

Appendix 12.8: Baseline Visual Survey: Summary Table

Viewpoint Area, Potential Visual Receptor, Distance to site & Photographic Viewpoints	Potential Visual Receptor - type and description	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Description of the existing view
01 - Site Environs			
<p>Fifth Avenue & Ninth Avenue (Adjacent to site)</p> <p>Photographic Viewpoint 1, Figure 12.8</p>	<p>Roads – Fifth Avenue runs along the south edge of the site and provides access within Hirwaun Industrial Estate. There is dense semi-mature planting to both sides over much of its length, except alongside the site. Ninth Avenue provides access to existing industrial units east of the site. There is a maturing native tree and shrub buffer approx. 5-8m wide along the south-western edge of Ninth Avenue and on the corner with Fifth Avenue.</p>	Low	The vegetated edge restricts views outwards over most of the length of the Fifth Avenue. There are direct views into the site, due to a break in the vegetative screen. Views across the site encompass the lower slopes of the Brecon Beacon hills. Views into site from Ninth Avenue are obscured by the existing landscape buffer, except in gap at turning area at northern end.
<p>Fifth Avenue House (hotel) (approx.200m)</p> <p>Photographic Viewpoint 3, Figure 12.9</p>	<p>Commercial - New-build property set on elevated ground on the south side of Fifth Avenue.</p>	Medium	The property is set back from the road on raised ground, and views from it towards the site are oblique and likely to be obscured by existing dense vegetation along the road. From the bottom of the entrance drive the site can be identified by the break in vegetation along Fifth Avenue.
<p>Halt Road (min. 700m)</p>	<p>Road – Links Rhigos Road with Fifth Avenue and allows access to the un-named lane that travels north to Penderyn. There are areas of mature vegetation and trees along much of its length.</p>	Low	The site and nearby existing nearby buildings are not evident in views due to the screening effects of vegetation and local topography.
<p>Properties on Halt Road (min. 1km)</p> <p>Photographic Viewpoint 4, Figure 12.9</p>	<p>Residential - A row of two-storey houses on the southern section of the road has frontages with a western aspect. The rear of the properties face the Industrial Estate. There is one dwelling and a caravan sited on lower ground on the north section of Halt Road, by the junction with Fifth Avenue.</p>	High	<p>The aspect of the properties on Halt Road, local topography and dense areas of vegetation tend to obscure views of the site.</p> <p>There would be views from the rear of the row of properties on Halt Road towards existing vegetation and buildings on the Industrial Estate. The single dwelling and caravan on Halt Road near the junction with Fifth Avenue do not have views of the site.</p>

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A465 (min. 200m from site) Photographic Viewpoint 5, Figure 12.9	Road – High speed dual carriageway running west from the junction with the A4059 at Hirwaun.	Low	The road runs on an embankment, which is well vegetated along its length, and restricts views to surrounding areas. At a gap in this vegetation where the road bridges Fifth Avenue, there is likely to be a fleeting glimpse for west-bound traffic of parts of existing buildings on the Industrial Estate. This view would be across the lane carrying east-bound traffic.
Tai-cwplau (min.300m) Photographic Viewpoint 6, Figure 12.10	Residential - Farmhouse and out-buildings located just west of a local ridge to the west of the site. The local area is well vegetated.	High	The farmhouse is positioned behind several out-buildings, and these, together with surrounding vegetation and the local ridge, make it difficult to distinguish the position of the site. The upper parts of conifers on the Industrial Estate and the opencast Tower Colliery beyond are visible from the access road/ public footpath leading to the house.
Hirwaun Industrial Estate (6m to 1km) Photographic Viewpoint 1, Figure 12.8	Commercial - Most of the buildings on the Industrial Estate are situated close to Rhigos Road, however a few are located along the eastern end of Fifth Avenue and east of Ninth Avenue. Large areas of coniferous and deciduous planting around the Estate both screen the buildings and limit views outwards.	Low	Views within both areas of the Industrial Estate tend to be focused on the buildings and screen planting within the estate itself, and there are few areas with clear views of the site itself. From areas close to the estate entrance on Rhigos Road, there are views between industrial buildings towards the residential property located north-east of the Penderyn Reservoir, identifying the position of the site. The property is set in a well-vegetated landscape, with a backdrop of the Brecon Beacons.
Rhigos Road east between Halt road and A4061 (min. 700m)	Road – The road runs along the southern edge of the Hirwaun Industrial Estate and is enclosed on both sides with mature coniferous and deciduous vegetation. There is a gap in the vegetation where buildings and fencing front onto the road at the entrance to the estate.	Low	The dense vegetation screen obscures views of the wider landscape. There are brief and passing views between buildings at the gap in the roadside planting by the Industrial Estate, of the wider landscape to the north.
A4059 (min. 1km from site)	Road – Main road connecting Aberdare to the south with Hirwaun, and turning north into the National Park. Alongside Hirwaun and on the route to Penderyn, the road is largely enclosed by mature coniferous and native planting along its length.	Low	The site and nearby existing buildings are not evident in views when travelling along this road between Hirwaun and Penderyn due to vegetation alongside the road, and local topography.

02 - Brecon Beacons National Park

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Penderyn Reservoir (min. 20m) Photographic Viewpoints 1 & 2, Figure 12.8	Recreation - The reservoir has access for private fishing and maintenance only. It is contained to the north, west and east by large areas of woodland. The reservoir is retained on its southern, western and eastern edges by steep grassed embankments.	High	From the southern edge of the reservoir there is a clear view of the site as well as the surrounding industrial buildings and screen planting, the opencast and deep mines of Tower Colliery, and high voltage pylons and overhead lines. There are also extensive views of the surrounding hills and associated open grasslands and plantation woodlands. From the northern edge of the reservoir, the site itself is no longer visible, however, the upper parts of existing buildings on Hirwaun Industrial Estate can be seen, amongst mature planting.
Footpath from Tai-cwplau to Pontbren Llwyd (3m – 1km)	Public right of way - The footpath passes at grade through a belt of woodland located along the northern edge of the site. Much of the remaining lengths of the footpath are enclosed by dense vegetation.	High	There are glimpsed views of the site through the vegetation where the footpath runs alongside it. Elsewhere, topographical variation and vegetation in the landscape provide an effective visual screen to the site.
Two properties north-east of Penderyn Reservoir (approx. 350m & 500m) Photographic Viewpoint 9, Figure 12.11	Residential - Two-storey properties at Trebanog-uchaf. One is located immediately in the north-west corner of the reservoir. The second is located on higher ground to the north of this.	High	The property located adjacent to the north-east corner of the reservoir has an oblique view across it that is likely to encompass glimpsed views of buildings on the Industrial Estate, surrounding conifers and the opencast colliery to the south. This view would include the backdrop of the steep valley slopes at Hirwaun to the south. Views southwards from the second property to the north are likely to be partially obscured by woodland north of the reservoir, however there is likely to be clearer views from upper floor windows, particularly towards the valley slopes at Hirwaun Common.
Trebanog-fâch (approx. 700m)	Residential - Two-storey property set in a well vegetated setting north-east of the Reservoir.	High	Existing vegetation provides an effective visual screen around the property.
Pantcefnffordd & Pontbren Llwyd (1.5 - 2.2km)	Residential - Pantcefnffordd consists of a small collection of houses, individual properties and a church. Pontbren Llwyd comprises a small settlement west of the A4059 (Pontbren) and individual properties and a row of houses along Church Road to the north.	High	The topography and extensive areas of vegetation create a substantial visual screen, so that views to the south and south-west are limited and the site is indistinguishable.
Penderyn (approx. 2.2km)	Residential - The village is located in an area of lower	High	The site is not visible due to the topography, distance and

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	ground between high points either side of the A4059.		vegetation in the landscape.
Footpath from Pontbren Llwyd to Penderyn (1km – 1.6km) Photographic Viewpoint 10, Figure 12.11	Public right of way - The footpath crosses small fields of grazing land to the north-east of Penderyn Reservoir, enclosed by dense areas of woodland and vegetation.	High	The local topography and vegetation prevent views towards the site. The opencast mine at Tower Colliery to the south however, is visible from limited sections of this footpath.
Un-named lane between Fifth Avenue and Pantcefnffordd (500m to 1.6km) Photographic Viewpoints 7, 11& 12, Figures 12.10 & 10.12	Road – The lower part of the lane is well enclosed by vegetation and includes a few residential properties to the west of it. The upper part of the lane is more open and with less vegetation alongside the road.	Low	Vegetation on the lower southern sections of the road, together with topography tends to obscure views towards the site. As the road rises above the level of the reservoir, there is a glimpsed view between the vegetation of some building roofs and conifers on the Hirwaun Industrial Estate. Further north, the upper part of the road is open along its sides and there is a clear view of most of the Industrial Estate buildings, associated screen planting, as well as of the site itself. The steep valley slopes and ridge at Hirwaun Common to the south form the backdrop to this view.
Bridleway from Pantcefnffordd to Pontneddfechan (min. 1.5km) Photographic Viewpoint 13, Figure 12.12	Public right of way/ open access land - Bridleway crossing open hills of the Brecon Beacons.	High	The elevated position and relative lack of vegetation in the landscape affords extensive views encompassing settlements, including Merthyr Tydfil, transport and energy infrastructure, and plantation woodland as well as large areas of industrial development including several current and former mining areas. There is a section of bridleway around 500m in length over which there are clear views down onto the site, and the surrounding Industrial Estate.
Trebanog Isaf & Tyle-morgrug Bunkhouse (min.900m) Photographic Viewpoint 14, Figure	Residential - Private property and bunkhouse, both set within areas of dense vegetation, to the west of un-named lane, west of the site.	High	The track that leads to both properties affords a view from high ground near the bunkhouse, of a large part of Hirwaun Industrial Estate – roofs and upper parts of coniferous trees - together with industrial buildings to the west of this, residential properties on Halt Road, Tower Colliery opencast mine to the south-east and high voltage pylons and power lines.

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12.13			
Footpath from Trebanog-Isaf to Clwyd-rhyd-fan (min.800m)	Public right of way - The footpath passes through wooded areas as well open grazing land, to the west of the un-named lane located north-west of Penderyn Reservoir and connects to the property at Trebanog Isaf and Tyle-morghug Bunkhouse.	High	The local topography and vegetation obscure views towards the site.
03 - Rhigos and Cefn Rhigos			
Footpaths and bridleway north of Rhigos and Cefn Rhigos (1.1 – 2.2km) Photographic Viewpoint 15, Figure 12.13	Public right of way - Two routes that meet at the Cwm Wyrfa stream to the east.	High	Topography, distance and vegetation are likely to screen most views of the site from these locations, however, where the bridleway meets Rhigos Road, there may be a glimpsed view of existing buildings on the Industrial Estate
Rhigos Road, west of Halt Road. (1.2 – 2.2km)	Road – The road runs uphill to the west toward Cefn Rhigos and is edged with mature deciduous vegetation along much of its length. There are occasional individual residential properties alongside the road and a small group of houses at the summit at Cefn Rhigos.	Low	Existing views tend to be focussed on localised areas, or distant landscapes.
Mount Road/ Mount Street , between Cefn Rhigos and Cwm-hwnt (min. 2.2km) Photographic Viewpoint 16, Figure 12.14	Road – This local road situated west of Rhigos is well-vegetated along much of its length with deciduous planting. There are occasional individual residential properties alongside the road.	Low	In a view taken from adjacent to a residential property and public footpath located around halfway along the eastern side of this road, there are panoramic views towards the Brecon Beacons. These views include the large area of woodland to the immediate northwest of Penderyn Reservoir as well as the two properties located just northeast of the reservoir. From these it can be inferred where the site is located.
Footpaths west of	Public right of way - A network of paths linking areas	High	There may be some views towards roofs of buildings and screen

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Rhigos (1.6 – 2.5km)	west of the settlement, and crossing undulating farmland.		planting on the Industrial Estate from the higher areas of ground, however topography and vegetation would provide some screening of views. There are otherwise extensive views of the Brecon Beacons landscape from these areas.
Mount Street , between Cwm-hwnt and Rhigos (1.8 - 2.6km) Photographic Viewpoint 17, Figure 12.14	Road – Local road west of Rhigos with small group of residential properties at Cwm-hwnt. The southern side of the road is well vegetated.	Low	The road crosses a section high ground where there is no vegetation or buildings on the south side of the road, allowing panoramic views to the south. From this location there are some distant views over and above the Rhigos settlement, to hills to the east – the storage tank at Bryn Dû, about 8km to the east can be seen on a summit.
Rhigos settlement (min.1.5km) Photographic Viewpoint 18, Figure 12.15	Residential - This small settlement lies on rising ground to the south-west of the site, and is clearly visible from the Mynydd Beili-glas carpark and viewing point to the south.	High	The majority of properties do not have views towards the site due to their orientation or screening by other buildings and vegetation. At the northeastern edge of the settlement a row of properties along Heol Esgyn are orientated so there are panoramic views from the rear, mainly from upper floor windows, to north and north-east, of the Brecon Beacons. Within this view, the line of vegetation that defines the routes of the east-west roads is just discernable, together with pylons and high voltage overhead lines and parts of the roofs of some buildings on the Industrial Estate. The storage tank at Bryn Dû, about 7.5km to the east is visible.
04 - Hirwaun Common			
Footpath between Rhigos & Hirwaun (1.7km – 2km)	Public right of way - Public footpath crossing pastoral land south of Hirwaun Common, disused colliery land, working colliery and open grassland.	High	There are clear views towards Penderyn Reservoir, particularly from the section of footpath between Rhigos and the A4061. The site itself is obscured by vegetation and buildings on the Hirwaun Industrial Estate. The panoramic views from this footpath include the urbanized valley as well as the open land and wooded areas in the Brecon Beacons to the north.
A4061	Road – Road travelling south from junction with the	Low	The land rises sharply to the south, and as a consequence offers

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(min. 700m)	A465 and A4059 at Hirwaun, crossing Hirwaun Common and serving settlements to the south.		panoramic views to the north of the Brecon Beacons. These views extend for several kilometres to the north, west and east. The reservoir is distinguishable in these views, including from the carpark/ viewing point at Mynydd Beili-glas and identifies the position of the site, which itself is screened by mature vegetation around the Industrial Estate.
Mynydd Beili-glas Parking area and viewing point (approx. 3.8km) Photographic Viewpoint 20, Figure 12.16	Public right of way/ open access land - Public carpark, viewing point and picnic area.	High	Refer to notes for the A4061 and Hirwaun Common.
Hirwaun Common Open Access land (min. 1.5km)	Public right of way/ open access land - Steep-sided slopes of Hirwaun Common, with open grassland to the east, and plantation forest to the west and south beyond the public car park and viewing point at Mynydd Beili-glas.	High	The views are similar to those described above, except that with greater elevation, the reservoir appears larger in the view.
Tower Colliery (Opencast mine up to 1.8km south-east of site; deep mine on A4061 approx. 2.5km south-west of the site) Photographic Viewpoint 21, Figure 12.16	Commercial - Apart from the physical structures, the operations of the colliery are dominated by a number of large vehicles moving around the site. There are few 'office' buildings and views from these are screened by vegetation.	Low	It is possible to identify the Penderyn Reservoir from higher ground at the Colliery, and therefore the location of the site. The Industrial Estate screen planting and upper parts of buildings are also seen in this view. The scene has a backdrop of the Brecon Beacon lower hills.
05 – Hirwaun			
Ty Newydd Hotel	Commercial - A large country house hotel, located in	Medium	The hotel is oriented on an approximately east-west access so

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(min. 600m) Photographic Viewpoint 8, Figure 12.10	a mature landscape setting.		that the principal rooms and bedrooms generally face south. The mature vegetation around the hotel and its carpark south of the building, provide an effective visual screen. From the southern edge of the carpark, glimpsed views between trees reveal the opencast mine at Tower Colliery and the A4061 over Hirwaun Common, while glimpsed views through trees to the south-west are to the adjacent Blaen Cynon SAC/ SSSI. Existing buildings on the industrial estate are not evident in these views due to the local topography and vegetation.
Hirwaun settlement (min.1.5km)	Residential - A small settlement set on undulating land, and contained to the east and south by the A4059, which is elevated above the houses.	High	Embankments alongside the A4059 surrounding the settlement are well vegetated, and together with the mound of Hirwaun Ponds disused tip, provide an effective visual screen to views of buildings on lower lying ground to the west, including those at the Industrial Estate.
Hirwaun RFC (min 2km) Photographic Viewpoint 5, Figure 12.9	Recreation - Rugby ground with floodlighting and equipped children's play area. The site is well contained by existing mature native and coniferous planting alongside the grounds and A4059.	Medium	Although there are distant views between the vegetation towards the Brecon Beacons, the lower areas of the urbanized valley, including the Hirwaun Industrial Estate are screened from view.
Mount Pleasant Public House, A4059 (approx. 1.3km) Photographic Viewpoint 23, Figure 12.17	Commercial - Public house facing the A4059, with reception building extension to the rear (west), and parking north of the building. The pub is enclosed by deciduous and coniferous vegetation surrounding it, and its windows are oriented principally to the east and north.	Low	The existing vegetation in the landscapes immediately surrounding the pub to the west, north and south provide an effective visual screen. From the car park, it is possible from one position to see the upper part of a tower structure associated with the opencast colliery and located just north the A465.