

## 7 Landscape and Visual

### 7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 Pegasus Landscape Design has been commissioned to undertake a landscape and visual assessment (LVIA) as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) on behalf of Lioncourt Homes.

7.1.2 The LVIA will form part of the application for outline planning permission related to the development proposal at land off Tamworth Road, Keresley, Coventry (referred to as 'the site').

7.1.3 The scheme (referred to as 'the development proposal') will include residential development of up to 800 dwellings, open space, vehicular access from Tamworth Road, a primary school, a local village centre including convenience store, community facilities, footpath and cycleways, nature conservation areas, play areas, allotments, associated infrastructure and all associated works. This is set out in detail in Chapter 2 of this ES.

7.1.4 This assessment aims to determine the likely effects of the development proposal on the existing landscape and visual receptors in the study area. The following receptors have been assessed to establish the significance of effect:

- Landscape character, including physical landscape resources; and
- Views and visual amenity experienced by residents, recreational users (including visitors and tourists) and road users.

7.1.5 This assessment identifies the impacts that are likely to arise from the development proposal and subsequently evaluates the potential of significant effects arising as a result. The assessment also sets out measures that will avoid, remedy or compensate adverse impacts (mitigation measures) and where such measures have been incorporated into the development proposal or where such measures are recommended as further mitigation.

7.1.6 Landscape features and elements provide the physical environment for flora and fauna and the associated importance of biodiversity assets. This LVIA does not consider the value, susceptibility or importance of ecology and biodiversity, nor does it consider impacts from an ecological stance. These issues are addressed in Chapter 5 of the Environmental Statement (ES), Ecology and Nature Conservation.

7.1.7 Heritage assets such as Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas all contribute to the overall landscape character, context and setting of an area. These aspects have also been given consideration in the LVIA in terms of setting and landscape character. However this assessment does not address the significance or importance of heritage assets and designations or the potential impacts of the development proposal on such assets. These are addressed in Chapter 6 of the ES, Archaeology and Cultural Heritage.

### 7.2 Assessment Approach

#### Methodology

7.2.1 The approach and methodology used for this assessment has been developed in accordance with the guidance in the following documents:

- Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition;
- Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002) Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland; and
- Landscape Institute Advice Note 1/11 Photography and Photomontages Guidance.

7.2.2 Reference has also been made to a number of additional sources of data and information; these are referred to in the relevant sections of the baseline information.

### **Level of assessment**

7.2.3 The Guidelines for Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) 2013 acknowledge that LVIA can be carried out either as a standalone 'appraisal' or as part of a broader EIA. The GLVIA note that the overall principles and core steps in the process are the same but that there are specific procedures in EIA with which an LVIA must comply. This LVIA has been prepared for the purpose of formal EIA for inclusion in the ES.

### **Approach**

7.2.4 The overall approach to the identification, evaluation and assessment of landscape and visual effects is summarised as follows:

- determining the scope of the assessment;
- collating baseline information for landscape and visual receptors, including completing desk study research and undertaking field based survey work;
- review the development proposal and identify and describe the likely impacts (enabling specific judgments to be made on sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors);
- establish the sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors (balancing judgments on susceptibility and value);
- determine the magnitude of impacts (balancing judgments on size / scale, duration and reversibility);
- the assessment of likely significant landscape and visual effects through a balanced approach and clear description of judgments on sensitivity and magnitude; and
- the identification of measures to avoid or remedy significant effects and the subsequent re-assessment of likely significant effects.

### **Scope of assessment**

7.2.5 The broad spatial scope for the LVIA is based on an approximate radius of 2km from the site. This is considered sufficient to account for the likely significant effects that will be generated by the development proposal. This has then been refined through the initial stages of the assessment (i.e. desk study and field survey work) to focus on the key sensitive receptors and likely significant effects.

7.2.6 This assessment considers landscape and visual effects at the following stages of the development proposal:

- Effects during construction – when the development proposal will be in construction, including reference to the potential influence of a phased approach to construction; and
- Effects at completion Year 15 – to assess the degree of residual impact following the establishment of proposed mitigation measures.

7.2.7 For receptors where existing vegetation is a component of the view, or where proposed planting and structural landscaping is included in the development proposal, the seasonal changes and influence on screening of the view is described. For proposed planting the assessment assumes that planting stock will have reached between 8m and 10 by year 15 years.

### **Collating baseline information**

7.2.8 Information has been collated using a process of desk study and field survey in order to capture a comprehensive description of the baseline position for landscape and visual receptors. The desk study

included reference to published landscape character studies other relevant planning policy guidance.

- 7.2.9 Field survey work was completed during December 2013. A series of representative photographs were taken during the field work. The photographs were taken with a digital camera with a 50mm lens (equivalent focal length) at approximately 1.7 metres in height. These are presented as a series of representative viewpoints (included as Viewpoints 1 to 10, **Figure 7.5**) and have been used to inform both the landscape assessment and, separately, visual assessment from a series of receptors.

### **Assessment of effects**

- 7.2.10 Having established the relevant baseline position the assessment process then completes the following specific stages:

- Evaluate the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and visual receptors, specifically in response to the nature of the development proposal (the sensitivity of landscape resource is not standard and depends on the nature and type of development proposed);
- Identify the potential magnitude of impact on the physical landscape, on landscape character and on visual receptors;
- Combine judgments on the nature of the receptor (sensitivity) and the nature of the impact (magnitude) to arrive at a clear and transparent judgment of significance.
- For both landscape effects and visual effects the final conclusions on significance are based on the combination of magnitude and significance. The rationale for the overall judgement on significance is based on the sequential combination of each of the criteria individually leading to the balance and justification of these.

- 7.2.11 The full methodology used for this LVIA, including detailed thresholds and criteria for each of the stages of analysis and assessment of landscape and visual impacts, is included in **Appendix 7.1**.

### **Policy Framework**

- 7.2.12 In the context of the relevant planning framework, the following is a summary of those policies specific to the landscape and visual issues surrounding the development proposal and which will have implications for the landscape strategy presented in this assessment.

#### **European Landscape Convention**

- 7.2.13 The European Landscape Convention (ELC) promotes the protection, management and planning of European landscapes. The convention was adopted on 20 October 2000 and came into force on 1 March 2004. The ELC is designed to achieve improved approaches to the planning, management and protection of landscapes and defines landscape as “...an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors)”. The importance of this definition is that it focuses on landscape as a resource in its own right and moves beyond the idea that landscapes are only a matter of aesthetics and visual amenity.

#### **National Planning Policy Framework**

- 7.2.14 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and provides a framework within which the appropriate local council can produce local and neighbourhood plans; the NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 7.2.15 The NPPF sets out three dimensions to achieving sustainable development that include economic, social and environmental considerations. It places an onus on the planning system to perform a role in relation to the environment that ‘*contributes to the protection and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment...*’ and this underpins the strategic guidance set out in the NPPF in relation to landscape and visual matters.

7.2.16 High quality design and local character are repeating themes through the core planning principles and more specific guidance on delivering sustainable development. Specific issues addressed by the core principles of the NPPF include:

- that decision making should secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
- that decision making should take account of the different roles and character of different areas and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it (this reflects the aims of the ELC); and
- that development should contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

7.2.17 Under delivering sustainable development the guidance sets out a series of considerations relating to 'good design'<sup>1</sup>. This includes reference to sense of place, responding to local character and materials and aiming for visually attractive solutions as a result of appropriate landscaping. It also notes issues relating to local distinctiveness and taking opportunities to enhance the character and quality of an area.

7.2.18 The NPPF notes the importance that designs 'evolve' in response to local issues and views of the local community<sup>2</sup> and also sets out principles in relation to conservation and enhancement of the natural environment<sup>3</sup>.

7.2.19 With specific reference to green belts, the NPPF states at section 9 that:

7.2.20 *"The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence."*

*Green Belt serves five purposes:*

- *to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
- *to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
- *to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- *to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- *to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land."*

### **Planning Practice Guidance**

7.2.21 The Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was updated on 6th March 2014. The Natural Environment section of the PPG explains the key issues in terms of implementing policy to protect biodiversity, landscape and green infrastructure, including local requirements. The Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space section explains how the recent local green space designation is to be implemented and provides general guidance regarding open space. The Design section of the PPG explains those points pertinent to design issues.

7.2.22 In the Natural Environment section of the PPG, part 1: Landscape considers how the character of the landscape can be assessed to inform plan-making and planning decisions. It states in paragraph 001 that:

7.2.23 *"One of the core principles in the National Planning Policy Framework is that planning should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Local plans should include strategic*

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<sup>1</sup> Para 58-66, Department for Communities and Local Government, NPPF (March 2012)

<sup>2</sup> Para 66, Department for Communities and Local Government, NPPF (March 2012)

<sup>3</sup> Section 11, Department for Communities and Local Government, NPPF (March 2012)

policies for the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, including landscape. This includes designated landscapes but also the wider countryside."

7.2.24 With regard to open space and green infrastructure, in paragraph 001 of the Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space section, the PPG states that:

7.2.25 "it [open space] can provide health and recreation benefits to people living and working nearby; have an ecological value and contribute to green infrastructure as well as being an important part of the landscape and setting of built development..."

7.2.26 Paragraph 007 of the Design section of the guidance, states that planning should promote local character, including landscape setting. It considers that:

7.2.27 "Development should seek to promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, local man-made and natural heritage and culture, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation. The successful integration of all forms of new development with their surrounding context is an important design objective, irrespective of whether a site lies on the urban fringe or at the heart of a town centre."

7.2.28 It also states that:

7.2.29 "When thinking about new development the site's land form should be taken into account. Natural features and local heritage resources can help give shape to a development and integrate it into the wider area, reinforce and sustain local distinctiveness, reduce its impact on nature and contribute to a sense of place. Views into and out of larger sites should also be carefully considered from the start of the design process."

**Local planning guidance**

7.2.30 The site is located to the north-west of Coventry and within the jurisdiction of Coventry City Council (CCC). Policy and designations related specifically to landscape and visual issues are set out in Table 7.1 and 7.2, below, and illustrated on **Figure 7.1**, Site Location and Planning Designations.

**Statutory and non-statutory landscape designations**

Table 7.1 – Relevant statutory and non-statutory designations

Designation	Detail	Distance from boundary
Ancient Woodland	Ancient replanted woodland and Ancient semi-natural woodland at Pikehorne Wood.	Approximately 280m north-west.
	Ancient replanted woodland and Ancient semi-natural woodland at Bunsons Wood.	Approximately 480m north.
Listed Buildings	Various including Coundon Hall Farmhouse (II), Akon House (II) and Beechwood Hotel (II).	Between approximately 60m and 225m to south.

**Local policy**

Table 7.2– Coventry Development Plan 2001 - Saved Policies Relevant to Landscape

Policy ref	Policy	Policy summary
GE1	Green environment strategy	This policy considers the protection, enhancement and accessibility of green space and explains that City Council will give protection to landscape features and maintain a green belt protecting green wedges and the "arden" countryside from inappropriate development.
BE20	Landscape design	This policy states that "A high standard of landscape

	and development	design and boundary treatment will be required as part of the design of development."
GE3	Green space corridors	This policy considers the green space corridors across the city, which shall be protected for: amenity; access to open countryside; outdoor sport and recreation; environmental education; and landscape and nature conservation. They include green wedges, wetlands and river corridors, linear open spaces and the Coventry Canal.
GE6	Control over development in the green belt	This policy states that "Inappropriate development will not be allowed in the Green Belt unless justified by very special circumstances. Development within or conspicuous from the Green Belt must not harm the visual amenities of the Green Belt by reason of siting, materials or design."
GE9	Green space provision in new housing developments outside the city centre	This policy is concerned with there being sufficient good quality green space in new housing developments outside the City Centre.
GE14	Protection of landscape features	This policy is concerned with landscape features considered to be of value to the amenity or history of a locality, including mature woodlands, trees, hedgerows, ridge and furrow meadows and ponds, which will be protected against unnecessary loss or damage.

**Scoping Criteria**

7.2.31 A scoping letter which outlined the intended scope of the LVIA with reference to landscape character and use of a 'parameters plan' for the assessment was produced to aid CCC in their scoping opinion; this scoping request letter is given in **Appendix 1.1**. CCC consulted with relevant statutory and other consultees and provided a scoping opinion which helped determine the scope of work deemed necessary; their response is also contained in **Appendix 1.1**.

**Limitations**

7.2.32 This LVIA has been prepared with the following known limitations:

- the development proposal for assessment is as illustrated on the Parameters Plans (**Figures 1.2 – 1.5**);
- the development proposal will be submitted for outline planning and therefore details pertaining to appearance, means of access landscaping, layout and scale (and other relevant reserved matters) will all be subject to further detailed design development at a later stage of development;
- during the baseline survey there were some areas which were inaccessible (such as private land, commercial premises and residential buildings). In these instances, professional judgement has been used to approximate the likely views from these locations.

7.2.33 Within the limitations identified, the information on the development proposal and baseline information is considered sufficient to undertake a robust assessment of landscape and visual effects for the purposes of an ES.

**7.3 Baseline Conditions**

**Site Description and Context**

- 7.3.1 The site context is varied in nature, to the south and east the site adjoins the urban fringe of the edge of Coventry. The urban fringe consists of the residential areas of Keresley Heath and Holbrooks and includes a number of schools, sports fields, a cemetery and pockets of agricultural land. Further southeast, Swallow Gate Business Park forms a large area of industrial land use. Further southwest there is ribbon development along Wall Hill Road and the small settlement of Brownhill Green. Directly south of the site boundary the Royal Court Hotel and a golf driving range are located.
- 7.3.2 To the west there is ribbon development along Tamworth Road (B4098). These buildings are generally set within a mature, well vegetated landscape, beyond which is open countryside.
- 7.3.3 To the north the landscape consists of open agricultural land comprising small to medium sized fields bounded by an established hedgerow network and small groups of trees. The village of Corley is located approximately 1.5km to the northwest. Beyond Corley is the corridor of the M6 motorway, including Corley Services motorway service area. To the northeast the large-scale commercial development at Prologis Park forms a prominent feature in the local landscape. The small settlement of Keresley is situated to the southwest of the industrial park and approximately 450m northeast of the site.
- 7.3.4 The landform of the surrounding landscape is generally undulating and has a general fall from approximately +182m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum) at Corley to approximately +120m AOD at Whitmore Park to the southeast. There are some areas of higher ground which extend from Corley to the south-east along Tamworth Road.
- 7.3.5 The site itself is bounded to the east by residential development along Bennetts Road South; to the north by Hall Brook and open agricultural land; to the west by open agricultural land and Tamworth Road; and to the south by the boundary of the Royal Court Hotel, the golf driving range and Sandpits Lane. The site consists of irregular shaped agricultural fields, bounded by hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Public access onto the site consists of three public rights of way (PRoW); these link Tamworth Road to the southwest to another PRoW that runs broadly along the line of Hall Brook; and Tamworth Road to the northwest of the site with Keresley to the north.

### **Baseline Survey Information**

#### ***Landscape elements and features***

##### *Physical landscape resources*

- 7.3.6 The following section describes the individual components of the physical landscape that are present in the study area. These have been described in order establish an understanding of the specific landscape baseline, including the elements and features that contribute to the definitions and variations of landscape character.

##### *Topography and landform*

- 7.3.7 At a broad scale the landform of the local area rises from Coventry city centre towards Corley and Corley Moor to the north-west where the topography is at approximately +170-180m AOD. Areas of higher ground extend south-eastwards at Hounds Hill; along Tamworth Road and further west at Harvest Hill. To the east the landform slopes gently from approximately +130m AOD at the Prologis industrial park to approximately +90AOD at the Ricoh Arena. Landform continues to descend to the south-east. Local topography is shown on **Figure 7.3**.
- 7.3.8 The topography of the site itself is falling gently to the east-north-east, towards Hall Brook from approximately +144m AOD at the site's western extent to approximately +120m AOD at its north-eastern extent.

##### *Drainage and water bodies*

- 7.3.9 Hall Brook is a positive landscape feature and passes along the northern boundary of the site. It flows through the landscape from Watery Lane to the east, generally following field boundaries until it arrives at Pikehorne Wood to the west. There are also a number of field ponds in the local area, including those on the site itself to the south and east.

##### *Land use*

7.3.10 Land use across the wider area is diverse and ranges from residential, commercial and industrial urban land uses to agricultural land uses and urban fringe elements such as golf courses and hotels, including the Royal Court Hotel and golf driving range located directly to the south of the site. There are a number of sports playing fields in the area including Keresley recreation ground to the north. In terms of vegetation there are a number of woodland blocks and a well established hedgerow network.

7.3.11 Land use on site consists of agricultural land of small to medium sized, irregular fields which are largely in pasture use. Fields are bounded by hedgerows and hedgerow trees.

### *Vegetation patterns*

7.3.12 Vegetation in the wider landscape consists of numerous hedgerows and hedgerow trees, with pockets of woodland such as Bunsons Wood to the north; Pikehorne Wood; Hall Yard Wood and The Alders to the northwest. Tree species include, amongst others, oak, ash and alder. The combined effect of hedgerows, mature hedgerow trees and woodland blocks promote a sense of wooded character with a strong framework of vegetation.

7.3.13 Hedgerows vary in size from intensively managed hedgerows without hedgerow trees, at a height of approximately 1-1.5m high, to larger hedgerows with trees that are approximately 2-3m high. Typical hedgerow species include hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, holly, bramble and ash. Hedgerow trees are typically oak and ash.

### *Public access*

7.3.14 There are three public rights of way within or in close proximity to the site (**Figure 7.4**). One follows the northern boundary of the site and links Fivefield Road with the edge of Coventry to the east. One follows the site's western boundary, linking Tamworth Road with Keresley to the northeast. The third passes through the site itself.

## **Landscape character and key characteristics**

7.3.15 Reference has been made to published guidance on landscape character for the area; details of these have been included in the following sections of this assessment. Published guidance on landscape character for the study area is available at regional, county and local scales. These documents are as follows:

### **Regional and county level**

- NCA 97 Arden (2012); and
- Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines (1993).

7.3.16 Overall, the content and findings of the published regional and county landscape character assessments are consistent and each identifies relevant characteristics at an increasingly refined scale. These provide a relevant context to the study area and the site and have been used to inform the baseline and assessment stages of this LVIA. A summary of the key characteristics for NCA 97: Arden is included in **Appendix 7.2**.

7.3.17 The site is located within the Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines Ancient Arden landscape character type and an area of Industrial Arden landscape character type is located adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site.

7.3.18 The Ancient Arden landscape type is described as small scale farmland with a varied undulating topography characterised by an irregular pattern of fields and narrow winding lanes. Landform relates to tree cover and field pattern to form a strong sense of enclosure and views are generally restricted by thick roadside hedgerows.

7.3.19 The characteristics of the Industrial Arden type have some influence on the adjacent Ancient Arden countryside. This character type is typified by a variable, fragmented urban fringe characterised by mining settlements, spoil heaps and pockets of arable and pasture land. This landscape is often dominated by the proximity of the urban edge and industrial land, including housing estates and

commercial development. Infrastructure elements such as roads, railways and electricity pylons are also common features.

- 7.3.20 The site and its immediate context display many of the features of both landscape character types, including winding lanes; views limited by roadside hedgerows; commercial development to the north at Prologis Park; and urban infrastructure such as the electricity pylons that cross the site.

### **Local level**

- 7.3.21 At a local level, reference has also been made to published guidance relevant to the local context of the site. These include:

- Coventry Joint Green Belt Review (2009); and
- Coventry Historic Landscape Characterisation Project (2013).

- 7.3.22 The purpose of the Coventry Joint Green Belt Review (CJGR) was to review the green belt land that surrounds the main urban areas of Coventry City, Nuneaton and Bedworth boroughs, land adjacent to Coventry within Rugby Borough and the Warwick District towns of Kenilworth, Warwick and Leamington Spa. The first stage identified those parcels of land within the designated Green Belt around the urban areas that contribute the least towards the purposes of including land within the Green Belt. The green belt study included information on landscape character for each land cover parcel and provided information regarding the value of the landscape.

- 7.3.23 Further detail on historic landscape character is provided by the Coventry Historic Landscape Characterisation Project (CHLC). The Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) approach has been used to define Coventry's character as represented by the visible historic environment by using character types to identify and define character areas. This publication represents the most recent assessment of the landscape and therefore has been used to supplement the descriptions of local landscape character that follow.

#### *Land cover parcel C19c*

- 7.3.24 The site is located within land cover parcel C19c of the CJGR. The CJGR describes the landscape character of land cover parcel C19c as a wedge of land between Allesley and Keresley. It states that Keresley is on the edge of the coal measures and that there was previously a colliery which is now the site of the large scale industrial development at Prologis Park. There has also been some recent residential development in the area.

- 7.3.25 The CJGR describes C19 as being within the Arden character area and the Ancient Arden landscape character type. It describes this as a small-scaled farmland landscape with scattered settlement and ancient origins. It states that Keresley is on the boundary of the Industrial Arden landscape character type which is characterised by a varied landscape of post-industrial brownfield sites, agriculture, horticulture and leisure uses. Historic features include mediaeval fishponds located to the east of Pikehorne Wood and a number of areas of ancient woodland, including Pikehorne and Bunsons Woods.

#### *Land cover parcel C18b*

- 7.3.26 Land cover parcel C18b is located adjacent to the site. The CJGR describes the landscape character of land cover parcel C18b as a wedge of land to the north of Allesley and Coundon. It describes the parcel as being within the Ancient Arden landscape which is described as a small scaled farmland landscape with scattered settlement and ancient origins. The parcel is characterised by mixed farming and interwar ribbon development, including large mature gardens, along roads. Towards the east is Coundon Hall (a former parkland with schools and playing fields).

### **Landscape value**

#### *Land cover parcel C19c*

- 7.3.27 This section addresses the value of the local landscape character which is then carried through to the analysis of landscape sensitivity (section 7.6 of this LVIA, Key Impacts & Likely Significant Effects.)

- 7.3.28 The site is located within land cover parcel C19c. The land parcel consists of small, irregular fields, often with banked hedges with sunken lanes and some woodland. This is typical of the Ancient Arden landscape. The topography is generally undulating and this combined with the hedgerows and tree cover provides some enclosure.
- 7.3.29 To the north there is a strong sense of enclosure due to existing woodland blocks and the narrow topography of the Hall Brook. The Alders and Pikehorne Wood are ancient semi-natural woodlands and form part of a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). Fivefield road passes through the landscape and forms an example of a typical Arden landscape sunken lane. To the northeast there is a small plateau area characterised by horse grazing and remnant, unkempt hedgerows.
- 7.3.30 Published character guidance suggests that the condition of hedgerows and hedgerow trees are often fragmented and generally field boundaries are in decline. There are some positive elements such as ancient woodland at Pikehorne Wood and the medieval fishponds to the northwest. It is considered that this land cover parcel has a varied condition. There are no formal designations relating to landscape on site.
- 7.3.31 The CJGR identify this land cover parcel as being of high value. Despite this, the CJGR However, urbanising elements such as the Royal Court Hotel and golf driving range to the south and some views of surrounding residential edges, for example that at Keresley, influence the perception of this parcel as an urban fringe landscape. There are a number of PRoW crossing the fields that make up the parcel, which indicates recreational value. According to character guidance, these footpaths tend only to be accessed by occasional local walkers to the north but are more popular to the south.
- 7.3.32 Overall the landscape condition is considered fair and components are generally relatively well maintained. In terms of enclosure the existing hedgerows, woodland and undulating topography result in an element of tranquillity being maintained, despite the parcels' proximity to the urban edge of Coventry and the major transport corridor of the M6 to the north.
- 7.3.33 Rare or distinctive elements and features are a notable component that contributes to the character of the area and these include the typical Ancient Arden pattern of field boundaries and woodland and the contribution of the rural environment as an area of landscape accessible from the urban fringe of Coventry.
- 7.3.34 Overall, land cover parcel C19c is considered to be of **medium value** in landscape terms.

### *Land cover parcel C18b*

- 7.3.35 Land cover parcel C18b is located adjacent to C19c and part of the site itself (see **Figure 7.2**, Landscape Character). This land cover parcel consists of small to medium scale agricultural fields with some interwar ribbon development and associated large mature gardens. Coundon Hall Park is located to the south-east of this land cover parcel. Woodland is limited to the Spinney to the south and other vegetation includes a number of small tree belts, hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- 7.3.36 Character guidance suggests that the condition of hedgerows and hedgerow trees are often fragmented and that generally field boundaries are in decline, so although there are some positive elements such as ancient woodland at Pikehorne Wood and the medieval fishponds to the northwest; it is considered that this land cover parcel has a varied condition. There are no formal designations relating to landscape on site.
- 7.3.37 The CJGR identify this land parcel as being of high value. However, urbanising elements such as the residential ribbon development along Tamworth Road and the commercial units off Brownhill Green Road influence the perception of this parcel as an urban fringe landscape. A single PRoW crosses the land parcel to the north, which indicates some limited recreational value.
- 7.3.38 Overall, land cover parcel C18b is considered to be of **medium value** in landscape terms.

### **Visual baseline**

- 7.3.39 This section provides a description of the nature and extent of the existing views from, towards and between the site and the surrounding area. It also includes reference to specific locations that will be subject to impacts as a result of the development proposal.

7.3.40 Establishing the specific nature of these views identifies the context and setting of representative viewpoints and also the nature of views in terms of distance, angle of view, and seasonal constraints associated with specific visual receptors. The identification of key sensitive receptors and links to the representative viewpoints is carried forward to the assessment process (see also Viewpoint Photographs, **Figure 7.5**).

#### **Overview**

7.3.41 Overall, notwithstanding the scale of the site, there is a relatively tight visual envelope; this is defined broadly as follows:

- from the north and northwest, views towards the site are largely limited to high ground south of Corley by a number of woodland blocks that provide visual enclosure;
- from the west, views towards the site are limited by the linear development and associated vegetation along Tamworth Road;
- from the south, views towards the site are limited by the existing settlement edge and urban fringe features, including Cardinal Newman school and a golf driving range along Sandpits Lane;
- from the north, there are some views towards the site from the edge of Keresley although more distant views are limited by intervening vegetation (including Bunsons Wood) and topography;
- from the east, views towards the site are limited by the existing settlement edge; and
- Within this overall visual envelope there are variations in the degree of inter-visibility between areas and in the nature and extent of views.

#### **Representative viewpoints and visual receptors**

7.3.42 The visual assessment references a series of viewpoints that are representative of visual receptors in the area. These are used to inform the assessment of impacts on specific receptors. The visual assessment will primarily refer to the following visual receptors:

- Residential receptors, including settlement edges at Keresley to the east and north as well as individual properties such as Manor Farm;
- Recreational users such as walkers, cyclists and horse-riders, including PROW between the fringes of Coventry, Keresley and Corley, will also be considered; and
- Road users, including those travelling along Tamworth Road and Fivefield Road.

7.3.43 A detailed description of the locations identified as receptors for this LVIA is included below; where appropriate, these cross reference the representative viewpoints as illustration.

*Viewpoint 1: Public right of way, Manor Farm*

7.3.44 This viewpoint is located at the northeastern boundary of the site at approximately +115m AOD, looking south across land currently used for keeping horses.

7.3.45 The horse paddocks in the foreground are bounded by post and tape fencing and an access track is visible between the paddocks to the west. The field is bounded by somewhat fragmented hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees in the middle distance and in the foreground to the east. To the southeast the landform rises and some individual buildings are visible along Bennetts Road South. To the northwest Pikehome Wood is visible beyond rolling agricultural fields in the distance (Viewpoint 1, **Figure 7.5**).

*Viewpoint 2: Public right of way, northern boundary of site*

7.3.46 This viewpoint is located along the northern boundary of the site at approximately +120m AOD, looking southwest from the public right of way that broadly defines the northern boundary of the site.

7.3.47 In the foreground the line of the Hall Brook is evident and lined with trees. The ground plane of the site is visible beyond the tree line. This line of trees appears to thicken to the west and serves to screen views of the wider landscape in this direction. In the middle distance the site itself A wooden bridge over the brook allowing access to the public right of way that crosses the site to the south is visible. An overgrown hedgerow field boundary is visible to the east which serves to partially screen views into the field beyond (Viewpoint 2, **Figure 7.5**).

*Viewpoint 3: Public right of way, Keresley*

7.3.48 This viewpoint is located on the southern edge of Keresley, at approximately +120m AOD, looking southwest from the public right of way that leaves the southern edge of Keresley and travels west.

7.3.49 A horse paddock is visible in the foreground, defined to the south by hedgerows, some overgrown. The rear curtilages of properties along Bennett's Road are visible to the south, both in the short distance and in the middle distance. In the middle distance the ground plane of the site is visible as an area of rising land. To the northeast Pikehorne Wood forms a raised, wooded backdrop in the landscape. Further tree cover forms a backdrop to views of the site from this location (Viewpoint 3, **Figure 7.5**).

*Viewpoint 4: Public right of way, northwest of site*

7.3.50 This viewpoint is located approximately 40m to the northwest of the site boundary at approximately +125m AOD, looking south.

7.3.51 In the foreground, the Hall Brook and its associated vegetation is visible running along the boundary of the site. Vegetation along the brook contains a number of mature trees which provide some screening of views into the site from this location. In the middle ground a somewhat fragmented hedgerow forms the field boundary of the adjacent field. A gate is also visible, providing access into the field. Beyond this in the distance the residential edge of Keresley is just visible beyond the vegetation (Viewpoint 4, **Figure 7.5**).

*Viewpoint 5: Fivefield Road*

7.3.52 This viewpoint is located approximately 730m to the northwest of the site at approximately +140m AOD, looking south across Fivefield Road and the agricultural land and woodland beyond.

7.3.53 In the foreground Fivefield Road passes through the view. A well maintained hedgerow boundary is also visible in the foreground. A large swathe of woodland, including Pikehorne Wood and The Alders, limit views to the wider landscape to the south from this location. The rear elevations of some properties fronting onto Tamworth Road are just visible beyond intervening field boundary vegetation in the middle distance (Viewpoint 5, **Figure 7.5**).

*Viewpoint 6: Public right of way, Corley*

7.3.54 This viewpoint is located approximately 1.5km to the northwest of the site at approximately +170m AOD, looking south across rolling agricultural land with blocks of woodland along localised ridgelines.

7.3.55 In the foreground a large arable agricultural field bounded by well established hedgerows is visible. Tamworth Road and its associated lighting columns are just visible beyond the hedgerow to the west. In the middle distance there are a number of blocks of woodland, including that associated with field boundaries and larger blocks such as Hall Yard Wood to the southeast and Lord's Wood to the southwest. The layering of vegetation and the rolling nature of the local topography results in limited views of the wider landscape to the south (Viewpoint 6, **Figure 7.5**).

*Viewpoint 7: Tamworth Road*

7.3.56 This viewpoint is located at the northeastern boundary of the site at approximately +142m AOD, looking north across the site.

7.3.57 The site is bounded by a well established hedgerow and boundary brick walling to the east. A truncated hedgerow is visible in the foreground, separating the agricultural access track from the

ploughed field to the west. In the middle distance an electricity pylon is visible to the north. Beyond this the northwestern boundary of the site is defined by vegetation associated with The Manor, a locally listed building to the north of the site. Views to the wider countryside from this location are limited by intervening field boundary hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees, including a number of large oak trees (Viewpoint 7, **Figure 7.5**).

*Viewpoint 8: Sandpits Lane*

- 7.3.58 This viewpoint is located on Sandpits Lane, at the southern boundary of the site, north of Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic School and Community College, at approximately +130m AOD, looking north across the site.
- 7.3.59 The site is visible in the foreground and consists of a grass field, bounded to the south by the hedgerow lining Sandpits Lane and individual mature trees, including a number of evergreen species. This grass field is part of the southern section of the site. A number of mature oak trees that are located within the site itself are visible in the middle distance (Viewpoint 8, **Figure 7.5**).

*Viewpoint 9: Tamworth Road, Corley*

- 7.3.60 This viewpoint is located approximately 1.5km to the northwest of the site at approximately +160m AOD, looking southeast across rolling agricultural land.
- 7.3.61 Tamworth Road passes through the foreground view and is bounded by a residential access road to the west and a grass verge and well maintained hedgerow to the east. Lighting columns along the road form prominent vertical elements in the foreground. Beyond the vegetation lining the road, the gently rolling landform of the agricultural land falling down to Hall Brook in the east is visible. Bunsons Wood is located to the east and Hall Yard Wood is located to the west, the latter serving to screen views further south towards the site. In the middle distance some existing residential development at Thompsons Road is visible below the tree line of the surrounding field boundary vegetation. In the far distance the rooflines of large scale industrial units at Prologis Park are visible (Viewpoint 9, **Figure 7.5**).

*Viewpoint 10: Public right of way, on-site*

- 7.3.62 This viewpoint is located along the public right of way crossing the site to the north of the Royal Court Hotel, at approximately +135m AOD, looking southwest across the site.

The trodden path of the public right of way is visible in the foreground, adjacent to a hedgerow on a shallow bank. This vegetation limits views of the ground plane of the site immediately beyond it. In the middle distance a number of mature oak trees are visible lining the boundary of the site along Tamworth Road. Properties off Tamworth Road are also visible beyond the intervening vegetation. An electricity pylon forms a prominent vertical element in the view to the east. Woodland associated with The Manor listed building is visible in the middle distance. In the far distance, the field network north of the site is visible, beyond which the existing settlement edge of Keresley can be seen. The skyline is dominated by the large scale industrial units that make up Prologis Park to the northeast (Viewpoint 10, **Figure 7.5**).

**Sensitivity of visual receptors**

- 7.3.63 The sensitivity of visual receptors is determined on a consistent basis between receptor types. The defined sensitivity for each receptor type is set out in section 7.5 of this LVIA, Key Impacts & Likely Significant Effects.

**7.4 Landscape Strategy**

**Landscape and visual analysis**

- 7.4.1 This section draws the landscape and visual baseline information together and summarises the key constraints and opportunities in the existing landscape (refer also to **Figure 7.6**). The following summary takes account of the context of the site and subsequently the site specific matters. The following key constraints and opportunities have been identified during the landscape and visual analysis.

**Constraints**

- Higher ground to the northwest south of Corley;

- Several public rights of way cross the site and link into the wider urban settlement;
- The extensive network of existing tree belts that contribute to a strong pattern of green infrastructure across the site;
- Views towards the site from the existing settlement edge at Keresley;
- The finer grained field pattern of hedgerows, trees and woodland belts that characterise the agricultural landscape and support the core green infrastructure assets, where present hedgerows are often in good condition;
- The site's location within the green belt;
- The need consider the root protection areas of existing trees and vegetation to be retained; and
- The presence of a line of electricity pylons and overhead cables across the northwestern part of the site.

### Opportunities

- The existing green infrastructure on site provides an important framework that increases the potential capacity of the site to accommodate residential led development;
- Existing vegetation providing visual containment;
- Proximity to the existing settlement edge;
- The flood risk and drainage strategy for the site presents opportunities to maximise the potential for these areas as contributors to green infrastructure, particularly along the corridor of the where improvements can be made;
- The opportunity to reduce the overall visual influence of large scale detracting features such as Prologis Park, including provision of additional screening that will reduce the overall influence of these detracting features;
- The network of PRoW can be maintained within the development and enhanced through creation of additional circulation routes and links;
- In addition to improvements to the PRoW network, accessibility can be improved through creation of cycleways; and
- Recreational opportunities can be improved through the introduction of new public open spaces.

### Strategy development

7.4.2 The landscape and visual strategy has been developed inherently to the overall master planning of the site; see the Parameters Plans **Figures 1.2 – 1.5** and the Indicative Masterplan, **Figure 1.X**. Landscape and visual appraisal work, along with identified development constraints (**Figure 7.6**), have helped to guide the proposed land use, distribution and scale of development. Consequently, within the proposals, landscape and visual mitigation have been integral with the design layout and are therefore considered as part of the development proposal in terms of the assessment of effects.

7.4.3 A number of long sections have been drawn which help to assess the parameters of the development proposal. Section AA is taken through the boundary of the site along Tamworth Road to the south, crossing the central area of the site and passing through the boundary to the north through Hall Brook. This section demonstrates how the contours of the land broadly slope down to Hall Brook at approximately +119m AOD from Tamworth Road, which lies at approximately +140m AOD, such that the built form of the development proposal is located on the lower slopes of the site. This section also demonstrates that views from the edge of Keresley are likely to be partially deflected by existing vegetation.

- 7.4.4 Section BB is taken through the site from a public right of way south of Corley, to the northwest of the site. The landform is broadly sloping to the southeast. The section line passes through Hall Yard Wood, which serves to provide some screening and filtering of the site from the public right of way, as demonstrated by the section. Additional filtering is likely to be provided by Pikehome Wood and other intervening field boundary vegetation.
- 7.4.5 Section CC is taken through the eastern edge of the site between the existing settlement edge to the northeast and the eastern extent of the development proposal boundary, where building heights are proposed to be up to approximately 13m AGL. This section demonstrates views from the existing settlement edge and is representative of the worst case scenario in terms of building heights. Existing boundary vegetation serves to filter and deflect views.
- 7.4.6 The strategy has also been developed with consideration to Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines (1993). The Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines management strategy for Ancient Arden is aimed at creating a more unified landscape by enhancing the pattern of ancient hedgerows and tree cover through small scale woodland planting and hedgerow improvements.
- 7.4.7 The proposals will provide the opportunity to introduce a coherent landscape infrastructure across the site with areas of open space, tree planting and woodland belts, hedgerow planting and new habitat, for example that associated with SUDS and attenuation ponds. Much of this new infrastructure planting will serve to filter and contain views towards the development proposal.

#### **Overall landscape strategy**

- 7.4.8 The extent of new development has been balanced against the landscape and visual opportunities and constraints, and further influenced by the delivery of an integral landscape strategy (**Figure 7.8**, Illustrative Landscape Masterplan). The strategy has informed the appropriate scale and character of development on the site, where both visual enclosure and the urban fringe context offer a good opportunity with limited landscape and visual constraints. The following summarises the structured and considered green infrastructure strategy which will include the following key elements:
- Retention and enhancement of the existing hedgerow network where possible, including retaining 4,395 m of hedgerow along the boundaries of and within the site, and replacing hedgerows where they are to be removed to accommodate highways works, in line with the guidelines set out for Ancient Arden in the Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines;
  - Combining these corridors with pedestrian green links where feasible;
  - Integration of the existing water features on site into a SUDS; including the Hall Brook corridor to the north;
  - Creation of a hierarchy of green open spaces to include three significant greenways to the west of the site, in the centre of the site and to the east of the site. These will serve to break down the scale of the development and help soften and filter views of it from the north;
  - Public open spaces, including children's play space, attenuation areas and allotments;
  - Strong swathes of infrastructure planting both through the development envelope and along the southern edge, creating 'layers' of woodland planting infrastructure, to visually contain the Development proposal and provide a softer presentation of the overall urban edge when viewed from the south;
  - Consideration of biodiversity opportunities associate with the water features; and
  - Use of mixed native species planting in line with the guidelines contained in Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines.

## **7.5 Key Impacts & Likely Significant Effects**

### **Construction Impacts**

- 7.5.1 This section describes the likely construction impacts. The initial construction activities for the site are likely to comprise the phased introduction of major infrastructure and enabling works, including:
- Highway works, for access into the site;
  - Temporary access and haul routes, site compounds and car parking;
  - Utilities works including diversions, upgrades and new provision; and

- Soil stripping and storage, site re-grading and the creation of development plateaux.

7.5.2 On-going construction works are likely to include the following:

- The creation of site roads with associated service provision;
- The construction of residential and commercial development;
- The construction of community facilities;
- The provision of public open spaces with associated leisure and play facilities; and
- The early implementation of the approved structural landscape scheme, where appropriate.

7.5.3 During the enabling works, arisings will include topsoil and subsoil that will be stored and recycled within the sites. During construction soils will be stored in mounds, the location and scale of which will be specified and approved as part of the earthworks strategy for the site.

7.5.4 Construction will generate a variety of vehicle movements including on site machinery such a general plant, forklifts, and taller lifting equipment. Off-site movements are likely to include light and heavy haulage, commercial vehicles and site staff vehicles. Site hoarding, temporary signage, including marketing signage and compounds, including porta-cabins are likely to be erected. Construction hazard lighting will also be visible and there also likely to be the aural intrusion of vehicle reversing alarms.

#### **Effects on Landscape Planning Designations during Construction**

7.5.5 It is considered that there would be no direct landscape and visual effects on any scheduled monuments or conservation areas within the 2km study area as a result of the construction phase of the Development proposal.

#### **Effects on Landscape Character during Construction**

7.5.6 The main effect on landscape character during the construction phase is likely to be the gradual transformation of the site from an urban fringe landscape to a development site over a period of time. The proposals include residential development, which is an existing component of the established landscape character that currently defines the site and its immediate environs. The effects on landscape character will be temporary. The impact of development is therefore considered in the following section that deals with the summary of effects at completion.

#### **Effects on Landscape Resources during Construction**

7.5.7 The following section reviews the potential effects of the application site during the construction phase.

##### *Topography*

7.5.8 The landform on site is gently sloping from approximately +144m AOD in the western area of the site, to approximately +120m AOD in the northeastern area. During construction there would be some limited direct effects on the topography of the site in order to create development platforms. Where necessary, the development plots and size will be sited to work with the topography of the site to minimise cut and fill requirements.

7.5.9 Preparation of site levels will require the removal and appropriate storage of topsoil followed by the cut and fill process to create development areas. Material would be temporarily stockpiled in appropriate locations to avoid visual disturbance on sensitive receptors. The topography of the site is considered to be of low sensitivity. There will be a minor alteration to site levels in relation to enabling an appropriate development platform, which will be permanent and of a local scale. The magnitude of impact is low. The likely significance of effect is therefore **neutral**.

##### *Land Use*

- 7.5.10 During construction the site will transfer from agricultural use to a development platform. Of the 42.2 hectares, approximately 30.1 hectares will become the construction site. The remaining land, approximately 12.1 hectares, shall be retained for the creation of the green infrastructure and attenuation areas.
- 7.5.11 Site compounds will be located within the construction zone(s) and areas to be retained as open space will be protected in accordance with standard practice; their short term use may be as amenity grassland areas seeded with a low maintenance species mix until landscape proposals are implemented.
- 7.5.12 The arable resource, in a landscape context is considered to be of low sensitivity. There will be an alteration of the land use on site which will be of a local scale and permanent. The magnitude of impact is high. The likely significance of effect is therefore **moderate adverse**.

#### *Vegetation*

- 7.5.13 Vegetation resources on site consist of hedgerow boundaries and hedgerow trees. The Development proposal will seek to retain this resource and further information will be provided at the detailed design stage. The site is not located within a Conservation Area and none of the trees within the site boundary are currently protected by Tree Preservation Order (TPO).
- 7.5.14 The vegetation resource on site is typical of the surrounding landscape and is considered to be of low to medium sensitivity. Overall, the development will result in a loss of approximately 1,700 m of hedgerow on site whilst 4,395 m will be retained. In terms of the overall vegetation resource, the magnitude of impact during construction will be low to medium. The likely significance of effect is **minor adverse**

#### *Hydrology*

- 7.5.15 The site's water resource includes part of Hall Brook, which flows along the northern boundary of the site. There are also a number of field ponds in the local area, including those on the site itself to the south and east of the site. These features will be retained and enhanced as part of the green infrastructure strategy for the site. The hydrology is considered to be low to medium sensitivity. Throughout the construction phase, good practice shall ensure that on-site works do not give rise to direct or indirect effects upon off-site water features. No water courses will be affected. The magnitude of impact will be low. The likely significance of effect is therefore **neutral**.

#### *Public Access*

- 7.5.16 There are two public rights of way that follow the northern and western boundaries of the site. Another passes through the site itself. The local public rights of way network is considered to be of low to medium sensitivity due to the limited number of public rights of way and public open spaces within the local context and study area as a whole. The Development proposal will retain and enhance existing public rights of way and provide new pedestrian and cycle links. The magnitude of impact will be neutral and the likely significance of effect is **minor beneficial**.

#### **Effects on Visual Amenity during Construction**

- 7.5.17 During construction works, there are likely to be effects on the visual amenity of the Development proposal site. These will be controlled where possible through the implementation of a construction management plan. The extent to which the construction phase would affect visual amenity is likely to change regularly, depending on the nature and location of the works.
- 7.5.18 Construction activities would be visible from the majority of areas identified within the visual envelope and are likely to comprise:
- Excavation works, bare earth and stockpiled soils;
  - Site hoarding/perimeter fencing;
  - Signage;
  - Construction traffic with flashing hazard lights;

- Temporary site infrastructure including porta-cabins, haulage routes, material stockpiling;
- The gradual erection of built-form; and
- Site plant/large scale machinery.

7.5.19 In the absence of a landscape mitigation strategy, there would be a gradual deterioration in the quality of views throughout the construction period. The magnitude of impact will vary in accordance with the progress and location of the works. All visual effects during construction would be indirect, temporary and local in scale. There are likely to be moderate changes in views in close proximity to the site. There are likely to be more limited, partially screened views of construction activity from longer distances. The careful siting and storage of machinery and plant and the routing of haulage tracks should avoid any substantial adverse visual effects during construction.

### Impacts at Completion

#### Key Planning (Landscape) Designations

7.5.20 The application site is not covered by any specific landscape planning designations. There will therefore be a neutral effect on landscape planning designations at completion. The site is within an area of Green Belt.

#### Effects on Landscape Resources at Completion

7.5.21 The following description of potential effects on landscape resources on completion of the Development proposal site considers the integral landscape mitigation measures to be part of each scheme for the purposes of this assessment.

##### *Topography*

7.5.22 At completion, there will be direct effects on the topography of the site including new levels created to form development platforms. The scale and form of development will however have been designed to integrate as much as possible into the local landform. New levels will be softened visually with the implementation of the proposed landscape strategy for the site. The topography of the site is considered to be of low sensitivity. There will be a very minor alteration to the levels on site which will be permanent and of a local scale. The magnitude of impact will be low. The likely significance of effect is therefore **neutral**.

##### *Land use*

7.5.23 At completion, agricultural land use will have been displaced by approximately 24.5 hectares of residential, commercial and educational development and approximately 12.1 hectares of associated open space and landscape planting. The arable resource is considered to be of low sensitivity due to its frequency in the wider landscape. There will be a small change to the contextual land use resource; the magnitude of impact will be low. The likely significance of effect will be **neutral to minor adverse**. A site specific scale, there will be a major alteration to the existing land use. The magnitude of impact will be high. The likely significance of effect at is **moderate adverse**.

##### *Vegetation*

7.5.24 At completion, the Development proposal shall include a landscape strategy to include tree and hedgerow planting, using locally prevalent species and planting arrangements that reflect the character of the site's context and help integrate the Development proposal into the wider landscape.

7.5.25 The vegetation resource on site is typical of the surrounding landscape and is considered to be of low to medium sensitivity. Overall, the development will result in a loss of approximately 1,700 m of hedgerow on site whilst 4,395 m will be retained. The introduction of a landscape strategy that includes landscape planting would be direct, permanent and local in scale would constitute a positive enhancement of vegetation on site. However, this enhancement will be balanced by an increase of built form. The magnitude of impact will therefore be medium. The likely significance of effect is **minor beneficial**.

*Hydrology*

- 7.5.26 The site's water resource includes part of Hall Brook, which flows along the northern boundary of the site. There are also a number of field ponds in the local area, including those on the site itself to the south and east of the site. These features will be retained and enhanced as part of the green infrastructure strategy for the site, which will include the creation of the Water Meadows wetland area to the north of the site. The hydrology is considered to be low to medium sensitivity. The landscape strategy in combination with the SuDS strategy will enhance the water resource on site. The magnitude of change will be medium. The likely significance of effect is therefore **minor beneficial**.

*Public access*

- 7.5.27 There are two public rights of way that follow the northern and western boundaries of the site. Another passes through the site itself. The local public right of way network is considered to be of low to medium sensitivity due to the limited number of public rights of way and public open spaces within the local context and study area as a whole. The Development proposal will retain and enhance existing public rights of way and provide new pedestrian and cycle links. The magnitude of impact will be neutral and the likely significance of effect is **minor beneficial**.

**Effects on Landscape Character at Completion**

- 7.5.28 It is likely that development will have an effect on the identity and character of the site itself and its immediate surroundings. The predicted effects upon landscape character take into consideration the quality of the resource, its size and the setting of the site within it (its relationship with existing development and other urbanising influences). The predicted effects on the identified landscape character can be summarised as follows.

**Local Landscape Character**

*Landscape sensitivity*

- 7.5.29 The landscape within which the site is located includes existing residential and commercial urban edge development to the east and north; and open agricultural land to the south and west.

*Value*

- 7.5.30 The value of the landscape has been established as part of the baseline description and has been applied to the landscape character at a local level. The local landscape is considered to be of medium value in landscape terms (refer to section 7.3 of this LVIA, Baseline Conditions).

*Susceptibility*

- 7.5.31 This landscape consists largely of agricultural land along the urban edge of Coventry. The scale of enclosure of this landscape is high; this is due to the well established network of hedgerows and trees which define the boundaries of the field network within the site and its context.
- 7.5.32 The context of the landscape includes reference to the existing urban edge and various different types of built form, including large scale commercial development at Prologis Park and recent residential development on the northern edge of Coventry. Detracting elements include the transport routes that pass through the landscape and electricity pylons and overhead cables that pass through the site itself and form vertical elements in the landscape. There is some intervisibility between the site and the existing settlement at Keresley to the north.
- 7.5.33 The design of the masterplan has been developed to maximise the retention of existing landscape elements and the nature of a residential led development facilitates a flexible approach to the spatial layout, massing and permeability of the development compartments to accommodate the retention of landscape elements and features.
- 7.5.34 Overall it is considered that the susceptibility of this landscape to residential led development is considered to be low.

*Sensitivity*

- 7.5.35 Having considered in detail the contributing factors to landscape value and the susceptibility of the site and surrounding area to the type of the development proposed, conclusions on landscape sensitivity can be drawn. On balance, due to the medium value and low susceptibility, this landscape is considered to be of **medium sensitivity**.

### *Contextual Landscape Character*

- 7.5.36 The site and its context display some key characteristics of the Ancient Arden landscape character type, including the irregular pattern of fields and winding lanes. The development proposal will result in a minor loss to the extent of agricultural land within the Ancient Arden landscape character type. Due to the scale of this landscape character type, the magnitude of impact is considered to be low. The significance of effect will be neutral to **minor adverse**.

### *Immediate Landscape Character*

- 7.5.37 The landscape character at a local scale is somewhat influenced by built form to the north and east, including both established residential development at Holbrooks and large scale commercial development at Prologis Park. The eastern boundary of the development proposal is defined by the residential edge along Bennetts Road. The development proposal is contained visually to the north by vegetation lining the Hall Brook and to the northwest by existing woodland blocks including Pikehome Wood. The internal vegetation of the site also provides a level of enclosure which will allow this part of the landscape on the edge of Coventry to accommodate residential development. The introduction of new residential development, accompanied by an integral landscape strategy to visually soften and integrate the development with the surrounding landscape, would fit well with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape in this location. The existing landscape quality of the character area would largely be maintained. Landscape elements such as hedgerow and tree planting shall be incorporated into the design. This will go some way to conserving and enhancing hedgerows and tree cover as suggested in the Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines management strategy.

The Development proposal would result in a minor alteration to the agricultural nature of this area and introduce elements such as residential buildings that would not be uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. The site is in proximity to the existing settlement edge of both Keresley to the north and Coventry to the east. It is considered in the context of the local landscape, including that area identified as land parcel C19c in the CJGR, the magnitude of impact is high by virtue of the proposed change in land use.

- 7.5.38 The high magnitude of impact will result in a **moderate adverse effect**; this is due to the overall change in land use on the site itself and is limited to its immediate context, including the existing urban fringe and settlement edge to the east.

### **Effects on Visual Amenity at Completion**

- 7.5.39 Following completion of the Development proposal site there would be inevitable indirect effects on the visual amenity of public and private receptors surrounding the site due to the new spatial configuration of the area, the heights, scale and massing of new buildings and the distribution of green infrastructure. However, the nature of effects would change overtime as the landscape element of the schemes establishes and matures. As such the visual effect of development would gradually reduce over the short term (1 year after implementation), through to the long term (15 years after implementation), according to the following growth rates:

- Short term – 1m generally for native infrastructure planting, with taller individual trees between 2 to 4m;
- Long term – average 10m high.

- 7.5.40 Elements (or combinations thereof) of completed development that would be visible from a number of receptors within the study area are likely to comprise the following:

- Residential development;
- Public open space;
- Highway infrastructure;

- Structural landscaping; and
- Vehicular traffic

The sensitivity of the views to the site varies dependant on where they are located and the nature of the receptor affected. However, in general views would be of higher sensitivity where there are higher sensitivity receptors such as users of public rights of way in the open countryside. The effect of development on views and receptors reduces with greater distance from the site as the wider panoramic view becomes more influenced by the surrounding landscape setting and the site begins to read as part of its local urban fringe setting (see Viewpoints 1, 3, 9 and 10, **Figure 7.5**).

7.5.41 The following section provides a summary of short and long term visual effects of the Development proposal.

***Viewpoint 1: Public right of way, Manor Farm***

7.5.42 Receptors will have very close, direct views of the Development proposal, including an area of linear open space associated with the attenuation area along the Hall Brook to the north of the site. Beyond the proposed open space in the foreground there will be views of proposed residential units up to two storeys high. The Development proposal will introduce built development into close views from this location in the short and long term. The Development proposal will occupy a large proportion of the view. Receptors are users of a public right of way in the open countryside in an urban fringe location to the north of the site and are considered to be of medium sensitivity. The Development proposal will form a prominent feature in the view, the magnitude of impact will be high and the likely significance of effect will be **moderate adverse**. In the long term, the landscape strategy will serve to filter and soften views from this location.

***Viewpoint 2: Public right of way, northern boundary of site***

7.5.43 Receptors will have close, partially filtered views of the Development proposal, including an area of linear open space associated with the attenuation area along the Hall Brook to the north of the site. Beyond the proposed open space in the foreground there will be views of proposed residential units up to two storeys high. The development proposal will introduce built development into close views from this location in the short and long term. The development proposal will occupy a large proportion of the view. These views will be partially screened by existing and proposed landscape infrastructure associated with the Hall Brook and proposed linear open space. Receptors are users of a public right of way in the open countryside to the north of the site and are considered to be of high sensitivity. The development proposal will form an identifiable feature in the view, the magnitude of impact will be medium and the likely significance of effect will be **moderate adverse**. In the long term, the landscape strategy will serve to filter and soften views from this location.

***Viewpoint 3: Public right of way, south of Keresley***

7.5.44 Receptors will have distant, framed views of the eastern most part of the Development proposal. Views to the central and western areas of the site are limited by intervening field boundary vegetation in the middle distance. The existing tree line along Hall Brook partially filters views towards the site. The development proposal will introduce distant views of built form into a pocket of open land to the southeast and will occupy a moderate proportion of the view from this location. Built form will include some buildings up to a maximum of 13m. Some distant rooflines may also be visible above the tree line to the southwest. Views will be partially filtered by existing and proposed tree planting along the northern edge of the site. The magnitude of impact is considered to be medium. Receptors are users of a public right of way in the open countryside and are considered to be of high sensitivity. The significance of effect is will be **moderate adverse**. In the long term, the landscape strategy will serve to filter and soften views from this location.

***Viewpoint 4: Public right of way, northern boundary of site***

7.5.45 Receptors will have very close, direct views of the development proposal, including an area of linear open space associated with the attenuation area along the Hall Brook to the north of the site. Beyond the proposed open space in the foreground there will be views of proposed residential units up to two storeys high. The development proposal will introduce built development into close views from this location in the short and long term. The development proposal will occupy a large proportion of the view. Receptors are users of a public right of way in the open countryside to the north of the site and are considered to be of medium sensitivity. The Development proposal will form

a prominent feature in the view, the magnitude of impact will be high and the likely significance of effect will be **moderate adverse**. In the long term, the landscape strategy will serve to filter and soften views from this location.

**Viewpoint 5: Fivefield Road**

7.5.46 The development proposal will be barely perceptible in the view in both the short and long term. Receptors are people travelling along Fivefield Road and are considered to be of low sensitivity. Receptors are not likely to notice such a minor change in the view readily. The magnitude of impact will be negligible and the likely significance of effect will be **neutral**.

**Viewpoint 6: Public right of way, south of Corley**

7.5.47 Receptors will have distant views of rooflines beyond the tree line to the south. Views are limited by woodland blocks including Hall Yard Wood and Pikehorne Wood. Receptors are people in vehicles travelling along Sandpits Road, who are considered to be of low sensitivity. The development proposal will be barely perceptible in views from this location in the long and short term. Receptors are not likely to notice such a minor change in the view readily. The magnitude of impact will be negligible and the likely significance of effect will be **neutral to minor adverse**.

**Viewpoint 7: Tamworth Road**

7.5.48 Receptors will have close, direct views of the development proposal. The development proposal will introduce built form into close views from this location in the short and long term. The immediate foreground will however be characterised by an area of green infrastructure. The development proposal will occupy a large proportion of the view. Receptors are people in vehicles travelling along Tamworth Road, who are considered to be of low sensitivity. The development proposal will form a prominent element in the view from Tamworth Road, although these views will be transient. The magnitude of impact will be high, the significance of effect will be **minor adverse**. Receptors are also people using the footway along Tamworth Road who are considered to be of medium sensitivity. The magnitude of impact will be high, the significance of effect will be **moderate adverse**.

**Viewpoint 8: Sandpits Lane**

7.5.49 Receptors will have close, direct views of the development proposal. The development proposal will introduce built form into close views from this location in the short and long term. The development proposal will occupy a large proportion of the view. Receptors are people in vehicles travelling along Sandpits Road, who are considered to be of low sensitivity. The development proposal will form a prominent element in the view from Sandpits Road, although these views will be transient. The magnitude of impact will be high, the significance of effect will be **minor adverse**. Receptors are also people using the footway along Sandpits Road who are considered to be of medium sensitivity. The magnitude of impact will be high, the significance of effect will be **moderate adverse**.

**Viewpoint 9: Tamworth Road, south of Corley**

7.5.50 Receptors will have distant views of rooflines beyond the tree line to the south. Views are limited by woodland blocks including Hall Yard Wood and Pikehorne Wood. Receptors are people in vehicles travelling along Sandpits Road, who are considered to be of low sensitivity. The development proposal will be barely perceptible in views from this location in the long and short term. Receptors are not likely to notice such a minor change in the view readily. The magnitude of impact will be negligible and the likely significance of effect will be **neutral to minor adverse**.

**Viewpoint 10: Public right of way, crossing site**

7.5.51 Receptors will have close, direct views of the development proposal. The development proposal will introduce built form into close views from this location in the short and long term and will occupy a large proportion of the view. Receptors are users of the public right of way crossing the site through countryside at the edge of the existing settlement and are considered to be medium sensitivity. The development proposal will be prominent in the view and the magnitude of impact will be high. The likely significance of effect will be **moderate adverse**.

**Summary**

7.5.52 The majority of likely effects are neutral to moderate adverse, with most moderate adverse effects occurring in close proximity to the site and from medium sensitivity receptors such as public rights of way linking the existing settlement edges. Where receptors are located further away, likely effects are generally neutral to minor adverse, due to the intervening topography and network of hedgerows and woodlands.

## **7.6 Mitigation, Enhancement and Residual Effects**

### **Construction**

7.6.1 Through the adoption of a Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) good site management shall be achieved through the following measures:

- Protection of existing vegetation to be retained where practicable;
- Strict adherence to the self storage areas and construction access roads;
- Use of site hoarding where appropriate; and
- A phased planting programme.

7.6.2 The implementation of good site management, maintenance and housekeeping would ensure that temporary deterioration to landscape resources, character and visual amenity will be kept to a practicable minimum. Despite these better practice measures, there would still remain inevitable adverse effects during construction works. However in overall terms the residual effects upon landscape resources, landscape character and the visual envelope are anticipated to be no worse than short term, temporary, local and minor adverse.

### **Completed Development**

7.6.3 Due to the careful and informed design of the development, the vast majority of landscape and visual mitigation measures are inherent to the design of the development proposal, as previously discussed. Additional secondary mitigation measures as part of the on-going detailed design process should include the following:

- The design of buildings within the development should be of high quality which responds to the environment in terms of aesthetic character, including materials, colour, articulation and fenestration and building heights and densities;
- Introduction of an appropriate lighting scheme for each site which adheres to best practice guidance;
- Adoption of a landscape management plan, complete with a series of aims and objectives that seek to improve the quality of the landscape in terms of its development (both visually and physically), its content (wildlife and habitat creation) and its diversity (opportunities for creation of additional landscape elements, such as ditches, water bodies, or new woodlands). The length of the management plan may vary from 10-20 years, and the management approach would vary dependent upon the aims and objectives. It would consist of a framework informed by all relevant data (ecological and landscape surveys, management prescriptions, contract documentation etc.), and be monitored on an agreed basis, typically annually.

7.6.4 Given the comprehensive nature of the scope and content of the landscape strategy and design proposals, all residual effects would remain identical to the identified potential effects of the completed development discussed in section 7.5.

## **7.7 Summary**

### **Introduction**

7.7.1 This chapter comprises a landscape and visual assessment of the development proposal at land at Keresley. The purpose of this chapter is to identify the elements of the development site and its surroundings that are important in terms of landscape resources and landscape character, and to assess the extent to which these would be affected by the two separate proposals. A visual

assessment has also been conducted to identify the receptors of views and to determine the degree to which development of the two sites would have a visual effect upon the surrounding environment.

### Baseline Conditions

- 7.7.2 The site context is varied in nature, to the south and east the site adjoins the urban fringe of the edge of Coventry. To the southeast, Swallow Gate business park forms a large area of industrial land use. To the north the landscape consists of open agricultural land comprising small to medium sized fields bounded by an established hedgerow network and small groups of trees. The village of Corley is located approximately 1.5km to the northwest. Beyond Corley is the corridor of the M6 motorway, including Corley Services motorway service area. To the northeast the large-scale commercial development at Prologis Park forms a prominent feature in the local landscape. The small settlement of Keresley is situated to the southwest of the industrial park. The landform of the surrounding landscape is generally undulating and has a general fall from approximately +182m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum) at Corley to approximately +120m AOD at Whitmore Park to the southeast. Hall Brook is a positive landscape feature and passes along the northern boundary of the site.
- 7.7.3 The combined effect of hedgerows, mature hedgerow trees and woodland blocks promote a sense of wooded character with a strong framework of vegetation. There are three public rights of way within or in close proximity to the site. One follows the northern boundary of the site and link Fivefield Road with the edge of Coventry to the east. One follows the sites' western boundary, linking Tamworth Road with Keresley to the northeast. The third passes through the site itself.
- 7.7.4 The site is located within the Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines Ancient Arden landscape character type and an area of Industrial Arden landscape character type is located adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site.
- 7.7.5 The site is located within land cover parcel C19c of the Coventry Joint Green Belt Review (CJGR). The CJGR describes the landscape character of land cover parcel C19c as a wedge of land between Allesley and Keresley. It describes this as a small-scaled farmland landscape with scattered settlement and ancient origins. It states that Keresley is on the boundary of the Industrial Arden landscape character type which is characterised by a varied landscape of post-industrial brownfield sites, agriculture, horsiculture and leisure uses.
- 7.7.6 There is a relatively tight visual envelope; defined broadly as follows:
- from the north and northwest, views towards the site are largely limited to high ground south of Corley by a number of woodland blocks that provide visual enclosure;
  - from the west, views towards the site are limited by the linear development and associated vegetation along Tamworth Road;
  - from the south, views towards the site are limited by the existing settlement edge and urban fringe features, including Cardinal Newman school and a golf driving range along Sandpits Lane;
  - from the north, there are some views towards the site from the edge of Keresley although more distant views are limited by intervening vegetation (including Bunsons Wood) and topography; and
  - from the east, views towards the site are limited by the existing settlement edge.

### Likely Significant Effects

- 7.7.7 The Development proposal is likely to have effects on the following landscape and visual matters, taking into account a comprehensive landscape strategy, as summarised below, prepared as part of the overall masterplanning process:
- Landscape resources including topography and landform, vegetation, hydrology, land use and public access;
  - Landscape character including the local landscape character area and the character of the site themselves; and

- Visual amenity: including the degree to which the Development proposals will change view;

7.7.8 In terms of landscape character, the development proposal would result in a minor alteration to the agricultural nature of this area and introduce elements such as residential buildings that would not be uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. The site is in proximity to the existing settlement edge of both Keresley to the north and Coventry to the east. It is considered in the context of the local landscape, including that area identified as land parcel C19c in the CJGR, the magnitude of impact is medium to high by virtue of the proposed change in land use. The medium to high magnitude of impact will result in a moderate adverse effect; this is due to the overall change in land use on the site itself and is limited to its immediate context, including the existing urban fringe and settlement edge to the east.

7.7.9 In terms of visual amenity, the majority of likely effects are neutral to moderate adverse, with most moderate adverse effects occurring in close proximity to the site and from medium sensitivity receptors such as public rights of way linking the existing settlement edges. Where receptors are located further away, likely effects are generally neutral to minor adverse, due to the intervening topography and network of hedgerows and woodlands.

7.7.10 In this part of the Green belt, the amenity value of the local landscape plays an important role in the openness of the Green Belt. The mosaic of small, irregular fields and woodland retains some attractive landscape features and resources. There are a number of urbanising elements however, including the Royal Court Hotel, golf driving range and views of the existing settlement edge at Keresley.

#### **Mitigation and Enhancement**

7.7.11 The vast majority of the landscape and visual mitigation measures are inherent to the design of the scheme and its integral landscape strategy, including:

- a landscape and visually led development envelope;
- retention of the majority of the existing vegetation on site; provision of a comprehensive landscape and green infrastructure / SUDS planting scheme in strategic locations;
- provision of a coherent, structured and varied landscape and open space hierarchy;
- comprehensive access and permeability, linking to the existing on-site and off-site PROW network; and
- wildlife and biodiversity opportunities.

7.7.12 Secondary mitigation measures will include A Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) developed prior to the commencement of construction. The content of this document will aim to promote good site management and ensure that both statutory and non-statutory environmental commitments are met. Measures that will be incorporated into the CoCP to avoid or reduce landscape and visual effects during construction include:

- maximising the retention of existing trees and vegetation in the design where possible;
- protection of all retained existing vegetation for the duration of the construction period (including accommodation works and site demobilisation) to ensure no vegetation is lost due to poor site management or construction operations;
- a phased programme of planting and early implementation of planting and other landscape measures where there is no conflict with construction activities or other requirements of the development proposal;
- strict adherence to the site boundaries of construction and storage compounds and construction access roads, including the use of well-maintained hoardings and fencing;
- designing lighting to avoid unnecessary intrusion onto adjacent buildings and other land uses;

- replacement of any trees intended to be retained which may be accidentally felled or die as a consequence of construction works; and
- appropriate maintenance of planting and seeding works and implementation of management measures, to continue through the construction period as landscape works are completed.

### **Conclusions**

- 7.7.13 The landscape strategy will ensure that the development proposal is acceptable in landscape and visual terms through the preparation of a landscape and visually led development masterplan, with careful consideration of scale and form, site planning and appearance.
- 7.7.14 As with any development of this scale and form, it should be expected that there will be some adverse effects. However, these have been limited through the delivery of a substantial green infrastructure strategy for the site, which will create permeability, connectivity and integration with the wider landscape. These new areas of green infrastructure will not only provide a structured landscape setting that will assist in reducing the likely visual effects of development over time, but will also deliver a multi-functional network of open spaces with enhanced opportunities for public recreation and local ecology.
- 7.7.15 Given the approach taken and the resulting development framework brought forward in accordance with emerging development policy for the site, there is no reason why the likely landscape and visual effects of the development proposal should be regarded as unacceptable.

