

Approximate location of site (screened)



Photo Viewpoint 7: Mid-range view looking south east from a public footpath adjacent to Pen y Coed

Approximate location of site (screened)



Photo Viewpoint 8: Long-range view looking south from the start of a public footpath adjacent to the entrance to Frochest

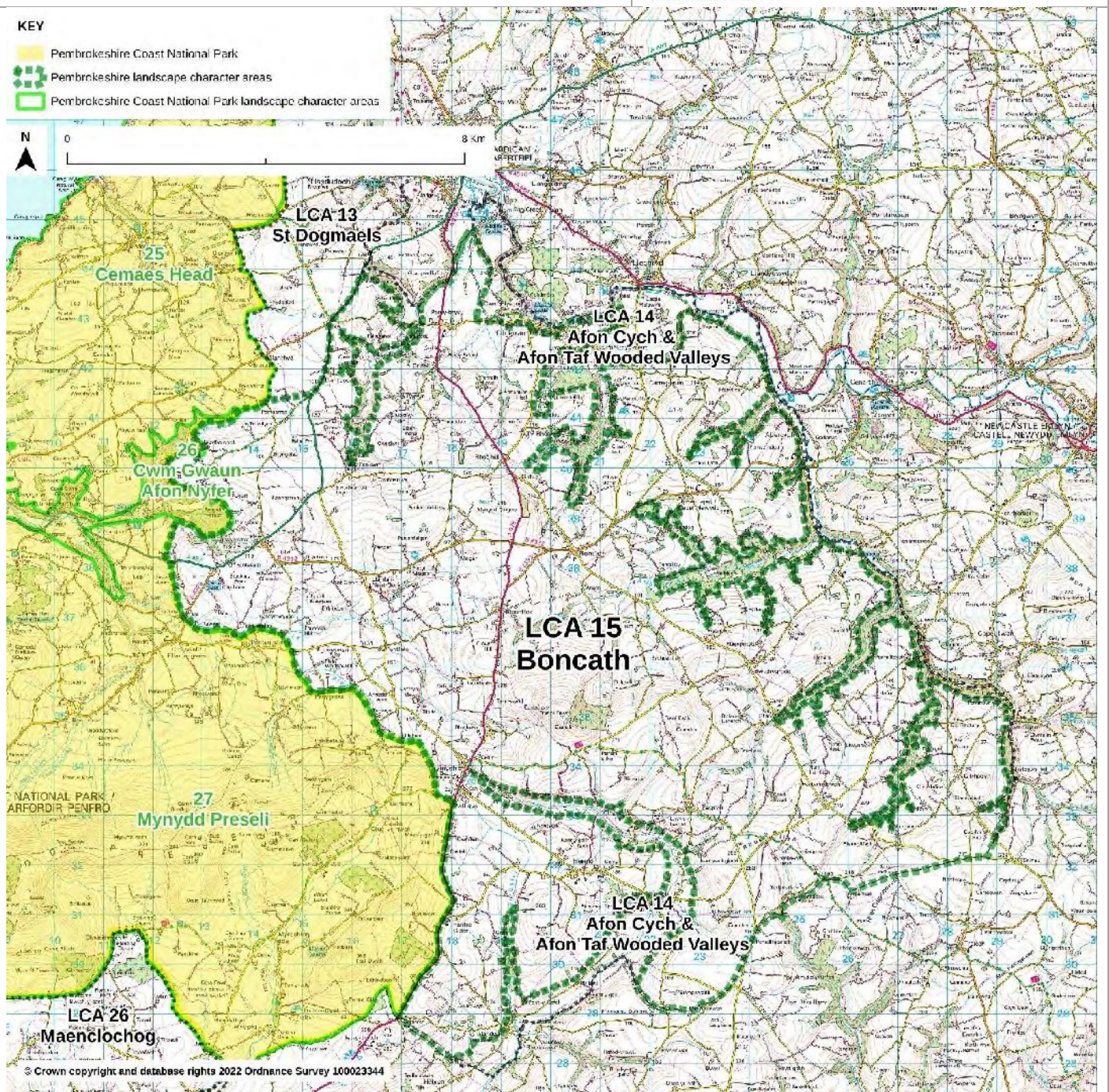
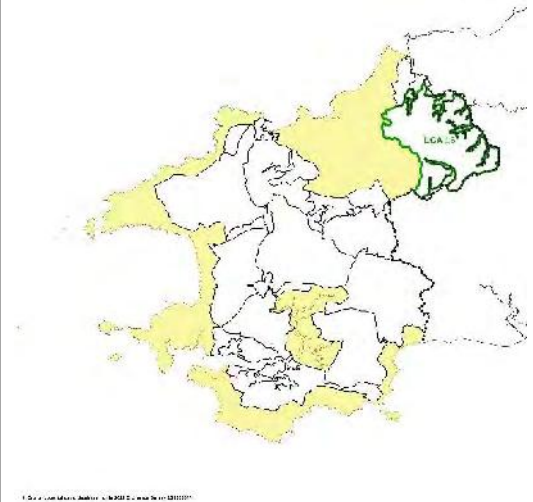
APPENDIX 1

Landscape Character Area 15 'Boncath'

Landscape Character Area 15: Boncath

Location

This area is located at north east Pembrokeshire lying between the Preselis to the south west and the Teifi and Cych valleys to the north and east bordering both Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire.





View southwest from near Bwlch y Groes



View east towards Cilgerran

Summary description

An area of rolling pastoral farmland to the north of the Preselis with a few areas of grazed moorland and a conifer plantation on the exposed hilltop of Frenni Fawr. The area is incised with small steep sided wooded valleys with watercourses feeding into the Afon Taf and Afon Cych. Settlements are generally linear in character with some having industrial origins such as Crymych, with others having a more rural historic character such as Eglwysrwr. There is a strong historic character in parts with some prehistoric and medieval interest as well as some registered parks and gardens.

Key characteristics

- **Rolling land rising from around 17m AOD near the Teifi to the north to around 235m AOD around Crymych to the south with a number of distinct domed open hills such as Frenni Fawr and Frenni Fach which are outliers east of the Preselis at 395m AOD and 301m AOD respectively.**
- **Rolling landform incised by small valleys with watercourses linking into the Teifi to the north, the Taf to the south (both in LCA 14) and the Nyfer to the west.**
- Geology is dominated by Ordovician slates and sandstones forming the lower slopes of the Preseli Hills. Narrow flood plain/drift fill also located along with the upper part of the Afon Nyfer system. Likely to be underlain by glacial deposits and infilled bases of adjacent steep valley sides.
- **Predominantly improved pasture with some semi-improved pasture, rough grazing and pockets of arable land with regular fields on higher ground and irregular patterns more apparent around valleys.**
- **Hedges and hedgerows are both trimmed and outgrown, some with trees on lower slopes such as around the Taf valley.**
- **Woodland cover tends to be small scale and linear in character, some being ancient**

woodland, and there are blocks of conifer plantations east of Frenni Fawr.

- **Patches of acid grassland and dry heath present on more exposed hilltops** including Frenni Fawr and Frenni Fach commons.
- **Settlements are linear in character at their historic core, and where elevated, feel exposed.** Crymych is the largest settlement with associated large 20c school which dominates the southern edge whilst **Eglwysrw has a more historic character with its Conservation Area and listed buildings** such as the Serjeants Inn and Courthouse.
- **Outside the linear settlements there is a scattering of farmsteads, dwellings and larger country houses with listed buildings including churches, chapels, dwellings and mills.**
- **Within the area, overlooking the adjacent valleys in LCA 14, there are parts of** Castell Malgwyn, and gentry mansions at Ffynone and Cilwendeg **Registered Parks and Gardens and associated listed houses and structures.**
- **Prehistoric funerary and ritual monuments lie on higher ground such as round barrows on Frenni Fawr and Frenni Fach** and defended enclosures and there are various medieval mottes/baileys on the northern fringes of the Preselis such as Castell Eglwysrw and there are post medieval quarries.
- Lower Teifi Valley Landscapes of Special Historic and Mynydd Preseli Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest on the fringes to the north and south respectively.
- Two A roads pass through the area linking to Cardigan to the north- the A478 and A487 with interlinking B road. Traffic is a source of movement and noise locally but elsewhere there is a loose network of minor lanes and footpaths linking the small settlements.
- National Cycle Route 47 runs east to west, and 82 to the north west.
- **There are fine expansive views over the area, especially from Frenni Fawr and Frenni Fach, as well as from the adjacent Preselis. The LCA acts as important part of their setting, and they act as a strong backcloth.**
- **There is a strong relationship between this area, the Preselis, the Teifi and the incised valleys of LCA 14 with this area acting as part of the setting.**
- **The area is generally tranquil away from the A and B roads.**
- There are a few small scale wind turbines on local high points.
- The Preseli Hills are locally considered as mountains with strong cultural traditions. Culturally, the area retains a locally significant Welsh speaking culture and was the location for social unrest of the 19th century tithe wars. Some settlements are former industrial communities including Glogue and Hermon with Crymych becoming the focus for Welsh language cultural activity during the 20th century. The Teifi Valley is also noted for the survival of the Welsh language reflected in place names and culture.

* **Note:** Bold text indicates key characteristics and qualities contributing most to sense of place.

Landscape change

- There is an increasing presence of modern agricultural buildings associated with the individual farm units which are out of scale and character with the area.
- Management of agricultural fields and associated boundaries is varied and gaps in hedgerows and post and wire fencing are now more common.
- The area contains a significant level of recent development which is out of character such as concrete blocks and cladding used in commercial buildings eg Crymych and modern brick built housing estates, although stone and render feature in some individual buildings and extensions.
- There is further development pressure to extend existing settlements.
- One Planet developments and new uses such as vineyards are changing character at a small scale.
- Recreational and tourism infrastructure such as caravan and camping increasing.
- Former small quarry areas are generally naturalised.

- Light pollution from settlements including Crymych.
- National Development Framework pre-assessed area for wind energy overlaps valleys to the south east which could lead to a substantial change in character.

Landscape guidelines

- Conserve and enhance the heathland and moorland character of Frenni Fawr and Frenni Fach whilst managing access.
- Conserve and enhance traditional field boundaries including hedgebanks and hedgerows retaining strong tree cover where appropriate.
- Ensure longer term woodland management is appropriate, including replacement of conifers with broadleaves especially at edges and along riparian corridors.
- Retain settlement pattern and appearance of traditional buildings and conserve historic landscape elements particularly in farm complexes, avoiding the development of new scattered rural dwellings.
- Locate and manage camping and caravan sites in line with County guidance.
- Locate and plan wind and solar energy developments in the least sensitive landscapes at an appropriate scale especially avoiding the setting of the National Park and avoiding prominent skylines and slopes.
- Reinforce Welsh culture with retention of Welsh place names.

Adjacent National Park landscape character areas:

LCA25 Cemaes Head

LCA26 Cwm Gwaun/ Afon Nyler

LCA27 Mynydd Preseli

Adjacent/nearby National Park seascape character areas:

-

LANDMAP aspect areas and value:

Visual and Sensory Aspect Areas	Historic Landscape Aspect Areas	Geological Aspect Areas	Cultural Landscape Aspect Areas	Landscape Habitats Aspect Areas
003 – moderate 006 – low 105 – high	46136 – low 46140 – moderate 46319 – moderate 46318 – moderate 46142 – moderate 46454 – moderate 46133 – moderate 46132 – moderate 46237 – moderate 46239 – moderate 46122 – moderate 46126 – high 46118 – high 46119 – high 46120 – high 46134 – high 46141 – high 46137 – high 42455 – high 46241 – high 42474 – high 46117 – outstanding 46116 – outstanding 46135 – outstanding 42264 – outstanding	029 – moderate 007 – high 030 – moderate 037 – moderate 023 – moderate 060 – moderate 025 – moderate 028 – moderate 024 – moderate 018 – moderate 010 – moderate 020 – moderate 027 – moderate 036 – moderate	007 010 210 016	431 – moderate 554 – low 370 – low 884 – low 499 – moderate 454 – moderate 854 – moderate 906 – moderate 668 – moderate 766 – moderate 823 – moderate 920 – high 455 – high 510 – high 774 – high 545 – high 381 – high 587 – high

Bold italic text indicates the prevailing aspect area where one exists

APPENDIX 2

Significance Criteria for Visual Impact.

Extract of 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact
Assessment produced by The Landscape Institute and Institute
of Environmental Management & Assessment.

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA FOR VISUAL IMPACT

Extract of 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2nd Edition) produced by The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2002).

Substantial adverse impact.

Where the scheme would cause a significant deterioration in the existing view.

Moderate adverse impact

Where the scheme would cause a noticeable deterioration in the existing view.

Slight adverse impact

Where the scheme would cause a barely perceptible deterioration in the existing view.

Slight beneficial impact

Where the scheme would cause a barely perceptible improvement in the existing view.

Moderate beneficial impact

Where the scheme would cause a noticeable improvement in the existing view.

Substantial beneficial impact

Where the scheme would cause a significant improvement in the existing view.

No change

No discernable deterioration or improvement in the existing view.

**LAND AT EGLWYSWRW,
CRYMYCH,
PEMBROKSHIRE**

**AGRICULTURAL LAND
CLASSIFICATION AND
CONSIDERATIONS**

April 2024





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- 1 Introduction
- 2 Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance
- 3 Agricultural Land Quality of the Site
- 4 Policy Assessment
- 5 Summary and Conclusions

Appendices

- KCC1 Welsh Government Guidance Note v2.1 (May, 2021)
- KCC2 Welsh Government's "Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQ) booklet (May, 2021)
- KCC3 ALC Report

Plans

- KCC3658/01 Auger Point Plan
- KCC3658/02 ALC Plan

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report considers the agricultural land quality of a parcel of land extending to 1.9 ha on land at Eglwysrw, Crymych, Pembrokeshire. This adjoins a development area permitted under reference 21/0871/PA, granted in March 2022. The approved site plan and layout is shown below (from plan R429 P-01G).

Insert 1. Approved Planning Consent Plan



- 1.2 The Site the subject of this land classification is shown outlined in red on the aerial image below.

Insert 2. Site Area (Boundary Approx.)



- 1.3 A detailed Agricultural Land Classification was carried out in March 2024, and found that the land comprised Subgrade 3a agricultural land.
- 1.4 The site's eastern boundary slightly overlaps with the red line for 21/0871/PA, and a small area is therefore mapped as non-agricultural land.

2 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

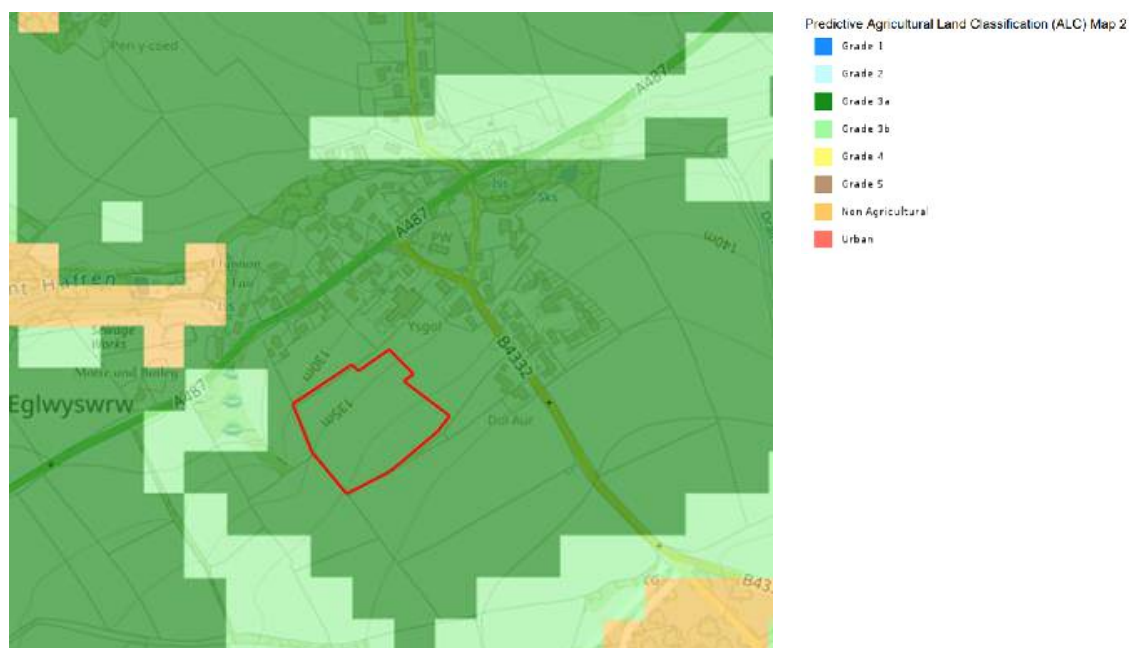
Planning Policy Wales (PPW)

- 2.1 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) (Edition 12, February 2024) sets out in paragraph 3.58 that agricultural land of grades 1, 2 and 3a is the **“best and most versatile and should be conserved as a finite resource for the future”**.
- 2.2 Paragraph 3.59 sets out policy that seeks to develop land of poorer quality in preference to BMV land unless other considerations outweigh the agricultural considerations, or poorer quality land has recognised environmental value.

Welsh Government Guidance

- 2.3 The Welsh Government has produced a Predictive Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) map. Version 2 was published in 2020. The accompanying guidance (May, 2021) sets out that where land is shown on the predictive map as potentially of Grades 1, 2 and 3a an ALC survey is required. The Guidance Note v2.1 (May, 2021) is reproduced in **Appendix KCC1**. Where land is shown as grades 3b, 4 or 5, the flowchart states that **“survey is not required”**.
- 2.4 The Predictive ALC Map 2 shows the Site to be Subgrade 3a. Accordingly, a detailed ALC survey is required of the site.

Insert 3. The Site on the Predictive ALC (boundary approximate)



Local Plan

- 2.5 The Local Plan does not reference agricultural land explicitly and does not reference best and most versatile agricultural land.

3 AGRICULTURAL LAND QUALITY OF THE SITE

The ALC System

- 3.1 The Agricultural Land Classification system provides a framework for classifying land according to the extent to which its physical or chemical characteristics impose long-term limitations on the agricultural use of the Site. The ALC system divides agricultural land into five grades. Grade 1 of the ALC is described as being of excellent quality and Grade 5, at the other end of the scale, is described as being of very poor quality. The current guidelines and criteria for ALC were published by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) in 1988.
- 3.2 The ALC is further described in the Welsh Government's "Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQ) booklet (May 2021), which is reproduced in **Appendix KCC2**.

Detailed ALC Survey Results

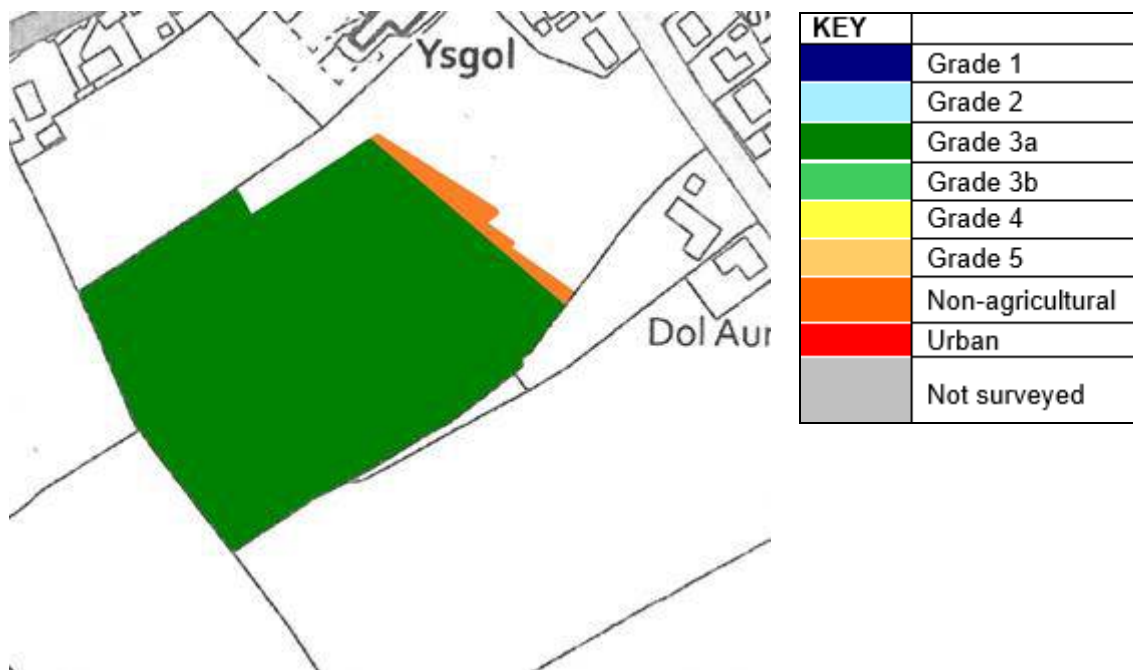
- 3.3 KCC Ltd carried out a detailed ALC survey in March 2024. Two auger inspection points were examined on a regular 100m grid, using a spade and soil auger to a depth of 120cm where possible. A further small pit was dug.
- 3.4 A detailed ALC report is set out in **Appendix KCC3**.
- 3.5 The results of the survey are provided in the table below.

Table KCC1: ALC Results

ALC Grade	Description	Area (ha)	Proportion (%)
Subgrade 3a	Good	1.8	94
Non-agricultural	-	0.1	6.0
Total	-	1.9	100

- 3.6 The distribution of grading can be seen on the extract of the ALC plan below. The full plan can be found at the back of this report.

Insert 4. Extract from the ALC Plan



- 3.7 Accordingly the detailed ALC has identified that the land quality is as predicted on the Welsh Government's ALC v2.

4 POLICY ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 Welsh planning policy seeks to protect best and most versatile agricultural land, because it is a finite resource.
- 4.2 The Guidance Note identifies that where land is shown on the Predictive ALC Maps as likely falling within Grades 1, 2 and Subgrade 3a of the ALC, field surveys will be required. Such land is defined in Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, 2024, Paragraph 3.58) as the **“best and most versatile agricultural land”** and is afforded a degree of protection. It also states that poorer quality land should be used in preference unless there are reasons why it cannot be used.

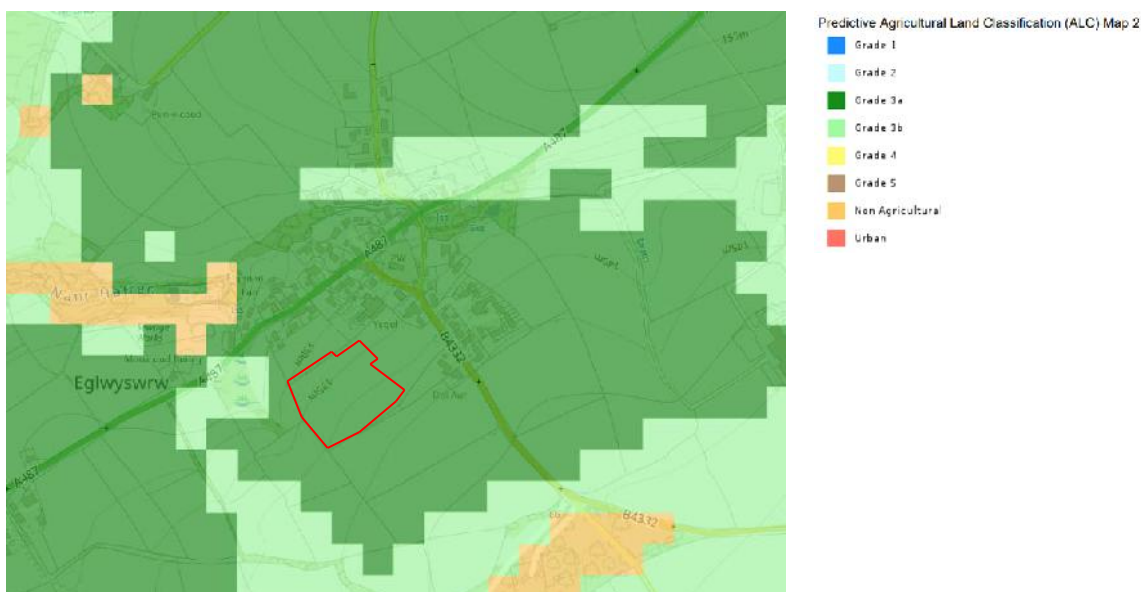
Practical Considerations

- 4.3 The Site has been classified as Subgrade 3a agricultural land and is therefore of BMV quality.
- 4.4 The Site forms part of a larger field, with the land to the east having been given planning consent for non-agricultural development. The remaining field is a relatively small area, suited really only to grassland uses due to the size and slope of the parcel.

Land Quality in the Area Generally and Whether Poorer Quality Land is Available

- 4.5 On the predictive ALC map v2, the Site and the village is shown to be surrounded by Subgrade 3a, with parcels predicted to be subgrade 3b.
- 4.6 This can be seen on the extract from the Predictive Map below.

Insert 5. Predictive ALC



Policy Considerations

- 4.7 The Site extends to under 2 ha of land. Of the 1.9 ha of the Site, 1.8 is subgrade 3a and 0.1 ha is being developed.
- 4.8 The quantum of BMV land involved for the Proposed Development is just 1.8 ha. Whilst PPW does not set a threshold for assessment, to give a sense of the small scale the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges advises that in Wales losses of between 1 and 20ha of agricultural land should be regarded as a "**moderate**" magnitude of impact. This site, at 1.8 ha of BMV, is only just within this category.
- 4.9 Paragraph 3.59 of PPWE12 (2024) advises that when considering the search sequence considerable weight should be given to protecting BMV land from development. BMV land should only be developed if land which is of a lower grade is either not available or has a recognised environmental value. It is evident from the predictive BMV maps that land whilst there is some non-BMV land, it is generally in close proximity to BMV land, and a site of this size completely of non-BMV value is unlikely to be possible.
- 4.10 The settlement is effectively surrounded by land of similar, subgrade 3a quality.
- 4.11 The ALC system considers the potential of the land, and the current land use does not influence the ALC grade. Nevertheless it is evident in all Google Earth images since 2006 that the area of Subgrade 3a has only been used as grassland, and contains areas of rough grazing.
- 4.12 Therefore the use of the land for agriculture, given its small field size, is limited.

5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The Proposed Development Site extends to 1.9 ha.
- 5.2 The majority of the area has been classified as comprising Subgrade 3a, as confirmed by a detailed Agricultural Land Classification. Therefore, the land is of best and most versatile land.
- 5.3 A small part of the site, 0.1 ha, is non-agricultural following planning consent
- 5.4 Welsh Government requires poorer quality land to be considered in preference. Based on the Welsh Predictive mapping, land surrounding the majority of the settlement is predicted Subgrade 3a, such that poorer quality land is not expected to be available.
- 5.5 Therefore, based on the land quality within the area, minimal economic farming benefits and the small area of BMV land involved, it is considered that only limited weight should be given to the loss of the small area.