

South Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment

Annex II: Strategic Viewpoints

South Gloucestershire Council

Final Draft Report for Adoption Chapter 10

Prepared by LUC

September 2024



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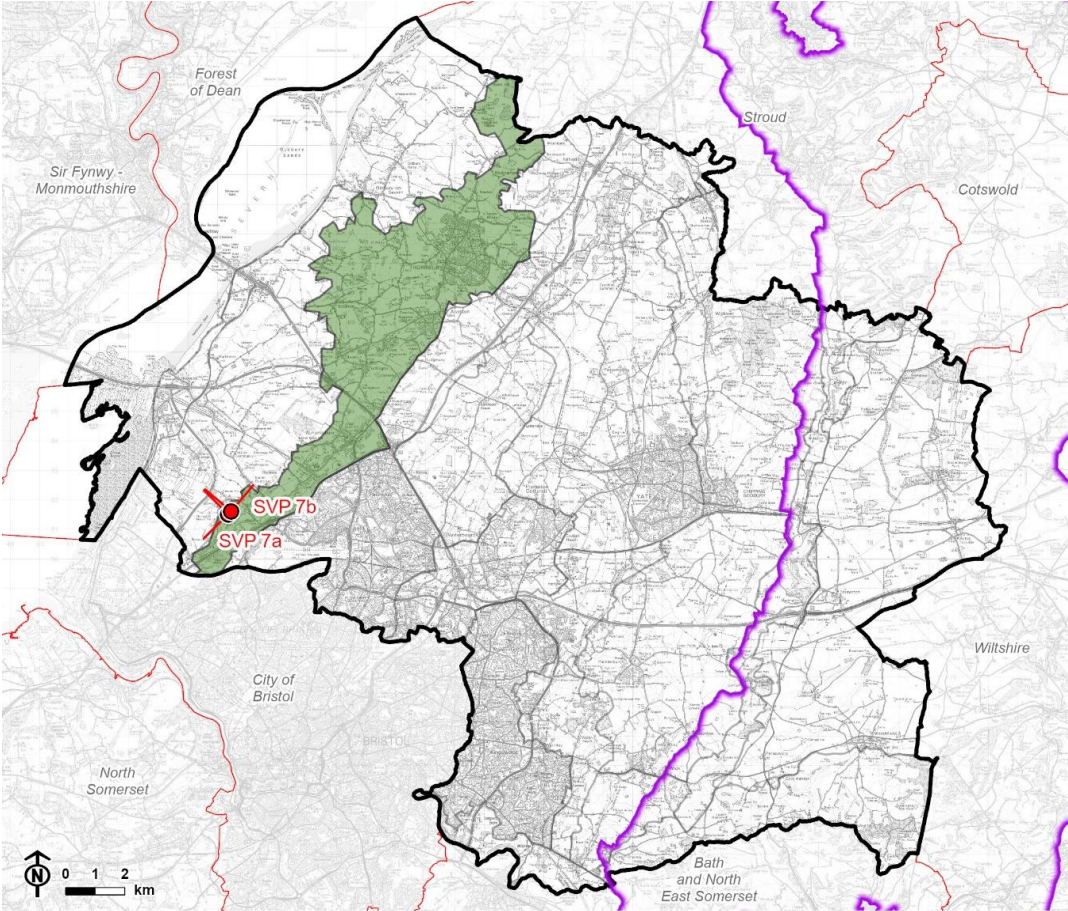
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Chapter 10

Strategic Viewpoint 7: Spaniorum Hill

Figure 10.1: Location of Strategic Viewpoint 7 and landscape character context

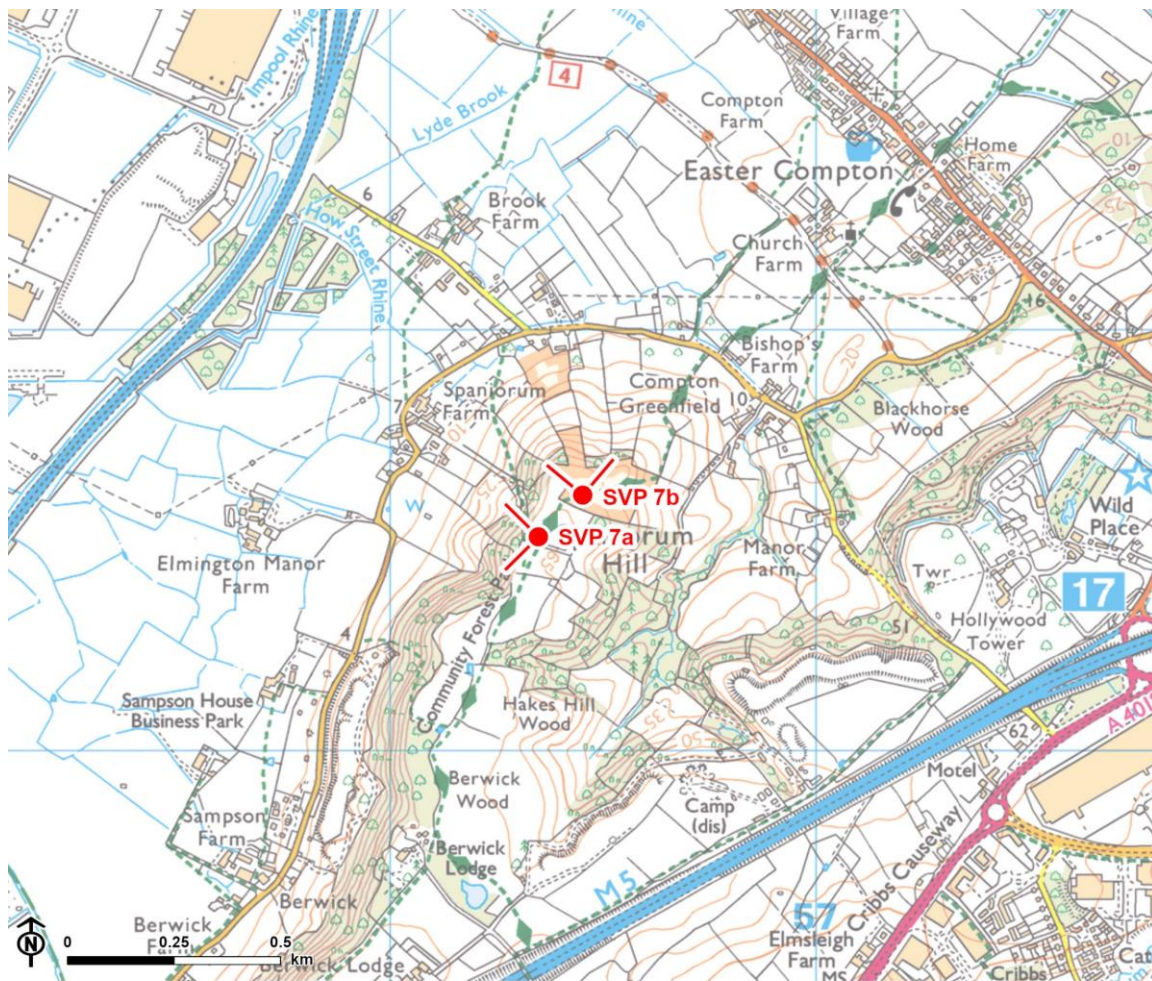


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


CB:HS, EB:shayler_h LUC 12274_FiguresUpdates_MayJune2024 12/06/2024
Source: LUC, SGDC, NE, OS

-  Council boundary
-  Neighbouring local authority
-  Cotswolds National Landscape (AONB) boundary
-  LCA 18: Severn Ridges
-  Strategic viewpoint and angle

Figure 10.2: Detailed map of the location of Strategic Viewpoint 7



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-  Council boundary
-  Cotswolds National Landscape (AONB) boundary
-  Strategic viewpoint and angle



Viewpoint Information

Grid reference: SVP 7a: ST 56370 81575 and SVP 7b: ST 56458 81613.

View location: Spaniorum Hill summit, Easter Compton.

View direction: SVP 7a provides views west and south-west over LCA 20: Pilning Levels, and towards LCA 21: Severn Shoreline and Estuary. SVP 7b provides views north and east over LCA 20: Pilning Levels and LCA 18: Severn Ridges.

Relationship with Visually Important Hillside (VIH): The viewpoint is located along the Severn Ridges VIH.

Experienced by: Recreational users of the open access land on Spaniorum Hill, –the Forest of Avon Community Forest Path (OAY/71/10) and public footpath OAY/70/10 that ascend and cross the hillside.

Figure 10.3: View Composition of Strategic Viewpoint 7a

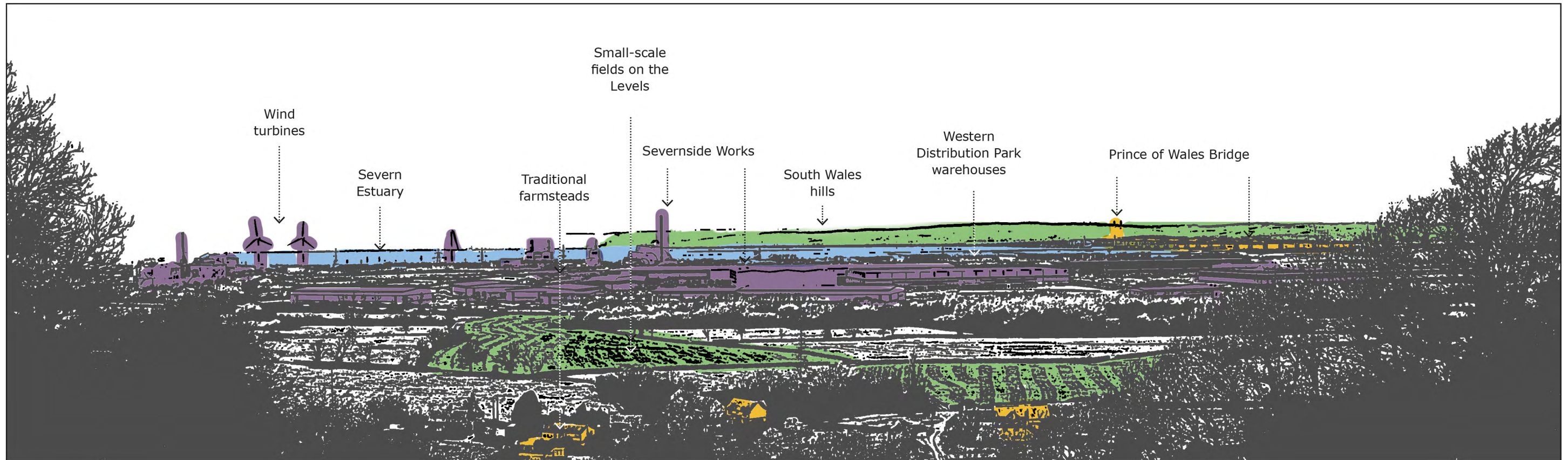


Figure 10.4: Full Panoramic Photograph of Strategic Viewpoint 7a

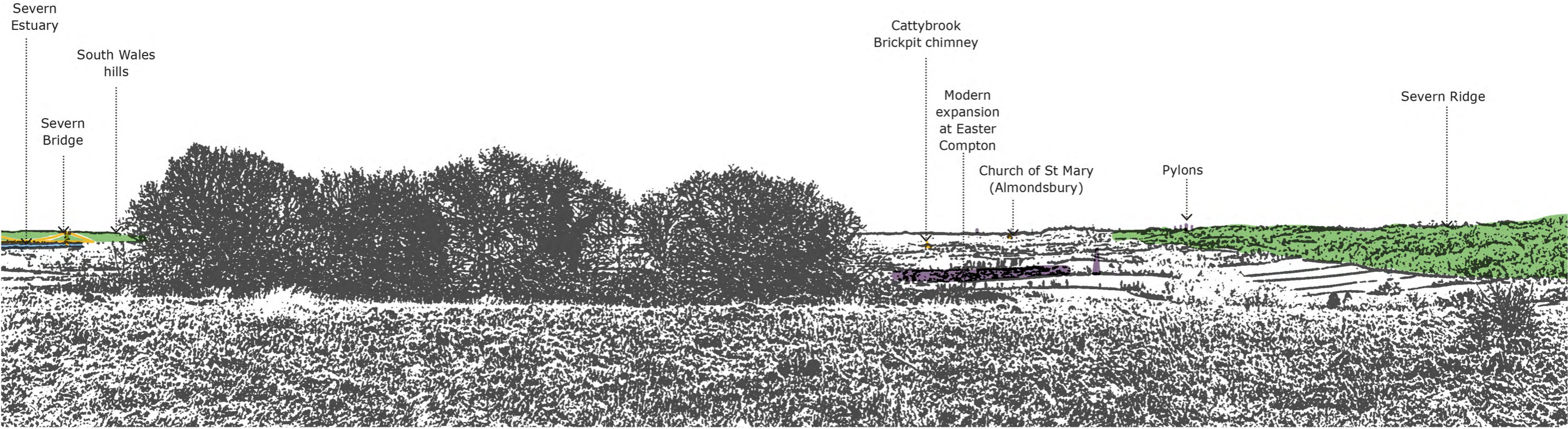


Strategic Viewpoint 7a: Spaniorum Hill (view west)



Strategic Viewpoint 7a (continued)

Figure 10.5: View Composition of Strategic Viewpoint 7b



Key landscape feature Landmark / historic feature Detractive feature

Figure 10.6: Full Panoramic Photograph of Strategic Viewpoint 7b



Strategic Viewpoint 7b: Spaniorum Hill (view north and east)



Strategic Viewpoint 7b (continued)

Characteristics

Popularity, access and facilities

- The viewpoint is mentioned in a local walking route leaflet (A Forgotten Landscape – Route 8: ‘Spaniorum Skyway’) which notes that *“there are wonderful views from the top of Spaniorum Hill west towards the River Severn and east over Bristol”* [See reference 1].
- The viewpoint location is noted in LCA 18: Severn Ridges which notes that *“views [from the Severn Ridge] are most extensive from the upper scarp edge, including places such as Spaniorum Hill”*.
- The viewpoint is publicly accessible, located along the Forest of Avon Community Forest Path (OAY/71/10) and near to footpath OAY/71/10. SVP 7b is also located on a small area of open access land on the north-east facing slope of the hill.

Quality, value and features of the view

- An elevated viewpoint along the Severn Ridges VIH that affords panoramic (180°) views in different directions, framed by foreground vegetation. The viewpoint represents a series of sequential views from the Community Forest Path, with those looking north-eastwards being more rural in nature and taking in the agricultural landscape around Easter Compton and Almondsbury together with the northern facing slopes of the Severn Ridges.
- SVP 7a provides a view to the west and north-west over the surrounding lower-lying ‘levels’ landscape (characterised by flat, small, regular and irregular fields, and blocks of woodland), extending to the Severn Estuary where warehouses, wind turbines and chimneys at Severnside Works and Western Distribution Park are prominent and exert a strong industrial character. The Prince of Wales Bridge (5km away) forms a distinctive landmark feature. Beyond the estuary, the distinctive hills of South Wales form a prominent backdrop in the view.
- SVP 7b provides a view to the north across the ‘levels’ and north-east over the Severn Ridges, and in contrast is characterised by a mosaic of open rural fields,

Chapter 10 Strategic Viewpoint 7: Spaniorum Hill

large swathes of woodland and the rising landform of the Severn Ridges). SVP 7b includes views of landmark features including the Severn Bridge (8km away) to the north, and in views to the north-east, The locally prominent chimney at Cattybrook Brickpit (located at the SSSI, 3km away) and the distinctive diamond-patterned lead spire of The Church of St Mary (Grade I listed) in Almondsbury which rises above woodland 4.5km away.

- In views to the east, modern expansion to the village of Easter Common and pylon lines, along with industrial infrastructure at Severnside Works and Western Distribution Park in the west, detract from the overall composition of the view.

Summary

The Spaniorum Hill viewpoint is categorised as a SVP as it meets most of the criteria to some extent. It is a popular, well known, and recorded viewpoint; it is noted in the South Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment as being a natural observation point from which to appreciate the landscape; it is located on a promoted footpath and likely to attract many visitors; and it provides a panoramic view that takes in the notable landscape features of the levels, the Severn Estuary (which is influenced by industrial activity), the Severn Ridges and the hills of South Wales, and the landmark features of The Church of St Mary, Cattybrook Brickpit, the Prince of Wales Bridge and the Severn Bridge. Other elevated views are available as the observer moves along the adjacent footpath network.

References

References

- 1 A Forgotten Landscape 'Spaniorum Skyway' walking route guide. (No date). Available at: <https://www.aforgottenlandscape.org.uk/projects/spaniorum-skyway-route/>

Report produced by LUC

Report produced by LUC

Bristol

12th Floor, Colston Tower, Colston Street, Bristol BS1 4XE

0117 929 1997

bristol@landuse.co.uk

Cardiff

16A, 15th Floor, Brunel House, 2 Fitzalan Rd, Cardiff CF24 0EB

0292 032 9006

cardiff@landuse.co.uk

Edinburgh

Atholl Exchange, 6 Canning Street, Edinburgh EH3 8EG

0131 202 1616

edinburgh@landuse.co.uk

Glasgow

37 Otago Street, Glasgow G12 8JJ

0141 334 9595

glasgow@landuse.co.uk

London

250 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8RD

020 7383 5784

london@landuse.co.uk

Manchester

6th Floor, 55 King Street, Manchester M2 4LQ

0161 537 5960

manchester@landuse.co.uk

landuse.co.uk

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