APPENDIX 4

Photographic Study of How Development on the Leckhampton Fields would affect the views from Leckhampton Hill

Photo 1 shows the view from above the main quarries north of the Observation Table. The importance of Lotts Meadow and of the field north of Lotts Meadow (bright green colour) is clear and also Robinswood Field to the left of it (hay colour). The photo shows that the hedgerow and trees at the north end of Lotts Meadow would not provide much screening for any possible development on field north of Lotts Meadow. The fields east of Farm Lane are also evident, especially the arable field at the corner of Farm Lane and Kidnappers Lane (emerald green). In front of Robinswood Field and left of Lotts Meadow is the solid mass of the tall poplars in Kidnappers Lane (all of these are covered by tree preservation orders). These help to screen the central part of nursery/orchard site in Kidnappers Lane. The buildings on the east side of this site, adjacent to Lotts Meadow, can be seen and are not significantly hidden by the hedgerow along Lotts Meadow. The west side of the nursery/orchards site is also clear but development would be softened by the hedgerow and trees in front of this. The field west of Robinswood Field is also evident, but this has not been included in the current proposed Local Green Space. It perhaps should be included or at least the south-east corner of this field to create greater visual separation from any development on the nurseries/orchard site.
Photo 2 is a wide-angle view from the same viewpoint shows the view from the same viewpoint as photo 1, but looking a little more west.
Photo 3 above is looking north-west. It shows how the west end of Brizen Lane is in line with the edge of the green belt along south-west Cheltenham and how development on the fields west of Farm Lane (White Cross Green fields) would extend right across the line of the green belt, almost to the left edge of the photograph. Behind Brizen Lane and the Lanes Estate the green fields of Brizen Farm are clear. The view shows how at present, with the fields of Brizen Farm behind, the Lanes Estate looks like a promontory rather than part of the conurbation of Cheltenham. The eye easily skips over this housing to the Brizen Farm fields beyond. This demonstrates why it is important that the Brizen Farm land is green belt but also that it is illogical not to have also included the White Cross Green land in the green belt also, as was proposed. All the White Cross Green site was considered in the JCS 2012 Landscape and Visual Sensitivity and Urban Design report to be of the highest landscape sensitivity and importance. The report recommended not building on any of this land and at most only building on the north-east of the four fields. Development just on this north-east field would lie in front of Brizen Lane as seen from Leckhampton Hill and would not cause any large extension across the green belt.
Photo 4 above is a close up showing better how Lotts Meadow, the field north of Lotts Meadow, Robinswood Field and the nurseries/orchards site would affect the view from the Hill. It shows the existing bank of trees on the nurseries/orchard site. These would help to considerably to soften and hide any development, provided they are retained. The view also shows how the large L-shaped bank of poplars in Kidnappers Lane hides the central part of the nurseries/orchards site, as noted earlier. The field west of Robinswood Field is quite apparent in this photo and is not well hidden. It is important that any development on this site will be visually separated from any development on the nurseries/orchard site. The strip of Robinswood Field between the two sites appears to be wide enough to achieve this, but any development on the Nurseries/Orchards needs to be sufficiently far from the Robinswood Field boundary and/or have sufficiently low roof height not to hide this separation.
Photo 5 above shows the view north. This view is not affected by the Leckhampton Fields apart from the fields above Collum End Rise, which are in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. But the view shows the effect of development coming much closer to the Hill, changing the view from one that is across countryside to one that is primarily across the Cheltenham conurbation.
Photo 6 above is the view northwest towards the Malverns from the Observation Table on Leckhampton Hill. In clearer conditions, the Shropshire Hill would also be visible to in the top right. One can see the presence of the fields east of Farm Lane in the centre left and how developing on these fields as well as developing on the northern fields beyond bring the Cheltenham conurbation much closer to the Hill. Again the nurseries/orchard site is reasonably well hidden. The importance of Lotts Meadow and Robinswood Field is also clear.
Photo 7 is the view from the Observation Table looking north-northwest. It shows the importance of Lotts Meadow, Burrows Field, the field north of Lotts Meadow and Robinswood Field.
Photo 8 is looking west-north-west from the Observation Table towards Wales. As before this view demonstrates how much development on the White Cross Green land west of Farm Lane would affect the view by protruding out across the green belt. The benefit is clear of not developing in the two southern fields and particularly in the south-west field. The view also shows the benefit of keeping the north-east corner of the site green as this creates a sort of green corridor on the right hand side of the picture from the AONB fields across the thin strip of Brizen Lane to the fields of Brizen Farm beyond and then along the edge of the green belt.
View 9 is a wide-angle view north-west from the Devils Chimney observation platform, with the Malvern Hills in the distance. The fields west of Farm Lane protrude somewhat less across the green belt because of the different angle of view. The Devils Chimney is about 100 metres south of the Observation Table.
Photo 10 is a wide-angle view north-north-west from the Devil’s Chimney Observation Table. It shows the importance of the fields between Farm Lane and Kidnappers Lane and of Lotts Meadow.
Photo 11 is looking north-north-west from the Devils Chimney Observation Platform. The top of the Devils Chimney is just visible in the bottom left corner. Because this view is not wide-angle, the effect of the field north of Lotts Medow and of Robinswood Field are more obvious. From this angle the eastern part of the nurseries/orchard site is hidden by the poplars in Kidnappers Lane, but the western side of this site is less hidden. The visual separation between the nurseries/orchard site and on the field west of Robinswood Field is more obvious from this viewing point than from the Observation Table because more of the west side of Robinswood Field is visible.
Photo 12 is a wide-angle view from the south end of Leckhampton Hill. Because of the trees in the foreground, the effect of developing on the land west of Farm Lane would be to bring the housing right up to the tree line with very little visual separation between the trees on the Hill and the housing on the land west of Farm Lane.