

Adran yr Economi a'r Seilwaith
Department for Economy and Infrastructure



File Ref WG/REB/OBJ0144.1 – CPRW/Ogden

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Objection Ref OBJ0144

Response to Objector's Evidence: Peter Ogden (CPRW)

1. GROUNDS FOR OBJECTION

1.1. Details

1.1.1. Peter Ogden has submitted a Statement of Evidence dated 6th February 2017 in relation to the draft statutory Orders associated with the Welsh Government's proposals for the M4 Corridor around Newport, which has been received via the Programme Officer.

1.1.2. The Welsh Government understands the evidence submitted within Peter Ogden's Statement to be based on the following:

1. Concerned that the scheme is not needed nor justified given that its stated objectives can be achieved by an alternative and less environmentally damaging means.
2. Believed this proposal will be highly damaging because of the major adverse, long term and irreversibly impacts it will have on the character of those distinctive landscapes through which the proposed road passes, in particular the Gwent levels and its surrounding landscapes.
3. Concerned that the proposed scheme would have significant and unacceptable impacts on the nationally important habitats and biodiversity resources of the Gwent Levels and its surroundings and their associated ecosystems values and services.
4. Stated that the European Landscape Convention makes it very clear that although a landscape may not be designated, that does not in any way devalue its importance locally. Retaining and enhancing the quality, diversity and resilience of Wales' natural environment through safeguarding those characteristics is specifically recognised by one of the Goals of Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015) as a fundamental dimension of public wellbeing. The importance of safeguarding the nation's landscapes and their associated ecosystems is likewise acknowledged in the Welsh Government's recently published Draft Natural Resources Policy document. Annex 2 of that document recognises two Key Challenges which need to be addressed: 'Improving the quality and connectivity of our habitats' and 'Retaining the distinctiveness of our places and historic landscapes'.

5. Stated that the quest for sustainable land use clearly requires careful judgements to be made to guide change in a responsible manner. Only by doing so can it be ensured that both a landscape's existing character is sympathetically retained and also that any change respects the role a landscape plays as both an important environmental asset in its own right and a provider of a diverse range of invaluable goods, services and public benefits.
6. Stated that no matter what their size, condition or status, the acceptability of any development or change to a landscape must take into account not only the inherent values of that landscape, its natural habitats and associated ecosystems but also the added value which local people attribute to the distinctiveness of the human imprint and the cultural identity the "perceptual experiential aspects of the landscape" add to its character.
7. Stated that the overall value of the relationships between a landscape's natural, historic and cultural qualities is therefore by implication far greater than simply the sum of their individual values.
8. Stated that the enactment of the Welsh Government's overarching Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and the Historic Environment (Wales) Act, all give credence to this view, each recognising the significance that the landscape should be considered as a whole and not just a series of individual and independent elements.
9. Stated that because this shift recognises the natural and cultural worlds as one and the landscape and their associated ecosystems services as a combination of value added resources, providing public goods and services, it follows that the diversity and significance of these value systems, must be properly expressed and the range of benefits their characteristic features provide, fully assessed. Only by so doing can the repercussions of a development on any of these values and their associated beneficiaries, including future generations, be fully understood and taken into account in the relevant decision making process. CPRW does not believe the Welsh Government's Environmental Statement of the impacts its road proposal will have on the landscapes of the Gwent

Levels and its surroundings, has addressed nor evaluated these issues in the manner now required by these relevant Acts.

10. Stated that although the Welsh Government's Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) recognises that the overall significance of effects on the Gwent Levels landscapes, (Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs) 2 and 7) are large adverse, CPRW believes the overall scale of proposed road impacts are likely to be at the top end of that level of significance.
11. CPRW noted the Welsh Government Environmental Statement at Chapter 9 (Landscape and Visual effects) and Chapter 8 (Cultural Heritage) both admit the proposal would result in significant major long term detrimental impacts to the landscape character and heritage value of certain Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs) of the Gwent Levels and their surroundings and to designated Gwent Levels Historic Landscape. CPRW deduces from both these influential representations (NRW's and Cadw's) that the Government's statutory advisors on landscapes, historic and cultural issues, believe there would be a strong likelihood that significant, long term and detrimental impacts to the character and integrity of the distinctive landscape of the Gwent Levels and its surroundings, would occur should proposed scheme proceed.
12. Stated that whilst acknowledging that the LVIA is broadly in line with the current IAN 135/10 Wales Update guidance and uses its landscape sensitivity, magnitude of change definitions, significance of effects categories and derivations, CPRW notes this guidance and therefore the LVIA (Para 9.3.36) has only three categories of adverse magnitude of change - major, moderate and minor. This we contend means the effects of the road on the landscape can be understated as there is a marked difference between "major adverse" i.e. total loss or large-scale damage, and "moderate adverse" i.e. partial loss or noticeable damage.
13. Contended the overall effect of the proposed road could be justified as being major/moderate as it is likely to be a prominent feature, very noticeably and significantly out of character with the Gwent Levels' landscapes both in terms of its physical appearance and also as importantly, for two further reasons; the operational effects of the

proposed road on a crucial landscape value of this area, its tranquillity / undisturbed character; and the considerable increase in clutter in the landscape resulting from the construction of the road.

14. Although CPRW accepted the Gwent levels and the adjoining areas cannot be considered as being in the highest category of “undisturbed area” in Wales, in the local context of the Newport area and its hinterland, the Gwent Levels and its surroundings, are nationally classified as Zone C in terms of their undisturbed character. This category of undisturbed land is defined in Table 15 at Page 53 of the CCW report. These locally important qualities of relative tranquillity and darkness are therefore important characteristics which contribute to the distinctiveness of the Gwent Levels area.
15. Stated that relative tranquillity and darkness are important characteristics which contribute to the distinctiveness of the Gwent Levels area. These we believe must therefore be taken fully into account in any judgement of the effects the proposed road would have on the landscape character of those areas through which it passes. Should these qualities disappear for whatever reason, the integrity of this area’s current landscape character would be further devalued.
16. Stated that given this context, when one considers the Welsh Government’s assessment of how the proposed road would impact on the tranquil qualities of the Gwent Levels, the Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) appears to understate the degree of the impact the road would have on this quality. The use of neutral language in the relevant extract of the Welsh Government’s landscape assessment statement illustrates its failure to qualify the effect.
17. Stated that in respect of LLCA 2 Wentlooge Levels, instead of assessing the actual magnitude of the affect, (Para 9.8.15) the text merely states in respect of the potential effects on the perceptual aspects
18. Stated that with respect to the equivalent assessment of the impacts of the road on LLCA 7, Caldicott Levels, there is no mention at all in the Welsh Government’s assessment of the effect of the road on the tranquillity of this landscape area.

19. CPRW noted that Chapter 9 of the Environmental Statement includes a 248 page supplement containing the Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTVs). These rightly and fairly show what other developments apart from the proposed Motorway are currently visible from the Gwent Levels and other areas. Whilst this assists in illustrating the baseline situation, it is clear there is a fundamental difference between the character of existing developments and the circumstances which will prevail should the proposed M4 motorway be constructed.
20. Stated that the particular aspect which will be different and of significance, is the fact that the range of existing developments are static and emit relatively small levels of noise. This however would not be the case with the proposed motorway which would have constant flows of traffic moving along it day and night, all of which would emit significantly different and additional levels of noise. The level of these additional effects would therefore be significant in relation to the comparatively undisturbed circumstances which currently prevail across the Gwent Levels and its surrounding areas.
21. Noted that Page 64, Para 8.8.6 onwards of the Cultural Heritage (Chapter 8) section of the Environmental Statement also draws attention to this issue even though this is not part of the ASIDOHL219 Method. This assessment highlights in particular the implications of this additional road noise on “a person’s ability to appreciate the historic landscape.
22. Noted that the ES para 8.8.8 states, “There is no specific guidance or approved methodology for the assessment of the impact of noise on historic landscapes, although some work has been undertaken with regard to aircraft noise (Temple Group, 2014). However it must be assumed that anything more than a negligible increase in traffic noise (in areas where this is currently low) would have some appreciable impact on a person’s ability to appreciate the historic landscape”... “Based on the above consideration of both visual and noise impacts, the operation of the proposed new section of motorway would have a moderate magnitude of impact on the registered historic landscape. This is a high value heritage asset and the consequent significance of effect has therefore been assessed as large.” This weakness we suggest arises from the ASIDOHL2 assessment process only using a three point scale

for assessing the magnitude of effect. It is not clear however whether this issue has been taken into consideration in the Welsh Government's overall assessment of the effects of the road on the landscapes of its proposed route corridor. If it has not, the current assessment underestimates the impact of the road on these particular qualities of the Gwent Levels and a person's ability to experience and appreciate the character of its historic landscapes

23. Stated that in addition to the major adverse visual effects of the proposed road on the landscape of the Gwent Levels and its implications on the relative tranquillity and undisturbed nature of this area, CPRW believes these factors will be further compounded and accentuated by the additional clutter associated with road's construction and ongoing operation.
24. Stated that although the proposed route passes along the northern boundary of the Levels (LLCAs 2 and 7) it cuts off some of the Levels to the north and is at a higher level, particularly where it passes over the mainline railway at an elevation of 10 metres. That being the case not only will the road's ancillary features such as gantries and lighting be apparent and very noticeable, so will the movement of high sided vehicles across what was previously an essentially a static landscape.
25. Stated that in addition, the proposed road bridge crossing of the River Usk will further add to the cluttered view of vertical elements along the river, when viewed in conjunction with the Transporter Bridge, pylons and power lines and other such structures.

2. REBUTTAL

2.1. Points Raised

2.1.1. All of the Objector's points have already been covered in proofs of evidence as follows and clarifications have been provided by expert witnesses when appropriate:

1. **Point 1** (Concerned that the scheme is not needed nor justified given that its stated objectives can be achieved by an alternative and less environmentally damaging means) / Proof of Evidence by Matthew Jones, WG1.1.1 section 3 and 10.
2. **Point 2** (Believed this proposal will be highly damaging because of the major adverse, long term and irreversibly impacts it will have on the character of those distinctive landscapes through which the proposed road passes, in particular the Gwent levels and its surrounding landscapes) / Proof of Evidence of Nicholas Rowson WG1.8.1, Environmental Statement (ES) paragraphs 9.8.9, 9.8.17, 9.8.57 and 9.8.73. Chapter 9 of the ES describes Year 15 effects are described as Large Adverse for Wentloog Levels (paragraph 9.8.17) and Caldicot Levels (9.8.57) and Moderate Adverse for Michaelston-y-Fedw (paragraph 9.8.9) and Magor and Undy (paragraph 9.8.73). The evidence of John Davies (WG1.23.1 goes further to consider the policy implications and balance between the impact on the landscape, townscape, and taking into account other factors. The evidence of Matthew Jones (WG1.1.1) summarises the key impacts of the Scheme, balanced against the assessed benefits.
3. **Point 3** (Concerned that the proposed scheme would have significant and unacceptable impacts on the nationally important habitats and biodiversity resources of the Gwent Levels and its surroundings and their associated ecosystems values and services) / The effect of building and operating the new section of motorway on the environment is set out in the Environmental Statement (Document 2.3.2) and its Supplements (Documents 2.4.4 and 2.4.14). The Environmental Statement acknowledges the importance of the Gwent Levels and clearly identifies the magnitude and significance of effects on a wide range of environmental features and assets. The evidence of John Davies (WG1.23.1 goes further to consider the policy implications and balance between the impact on the natural environment taking into account

other factors. The evidence of Matthew Jones (WG1.1.1) summarises the key impacts of the Scheme, balanced against the assessed benefits.

4. **Points 4 and 5** (Stated that the European Landscape Convention makes it very clear that although a landscape may not be designated, that does not in any way devalue its importance locally. Retaining and enhancing the quality, diversity and resilience of Wales' natural environment through safeguarding those characteristics is specifically recognised by one of the Goals of Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015) as a fundamental dimension of public wellbeing. The importance of safeguarding the nation's landscapes and their associated ecosystems is likewise acknowledged in the Welsh Government's recently published Draft Natural Resources Policy document. Annex 2 of that document recognises two Key Challenges which need to be addressed: 'Improving the quality and connectivity of our habitats' and 'Retaining the distinctiveness of our places and historic landscapes'), (Stated that the quest for sustainable land use clearly requires careful judgements to be made to guide change in a responsible manner. Only by doing so can it be ensured that both a landscape's existing character is sympathetically retained and also that any change respects the role a landscape plays as both an important environmental asset in its own right and a provider of a diverse range of invaluable goods, services and public benefits) / Proof of Evidence of Nicholas Rowson, WG1.8.1, paragraphs 2.8.8, 2.8.11 and 3.1.1. To address the potential impacts of the Scheme, requirements that guided the mitigation measures were identified (paragraph 2.8.8 of Nicholas Rowson's Proof of Evidence WG 1.8.1), design objectives were identified (paragraph 2.8.11 of Nicholas Rowson's Proof of Evidence WG1.8.1) and a number of environmental design principles have been developed (paragraph 3.1.1 of Nicholas Rowson's Proof of Evidence WG 1.8.1). The evidence of John Davies (WG1.23.1 goes further to consider the policy implications and balance between the impact on the environment taking into account other factors. The evidence of Matthew Jones (WG1.1.1) summarises the key impacts of the Scheme, balanced against the assessed benefits.
5. **Points 6, 7 and 9** (Stated that no matter what their size, condition or status, the acceptability of any development or change to a landscape must take into account not only the inherent values of that landscape, its natural habitats and associated ecosystems but also the added value which local people

attribute to the distinctiveness of the human imprint and the cultural identity the “perceptual experiential aspects of the landscape” add to its character), (Stated that the overall value of the relationships between a landscape’s natural, historic and cultural qualities is therefore by implication far greater than simply the sum of their individual values), (Stated that because this shift recognises the natural and cultural worlds as one and the landscape and their associated ecosystems services as a combination of value added resources, providing public goods and services, it follows that the diversity and significance of these value systems, must be properly expressed and the range of benefits their characteristic features provide, fully assessed. Only by so doing can the repercussions of a development on any of these values and their associated beneficiaries, including future generations, be fully understood and taken into account in the relevant decision making process. CPRW does not believe the Welsh Government’s Environment Statement of the impacts its road proposal will have on the landscapes of the Gwent Levels and its surroundings, has addressed nor evaluated these issues in the manner now required by these relevant Acts) / The effects of the published Scheme on ecology and nature conservation are described in Chapter 10 of the March 2016 Environmental Statement (ES) (Document 2.3.2). This explains that the assessment was carried out taking account of the guidance listed in section 2.1.1 of Keith Jones’ evidence (WG1.18.1). The effects of the published Scheme on landscape and visual matters are described in Chapter 9 of the March 2016 ES (Document 2.3.2). In his evidence Nicholas Rowson (WG 1.8.1)) refers to the ES) and at ES paragraph 9.3.8 it addresses how LANDMAP has been used to bring together the aspects of cultural landscape, geological landscape, historic landscape, landscape habitats and visual and sensory within the landscape assessment, which is in line with IAN 135/10(W) guidance. LANDMAP is a recognised and accepted Wales-wide methodology for landscape assessment devised and maintained by Natural Resources Wales, described on their web-site as “a tool to help sustainable decision-making and natural resource planning at a range of levels from local to national whilst ensuring transparency in decision-making”.

6. Whilst the objector claims that the March 2016 ES has not evaluated the issues in the manner now required by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and the Historic

Environment (Wales) Act, none of these pieces of legislation requires the assessment of environmental impact of development to be carried out in a particular manner, However, as set out in the evidence of Matthew Jones (WG1.1.1) and John Davies (WG1.23.1) the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 sets out the sustainable development duty (but makes no reference to ecosystems services).

7. In addition, Nicholas Rowson (WG1.8.1) clarifies that ecosystems services are defined in the Welsh Government's consultation document Consultation to inform the development of the Natural Resources Policy, November 2016 as:

- *Supporting systems and services*: necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services, such as soil formation, nutrients cycling and primary production
- *Provisioning services*: such as crops, fish, timber and genetic material
- *Regulating services*: such as water purification, biological control mechanisms, carbon sequestration, pollination of commercially valuable crops
- *Cultural services*: providing a source of aesthetic, spiritual, religious, recreational or scientific enrichment.

8. Nicholas Rowson (WG1.8.1) clarifies that this document however does not advise on a methodology for measuring the impact of development on ecosystems services. Until such time as such a methodology has been developed, recognised current assessment methods must be used. Current guidance on the assessment of landscape and visual impacts is set out in DMRB, IAN 135/10(W) and GLVIA3. As noted in the Proof of Evidence of Nicholas Rowson (WG 1.8.1) paragraph 2.5.3, both the scope and outcomes of the assessment are agreed by those statutory bodies that have commented.

9. Nicholas Rowson (WG1.8.1) clarifies that whilst in time new assessment methods may become available to enable the impact of a proposed development on the resilience of ecosystems to be assessed, in line with the aims of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, the Welsh Government has assessed the environmental impact of the Scheme in accordance with the

appropriate guidance and methodology that was current and available at the time of the assessment. As Nicholas Rowson's evidence WG1.8.1 refers; the environmental impacts are clearly described and evaluated in the ES (Document 2.3.2) and it's Supplements (Document 2.4.4 and 2.4.14).

10. **Point 8** (Stated that the enactment of the Welsh Government's overarching Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and the Historic Environment (Wales) Act, all give credence to this view, each recognising the significance that the landscape should be considered as a whole and not just a series of individual and independent elements) / Proof of Evidence of Nicholas Rowson WG 1.8.1 paragraph 2.5.3. The assessment of landscape and visual impacts has followed the appropriate guidance in DMRB, IAN 135/10(W) and GLVIA3 (Document 6.1.8). As noted in WG1.8.1 paragraph 2.5.3, both the scope and outcomes of the assessment are agreed by those statutory bodies that have commented. The evidence of John Davies (WG1.23.1 goes further to consider the policy implications and balance between the impact on the landscape, townscape, and taking into account other factors. The evidence of Matthew Jones (WG1.1.1) summarises the key impacts of the Scheme, balanced against the assessed benefits.

11. **Point 10 and 24** (Stated that although the Welsh Government's LVIA recognises that the overall significance of effects on the Gwent Levels landscapes, (Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs) 2 and 7) are large adverse, CPRW believes the overall scale of proposed road impacts are likely to be at the top end of that level of significance) (Stated that although the proposed route passes along the northern boundary of the Levels (LLCAs 2 and 7) it cuts off some of the Levels to the north and is at a higher level, particularly where it passes over the mainline railway at an elevation of 10 metres. That being the case not only will the road's ancillary features such as gantries and lighting be apparent and very noticeable, so will the movement of high sided vehicles across what was previously an essentially a static landscape) / Proof of Evidence of Nicholas Rowson WG1.8.1, ES paragraphs 9.8.10 to 9.8.17 and 9.8.50 to 9.8.57 (Document 2.3.2). Nicholas Rowson WG1.8.1 clarifies that GLVIA3 paragraph 3.36 places "more emphasis on narrative text describing the landscape and visual effects and the judgements

made about their significance... Tables and matrices should be used to support and summarise descriptive text, not to replace it.” We therefore refer to the ES assessment made across paragraphs 9.8.10 to 9.8.17 (LLCA2) and 9.8.50 to 9.8.57 (LLCA7).

12. **Point 11** (CPRW noted the Welsh Government Environmental Statement at Chapter 9 (Landscape and Visual effects) and Chapter 8 (Cultural Heritage) both admit the proposal would result in significant major long term detrimental impacts to the landscape character and heritage value of certain Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAS) of the Gwent Levels and their surroundings and to designated Gwent Levels Historic Landscape. CPRW deduces from both these influential representations (NRW's and Cadw's) that the Government's statutory advisors on landscapes, historic and cultural issues, believe there would be a strong likelihood that significant, long term and detrimental impacts to the character and integrity of the distinctive landscape of the Gwent Levels and its surroundings, would occur should proposed scheme proceed) / It is acknowledged in the ES and in Nicholas Rowson's Proof of Evidence WG1.8.1 that there would be long-term significant adverse effects on the landscape as a result of the Scheme. These are described further in Section 9.15 of the ES (Document 2.3.2). These are taken into account by John Davies (WG1.23.1) and Matthew Jones (WG1.1.1) in reaching their balanced conclusions.

13. **Point 12** (Stated that whilst acknowledging that the LVIA is broadly in line with the current IAN 135/10 Wales Update guidance and uses its landscape sensitivity, magnitude of change definitions, significance of effects categories and derivations, CPRW notes this guidance and therefore the LVIA (Para 9.3.36) has only three categories of adverse magnitude of change - major, moderate and minor. This we contend means the effects of the road on the landscape can be understated as there is a marked difference between “major adverse” i.e. total loss or large-scale damage, and “moderate adverse” i.e. partial loss or noticeable damage) / Proof of Evidence of Nicholas Rowson WG1.8.1 and ES Tables 9.8, 9.9, 9.10, 9.11 and 9.12 (Document 2.3.2). Nicholas Rowson (WG1.8.1) clarifies that the ES, and the guidance followed, use five categories being: No Change, Negligible, Minor, Moderate and Major. GLVIA3 paragraph 3.27 recommends ideally three or four but a maximum of

five categories. In relation to overall significance, GLVIA3 paragraph 3.34 states use of “for example a four-point scale of major/moderate/minor/negligible”. Again, for significance we have used a five-point scale and we have made clear which categories are considered significant (Moderate, Large and Very Large) and which are not, which is the aim of environmental assessment.

14. Point 13 (Contended the overall effect of the proposed road could be justified as being major/moderate as it is likely to be a prominent feature, very noticeably and significantly out of character with the Gwent Levels' landscapes both in terms of its physical appearance and also as importantly, for two further reasons; the operational effects of the proposed road on a crucial landscape value of this area, its tranquillity / undisturbed character; and the considerable increase in clutter in the landscape resulting from the construction of the road) / Nicholas Rowson's evidence WG1.8.1 at section 3.3 considers landscape design on the Gwent Levels. Nicholas Rowson (WG1.8.1) refers to Chapter 9 of the ES (Document 2.3.2), which describes the effects of the Scheme on landscape and visual receptors. Section 9.7 considers Assessment of Potential Construction Effects and section 9.8 considers Assessment of Potential Operational Effects across a range of viewpoints including the Gwent Levels, identifying a wide range of potential effects.

15. Point 14 (Although CPRW accepted the Gwent levels and the adjoining areas cannot be considered as being in the highest category of “undisturbed area” in Wales, in the local context of the Newport area and its hinterland, the Gwent Levels and its surroundings, are nationally classified as Zone C in terms of their undisturbed character. This category of undisturbed land is defined in Table 15 at Page 53 of the CCW report. These locally important qualities of relative tranquillity and darkness are therefore important characteristics which contribute to the distinctiveness of the Gwent Levels area) / Proof of Evidence of Nicholas Rowson WG1.8.1 and Chapter 9 of the ES (Document 2.3.2) explains how the majority of the study area (and all of the area through which the proposed Scheme would be located) appears to be within Zone B and "Built up areas", not Zone C on both the 1997 Tranquil Areas Map (Map 16 of CCW report) and 2009 Tranquil Areas Map (Map 17 of CCW report). Nicholas Rowson WG1.8.1 clarifies that Table 15 at Page 53 of

the CCW report describes Zone B as "Countryside subject to significant traffic intrusion and other equivalent disturbance". Zone C is also partly defined as "Countryside somewhat disturbed by light traffic noise, small settlements, etc". As there is little variation across the study area in terms of the CCW tranquillity mapping, our baseline study of landscape tranquillity is based on site knowledge and Landmap information, particularly the Visual & Sensory aspect areas. We have included text on the night-time landscape within the report, for the baseline, and during construction and operation.

16. Point 15 (Stated that relative tranquillity and darkness are important characteristics which contribute to the distinctiveness of the Gwent Levels area. These we believe must therefore be taken fully into account in any judgement of the effects the proposed road would have on the landscape character of those areas through which it passes. Should these qualities disappear for whatever reason, the integrity of this area's current landscape character would be further devalued) / Proof of Evidence of Nicholas Rowson WG1.8.1 and Chapter 9 of the ES (Document 2.3.2) explains how the ES baseline study of landscape tranquillity is based on site knowledge and LANDMAP information, particularly the Visual & Sensory aspect areas. We have included text on the night-time landscape for the baseline, and during construction and operation assessments. Landscape character (as stated in paragraph 2.7 of IAN 135/10(W) is "a combination of physical (e.g. landform, vegetation, buildings), aesthetic/perceptual (e.g. scale, appearance, tranquillity) and cultural/social (e.g. human interaction, land use, heritage) aspects which together make up the character of the area.

17. Point 16 (Stated that given this context, when one considers the Welsh Government's assessment of how the proposed road would impact on the tranquil qualities of the Gwent Levels, the LVIA appears to understate the degree of the impact the road would have on this quality. The use of neutral language in the relevant extract of the Welsh Government's landscape assessment statement illustrates its failure to qualify the effect) / Proof of Evidence of Nicholas Rowson WG1.8.1 explains how tranquillity is one component of landscape character, IAN 135/10(W) paragraph 3.4 goes on to state that potential effects could include those on landform/drainage patterns/urban form/street pattern, land cover/land use patterns/urban structure, cultural and historic associations and perceptual aspects. This

informed the structure for reporting effects on landscape character in Sections 9.7 and 9.8 of the ES (Document 2.3.2).

18. **Point 17** (Stated that in respect of LLCA 2 Wentlooge Levels, instead of assessing the actual magnitude of the affect, (Para 9.8.15) the text merely states in respect of the potential effects on the perceptual aspects) / Proof of Evidence of Nicholas Rowson WG1.8.1 refers to the ES (Document 2.3.2) and paragraphs 9.8.10 to 9.8.17. 9.8.10 to 9.8.15 summarise the sensitivity of the LLCA, the proposed works in that section and the potential effects. Paragraphs 9.8.16 (Winter Year 1 Assessment) and 9.8.17 (Summer year 15 Assessment) correctly assess the Magnitude of the potential effects. Nicholas Rowson WG1.8.1 clarifies that actual effects (rather than potential effects) can only be determined upon completion of the proposed Scheme, until that time all effects are potential based upon the proposals being assessed.
19. **Point 18 and 23** (Stated that with respect to the equivalent assessment of the impacts of the road on LLCA 7, Caldicott Levels, there is no mention at all in the Welsh Government's assessment of the effect of the road on the tranquillity of this landscape area) (Stated that in addition to the major adverse visual effects of the proposed road on the landscape of the Gwent Levels and its implications on the relative tranquillity and undisturbed nature of this area, CPRW believes these factors will be further compounded and accentuated by the additional clutter associated with road's construction and ongoing operation) / Proof of Evidence of Nicholas Rowson WG1.8.1 refers to the ES (Document 2.3.2) and paragraphs 9.8.50 to 9.8.55 summarise the sensitivity of the LLCA, the proposed works in that section and the potential effects. Paragraphs 9.8.56 (Winter Year 1 Assessment) and 9.8.57 (Summer year 15 Assessment) correctly assess the Magnitude of the potential effects. Paragraph 9.8.54 states that "The presence of the motorway within the area as well as lighting, signage and gantries as some locations would be conspicuous and alter the tranquillity and perception of the area. The effects would be focused in the north of the area."
20. **Point 19** (CPRW noted that Chapter 9 of the Environmental Statement includes the Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTVs). These rightly and fairly show what other developments apart from the proposed Motorway are currently visible from the Gwent Levels and other areas. Whilst this assists in illustrating the baseline situation, it is clear there is a fundamental difference

between the character of existing developments and the circumstances which will prevail should the proposed M4 motorway be constructed) / Proof of Evidence of Nicholas Rowson WG1.8.1 refers to the ES (Document 2.3.2) and clarifies that the information presented on the ZTV's appear to be misunderstood here. The ZTV's show the location where the Scheme may be visible from, not what other developments apart from the proposed Motorway are currently visible from the Gwent Levels and other areas (ES paragraph 9.3.8). The ZTV drawing notes state "The ZTV shown is an indication of the area, up to a distance of 5km from the centreline, within which the [section of the Scheme shown on the plan] may be visible... A height of 4.35m has been added to the proposed alignment elevation to simulate the average height of HGV traffic Above Ordnance Datum (AOD)."

21. **Point 20** (Stated that, the particular aspect which will be different and of significance, is the fact that the range of existing developments are static and emit relatively small levels of noise. This however would not be the case with the proposed motorway which would have constant flows of traffic moving along it day and night, all of which would emit significantly different and additional levels of noise. The level of these additional effects would therefore be significant in relation to the comparatively undisturbed circumstances which currently prevail across the Gwent Levels and its surrounding areas) / Proof of Evidence of Philip Evans (WG1.14.1) provides information about the assessed noise impacts of the Scheme. Philip Evans (WG1.14.1) clarifies this has been taken into account and that the spread of noise across the Gwent Levels have been predicted where they lie within 1 km of the Published Scheme. Much of the levels are already characterised by industrial, agricultural and road traffic noise, and are not currently undisturbed by anthropic sources.

22. **Point 21** (Noted that Page 64, Para 8.8.6 onwards of the Cultural Heritage (Chapter 8) section of the Environmental Statement also draws attention to this issue even though this is not part of the ASIDOHL2 Method. This assessment highlights in particular the implications of this additional road noise on "a person's ability to appreciate the historic landscape") / Proof of Evidence of Mick Rawlings WG1.9.1 refers to the ES (Document 2.3.2). ES Paragraphs 8.6 - 8.11 explain that, whilst the assessment of noise impacts on the historic landscape are not covered within the ASIDOHL2 process, such

impacts have nevertheless been considered within the overall assessment of the effect of the published Scheme on this registered historic landscape and have therefore been taken into account.

23. **Point 22** (Noted that The ES para 8.8.8 states, “There is no specific guidance or approved methodology for the assessment of the impact of noise on historic landscapes, although some work has been undertaken with regard to aircraft noise (Temple Group, 2014). However it must be assumed that anything more than a negligible increase in traffic noise (in areas where this is currently low) would have some appreciable impact on a person’s ability to appreciate the historic landscape”... “Based on the above consideration of both visual and noise impacts, the operation of the proposed new section of motorway would have a moderate magnitude of impact on the registered historic landscape. This is a high value heritage asset and the consequent significance of effect has therefore been assessed as large.” This weakness we suggest arises from the ASIDOHL2 assessment process only using a three point scale for assessing the magnitude of effect. It is not clear however whether this issue has been taken into consideration in the Welsh Government’s overall assessment of the effects of the road on the landscapes of its proposed route corridor. If it has not, the current assessment underestimates the impact of the road on these particular qualities of the Gwent Levels and a person’s ability to experience and appreciate the character of its historic landscapes) / Proof of Evidences of Mick Rawlings WG1.9.1 addresses the historic landscape and Phillip Evans WG1.14.1 addresses noise matters. Mick Rawlings (WG1.9.1) clarifies that it is considered that this statement made by Peter Ogden is incorrect and that the ASIDOHL methodology utilises a six-point scale for assessing the significance of the impact of development on the historic landscape; it does not measure the magnitude of effect. Mick Rawlings (WG1.9.1) refers to the ES (Document 2.3.2) and this matter is explained in paragraph 8.8.9 of the ES. Philip Evans (WG1.14.1) clarifies that noise impacts are considered within the assessment of the overall effect of the published Scheme on the registered historic landscape, referring to paragraphs 8.8.10 and 8.8.11 of the ES (Document 2.3.2).

24. **Point 25** (Stated that in addition, the proposed road bridge crossing of the River Usk will further add to the cluttered view of vertical elements along the

river, when viewed in conjunction with the Transporter Bridge, pylons and power lines and other such structures.) / Proof of Evidence of Nicholas Rowson WG1.8.1 refers to Chapter 9 of the ES (2.3.2) which considers the potential impacts of the River Usk crossing on landscape and visual receptors. An overview of the assessment approach to the River Usk crossing is considered in paragraphs 9.3.47 to 9.3.51 of the ES.