

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council

Concept Plans for Strategic Allocations: EMP4, Coventry Road, Nuneaton

Supplementary Planning Document (2020)

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1 Introduction

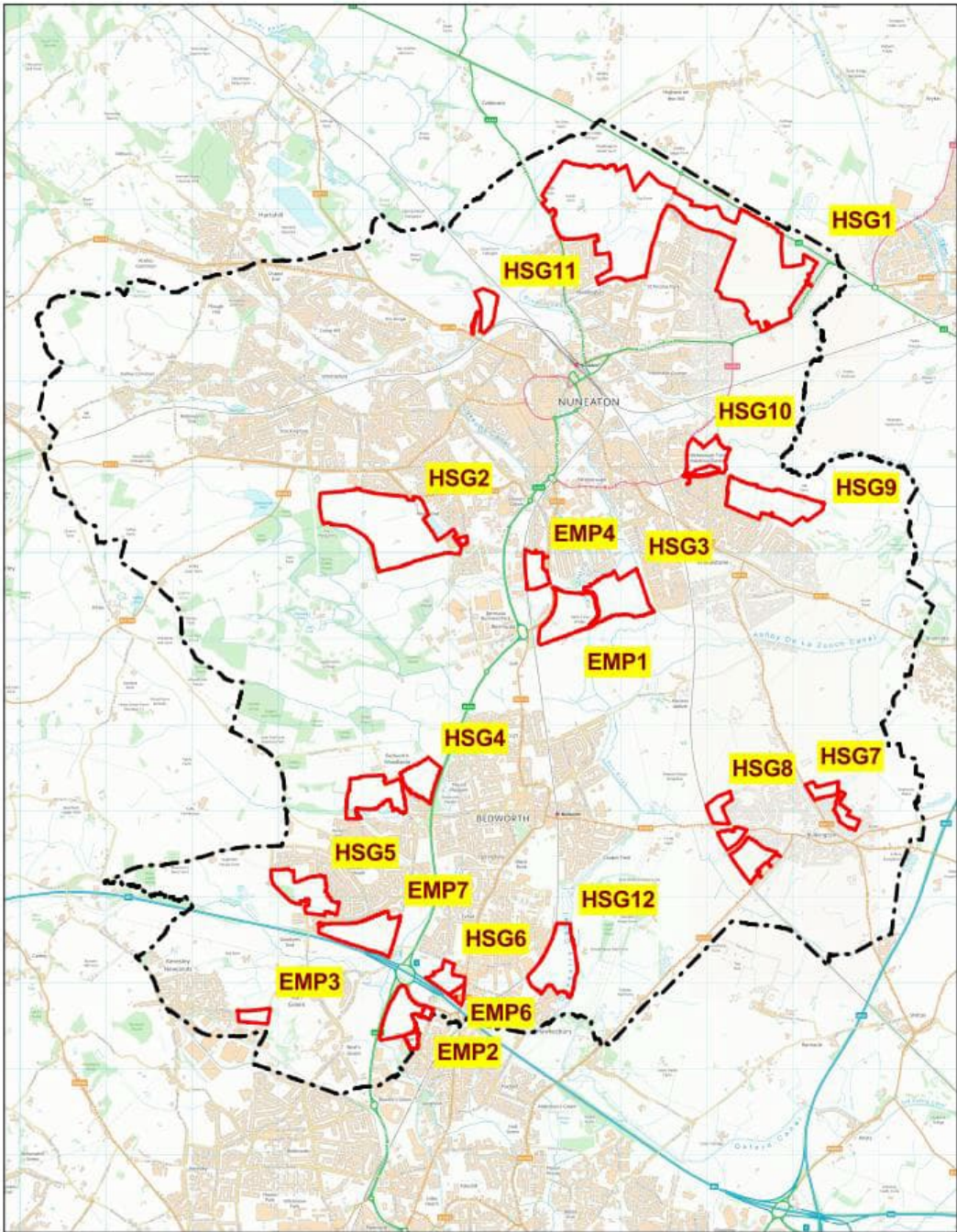
1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 The Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Plan will see the delivery of circa 14,060 new homes and 107.8 ha of new employment land within the borough for the plan period ending in 2031. A key component of accommodating this growth within the borough will be the development of a number of strategic land allocations for housing and employment uses (see Figure 1). This framework relates to the strategic allocation known as EMP4 – Land off Coventry Road.
- 1.1.2 The strategic land allocation covers an area of 9.59 hectares in the centre of the Nuneaton and Bedworth borough area.

1.2 Role of concept plan

- 1.2.1 The preparation of a concept plan is a key step in guiding all future stages of development on each strategic land allocation. It establishes a strategic context for planning applications and sets a 'baseline' position in terms of assessing future schemes which will contain more detailed proposals. A key objective of the concept plan is to ensure that the strategic land allocation is brought forward in a strategic and comprehensive manner.
- 1.2.2 In meeting this objective, the concept plan establishes the following matters for each site:
- Land uses;
 - Development principles; and
 - Infrastructure delivery.
- 1.2.3 The concept plan provides guidance on the delivery of the development principles set out in the adopted Borough Plan for each strategic site allocation. The Concept Plans are intended to provide a visual representation of policy requirements, as well as other key elements, and so are conceptual in nature. They are not intended to be exhaustive and show all required elements. The Concept Plans should inform the more detailed masterplans that are submitted at the planning application stage. Alternative solutions and land use arrangements may come forward as part of the planning application process, but the Concept Plans should be viewed as fundamental principles for the site and any significant differences in approach would need to be justified at the planning application stage.

Strategic housing and employment sites



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Scale
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Figure 1: Strategic housing and employment sites

1.3 Stakeholder and community engagement

- 1.3.1 The concept plan has been prepared by WYG on behalf of Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, in consultation with other stakeholders, developers and the main landowner interests.

1.4 Status of concept plan

- 1.4.1 It is intended that the Concept Plan will acquire status as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), providing additional explanation to the Borough Plan policies. This concept plan accords with Borough Plan policy, the National Planning Policy Framework and national planning policy guidance. Once adopted, the Concept Plans SPD will be a material consideration when deciding planning applications.

1.5 Planning policy background

National Planning Policy Framework

- 1.5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019) includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF states that sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways:
- a) an economic objective - to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - b) a social objective - to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs, and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - c) an environmental objective - to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

1.5.2 The NPPF further states that “Plans should be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development and be prepared positively, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable”. The concept plan seeks to provide development parameters to guide the future deliverability of the proposed scheme on the strategic site allocation.

Borough Plan

1.5.3 The vision for the Borough Plan is: “By 2031, Nuneaton and Bedworth borough will be a place where there are opportunities for sustainable economic growth with diverse job prospects, healthy living and an integrated infrastructure network. Business will want to invest in the borough as a result of the outcomes of policies in the Plan, which will include creating an attractive environment”.

1.5.4 In order to meet this vision the Borough Plan has set out a number of strategic objectives and planning policies. The following sites are identified:

- HSG 1 – North of Nuneaton,
- HSG 2 – Arbury,
- HSG 3 – Gipsy Lane,
- HSG 4 – Woodlands,
- HSG 5 – Hospital Lane,
- HSG 6 – School Lane,
- HSG 7 – East of Bulkington,
- HSG 8 – West of Bulkington,
- HSG 9 – Golf Drive,
- HSG 10 – Attleborough Fields,
- HSG 11 – Tuttle Hill
- HSG12 – Former Hawkesbury Golf Course
- EMP 1 – Faultlands,
- EMP 2 – Pickards Way / Wilsons Lane,
- EMP 3 - Prologis Extension
- EMP 4 – Coventry Road
- EMP 6 – Longford Road, and
- EMP 7 – Bowling Green Lane.

1.5.5 There are a number of other Borough Plan policies, which will have implications for the development of the strategic land allocation.

Supplementary planning documents

1.5.6 There are supplementary planning documents produced by Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council which should be read in conjunction with this framework. At the time of publishing, these include:

- Affordable Housing (2007);
- Car Parking Standards (2003); and
- Residential Design Guide (2004).

1.5.7 The following supplementary planning documents are also due to be produced. Once adopted, the new documents will replace the older documents where necessary:

- Affordable Housing
- Air Quality
- Transport Demand Management Matters
- Heritage, Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans
- Health Impact Assessment
- Planning for a Healthier Area – Hot Food Takeaways
- Green Infrastructure
- Sustainable Design and Construction

Other planning guidance

1.5.8 The following publications have also informed the preparation of this framework:

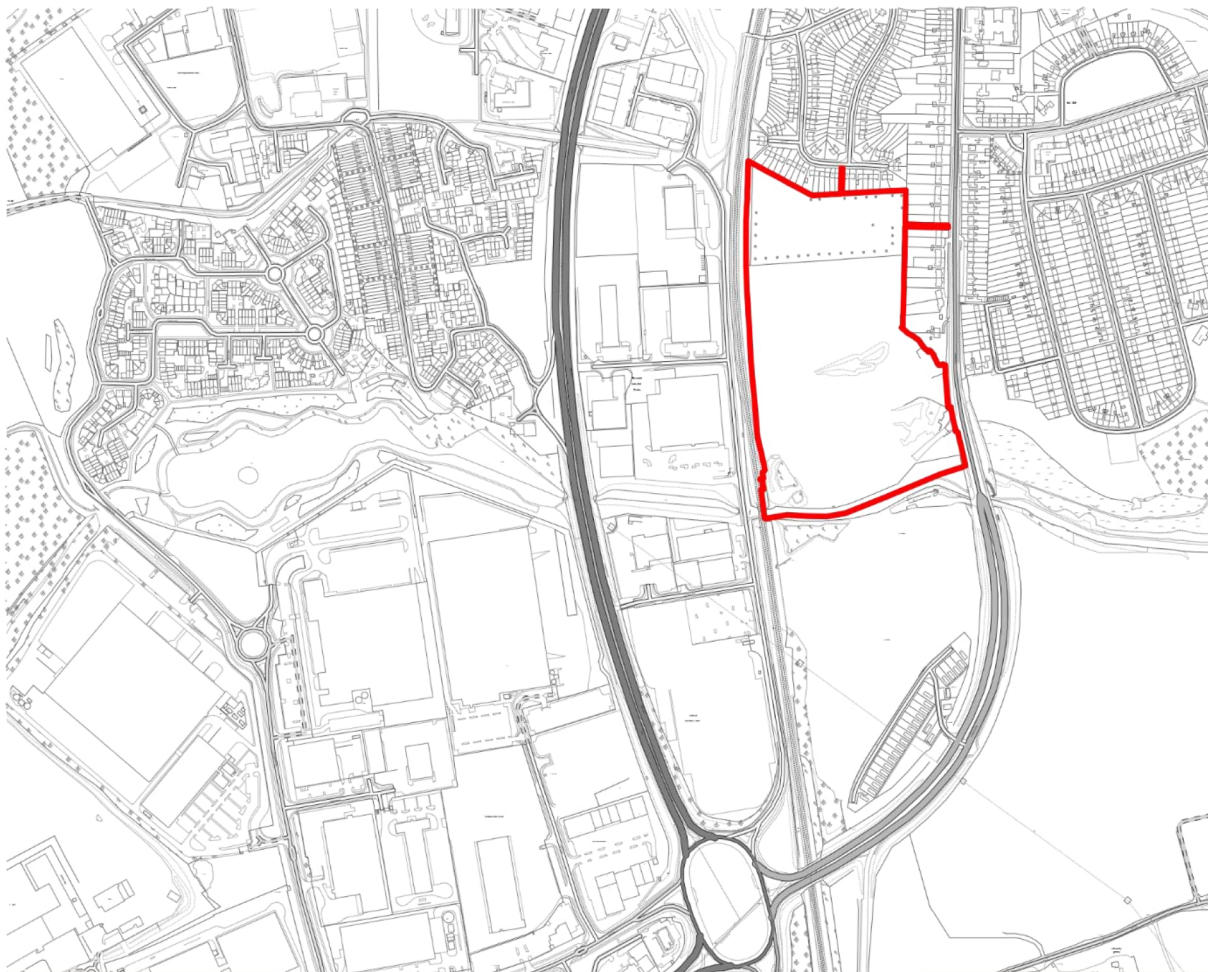
- National Planning Practice Guidance.

2 Site and context

2.1 EMP4 strategic site

Context

- 2.1.1 Strategic allocation EMP4 covers 9.59 ha. The site is situated in an urban environment and comprises derelict land formally used as the Griff Granite Quarry. The north of the site is characterised as former educational/civic land which was the site of the former Red Deeps Special School. Below this is a small area of large rectilinear fields, followed by an area of scrubland which was formed by the infilling of a modern extension to the quarry. To the west of the site is the Bermuda Industrial Estate and Business Park, and Bermuda Park Station. To the south is The Griff Gypsy and Traveller site, which occupies a flat area of land buffered by Coventry Road.
- 2.1.2 The land to the south formed part of the Griff Granite Quarry, which was extensively quarried throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The former Griff Arm of the Coventry Canal (now infilled) runs along the edge of the site. The alignment of the canal is retained through the strategic site by a footpath.



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Land East of St Georges Way, Bermuda - EMP 4

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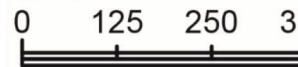
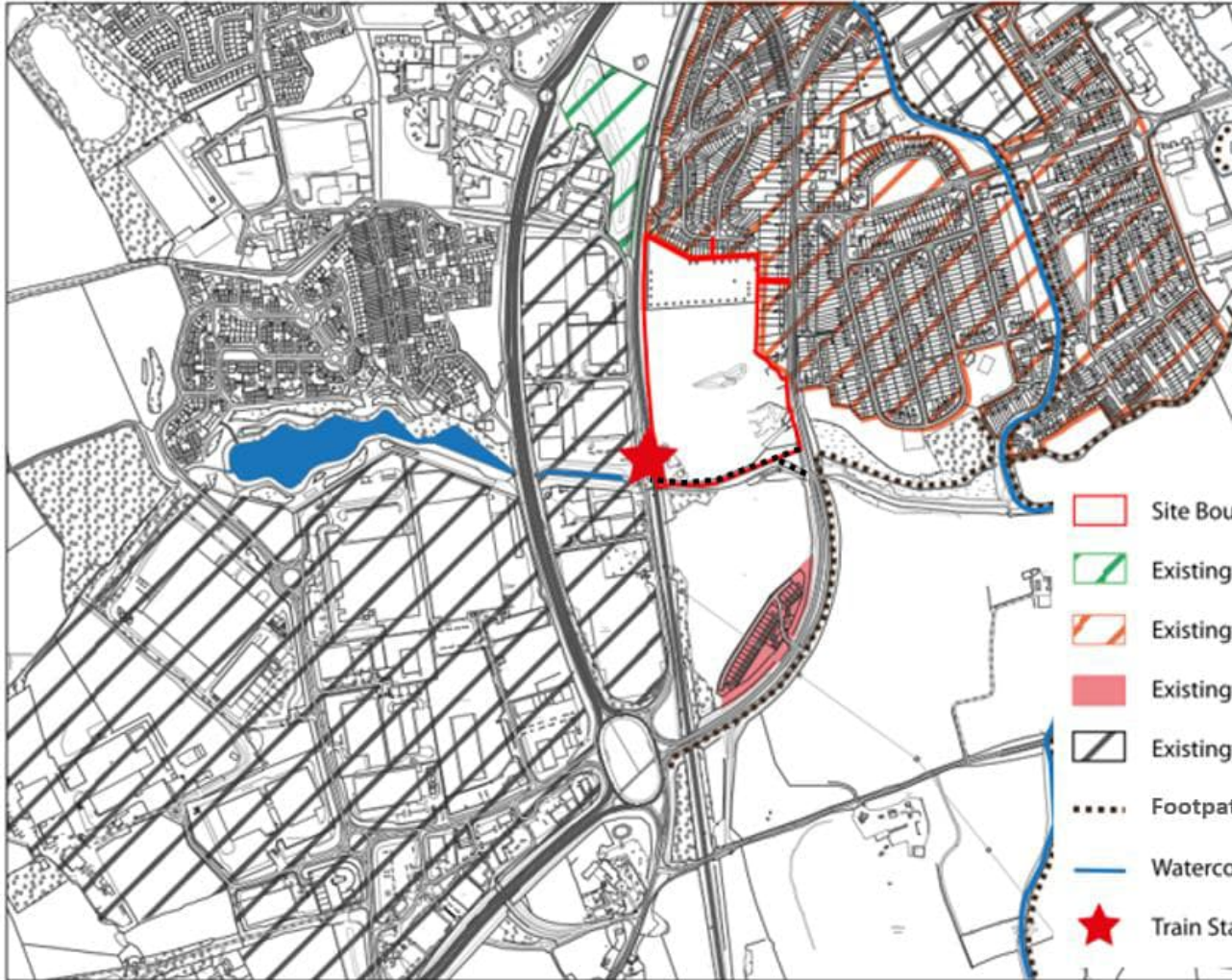


Figure 2: EMP4 Site location

2.2 Edge conditions

- 2.2.1 Edge conditions are important as they form the interface with the existing context. Depending on the nature of the edge conditions, they can inform a certain development or response to the surrounding environment.
- 2.2.2 The B4113 Coventry Road forms the site's eastern boundary, which is flanked by a belt of predominately thorn trees. Coventry Road, at the point it merges from the junction with the A444, is initially set on an embankment. The northern boundary of the site is defined by the residential area of Hill Top, with further residential properties situated on Coventry Road on the northeast corner, which have views into the site from the rear of the properties.
- 2.2.3 The western boundary of the site is defined by the railway, beyond which lies St Georges Way, which serves Bermuda Industrial Estate.



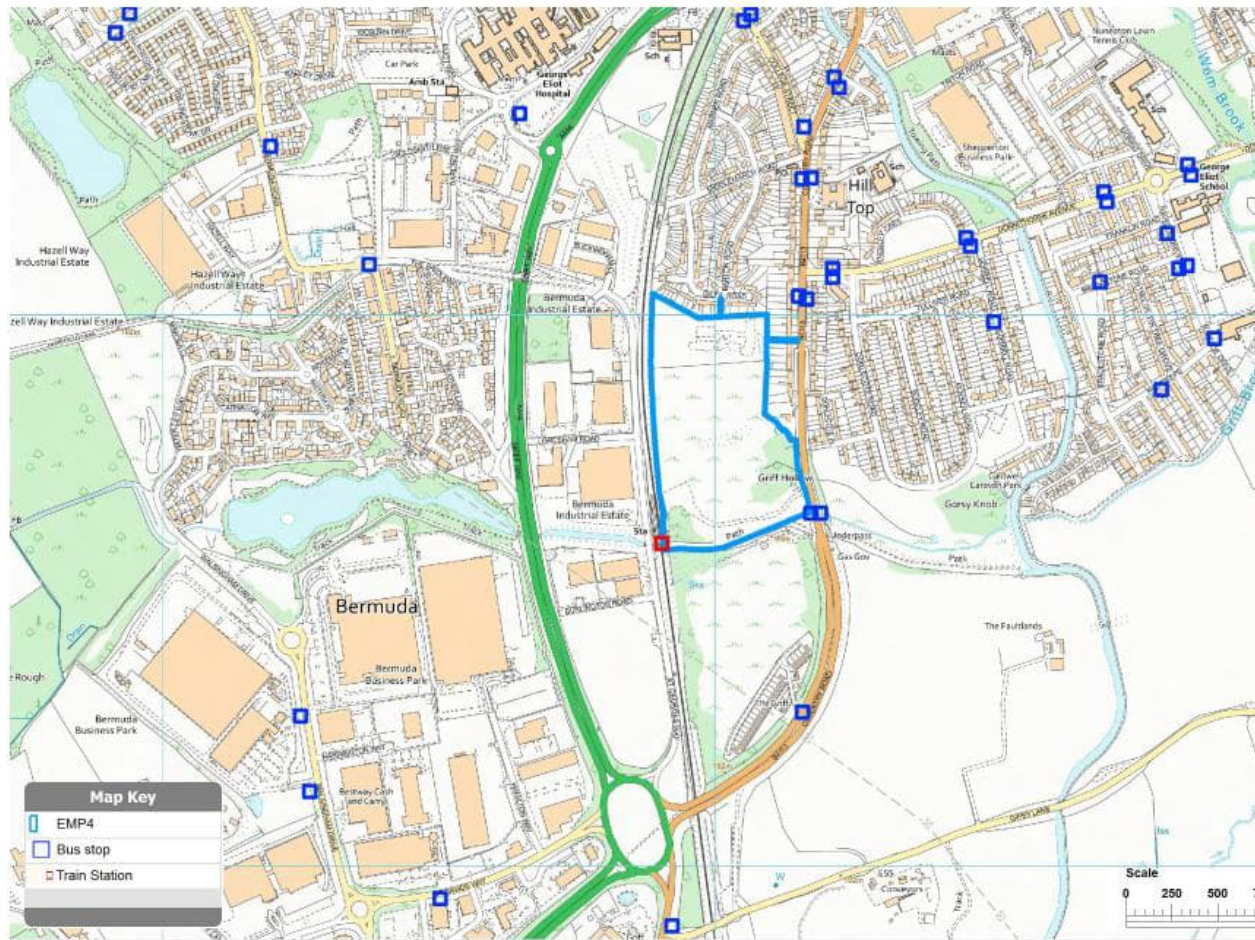
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Figure 3: EMP4 Site context



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EMP4 Accessibility

Figure 4: EMP4 Accessibility and local amenities

2.3 Views

- 2.3.1 The site sits at an elevated position, with views of the urban edge dominating the views to the west above Bermuda Industrial Estate and Bermuda Business Park. Due to the scale of the industrial units these views are not screened by any intervening vegetation and form a hard urban edge.
- 2.3.2 Views from the south and east are less prominent due to the intervening high ground and vegetation screening currently present. Housing at the northern edge of the parcel is partially visible.
- 2.3.3 Public views within and immediately surrounding the site are limited to Centenary Way public footpath, the railway line and some views from the B4113 – St Georges Way. Views of the western boundary are present from St Georges Way within Bermuda Industrial Estate, however views further into the site are prevented from St Georges Way due to the presence of the embankment along the railway.

2.4 Flood risk and drainage

- 2.4.1 A small part of the site is shown to fall within an area at risk of flooding (flood zone 2), however, this is only along the southern boundary and does not impact on the whole site. The rest of the site is within flood zone 1. A site specific flood risk assessment will be required for any development in flood zone 2. Small areas of the site are also identified as being at risk of surface water flooding, however, as they are so small this will not impact on any layouts for the site.

2.5 Landscape character, habitat and vegetation

- 2.5.1 Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council commissioned a Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) in 2012, prepared by TEP. This was updated in 2016.
- 2.5.2 Strategic site EMP4 is not shown to fall within a landscape character area. It does border Landscape Character Area 6 – Nuneaton and Bedworth Urban Fringe, where the land use varies from typical urban landscapes which include golf courses and recreational areas, whilst some of the land has more rural surroundings of pasture farmland, arable farmland and horse paddocks.
- 2.5.3 An ecological assessment was commissioned by the Council (dated September 2016). The majority of the site was designated as a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) in 2014, known as Griff Hollow Quarry LWS. The site sits at a crossroads of north-south and east-west local ecological

connectivity and at this point provides a large area for species to reside. The key features of the site are found to include:

- Semi-improved grasslands;
- Post-industrial mosaic habitats; and
- Habitat connectivity and an ecological corridor.

2.6 Access and movement

Public transport

- 2.6.1 Stagecoach bus service 48 operates along B4113 Coventry Road and connects to Leicester and Coventry via Nuneaton and Bedworth.
- 2.6.2 Bermuda Park Station is located adjacent to the site's western boundary, with train services from the station operating to Coventry and Nuneaton.

Highway network

- 2.6.3 The site is currently served from an access off the B4113 Coventry Lane along the eastern boundary, which provides access to the A444 dual carriageway / B4113 roundabout. The A444 is a primary route at this location, linking through Nuneaton and Bedworth to the A5 in the north, and Junction 3 of the M6 to the south.

Pedestrian and cycle routes

- 2.6.4 The Centenary Way long distance footpath route runs across the parcel in an east-west direction in a cutting flanked by areas of scrubby woodland. This route connects from Bermuda Train Station and leads to Coventry Road.

2.7 Heritage and archaeology

- 2.7.1 Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council commissioned a heritage assessment which was prepared by ECUS Environmental Consultants, forming part of the evidence base for the Borough Plan.
- 2.7.2 The heritage assessment confirms there are no designated heritage assets (scheduled monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas, registered parks & gardens or registered battlefields) within the extent of strategic employment site EMP4.
- 2.7.3 The following designated heritage assets are found to be located within 1 km of the strategic site EMP4:

- The Griff House Hotel (Grade II listed building); and
- Griff Cottage and an associated disused cottage (Grade II listed building).

2.7.4 There are no designated landscapes of historic interest within the strategic site. The historic landscape character of the strategic site is characterised by the derelict land relating to the former Griff Granite Quarry, which is considered to hold low heritage significance, derived from the remains of the former Griff Quarry, as well as the remains of the Griff Branch of the Coventry Canal.

2.7.5 No previous archaeological investigations are recorded to have been undertaken within the strategic site. The heritage assessment has identified that there may be high potential or as yet unknown archaeological remains of prehistoric, Romano-British and medieval date surviving in small areas in the northern and southern part of the strategic site, which have not been previously quarried.

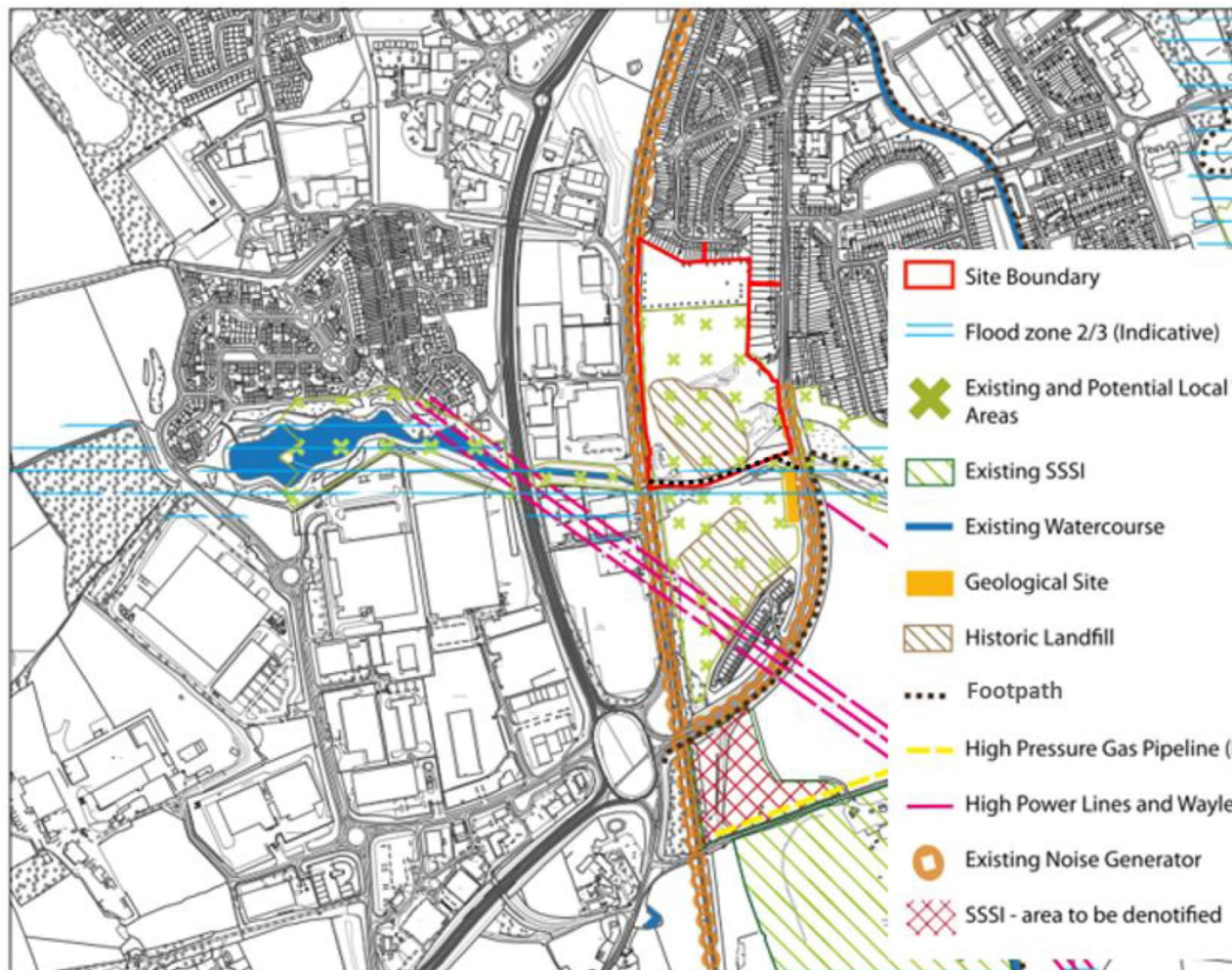
2.8 Environment

2.8.1 The natural bedrock geology within the strategic site is complex. There are ridges of Midlands minor intrusive suite - lamprophyres and outwood shale formation – mudstone, across most of the strategic site. A band of alluvium runs through the middle of the site. To the south the geology is mapped as Pennine lower coal formation – mudstone, overlain by thrussington member - diamicton (BGS, 2016). The site sits at approximately 100 m AOD.

2.9 Utilities

2.9.1 National Grid online mapping indicates that no main gas pipe is located within the extent of the site boundary.

2.9.2 There are overhead lines that cross an area to the south of the site, but these are not considered to be a major constraint.



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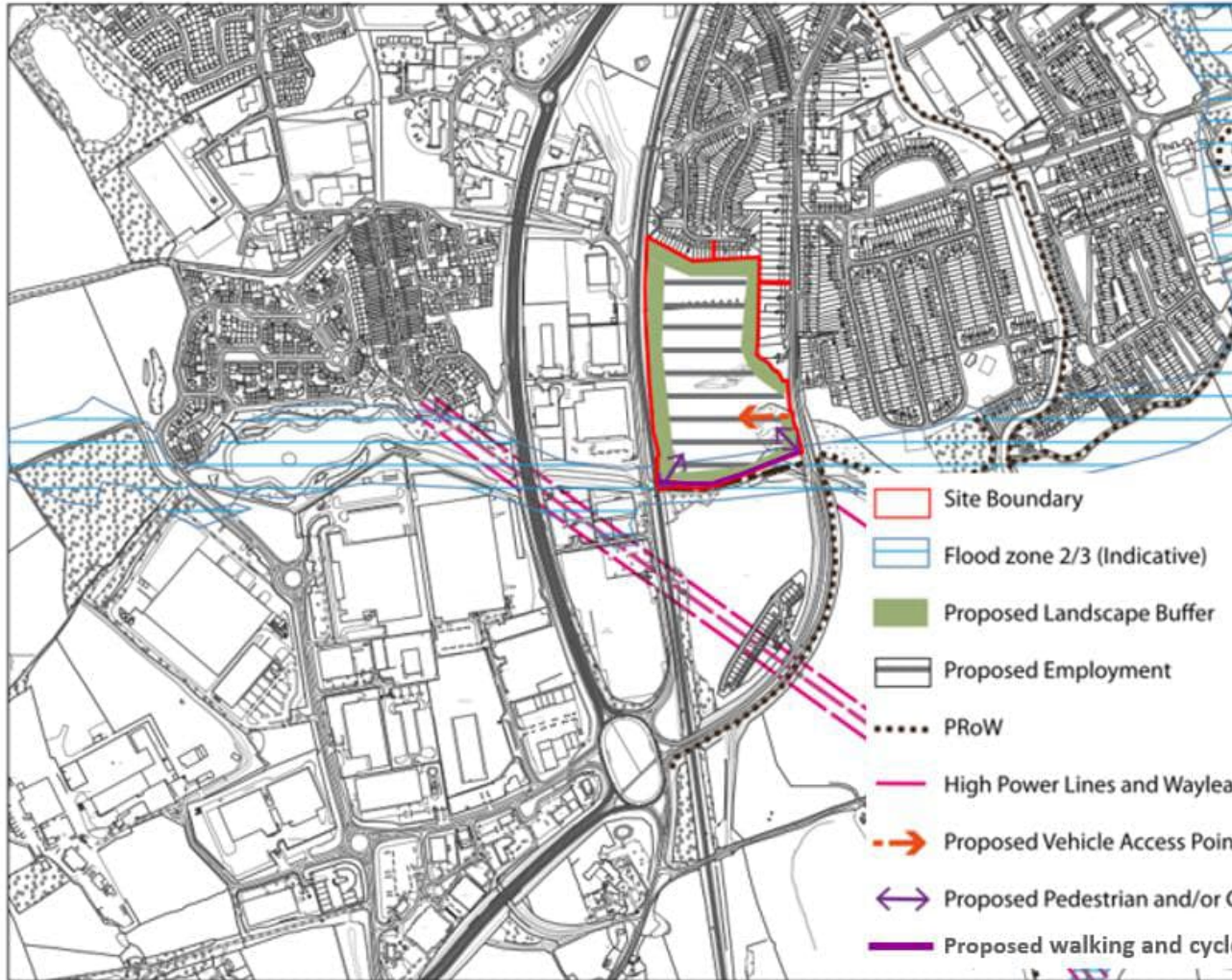
Figure 5: EMP4 Site opportunities and constraints

3 Framework and delivery

3.1 Core concept

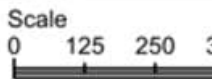
3.1.1 The concept plan is not a masterplan but rather highlights key principles that will help inform and guide subsequent planning applications which are brought forward on the strategic employment site. This framework and accompanying indicative plan seeks to ensure comprehensive delivery of the site to fulfil the strategic aims of the Borough Plan. The concept plan uses a base map that is to scale, however the elements overlaid onto the plan are indicative and for illustrative purposes only. The elements shown on the plan (and as set out in the key) are therefore not to scale and so the plan should not be used for measuring purposes. Key elements of the concept plan have been derived from stakeholder engagement and policy requirements within the Borough Plan, and are split into the following sections:

- Landscape, open space and biodiversity;
- Movement;
- Land uses;
- Character and design; and
- Sustainability.



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Land East of St Georges Way, Bermuda - EMP 4



Scale 1:10000

Figure 6: EMP4 Site concept

3.1.2 These sections inform the overall indicative plan.

3.2 Landscape, open space and biodiversity

3.2.1 The development of strategic site EMP4 should support the provisions of Borough Plan Policy NE1 which seeks to create, protect, manage and enhance the Borough's green infrastructure assets. To achieve this, any development proposal should seek to:

- Incorporate a landscape buffer to be provided along the perimeter of the site as shown on the indicative plan;
- Introduce soft landscaping areas within the scheme design; and
- Use hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodland planting to soften the effects of any development.

3.2.2 Applicants are encouraged to engage with the Council's Parks and Countryside team at the earliest opportunity to ensure that ecology, biodiversity and open space are considered at the outset and adequately factored into site masterplanning.

Edge treatments

3.2.3 Edge treatments and landscape buffers should align with the policy requirements and recommendations of the 2017 Landscape Capacity Study¹ for the site. Along the edges of the site a landscaped buffer should be provided to serve as a natural barrier with the site and its surrounding, with the buffer being widest adjacent to the railway and Griff Brook. The use of hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodland planting will soften the effects of any development.

Areas of wildlife interest

3.2.4 Borough Plan Policy NE3 requires developments to conserve, enhance and restore ecological networks, biodiversity features and geological features, as well as where appropriate, create new ecological networks.

3.2.5 Any development of the site should avoid areas of the highest ecological value. Broadleaved woodland should be retained and restored where possible to reduce the biodiversity impact of development.

3.2.6 Development should also incorporate the Centenary Way into the new development, as indicated on the indicative plan, creating a green corridor along the southern boundary of the site.

¹ <https://www.nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk/downloads/21027/landscape>

3.2.7 Development proposals would also need to maintain and enhance the connectivity between the Bermuda Balancing Lake Local Wildlife Site to the west, and Griff Hollow Local Wildlife Site and Coventry Canal to the east through:

- Re-opening the culverted Griff Brook, enabling mammals to pass under the Old Coventry Road, St David's Way and A444 roads; and
- Strengthening habitat adjacent to the railway line.

3.2.8 Additionally, ecological enhancements should be made to the remaining local wildlife site to the south of EMP4.

3.2.9 Development proposals brought forward would need to be accompanied by an ecological assessment incorporating biodiversity offsetting proposals. This should include a resurvey of Griff Hollow Local Wildlife Site, and include a water vole survey project currently being undertaken by Warwickshire Wildlife Trust.

3.3 Movement

3.3.1 The submission of a transport assessment will be required as part of any planning application to determine whether any impact from the development on transport is acceptable. The transport assessment should identify the measures that would be applied to mitigate any transport impacts of the development, and to improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel, particularly promoting travel by sustainable modes such as public transport, walking and cycling, as an alternative to the use of the car.

3.3.2 Any transport improvements/upgrades required will be secured by planning condition attached to the grant of any planning permission and subsequent planning obligation.

Highway access

3.3.3 Primary access for vehicles to the site will be provided from B4113 Coventry Road. All HGV parking and servicing areas are to be served from the primary access point leading from the B4113 Coventry Road.

Footpaths and cycleways

- 3.3.4 Reinforce connectivity to the existing footpath and cycle routes surrounding the site through the creation of footpath and cycle connections through the site from Coventry Road B4113, to the Griff Brook to the north and canal towpath to the east.
- 3.3.5 The Concept Plan shows the main walking and cycling routes which are principal utility routes through the site. Other walking and cycling routes may also be required. Any necessary pedestrian and cycle routes will need to be of suitable design and construction. Consultation should be undertaken with active travel officers at the Borough and County Councils at the earliest opportunity to ensure that the design and construction of such routes are factored into site masterplanning.

Travel plans

- 3.3.6 A travel plan for the site will be required to be developed in line with Borough Plan Policy HS2. This shall include details of measures to deliver sustainable transport improvements on site, including details of measures to encourage modal shift in travel to work patterns and deliveries.

3.4 Land uses

- 3.4.1 The strategic employment allocation EMP4 will accommodate use classes B1, B2 and B8.
- 3.4.2 Ancillary B1(a) office proposal will be supported. Proposals for non-class B uses will only be supported where the development complies with the tests of Policy E1 of the Borough Plan.

3.5 Character and design

3.5.1 The concept plan does not seek to advocate a particular design style. The design for any development on this strategic site should seek to meet the principles of Policy BE3 in delivering high standards. Any scheme should be able to accommodate changing needs of occupants and adapt to and minimise the impact of climate change. Any built form should be sensitively sited to create varied built form and rooflines, whilst variation of material should be used to further break up the mass of development.

3.6 Sustainability

Sustainable construction

3.6.1 Development on the strategic site will meet the objectives of Borough Plan Policy BE3 by providing BREEAM very good standard or equivalent for new construction projects. Development proposals will also need to demonstrate compliance with Policy BE2 of the Borough Plan.

Surface water drainage and flooding

3.6.2 A flood risk assessment and drainage strategy will be required as part of any planning application submission, which would need to include a comprehensive Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) scheme.

Safety and security

3.6.3 Design has a crucial role in delivering a safe and secure environment for employment development. Any development proposals for strategic employment allocation EMP4 will need to comply with Policy BE3, in contributing to reducing crime and the fear of crime by meeting the principle of Secured by Design.

Noise and air quality

3.6.4 The development of the site will need to take account of strategic housing allocation HSG3 on the land to the east of the site. Traffic noise along Gipsy Lane and B4113 Coventry Road will need to be taken into consideration, along with noise generation from traffic movement within the site (service yard/HGV movements) and internal operations proposed.

3.6.5 The precise nature of noise mitigation measures should be established by developers through undertaking of a noise impact assessment. If

required, suitable noise mitigation shall be incorporated as part of the overall scheme design.

- 3.6.6 Two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) are located in the borough, both of which are designated in Nuneaton. The development of the strategic site is not considered to adversely affect the AQMAs.

3.7 Delivery

Timescales

- 3.7.1 The development of the site is anticipated to be delivered within the first 5 years of the Plan period following formal adoption of the Borough Plan.

Infrastructure

- 3.7.2 The strategic employment site shall deliver the following infrastructure and facilities:
- Upgrade of existing access onto Coventry Road B4113.
 - Financial contributions towards borough-wide strategic highway infrastructure works identified within the A444 corridor.
 - Financial contribution towards the delivery of biodiversity enhancement on land to the south of Centenary Way (Griff Hollows Local Wildlife Site), as well as biodiversity offsetting.
 - Financial contribution towards the reopening of the culverted Griff Brook.
 - Financial contribution to deliver an area-wide green infrastructure supplementary planning document (or equivalent) that promotes species movement along identified green corridors.
 - Suitable sewage connection to the existing foul drainage network.
 - Creation of cycle path link between Bermuda Station and Coventry Road, as well as contribution to crossing of Coventry Road.
 - Contribution for cycle path linking to Hill Top.
 - Contributions for cycle path from Bermuda Station to Marston Lane.
- 3.7.3 Consideration should be given at an early stage of the preparation of any planning application to the future management arrangements for infrastructure and facilities. Services infrastructure will be the responsibility of the relevant services provider.

3.7.4 The provision of footway/cycleway linkages and upgrade of existing public footpaths from the canal would be adopted by the council or county council as appropriate.