

Welsh Government

M4 Corridor around Newport

Environmental Statement Volume
3: Appendix 9.10

Visual Assessment Table – Land
with Public Access

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Appendix 9.10 Visual Assessment Table - Land with Public Access

Survey Dates:

September and October 2015

Distance of views has been assessed using the following parameters: up to 1km from the proposed new section of motorway = Short distance, 1km-5km = Middle distance, 5km-10km = Long distance, Over 10km = Distant. Any distances quoted are approximate

Refer to Figure 9.18 for location of receptors and visual effects drawings, Figure 9.9 for location of representative viewpoints, Figure 9.10 for day and night time photosheets, and Figure 9.11 for photomontage sheets

Receptor Reference	Receptor Type	Distance	Components of the existing view and the nature of the change in view	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect		
					During Construction	Year 1 Winter	Year 15 Summer
54a	Gaer Hill Fort and Sirhowy Valley Walk High sensitivity	Middle	<p>This area of land, which lies adjacent to the residential district of Gaer, is crossed by numerous informal paths and tracks. These run between blocks of trees and scrub, interspersed with more open areas of rough grassland and bracken. A waymarked trail – The Sirhowy Valley Walk – uses this land to link between an urban stretch of the route to the south and footpath number 384/23 to the north. The land occupies one of the highest areas around and within Newport at 91 metres AOD, offering expansive views in all directions apart from the northeast (where views are blocked by the adjacent housing areas). When looking towards the new section of motorway, panoramic views south and south east across the entire Usk and Ebbw rivers and the Wentlooge Levels area beyond Newport are available. The view extends across the Severn Estuary to the hills on the English side. The view is complex and contains a diversity of landscape elements, including housing areas, the Cardiff to London rail line, Newport docks and surrounding industrial areas, the transporter bridge and the natural landscape of the Wentlooge Levels. There are many industrial vertical elements within the middle distance of this view to the south east such as pylons, wind turbines, bridge piers and industrial chimney stacks.</p> <p>Construction: There would be middle distance views of the construction area of the new section of motorway as it runs through the Wentlooge Levels from some parts of this area but this element will be barely perceptible within the wider landscape at this distance. There would also be long distance views of the construction of the s the Usk River Crossing. This large scale element and the immense cranes required to construct it will be noticeable in the view, although they will coalesce to some degree with the surrounding industrial area and will not be dominant due to the expansive nature of the views.</p> <p>Year 1: Traffic moving along the new section of motorway would just be visible but is likely to be barely perceptible within the wider view, except in the clearest of conditions. The Usk River Crossing will be a noticeable feature as it sweeps over the industrial areas below, although its dominance would be limited by the expansiveness of the views. It is considered that this element would be a positive contribution to visual amenity, being a higher quality and more aesthetically pleasing feature than the surrounding industrial buildings and chimneys.</p> <p>Year 15: As per year 1.</p>	Minor adverse	Slight adverse		
54b	Belle Vue Park High sensitivity	Middle	<p>Belle Vue Park is a Victorian urban park on elevated ground to the south of the centre of Newport. The park includes a bowling club, tea room and play areas which are linked by curving paths. The park has a well wooded parkland style with the majority of the trees being mature specimens. These mature trees, along with the sloping gradients across the park, mean that views out across the surrounding areas are limited</p>				

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			<p>and intermittent. Where longer range views outwards are available, those to the south towards the new section of motorway encompass the lower reaches of Newport and the industrial areas around the Docks and the River Usk. Views are generally framed and focused rather than expansive due to surrounding trees. The Millennium Bridge and Transporter Bridge spanning the Usk are noticeable features at the points where these are visible between intervening trees.</p> <p>Construction: The construction of the Usk River Crossing will be a highly noticeable feature. It will be visible intermittently as visitors move around the park. The immense cranes involved in its construction will be particularly prominent. However, it is considered that, within the context of the park and the existing views available, this will be perceived as a fascinating landmark feature.</p> <p>Year 1: The Usk River Crossing will be a prominent and distinctive feature within the views from a limited proportion of the park. As visitors move around the park they are likely to see this landmark feature as part of a succession of 'bridge views' which would represent bridge building styles and techniques over the years since the park was built. There is the potential to enhance this experience with dedicated view points and interpretation.</p> <p>Year 15: As for year 1</p>	<p>Moderate beneficial</p> <p>Moderate beneficial</p> <p>Moderate beneficial</p>	<p>Moderate beneficial</p> <p>Moderate beneficial</p>	<p>Moderate beneficial</p> <p>Moderate beneficial</p>	
54c	<p>Public open space, Llanrumny, Cardiff</p> <p>High sensitivity</p>	Middle	<p>This public open space lies between extensive housing areas. It comprises a linear sweep of gently undulating informal grass areas, most frequently bounded by the surrounding houses, but occasionally bordered by woodland blocks. Beyond the surrounding housing areas, undulating well wooded countryside can be seen heading away to the north and north east from more elevated sections of this area, with the hills bordering the Brecon Beacons visible in the far distance. When looking north east towards the new section of motorway the wooded top of the Castleton Ridge is just discernible in the far middle distance above and beyond intervening hills as a small part of wide and expansive views.</p> <p>Construction: The woodland clearance associated with the Castleton Junction works and earthworks to form new cutting faces and excavate from borrow pits may just be discernible at a distance of approximately 4.5 km. These elements would only be visible from a very small proportion of the highest areas of this public open space, as from lower elevations intervening buildings and hills screen any views of the new section of motorway.</p> <p>Year 1: Bare cutting faces and traffic moving along the westernmost sections of the Castleton Junction may just be discernible from limited parts of this area.</p> <p>Year 15: Woodland screen planting would have matured and would be expected to completely screen the new section of motorway from this area. The visual amenity will return to the baseline situation.</p>	<p>Negligible adverse</p> <p>Negligible adverse</p> <p>No change</p>	<p>Slight adverse</p> <p>Slight adverse</p>	<p>Slight adverse</p> <p>Neutral</p>	
60	"Orb Industrial Estate recreational ground"	Short	<p>Views are largely contained due to a linear belt of trees following the boundary of the recreational ground found adjacent to the receptor. This intervening vegetation obscures far reaching views and offers intermittent glimpses through to beyond. Where vegetation is not intervening the land opens into the River Usk corridor where higher industrial buildings and components associated with the Newport Docks area can be</p>				

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					During Construction	Year 1 Winter	Year 15 Summer
	High sensitivity		<p>seen.</p> <p>Construction: Large scale construction activity within close proximity, including construction of an overbridge. Intervening vegetation will remain and would break up clear views but still offer glimpses of activity.</p> <p>Year 1: The new section of motorway would run within 1km of the receptors with traffic and elevated infrastructure forming dominant elements in the view. However, other vertical detracting elements are common in the view and would mean that the additional tall piers of the overbridge and visible infrastructure would not majorly alter the overall balance of the features.</p> <p>Year 15: Same as year 1.</p>	<p>Moderate adverse</p> <p>Moderate adverse</p> <p>Moderate adverse</p>	<p>Moderate adverse</p> <p>Moderate adverse</p>	<p>Moderate adverse</p>	<p>Moderate adverse</p>
72B	Newport Wetlands Nature Reserve High sensitivity	Middle	<p>The Newport Nature Reserve is located within Caldicot Levels at low lying area of land bordering the northern shore of the Severn Estuary. The reserve includes a wide variety of habitats which include grazed pastures with hedgerows, ditches, reens, reed beds and grasslands. The views are available from the network of paths that link the Nature Reserve with the local Public Rights of Way (PRoWs), coast and the visitor centre located between Uskmouth Power Station and Nash village. The availability of views varies depending on the presence of screening elements along footpaths including fences, reeds and trees within the Nature Reserve. Whilst most of the views are likely to be orientated to the south on the coast, there are views available to the north and these include Industrial buildings, numerous pylons with overhead power lines and dockside cranes.</p> <p>Construction: Partial views of the construction activities associated with the proposed Usk River crossing as well as other highway works along the proposed route would be available. The change would take place in the background of the view and the activities will be regarded in the context of other detracting elements that are present in the view.</p> <p>Year 1: The change in the view would take place in the background of the view. Partial views of the new section of motorway would be visible with the Usk River Crossing being most prominent due to its elevated location. The elements of the new section of motorway would be set within the landscape of industrial buildings and pylons viewed in the context of hills to the north of Newport visible in the background.</p> <p>Year 15: The view allows only for partial views of the River Usk Crossing and other elevated elements of the new section of motorway, therefore maturing vegetation would not change the nature of the views from those available in the year 1.</p>	<p>Minor</p> <p>Negligible</p> <p>Negligible</p>	<p>Slight adverse</p> <p>Slight beneficial</p>	<p>Slight beneficial</p>	<p>Slight beneficial</p>
101B	Magor Marsh Nature Reserve High Sensitivity	Middle	<p>The Magor Marsh Nature Reserve is well enclosed by the surrounding woodland, however some glimpsed and partial views are available towards the fencing that delineates the South Wales to London Mainline in the cutting and some adjacent houses at the southern edge of Magor.</p> <p>Construction: There would be no views of the new section of motorway due to the presence of belt of trees within the Nature Reserve and due to the screening provided by overlapping houses to the north and north west.</p> <p>Year 1: There would be no views of the new section of motorway due to the presence of belt of trees within the Nature Reserve and due to the screening provided by</p>	<p>No change</p> <p>No change</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Neutral</p>

Receptor Reference	Receptor Type	Distance	Components of the existing view and the nature of the change in view	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect		
					During Construction	Year 1 Winter	Year 15 Summer
			overlapping houses to the north and north west. Year 15: Same as year 1	No change			Neutral