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1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Richards Partnership was appointed by Mactaggart and Mickel Homes Limited, in 2011, to advise on landscape & visual appraisal matters associated with land at Pirton Fields, Innsworth, Gloucestershire. This is in support of the strategic allocation of Pirton Fields within the Joint Core Strategy: Draft for Consultation (Oct 2013) drawing from new evidence produced for Mactaggart and Mickel Homes Ltd.

1.2 The study site (the Site) shown in Figure 1: Site Location and Topographical Study consists of two fields situated between:
   - B4063
   - Innsworth to the north
   - Innsworth/Churchdown to the east
   - Arable fields and the A40 to the west.

1.3 The Site forms the larger western part of the A3 Strategic Allocation Developable Option, as identified within the Joint Core Strategy (JCS): Draft for Consultation (Oct 2013).

1.4 The Richards Partnership looked at the Pirton Fields site and its environs in 2011 and prepared a Landscape & Visual Appraisal which was submitted to Tewkesbury Borough Council in February 2012 in response to the ’Developing the Preferred Option Consultation Document’ (Dec 2011).

1.5 The Joint Core Strategy Draft for Consultation (Oct 2013) identified the Site as part of a larger Strategic Allocation Plan 3 – South Churchdown Urban Extension.

1.6 The Joint Core Strategy Draft for Consultation (Oct 2013) is supported by the following three key studies:
   - JCS Landscape Characterisation Assessment and Sensitivity Analysis (Sep 2013)
   - JCS Strategic Allocations Report (Oct 2013)

1.7 The above studies are a little more broad brush than our work to date, as the studies have considered wider strategic land parcels between South Innsworth to Tinker’s Hill (also referred to as Chosen Hill and Churchdown Hill).

1.8 The broad findings within the Joint Core Strategy: Draft for Consultation (Oct 2013) agree with our own, albeit the visual sensitivity levels/ thresholds shown in the JCS Landscape & Visual Sensitivity and Urban Design Report (Oct 2012) are at variance with our Landscape & Visual Appraisal (Feb 2012) findings.

1.9 In light of this variance, and further detailed information that has been produced in support of the JCS: Draft for Consultation (Oct 2013), we have reviewed the methodology and findings contained within the JCS evidence base as they relate to Pirton Fields.

1.10 This report seeks to address the variance between the Joint Core Strategy (2013) and The Richards Partnership’s Landscape & Visual evidence by addressing those issues that give rise to the variance. The report shall:

1. Summarise the findings of the Richards Partnership Pirton Fields, Innsworth, Gloucester Landscape & Visual Appraisal February 2012.


3. Revisit the Landscape & Visual Sensitivity through detailed analysis of the visual receptors of Pirton Fields and its environs.

4. Summarise the findings and draw conclusions supported by a detailed understanding of the sensitivity of the Pirton Fields site.

1.11 In consideration of this appraisal work and additional hydraulic modelling work undertaken by Peter Brett Associates, the report summarises its findings with a suggested Pirton Fields Development Capacity Plan illustrating an adjustment to the development area within the Site and within the areas identified by the JCS authorities for removal from the green belt.
Figure 1. Site Location and Topographical Study
2.0 Summary of The Richards Partnership Landscape & Visual Appraisal (Feb 2012)

2.1 The Pirton Fields site is situated on the eastern edge of Gloucester, immediately to the south of Innsworth and alongside and to the north of Cheltenham Road East (B4063) (see Figure 1). The A40 Gloucester Ring Road lies approximately 100 metres to the west and the A40 Gloucester to Cheltenham link road approximately 200 metres to the south.

2.2 The Site measures approximately 19.8 hectares and falls from approximately 20 metres Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) along the site’s north-eastern boundary with the adjoining residential area on Parkside Drive and Dancey Road to 15 metres AOD at the site’s north-western corner where it adjoins the residential properties off Thompson Way.

2.3 Visual Appraisal

2.3.1 The report assessed the visual inter-relationship of the Site within the wider with particular regard to Tinker’s Hill.

Views from the A40 to the west and south.

2.3.2 Given the busy nature of the A40, it is from this road that the greatest number of people might view the Site.

2.3.3 The visual appraisal noted the roadside and field hedgerows provided few viewing opportunities, whilst the number of motorists travelling along these roads would be considerable. The sensitivity of the receptors was concluded to be low, given the oblique nature of the views, that most views would be snatched glimpses and motorists’ focus would most likely be on traffic around them and their approach to the roundabout. (Photograph 1)

Views from Cheltenham Road East (B4063)

2.3.4 The visual appraisal noted that the dense roadside hedgerow and trees largely conceal views of the Site and the existing residential edge beyond. (Photograph 2)

2.3.5 Whilst the introduction of development would have some impact on views along this road (particularly at any new junction into the Site), the retention and re-enforcement of existing roadside vegetation would conceal most views of residential development – if this was the favoured development approach.
Photograph 3. View towards the site from the fields below Tinker’s Hill. The intervening hedgerows and Churchdown preclude views of the Site.

Photograph 4. Properties along Parkside Drive enjoy open views over Pirton Fields westwards.
2.3.6 The initial appraisal found the area to be relatively flat, the only view afforded of the Site being from the elevated position of Tinker’s Hill/Churchdown Hill.

Views from Tinker’s Hill/Churchdown Hill

2.3.7 As a result of intervening topography the Site can only be viewed from the hill’s northern side. In the views identified, the appraisal noted that the site is discernible, albeit it could not be said to be prominent, sitting within a strong urban context provided by the A40, the Bristol – Birmingham main railway line, industrial buildings in the foreground and with both Gloucester and Innsworth in the background. (Photograph 3).

Views from the Adjoining Residential Area

2.3.8 The appraisal noted that from the adjoining residential area the strong belt of hedgerow scrub and trees along the Site’s northern boundary generally precludes any views of the Site from the adjacent Innsworth residential area.

2.3.9 In contrast, the residents along Parkside Drive to the east of the site have open and expansive views over the Site. (Photograph 4) with properties along Dancey Road being restricted to views from rear first floor bedrooms due to garden fences and planting generally limiting the view otherwise.

2.4 Landscape Appraisal

2.4.1 The report identifies the Site as falling within the ‘Settled Unwooded Vale – SV6B Vale of Gloucester – Landscape Type’ as outlined in the Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment.

2.4.2 Whilst the classification is certainly true within the wider context, the report noted that the area is heavily impacted upon by urban influences and the weakening of field boundaries which result in it being atypical of the wider character area.

2.5 Planning Context

2.5.1 The report discussed the matters on which planning policy was pertinent to the Site which included Green Belt, Landscape & Visual Appraisal policy and the designation of Tinker’s Hill/Churchdown Hill as being a ‘Special Landscape Area’.

2.5.2 The initial Green Belt Assessment had categorised the parcel G9, of which the Site formed a part, as highly significant in preventing ‘urban sprawl’.

2.5.3 The report examined the justification for this and concluded that the parcel of land, and in particular the Site, was an area which could support sustainable development, a conclusion which is supported by the JCS: Draft for Consultation (2013).
3.0 Review of the Joint Core Strategy: Draft for Consultation (Oct 2013)

3.1 The JCS: Draft for Consultation (October 2013) discusses a number of opportunities & constraints for the strategic allocation for development on parcel A3, of which the Pirton Fields site forms a part.

3.2 Within the JCS, the Landscape opportunities identified as being applicable to the Site are:
- Demonstrate how the strategic allocation can be developed as comprehensive urban extension
- New green infrastructure linkages along Innsworth Ditch and unnamed brook to be actively managed for biodiversity purposes.
- Enhancements to existing green infrastructure linkages to Tinker’s Hill/Churchdown Hill.
- New pedestrian and cycle linkages required from the north of the site towards Innsworth across the unnamed ditch.
- Green wedge to be retained through middle of broad location when viewed from Tinker’s Hill/Churchdown Hill

3.3 The constraints relating to landscape & visual matters both discussed within the JCS: Draft for Consultation (October 2013) and evidence base refers to three key landscape constraints relating to the A3 land parcel. These are:
- Flooding
- Visual Sensitivity
- Landscape Sensitivity

3.4 The JCS Landscape Characterisation Assessment and Sensitivity Analysis (September 2013) has assessed the Landscape Sensitivity of the South Innsworth land parcel, namely G7, as Medium – Low.

3.5 The Richards Partnership Landscape & Visual Appraisal Feb 2012 is supportive of this landscape sensitivity assessment, but variance lies within the JCS assessment with regards:
- Flooding
- Visual Sensitivity

Figure 2. The Proposed Changes to Green Belt Boundary from JCS: Draft for Consultation (Oct 2013).
3.6 Visual Sensitivity

3.6.1 The JCS Landscape & Visual Sensitivity and Urban Design Report (October 2012) evaluated the site to contain areas of high & medium visual sensitivity and medium landscape sensitivity with overall sensitivity rated as medium, see Figure 3.

3.6.2 The visual methodology of the Landscape & Visual Sensitivity and Urban Design Report suggests that sites are assessed as of high visual sensitivity if they satisfy the following criteria;
- **Criteria 1:** "Substantial adverse impact where scheme could cause significant deterioration in the existing view"
- **Criteria 2:** "Considerable scale of change in the view with loss of features and large change to composition"
- **Criteria 3:** "Extensive degree of contrast and change within the landscape or removing key visual landscape elements and character"

3.6.3 The JCS applied ‘high visibility’ to the west portion of the Site, nearest the A40 and covers two thirds of the Site, see Figure 3.

3.6.4 The JCS Landscape Characterisation Assessment and Sensitivity Analysis (September 2013) states that the parcel of land in which the Site study area is situated is;
- "Physically contained by infrastructure and housing, the landscape character is retained … has remaining landscape features … including a treed stream, limited rough grassland, some hedgerow, and tall and often scrubby field boundaries"
- It further states;
- "Views of infrastructure and housing … partly softened, but tranquility is lost and pylons create industrial landmarks … Land use is compartmentalised into intensive arable, un-grazed pasture and abandoned, scrub encroached waste land"
- and concludes its inclusion within the strategic allocation for development as it contains;
- "Highly fragmented infrastructure … a lack of visual and physical cohesion"

3.6.5 Given that the form of proposed development is residential, and the Site is bordered on two of its boundaries by existing residential form, we do not believe the introduction of residential development in this area would constitute; Criteria 2 - 'Considerable scale of change'.

3.6.6 Our Landscape and Visual Appraisal (2012) noted the Site was not prominent in the immediate or wider landscape. The Site’s boundary vegetation heavily filters views from its immediate surroundings and views from the wider landscape, including Tinker’s Hill/Churchdown Hill. The development would visually read as a continuation of the existing vegetation & built form.

3.6.7 The report summarises that the key considerations for the Landscape & Visual Sensitivity Plans are;
- Predominantly enclosed site with significant views from Tinker’s Hill/Churchdown Hill
- Landscape Character susceptible to change and has a value as a landscape visual resource more so to the west.

3.6.8 This would indicate that the high visual sensitivity assessment relates to receptors from Tinker’s Hill/Churchdown Hill and the Gloucester settlement/A40.
### 3.7 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

#### 3.7.1 Initial flood risk data from the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 (2008) indicated that the Site was susceptible to extreme floods (1 in 100 years) on the South and South West boundaries.

#### 3.7.2 The initial data was supported by the JCS Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Local Development Framework Level 2 (October 2011) Shown in Figure 4.

#### 3.7.3 The Strategic Allocation Report (Oct 2013) suggests that the opportunity for development within Strategic allocation G9 is constrained by the flood assessment, Paragraph 2.72 states;

> "A Strategic Flood Risk Level 2 assessment has subsequently been carried out on this land at this location [G9] which provides more detailed information on the site’s performance with regard to flood risk. This has informed the potential developable areas at this location.”

#### 3.7.4 This is reaffirmed within the proposed options plan within the Strategic Allocation Plan, mirroring the flood extent shown in Figure 4, with the preferred Option 2 Strategic Allocation Plan being taken into the JCS: Draft for Consultation (Oct 2013).

#### 3.7.5 In February 2012, on behalf of Mactaggart and Mickel Homes Limited, Peter Brett Associates produced a detailed report regarding the drainage & flood performance of the Site & its surroundings.

#### 3.7.6 Following the report findings, a hydraulic model of potential flood zones 2, 3A, 3B and Climate Change Floodplain within the Site and its surroundings was undertaken shown in Figure 5.

#### 3.7.7 The results of the model confirm that the risk of flooding within the locality is principally from the Innsworth Ditch/Drain. The model demonstrates that the flooding is contained within the land to the west, outside of the Site.

#### 3.7.8 The results also show that within the 1 in 100 flood profile model, the un-named watercourse to the northern boundary of the site is at risk of flooding, however, this is contained within the desired area of green infrastructure intended to support amenity links to the sports ground to the north of the Site.
4.0 Visual Inter-relationship - Site Visit to Test TRP Appraisal with JCS Methodology

4.1 In response to the information contained within the Landscape & Visual Appraisal and Urban Design Report (Oct 2012) which identified the western area of the Pirton Fields site as ‘High Visual Sensitivity’, a detailed visual study was undertaken by The Richards Partnership in November and December 2013 to test the visual sensitivity of the Site and understand the exact nature of potential impact to the key receptors.

4.2 The photographs within this report were taken during December 2013 using an EOS Canon 5D with a fixed 50mm lens. These photographs were ‘stitched’ in Photoshop so as to provide an undistorted true image of the views as seen by the eye from the specified photographic viewpoints.

Views from the Gloucester settlement west of the Site.

4.3 The Gloucester settlement is located to the east of the Site and is separated from it by the A40 and a landscape strip comprising of amenity grass and scrubland.

4.4 This scrub species, which remain unmanaged, provide a shelter belt and visual screen to the residential settlement which is reinforced by domestic fencing and garden planting.
Legend

- Site boundary
- Photographic viewpoints

Figure 6. Photograph Viewpoint Locations from Site Visit December 2013
Views from the A40 to the west of the Site

4.5 To establish the exact nature of views available from the A40, viewpoints were taken at 100m intervals as shown on Figure 6 from the Elmbridge Roundabout to the footbridge approximately 600-700 meters to the north-west, (Photographs 5 – 14).

4.6 These views are representative of views experienced by motorists travelling in both directions along this road. In accordance with Landscape Institute’s LVIA guidance, the receptors are considered of relatively low sensitivity, given they are travelling at speed with limited opportunities to view the landscape/scenery, views are oblique and limited to snatched glimpses.

4.7 As shown in Photographs 5 - 14 views of the Site afforded are heavily filtered as a result of roadside and intervening tree/hedgerow planting.

4.8 The roadside vegetation allows two ‘windows’ toward the site as shown in Photographs 7 & 9. The clear strips being approximately 20m in length, would offer snatched glimpses through the vegetation toward the Site.

Photograph 5. View from A40 towards Pirton Fields. The Site is fully screened from view by roadside vegetation, visual sensitivity criteria 1,2 & 3 are not applicable at this view point.

Photograph 6. View from A40 towards Pirton Fields. The Site is heavily filtered from view by roadside vegetation, the visual sensitivity criteria 1,2 & 3 are not applicable at this view point.
Photograph 7. View through gap in vegetation. Pirton Fields are discernible, but the speed of motorists' travel and the oblique view would only facilitate snatched glimpses and not constitute substantial change as required to satisfy Criteria 1, 2 & 3.

Photograph 8. View from A40 towards Pirton Fields. The Site is heavily filtered from view by roadside vegetation; the visual sensitivity criteria 1, 2 & 3 are not applicable at this viewpoint.

Photograph 9. View through gap in vegetation. Pirton Fields are discernible but the speed of motorists' travel and the oblique nature of the view would only facilitate snatched glimpses and not constitute substantial change as required to satisfy Criteria 1, 2 & 3.
Views from the A40 to the west of the Site

Photograph 10. View from A40 towards Pirton Fields. The Site is heavily filtered from view by roadside vegetation, the visual sensitivity criteria 1, 2 & 3 are not applicable at this view point.

Photograph 11. View from A40 towards Pirton Fields. The Site is heavily filtered from view by roadside vegetation, the visual sensitivity criteria 1, 2 & 3 are not applicable at this view point.

Photograph 12. View from A40 towards Pirton Fields. The Site is heavily filtered from view by roadside vegetation. The visual sensitivity criteria 1, 2 & 3 are not applicable at this view point.
Views from the A40 to the west of the Site

Photograph 13. View from A40 towards Pirton Fields. The site is heavily filtered from view by roadside vegetation, the visual sensitivity criteria 1, 2 & 3 are not applicable at this viewpoint.

Photograph 14. View from A40 towards Pirton Fields. The site is heavily filtered from view by roadside vegetation, the visual sensitivity criteria 1, 2 & 3 are not applicable at this viewpoint.
Views from the Elmbridge Roundabout

4.9 To establish the exact nature of views available from the Elmbridge Roundabout, views were taken from the roundabout towards the Pirton Fields site.

4.10 As shown in photographs 15 & 16 the views from the roundabout are heavily filtered as a result of the roadside vegetation.
Views from the A40 to the South of the Site

4.11 To establish the exact nature of views available from the A40, viewpoints were taken at 100m intervals as shown on Figure 6 from the Elbridge Roundabout towards Cheltenham looking towards the Site.

4.12 These views are representative of views experienced by motorists travelling in both directions along this road. In accordance with LVIA guidance the receptors are considered of relatively low sensitivity, given they are travelling at speed with limited opportunities to view the landscape/scenery, views are oblique and limited to snatched glimpses.

4.13 As shown in Photographs 17-22 the views afforded from the A40 are heavily filtered as a result of roadside hedgerow planting and the distance from the Site.
Photograph 19. View from A40 towards Pirton Fields, view is lightly filtered with layered vegetation. It is anticipated that the development rooflines would be visible from the viewpoint, but motorists would be travelling at speed with an oblique view, therefore, the visual sensitivity is not considered to be ‘High’ or ‘Significant’ in relation to the sensitivity criteria 1, 2 & 3.

Photograph 20. View from A40 towards Pirton Fields, view is lightly filtered with layered vegetation. The existing residential areas come into view on the far right of the photograph which demonstrates the viability of the existing development during the winter months. As motorists would be travelling at speed with an oblique view, the visual sensitivity is not considered to be ‘High’ or ‘significant’ in relation to the sensitivity criteria 1, 2 & 3.

Photograph 21. View from A40 towards Pirton Fields, view is lightly filtered with layered vegetation. The existing residential areas come into view on the far right of the photograph which demonstrates the viability of the existing development during the winter months. As motorists would be travelling at speed with an oblique view the visual sensitivity is not considered to be ‘High’ or ‘Significant’ in relation to the sensitivity criteria 1, 2 & 3.

Views from the A40 to the south of the Site
Photograph 22. View from A40 towards Pirton Fields, view is lightly filtered with layered vegetation. The existing residential areas come into view on the far right of the photograph which demonstrates the visibility of the existing development during winter months. As motorists would be travelling at speed with an oblique view the visual sensitivity is not considered to be ‘High’ or ‘Significant’ in relation to the sensitivity criteria 1, 2 & 3.
4.14 To establish the views available from the B4063 towards the Site, viewpoints were taken at 100m intervals along this stretch of road looking towards the Site.

4.15 Photographs 23-29 show views from the B4063 towards the Site are screened by scrubby marginal growth with some small trees which follow the line of the road and Innsworth Drain.

4.16 As shown in these photographs, the view of the Site from the road is heavily filtered and would be fully screened when the vegetation strip was in full leaf. Whilst new development would most likely appear at times above the hedgeline, the Site itself and most of the development would remain largely hidden from view. Given this, we do not believe the Site plays a strong visual role to people travelling along this road. This suggests the site has a ‘Moderate to Low’ visual role along this length of road.

4.17 In addition, the vegetation strip is in contrast to the opposite side of the road, which is a failed hedgerow which affords views across towards Tinker’s Hill and it would be reasonable to suggest that receptors on this road would be drawn towards this view rather than towards the Site study area. Photograph 27.
Photograph 25. View towards Pirton Fields, roadside vegetation heavily filters views of site, the visual sensitivity criteria 1, 2 & 3 are not applicable at this viewpoint.

Photograph 26. View towards Pirton Fields, roadside vegetation heavily filters views of site, the visual sensitivity criteria 1, 2 & 3 are not applicable at this viewpoint.

Photograph 27. View towards Tinker’s Hill from Cheltenham Road East. Motorists travelling along the road will be naturally drawn towards the open view of Tinkers hill over the managed field boundary rather than the heavily vegetated northern boundary that filters views to Pirton Fields.
Photograph 28. View towards Pirton Fields, roadside vegetation heavily filters views of site, the visual sensitivity criteria 1, 2 & 3 are not applicable at this view point.

Photograph 29. View towards Pirton Fields, roadside vegetation heavily filters views of site, the visual sensitivity criteria 1, 2 & 3 are not applicable at this view point.

Views from the B4063, Cheltenham Road East
Figure 7. Visibility mapping of Tinker’s Hill in relation to Pirton Fields
Views from Tinker’s Hill/Churchdown Hill

4.18 Tinker’s Hill affords walkers elevated attractive panoramic views over Gloucester, Churchdown and Innsworth.

4.19 At approximately 2km from the Site, the Site itself is largely hidden behind layered field margin vegetation with only the south east corner of the Site discernible, as shown in Photograph 30.

4.20 A visit of Tinker’s Hill/Churchdown Hill was undertaken in 2013 in which all footpaths were walked to test the Site’s visibility from this location. A plan mapping the visibility of the site is provided in Figure 7. This exercise shows that intervening vegetation strongly limits views to the Site.

4.21 As shown in Photograph 30, the view of the Site is barely discernible from Tinker’s Hill, the north eastern area of the Site is visible but the larger, southern and western areas of the site are screened by intervening hedgerows and trees. In photograph 30 the Gloucester North Community Fire & Rescue Headquarters is visible.

4.22 Given the focused study undertaken as part of this report, it would seem disproportionate when taken in context of the wider landscape (and in particular the AONB) that the Site is classified as ‘High Sensitivity’ and we would suggest that this assessment is reduced to Medium – Low.

Photograph 30. View towards Pirton Fields from Tinker’s Hill, the site is barely discernible from this viewpoint and therefore it’s visual sensitivity is not considered to be ‘High’ or ‘Significant’ in relation to the criteria 1, 2 & 3.
Structure planting would be introduced along the water-courses which form the Site’s western and northern boundaries. This planting would strengthen the Site’s visual enclosure from the A40 and the eastern part of the Cheltenham Rd East and enhance the brooks ecological value.

We would suggest the structure planting be designed, planted and managed so as to frame views into the Site from the housing area to the north.

To build upon the visual, ecological and amenity value of the existing water courses the Site’s principal areas of public open space are focused around the Site’s northern and western boundaries. This approach would have the benefit of positioning the development’s SuDS system alongside the brooks and the areas principal areas of public open space.

Access into the Site would be via a main access point off Cheltenham Rd East and secondary access points/links via Parkside Drive.

Figure 8. Development Capacity Plan
5.0 Summary

5.1 The Richards Partnership considered the landscape and visual characteristics of the Pirton Fields Site and its immediate environs in our Landscape & Visual Appraisal, February 2012. This report was submitted as part of an associated Promotional Document submitted to Tewkesbury Borough Council in February 2012, in respect of the ‘Developing the Preferred Option Consultation’ December 2011.


5.3 Whilst we are broadly supportive of the JCS: Draft for Consultation (Oct 2013) Strategic Allocation Plan 3 – South Churchdown Urban Extension, our own work leads to different conclusions in two important areas:

Firstly, the LVUSD Report concludes that visual sensitivity of the western area of the Pirton Fields site is of ‘High Visual Sensitivity’

Secondly, the 1 in 100 flood line shown within the Flood Risk Assessment Level 2 and its influence on the developable area in Strategic Allocation Plan 3 – South Churchdown Urban Extension.

5.4 Using the Visual Assessment Methodology provided in the LVUSD Report we have carefully revisited our earlier landscape & visual work and tested the Pirton Fields site’s visual inter-relationship with the locations from which the Site might be seen. This study included:

- Views from A40 to the West.
- Views from A40 to the South.
- Views from B4063, Cheltenham Road East.
- Views from adjoining residential areas.
- Views from Tinker’s Hill (also referred to as Chosen Hill/Churchdown Hill).

5.5 The visual assessment contained within this report demonstrates that the Pirton Fields site has, at best, a weak visual relationship with the A40 to the south, the A40 to the west and the B4063 Cheltenham Road East.

5.6 The visual mapping exercise and photographs taken from the network of rights of way across and around Tinker’s Hill demonstrate that, whilst the eastern and northern areas of Pirton Fields are discernible, the Site is not notably prominent, furthermore, unlike the landscape to the south of the railway line, those areas of Pirton Fields which are discernible from Tinker’s Hill are seen within an urban context of existing built form which wraps around the Site’s northern and eastern boundaries. In contrast, the land to the south of the railway line is far more prominent by virtue of its proximity to the footpath on Tinker’s Hill and the ability of viewers to see this unhindered by intermediate trees and hedgerows.

5.7 Given this exercise and their findings, and using the same visual assessment criteria provided in the LVUSD Report, we are of the opinion that the Pirton Fields Site Visual Sensitivity is not ‘High’ but ‘Medium to Low’.

5.8 With regards to the flood characteristics of the area, the JCS Strategic Allocation Report (2013) notes that the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2 (2011):

“has informed the potential developable areas at this location” (Pg35, Para 2.72)

5.9 This Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2 (2011) identified the ‘1 in 100 year’ flood area in and around the south western extents of the Pirton Fields site.

5.10 Recent hydraulic flood modelling undertaken by Peter Brett Associates in 2013, and agreed with the Environment Agency, has established the south western areas of the Site would, in fact, not be affected by the ‘1 in 20 year’ nor the ‘1 in 100 year’ flood extent.

5.11 Whilst we are broadly supportive of the JCS: Draft for Consultation (Oct 2013) Strategic Allocation Plan 3 – South Churchdown Urban Extension, we believe the Landscape & Visual Appraisal undertaken by ourselves in 2012 being tested in some detail in the production of this report, and the additional flood mapping model supports the development strategy/capacity illustrated in Figure 8, opposite. This approach would deliver upwards of 450 new homes within a landscape strategy/capacity that responds to the site’s visual inter-relationship with Tinker’s Hill, views from the A40 and the 1 in 100 flood risk areas identified by Peter Brett Associates. The corridor of green space provided and the Site’s western and northern boundaries are complementary to the Site’s green infrastructure linking with open space and ecological areas/corridors in the surrounding area.

The Richards Partnership

December 2013