

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council

Concept Plans for Strategic Allocations: EMP1, Faultlands

Supplementary Planning Document (2020)

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1 Introduction

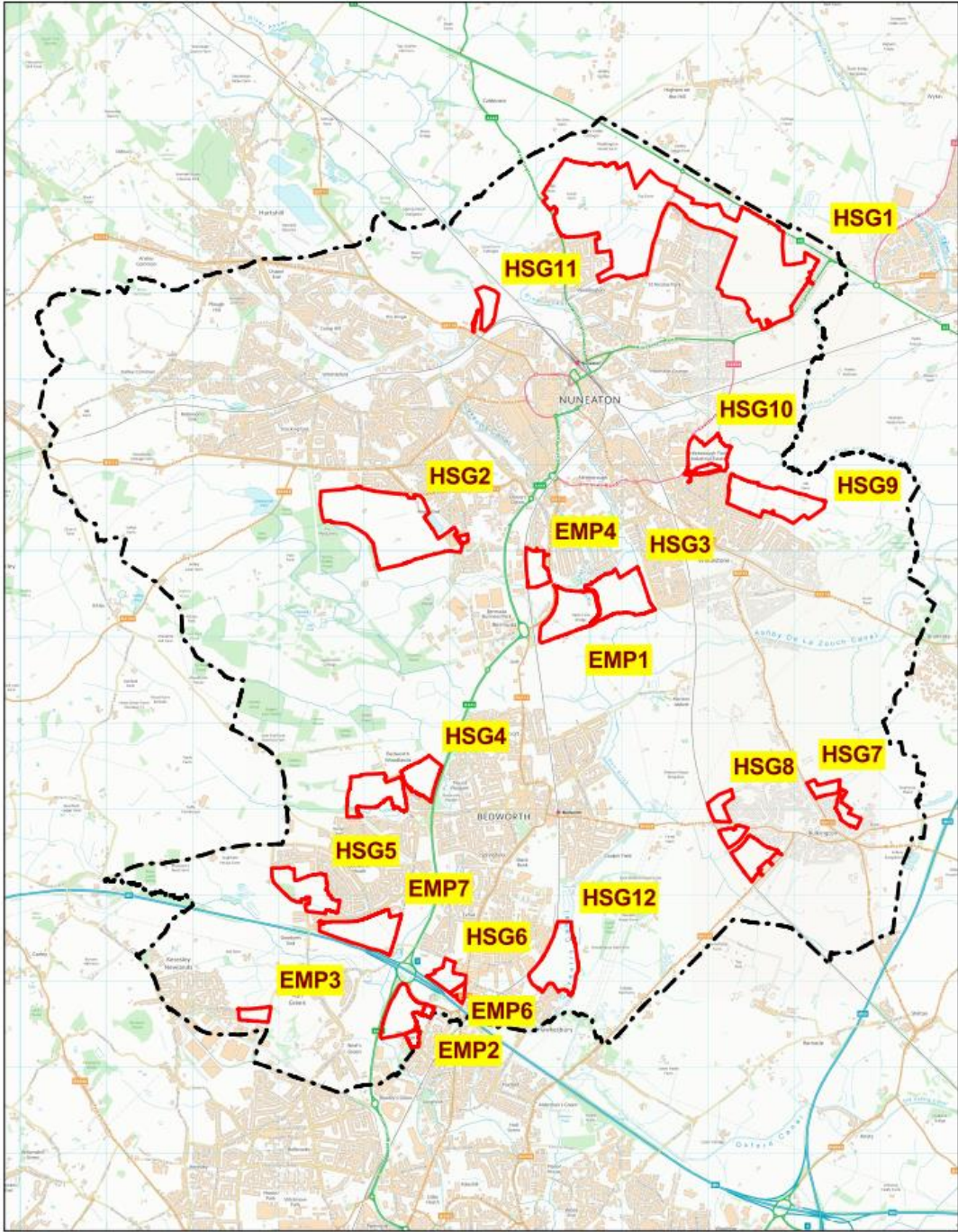
1.1 Introduction

- 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 EMP1 – Land off Coventry Road / Gipsy Lane.
- 1.1.2 The strategic land allocation covers an area of 26.4 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 that 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
 - 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 the 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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100018416 2018/19

Scale
0 800 1600 2400 3200 m



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) (July 2018) 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 that 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 EMP1 strategic site

Context

- 2.1.1 Strategic allocation EMP1 covers 26.43 ha of land located to the north of Gipsy Lane, situated on the southern edge of Nuneaton with the site's southern edge approximately 730 m to the north of Bedworth. The site is predominantly arable land, with associated agricultural buildings and a farm house. Part of the site comprises a former hard rock quarry that has been restored by infilling.
- 2.1.2 The agricultural buildings and farmhouse are currently served by an access off Gipsy Lane, which forms the site's southern boundary. The northern boundary is defined by the edge of pastoral land on higher ground where it meets the southern edge of Griff Brook Valley, which runs in an east-west direction along the northern extent of the site. Beyond this, the existing residential area known as Hill Top is located to the north, and Red Deeps to the north east of the site. To the north-west of the site is the employment allocation EMP4 – Coventry Road. To the west is Griff caravan site, the A444 and Griff roundabout, together with Bermuda Industrial Estate and Business Park. The Bermuda Park Railway Station is located to the north-west of the site beyond the B4113.
- 2.1.3 The site's eastern boundary is defined by the Coventry Canal which runs in a north-south direction, with the adjacent land forming part of the proposed strategic housing allocation HSG3.

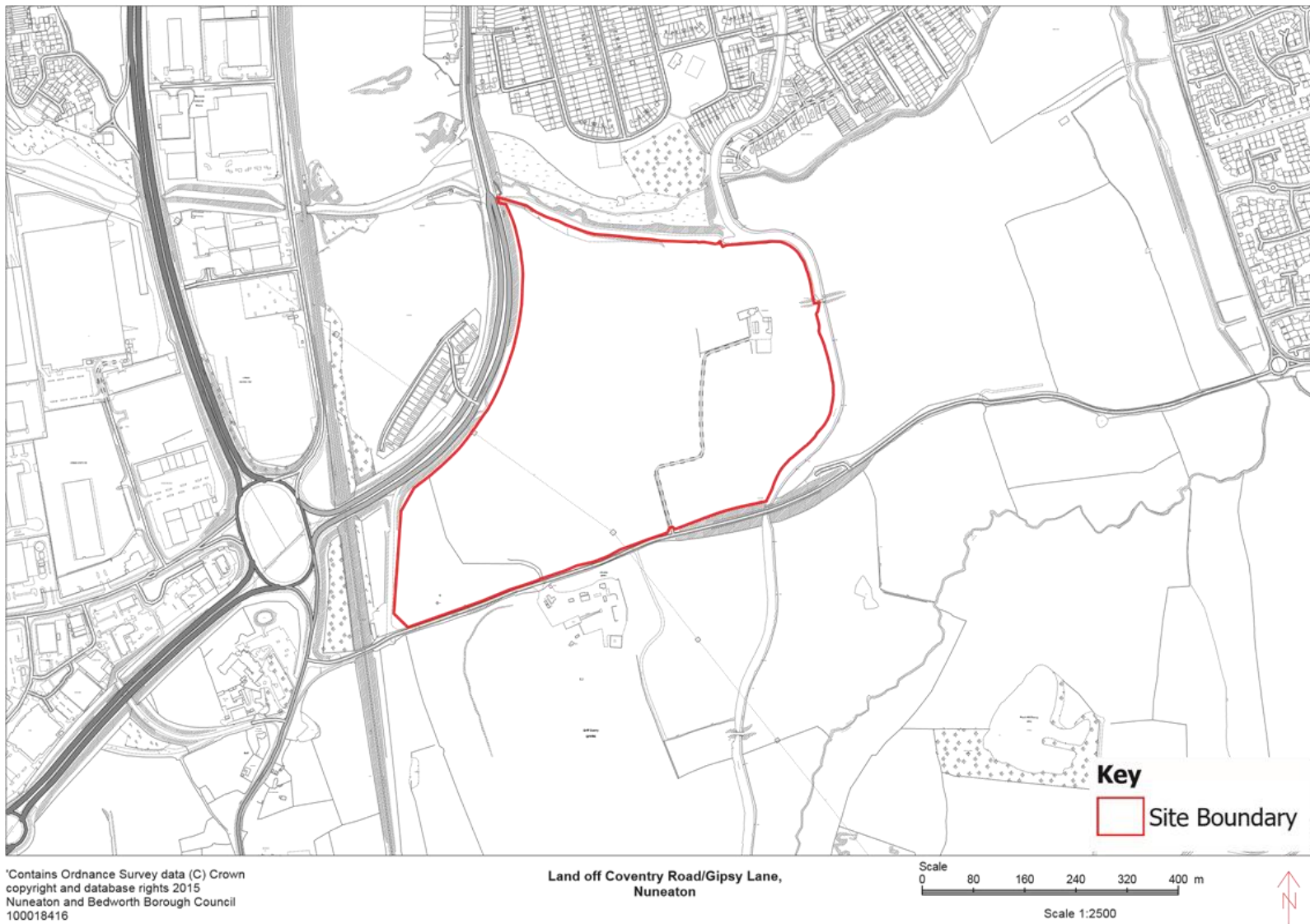


Figure 2: EMP1 Site location

- 2.1.4 The B4113 abuts the north-eastern boundary which connects from the A444. The land to the south-east of the site forms the Griff Hill Quarry Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which is an active quarry site. The land to the north of Gipsy Lane is currently designated as a SSSI, however Natural England have stated that boundary changes will be required to remove this area from the SSSI in due course.
- 2.1.5 The topography of the site slopes towards the north-west, and sits at approximately 95-100 m AOD.

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 majority of the site's southern boundary is formed by Gipsy Lane, bordered by mature hedgerow trees providing a significant buffer between the urban fringe to the north and the countryside to the south. The south-western edge of the site abuts Griff Hill Quarry SSSI, with the remainder of the western boundary bounded by B4113 Coventry Road, which is urban in character. The eastern edge of the site adjoins Coventry Canal, whilst the northern edge abuts a community park.

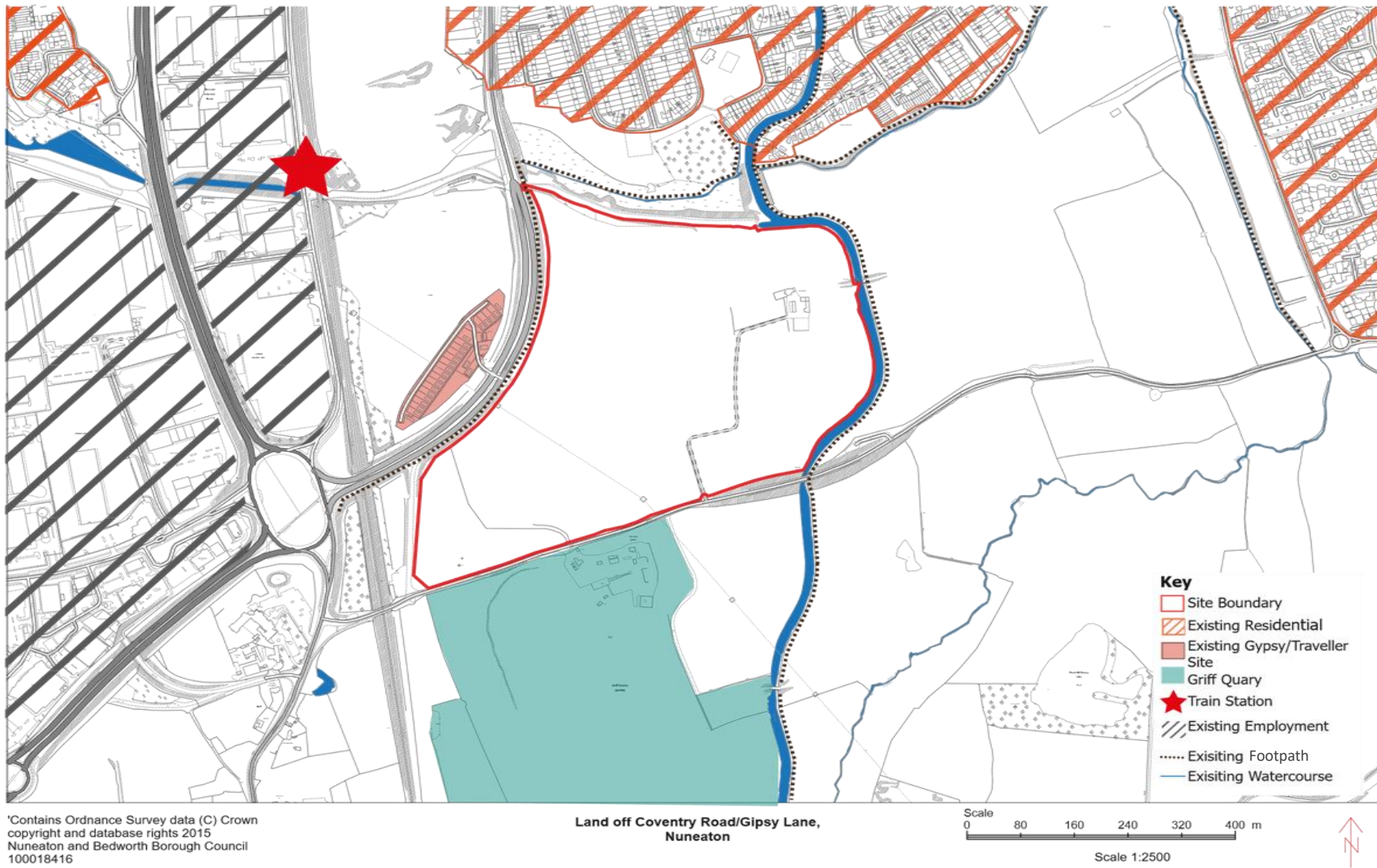


Figure 3: EMP1 Site context

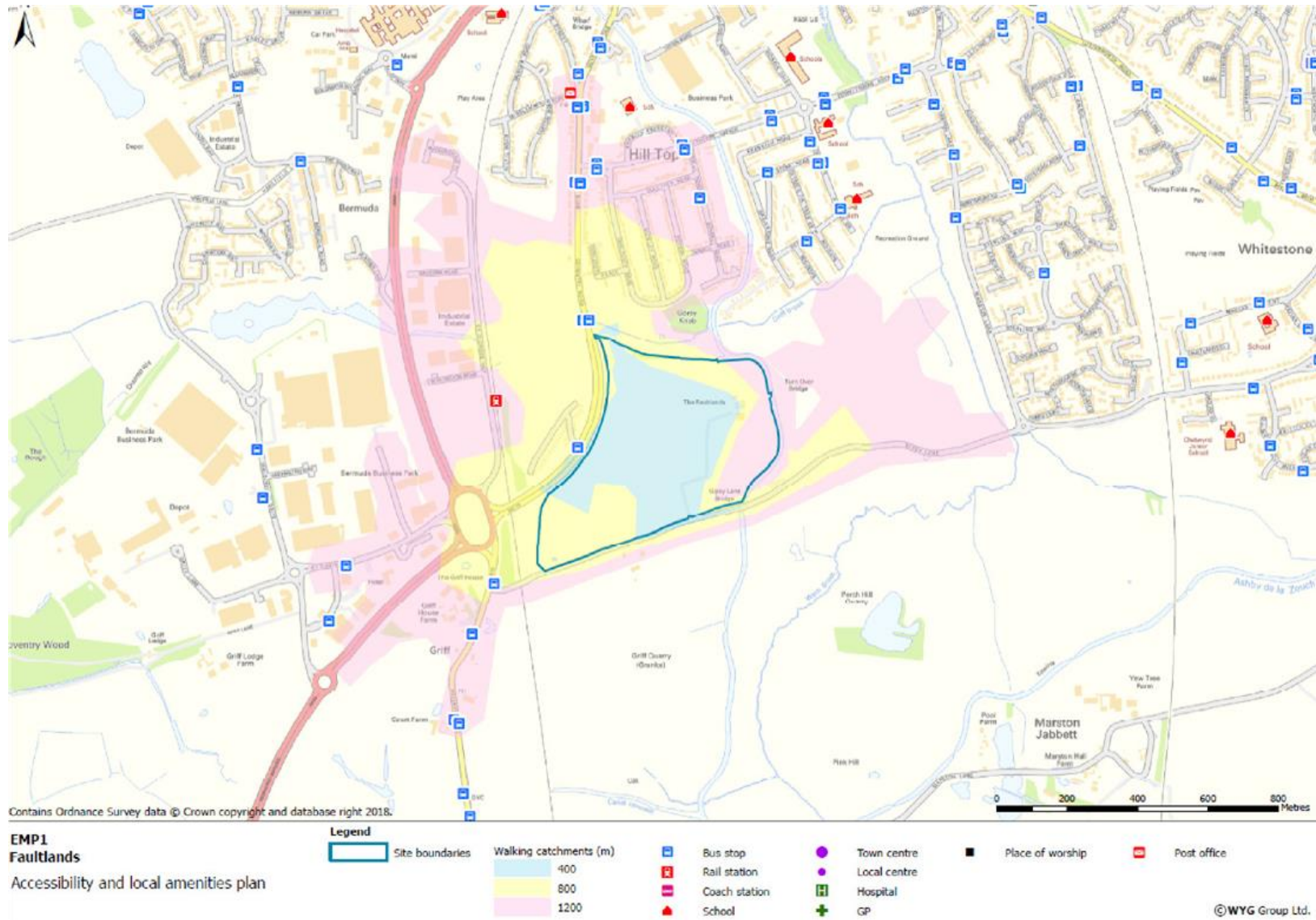


Figure 4: EMP1 Accessibility and local amenities

2.3 Views

- 2.3.1 From the site and from Gipsy Lane, views of the urban edge to the north and north-west of the site are partly obscured by woodland along Griff Brook Valley, and tall hedgerows and scrub along the B4113 – Coventry Road.
- 2.3.2 Whilst Griff Quarry situated to the south of the site is screened to some extent, the views of the infrastructure and machinery are present above the existing tree line.

2.4 Flood risk and drainage

- 2.4.1 The site is not located within an area at risk of flooding. The land to the north of the site which encompasses Griff Brook falls within flood zone 2.

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 EMP1 is situated in the northern part of 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 there are also more rural areas such as pasture farmland, arable farmland and horse paddocks. The landscape character area also includes parcels of restored land and active quarries, reflecting the industrial heritage of the landscape.
- 2.5.3 To the north of the site lies Griff Brook, which forms an area of wooded narrow valley situated close to the settlement edges. The Coventry Canal lies along the eastern boundary of the site, which is a key unifying features through the wider landscape, providing an edge to the strategic allocation.
- 2.5.4 Although the site predominantly comprises farmland, the landscape within the site is in a poor condition with remnants of hedgerows and the presence of storage associated with the Faultlands Farmstead. These factors combined with the presence of overhead powerlines and views of Griff Quarry result in a less attractive landscape. There is also interruption in the landscape due to the close proximity of roads and the railway line on the western and southern peripheries of the site. Notwithstanding this, the open nature of the site and landscape features along the boundary provide a transition from the southern

edge of Nuneaton and contribute to the rural area separating Nuneaton and Bedworth.

2.6 Access and movement

Public transport

- 2.6.1 Stagecoach bus services 48 operates along B4113 Coventry Road and connects to Leicester and Coventry via Nuneaton and Bedworth. The nearest bus stop to the site is at Hill Top Post Office. This bus stop is located approximately 480 m from the northern edge of the site.
- 2.6.2 Bermuda Park Station is located approximately 300 m from the western edge of the site. Train services from the station operate to Coventry and Nuneaton.

Highway network

- 2.6.3 The site is currently accessed from Gypsy Lane, which connects to B4113 Coventry Road to the west, 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.
- 2.6.4 To the east, Gypsy Lane connects to Bulkington Lane, which provides access to B4114 Lutterworth Road to the north and B4112, leading into Bulkington to the south.

Pedestrian and cycle routes

- 2.6.5 There are no public rights of way across the site.
- 2.6.6 The canal towpath forms part of the National Cycle Network Route 52 which runs alongside the eastern edge of the canal in a north-south direction. Route 52 connects to Nuneaton Town Centre in the north and to Bedworth in the south.
- 2.6.7 A further footpath runs alongside the northern edge of Griff Brook, connecting the canal towpath / National Cycle Network Route 52 with the Wem Brook Trail. The Wem Brook Trail, a further surfaced route, runs north-south through Marston Lane Meadows, a linear open space between the Wem Brook and Marston Lane. The Wem Brook Trail connects to Nuneaton Town Centre. There is also a footpath along the north of the site which starts at the canal, and runs alongside the

disused Griff Arm Canal towards Bermuda Park Station. This footpath forms part of the Centenary Way Walk.

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 and gardens or registered battlefields) on or close to strategic employment site EMP1.

2.7.3 The following designated heritage assets are found to be located within 1 km of EMP1:

- The Griff House Hotel (Grade II Listed Building);
- Bridge Number 1 of Ashby De La Zouch Canal (Grade II Listed); and
- Bridge Number 2 of Ashby De La Zouch Canal (Grade II Listed).

2.7.4 There is no designated landscape of historic interest within the strategic site. The strategic site comprises two areas of post-war fields, with pre-1880s farm buildings, The Faultlands, and its associated barn which are located within the site, although the associated field systems have not survived.

2.7.5 No previous archaeological investigations are recorded to have been undertaken within the strategic site. Land directly to the east of the site was evaluated by geophysical survey and trial trenching, which revealed evidence of post-medieval field boundaries and two shards of residual Roman pottery. No further archaeological investigations are recorded within 500 m of the study area.

2.8 Environment

2.8.1 The natural geology of the strategic site is complex, with the bedrock comprising outwoods shale formation with ridges of Midlands minor intrusive – lamprophyres to the west. The eastern half of the site is overlain by glaciofluvial superficial deposits, whilst alluvium is adjacent to the Griff Brook in the north.

2.8.2 The agricultural land is classified as grade 4 (poor).

2.9 Utilities

- 2.9.1 National Grid online mapping indicates that a mains gas pipe is situated along the frontage of the site.
- 2.9.2 There are overhead lines that cross part of the site to the west, however these are not considered to be a major constraint.

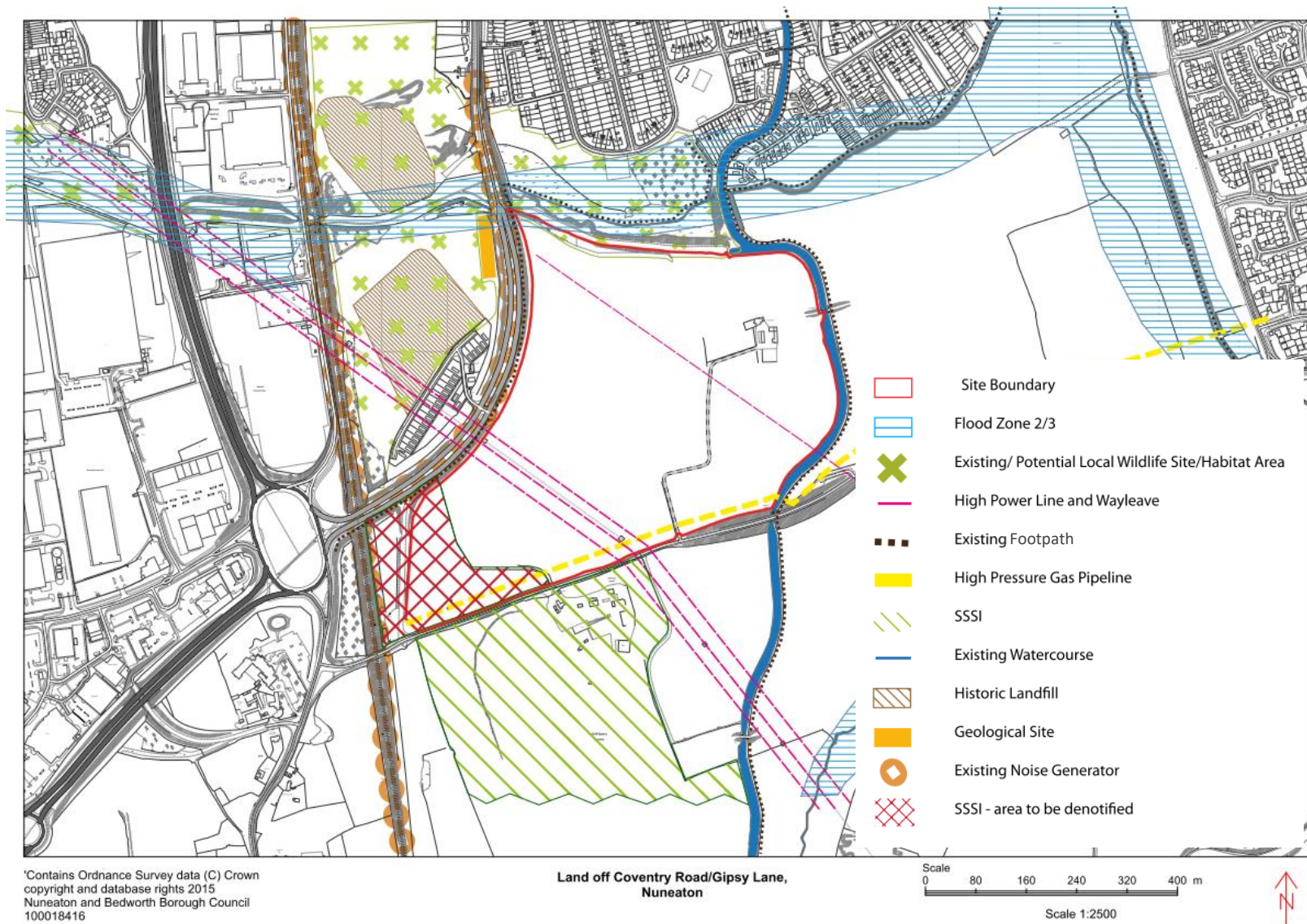


Figure 5: EMP1 Site opportunities and constraints

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.

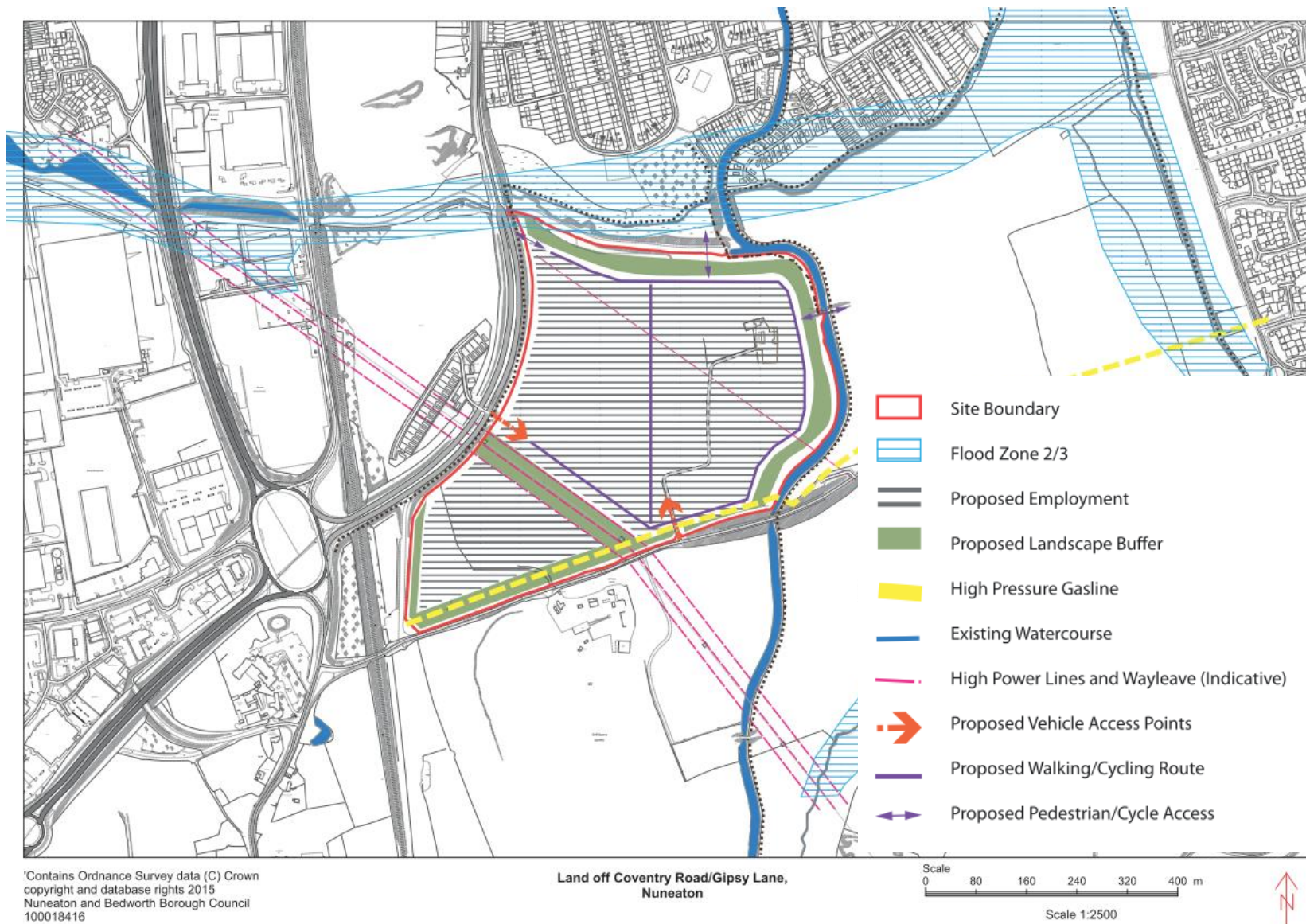


Figure 6: EMP1 Site concept

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 EMP1 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:

- Establish a landscape framework to mitigate the effects of the development through the retention of open land around the development footprints.
- Planting on site should be varied including specimen trees, groups of trees, hedgerows and hedgerow trees to screen and reduce the effect of the buildings' scale and mass, and also provide visual interest to the site.
- Maintain an open corridor next to the Coventry Canal, creating an attractive setting to screen the development, with appropriate tree and shrub planting to mitigate the effects of the development on the distinctive canal-side views along Centenary Way.
- Development to be set back from Gipsy Lane boundary.
- Maintain a landscape buffer along western site boundary near to the railway.

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 northern and eastern edge of the site a landscaped buffer and ecological mitigation should be provided, serving as a natural barrier to create an appropriate interface with the community park to the north, and the strategic housing allocation HSG3 to the east of the site.

3.2.4 Appropriate landscaping should be created around the site to screen the proposed development, particularly from Gipsy Lane and the canal. The landscaping along the southwestern elevation should ensure the protection and enhancement of the Griff Hill Quarry Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

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

Areas of wildlife interest

- 3.2.5 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.
- 3.2.6 The development of the site should not result in an adverse effect on the Griff Hill Quarry Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Where an adverse effect on the site's special interest features is likely, an exception should only be made where the benefits of the development clearly outweigh both the impacts that it is likely to have on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest.
- 3.2.7 The south-west corner of the site is designated as a geological SSSI associated with Griff Quarry. However, Natural England has confirmed that this land is scheduled for de-listing, as the land is no longer of SSSI quality. Natural England has no objection to the land being developed for employment uses.
- 3.2.8 Development proposals brought forward shall be accompanied by an ecological assessment, incorporating biodiversity offsetting proposals.

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 from be provided from B4113 Coventry Road. Should a secondary access be required, this should be served from Gipsy Lane and should be limited to provide access for emergency vehicles, car parking, and cycle and pedestrian

linkages. All HGV parking and serving 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 EMP1 will accommodate use class B2 and B8.
- 3.4.2 Ancillary B1(a) office proposals 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 the development on this strategic site should seek to meet the principles of Policy BE3 in delivering high standards, a scheme able to accommodate changing needs of occupants and adapt to and minimise the impact of climate change.
- 3.5.2 The design rationale for the new proposed development would need to positively respond to the landscape character of the area to avoid an adverse impact on the Griff Hill SSSI (Borough Plan Policy NE3) and

also to minimise the impact on the amenity of both current and future residential properties in the local vicinity.

3.5.3 Due to the site's position between Nuneaton and Bedworth and the surrounding landscape character, the following design principles would apply to new employment development:

- Use of varied textures, colours and profiles on building elevations to provide visual interest and to reduce any perceived negative effects of scale and massing of proposed development. This could include the use of colour graduation on elevations to better integrate any development into the landscape.
- New development should address the canal. Any potential negative effects of the development on the adjoining section of the Coventry Canal and associated habitats within the Griff and Wem Brooks should be considered in the construction management plan.

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 The site is not located within an area at risk of flooding. The land to the north of the site is located within flood zone 2. In order to ensure the site remains at low risk of flooding and does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere, any development shall include a comprehensive Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) scheme.

3.6.3 A flood risk assessment and drainage strategy will be required as part of any planning application submission.

Noise and air quality

3.6.4 The development of the site will need to take account of the 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:

- Any proportionate transport improvements/upgrades required along Gipsy Lane as a result of the development, and to the Gipsy Lane / Coventry Road junction.
- A proportionate financial contribution towards the creation of a cycle path leading to the Bermuda Park Station, including a toucan crossing on Coventry Road and creation within the site of a cycle path linking from the canal turnover bridge to Coventry Road.
- A proportionate contribution toward enhancement of the canal towpath, and provision for the crossing of the canal to facilitate cycle usage, including investigation of the suitability of using the turnover bridge. If it is not technically feasible to use the turnover bridge, alternative bridge provision will be secured. Additionally, creation of cycle path within development.
- Provision of a footway/cycleway linkage to the existing footway/cycleway alongside the north bank of Griff Brook.
- Upgrades to the existing bus stops on the edge of the site to include covered bus shelters and seating.
- A proportionate financial developer contribution towards Gipsy Lane canal bridge strengthening/widening works, in order to enhance local bus service accessibility to the employment site from Griff Roundabout, Coventry Road, etc.
- A proportionate financial contribution towards the road improvement schemes in the A444 corridor as set out in the transport modelling report.

- New access should be provided from the B4113 (Coventry Road).
- A proportionate financial contribution towards delivery of an area-wide green infrastructure supplementary planning document (or equivalent), that promotes species movement along identified green corridors.

Management and maintenance

- 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.