

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON LAND SOUTH OF

# **BROWNSOVER ROAD | RUGBY**

## VISION DOCUMENT

JANUARY 2024



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on behalf of

**ST MODWEN HOMES**

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# 1.0 Introduction





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Marrons have been instructed to prepare this vision document by St Modwen Homes to demonstrate deliverability of development as part of promotion of Land South of Brownsover Road, Rugby (“the Site”).

The key objectives of the document are:

- 1. To present a vision to guide development proposals**
- 2. To set out a summary of site considerations and local context**
- 3. To present illustrative concept proposals and the benefits that development of the Site could offer**

The Site comprises agricultural fields adjoining Brownsover Road on the built edge of Rugby. The Site is a logical and deliverable location for development, being well-placed geographically to provide new homes for the district, and close to existing residential development, employment and local amenities.

A high-level approach to site analysis has been taken at this early stage, identifying known constraints and considerations. More detailed analysis of the Site and its context will follow - together with specialist technical guidance - to support a future planning application.

Analysis of the Site’s locality and context has informed the preparation of an illustrative concept plan included within the document.

It is shown within the document that the site is deliverable, with the potential to supply new housing. The site is available now, offers a logical location for sustainable development, rounding off the development edge of Rugby.











## SITE LOCATION

The Site is located around 2km north of Rugby town centre. The Site is within a sustainable location, close to established services and facilities which can be accessed through sustainable modes of transport.

The Site lies around 500m east of the centre of Newbold-on-Avon, a suburb of Rugby which offers a variety of facilities and amenities. Local amenities and connectivity are set out in the Facilities Plan on the following page, and include:

- Local shops
- Public houses
- Places of worship
- Recreation areas
- Post office
- Village Hall

The Viaduct Cycleway runs along the eastern boundary of the Site, providing convenient pedestrian and cycle access to the town centre and Rugby train station. The station provides fast services to Coventry, Birmingham and London, in addition to more local services.

Rugby town centre offers a wide array of employment opportunities together with amenities including shopping, education, entertainment and leisure. An industrial estate is also located adjacent to the Site, forming a significant employment area within Rugby.

The Site is well connected to other towns and cities by rail, bus, and road links and there are bus stops within walking distance of the Site. As such, development proposals for the Site would constitute sustainable development.

The site extends to approximately 8.27 hectares (20.44 acres) of grassland, with existing hedgerows along field boundaries. It is bound by Brownsover Road to the north, the Viaduct Cycleway and an industrial area to the east and the Oxford Canal to the south.



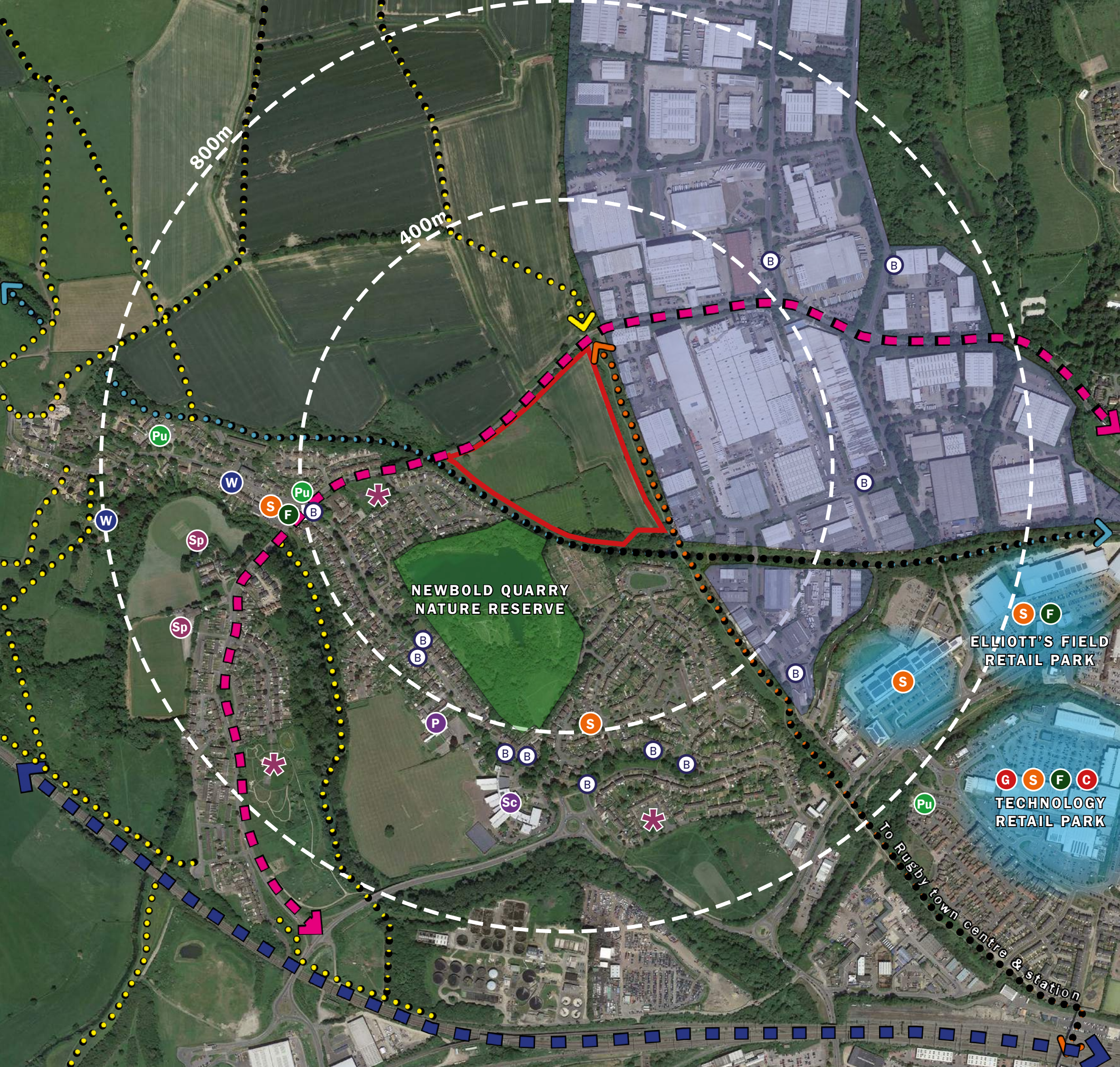
**TOP NEWBOLD QUARRY NATURE RESERVE**  
**BOTTOM VIADUCT CYCLEWAY**



Facilities and Amenities Plan

- Site boundary
- Key vehicular routes
- Public Rights of Way
- Viaduct Cycleway
- Recreational route along canal
- Railway line
- Primary school
- Secondary School
- Shop
- Place of Worship
- Food and Beverage
- Public House
- Post Office
- Cinema
- Gym
- Sport
- Play area
- Industrial estate
- Local nature reserve
- Retail area
- Bus stop

Plan not to scale





**Circa 140 - 160 new homes**  
within Rugby to meet local  
need

**extensive public open space**  
a green network for people to  
enjoy, enhancing landscape  
and ecological benefits  
reflective of the Site's location

**sustainable and connected**  
enhancing Viaduct Cycleway,  
providing new direct active  
travel connections and  
permeability for walking and  
cycling

## THE VISION

“ The vision is to create a sustainable, well-connected, landscape-led addition to Rugby, that delivers new homes for the town.

With proposals that positively responds to their local setting, bring forward development that provides high quality new homes catering for varied needs, with ecological benefits and high quality public open space that's closely linked to its landscape setting, all combining to create a new community to be enjoyed by all.

”



## 2.0 Planning Context



PLANNING CONTEXT

The current Rugby Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 was adopted in 2019. Government policy requires that Development Plans are reviewed every five years. In that context the Council are currently reviewing the Local Plan in order to update the Plan and its policies and make provisions to meet housing, employment and other needs for a new plan period through to 2041, potentially longer. An initial Issues and Options Consultation has been published setting out key issues for the Local Plan Review, together with a “Call for Sites”, inviting developers and landowners to put forward sites and proposals for considerations as part of the Local Plan Review – this Vision Document is put forward in this context.

The need for the Borough to plan for additional housing and employment is important. Government planning policy in the National Planning Policy Framework advises that Council’s should significantly boost the supply of homes - it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed. The overall aim should be to meet as much of an area’s identified housing need as possible, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community. In respect of employment growth, the Framework advises that Council’s should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. It is important therefore that the Borough plans for growth.

For Rugby, in respect of housing, there is a need for more housing, plus whatever reasonable unmet need for housing may reasonably agreed with Coventry City who struggle to meet their full needs within the City boundary. Affordability of housing supports the need for more housing to be delivered, including more affordable homes where there is a significant identified need, along with the need for a range of property types, sizes and arrangements to fully meet those in housing need. The site here at Brownsover Road has the clear potential to support these important requirements for the new Plan in a sustainable location, with high quality housing within a beautifully designed development.

The Site is currently in the Green Belt, however the contribution it makes to Green Belt purposes is very limited due to its ‘infill location’, being well enclosed by the surrounding built form, landform and vegetation, as set out in the adjacent table. The draft Publication Local Plan (2016) originally proposed removal of the Site from the Green Belt, stating that *“Land at Brownsover Road is not considered to serve the purpose of the Green Belt and this designation has therefore been removed and the Green Belt boundary amended accordingly*

*as shown on the Policy Map.”* This proposal was subsequently struck out, with the Council’s reason stating *“Site not justified for release from Green Belt, therefore proposal deleted to ensure consistency with NPPF.”* However, the Inspector’s Report confirms at paragraph 215 that “the parcel of land is [not] required to meet objectively assessed development needs of the borough or the unmet needs of Coventry”. It is therefore understood that the Inspector raised no concern with the principle of the Site’s removal from the Green Belt, it was simply not required at the time to accommodate housing need. Further detail is set out in Landscape and Visual Appraisal accompanying this document.

Green Belt Purpose	Brownsover Road Contribution
Check unrestricted sprawl	As a triangular Site with development on two sides, the Site is considered as an ‘infill’ area to the settlement and any development on the Site would not create sprawl or ribbon development. The adjacent areas of development and undulating topography also limit the sense of openness.
Prevent neighbouring towns merging	Development on the Site would not extend development any closer to neighbouring towns given the infill nature of the Site and that development already exists to the north and south.
Safeguard countryside encroachment	The character of the Site is considered to be urban edge, rather than open countryside given the urbanising influence of Glebe Farm Industrial Estate and the residential area of Newbold on Avon. Development on the Site would not encroach into the wider countryside, with Brownsover Road providing a clear, robust defensible Green Belt boundary.
Preserving the setting of historic towns	The Site does not contribute to the setting of a historic town.
Assisting urban regeneration	The development of the Site would not prejudice other urban regeneration or development of urban land.



# 3.0 Site Context





## SITE DESCRIPTION

The site extends to approximately 8.27 hectares (20.44 acres) of land located to the south of Brownsover Road and north of Oxford Canal, Rugby. The Site comprises four fields currently used for pastoral and arable farming. The fields are separated by mature trees and hedgerows. The Site is bounded by Brownsover Road to the north / north-west, the Oxford Canal to the south and the Viaduct Cycleway to the east. Existing trees, hedgerows and scrub feature along the eastern and north-western boundaries, and towards the south-east of the southern boundary.

An industrial area is located to the east of the Site, beyond the Viaduct Cycleway. Existing residential development is located to the south and west of the Site, with Newbold Quarry Park (Local Nature Reserve, LNR) and allotments also located to the south. Open field systems are present to the north and northwest beyond Brownsover Road.

The Site falls from approximately 110mAOD in the far north to approximately 100mAOD in the south east and 93mAOD on the south western boundary, adjacent to the canal.

There are no designated archaeological remains located within the Site. Ridge and furrow earthworks are present in the southern portion of the Site, however these are not anticipated to preclude development as the furlongs are not intact and these remains are not rare to the region.

It is anticipated that development within the Site would have the potential to not cause harm/adverse effect to designated/non-designated heritage assets through setting change. This may require embedded mitigation measures to negate any adverse effect to the non-designated canal, i.e. refinement in terms of massing, heights, stand-off and screening should this be necessary. On this basis heritage receptors should not preclude the promotion of the Site.



# LANDSCAPE

## LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

As defined in the Warwickshire Landscape Character and Guidelines 1993, the Site is located within High Cross Plateau Landscape Character Types (LCT) and subsequently in the Open Plateau LCT. The key characteristics features include: a rolling plateau dissected by broad valleys; a medium to large scale, often poorly defined field patterns; a sparsely populated landscape of hamlets and isolated manor farmsteads; deserted medieval village sites surrounded by extensive areas of ‘empty’ countryside; pockets of permanent pasture often with ridge and furrow; and prominent belts of woodland.

The Site does inherit some key characteristic features such as rolling landscape with small localised plateau to the eastern part, the pockets of pasture with ridge and furrow within the southern part, and prominent belts of wood along the southern and eastern boundaries.

The Site is not located within any landscape related designations and is not in the close proximity to any heritage assets. The Site is not publicly accessible. Many Public Rights of Way are designated in the local landscape.

Oxford Canal forms a distinctive feature a along the southern boundary. Walking along the towing path from west to east, the character changes from Urban Residential Moorings to Urban Fenced Edge, then Urban Park Edge where it meets the Newbold Quarry Park and finally to Wooded Enclosure that is formed by the high embankment and mature vegetation.

## VISUAL AMENITY

The views of the Site are generally contained within its immediate context due to the combination of the rolling topography with an overall fall towards the Oxford Canal, the existing boundary and internal vegetation and adjacent urban built form and mature vegetation coverage.

There are open and near distance views of the Site from towing path (a long distance route) along Oxford Canal. Direct and middle distance views of the Site are available from the small plateau within the Newbold Quarry Park. Along Brownsover Road and Viaduct Cycleway (Public Bridleway 333/RB7/1), there will be filtered or heavily filtered views of the Site. Residents occupying the properties off Pantolf Place might experience filtered views of the western part of the Site, albeit these are private views.

The local landscape is well served by a number of Public Rights of Way to the north of the Site. Many panoramic views of the northern settlement edge of Rugby and some key buildings within the town centres are available from relatively elevated points. However, the views of the Site are barely perceivable.



The photo is taken from Public Rights of Way - Bridleway 162/R95/1 to the north of the Site at c. 120m AOD. The view comprises rolling agricultural landscape in the foreground and middle ground. The settlement of Rugby is visible in the background. The Industrial Estate to the east of the Site is very evident and occupies a large proportion of the scene. As represented by the photo, views of the Site are not available from this elevated point.



The photo is taken from the towing path (long distance route) along the Oxford Canal. The existing pastures within the southern part of the Site are clearly visible from this viewpoint. The landform constantly rises northwards. Existing hedgerow, scrubs and trees within the Site provide layers of screening for the northern and eastern parts of the Site. The vegetation along the southern boundary of the Site becomes dense and mature to the eastern end. As a result, views of the Site become limited when walking eastwards.



# ECOLOGY

## HABITATS

The Site is approximately 8.27ha in total and is composed mainly of arable land, grassland and hedgerows with associated drainage ditches and scattered trees. The hedgerows, Oxford canal interface and the pond feature is considered to be the habitat of greatest biodiversity value within the site.

The ecology mitigation hierarchy will be applied to retain, enhance and buffer key ecological assets within the Site such as the Oxford Canal interface with the Site, higher value trees and hedgerows where feasible.

Furthermore there is a vision to improve habitat connectivity within site & wider landscape by linking woodlands & waterbodies via newly created waterbodies, grasslands, enhanced hedgerows and scrub. This can be done through enhancement and creation of strong green links based on the provision of nature recovery network on former arable land. Included within created habitat areas will be areas that are wildlife beneficial greenspace to introduce structural diversity and key ecological stepping stones. This will include Creation of ponds/ SUDS/wetlands in area previously devoid of wet habitat.

## PROTECTED/ NOTABLE SPECIES

The intensive agricultural management of the site reduces opportunities for faunal species. Nonetheless, the range of habitats, alongside the sites size, means that potential opportunities exist for protected and notable species. The Site has the potential to support the following protected and notable species: Nesting birds; Bat (commuting and foraging only); Reptile (limited to the peripheries of the Site) to be further confirmed with local records; Great Crested Newts - to be confirmed with local record and EDHA visit; Badger (commuting and foraging only); Hedgehog; Otter (commuting and foraging only) to be confirmed with local records and Brown hare.

## BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN (BNG)

Biodiversity enhancement will be the key consideration during the masterplan development. The nature led landscape masterplan will set out a strategy to achieve biodiversity net gain with wildlife as the primary driver for the landscape framework.





## PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY, FOOTPATHS & VIADUCT CYCLEWAY

The Viaduct Cycleway that adjoins the Site's eastern boundary forms part of a wider network of active travel routes which criss-cross the local area. These include footpaths along the Oxford Canal, a continuation of the PRow across agricultural fields to the north of the Site and footways along Brownsover Road. The Perkins Bridge Footpath branches off the Viaduct Cycleway to the south of the Site and the Oxford Canal. This provides linkages with existing residential areas and the Glebe Farm Industrial Estate.

This network links the Site to - among others - Newbold Quarry Park (Local Nature Reserve), Avon Valley School and Performing Arts College, Rugby town centre, Rugby station and Glebe Farm Industrial Estate, as well as providing convenient pedestrian and cycle access to local amenities in close proximity to the Site.

The Site provides an excellent opportunity to include new links to the cycleway and a positive frontage towards this important green corridor and active travel route.



VIADUCT CYCLEWAY



VIADUCT CYCLEWAY ADJOINING THE SITE'S EASTERN BOUNDARY





VIADUCT CYCLEWAY



VIADUCT CYCLEWAY



FOOTPATH ALONG OXFORD CANAL



# 4.0 Opportunities & Considerations



# OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

A number of opportunities and constraints have been identified following the Site assessment work undertaken to date. These are summarised below and on the opportunities and constraints plan on the following page.

## Access and Movement

- A new vehicular access point is proposed off Brownsover Road.
- Opportunity to enhance the Viaduct Cycleway adjoining the Site, via new connections, enhanced landscaping and positive frontages, improving its usability and connectivity with the Site.
- New recreational routes and pedestrian and cycle permeability through the Site, plugging into the wider movement network.

## Landscape and Ecology

- There is a strong network of existing trees and hedgerows through the Site, to be retained and enhanced where possible, with any loss of hedgerow replaced and enhanced with new hedgerow planting, strengthening existing habitats and green networks.
- Opportunity to enhance existing hedgerows running east-west through the Site, creating a green spine linking the Viaduct Cycleway, Oxford Canal and Newbold Quarry Nature Reserve.
- The Oxford Canal provides a natural landscape edge to the Site, allowing for a potential green buffer containing ecological enhancements, amenity space, SuDS features and landscaping.

## Noise

- A 10m standoff from Brownsover Road is proposed to mitigate noise from traffic, particularly at night.
- Noise from the adjacent industrial estate to the east should be mitigated via eastern boundary massing, screen, building form, orientation and layout, to be explored in more detail as proposals progress.
- Opportunity for higher density housing towards eastern edge, for example terraced properties and apartments facing towards the boundary treatments, creating a positive edge and relating to the built form of the adjacent industrial area.

## Utilities

- Existing overhead cables crossing the northern tip of the Site, no buildings should be situated within 15m of the overhead line.

## HSE Zone

- There is a HSE Zone (outer zone) in the northern corner of the Site. This does not mean development cannot take place in this area, however there may be limitations on the type of development and the use of any buildings constructed here. Consultation with HSE is required to progress proposed development in this zone.

## Flood Risk and Drainage














- The Site is located in flood zone 1, meaning that it has a low probability of flooding and is broadly suitable for development.
- Opportunity to provide new sustainable drainage features, which could be in the form of planted attenuation basins, managing surface water run off and providing ecological and amenity benefits.

## Key Considerations

- **Delivery of residential development on the Site can bring forward opportunities for enhanced active travel routes including connections with the canal and the Viaduct Cycleway.**
- **Development would provide opportunities for new green infrastructure, recreation provision and biodiversity improvements.**
- **Opportunity for a ‘green spine’ through the centre of the Site and a green buffer towards the canal.**
- **There are no known physical or technical constraints which would prevent development from taking place on the site where indicated.**
- **Future detailed design of the scheme will require technical input for matters including the HSE outer zone.**

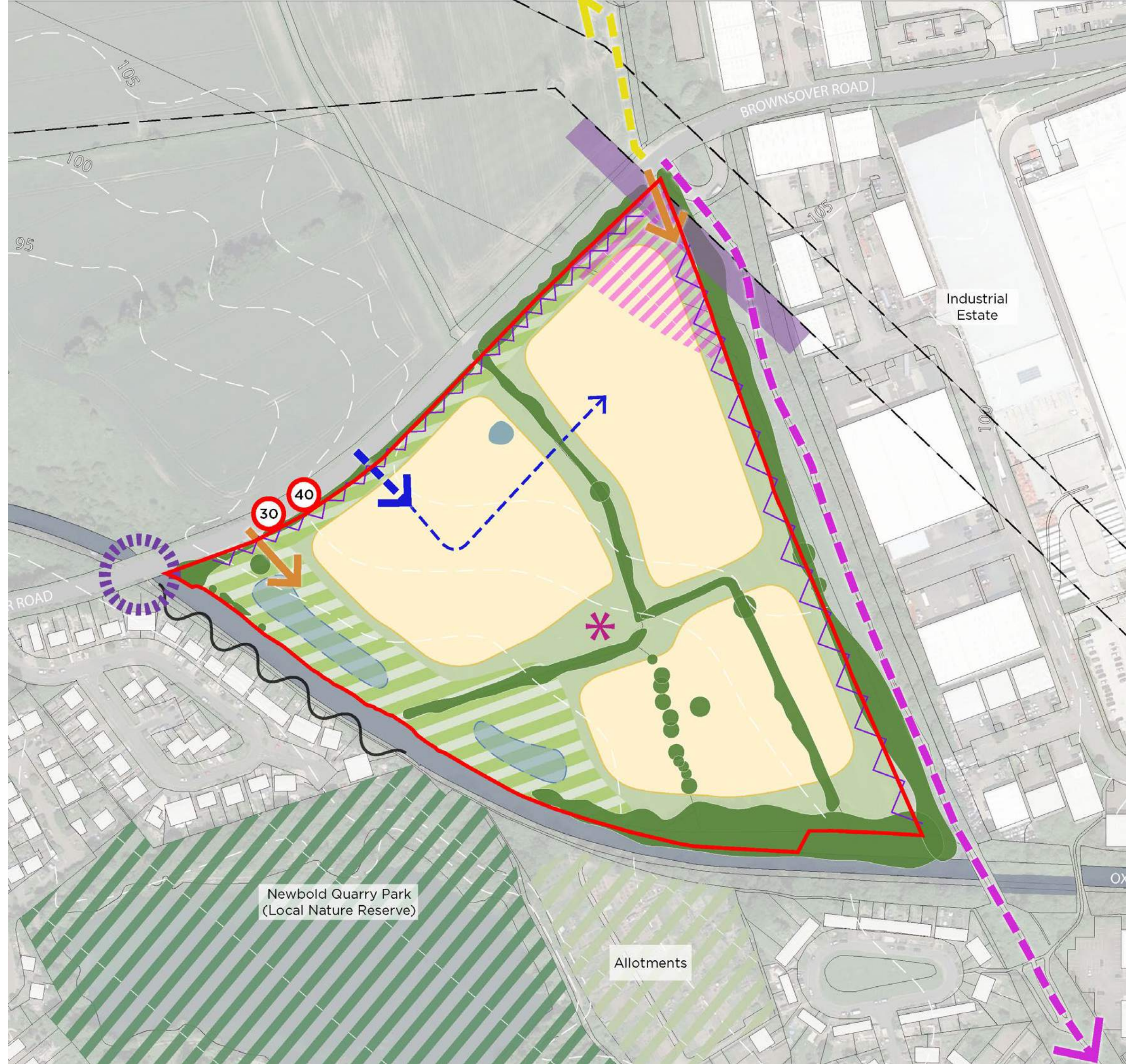


## Opportunities and Constraints Plan

-  Site boundary
-  Existing trees & hedgerows (to be retained where possible)
-  PRoW
-  Viaduct Cycleway
-  Overhead cables
-  15m offset from cables
-  HSE Outer Zone
-  Existing Site access point
-  Potential Site access point
-  Nearby residential development
-  Pinch point over bridge
-  Key carriageway
-  Bus stop
-  Potential landscape buffer
-  Indicative residential development area
-  Indicative primary route
-  Indicative play area
-  Indicative attenuation area
-  Noise impacts



Plan not to scale





## KEY CONSIDERATIONS & LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

The plan illustrates the key design considerations and potential green infrastructure for the future development. Landscape proposals must be underpinned by the ecological principles in particular associated with establishing a mosaic of habitats.

- Pull development away from the boundary to allow adequate spaces for retention of the existing hedgerow, scrub and trees, as well as establishment of robust edges.
- Respect the existing rolling topography of the Site with minimum changes to the levels.
- Pull development away from the Oxford Canal to create a multifunctional open space serving as a key destination for residents and visitors and a soft transitional edge to the canal, helping to reduce the potential visual impacts.
- The four distinctive characters along this section of the Oxford Canal should be reflected into the landscape proposal so that the current character is maintained and enhanced.
- Along eastern boundary, a landscape buffer comprising rich habitats form strong linear and biodiverse edge, connecting to the wider green infrastructure network along Viaduct Cycleway. A new pedestrian connecting point should be considered to provide easy access.
- A new green edge should be established along Brownsover Road to form a robust definition to the Green Belt, incorporating the existing trees and hedgerow.
- Where possible, the existing internal hedgerows, scrub and trees should be incorporated into the green links or street planting to bring the natural elements to doorstep.
- New hedgerows, trees and grassland would offer a range of nesting opportunities for birds, invertebrates and mammals. Surrounded by grassland, marginal planting and trees, any proposed drainage ponds should be designed to provide wet or semi-wet habitats for a broad range of invertebrates.





# 5.0 Development Vision



## CONCEPT AND VISION

The vision is to create a sustainable, well-connected, landscape-led addition to Rugby, that delivers much needed new high-quality homes for the town.

New areas of public open space and play sit at the heart of the masterplan with a greenway and hedgerow retained through the centre, creating a 'green spine'. A new green space opposite the nature reserve celebrates the tranquillity of this space.

The Oxford Canal and Viaduct Cycleway act as existing greenways into the town centre, with the proposals linking to these routes, creating safer usable routes as part of development of this infill site. This includes outwards looking development parcels with active frontages and higher density development towards the cycleway and industrial estate, mitigating noise and opening up the cycleway as a usable travel route into town with additional lighting and linkages.





# CONCEPT FRAMEWORK PLAN

The concept framework plan illustrates how the Site is proposed to be developed, taking into account the Site assessment work undertaken to date.

The proposals could deliver:

- Provision for approximately 4.6 hectares net developable area of residential development within a new and enhanced landscaped setting;
- A dedicated vehicular access proposed off Brownsover Road;
- Enhanced connectivity with the existing Viaduct Cycleway;
- Dedicated active travel and recreational routes through the development, allowing for high quality pedestrian and cyclist permeability;
- Provision of outward-facing development parcels ensuring visual interest and high levels of natural surveillance of the public realm, including a positive frontage towards the Viaduct Cycleway;
- Opportunity to deliver varied character through the design of streets and varied density, with a higher density and more urban character towards the north-east, relating to the adjacent industrial area and a lower density edge and looser character towards the Oxford Canal;
- A new open, tranquil green space opposite the Newbold Quarry Nature Reserve, linking to a green corridor through the centre of the Site;
- Provision for a dedicated local area of play within the landscaped public open space;

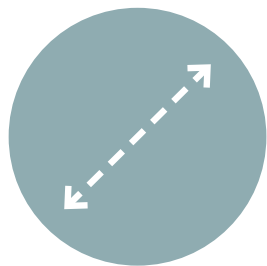
- A green buffer to the Oxford Canal and a multifunctional area of green space for biodiversity and recreational benefits. This could include new species rich grassland (wildflower meadows), informal paths and a series of tree groups, woodland edge (scrub) and individual trees. This would create a naturalistic area of green space to assist with biodiversity gains and informal recreation.
- Enhancement of trees and hedgerows through the Site and towards the Site boundaries, including new planting, hedges and trees to reinforce the existing landscape;
- Buffers to existing trees and hedgerows;
- Compliance with current biodiversity net gain legislation, through enhancing biodiversity on site and offsetting mitigation measures as necessary; and
- New dwellings to be of a design and style in-keeping with the local area’s urban form, materiality and local character.



Landscape-led



High Quality



Green & Connected



# Concept Framework Plan

- Site boundary
- Existing PRoW
- Viaduct Cycleway
- Proposed vehicular access point
- Potential pedestrian connection
- Indicative development area
- Higher density frontage
- Indicative recreational route
- Proposed play area
- Indicative attenuation area



Plan not to scale



Brownsover Road

Glebe Farm Road

Oxford Canal



# 6.0 Summary





**Circa 140 - 160 new homes**  
within Rugby to meet local  
need

**Extensive public open space**  
a green network for people to  
enjoy, enhancing landscape  
and ecological benefits  
reflective of the Site's location

**Sustainable and connected**  
enhancing Viaduct Cycleway,  
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