape layer only identifies historic land uses, patterns and features that are structurally prominent and contribute to the overall historic character of the present landscape. Archaeological sites and monuments that do not meet this criterion but that are considered important are protected through other mechanisms and will still need to be considered as part of the development proposal but won't feature as part of the landscape assessment. Consequently, the dominant characteristic selected for a particular Aspect Area might not necessarily be of any great antiquity, although the area itself might contain several archaeological sites. It is worth noting that LANDMAP is concerned with the identification of patterns and features within the current landscape, and with their subsequent management. It is not a landscape history, nor is it an historic landscape characterisation exercise.

8.31 The survey report for the historic landscape aspect layer consists of 43 questions that start with a description of the area. The description identifies any traditional boundary types, any significant archaeological interest, the dominant chronological period and any historic environment designations. Further down the report is a summary description that highlights key patterns and elements. Together these components can be used to identify features that contribute to the historic landscape character of the area. This can then be used to identify any features which the development proposal may impact upon and to identify any characteristics that can be taken into consideration in the design process so that the development proposal can be successfully integrated within the landscape.

8.32 Within the report is an assessment of the Historic Landscape value and qualities that are based on the specific evaluation criteria which have been scored as Outstanding, High, Moderate and Low.

Evaluation Criteria	Guidance outlined in LANDMAP Methodology Historic Landscape 2016
Integrity	The integrity of an Aspect Area relates to its overall 'completeness'. This is assessed by the visibility and legibility of the components or elements of the Dominant Landscape Pattern or the Historic Landscape Detail.

Survival	This relates to the degree of survival of individual elements and components present in the Aspect Area.
Condition	This relates to the condition of those elements and components that survive in the Aspect Area, as a measure of overall condition.
Rarity	This relates to the rarity of the Aspect Area.
Potential	This relates to the potential within the landscape for future study and analysis and for the potential of elements that might be, or already are, developed as a public educational and recreational amenity.
<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>An overall assessment of how important the area is based on the evaluation criteria above.</b>

8.33 Rather than just looking at the overall evaluation for an aspect area to assess landscape quality it is useful to understand what gives the landscape its qualities. This should be done by referring to the justification given for the overall evaluation together with the values for each of the evaluation criteria.

8.34 There may be instances where the scoring for one or more of the evaluation criteria is higher than the overall evaluation, this will need to be taken into consideration when looking at the sensitivity of the landscape to the specific development proposal.

8.35 Development proposals effecting historic environment designations (as listed in LDP Policy SP7 (2)) will need to consider the impact of such proposals separately to the LANDMAP assessment process, this includes development proposals which may have an impact on a Registered Historic Landscape, the setting of a Listed Building or views in and/or out of a conservation area.

- ***Geological Landscape***

8.36 The Geological Landscape LANDMAP layer considers the physical, primarily geological, influences that have shaped the contemporary landscape and identifies those landscape qualities which are linked to the control or influence exerted by bedrock, surface processes, landforms and hydrology. The layer therefore considers the landscapes geological history by identifying distinct components of the landscape where geology and topography are intimately linked. Such areas are distinguished as separate Aspect Areas.

8.37 Aspect Areas identified in the Geological Landscape layer are defined and evaluated on the basis of their intrinsic character, typically either:

- The topographic influence of the bedrock geology and its surface expression at outcrop, or
- The character of the sediments present and the processes of their deposition as expressed by the topography and landforms created by such processes.

8.38 Only in cases where the geology is of high scientific value (and conservation priorities may therefore be distinct from adjacent areas), or where geological formations or

deposits have a significant effect on land use (such as by determining soils rather than distinctive landforms) are the Aspect Area boundaries more geological than topographical.

8.39 The survey report for the geological landscape aspect layer consists of 37 questions that start with a description of the area. The description identifies the geographical and topographical character, significant contributors to the geological character, active geological and geomorphical components, any mineral extraction details and any national / local designated sites for geodiversity interest. These components can be used to identify features that contribute to the geological landscape character of the area. Attention should also be paid to the recommendations within the survey report to determine whether the development proposal is in alignment with the recommendations for the aspect area, it may also help to identify issues which could be proactively addressed at an early stage in the design process.

8.40 Within the report is an assessment of the geological landscape value and qualities that are based on the specific evaluation criteria which have been scored as Outstanding, High, Moderate and Low.

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>
Research Value
Educational Value
Historical Value
Rarity / Uniqueness
Classic Example
<b>Overall Evaluation - An overall assessment of how important the area is based on the evaluation criteria above.</b>

8.41 Rather than just looking at the overall evaluation for an aspect area to assess the geological landscape quality it is useful to understand what gives the landscape its qualities. This should be done by referring to the justification given for the overall evaluation together with the values for each of the evaluation criteria.

8.42 There may be instances where the scoring for one or more of the evaluation criteria is higher than the overall evaluation, this will need to be taken into consideration when looking at the sensitivity of the landscape to the specific development proposal.

8.43 Development proposals effecting geodiversity designations (as listed in LDP Policy DM2) will need to consider the impact of such proposals separately to the LANDMAP assessment process.

**Section 9. Figure 2: Process Chart for Development Proposals that require a LVIA as part of an EIA**

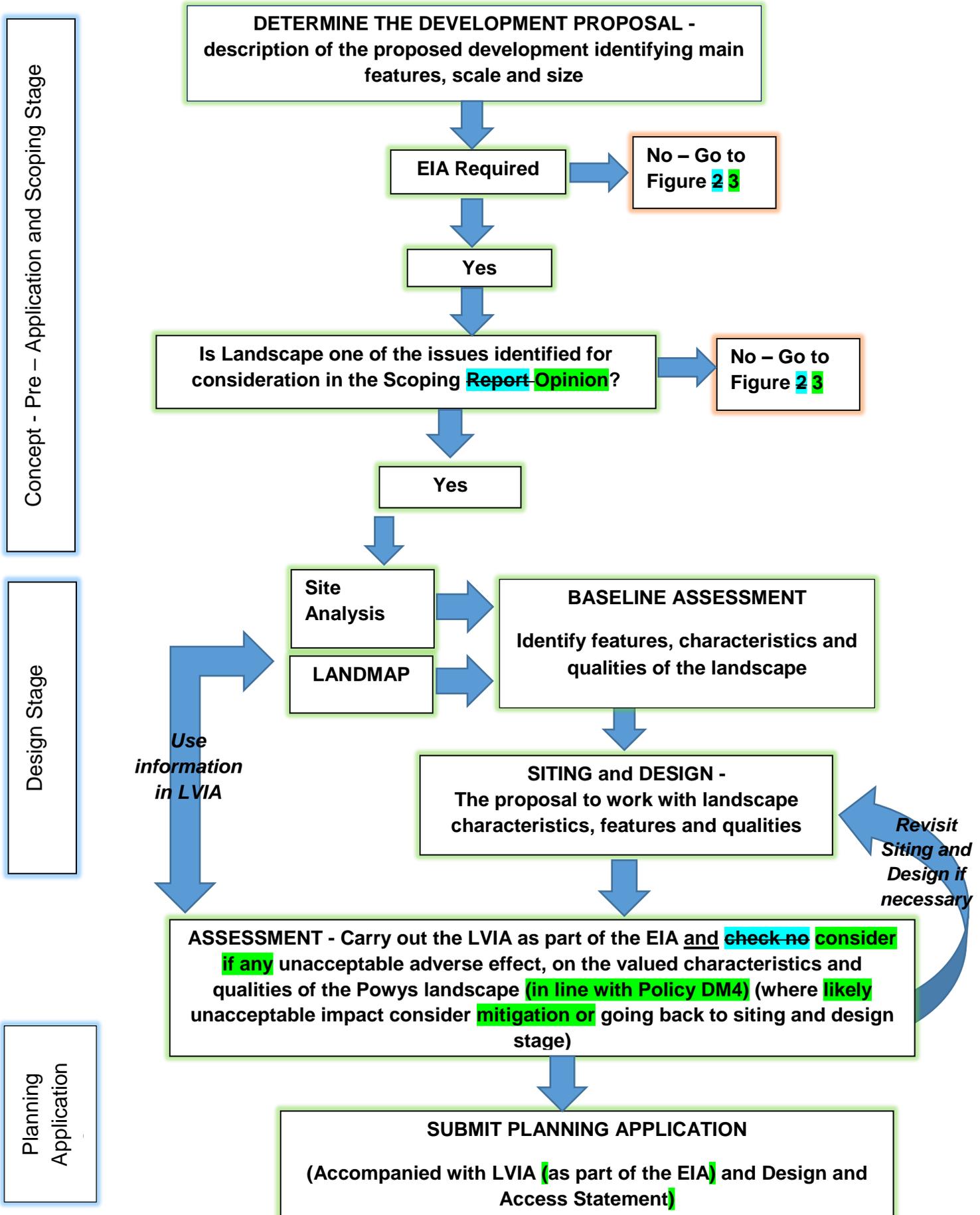
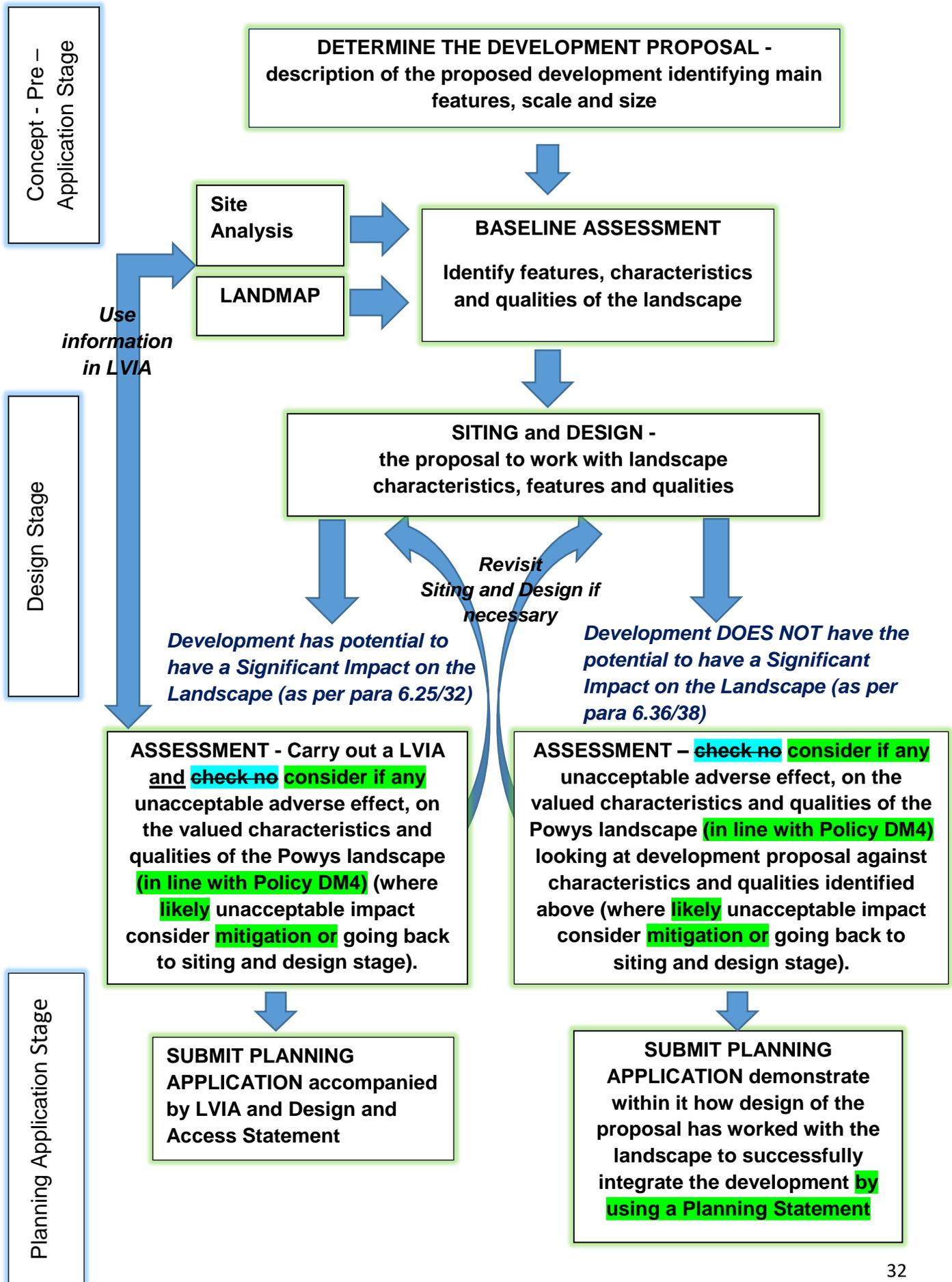


Figure 3: Process Chart for Other Development Proposals



## 10. Monitoring and Review

10.1 The implementation of the LDP's landscape policy, through developments permitted and delivered under the LDP, will be monitored annually and reported in the LDP's Annual Monitoring Report (submitted to the Welsh Government by 31<sup>st</sup> October each year following adoption of the LDP). The process will monitor developments permitted that may have an unacceptable adverse impact on the valued characteristics and qualities of the landscape throughout Powys **in line with Policy SP7, this will be through AMR43 in the Annual Monitoring Framework.** The number of developments that could have a significant landscape or visual impact permitted without an accompanying LVIA will also be monitored **as required through AMR53.**

10.2 Consideration will need to be given as to the quality of LVIA's submitted this will be done through the use of landscape professionals, appeal decisions and comparing the LVIA with the completed development.

10.3 This SPG will be kept under review and, where necessary, updated to take into account changes in any relevant policy, guidance, evidence of circumstances, and in response to relevant issues raised with the SPG in practice.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

Definition	Meaning
<b>Aspect Area</b>	A discrete geographic area of relatively homogenous character identified within a particular LANDMAP layer. In GIS it is represented as a single polygon. LANDMAP divides the landscape into discrete geographical areas known as aspect areas (polygons in GIS). Each aspect area is identified by its own landscape characteristics and qualities, these will be different from adjacent aspect areas
<b>Baseline Assessment</b>	Work done to describe the characteristics, features and qualities of the site. This should include the site analysis and LANDMAP assessment.
<b>Character</b>	Distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that make one landscape different from another.
<b>Design and Access Statement</b>	A Design and Access Statement communicates what is proposed and demonstrates the design process that has been undertaken to reach the final proposal. Should include details from the Baseline Assessment and either the LVIA or the Informal Assessment.
<b>Feature</b>	Distinctive or prominent part which makes up the landscape such as trees, hedges and buildings. In the context of development proposals a 'feature' may also be a particular aspect of the project.
<b>Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC)</b>	The identification and interpretation of the historic dimension of the present day landscape or townscape within a given area.
<b>Informal Assessment</b>	An informal assessment looking looks at how the development proposal impacts on the characteristics, features and qualities identified in the baseline assessment.
<b>LANDMAP</b>	A GIS based landscape resource where landscape characteristics, qualities and influences on the landscape are recorded and evaluated into a nationally consistent data set.
<b>Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment/ Appraisal (LVIA)</b>	A tool used to identify and assess the likely significance of the effects of change resulting from development both on the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).
<b>Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment/ Appraisal (LVIA)</b>	A tool used to identify and assess the likely significance of the effects of change resulting from development both on the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity.
<b>Landscape Value</b>	The relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society.
<b>Planning Statement</b>	A statement to be submitted alongside the planning application (for minor developments) to demonstrate how the development proposal has been sited and designed into the landscape. Includes components from baseline assessment and informal assessment.
<b>Qualities</b>	Aesthetic or perceptual attributes of the landscape such as those relating to scale or tranquillity.

<b>Site Analysis</b>	A site assessment accompanied with information from Ordnance Survey maps, aerial photographs and any other local studies or resources to inform the baseline assessment.
<b>Scoping</b>	The process of identifying the issues to be addressed by an EIA.
<b>Townscape</b>	The character and composition of the built environment, including the buildings and the relationships between them and the relationship between buildings and open spaces, <b>including green spaces</b> .
<b>Tranquillity</b>	A state of calm and quietude associated with peace, considered to be a significant asset of landscape.
<b>Visual Receptors</b>	<b>Effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people. Individuals and/or defined groups of people who have the potential to be affected by changes in views or visual amenity at different places.</b>
<b>Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)</b>	The area of land within which the development <b>theoretically</b> may be seen.

## Appendix 1. Key Things to Consider for a Sample of Development Types

### *Agricultural Buildings*

**Cumulative impact** – Needs to be considered, particularly where the building forms part of a larger complex of other agricultural buildings. One unit may be capable of being 'absorbed' into the landscape but three or four could tip the balance of acceptability so cumulative assessment is essential.

**Viewpoints** - A modern farm building by nature of its scale and materials can act as a prominent feature in the landscape. It is important therefore, that views into and out of the site are accounted for. Approaching a building obliquely, having perhaps seen it earlier from a distance, is a gentler way to approach a large building.

**Skylines** - New buildings should respond to contours and the natural form of the land by fitting into folds or valley bottoms and avoiding platforms or exposed skylines or ridges.

**Profile** - Where possible, buildings should have a low profile. Overhanging eaves and big roofs can help settle a building into the landscape, create shadows and give shape to a building.

**Colour** - Roofs should be dark wherever practical, with a non-reflective finish, taking their cue from the landscape in terms of colour and texture. Pale or white buildings reflect more sunlight and should be avoided as they are more conspicuous. (If a building has to be light coloured to reduce internal temperatures, then careful siting and planting will be essential). Generally, colours should be “earth colours” such as browns, greys or greens to reflect local materials e.g. red bricks with a rustic finish. ~~Green colours should be used with care since they may clash with the changing greens in the landscape.~~ Colours should preferably be matt, avoiding high-gloss paints.

**Materials** – Where appropriate materials should reflect the textures and vernacular of neighbouring buildings. Using a combination of materials such as stonework, wood and coloured steel panelling can help to reduce apparent scale in the landscape.

**Grouping** - When seen from a distance it is not the siting of a building which is apparent but its scale in relation to adjacent buildings. Tight clusters of buildings generally look more settled in the landscape than scattered ones. ~~For this reason, New buildings may be best sited as should form part of a group rather than standing in isolation, however the information collected in the baseline assessment should be used to inform siting so that it responds to context.~~ In the case of an existing group of traditional or historic buildings, it may sometimes be best to site a new building of modern design away from the group to avoid visual conflict.

**Planting** - The impact of new buildings can be softened by careful landscaping reflecting the local landscape character. Planting around modern farm buildings with appropriate native species of assured British origin, reflecting the existing pattern of woodlands, copses and hedgerows can create new landscape features and wildlife habitats.

In some instances the siting of new buildings adjacent to existing woods or shelter belts may provide valuable screening.

***Dwellings - including replacement dwellings, agricultural workers and affordable housing exception sites.***

**Siting** - Position in the context of the landscape topography. Work with the contours of the site. Avoid mounding up to form a flat site as this makes the house more conspicuous in the landscape.

Consider how to orientate the building to obtain an outlook and reduce landscape impacts. Often the positioning of older houses in the surrounding countryside provide information as to how these aspects have been dealt within the past, and the degree to which they have been successful.

**Scale** - Scale is a key consideration in the design of a new house in the countryside; a building's size must suit the landscape in which it sits, its surroundings and the house type.

**Form** - Dwellings should generally have a horizontal emphasis and generally be low rise, however it is important that the design reflects the local context where appropriate.

**Materials** - Materials and colours should be simple and reflect the landscape and geology around them. Account must be taken of the materials and colours of traditional buildings in the area where they contribute to local character.

**Ancillary Buildings and Garages** - Ancillary buildings such as workshops and sheds should be located as close to the main dwellings as possible (proposals will need to refer to LDP Policy DM7).

If garages are to be provided they must be co-ordinated with the whole scheme, using similar design and materials.

**Boundaries** – Existing vegetation such as hedgerows and trees should be retained. New boundaries should be hedgerows made up of native species avoiding painted fences.

**Lighting** - External lighting should be directed downwards, shielded so that light does not spill beyond the area needing to be lit and make effective use of sensor switches. Permanent lighting, e.g. floodlit entrances, driveways and buildings, is discouraged.

**Access** - The relationship of the site to the proposed access road should be considered. There should be an avoidance of the need to create long lengths of new road.

***Residential Conversions***

There are many non-residential buildings within the Powys LDP area that are capable of conversion to residential use. These include buildings associated with agriculture such as outbuildings and barns and buildings built for religious purposes such as churches or chapels.

As a general rule, buildings constructed for agricultural purposes such as farm steadings are strong, unfussy structures. Any conversion should make use of existing openings wherever possible so that new windows and doors are kept to a minimum. All windows

and doors should be simple and sturdily built, and existing ventilator slots, distinctive detailing and any important ancillary structures retained.

Extensions or new build should only be contemplated where they reinforce the architectural integrity of the existing building by, for example, infilling inappropriate gaps in a group or rounding off a group. Projections above the existing roof ridgeline, raising ridges or eaves should be avoided and introducing porches and new dormers are only appropriate where the applicant has demonstrated that such changes are sympathetically designed and that no reasonable alternative exists to achieve the conversion. Bay windows along with conservatories are difficult to successfully integrate because they have no previous association with agricultural buildings.

### **Holiday Park Proposals**

**Layout** - Preference should be given to having an informal layout of caravan units / glamping pods / log cabins etc. The site should be characterised by the use of small informal clusters separated by appropriate landscaping and the avoidance of 'regimented' rows of units that typically results in a detrimental visual impact.

**Colours and Materials** - The use of muted colours and natural materials, that reflect the local context, should be used as appropriate for both caravan units / glamping pods / log cabins etc. and ancillary buildings. Where possible consideration should be given to the conversion of any existing buildings within the site particularly where ancillary buildings are required.

**Scale** - The scale of the development must respect its surrounding environment.

**Siting** - Proposals should be sited in unobtrusive locations, and avoid skylines, prominent hillsides or exposed sites. The development should respect the topography of the site and existing site levels should be retained wherever possible.

**Boundaries** – Existing vegetation such as hedgerows and trees should be retained. New boundaries should be hedgerows made up of native species avoiding fences.

**Lighting** - External lighting should be directed downwards, shielded so that light does not 'spill' beyond the area needing to be lit and make effective use of sensor switches.

**Access** - The relationship of the site to the proposed access road should be considered. There should be an avoidance of the need to create long lengths of straight new road, existing roads/tracks should be utilised wherever possible. Consider how any proposed roads/tracks can fit in with the landscape character and complement the pattern of existing tracks and road networks.

**Cumulative impact** – Consider how the scheme fits with other similar proposals in the area.

### **Solar Energy Proposals**

**Local Search Areas** - All proposals for solar development within a Local Search Area (identified in the Powys LDP) should consult with the Landscape Sensitivity Study for Solar Farm Development (Enplan, 2017).

**Landform and Topography** - The most suitable sites are likely to be on flat landforms or on lower slopes/within folds in gently undulating lowland landscapes rather than on prominent upland landforms and highly visible slopes.

Landscapes with a sense of enclosure (e.g. provided by woodland or high hedges) are better suited to solar PV development than open and unenclosed landscapes.

**Views and Screening** - Avoid locating solar PV development where it would be directly overlooked by important or sensitive viewpoints. Consider views from local viewpoints and popular routes (including Rights of Way). For sites that are overlooked by high ground, particularly within 1-2km, the design of the site and how it integrates with the landscape will be particularly important.

**Layout** - Ensure the layout and design of schemes follows the contours and enclosure patterns of the landscape to integrate them into the landscape - avoid siting panels that are remote from the rest of the group.

When designing the layout of panels, consider the appearance of the development as viewed from the 'backs' and 'sides' (where frames will be more visible) as well as from the 'front'.

Consider locating solar arrays in close proximity to existing farm buildings to encourage a clustering of built development and reduce the need for more isolated development.

**Scale** - Ensure the area of development is in scale with the landscape in which it lies.

**Landcover** - Maintain field pattern and diversity to avoid a dominating character in the locality and to ensure the development is compatible with the landscape scale (areas with smaller scale fields are likely to be more appropriate for smaller developments).

**Design** - Ensure the height of panels and use of screening are designed to make the development as unobtrusive as possible. Wherever it is possible to do so, panels should be lower than any hedgerows on the site.

Aim to work with the natural topography and avoid the need for large scale earthworks, banks and bunds which can highlight the development rather than screening it.

**Ancillary Infrastructure** - Utilise existing tracks wherever possible. Consider how any proposed tracks can fit in with the landscape character and complement the pattern of existing tracks and road networks. Any proposed tracks should seek to avoid steep slopes and minimise the need for cut and fill operations. **The roofs of ancillary buildings should be dark wherever practical, with a non-reflective finish, taking their cue from the landscape in terms of colour and texture. Pale or white buildings reflect more sunlight and should be avoided as they are more conspicuous. Generally, the colours of ancillary buildings should be "earth colours" such as browns, greys or greens to reflect local materials.**

**Cumulative Impact** - When siting a solar PV development, it is important to consider how the scheme fits with other operational and consented schemes to minimise cumulative impacts.

Applicants should aim for a similarity of design between schemes that fall in the same type of landscape to maintain a simple composition and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response.

### *Wind Energy Proposals*

**Skylines** - ~~it is particularly important that~~ where practical a wind farm should seek to reduce impact on ~~avoids~~ skylines, ~~if this is not possible proposals should be~~ ~~or is~~ sited and designed to relate to them. A key challenge is that the skyline will vary in relation to the position and elevation of a viewer. Nevertheless, the design of a wind farm from key viewpoints and routes should ensure it does not detract from the character of a distinctive skyline.

The landform may provide a design opportunity to limit visibility of wind turbines and site infrastructure. For example, where a wind farm is to be sited on a hill ridge, turbines may be set back from the edge and placed to limit visibility from below.

**Scale** - Landscape scale and openness are particularly important characteristics in relation to wind turbines because large wind turbines can easily seem to dominate some landscapes. Does the proposed turbine(s) relate well to and not dominate the key landscape and visual characteristics identified in the baseline assessment?

**Design** – Consider whether the proposed turbine/s is/are the most appropriate in form, appearance and blade movement for the proposed site, this should include considering how the turbine relates to other neighbouring turbines and the characteristics and features identified in the baseline assessment.

**Focal Features** - Wind farms, because of their very nature and typical location within open landscapes, often become major focal points. Their interaction with the existing hierarchy of foci needs to be considered in their siting and design, in order to minimise visual conflicts or avoid compromising the value of existing foci.

**Cumulative Impact** - A key factor determining the cumulative impact of wind farms is the distinct identity of each group. This relates to their degree of separation and similarity of design. This applies whether they are part of a single development, a wind farm extension, or a separate wind farm in a wider group. A wind farm, if located close to another of similar design, may appear as an extension; however, if it appears at least slightly separate and of different design, it may conflict with the other development. In these cases, if a landscape is unable to accommodate the scale of a combined development, wind farm groups should appear clearly separate. It is important to achieve a balance between wind farms and the undeveloped open landscape retained between them. Adequate separation will help to maintain wind farms as distinct entities. The separation distance required will vary according to the landscape characteristics.

**Turbine Layout / Array** - In a wind farm, turbines can be arranged in many different layouts. The layout should relate to the specific characteristics of the landscape - this means that the most suitable layout for every development will be different.

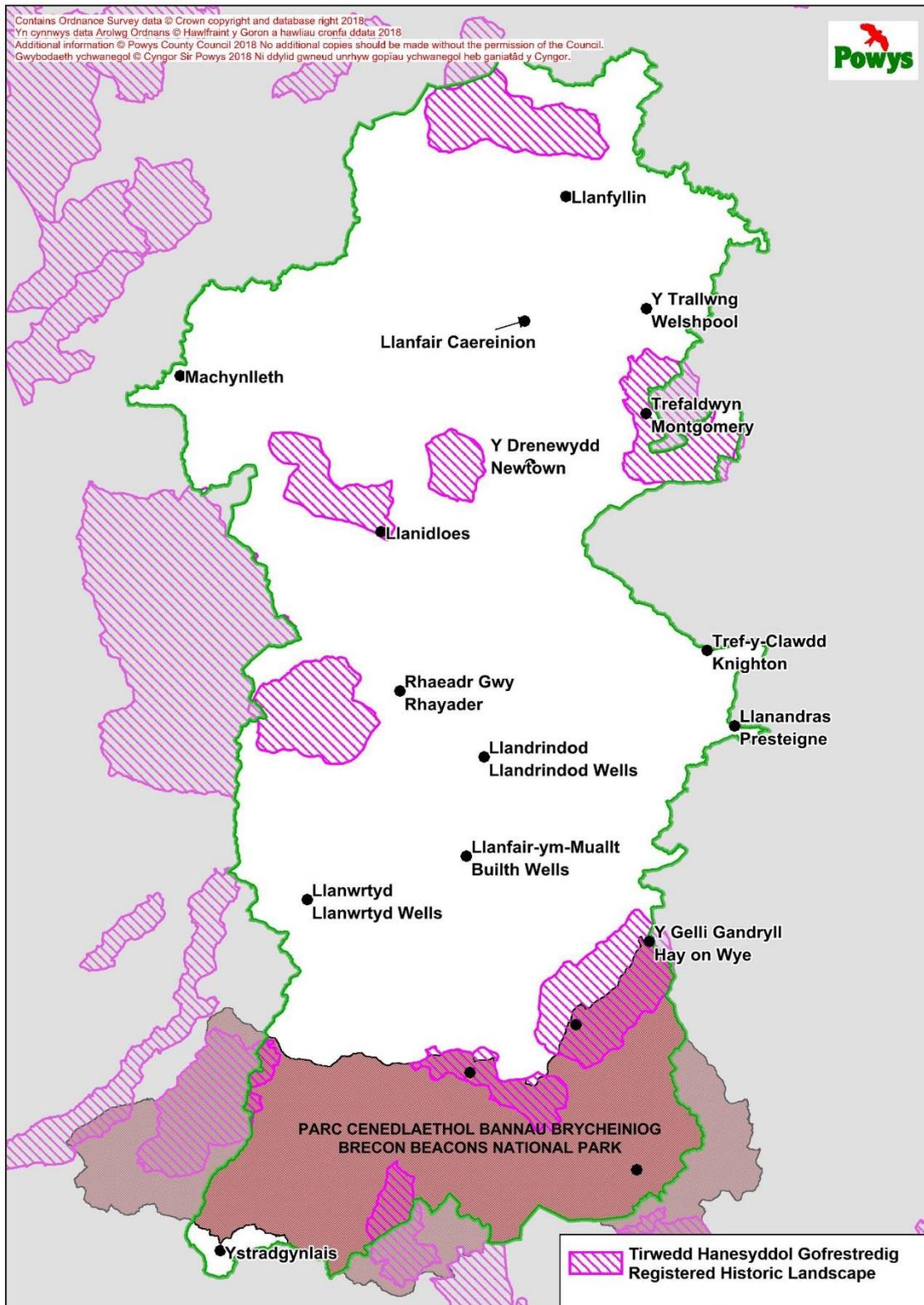
For small scale proposals, the potential for the design of groups of small turbines to reflect the characteristic patterns in the landscape should be exploited whenever possible.

Turbines could be arranged in a straight line where a geometric field pattern or straight road edge exists, or in an informal more scattered group or sweeping line adjacent to an indented woodland edge.

**Ancillary Infrastructure** - Utilise existing tracks wherever possible. Consider how any proposed tracks can fit in with the landscape character and complement the pattern of existing tracks and road networks. Any proposed tracks and turbine bases should seek to avoid steep slopes and minimise the need for cut and fill operations.

Ancillary features, such as buildings, walls and fences should use materials characteristic of the locality and be appropriate to the scale and character of the landscape. Where possible the visibility of ancillary features should be minimised.

## Appendix 2 – Registered Historic Landscapes Map



### Appendix 3 – National Landscape Character Areas Map

