

School Lane

EXHALL

The Vision | March 2017



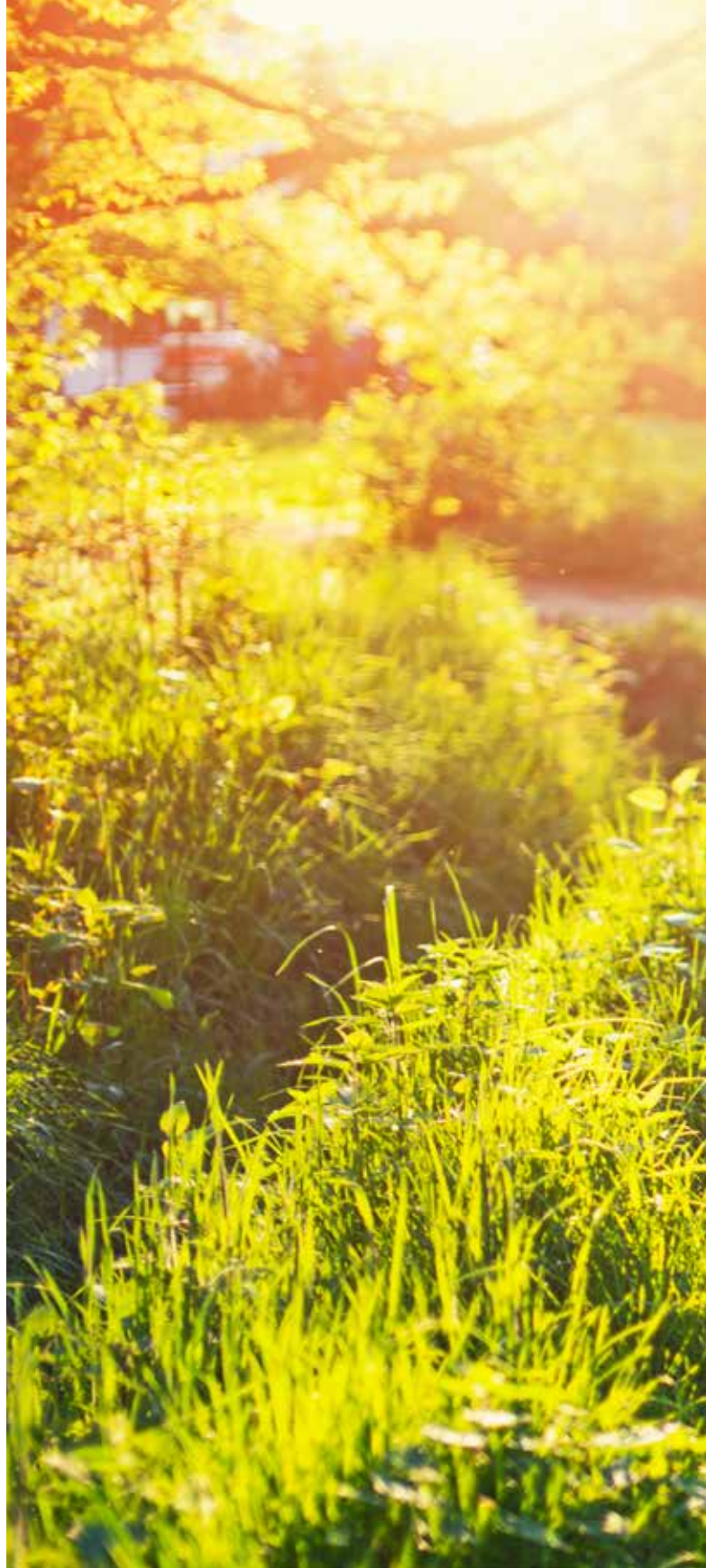
School Lane

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EXHALL

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VISION

*The proposals will create a **sustainable mixed use development** for Exhall that **successfully integrates** with its surroundings through **excellent connections** with nearby local facilities, amenities and recreation areas. New green spaces will **enhance the landscape qualities** of the site for the enjoyment of the whole neighbourhood, aiding the creation of an attractive, high quality and locally distinctive place to live.*





INTRODUCTION

This Vision document has been prepared on behalf of Heyford Developments and UK Land Development by Barton Willmore (masterplanning and landscape) and GVA.

The purpose of the document is to support the promotion of mixed use development on land south of School Lane in Exhall. Key objectives of this document are to:

- » provide a vision for the site that guides and shapes the design proposals;
- » provide a summary of current site assessment undertaken;
- » present the emerging concept masterplan, accompanied by an explanation of the key design principles that have informed it; and
- » help assist further discussions with the Local Planning Authority, relevant stakeholders and the local community.

THE SITE

The site is located in Exhall which lies approximately 2.5 kilometres (km) south of Bedworth and 6.5km north of Coventry. Birmingham is located approximately 30km to the west of the site. The area benefits from accessible connections to Nuneaton and Bedworth (via the A444), Rugby (via the M6) and Leicester (via the M6 and M69).

Nuneaton rail station (10km away) provides sustainable transport connections to wider destinations including a direct route to Birmingham. Birmingham Airport is located 18km west, allowing easy access to UK and international destinations.

The site at School Lane comprises 10.51 hectares (ha) of farm land. The site is defined by School Lane to the north, Longford Road and Coventry Road (B4113) to the east, the M6 motorway to the south and an existing tree lined hedgerow to the west.



Site Location Plan



Access and Movement Plan

- Site Boundary
- Draft Allocation Housing Site HSG6
(Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Plan 2017)
- Draft Allocation Employment Site EMP6
(Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Plan 2017)

PLANNING CONTEXT

Whilst currently within the designated Green Belt, the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Plan Publication version proposes the site's allocation as a Strategic Housing site under Policy HSG6. Part of the site, forming land defined by Wilsons Lane and Longford Road, is proposed as an employment allocation under Policy EMP6.

The Borough Plan Publication represents the latest stage in the Council's plan-making process. This commenced in 2009 when the Council consulted upon the Issues and Options stage of the then Core Strategy. This set out a number of spatial options for accommodating growth derived from the former West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy between 2006 and 2026.

In 2013, the Council conducted a Preferred Options consultation on its emerging Core Strategy. This continued to highlight a number of housing issues in the Borough, namely a lack of suitable new homes being delivered (for meeting family needs), over-development of sites within the existing urban area, and a lack of affordability and aspirational housing.

However, in seeking to accommodate the identified housing need at that time (7,900 dwellings between 2011 and 2028), the Preferred Options sought to direct 5,192 dwellings to four sites outside of the defined urban area. Since the Preferred Options consultation was undertaken, a significant uplift in the Borough's Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAHN) has been identified through the Joint Coventry and Warwickshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2013 and its subsequent addendums, published in 2014 and 2015.

Following the Government's release of its 2014-based Household Projections in February 2016, the identified OAHN for Nuneaton and Bedworth is now 10,040 dwellings, to be delivered between 2011 and 2031. This remains in line with that identified for the Borough under the 2012-based Household Projections and which informed the housing requirement identified in the Submission version of the Borough Plan.

The Borough Plan Submission identified an additional 1,460 dwellings to help meet Coventry's housing needs (to support economic growth, taking account of commuting patterns). In seeking to accommodate the uplift in the Borough's housing requirement, the Borough Plan Submission carried forward the four strategic sites previously identified for allocation at the Preferred Options stage, in addition to two further sites, one of which is the proposed allocation at School Lane under HSG6.

Notwithstanding the above, Coventry's unmet housing need has significantly increased across the plan period (2011 to 2031), amounting to 17,800 dwellings which the city has confirmed it cannot accommodate within its administrative area. It has become necessary for all of the Warwickshire authorities to reach an agreement as to how Coventry's unmet need is to be distributed. Work collectively undertaken through the Coventry, Warwickshire and South West Leicestershire Shadow Economic Prosperity Board (EPB) has culminated in the following distribution being proposed, as shown in the table below.

Following the outcome of the EPB's meeting on 29th September 2015, the borough of Nuneaton and Bedworth was the only Warwickshire authority which did not agree the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This identified 4,020 dwellings being accommodated by the Borough in order to help accommodate Coventry's unmet housing need over the plan period. The Council has subsequently embarked on a further update of its Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) in order to identify additional capacity within the Borough.

Following the outcome of the latest SHLAA work, the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Plan Publication identifies an uplifted housing requirement of 13,374 homes for delivery in the plan period. However, this leaves a shortfall of 686 homes against the MoU requirement. It remains unclear as to whether the Warwickshire authorities will be able to reach agreement on the apportionment of Coventry's unmet housing need.

The proposed allocation of the site at School Lane and Wilsons Lane, Exhall, will ensure the delivery of much-needed housing in the Borough, making a tangible contribution to its five-year housing land supply. As will be demonstrated within the latter parts of this Spatial Vision Document, the site presents a sustainable location for residential development.

	OAHN (2011 – 2031)	PROPOSED CHANGE	TOTAL PER ANNUM	TOTAL 2011 – 2031
COVENTRY	38,600	-17,800	1,230	24,600
NORTH WARWICKSHIRE	4,740	+540	264	5,280
NUNEATON & BEDWORTH	10,040	+4,020	703	14,060
RUGBY	9,600	+2,800	620	12,400
STRATFORD-UPON-AVON	13,180	0	659	13,180
WARWICK	12,000	+6,640	932	18,640
HMA TOTAL	88,160		4,408	88,160

Source: Report to the Coventry, Warwickshire and South West Leicestershire Shadow Economic Prosperity Board, Table 1 (September 2015)

LOCAL CONTEXT: ACCESS & MOVEMENT

The site is well connected to the surrounding urban area, with easy access to public transport services and strategic highway links. The plan opposite shows the location of the site within the context of the local access and movement network.

WALKING + CYCLING

The site is well connected to the existing pedestrian network with footways located on both sides of the B4113 (Longford Road/ Coventry Road) to the east and the northern side of School Lane to the north of the site. A footpath link from School Lane provides access through Heckley Fields Recreation Ground to the north of the site.

Public Rights of Way including the Centenary Way and Coventry Way are located to the east of Exhall. Both routes are accessible from the site via the existing pedestrian network.

Access to National Cycle Network Route 52 is provided via Blackhorse Road to the east of the site, providing safe cycling links south to Coventry. When completed the route will join Warwick in the south to Route 6 (west of Loughborough) in the north via Exhall, and 80km of off road cycle routes.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Bus stops on Longford Road/ Coventry Road directly east of the site provide frequent services to a range of destinations including Bedworth, Coventry, Nuneaton, Walsgrave University Hospital, and Leicester.

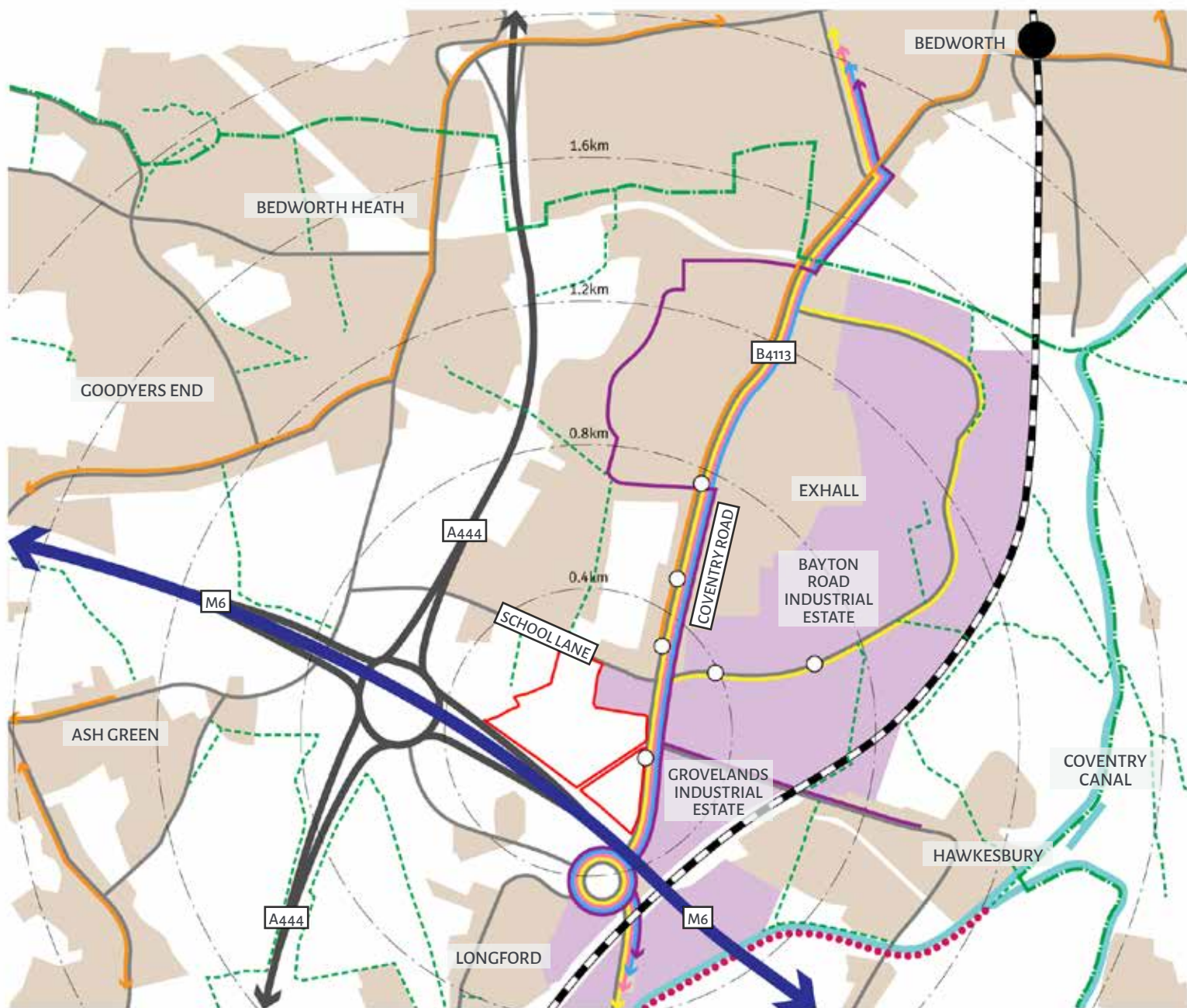
Daily secondary school buses from Longford Road provide services to Bedworth Blue Coat School, Nicholas Chamberlaine School and King Henry VIII School.

Bedworth train station, located 2.4km from the site, offers hourly services between Coventry and Nuneaton throughout the day. Passengers can also travel onwards from these locations to Birmingham and other wider destinations on the mainline rail network.

HIGHWAY NETWORK

The site is well connected to its surroundings via the local highway network. School Lane forms the northern site boundary and provides access west to Ash Green and Bedworth Heath. The eastern boundary of the site is formed by Longford Road / Coventry Road (B4113), providing direct access to Bedworth town centre to the north and Coventry to the south.

Junction 3 of the M6 is located approximately 500m west of the site, providing access to the national motorway network and a range of major nearby settlements including Birmingham, Leicester and Northampton. From Junction 3 the A444 also provides links north to Nuneaton and south to Coventry city centre.



Access and Movement Plan



LOCAL CONTEXT: FACILITIES

The site is well positioned in terms of access to local facilities and services, as shown on the plan opposite which includes indicative journey distance isochrones of 400m (5 minutes' walk), 800m (10 mins walk) and 1200m (15 mins walk).

A local centre is located within a 400m walking distance of the site, positioned around the junction between School Lane and Coventry Road, providing a Co-op food store and post office, café and hair dressers. A petrol station with convenience retail offer is located 270m further north.

Bedworth town centre is approximately 2.1km north-east of the site, offering a wider range of shops and services, leisure centre, hotel and railway station.

Exhall Old School Community Centre is located directly north of the site on School Lane.

EDUCATION

Exhall Cedars Infant, Nursery and Pre-School is located approximately 1km north of the site on Trenance Road, whilst St Giles Junior School, off Hayes Lane, is approximately 800m north west of site.

Secondary education is provided at Ash Green School which is located approximately 2km west of the site.

HEALTH

Colehouse Surgery is located 1.8km from the site to the north, accessible from bus services operating along Coventry Road.

RECREATION

School Lane Allotments and Heckley Fields Recreation Grounds (community park with recreation space, equipped play area and sports pitches) are found directly north of the site with access gained from School Lane.

Miners Welfare Park and Bedworth Leisure Centre are 1.7km north of the site, along Coventry Road, offering further recreation facilities including swimming provision and a 3G sports pitch.



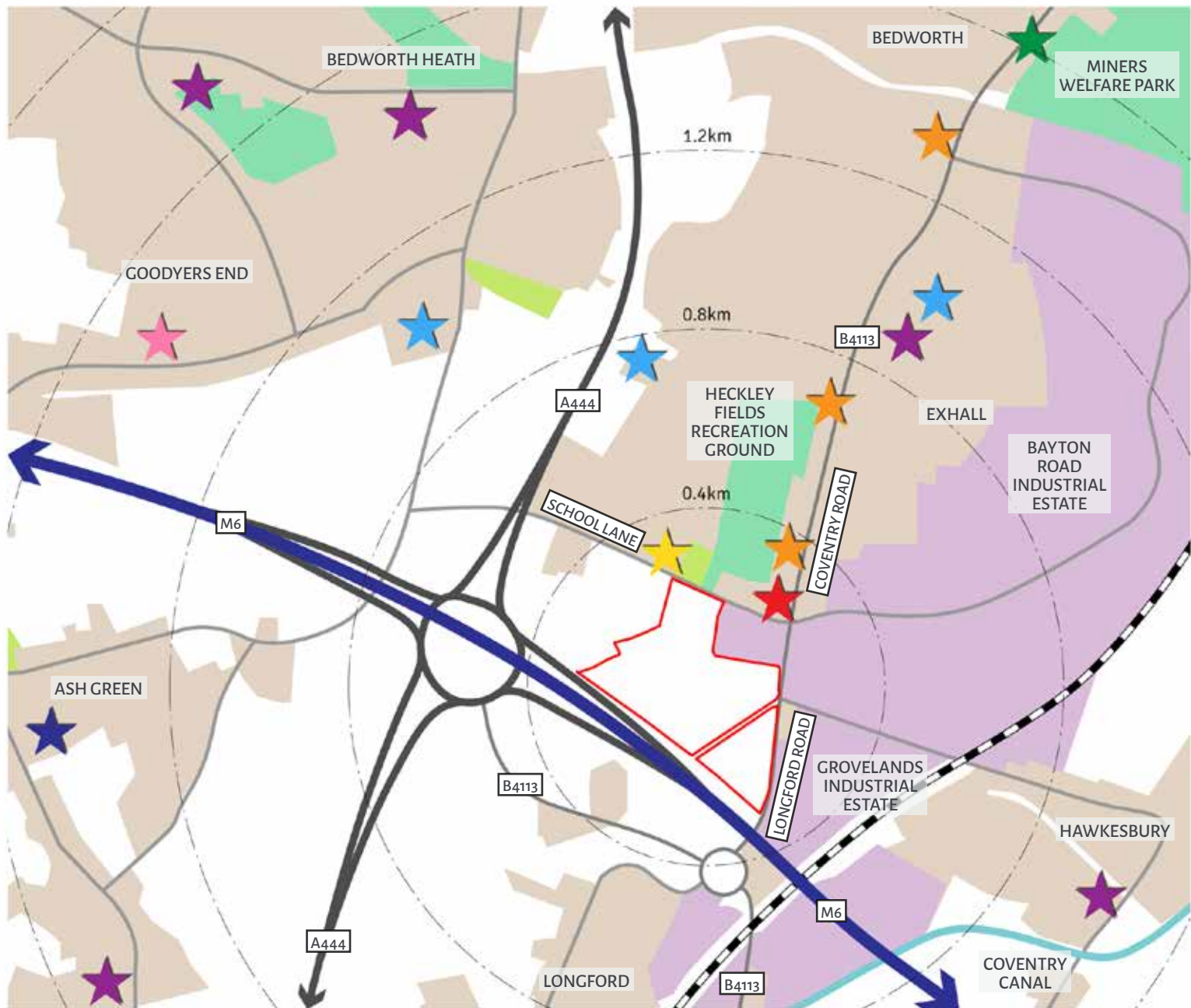
Play space at Heckley Fields Recreation Ground



Local shops at Coventry Road



Exhall Old School Community Centre



Local Facilities Plan



LOCAL CONTEXT: LANDSCAPE & VISUAL

The Site has well defined limits formed by boundaries with: the tree covered embankment to the M6; Longford Road and the employment land near and along the road; School Lane and the properties along it; and the: all of these boundaries are characterised by hedges and tree cover.

LOCAL SETTING: OVERVIEW

The Local Setting for the Site, (within approximately 5Km of the boundaries for the purposes of this study), extends to the following areas: to the north: all of Bedworth and the southern limits of Nuneton; to the east of the Coventry Canal it includes the countryside around the villages of Bulkington and Barnacle; to south of the M6 and the Oxford Canal it comprises the northern limits of the City of Coventry; and to the west it covers the countryside east of Goodyears End and Keresley Newlands.

LAND USES AND SETTLEMENT PATTERN

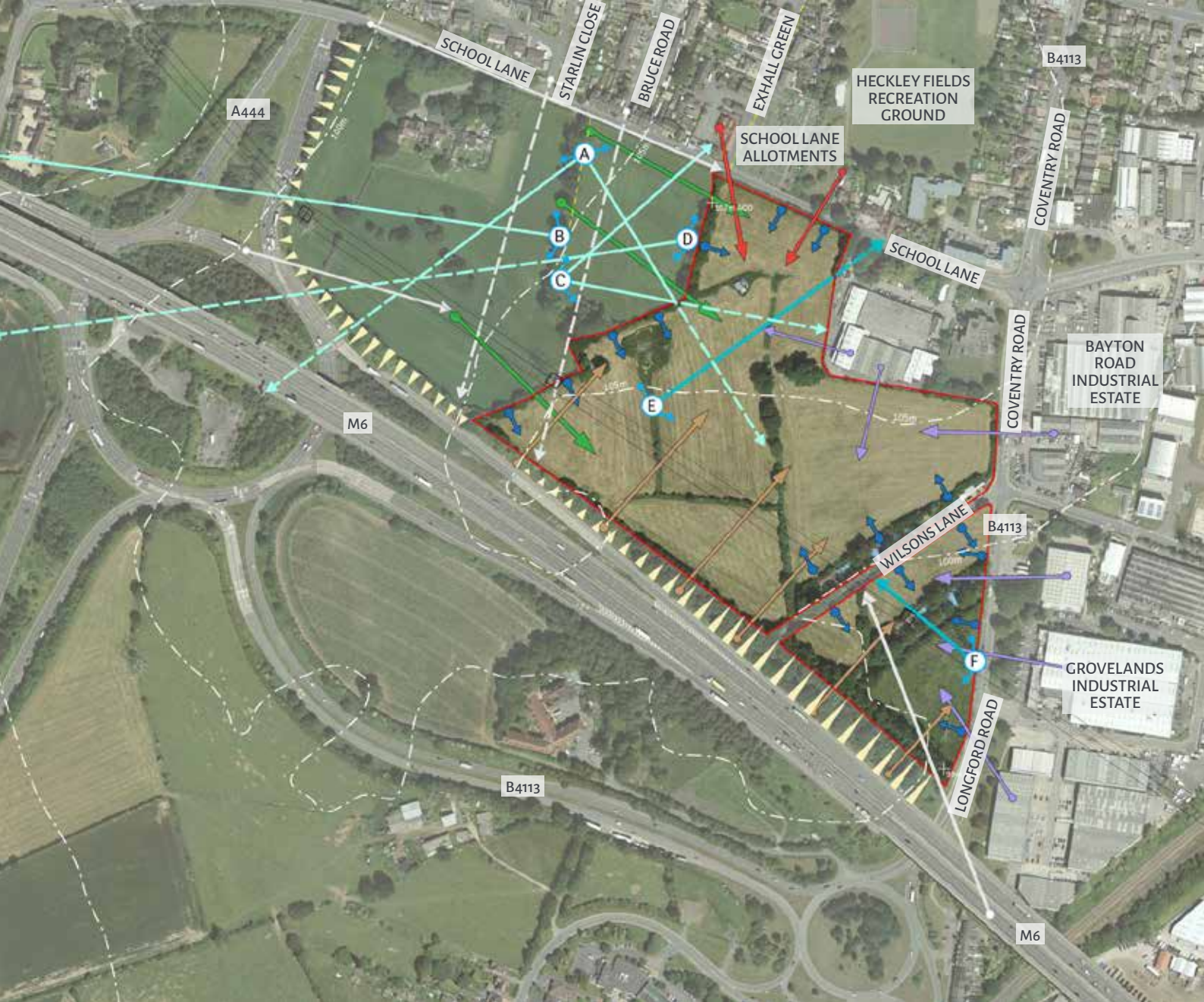
Nuneaton, Bedworth, and the City of Coventry are major settlements in the local landscape. Smaller settlements such as Bulkington, Keresley and Fillongley sit amongst a pattern of farmland that is intersected by numerous local roads as well as major transport corridors such as the M6 and A444. To the west of the Site stands of woodland are common across the landscape. Land use on the fringes of settlements often comprises of a mix of arable and pasture farmland. Industrial units are also frequent and prominent.

LANDFORM

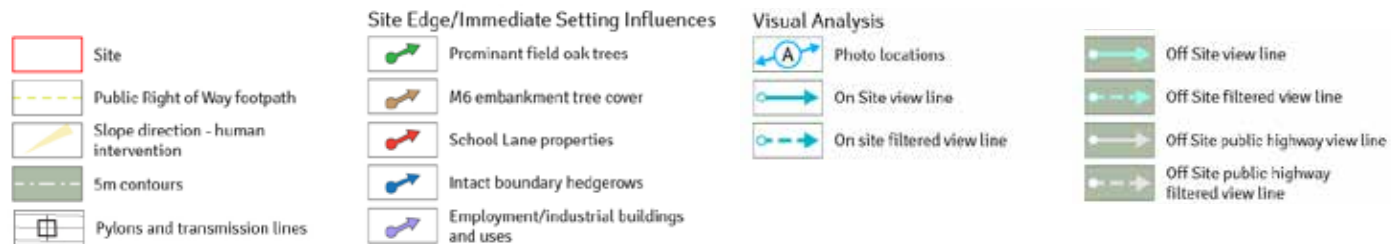
The landform of the surrounding landscape undulates gently. The landform to the east falls towards the Coventry Canal and to the west of the Site it falls towards the River Sowe. The River Sowe flows in a southerly direction into the centre of Coventry where the elevation of the land is at approximately 70m AOD adjacent to the river. Approximately 4.5km to the west of the Site the land rises to 170m AOD at Corley and a ridge line which continues north towards New Arley. To the north of the Site, Bedworth sits on a lower broad ridge between 100-115m AOD.



A - Taken on the PRoW footpath off School Lane to the west of the Site



Landscape and Visual Constraints and Opportunities Plan



TREE COVER

Tree cover in the immediate vicinity of the Site is considerable to the west where trees are common in hedgerows and as, isolated mature field trees, and in tree belts alongside main roads, as well as numerous small woodland copses. In the wider landscape particularly to the northeast and east of the Site beyond the settlement of Bedford, larger mature woodland blocks are more common across the landscape.

VIEWS AND VISUAL AMENITY

The Site is surprisingly high degree of visually containment. The substantial embankment to the M6, with its extensive tree cover, restricts and cuts-off views from the Site to the south. The tree cover also prevents clear views from the motorway north over the Site. The housing along School Lane to the north similarly restricts views to the north but there will be views to the Site from these properties. The industrial buildings along the B4113 Longford Road to the east restrict long views from the Site and the hedgerow along the road limits views westwards into the Site.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The landscape character of the local setting sits within the National Character Assessment NCA 97: Arden. At a local level of landscape character assessment, the 'Nuneaton and Bedworth Landscape Character Assessment' ([NBLCA]. TEP. 2012) places the Site and its local setting, within Landscape Character Area LCA 7: Keresley Urban Fringe.

Key Characteristics relevant to the Site and recognisable in the surrounding area and as described in the NBLCA for LCA 7 are as follows:

- » Field ponds where present are generally surrounded by trees and scrub;
- » Mixed landscape of arable farmland, pockets of pasture and recreational land often fragmented and isolated from the wider countryside by development and roads including the M6 and A444;
- » Field pattern is generally defined and influenced by roads and settlement fringes creating a variable size and shape to fields;
- » Frequent hedgerow trees, primarily oak with some ash, are present along hedgerows and in places within fields where hedgerows have been lost. To the south of School Lane, a line of mature oak trees demarcates the field boundary although the hedgerow is no longer evident;



B - Taken off Site on the PRoW footpath looking west

- » Urban fringes are common within the landscape with built development always visible on at least two sides of farmland; and
- » Large warehouse development is often prominent above trees and woodland on the fringes of the character area;

The landscape strength of the character area is assessed as weak within LCA 7, with the presence of urban edges, long views to development and warehouses, identified as being character defining elements within the landscape creating an urban fringe character.

The overall condition of the landscape LCA 7 is considered to be poor in NBLCA, with fragmented hedges that are over-mature leading to the loss of field boundaries and pattern. The NBLCA landscape strategy for LCA 7 is to restore and create lost elements with the emphasis on repairing, re-establishing and re-creating landscape features which are appropriate to the area and have been lost or are in a state of severe decline.



C - Taken on the furthest most extent of the PRoW footpath to the west of the Site



D - Taken on the western boundary of the Site looking west



E - Taken on Site looking broadly north towards School Lane

LANDSCAPE CAPACITY

The relevance of the NBLCA local character assessment study is that it is current and that it has provided the evidence base for the next stage of assessment in strategic planning terms, by the Borough Council, of the land within its administrative area. The Nuneaton and Bedworth Landscape Capacity Study ([NBLCS]. TEP. January 2017) is a landscape based study that makes judgements of landscape capacity based on assessment of the key components and landscape character. The Capacity study places the Site within a larger parcel of land south of School Lane that extends to 15.45ha and is bounded by the B4113 Longford Road to the east, the M6 to the south and by the A444 Bedworth Road to the west. The study describes the constraints: the M6; the high voltage power lines and pylons; the ribbon development; the urban fringe landscape and presence of settlement influences; and how Wilsons Lane is cut-off and used for container storage; as well as the ponds; field pattern and tree cover.

The NBLCS describes the Landscape Qualities as: 'Mostly Consistent' - that is representative of the wider landscape character; it states that the landscape is: 'Not Tranquil'; and judges there to be: 'Few attractive features or views'. The Site within this Vision Document at 10.51ha, does not extend to the full area of the Capacity study 'site' and it is important to note that the Site occupies the more easterly areas of the larger NBLCA 'site'. The Capacity study judges the whole, 15.45ha site, to have a Landscape Capacity that is: High Capacity. The Recommendations include a schedule of infrastructure facilities that should inform the policies for the larger 'site' if it is to be taken forward through the plan process.

The 2017 Nuneaton and Bedworth Landscape Capacity Study supports the allocation of the larger Site for residential development. The work within this Vision Document study has taken the landscape and visual appraisal work to a finer level of detail and also has the remit to consider the nature and some detail of an actual development concept for the Site that respond to the constraints; the opportunities; and the early recommendations that would inform the allocation policy HSG6 and EMP6.

GREEN BELT

The Site is currently washed over by the West Midlands Green Belt. The 'Joint Green Belt Study' ([JGBS]. LUC]. June 2015) prepared for six planning authorities, including Coventry City Council, that neighbour the city, describes its purpose as a comprehensive assessment of Green Belt land within the authorities' administrative area. The methodology results in a process where Green Belt land is divided into parcels for assessment against the performance against the five purposes of Green Belt within the NPPF.

The site is identified as Land Parcel Ref: BE5 and it shares a boundary with the site along School Lane and Longford Road but is completely different to the south as BE5 extends south of the M6. The overall summary score of 6/20 (there is a possible maximum of 4 points per Green Belt purpose) is defined within Figure 4 'Overall Assessment Findings – Nuneaton and Bedworth' as low.

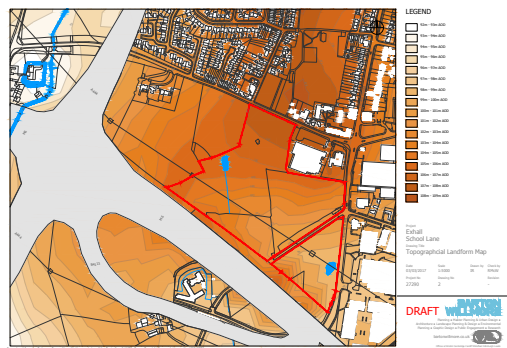
In terms of Purpose 2 – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another the assessment gives a score of: 0, stating that: 'The parcel sits between Coventry in the south and Bedworth to the north;



F - Taken on Site looking west towards Wilsons lane

however, this parcel of Green Belt does not play a separating role between the two settlements as the two have already been merged by the development directly to the east.'

This low contribution to the purposes of Green Belt has led to NBBC proposing the removal of the whole 15.45ha site from the Green Belt. Policy DS7 – Green Belt identifies a list of strategic Green Belt release sites that include: HSG6/EMP6 School Lane The Landscape and Visual analysis work undertaken within this Vision Document study reinforces and supports the Policy DS7 in terms of the Site.



Topographical Landform Map



Urban Areas Plan



Joint Green Belt Study Map extract from 'Stage 1 Final Report for Coventry City Council, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, Rugby Borough Council and Warwick District Council' document (June 2015).



Landscape Capacity Map extract from 'Nuneaton and Bedworth Landscape Capacity Study' document (January 2017).

THE SITE: CONSTRAINTS & OPPORTUNITIES

Initial site assessment and observations been evaluated to identify the emerging constraints and opportunities relevant to the development of the site.

A summary of these findings are set out below:

LAND USE

- » Consider the interface between residential and employment uses.
- » Respond to the location and orientation of the existing built form adjoining the site; new development should be based on best practice urban design principles.
- » Seek to ensure that the masterplan accommodates key desire lines to surrounding land uses, such as local shops located on Coventry Road, play and recreation facilities located in Heckley Fields and the School Lane Allotments.

	Site Boundary
	Draft Allocation Housing Site (HSG6 Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Plan)
	Draft Allocation Employment Site (EMP6 Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Plan)
	Existing Development
	Motorway
	Overhead Cable, Pylon + Offset (Subject to Survey)
	5m Contours
	Existing Trees/ Hedgerow
	Waterbodies Watercourse/ Ditch
	Low Point (Possible Attenuation Area)
	Potential Local Wildlife Site
	Scheduled Ancient Monument
	PROW- Footpath
	Potential Vehicular Access Point
	Potential Bus Only, Pedestrian + Cycle Access Point
	Potential Employment Access Point
	Potential Pedestrian + Cycle Access Point
	Setting Consideration: Amenity and Privacy of Existing Properties
	Setting Consideration: Noise



Constraints & Opportunities Plan



ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

- » Access to the development will be taken from School Lane, with a separate access point likely to be provided from Longford Road for employment land.
- » Pedestrian and cycle connectivity to nearby destinations will be maximised wherever possible, including links to Heckley Fields, the local centre, and nearby bus stops.
- » Seek to provide new pedestrian and cycle connection routes within the site to promote sustainable transport and healthy living. This may be introduced along Wilsons Lane, for example.

HYDROLOGY AND DRAINAGE

- » Development will not be located within land that is at risk from flooding.
- » Two ponds are located within the site area; the masterplan will seek to retain these ponds and integrate them with a new network of SUDs (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) that will manage surface water run-off and benefit landscape amenity and biodiversity.

ECOLOGY

- » The development will seek to maximise opportunities to enhance biodiversity and ecology wherever possible. This will be aided by the creation of green corridors that are integrated with existing trees and hedgerows.
- » The development will consider how new habitats and features with ecological value can be integrated with the proposals.

HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

- » Page 81 (para 9.4.7) of the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, Borough Plan – Heritage Assessment states:

"In summary it is considered that there are minimal heritage concerns regarding development within the strategic site. Specifically these are in regards to historic landscape character, and the as yet unknown presence of archaeological remains potentially of medium heritage significance. It is considered that there are opportunities for detailed design to avoid harm and maximise enhancement."

UTILITIES

- » A 400kv powerline runs across the southern part of the site. Associated easements will be accommodated within the masterplan.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

- » The landform change across the Site is modest and not particularly marked: it has a local high point at the northern boundary of 107m AOD and a low point near Longford Lane at 99m AOD: an overall level change of only 8m (the mature oak trees on Site are over 12m high).
- » The M6 motorway is elevated for part of the southern boundary and has a heavy tree cover.
- » Hedges and tree cover are present along much of the northern (School Lane) and eastern (B4113 Longford Road) boundaries and is often dense and mature and as a result restricts views into the Site from many locations in close proximity to the Site.
- » Some of the field hedgerow boundaries within the Site are fragmented and gappy, but there is a strong presence of prominent oak trees that are character driver.

- » Wilsons Lane has been truncated and cut-off by the M6 and has a strong hedgerow structure of hedge and tree species plants – it is a landscape detractor as it is cut-off and currently used as a storage area for steel containers.
- » The two ponds on Site appear to have little management.
- » There is a change in local landscape character from the eastern area near Longford Road that has clear industrial and urbanising influences west to an area that still is close to the M6 but being away from the employment and industrial areas, has a more residential and edge of settlement landscape character.



View of School Lane along northern boundary of site



Existing pond to be retained



Exhall Old School Community Centre and Exhall Green allotments

DESIGN CONCEPT & PRINCIPLES

The concept masterplan shown opposite has been informed by the following design principles and considerations:

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT FORM

- » Provision of 3.9ha of residential land, allowing for up to 200 dwellings with a typical density range of 45 - 50 dwellings per hectare, reflecting the setting of the surrounding urban areas.
- » 2ha of Employment land, located within areas less suitable for residential development between the M6 corridor and the existing overhead power lines (Policy HSG 6.2).
- » Residential development of two to three storeys will positively front onto surrounding land uses, streets and open spaces to ensure that these areas are safe, overlooked and inviting places to live (Policy HSG 6.24).
- » The character and appearance of the proposals will be influenced by the locally distinctive qualities of the local area and the sites relationship with its immediate surroundings, helping to ensure successful integration of the development.
- » There is the potential to locate higher density development along School Lane and Longford Road where the site joins the existing urban area.

Site Boundary

Draft Allocation Housing Site
(HSG6 Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Plan)

Draft Allocation Employment Site
(EMP6 Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Plan)

Potential Primary Vehicular Access

Potential Bus Only Access

Potential Employment Access

Potential Pedestrian Access

PROW- Footpath

Primary Route

Secondary Route

Residential Development

Employment Development

Green Corridor

Public Open Space

Existing Trees

Existing Hedgerow

Area for Formal Play

Existing Pond

Indicative Attenuation Area

Existing Overhead Electrical Cables + Pylon

Potential Future Phase of Development



Development Concept Plan



SCHOOL LANE

EXHALL OLD
SCHOOL
COMMUNITY
CENTRE

SCHOOL LANE
ALLOTMENTS

HECKLEY FIELDS
RECREATION
GROUND

B4113

SCHOOL LANE

COVENTRY ROAD

BAYTON
ROAD
INDUSTRIAL
ESTATE

B4113

LONGFORD ROAD

GROVELANDS
INDUSTRIAL
ESTATE

M6

ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

- » Vehicle access serving the residential areas will be taken from School Lane.
- » Pedestrian and cycle access will also be provided from School Lane to offer a safe and convenient connection between the site and nearby destinations, including: the Community Centre, Local Centre, Heckley Fields Recreation Ground and the allotments (Policy HSG 6.11).
- » Elsewhere, the existing Wilsons Lane junction could also be used for pedestrian and cycle access to provide a direct connection to Longford Road bus services and the employment areas to the east. This junction also has the potential to provide a dedicated bus access and / or full vehicle access if necessary (Policy HSG 6.12).
- » Vehicular access to the Employment area would be kept separate from the residential access. This may be located on Longford Road to the south of Wilsons Lane (Policy HSG 6.3).
- » Within the site itself, development will be structured around a permeable and legible hierarchy of streets and spaces, that will provide a connected and safe environment for all users.

OPEN SPACE AND LANDSCAPE

- » The new Green Infrastructure Strategy will realise the potential in the existing Natural Capital of the hedgerows and mature oak trees and place them in a new and stronger connected landscape framework.
- » The new Blue Infrastructure Strategy will capture the opportunity for habitat diversity enhancement through the creation of a development-wide network of Sustainable Urban Drainage, open water treatment train elements, that add biodiversity and public amenity value to the development.

- » The two existing large ponds will be retained (Policy HSG 6.20) and enhanced within areas of the new open space within the development. They will be as key network features through management of habitat potential and appropriate public access measures.
- » The development will have a strong framework of formal and informal Public Open Space (POS) creating the setting for the retained and enhanced elements of Natural capital.
- » The new POS will deliver an important landscaped buffer along the southern side of the development with the M6, and will retain a green edge along the northern boundary along School Lane.
- » The new POS will deliver improved PRoW accessibility to the wider landscape framework of the development (Policy HSG 6.25) and will deliver a valuable cyclepath link, in a landscaped vehicle-free Greenway, up to a new crossing of School Lane to the Heckley Fields Recreation Ground (Policy HSG 6.10).
- » The landscape framework will reinforce much of the existing tree cover and hedgerow pattern and will make an important contribution to a strategy that avoids the existing linearity of the M6, the overhead power lines and pylons. The trees and woody vegetation along Wilsons Lane will be evaluated and if appropriate, managed as a wildlife site (Policy HSG 6.10 and 6.22).
- » Areas of Ridge and Furrow ploughing will be retained in the POS in a form that compliments the public amenity and recognises the history of the landscape.



View north west towards existing houses on School Lane from the site

SUMMARY OF ASPIRATIONS

The emerging concept masterplan presented in this document has been informed by the development vision and responds to initial site analysis which identifies the constraints and opportunities of the site.

The Vision Document has explained how development at School Lane in Exhall could come forward and provide the following key benefits:

- » A mixed use development comprising up to 200 new homes plus 2ha of employment land.
- » A high quality and attractive scheme that references positive elements of surrounding built form and provides appropriate development densities for the setting and location.
- » A generosity of accessible open space which enhances the existing green capital, provides local amenity and creates opportunities for play, sustainable drainage and habitat creation.
- » An easily accessible site, with excellent connections to nearby facilities, employment opportunities and education provision by foot, cycle and public transport.
- » Creation of new pedestrian and cycle routes that form part of a wider network of legible streets and spaces designed to promote sustainable movement.
- » A cohesive and vibrant new community formed by the creation of a safe and active development based on best practice urban design principles.

