The settlement of Tong is excluded by the site boundary; however, its Conservation Area extends into the site. Tong Conservation Area includes the area from Tong Priory in the north-east, roughly following the property and field boundaries to the A41in the west. In the south-east the boundary follows Newport Road up to the Old Orchard where it then follows the property boundaries and Hubbal Lane north (see Map 02).

The Conservation Area contains 16 Listed Buildings, predominantly Grade II, but with a Grade II* medieval cross base and the Grade I St Bartholomew Church. The Listed Buildings make up the majority of the village's built fabric. Additionally, the Conservation Area contains 2 Scheduled Monuments, although the A41 cuts through one of them, the site of the medieval college. Most of the settlement is on the eastern side of Newport Road, with only the Church of St Bartholomew, Tong House (the former vicarage) and the northern part of Tong Castle estate on the west. The Conservation Area is largely of rural character. This is due to the surrounding open landscape as well as the open space between the scattered properties.

Access and Public Right of Way

The site is defined to the north by the A5 Roman Road, to the south by the M54. The main vehicular access into the site is via the M54 junction leading north onto the A41, which splits parts of the site east and west. A small network of minor local roads is also located within the site, Lizard Lane cuts through the site from north to south connecting to the A5 Roman Road to the north, and Stanton Road to the south. Stanton Road also cuts through the southern part of the site, from west to east, and numerous tracks provide connectivity to the various farmsteads.

The landscape within the site is lacks an interconnected public right of way network and is limited to a small number of short footpaths and bridleways, most of which provide no linkages with a wider PRoW network. However, the Monarch's Way recreational route does pass through the site from west to east.

Tranquillity

The site retains an overall sense of tranquillity largely due to its rural character and limited levels of development. The dispersed farmsteads and hamlets of Tong and Tong Norton do not notable reduce the overall tranquillity levels of the site. This tranquil landscape positively contributes to the experience of walkers within the site, particularly users of the Monarch's Way route.

However, the M54, A5 and the A41 dissect the countryside, introducing distraction and noise. Tranquillity levels within the site in close proximity to these roads does noticeable reduce due to the noise and visual intrusion.

The tranquillity of Tong and Tong Norton is particularly affected due to proximity to the A41 and Junction 3 of the M54. The influence of the road network diminishes significantly to the western parts of the site where the more rural qualities prevails.

3.0 Landscape Appraisal

3.1 Landscape Sensitivity

The field work and baseline study has identified the following key landscape features as being of high importance in terms of their contribution to the local landscape character:

- Rural landscape;
- Wooded dingles and hedgerows;
- Distant cross valley views;
- Wooded skyline;
- Monarch's Way recreational route; and
- Tranquillity.

To establish the landscape character sensitivity, the above landscape features have been considered in terms of their value and susceptibilities.

The rural landscape is a widespread characteristic throughout the wider landscape and the study area, with some areas being of higher value than others. Within the site, land is primarily used for intensive agriculture with fields generally being of medium to large scale. The rural character within the site is apparent, but not unique nor outstanding for scenic qualities. Areas of higher valued countryside are generally located to the east, north or west of the site, on higher ground where scenic quality is increased. Overall, the rural character is apparent, and attractive in parts with areas of historic value. However, the network of nearby major roads damages the intactness of the landscape. The rural landscape is therefore considered to be of medium value. However, susceptibility to change is variable, but generally medium.

The wooded dingles are a typical feature of the Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau as well as a distinctive element within the site, with the wooded belt following the watercourse through the rural landscape. A small part of the wooded belt is also Ancient Woodland. It has high scenic quality, but there is limited public access. The hedgerows within the site are relatively well established and maintained with less scattered field trees compared to the wider countryside (i.e. east of Tong). Consequentially the landscape openness varies according to the fields sizes and enclosure. Overall, the value of this landscape component is considerate high, with high susceptibility to change.

Distant cross valley views are a typical characteristic of the undulating Shropshire landscape, parts of which are designated landscapes such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These features contribute to the overall scenic quality of landscape. However, this is not a rare landscape feature and accessibility can be variable. The limited public accessibility of the site and study area limits the value of this landscape feature. Overall, value is considered to be medium with a medium susceptibility to change.

The wooded skyline is partially associated with the cross valley views. In particular Lizard Wood, located on higher ground is a prominent and unique skyline feature in the study area. Consequentially, the value of the wooded skyline is considered high as is the susceptibility to change. Development on higher ground could damage this characteristic.

The Monarch's Way affords high value and susceptibility to change due to its recreation and cultural value and susceptibility to change. Development could substantially change the setting of the route. The recreational value s accentuated by its cultural associations, popularity and

reference in guidebooks and leaflets (see literature available at the St Bartholomew's Church). Within the study area the route is well maintained and within scenic setting, largely consistent rural character.

The sense of remoteness and tranquillity is a distinctive feature within the site where the influence of the road network is less perceived, however, levels are variable. The current sparse scattered farmsteads and nucleated villages lower the tranquillity of the site and wider study area, where traffic flows is limited. However, tranquillity is not consistent within the study area and it is considered to be of medium value with medium susceptibility to change.

Overall, the landscape character sensitivity is considered to be **medium**. The findings of the field survey, desk-based research assessment of sensitivity in relation to the key site features identified is in agreement with Shropshire LVS in terms of the overall landscape character sensitivity in relation to the proposed development.

The Shropshire LVS assessment provides a general overview of most of the site and defines the relative landscape sensitivity to residential and employment developments. The site is located within parcels 64JCT-A, B and C, with the majority located in parcels in A and B. The sensitivity to residential development for these parcels is identified to be 'medium', which the LVS defines as 'some of the key landscape/visual characteristics and qualities of the Sensitivity Parcel are susceptible to change as a result of the scale and type of development and/or have some landscape value.' However, the landscape sensitivity to employment development is defined as 'medium-high' which means that 'the key landscape/visual characteristics and qualities of the Sensitivity Parcel are susceptible to change as a result of the scale and type of development and/or have high landscape value.'

The LVA findings support the Shropshire LVS assessment of a rural landscape with moderate strength of character. Fields vary in scale, medium to large, and so does the openness of the landscape. Intact field hedgerows and prominent woodlands are distinctive features of this landscape. In particular, Lizard Wood adds skyline interest due to its location on the rising ground. However, the noticeable intrusion of the road infrastructure system is a major detracting feature, and detrimental to the character of the landscape.

3.2 Predicted Landscape Effects

Table 2 below describes the key landscape effects, which are likely to result from the proposed development (visual effects are assessed separately in Section 6).

The predicted landscape effects assume the design recommendations outlined in Section 8 are implemented as an integral part of the scheme proposals.

Table 2 - Landscape effects

LANDSCAPE FEATURES	PREDICTED LANDSCAPE EFFECTS
Open rural landscape character	The proposed development will substantially change the local landscape character and urbanise large parts of the site. There would be a direct loss of open countryside. Although the proposed neighbourhoods would be partially enclosed by existing and proposed woodland belts, the change will be noticeable on a large scale.
Wooded dingle and hedgerows	The proposed development seeks to retain all existing woodland and reinforce its character using new native woodland planting to

LANDSCAPE	
FEATURES	PREDICTED LANDSCAPE EFFECTS
	integrate the development and provide linkages into the existing woodland habitats.
	Overall the proposals would result in a net increase of woodland cover compared with the existing site, which will reinforced the wooded valley bottom.
	There would be some loss of existing hedgerows, however, the proposed neighbourhood's largely follow the existing fields pattern, enabling most hedgerows to be retained
Distant cross valley views	While the visual implication of the proposed development on the appreciation of cross valley views is assessed further in section 6, in landscape terms the development will partially alter the rural, rolling landscape of the valley although it has been located to minimise disruption of the prominent features such as Lizard Wood and Weston Park. The wooded backdrop would assist in integrating the development within the landscape.
Wooded skyline	While the visual implication of the proposed development on the appreciation of the distinctive and prominent skyline is assessed further in section 6, in landscape terms the setting of Lizard Hill woodland has been protected by locating the development on the lower valley contours, maintaining a green open space to the west of the woodland and preserving the skyline.
Setting of recreational routes	The proposals include a generous landscape corridor along the route of Monarch's Way to the west of the Bell Inn. While this will partially preserve some sense of remoteness and enjoyment of the recreational route, by filtering the new development area mostly in visual terms (see section 6 for more details on visual effects), the reduction in extent of rural views and potential views of the development would have an adverse urbanising effect on the setting of the route and also reduce the tranquil setting due to the increased activity traffic noise. All other public right of ways within the site or in its proximity will experience similar landscape effects.
Tranquillity	Although the generous green open space strategy will preserve parts of the existing countryside; the proposals will inevitably cause a substantial reduction of the sense of remoteness and tranquillity due to increased usages, more traffic, and activities within the residential neighbourhoods. These effects on the landscape will be experienced particularly in close proximity to the proposed development, and lessen further away from the development.

3.3 Summary of Landscape Effects

The most notable adverse landscape effects identified relate to the loss of open countryside and the increased urbanisation of the predominantly rural landscape. This increased urbanisation also introduces further related adverse landscape effects due to the reduced tranquillity as a result of increased traffic, noise and activities associated with both housing and commercial development.

To a lesser extent further adverse landscape effects are predicted due to the reduction in the open countryside setting of Monarch's Way, and the loss of some existing hedgerows.

The character of the distant, cross-valley views will experience some adverse effects due to the loss of rural landscape. However, other important landscape elements such as woodland cover, hedgerows, and undulating skylines will be largely preserved.

In order to mitigate adverse effects, the development has been located within the lower valley slopes, which limits the disruption of key landscape features such as cross valley views and wooded skylines. Furthermore, existing woodland cover would be reinforced and improved with an overall net increase of woodlands. A combination of this and proposed tree belt seeks to minimize the perception of large block of development while reinforcing field patters.

The proposed structural planting, areas of meadow grassland, and the hedgerows will have positive biodiversity effects. Habitat linkages will benefit from the increased planting throughout the site. In addition, the existing and new communities will benefit of better public access into the countryside and high quality open spaces through an improved network of public footpaths.

In conclusion, it is clear the proposals will result in some notable adverse landscape effects in relation to effects on the landscape character, loos of open countryside and its increased urbanisation. However, the proposed masterplan layout, including strategic open spaces and additional woodland planting, contributes to the partial mitigation of these effects.

4.0 Visual Baseline

The visual appraisal considers the likely potential effects on views of the from key visual receptor locations within the study area. The assessment was undertaken with the assistance of site visits and Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) analysis.

4.1 Zone of Theoretical Visibility

To identify areas from which the proposed development may be visible, a computer-generated ZTV analysis of the study area was produced using Ordnance Survey (OS) 'Terrain 5' digital terrain model (at 5 m resolution). The resulting ZTV is shown on Drawing UDS4103-A3-0101.

The ZTV does not take account of any proposed mitigation measures. However, key woodland blocks and buildings were included in the model to provide a more accurate zone of visibility. Woodland and buildings were mapped using OS VectorMap District data (woodland was given an assumed height of 12 m; buildings were given an assumed height of 10 m). The mapping was generated using a viewer height of 2 m above ground level. The ZTV represents the theoretical visibility of 3 storey dwellings at a height of 12.5m above existing levels.

It is important to note that the ZTV represents a 'worst case' scenario, only taking into account key visual barriers identified on OS mapping data. In reality, considerable additional eye-level screening is likely to be afforded by low-level structures, walls, hedgerows and vegetation which are not included in OS datasets. Additionally, the ZTV does not reflect the extent to which visibility reduces with distance from the site.

4.2 Visual Context and Viewpoints

Despite the large extent of the site visibility of the site from the wider study area is relatively limited. This is largely due to the highly limited access, undulating topography and areas of dense woodland blocks that enclose parts of the site. Rising topography in the far distance from the site does also afford some theoretical visibility of the development, however, distance would be such that the change will be minimal. Views from the south of the M54 are very limited due to intervening urban settlement and the embankment of the road itself.

An appraisal of potential effects on views of the development was undertaken from 18 viewpoints, which were identified within the ZTV and verified by site observations. The viewpoints cover a range of receptors that may be effected by the proposals. These include users of public footpaths, road users, and visitors of Weston Park. The following viewpoints were visited.

Viewpoint 1a - Newport Road

The viewpoint represents views experienced by road users travelling through Tong village on Newport Road in a northerly direction and pedestrians on a dedicated pavement. This viewpoint is located in close proximity of the western site boundary; the site extends across the whole view but it's not visible due to intervening vegetation and buildings. St Bartholomew's Church is central to the view. In the foreground is the church courtyard.

Viewpoint 1b - Newport Road

The viewpoint represents views experienced by road users travelling on Newport Road through Tong village and pedestrians on a dedicated pavement looking west across St Bartholomew's Church courtyard. This viewpoint is in close proximity of the western site boundary.

The site is visible in the middle-ground, beyond the A41 corridor. To the right is a glimpse of Church Pool.

Viewpoint 2 – Monarch's Way – Public Right of Way 0149/19/03

The viewpoint represents views experienced by pedestrians using the Monarch's Way footpath linking Tong to Meashill Farm. The viewpoint is located at the eastern edge of the site, which extends over the arable fields in the foreground. To the left of the view, Wrekin hill emerges on the horizon line.

Viewpoint 3 - Monarch's Way - Public Right of Way 0149/7/1

The viewpoint represents views experienced by pedestrians walking along the Monarch's Way to the south of Tong Norton. The viewpoint is located within the site, which extends across the whole photograph. The open fields in the foreground are currently used as paddocks. The horizon line is largely defined by wooded and hills; the electricity post and St Bartholomew's Church on the left stand above the horizon. Lighting columns and cars travelling along the A41 are visible in the middle ground.

Viewpoint 4 - Offoxey Road

The viewpoint represents views experienced by road users travelling on Offoxey Road in a westerly direction. The view is taken through one of the occasional gaps in the hedgerow. The foreground is open arable land dissected by linear hedgerows and isolated trees. The linear horizon line is broken by Spring Coppice woodland block and Wrekin outline is visible in the far distance.

Viewpoint 5a - A41 - North

The viewpoint represents views experienced by road users travelling on the A41 in a southernly direction, located within the site. The A41 is a prominent feature within the view, though the majority of the view consists of agricultural fields enclosed by mature tree belts. The field to the left of the view is not part of the site.

Viewpoint 5b - A41 - North

The viewpoint represents views experienced by road users travelling on the A41in a southernly direction, located within the site. The A41 is a dominant feature of this view, beyond it is an agricultural field enclosed by the tree belt.

Viewpoint 6a - Stanton Road

The viewpoint represents views experienced by road users travelling in an easterly direction along Stanton Road. The viewpoint is located within the site, which extends across the whole photograph. The foreground is mostly arable fields and the gently undulated horizon line is defined by woodlands.

Viewpoint 6b - Stanton Road

The viewpoint represents views experienced by road users travelling in a westerly direction along Stanton Road. The viewpoint is located within the site, which extends across the whole photograph. The foreground is arable fields and the gently undulated horizon line is mostly defined by woodlands in the background.

Viewpoint 7 - The Knoll Tower - Weston Park

The viewpoint represents views experienced by visitors of Weston Park in proximity of the Knoll Tower. The site is mostly behind the park hills and existing woodland blocks, Lizard Hill and the ground below is visible to the right of the view. On the foreground is Weston Park land, mostly used for grazing and occasionally cultivated. Mature trees and a block of woodlands define the fields boundaries and extent of the park.

Viewpoint 8 – Public Right of Way 0141/2/1 – North of Coppice Green

The viewpoint represents views experienced by pedestrians walking along a public footpath crossing an open, arable field. Lizard Hill is a prominent feature on the left of the photograph and part of the site. To the right of it, the central area of the site, between Tong and Spring Coppice, is visible in the distance within a long view that ends on a linear, wooded horizon line.

Viewpoint 9a - Monarch's Way - Public Right of Way 0149/15/2

The viewpoint represents views experienced by pedestrians walking along the Monarch's Way route to the east of Tong Forge. The viewpoint is located within the site. In the foreground is an arable field backed up by Tong Forge's woodland belt, through which Lizard Hill is also visible. Glimpsed of Tong Forge dwelling are visible amongst the trees.

Viewpoint 9b - Monarch's Way - Public Right of Way 0149/15/2

The viewpoint represents views experienced by pedestrians walking along the Monarch's Way route to the east of Tong Forge. The viewpoint is located within the site. In the foreground is an arable, open field backed up by Norton Mere woodland. On top of this Weston Park hill is also visible.

Viewpoint 10 - Public Right of Way 0149/12/1

The viewpoint represents views experienced by pedestrians on a public footpath linking the A41 to Mill Lane. The site is located on the western side of the A41 and is visible from this viewpoint. However, to the left is screen by the existing hedgerow that runs along the footpath to the south. The majority of the view consists of open agricultural landscape that extends up to the hedgerow along the A41. Lizard Mill and Lizard Grange farms are visible in the background within cluster of trees. The horizon line is defined by undulating wooded hills.

Viewpoint 11 - Mill Lane

The viewpoint represents views experienced by road users travelling northwards along a secondary country lane. The lane runs along the western boundary wall of Weston Park, visible to the right of the photograph. The lane is enclosed by a fairly consisted hedge, views are afforded through the occasional gaps and, due to elevated topography, they extend across the cross valley. Lizard Hill And Upper Gallop woodlands are visible in the far distance.

Viewpoint 12 - Roman Road - East

The photograph represents views experienced by road users travelling on the A5 Roman Road, a busy access road to Telford. The road is a prominent feature of the view and the fragmented hedgerow allows for a extensive views of the countryside. Lizard Hill and Forge Plantation are defining features of the skyline.

Viewpoint 13 - Marsh Road

The viewpoint represents views experienced by road users travelling south along this secondary country lane. The road is largely enclosed by the field hedgerow, however occasional gaps affords extensive views of the countryside. The view is partially enclosed by Burlington woodland, which filters views of the fields south of the Roman Road. The undulating, wooded skyline is defined by Dog Wood and Lizard Hill.

Viewpoint 14 - Road between Burlington and Gorsey Bank

The viewpoint represents views experienced by road users travelling south along the country lane. The road is largely enclosed by hedgerows, however views of the countryside are afforded through occasional gaps. The open field in the foreground is enclosed by the woodland surrounding Burlington Pond. Lizard Hill defines the gently undulated skyline.

Viewpoint 15 - Public Right of Way 0141/2/1

The viewpoint is representative of views experienced by pedestrians on the public footpath linking the Roman Road to Coppice Green Lane through Dog Wood, visible on the right. Passed the agricultural field in the foreground, the viewer experiences the typical, gently undulating landscape which extends up to Weston Park on the opposite valley embankment. Farm building, such as Woodlands farm, are scattered throughout the view. The skyline in the far distance is uninterrupted and gently undulating.

Viewpoint 16 - Monarch's Way - Tong Forge

The viewpoint represents views experienced by road users and pedestrians on Lizard Lane, which is also part of the Monarch's Way recreational route. The majority of the view consists of the agricultural field enclosed to the left by hedgerow and then parkland fence. In the background is Lizard Hill woodland.

Viewpoint 17 – Weston Park – North

The viewpoint represents views experienced by visitors of Weston Park on the path south of Weston Hall. The parkland in the foreground is scattered with mature trees. Further woodland cover in the foreground encloses the view defining the largely level skyline.

Viewpoint 18 - Upton Road

The viewpoint represents views experienced by road users travelling north on a secondary road to the south east of Shifnal. The agricultural land in the foreground in enclosed by woodland cover. Nevertheless long views are afforded to the undulating, wooded skyline in the background. Weston Park is visible to the left of the view.

5.0 Visual Appraisal

5.1 Viewpoints Assessment

An assessment of potential effect on views of the site was undertaken from 18 viewpoints within the ZTV, refer to Drawing UDS4103-A3-0101. These were selected to represent views from key visual receptor locations, at varying distance and orientations form the site.

The following is provided for each viewpoint:

- A panoramic photograph of the application site;
- A description of the existing view;
- An assessment of the type and relative sensitivity; and
- A brief description of the predicted view based on the concept masterplan design.

Tables in Appendix C provide the complete assessment of each viewpoint.

It should be noted that the scoring of visual effects from the locations identified has not been undertaken at this stage as the identification of key viewpoints locations and their relative sensitivity is intended for use as a design tool, to assist in the refinement of the existing concept proposals.

5.2 Summary of Visual Effects

The viewpoints identified can be divided in two main groups: those located within the site boundary and those outside the site boundary. The viewpoints located outside the site boundary often represent cross-valley views experienced by various receptor types e.g. road users (including cyclists), or pedestrians using public rights of way.

Generally, the visual effects experienced from viewpoints more distant from the development (viewpoints 4, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17 and 18) are not substantial, and in some cases the proposals could be recessive due to not breaking the skyline and the existing woodland blocks assisting assimilation into the landscape. Notably, this is very much the case for receptors within Weston Park Registered Park and Garden where the dramatic topography and dense vegetation provides good screening to the development. Lilleshall Hall also affords no views for similar reasons.

Unsurprisingly, most views within the site would be substantially effected by the development (viewpoint 6, 9 and 16), which is in most cases the development and receptor locations are very close to each other, with the wooded horizon no longer visible due to new built form. Viewpoints 5 and 10 experience slightly less change as the proposal includes strategic open space along the A41, that would retain some of the baseline open character. Viewpoint 1 would experience minimal visual effects as it looks over the retained open green space and associated vegetation. Furthermore, existing woodland and St Bartholomew's Church would screen the proposed development. Viewpoint 3 would also be retained as open space, but would afford partial views of the development, albeit in the distance and filtered by existing and proposed vegetation. Similarly, Viewpoint 2, located on the site boundary affords limited views of the development due to distance and existing vegetation.

Monarch's Way recreational route would be notably effected by the development where it crosses through the site from east to west. However, buffer planting is provided to mitigate the visual effects. Views from the route will substantially change, with an increased urban character and the

loss of the wooded horizon and open character. These effects diminish with distance from the site, or along sections of the route which are currently enclosed by mature hedgerows.

The effects experienced from other PRoWs within the study are also directly proportionate to distance from the development. Generally, those in close proximity or within the site will afford substantial visual effects; while footpaths further away benefit from intervening vegetation and topography, which provide a degree of screening of the proposals.

Views of the site from the M54 will remain very limited due to partial screening afforded by the buffer planting and its location within a slight cutting. Furthermore, users of the M54 are least sensitive to change as they would be travelling at high speed on a busy motorway. The A41, Lizard Lane and Stanton Road are more likely to be effected by changes in views, particularly in close proximity of the site and less as the distance increases. However, many of the roads are contained by mature hedgerows and often views are limited to occasional gaps.

6.0 Analysis of Site Capacity

Landscape capacity is defined in the *'Landscape Character Assessment Guidance'*, 2002 (Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage) as:

"...the degree to which a particular landscape character type or area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type. Capacity is likely to vary according to the type and nature of change being proposed."

Utilising the baseline information, site observations and with reference to Topic Paper 6: '*Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity*', The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, January 2004' an assessment of the sites capacity to receive development has been undertaken.

In accordance with Topic Paper 6 the assessment considers the 'landscape character sensitivity' and 'visual sensitivity' to establish the overall 'landscape sensitivity'. The overall 'landscape sensitivity' and 'landscape value' are then assessed to determine the 'landscape capacity' of the site to accommodate the development type proposed. A matrix system is applied to assist in combining assessment results to establish the overall landscape sensitivity and landscape capacity, in accordance with Topic Paper 6. Professional judgment is used where the matrix cannot accurately define the result and to validate the findings.

Due to the size of the site and its variable levels of sensitivity and value it has been subdivided into 8 main areas, and each main area was subdivided further into smaller units. This was undertaken with reference to physical landscape features (woodland, hedgerows and roads etc.) along with site observations. Assessments were then undertaken for each individual unit identified.

6.1 Landscape Character Sensitivity

Landscape Character sensitivity is concerned with the inherent character of the landscape, and the likelihood that this character would be changed by the introduction of development. The sensitivity of a given landscape will vary according to the type of change proposed, in this case the development of new residential settlements and strategic employment areas. Topic Paper 6 states that:

'Judging landscape character sensitivity requires professional judgement about the degree to which the landscape in question is robust, in that it is able to accommodate change without adverse impacts on character. This means making decisions about whether or not significant characteristic elements of the landscape will be liable to through disturbance, whether or not they could easily be restored, and whether important aesthetic aspects of character will be liable to change. Equally, consideration must be given to the addition of new elements, which may also have a significant influence on character.' (paragraph 4.2).

Landscape character sensitivity for the site has been considered in Section 3.6 The site as a whole is considered to be of 'Medium' sensitivity using the criteria provided in Appendix A.

6.2 Visual Sensitivity

Visual sensitivity relates to a specific form of change, where the nature of the development proposed is known, which in this case is residential and employment development.

Visual sensitivity considers how the landscape is currently viewed, the likely prominence and visibility of the proposed development, potential screening provided by landform or woodland etc, the number of people likely to view the development, the activities of those who may see the development (e.g. commuters, residents or recreational visitors) and the likelihood that the proposed development could mitigated by screening measures.

Visual sensitivity within the site is variable. Each unit identified has been assessed to be of either High, Medium, or Low visual sensitivity using the criteria provided in Table 3.

Table 3 - Visual Sensitivity

VISUAL SENSITIVITY	ATTRIBUTES		
High	Highly visible with largely open and exposed surroundings.		
	Potentially visible from long distances.		
	Seen by a large number of viewers ranging from high to lower sensitivity, engaged in recreational activities.		
	Limited benefits afforded by mitigation.		
Medium	Some visibility but partially enclosed or screened surroundings. Potentially visible from close to mid-distances.		
	Seen by a moderate number of viewers, generally of a medium or lower sensitivity, engaged in travel or at their homes.		
	Views could benefit by mitigation.		
Low	Limited visibility, generally enclosed or screened surroundings.		
	Potentially visible from short distances.		
	Seen by few viewers, generally medium or lower sensitivity, engaged in work or travel with little interest in their surroundings.		
	Views are likely to benefit by mitigation.		

To assist in assessing the level of visual sensitivity detailed ZTV mapping was undertaken for each of the 8 areas identified within the site. These ZTVs indicate locations within the study area which would have theoretical views of development from each of the 8 areas assessed (Refer to Drawings 8 and 9). These assisted in identifying the potential extent of views, numbers of receptors and types of receptors likely to be affected.

In addition, a further ZTV was prepared to illustrate the varying levels of visual prominence within the site. This was generated by overlaying a 100m grid of 'analysis points' set at 1.5m above ground (to represent eye level) across the entire study area, excluding all land within the site. The resulting ZTV demonstrates areas within the site which have the greatest levels of visual prominence from within the study area (Refer to Drawing 10).

The ZTV's were then used alongside field observations to assess the level of visual sensitivity of each individual unit.

6.3 Overall Landscape Sensitivity

The overall 'Landscape Sensitivity' for each unit is defined by combining the 'Landscape Character Sensitivity' and 'Visual Sensitivity'. This process is guided by the matrix approach provided on Table 4, and as illustrated in Topic Paper 6, Figure 3(a).

Table 4 - Overall Landscape Sensitivity

	VISUAL SENSITIVITY				
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER SENSITIVITY	High	Medium	High	High	
	Medium	Low	Medium	High	
	Low	Low	Low	Medium	
		Low	Medium	High	

6.4 Landscape Value

Landscape value is established by considering various criteria, including the presence of landscape designations, cultural associations, tranquillity, scenic quality and conservation interest. Assessing landscape value also requires the application of professional judgement.

Landscape value within the site is variable. Each unit identified has been assessed to be of either High, Medium, or Low landscape value using the criteria provided in Table 5.

Table 5 - Landscape Value

LANDSCAPE VALUE	ATTRIBUTES			
High	May contain landscape designation of national importance.			
	Notable scenic quality with very few or no detracting features.			
	High level of tranquillity.			
	May have a sense of remoteness.			
	May contain conservation designations of national importance.			
	Has some cultural associations, or close to an area of cultural association.			
Medium	May contain landscape designation of local importance.			
	Some scenic quality with occasional detracting features.			
	Moderate level of tranquillity.			
	Has a limited sense of remoteness.			
	May contain conservation designations of local importance.			
	Close to an area of cultural association.			
Low	Does not contain any landscape designations.			
	Limited scenic quality with prominent detracting features.			
	Low level of tranquillity.			
	Does not have a sense of remoteness.			
	Does not contain any conservation designations.			
	Has no cultural associations.			

6.5 Landscape Capacity

Topic Paper 6 suggests that the assessment of capacity must combine judgements of the overall landscape sensitivity and landscape value, informed by consideration of the specific type of

change proposed. This is undertaken with reference to Table 6, and as illustrated in Topic Paper 6 Figure 3(b), to classify the level of capacity for each unit being assessed.

Table 6 - Landscape Capacity

	LANDSCAPE VALUE					
DSCAPE	High	Medium	Low	Low		
	Medium	High	Medium	Low		
ZZ	Low	High	High	Medium		
LAI		Low	Medium	High		

Low capacity - these areas of landscapes are unlikely to accommodate housing or employment development without unacceptable adverse effects on the landscape character or views from the wider landscape. Capacity may also be low due to certain physical characteristics such as adverse topography.

Medium capacity - these areas of landscapes may be able to accommodate some housing or employment development of an appropriate type and scale. Development proposals must contain sufficient mitigation measures that any net adverse effects on the landscape character or views are balanced, or a potential net gain achieved.

High capacity – these areas of landscape are likely to accommodate housing or employment development without unacceptable adverse effects on the landscape character or views from the wider landscape. Mitigation measures may not be essential in these areas but may provide the opportunity for landscape or visual enhancements.

Table 7 shows a summary of how the landscape capacity has been calculated for each landscape unit identified. These results are also presented on Drawing 11.

Table 7 - Assessment of Capacity

AREA (UNIT)	LANDSCAPE CHARACTER SENSITIVITY	VISUAL SENSITIVITY	OVERALL LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY	LANDSCAPE VALUE	CAPACITY
1a	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low
1b	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low
1c	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low
1d	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low
2a	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low
2b	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low
2c	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low
2d	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low
2e	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low
2 f	Medium	High/ Medium	High/ Medium	Medium	Medium
2 g	Medium	High/ Medium	High/ Medium	Medium	Medium

AREA (UNIT)	LANDSCAPE CHARACTER SENSITIVITY	VISUAL SENSITIVITY	OVERALL LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY	LANDSCAPE VALUE	CAPACITY
3a	Medium	High/ Medium	High/ Medium	Medium	Medium
3b	Medium	High/ Medium	High/ Medium	Medium	Medium
3c	Medium	Medium/ Low	Medium/ Low	Medium/ Low	High
3d	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low
4a	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low
4b	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low
4c	Medium	High/ Medium	High/ Medium	Medium	Medium
4d	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low
4e	Medium	Low	Medium/ Low	Medium/ Low	High
4f	Medium	High/ Medium	High/ Medium	Medium	Medium
5a	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low
5b	Medium	High/ Medium	High/ Medium	Medium	Medium
5c	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
5d	Medium	High/ Medium	High/ Medium	Medium	Medium
5e	Medium	Low	Medium/ Low	Medium/ Low	High
5f	Medium	High/ Medium	High/ Medium	Medium	Medium
6a	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low
6b	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low
6c	Medium	Low	Medium/ Low	Medium/ Low	High
6d	Medium	High/ Medium	High/ Medium	Medium	Medium
6e	Medium	High/ Medium	High/ Medium	Medium	Medium
6f	Medium	High/ Medium	High/ Medium	Medium	Medium
6g	Medium	High/ Medium	High/ Medium	Medium	Medium
6h	Medium	Low	Medium/ Low	Medium/ Low	High
7a	Medium	High/ Medium	High/ Medium	Medium	Medium
7b	Medium	High/ Medium	High/ Medium	Medium	Medium
7c	Medium	High/ Medium	High/ Medium	Medium	Medium
7d	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low
8a	Medium	High/ Medium	High/ Medium	Medium	Medium
8b	Medium	High	High	High/ Medium	Low
8c	Medium	High	High	High/ Medium	Low
8d	Medium	High	High	High/ Medium	Low

6.6 Summary of Landscape Capacity

The following summary should be read in conjunction with Drawing 11 Assessment of Landscape Capacity.

Area 1

This area forms part of the highest ground associated with the site, reaching elevations of up to 125m AOD on the lower flanks of Lizard Hill. This elevation results in high levels of visual prominence from the wider study area, and the potential for distant and direct views of any potential development. Refer to Drawing 8 Area 1 and Drawing 10.

Lizard Hill and its woodland also form a valuable and prominent landscape feature with strong scenic appeal, as a result all units identified (A to D) were assessed to be of low landscape capacity and generally unsuitable for development.

Area 2

Situated between Lizard Lane, the A5 and the central woodland corridor dividing the site from north to south the area varies in visual prominence from high to moderate. Refer to Drawing 8 Area 2 and Drawing 10.

It also contributes to the open countryside setting of the A5 and Lizard Lane, and contains a Schedule Monument within units A to E, as a result these units were assessed to be of low landscape capacity and units F and G were assessed to be of medium landscape capacity. However, it is recommended that mitigation planting is located along the north of unit F.

Area 3

Located south of the A5, between the A41 and the central wooded corridor this area contributes to the open countryside setting of the A41 and Lizard Grange (Listed Building). The eastern edge of the area is of moderate visual prominence considered to have the lease capacity, with unit D being assessed as low landscape capacity. Refer to Drawing 8 Area 3 and Drawing 10.

Units A and B are assessed to be of medium landscape capacity; however, it is recommended that a generous open grassland margin is provided along the eastern and northern edge of unit A to seek to retain some of the open character.

Further west unit C is located within lower topography and less visually prominent, situated behind an established hedgerow this discrete unit is assed to be of High landscape capacity.

<u>Area 4</u>

This area is situated to the east of the A41 and north of the public footpath linking to Weston Park Registered Park and Garden. The area itself contains no designations. As with area 3 it contributes to the open countryside setting of the A41. Land to the north of this area has high levels of visual prominence. Refer to Drawing 8 Area 4 and Drawing 10.

Due to its visual prominence and contribution to the open countryside setting of the A41 units A, B and D were assessed to be of low landscape capacity, while units C and F are of medium landscape capacity. Any development within unit F must provide a landscape buffer alongside the public footpath to reduce adverse effects upon its setting.

Unit E, located to the east of area 4 is partly screened by woodland and of low visual prominence, therefore it is assessed to be of high landscape capacity.

Area 5

This area is situated between Lizard Wood and Lizard Lane. It forms the highest ground associated with the site, reaching elevations of up to 140m AOD, forming the side slopes of Lizard Hill. Due to the elevation this area affords high levels of visual prominence to the western parts (unit 5), with the potential for distant and direct views of any potential development. However, the eastern parts of this area fall in elevation significantly, reducing the visual prominence to medium/ low. Refer to Drawing 9 Area 5 and Drawing 10.

Lizard Hill and its woodland are a valuable and prominent landscape feature with strong scenic appeal, as a result unit A was assessed to be of low landscape capacity and unsuitable for development.

Units B, C, D and F were assed to be of medium landscape capacity. However, any development within units D and F must ensure that a generous landscape buffer provided between Monarch's Way.

Unit E is a smaller field to the east of Lizard Lane, adjoining the central woodland belt, as such it is of low visual prominence and has been assed to be of high landscape capacity.

Area 6

This area is situated within the centre of the site, to the west of the A41 and to the east of the central wooded corridor. Monarch's Way and a short pubic footpath cut through the site from west to east. The area is within the bottom of the valley and therefore elevations are relatively low, falling to approximately 85m AOD. Due to the low elevation and nearby exiting woodland generally the area is of low visual prominence, with the expectation of unit G which is of medium visual prominence. Refer to Drawing 9 Area 6 and Drawing 10.

As with areas 3 and 4 area 6 also has a notable contribution to the open countryside setting of the A41 corridor, particularly within the narrower fields to the north (units A and B). As a result, units A and B are assessed to be of low landscape capacity. Units D, E, F and G are assessed to be of medium landscape capacity; however, a generous open green offset with buffer screen planting beyond should be provided along the Monarch's Way corridor.

Units C and H are set back from the A41 and away Monarch's Way, and both are also of low visual prominence. As a result, these units are considered to be of high landscape capacity.

Area 7

This area is located to the south of the site and enclosed by M54, Stanton Road and the A41. It forms the lowest elevation within the site, adjacent to Church Pool. Area 7 contains two Listed Buildings associated with Vauxhall Farm, one bridleway and part of Scheduled Monument (site of medieval college), it also adjoins Tong Conservation Area to the east.

Elevations range between 90m and 80m AOD and the visual prominence ranges between low to medium. Wooded road corridors and occasional woodland blocks to the northwest and southeast provide partial screening of this areas. Refer to Drawing 9 Area 7 and Drawing 10.

The M54 is a notable detractor and reduces tranquillity significantly, this combined with the existing woodland screening result in high landscape capacity within unit A, and medium landscape capacity within units B and C. Unit D contributes to the wider setting of Tong Conservation Area and also contains part of a Schedule Monument, as a result this unit is assessed to be of low landscape capacity.

Area 8

This are is located between Tong Norton and Tong, to the east of the A41. The area is divided into 4 units by Friar's Lane, a belt of woodland (with drainage ditch which outfalls into Church Pool) and Monarch's Way, all of which cut through this area from north to south.

The area also contains Castle Hill motte and bailey castle Schedule Monument to the north, part of Tong Conservation Area to the south and adjoins several Listed Buildings.

Topography ranged from 85m to 100m AOD and visual prominence ranges from low to the west and high to the east. Refer to Drawing 9 Area 8 and Drawing 10.

Units B, C and D contribute to the setting of Tong Conservation Area and contain several constraints. unit C also forms part of the wider setting of the Grade I Listed Church of St Bartholomew. As a result, units B, C and D are assessed to be of low landscape capacity. However, the northern part of unit A is considered to have some potential capacity and therefore is assed to me of medium landscape capacity.

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 Recommendation for Development of the Masterplan

Based on the findings of the LVA and Capacity Study, the key recommendations that informs the refinement of the proposals for a new settlement are summarised as follows:

- The extent of development should strongly relate to the overall site visibility study, therefore proposed developed land should be located within the less visible areas, which largely coincide with the lower valley topography extending along the Tong Forge dingle. In particular, the strategic employment area should concentrate on the lower flat topography to minimise visual prominence of the potentially tall buildings.
- The development approach to each neighbourhood should consider local sense of place and, in particular, association with the countryside. For the development to be of appropriate scale within the contextual landscape considered in this assessment, appropriate built-form densities should be applied to each neighbourhood with the average density decreasing as the distance from the M54 and A41 increased. In other words, less dense development should reflect the proximity with the countryside or distinctive landscape and historic features (such as Lizard hill, listed buildings and scheduled monuments).
- The design of the A41 corridor should consider two fundamental issues: the currently open character, as well as cross valley views from Weston Park and from the rising topography towards the park. While the eastern side of the A41 is retained open landscape due to additional constraints associated to the setting of Weston Park, strategic open space should be included on the western side, north of the Havannah, in correspondence a long views from the Knoll Tower. Planting buffer should be considered along the road where development is proposed to mitigate the remaining visual effects.
- In addition to the strategic structural planting along the A41, visual effects of the proposed development should be mitigated with larger woodland planting on higher topography. Therefore, tree belts should be appropriately located to break the proposed urban blocks. Visual effects would be mitigated by proposed tree belts to the east of Woodlands farm, south east of Lizard Wood and north of the M54.
- The subdivision of the neighbourhoods should follow the existing fields edges to maintain the existing scale of landscape. Furthermore, treed avenues within the proposed development should reinforce the historic fields pattern, while preserving existing hedgerows.
- The fields to the east of Lizard Hill should be retained as open space to protect the hill as a distinctive landmark in visual and landscape terms. This would also benefit the retention of wooded, undulating skyline experienced from a wide range of receptors within the study area.
- The setting of Tong Conservation areas should be preserved as attractive countryside and therefore development should be desisted to the west of the A41 as well as north east of Junction 3. This would also preserve the remaining of some Capability Brown landscape at Church Pool.
- The proposed green infrastructure strategy, which includes country parks to the edges of the proposed development, should maintain the rural character, improve it where weak and preserve historic associations. Enhanced public access should coexist with some, retained, agricultural character.

7.2 Overall Conclusion

The site is located in an area with some urban influence but largely considered rural. The proposed development substantially causes the loss of agricultural land (Grade 3 as per Agricultural Land Classification map) that generally consist of some attractive countryside with some distinctive features. However, this landscape as a whole affords little designations, besides the Green Belt policy and some historic components, and it's not sufficiently distinctive to prohibit development. In fact, the findings of this appraisal indicate that subject to the recommendations listed above the site has capacity to accommodate a sympathetically designed development within the countryside.

APPENDIX A

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of the Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) is to identify the potential effects on the landscape baseline and the changes to views experienced by the inhabitants.

It is important to note that there is a distinction to be made between landscape and visual effects:

- <u>Landscape effects</u> relate to changes in the scale, pattern, character and quality of the landscape.
 These include direct impacts such as loss of vegetation, or less perceptible effects such as changes to tranquilly. Landscape effects do not need to be visible; and
- <u>Visual effects</u> relate to specific changes in views and the effects on visual receptors (e.g. residents, users of public rights of way or recreational facilities). Changes to the visual setting of protected cultural heritage features are also considered (e.g. Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) is accessible to public.

Guidance and Approach

The LVA is different from a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) as it does not include a classification of significance for the landscape and visual effects. However, as stated in the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (Third Edition, Landscape Institute & Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2013), it is possible to adopt the same approach for LVAs and LVIAs. Therefore, this assessment methodology has been developed from the guidance provided in the following publications:

- 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA), Third Edition Landscape Institute
 & Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2013;
- 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment' Christine Tudor and Natural England, October 2014.

It should be noted that the above guidance does not dictate a prescriptive methodology, instead it encourages practitioners to develop transparent and logical methods, using standardised terminology and which are proportionate the type and size of development proposed.

The appraisal starts with the definition of the landscape and visual baseline which identifies key characteristics and constraints relating to the site and its context. The baseline studies include landscape designations, published landscape character assessments, field observation and representative viewpoints. The planning policy context is also taken into consideration to identified distinctive landscape qualities at a local scale.

The baseline findings provide the basis for the understanding of the value in landscape and visual terms of the area that will be affected by the proposed development. The assessment of both visual and landscape effects starts with the definition of the relative sensitivities, which are defined by value and susceptibility to change. Landscape effects will then be considered for a set of landscape features relevant to the site character. Similarly, assessment of the visual effects will be determined for critical visual receptors.

Since a full LVIA has not been undertaken at this stage, a qualitative appraisal of the key issues has been completed to inform the development proposals. Consequentially the definition of landscape and visual sensitivities is based on the following considerations:

Landscape Sensitivity

- Landscape value is based on a range of features that may include the presence or absence of landscape designations, landscape condition /scenic qualities, rarity/representativeness, conservation interests, recreational value, perceptual qualities such as tranquillity and historical or cultural associations. The absence of a landscape planning designation does not mean that an area is of 'low' landscape value. Likewise, it should be noted that a landscape of high value may not always equate to areas of high landscape quality.
- Landscape susceptibility is defined as 'the ability of the landscape (whether it be the overall
 character or quality/condition of a particular landscape type or area, or an individual element and/or
 feature, or a particular aesthetic and perceptual aspect) to accommodate the proposed development
 without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of
 landscape planning policies and strategies' (Paragraph 5.40 of GLVIA3).

Visual Sensitivity

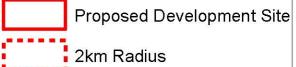
- The Value of a View is defined by the presence of heritage assets or landscape designations (i.e. National Park or AONB) and whether it attracts visitors/tourists. Indications of value provided by guidebooks, tourist literature, provision of car parking and/or provision of interpretation materials is considered as well as any scenic guality or protection by planning designations.
- **Visual Susceptibility** is defined by the occupation or activity of the people experiencing the views at particular locations and by the extent to which their attention or interest may be focused on the views.

The assessment of the landscape effects, as suggest by the GLVIA3, focuses on the perception of the landscape as a resource and considered the effects of change. 'The concern ... is with how the proposal will affect the elements that make up the landscape, the aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape and its distinctive character.' On the other hand, the visual assessment focuses on the 'effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity.' In this case the concern is to assess 'how the surroundings of individuals or groups of people may be specifically affected by changes in the content and character of views as a result of the change or loss of existing elements of the landscape and/or introduction of new elements'

APPENDIX B MAPPING AND MASTER PLAN



Land at J3 Map 01 - Aerial



Drawing Number: B.14,501 Date: 28/08/2019 Scale: 1:30,000 @ A3 O.S. Ref: SJ8007



