APPENDIX 7.11 ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL EFFECTS FROM SETTLEMENTS

1.1.1 Residential receptors are of high susceptibility as their attention is likely to be focused on the surrounding views from their property. The views are therefore all high susceptibility. Furthermore because of the nature of these receptors and as they are likely to value their views, they are all also of high sensitivity.

1.1.2 As the Visual impact assessment (Appendix 7.4) finds, it is unlikely that there will be any significant visual effects beyond an approximate 10km radius of the Site.

1.1.3 Where the proposed development is visible (See drawing 007), it is considered that available views of the proposed development will be distant, and the proposed development is likely to be a minor feature. It is also likely to be viewed in the context of other man-made elements, particularly operational wind farm development. Where visible, the magnitude of impacts has been assessed as no more than medium to low. The significance of any effects will, when combined with the high sensitivity of receptors, be moderate to slight adverse and not significant.

1.1.4 The appendix should be read in combination with drawings 007 to 010, illustrating the extent of the settlements within the study area.

1.1.5 Below is the detailed assessment of all settlements that fall within the ZTV between 2km and 10km of the proposed development. Those within 2km are considered in Appendix 7.9.

	Name: Abertysswg, Pontlottyn and Fochriw		
Distance the nearest Turbine (km):	2km	**Direction from the site:**	S
Susceptibility of the Visual Receptor	Residential receptors are of high susceptibility as their attention is likely to be focused on the surrounding views. Overall, the views are of high susceptibility.		
Value of the Visual Receptor	The view is an ordinary view, with no recognised qualities, cultural associations. The view is not the reason for receptors to be there. Therefore, this view is considered to be of low value.		
Sensitivity to change of visual receptor	Overall, the views are of high sensitivity.		

	Name: Abertysswg, Pontlottyn and Fochriw
Baseline Description:	These settlements are located to the south of Rhymney, along the R4hymney valley bottom and lower slopes. The surrounding comprises of a mixture of other small settlements, industrial estates, areas of woodland and valley side grassland. Views are a mixture of neighbouring settlements, woodland, predominantly located in the valley bottom the surrounding valley slopes and exposed upland. Detracting features such as wind turbines and power lines are common in place.
Predicted View and Magnitude of Effects	***Construction:*** The construction activities associated with the erection of the Proposed Development will be visible above and between intervening vegetation and above the skyline several view. The gradual progression of installation will be of a temporary nature and will occupy a relatively small proportion of the overall view. Construction will be very short term (>1 year) and reversible, resulting in a low magnitude of change.
	Operation: On completion, the wind turbines would be visible above the skyline. The Solar Farm would only be visible from a small proportion of Abertysswg and Pontlottyn . The Proposed Development would introduce three wind turbines that would be visible, above the skyline in both enclosed, narrow views and open panoramic views. In year 15 the proposed wind turbines will still be a prominent feature within the view. Where the sola farm is perceptible, the proposed mitigation planting would of matures, partially to fully screening the solar panels from view. Although the Proposed Development would not be incongruous in the view due to the existing presence of wind turbines and it would only occupy a relatively small proportion of the overall view, it would increase the presence of wind turbine development. The Proposed Development would be of a long-term (<10 years) and reversible in nature. Therefore, the magnitude of change has been assessed as medium through to negligible.

	Name: Abertysswg, Pontlottyn and Fochriw
	Decommissioning: The decommissioning activities of the wind turbine elements of the Proposed Development will be visible. The gradual removal of the proposed development will be of a temporary nature and would only occupy a relatively small proportion of the overall view. Decommissioning will be very short term (>1 year) and permanent. The only elements that will remain will be the matured solar farm mitigation vegetation, by which time would have become an established minor part of the view, resulting in a Negligible magnitude of change.
Level of Effect and Significance	***Construction:*** The combined high sensitivity and medium to low magnitude of change will result in a moderate adverse and significant level of effect.
	Operation: The combined high sensitivity and medium to low magnitude of change will result **moderate adverse and significant** level of effect as the Proposed Development would introduce a new manmade feature in views from the northern most part of Abertysswg and quickly reducing to moderate to slight through to imperceptible from Fochriw and Pontlottyn.
	Decommissioning: The combined high sensitivity and negligible magnitude of change will result in an imperceptible and non-significant effect.
Cumulative Assessment	
Predicted Cumulative View:	As the wireline for viewpoint 4 illustrate, that in addition to the proposed development and the operational developments that are visible, there will be combined views of the in-planning Pen March wind farm within the same field of view from Fochriw. There will also be combined, but successive views of the in planning Manmoel and to a lesser extent the in-planning West Monmouthshire Golf Club schemes, in a separate field of view as the viewer turns east. Similarly, there will be successive views of the consented Cwmbargoed Disposal Point turbine in a separate field of view as the viewer turns west. The distance between the proposed development and the Manmole, and Cwmbargoed Disposal Point turbines clearly indicates that they are separate schemes. Aa a result of the distance and scale of the West Monmouthshire Golf Club turbine, it will appear as a very minor feature within the view.

	Name: Abertysswg, Pontlottyn and Fochriw
Magnitude of Cumulative Effects:	The introduction of the Pen March, Manmole and Cwmbargoed Disposal Point turbines would notably intensify the influence of wind farm development in the view, however, when considering the Proposed Development in addition to the cumulative scenario, the Proposed Scheme increase th3 spread of turbine development across a wider extent of the view, increasing effects. The cumulative magnitude of change is considered to be Medium to low overall.
Significance of Cumulative Effect:	The combined high sensitivity and medium to low magnitude of change will result in **Moderate adverse and significant** cumulative effects.

	Name: Dukestown		
Distance the nearest Turbine (km):	4.5km	**Direction from the site:**	E
Susceptibility of the Visual Receptor	Residential receptors are of high susceptibility as their attention is likely to be focused on the surrounding views. Overall, the views are of high susceptibility.		
Value of the Visual Receptor	The view is an ordinary view, with no recognised qualities, cultural associations. The view is not the reason for receptors to be there. Therefore, this view is considered to be of low value.		
Sensitivity to change of visual receptor	Overall, the views are of high sensitivity.		
Baseline Description:	This settlement is located at the top of the Sirhowy Valley just south of the Heads of the Valleys Road. The surrounding comprises of a mixture of other small settlements, industrial estates, small areas of woodland and valley side grassland. The foreground is made up of neighbouring settlements along with small areas of woodland. The middle ground is dominated by the east facing valley slopes along with woodland around Par Bryn Bach. The background consists of Rhymney hill to the left with a horizon made up detracting features such wind turbines, woodland and power lines.		

	Name: Dukestown
Predicted View and Magnitude of Effects	***Construction:*** The erection of the Wind Turbine blades of the Proposed Development will just be visible above the skyline from a small area along the eastern edge of the settlement. The construction activities of the remaining wind turbines elements and solar farm elements will be screened from view by intervening landform. The construction activities will be of a temporary nature and will only occupy a very small proportion of the view. Construction will be very short term (>1 year) and reversible, resulting in a negligible magnitude of change.
	Operation: On completion, it is predicted that only the blade tips will be perceptible in the background. The Proposed Development would not be incongruous in the view due to the existing presence of wind turbines, and only the blade tips would be visible. The proposed development would only occupy a very small proportion of the overall view. The Proposed Development would be of a long-term (<10 years) and reversible in nature. Therefore, the magnitude of change has been assessed as negligible.
	Decommissioning: The decommissioning activities of the wind turbine elements of the Proposed Development would just be visible. The removal of the proposed development will be of a temporary nature and would only occupy a very small proportion of the overall view. Decommissioning will be very short term (>1 year) and permanent. No visible elements of the proposed development will remain, returning the view to is baseline state. Therefore, the magnitude of change has been assessed as Negligible.
Level of Effect and Significance	***Construction:*** The combined high sensitivity and negligible magnitude of change will result in an imperceptible and not significant level of effect.
	Operation: The combined high sensitivity and negligible magnitude of change will result in imperceptible and not significant effects as the proposed development would go largely unnoticed in this open and panoramic view.
	Decommissioning: The combined high sensitivity and negligible magnitude of change will result in an imperceptible and non-significant effect.
Cumulative Assessment	

	Name: Dukestown
Predicted Cumulative View:	The cumulative windfarm assessment drawing illustrates that there will be combined views of several existing cumulative schemes within the same field of view from this settlement, the windfarms seen along the horizon in a similar direction to the site are Pen Bryn Oer and Maesgwyn. The in-planning Pen March will become a notable cumulative scheme visible in the same field of view. The distance between the proposed development and the cumulative turbines clearly indicates that they are separate schemes.
Magnitude of Cumulative Effects:	The introduction of the cumulative schemes would slightly intensify the influence of wind farm development in a view already influenced by wind turbine development. When considering the Proposed Development in addition to the cumulative scenario, the Proposed Scheme would be perceived as a standalone development and would be located in the background of the view. Only the blade tips of the proposed development will be visible due to intervening landform. The cumulative magnitude of change is considered to be low to negligible.
Significance of Cumulative Effect:	The combined high sensitivity and low to negligible magnitude of change will result in slight adverse to imperceptible and not significant cumulative effects.

	Name: Rassau and Beaufort		
Distance the nearest Turbine (km):	7km	**Direction from the site:**	E
Susceptibility of the Visual Receptor	Residential receptors are of high susceptibility as their attention is likely to be focused on the surrounding views. Overall, the views are of high susceptibility.		
Value of the Visual Receptor	The view is an ordinary view, with no recognised qualities, cultural associations. The view is not the reason for receptors to be there. Therefore, this view is considered to be of low value.		
Sensitivity to change of visual receptor	Overall, the views are of high sensitivity.		

	Name: Rassau and Beaufort
Baseline Description:	These settlements are located at the top of the Ebbw Valley just south of the Heads of the Valleys Road. The surrounding comprises of a mixture of other small settlements, industrial estates, small pockets of woodland on a reasonably flat area of the valley floor. The foreground and midground is made up of neighbouring settlements along with small areas of woodland extending to the valley sides in the distance. The background consists of Rhymney hill and Briery Hill to the left and a relatedly flat horizon to the right following the Heads of the Valley Road towards the site with a horizon made up detracting features such wind turbines and power lines.
Predicted View and Magnitude of Effects	***Construction:*** The erection of the tops of the Wind Turbines from the Proposed Development will just be visible above the skyline. The construction activities of the remaining wind turbines elements and solar farm elements will be screened from view by intervening landform. The construction activities will be of a temporary nature and will only occupy a very small proportion of the view. Construction will be very short term (>1 year) and reversible, resulting in a negligible magnitude of change.
	Operation: On completion, it is predicted that only the blade tips will be perceptible in the background. The Proposed Development would not be incongruous in the view due to the existing presence of wind turbines, and only the blade tips would be visible. The proposed development would only occupy a very small proportion of the overall view. The Proposed Development would be of a long-term (<10 years) and reversible in nature. Therefore, the magnitude of change has been assessed as negligible.
	Decommissioning: The decommissioning activities of the wind turbine elements of the Proposed Development would just be visible. The removal of the proposed development will be of a temporary nature and would only occupy a very small proportion of the overall view. Decommissioning will be very short term (>1 year) and permanent. No visible elements of the proposed development will remain, returning the view to is baseline state. Therefore, the magnitude of change has been assessed as Negligible.
Level of Effect and Significance	***Construction:*** The combined high sensitivity and negligible magnitude of change will result in an imperceptible and not significant level of effect.

	Name: Rassau and Beaufort
	Operation: The combined high sensitivity and negligible magnitude of change will result in imperceptible and not significant effects as the proposed development would go largely unnoticed in this open and panoramic view.
	Decommissioning: The combined high sensitivity and negligible magnitude of change will result in an imperceptible and non-significant effect.
Cumulative Assessment	
Predicted Cumulative View:	The cumulative windfarm assessment drawing illustrates that there will be combined views of existing cumulative schemes within the same field of view from these settlements, the windfarms seen along the horizon in a similar direction to the site are Pen Bryn Oer and Maesgwyn. The in-planning Pen March will become a notable cumulative scheme visible in the same field of view. The distance between the proposed development and the cumulative turbines clearly indicates that they are separate schemes.
Magnitude of Cumulative Effects:	The introduction of the cumulative schemes would slightly intensify the influence of wind farm development in a view already influenced by wind turbine development. When considering the Proposed Development in addition to the cumulative scenario, the Proposed Scheme would be perceived as a standalone development and would be located in the background of the view. Only the blade tips of the proposed development will be visible due to intervening landform. The cumulative magnitude of change is considered to be negligible.
Significance of Cumulative Effect:	The combined high sensitivity and medium magnitude of change will result in imperceptible and not significant cumulative effects.

	Name: New Tredegar		
Distance the nearest Turbine (km):	6.4km	**Direction from the site:**	SE
Susceptibility of the Visual Receptor	Residential receptors are of high susceptibility as their attention is likely to be focused on the surrounding views. Overall, the views are of high susceptibility.		

	Name: New Tredegar
Value of the Visual Receptor	The view is an ordinary view, with no recognised qualities, cultural associations. The view is not the reason for receptors to be there. Therefore, this view is considered to be of low value.
Sensitivity to change of visual receptor	Overall, the views are of high sensitivity.
Baseline Description:	This settlement is located in the Rhymney valley along the A469. Located along the valley floor and part way up the valley sides, this settlement is intersected with small pockets of woodland and surrounded by large open areas of grassland along with other areas of woodland. The foreground and midground is made up of the edge of the settlement along with small areas of woodland extending along the valley towards the proposed development. The background consists of Rhymney Hill and Briery Hill flanking the valley, while the site itself and the distant Brecon Beacons form the distant horizon.
Predicted View and Magnitude of Effects	***Construction:*** The construction activities of the Wind Turbines of the Proposed Development will be visible at a distance, in the centre of the view down the valley. The gradual progression of installation and construction of auxiliary structures will be of a temporary nature and will only occupy a very small proportion of the overall view. Construction will be very short term (>1 year) and reversible, resulting in a low to negligible magnitude of change.
	Operation: On completion, it is likely that all three wind turbines will be visible in the view from the settlement up the Rhymney Valley. The Proposed Development would introduce additional features to the view, although they would not be incongruous to the view, due to the existing presence of wind turbine development. The proposed development would occupy a relatively small proportion of the overall view and would be of a long-term (<10 years) and reversible, resulting in a medium to low magnitude of change
	Decommissioning: The decommissioning activities of the Proposed Development will be visible. The gradual removal of the Proposed Development will be of a temporary nature will occupy a relatively small part of the view. Decommissioning will be very short term (>1 year) and permanent, resulting in a Negligible magnitude of change.

	Name: New Tredegar
Level of Effect and Significance	***Construction:*** The combined high sensitivity and low to negligible magnitude of change will result in a moderate to slight adverse and not significant level of effect
	Operation: The combined high sensitivity and medium to low magnitude of change will result in a moderate to slight adverse and not significant level of effect as the Proposed Development would be noticeable but not dominate.
	Decommissioning: The combined high sensitivity and negligible magnitude of change will result in slight to imperceptible and non-significant effects.
Cumulative Assessment	
Predicted Cumulative View:	The cumulative windfarm assessment drawing illustrates that the in-planning Pen March may become a notable cumulative scheme visible in the same field of view. The distance between the proposed development and the cumulative turbines may give the impression that they are the same or at least close schemes.
Magnitude of Cumulative Effects:	The introduction of the Pen March would intensify the influence of wind farm development in the view, however, when considering the Proposed Development in addition to the Pen March scheme, the Proposed Scheme would increase the influence of turbine development across a wider extent of the view. However, this increase will still only represent a small overall proportion of the distant view. The cumulative magnitude of change is considered to be Low.
Significance of Cumulative Effect:	The combined high sensitivity and medium magnitude of change will result in Moderate slight adverse and not significant cumulative effects.

	Name: Merthyr Tydfil, Gellideg, Cefn-coed-y-cymmer & Trefechan		
Distance the nearest Turbine (km):	5.6km	**Direction from the site:**	W
Susceptibility of the Visual Receptor	Residential receptors are of high susceptibility as their attention is likely to be focused on the surrounding views. Overall, the views are of high susceptibility.		
Value of the Visual Receptor	The view is an ordinary view, with no recognised qualities, cultural associations. The view is not the reason for receptors to be there. Therefore, this view is considered to be of low value.		

	Name: Merthyr Tydfil, Gellideg, Cefn-coed-y-cymmer & Trefechan
Sensitivity to change of visual receptor	Overall, the views are of high sensitivity.
Baseline Description:	This settlement is one of the largest in the South Wales Valleys and is situated in Taff Valley. The view towards the Site largely comprises of Merthyr Tydfil, which dominates the fore and middle ground. The BBNP can be seen, forming the left background and contrasting with the dense urban area dominating the view. Merthyr Common forms the right background, where opencast working, and angular tips can be seen. Several existing wind turbines are visible within the view, above the skyline.
Predicted View and Magnitude of Effects	***Construction:*** The construction activities of the erection of the wind turbines will be visible at a distance in the background of the extensive open view. The installation and construction will be of a temporary nature and will only occupy a very small proportion of the overall extensive view. Construction will be very short term (>1 year) and reversible, resulting in a negligible magnitude of change.
	Operation: On completion, its predicted that only the upper part of the turbines will be visible in the background of this settlement. In year 15, the wind turbines will be as visible as on completion. The Proposed Development would introduce additional features to the view, although they would not be incongruous to the view, due to the existing presence of wind turbine development. The proposed development would occupy a very small proportion of the overall open view and would be of a long-term (<10 years) and reversible, resulting in a low to negligible magnitude of change
	Decommissioning: The decommissioning activities of the Proposed Development will be visible. The gradual removal of the Proposed Development will be of a temporary nature and would occupy a very small proportion of the overall view. Decommissioning will be very short term (>1 year) and permanent, resulting in a negligible magnitude of change.
Level of Effect and Significance	***Construction:*** The combined high sensitivity and negligible magnitude of change will result in a slight to imperceptible adverse and not significant level of effect
	Operation: The combined high sensitivity and low to negligible magnitude of change will result in a slight adverse and not significant level of effect as the Proposed Development would be perceptible but not dominate.

	Name: Merthyr Tydfil, Gellideg, Cefn-coed-y-cymmer & Trefechan
	Decommissioning: The combined high sensitivity and negligible magnitude of change will result in slight to imperceptible and non-significant effects.
Cumulative Assessment	
Predicted Cumulative View:	The wireline illustrates that in addition to the proposed development and operational schemes that are visible, the in-planning Pen March and Manmole, consented Rassau Industrial Estate and Cwmbargoed Disposal Paint and scoping Abertillery schemes would be visible within the same field of views as the proposed Development. Other operational and cumulative schemes are at such a distance that they appear as insignificant features. The Proposed Development would be viewed in front of the operational Pen Bryn Oer.
Magnitude of Cumulative Effects:	The introduction of the cumulative schemes, particularly Pen March, would notably intensify the influence of wind farm development from this settlement due to its visibility. When considering the Proposed Development in addition to the cumulative scenario, the Proposed Scheme would be partially visible in the background of the view. Only the upper part of the turbines will be visible in the background of this settlement. The cumulative magnitude of change is considered to be low to negligible.
Significance of Cumulative Effect:	The combined high sensitivity and low to negligible magnitude of change will result in slight adverse and not significant cumulative effects.

	Name: Trefil		
Distance the nearest Turbine (km):	5km	**Direction from the site:**	NE
Susceptibility of the Visual Receptor	Residential receptors are of high susceptibility as their attention is likely to be focused on the surrounding views. Overall, the views are of high susceptibility.		
Value of the Visual Receptor	The view is an ordinary view, with no recognised qualities, cultural associations. The view is not the reason for receptors to be there. Therefore, this view is considered to be of low value.		

	Name: Trefil
Sensitivity to change of visual receptor	Overall, the views are of high sensitivity.
Baseline Description:	This small settlement lies at the top of the Sirhowy Valley, just beneath the BBNP. The view comprises of open, panoramic distant views of the South Wales Valleys and southern extents of the BBNP. The foreground and middle ground are occupied by the rough grassland along the valley floor and sides surrounding Trefil. The background is made up of the South Wales Valleys, dominated by a mix of settlement creeping up the lower wooded slopes of the valleys, which contrasts with the exposed grassland on the upper slopes. There are several existing wind turbines visible within the view, all south of the settlement.
Predicted View and Magnitude of Effects	***Construction:*** The construction activities of the erection of the Wind turbine elements of the Proposed Development will be partially visible in the centre of the extensive panoramic view. The installation and construction will be of a temporary nature and will only occupy a very small proportion of the overall view. Construction will be very short term (>1 year) and reversible, resulting in a low to negligible magnitude of change.
	Operation: On completion, it's likely that the blade tips from the wind turbines may be visible from this settlement. The Proposed Development would introduce additional features to the view, although they would not be incongruous to the view, due to the existing presence of wind turbine development. The proposed development is likely to only occupy a very small proportion of the overall view and would be of a long-term (<10 years) and reversible, resulting in a low to negligible magnitude of change.
	Decommissioning: The decommissioning activities of the Proposed Development may be partially visible. The gradual removal of the Proposed Development will be of a temporary nature will occupy a relatively small part of the open panoramic view. Decommissioning will be very short term (>1 year) and permanent, resulting in a Negligible magnitude of change.
Level of Effect and Significance	***Construction:*** The combined high sensitivity and negligible magnitude of change will result in a slight to imperceptible adverse and not significant level of effect

	Name: Trefil
	Operation: The combined high sensitivity and negligible magnitude of change will result in a slight to imperceptible adverse and not significant level of effect as the Proposed Development is likely to be minimally visible.
	Decommissioning: The combined high sensitivity and negligible magnitude of change will result in slight to imperceptible and non-significant effects.
Cumulative Assessment	
Predicted Cumulative View:	The in-planning Pen March and Manmole schemes may be visible within the same field of views as the proposed Development. Other operational and cumulative schemes are at such a distance that they appear as insignificant features. The Proposed Development would be viewed in front of the operational Pen Bryn Oer.
Magnitude of Cumulative Effects:	The introduction of the cumulative schemes, particularly Pen March, would notably intensify the influence of wind farm development from this settlement due to its visibility. When considering the Proposed Development in addition to the cumulative scenario, the Proposed Scheme would be partially visible in the background of the view. Only the upper part of the turbines will be visible in the background of this settlement. The cumulative magnitude of change is considered to be low to negligible.
Significance of Cumulative Effect:	The combined high sensitivity and low to negligible magnitude of change will result in slight adverse and not significant cumulative effects.

Settlements that fall between 10km and 20km of the site and are within the ZTV

1.1.6 The settlements of Oakwood and Abertillery both lie within the ZTV but because of their distance from the site, they have been excluded from the settlement assessment. Due to and intervening landforms and vegetation and the distance from the site, these settlements would be unlikely to experience any effect from the turbines and the turbines would be at such a distance that they would become a very small and likely insignificant feature on the horizon.