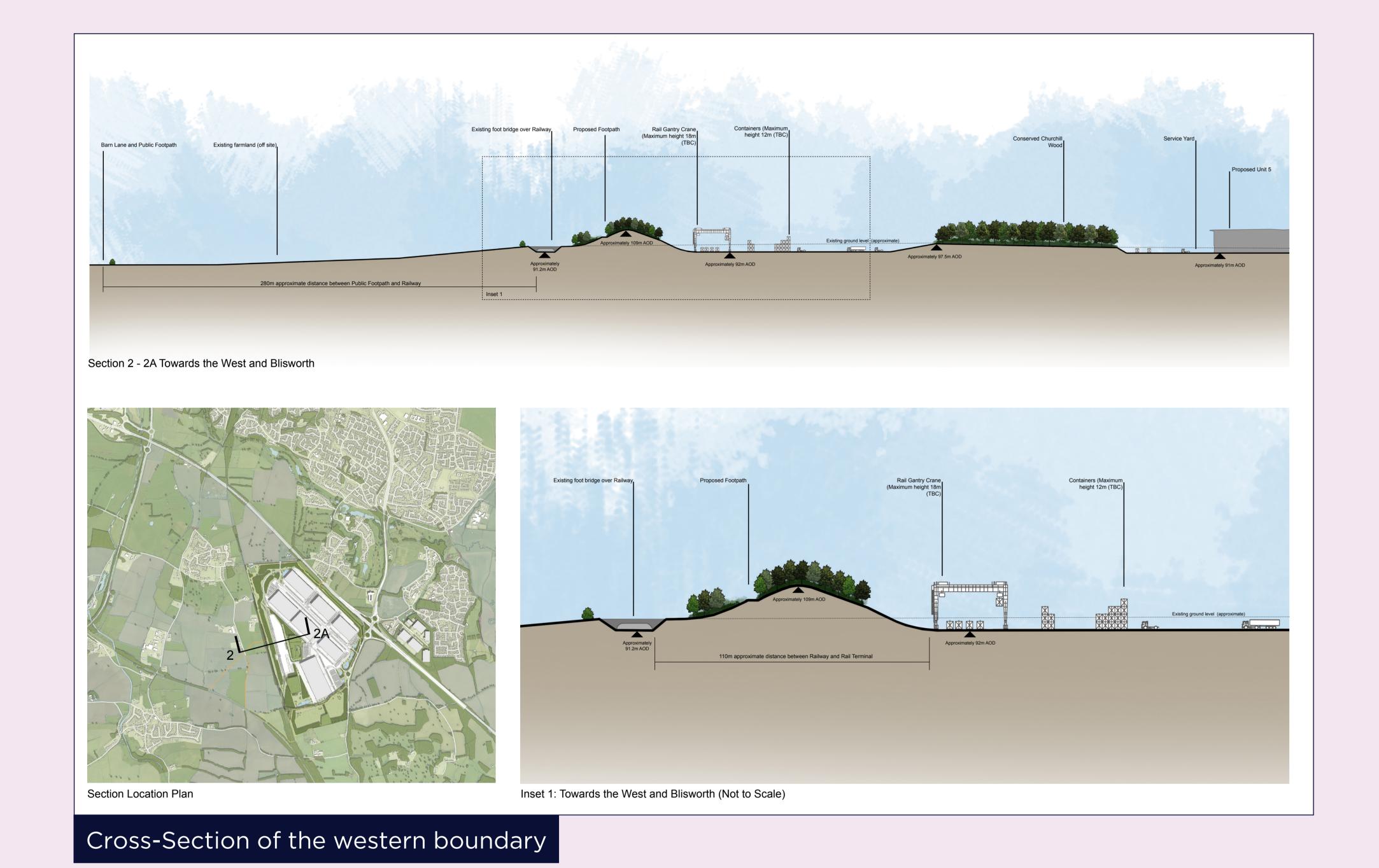
7. Environment - Landscape and Visual

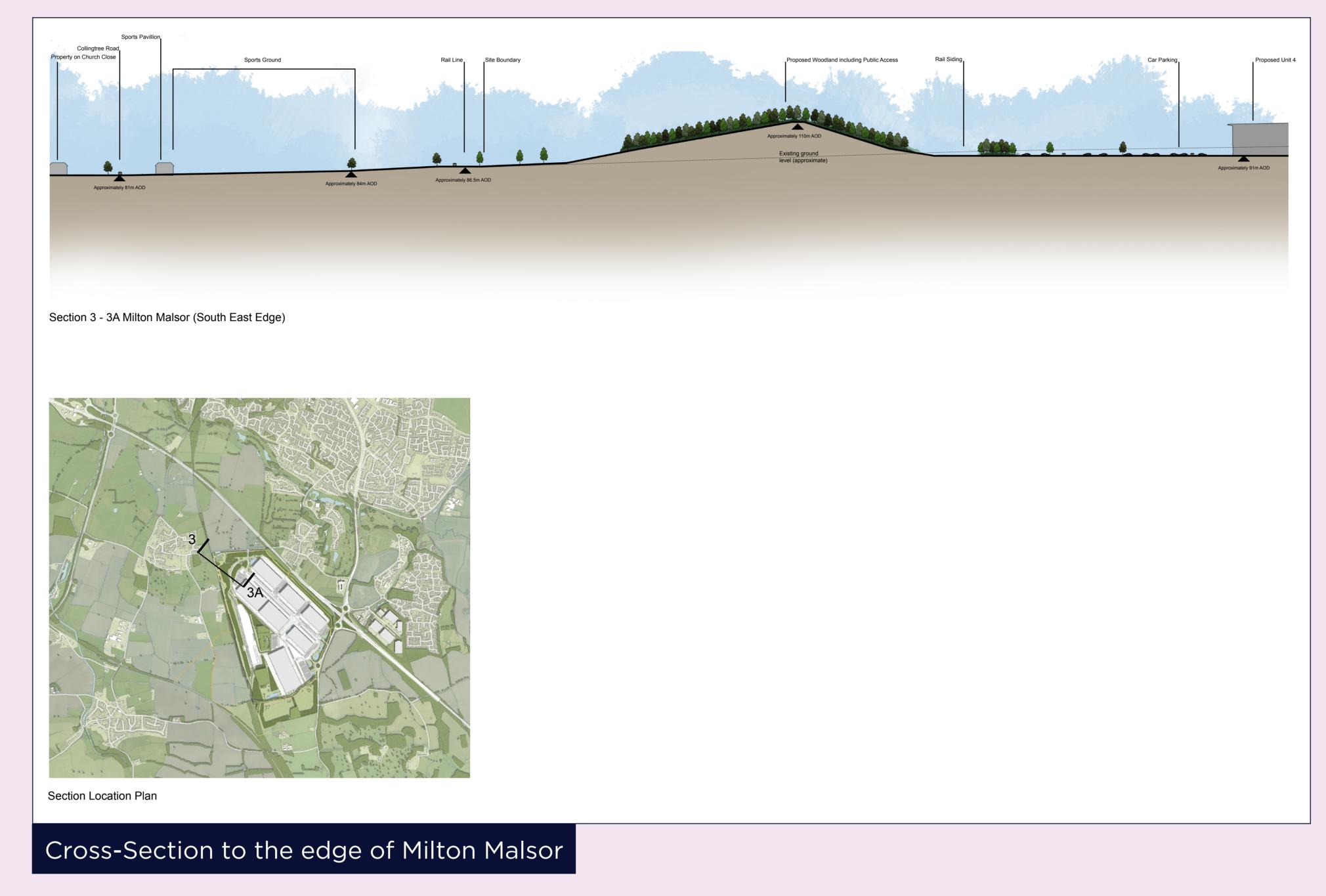




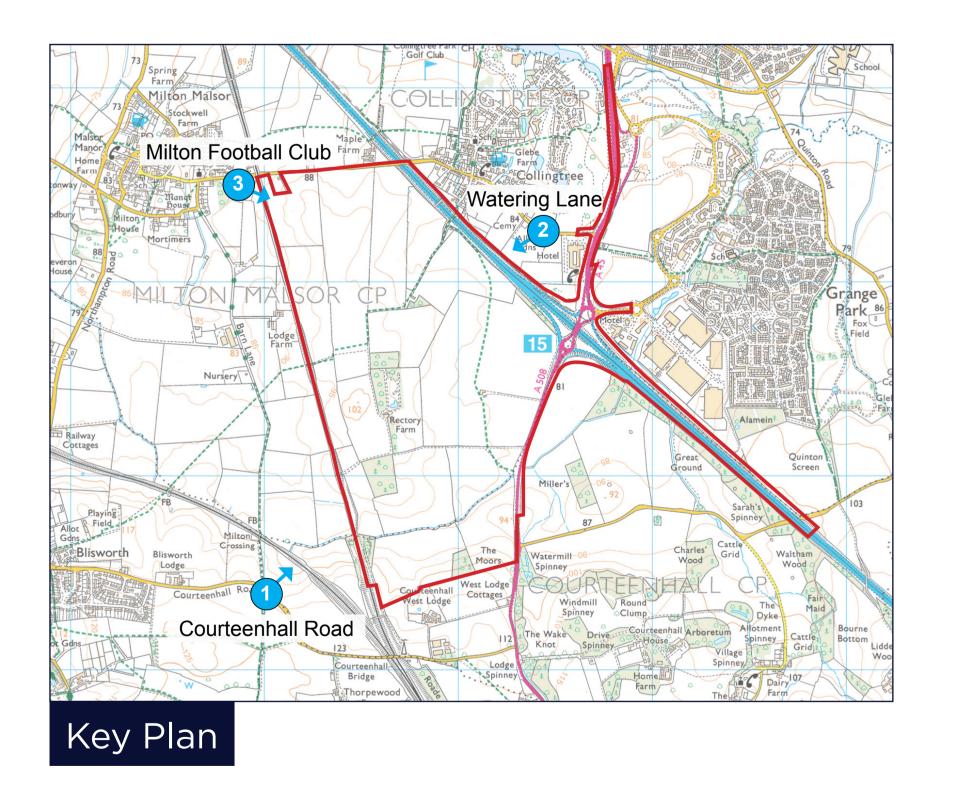
The earthworks and landscape strategy is being developed with the intention to make the views of the Proposed Development as sympathetic as possible. Although it will not be possible to entirely eliminate views of the proposed buildings from all viewpoints, the combination of the existing topography, new earthworks and existing and new woodland planting will establish a very effective visual screen and 'buffer' to even nearby positions. It will be particularly effective in screening the development from the north, north east, west and south of the site. The existing mature trees and planting along the M1 motorway corridor will be reinforced with new mounding and planting to screen views from this direction.

The nature and likely significance of the landscape and visual effects arising from the proposals are being assessed, yet the work done to date has informed both the emerging development proposals and landscape strategy (as shown here).

















8. Environment - Air, Noise and Lighting





Air quality

Assessments of the likely effects of the operational phase of the proposed development on air quality will be undertaken once the transport modelling is complete. A detailed dispersion model will be used to predict nitrogen dioxide (NO2) and fine particulate matter (PM10) concentrations in the vicinity of key roads around the site, i.e. the M1, A45 and A508.

Within Northampton Borough, there are two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) that could be affected by changes in traffic flows. One of these is along the M1 to the immediate north of the site, including part of Collingtree village, and the other along the A45 in Wootton. Whilst no AQMAs in South Northamptonshire are likely to be affected, pollution levels in Roade have been highlighted as a concern by the local authority, and we are confident that the proposed bypass will deliver a significant improvement to air quality in the village.

In order to gain a better understanding of the current issues in Collingtree, we are currently undertaking a year-long programme of diffusion tube monitoring in the village. Initial results show that, whilst very high concentrations of NO2 are experienced in close proximity to the M1, these drop off rapidly with distance, with the pollutant largely dispersed to background levels at 90m distant from the motorway.

Providing improvements and increased capacity to Junction 15 of the M1 are expected to reduce road congestion, providing local air quality benefits. There will be a small increase in traffic flows on the M1, relative to the current volumes. However, more widely, the development is expected to reduce the reliance of road freight and HGV trip lengths, and therefore produce benefits in terms of emissions reductions.

Mitigation for any local adverse effects will include specific Travel Plan measures, such as:

- appointment of a travel coordinator to oversee the development and implement the Travel Plan and associated schemes.
- provision of bus shuttle service for staff to access the site;
- provision of pedestrian and cycle routes for easier site access;
- provision of secure cycle parking facilities; and
- provision of real time information on public transport.

Such measures are likely to feature in a Low Emissions Strategy, to be agreed with the relevant local authorities.

Lighting (night-time effects)

A lighting assessment and strategy is being undertaken as part of the ES and site design work. This will inform decisions on both the placing and type of lighting features on the site to ensure that the proposed development will have minimal direct effects on neighbouring communities.

Part of the process includes an assessment of the existing lighting context and any light pollution evident in views from the surrounding area. In accordance with industry standards and recommendations, the lighting strategy is being designed to prevent glare and light spill to locations off-site, including upward light that can contribute to sky glow. The landscaping and earthworks strategy (described on Board number 6 and 7) will screen much of the lighting on the site from being directly visible from outside the site and so will form part of the mitigation for lighting as well as other potential visual effects. We are confident that, taking into account the existing lighting context, any lighting effects from the proposed development will be negligible for the vast majority of views and communities and no more than minor for the remaining few.

Noise and Vibration

Surveys are being undertaken to determine the existing noise and vibration conditions at sensitive receptors around the proposed development. These include locations in Collingtree, the eastern side of Milton Malsor, the eastern edge of Blisworth, around Junction 15 of the M1, and in Roade. The survey locations are shown on the maps.

For most of the sensitive receptors, the existing noise environment is dominated by road traffic noise from the M1. For receptors in proximity to the Northampton Loop and West Coast Main Line railway lines, the existing noise environment is also punctuated by freight and passenger train movements.

The emerging scheme design includes mitigation measures built into the development. These include the proposed landscaping and bunding around the main site and the earthworks strategy which partially sinks the buildings into the landscape and will assist in minimising noise effects from the site.

An assessment of the noise impacts likely to result from the scheme will be completed once the transport modelling work is complete. However, based on our work to date and our experience of assessing similar sites, we have provided an outline of what we anticipate the likely impacts could be.

For properties to the east of the M1, the anticipated levels of sound from operational activities at the SRFI would be such that little to no adverse impact is expected to occur. This is due to the mitigation provided by the landscaping and the generally higher ambient noise levels.

Some properties to the west of the M1 are more likely to experience operational noise from the SRFI than those in Collingtree due to their proximity to the site boundary and generally lower ambient noise levels. The scheme design does include inherent mitigation which will help to minimise any adverse impacts. There is also likely to be increased railway noise at receptors in proximity to the Northampton Loop railway line due to the additional freight train movements. The extent of this impact will be investigated and determined in the subsequent assessment work, but is not expected to be significant.

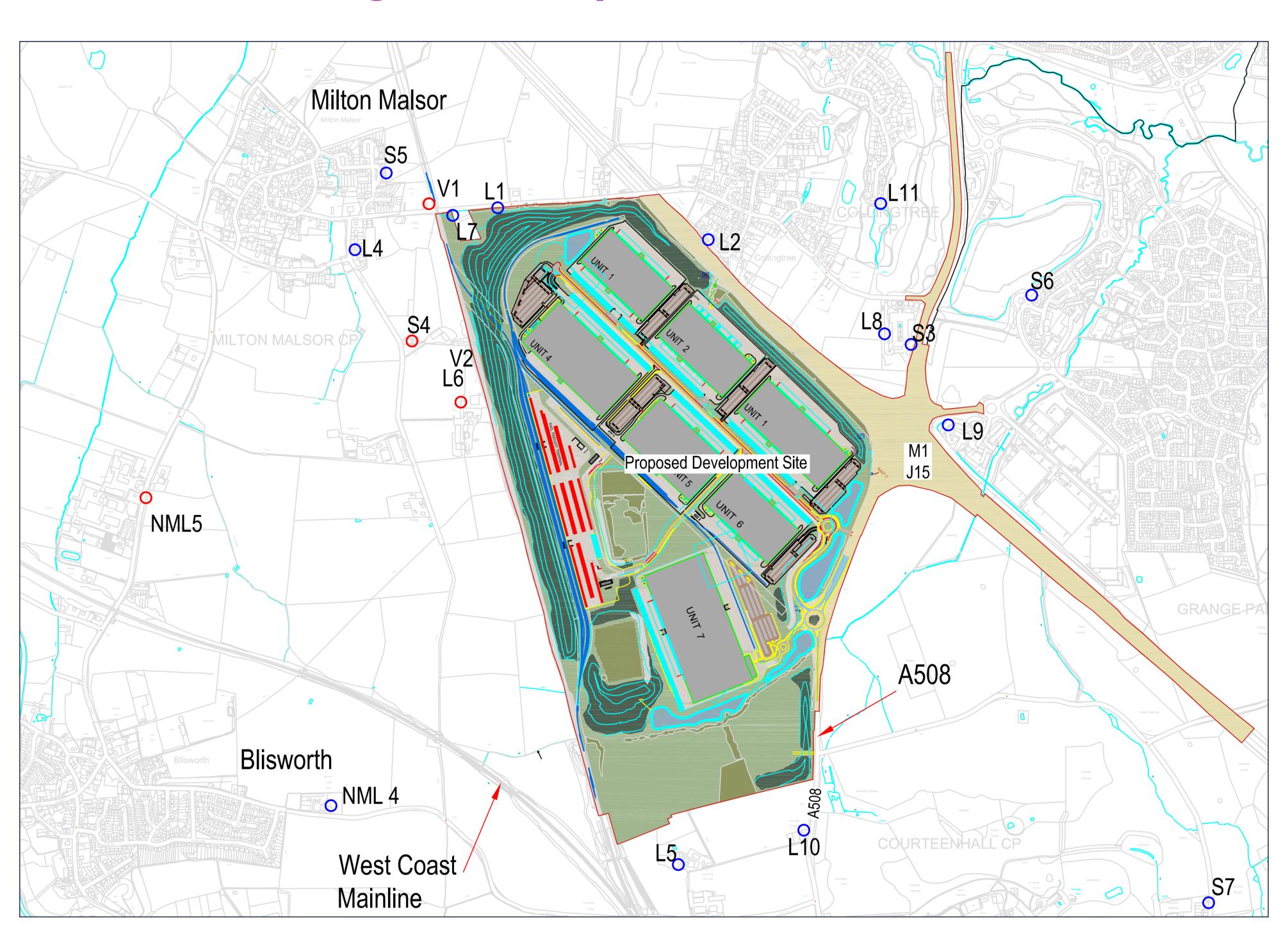
At the detailed design stage, depending on the precise layout and operation of the warehouses, HGVs will as far as possible be encouraged to have white noise reversing alarms which is increasingly common on newer vehicles. Furthermore, if refrigerated HGVs are likely to use the site, electric docking stations will be used to minimise the need for HGVs to keep their chiller units operating and engines idling when at the SRFI

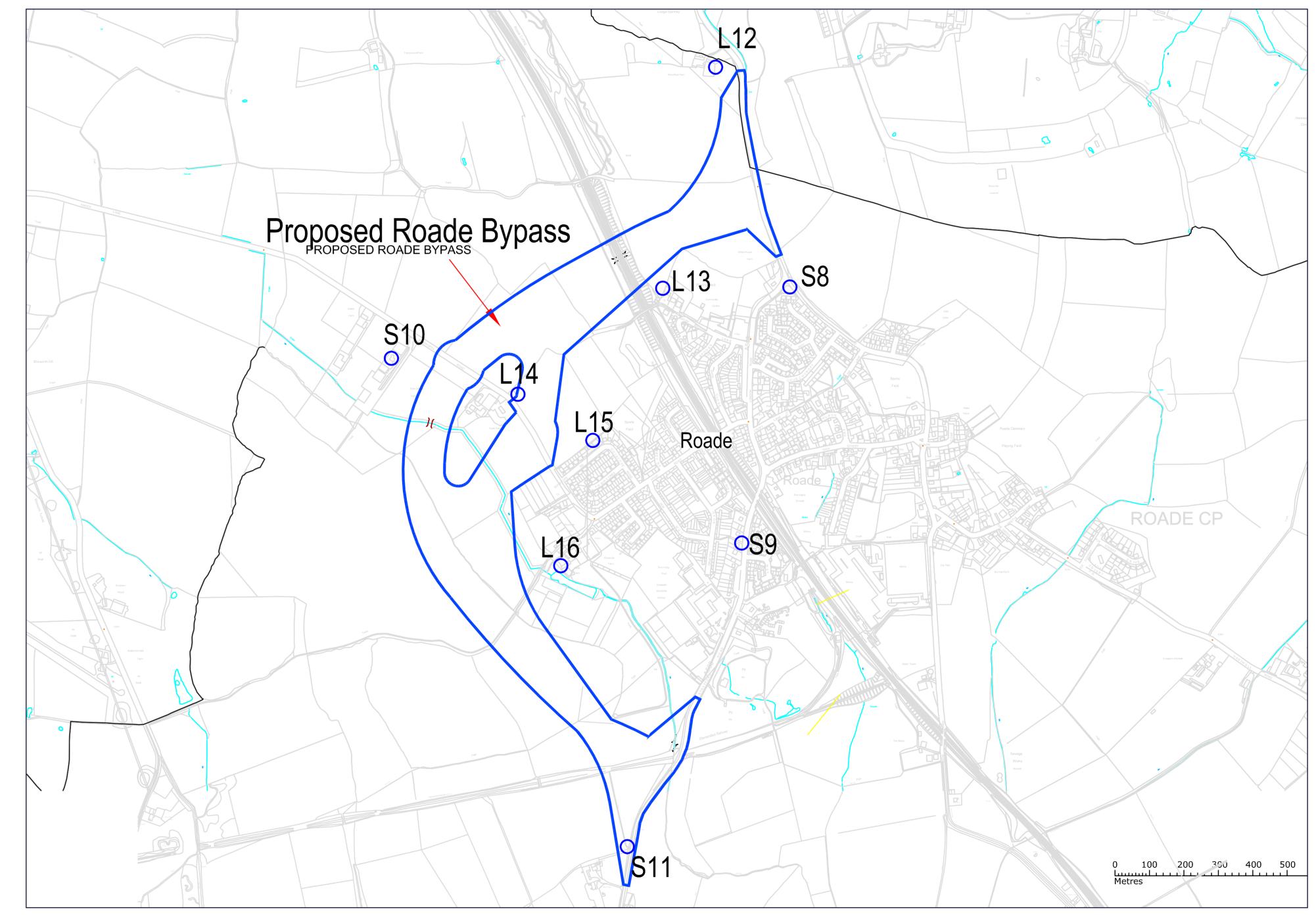
There will be an increase in traffic on the local road network associated with vehicles travelling to and from the proposed SRFI site. When added to the existing baseline flows on these roads, these vehicles are anticipated to result in a relatively modest increase in road traffic noise which is unlikely to be particularly noticeable at most nearby receptors.

The proposed Roade bypass is anticipated to reduce the volume of traffic on the A508 through the centre of Roade, noticeably reducing the traffic noise and having a beneficial impact at receptors in proximity to that part of the A508. Creation of the bypass is likely to increase the traffic noise experienced on the outskirts of Roade near the bypass. The assessment work to be undertaken in due course will consider what mitigation is required to minimise any adverse impacts at these receptors.

There is also potential for an increase in perceived vibration at the nearest dwellings to the existing railway in Milton Malsor, although the increased rail traffic will not be significant in the context of the number of existing movements. However, the vibration effects are still to be assessed.

Noise Monitoring location plans





Note the above plan indicates both potential Bypass corridor options, see board 11 for further information.



9. Environment - Ecology, and Drainage





Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment

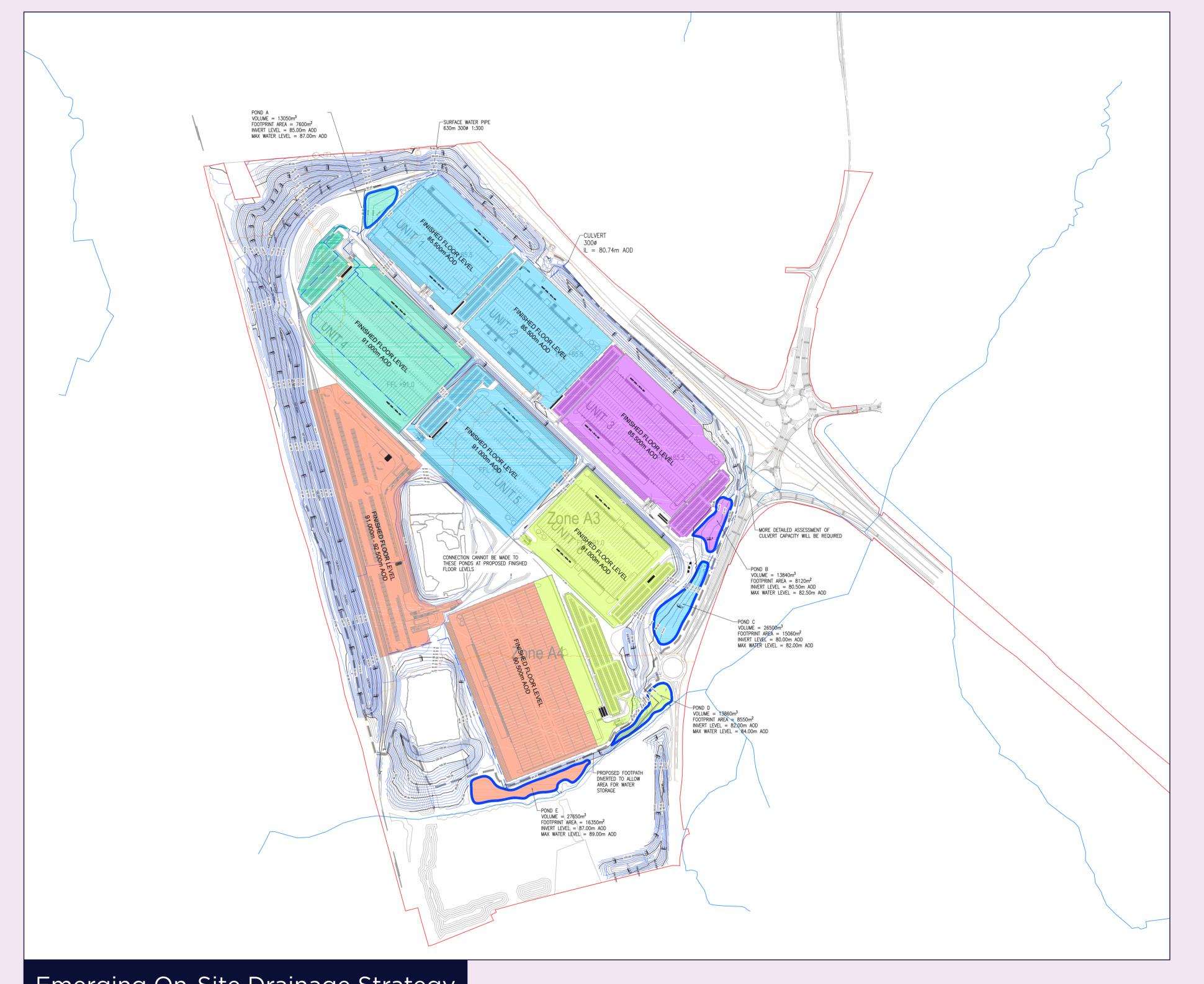
A Flood Risk Assessment is being prepared. The site is located within 'Flood Zone 1' where there is the lowest probability of flooding.

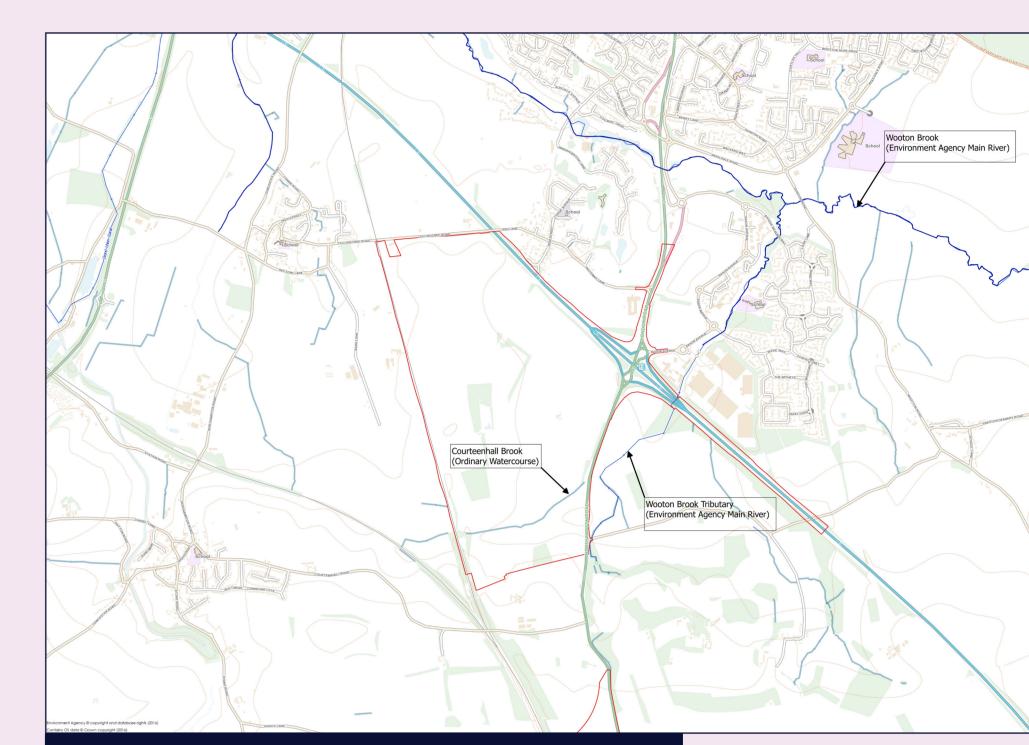
The nearest watercourses are a tributary of the Wooton Brook which is located in the southern part of the main site, and which flows from west to east, passing under the A508, and a tributary of the River Tove which flows in a southerly direction around the western boundary of Roade.

A hydraulic model is being prepared of these small watercourses, the results of which will inform the final strategy. There are some localised areas of higher risk of surface water flooding within the site, as well as known issues off-site further downstream on both the Wooton Brook and River Nene. The assessments being prepared are required to demonstrate how the development site will be drained effectively, and without exacerbating the downstream risk of flooding.

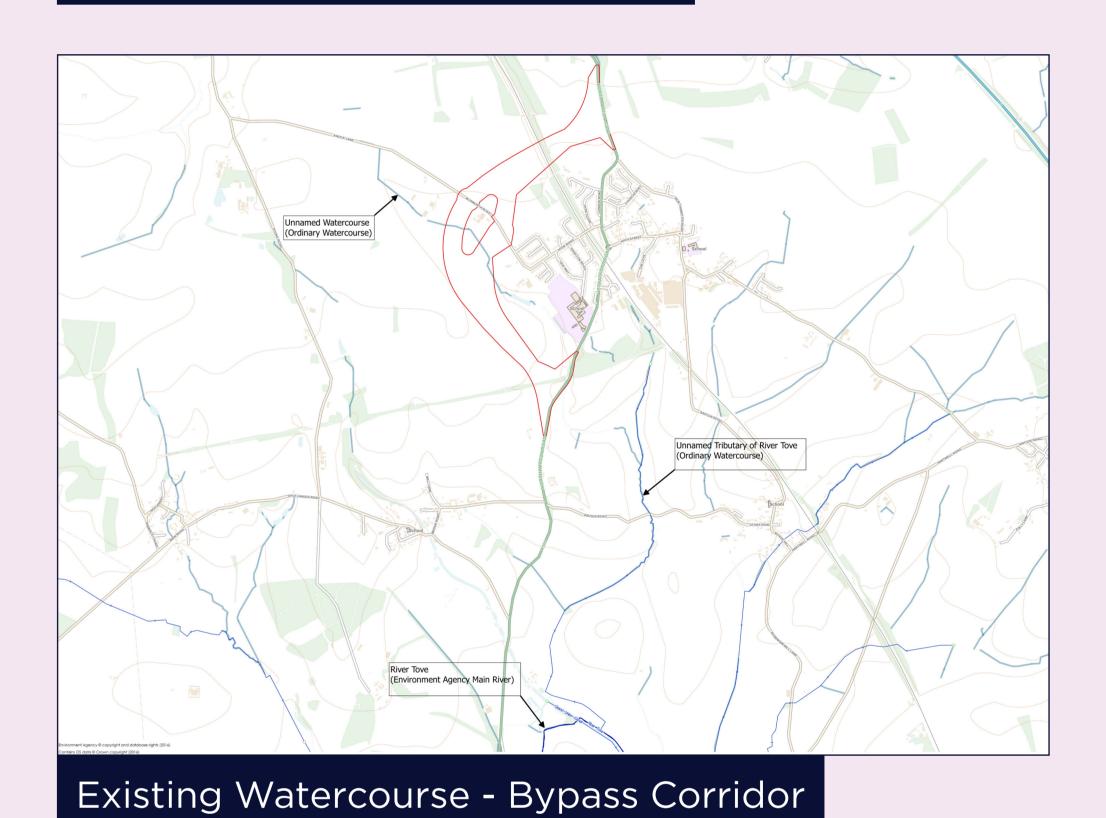
The development proposals will add new impermeable areas to the site, and a drainage strategy is being developed to ensure the site can accommodate and store rainwater collected on these surfaces in a sustainable and predictable way, with an allowance for climate change. As shown on the illustrative masterplan, the proposals include provision of drainage attenuation features (including ponds) to store and retain rainwater runoff from the site as part of a sustainable drainage system. Drainage ponds also have benefits in terms of ecology, habitat creation and water quality as well as providing amenity benefits to employees and local people who will also be able to make use of the footpaths within the site.

The attenuation ponds will be designed to slowly release water at rates which are intended to reduce downstream flood risk by limiting the maximum rate at which they discharge to the existing average greenfield runoff rate. This will have the benefit of providing significant betterment for more extreme storms, as well as providing resilience against the predicted impacts of climate change. Runoff will be provided with appropriate treatment to ensure that all pollutants and contaminants are removed prior to discharge and where necessary oil separators and silt traps will be installed to serve higher risk areas for each unit.





Existing Watercourse - SRFI Site



Emerging On-Site Drainage Strategy

Ecology

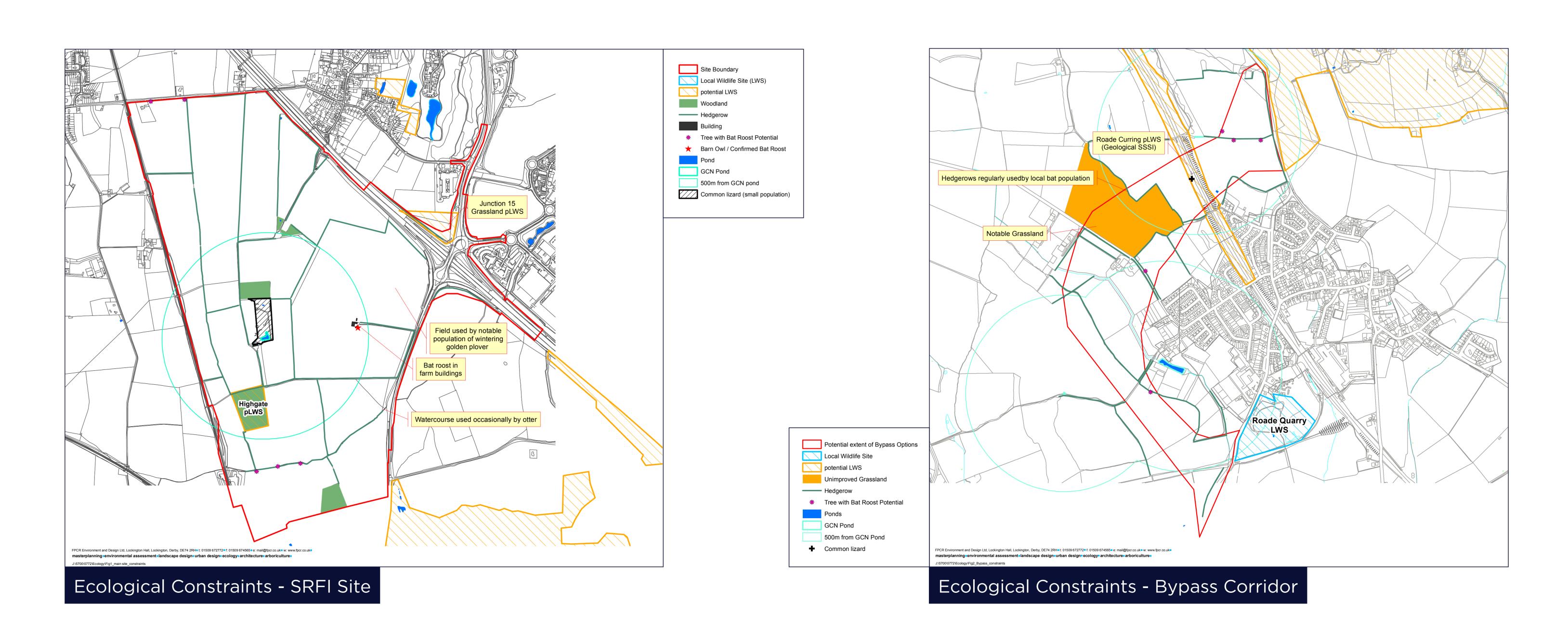
A full suite of ecological surveys are nearing completion, updating the data gathered from surveys undertaken in 2014 on the SRFI site. The results from the previous and new surveys are informing the emerging proposals with regard to both protection of any key existing habitats of importance, and provision of new or replacement habitats on site. Further afield (approximately 5.5km to the north-west) is the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/SSSI, and any potential effects on that designated site are also being assessed.

The survey data shows that the site is dominated by arable fields of low ecological value or interest. However, there are some areas which contain specific features or habitats of ecological interest, and the SRFI site includes a potential Local Wildlife Site (pLWS) at Highgate wood, and another (Junction 15 pLWS) at the eastern boundary. There is also a network of native hedgerows and a number of mature trees, as well as a brook in the southern part of the SRFI site.

A number of notable species are known to either be present on-site, or to use parts of the site. These include badgers, bats, great crested newts in a single pond on-site, common lizard and farmland birds, such as over-wintering golden plover.

The proposed Roade Bypass corridors include areas of grassland and a watercourse with ponds close by, as well as boundary hedges and trees. A number of surveys are underway or planned, including surveys for great crested newts, reptiles, badgers, birds, bats and invertebrates. The route of the bypass corridor includes the Roade Cutting pLWS (which corresponds to the boundary of the Roade Cutting SSSI geological site).

While the survey data is not yet complete, based on the surveys undertaken to date, the evidence suggests that the majority of residual impacts of the proposals on ecological features are likely to be low. Indeed, through the additional habitat creation, including grassland, woodland and wetland features, there is likely to be a net gain in biodiversity in line with the aims of planning policy.

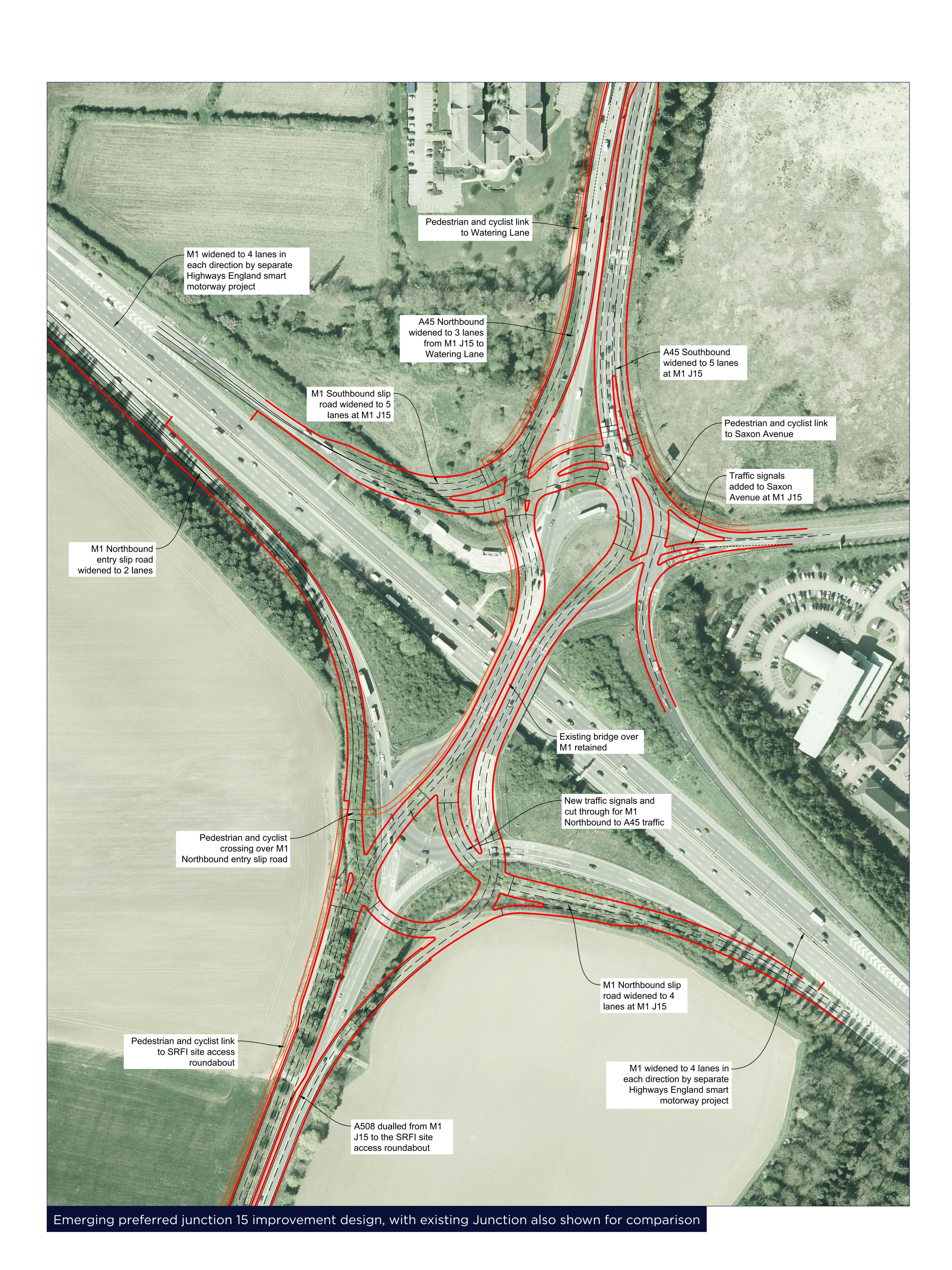




10. Highways and Transport







The Proposed Development is in a highly accessible location, adjacent to Junction 15 of the M1. The site is located 6km from Northampton town centre, and is within a few hundred metres of existing major employment and residential development on the southern side of Northampton, including Grange Park and the recently approved Sustainable Urban Extension at Collingtree to the north of the M1.

Junction 15

The existing layout of Junction 15 is widely recognised as being poor due to constrained geometry and high demand. It is often very heavily congested, particularly at peak times. The development proposals would deliver a significant enlargement and reconfiguration of Junction 15 which provides greatly improved capacity to minimise journey times. The emerging improvement scheme is likely to cost around £6m.

M1 Junction 15 is currently around 27% over capacity during the morning and evening peak hour periods, with long queues forming on the A45 and A508. Highways England, as part of their M1/A45 Northampton Growth Management Scheme (NGMS), have identified a small improvement scheme for Junction 15. The scheme could potentially provide a capacity improvement of around 9% at the junction. However, this would still leave the junction some 18% over capacity and Highways England have advised that there is no certainty when an improvement at Junction 15 would be delivered, as other NGMS junctions have been identified as priorities.

The design of the improvements are not yet finalised, but the plan on this board shows the emerging preferred design. Improved routes for pedestrians and cyclists will be included.

The new layout would greatly reduce congestion and delays at this junction, with benefits not only for traffic and employees accessing the development, but also for other road-users at Junction 15.

We are working with Highways England and Northamptonshire County Council to agree the new layout, and it will be designed to complement the Smart Motorway proposals for M1 Junctions 13 to 16, which are proposed to be constructed around 2019/2020.

The emerging preferred design provides a significant enlargement and reconfiguration of Junction 15. Initial modelling indicates that such an improvement would satisfactorily accommodate the development traffic and would provide around 30% improvement in capacity at the junction across the morning and evening peak hours, with a corresponding reduction in queueing and in journey times.

The new layout would therefore greatly reduce congestion and delays at this junction, with benefits not only for traffic and employees accessing the development, but also for other road-users at Junction 15.

Key Points:

- Junction 15 currently operates at 27% over capacity at peak times;
- The proposed improvement scheme will cost around £6 million;
- Junction capacity will increase by around 30 to 35%.

11. Highways and Transport





A508 Roade Bypass

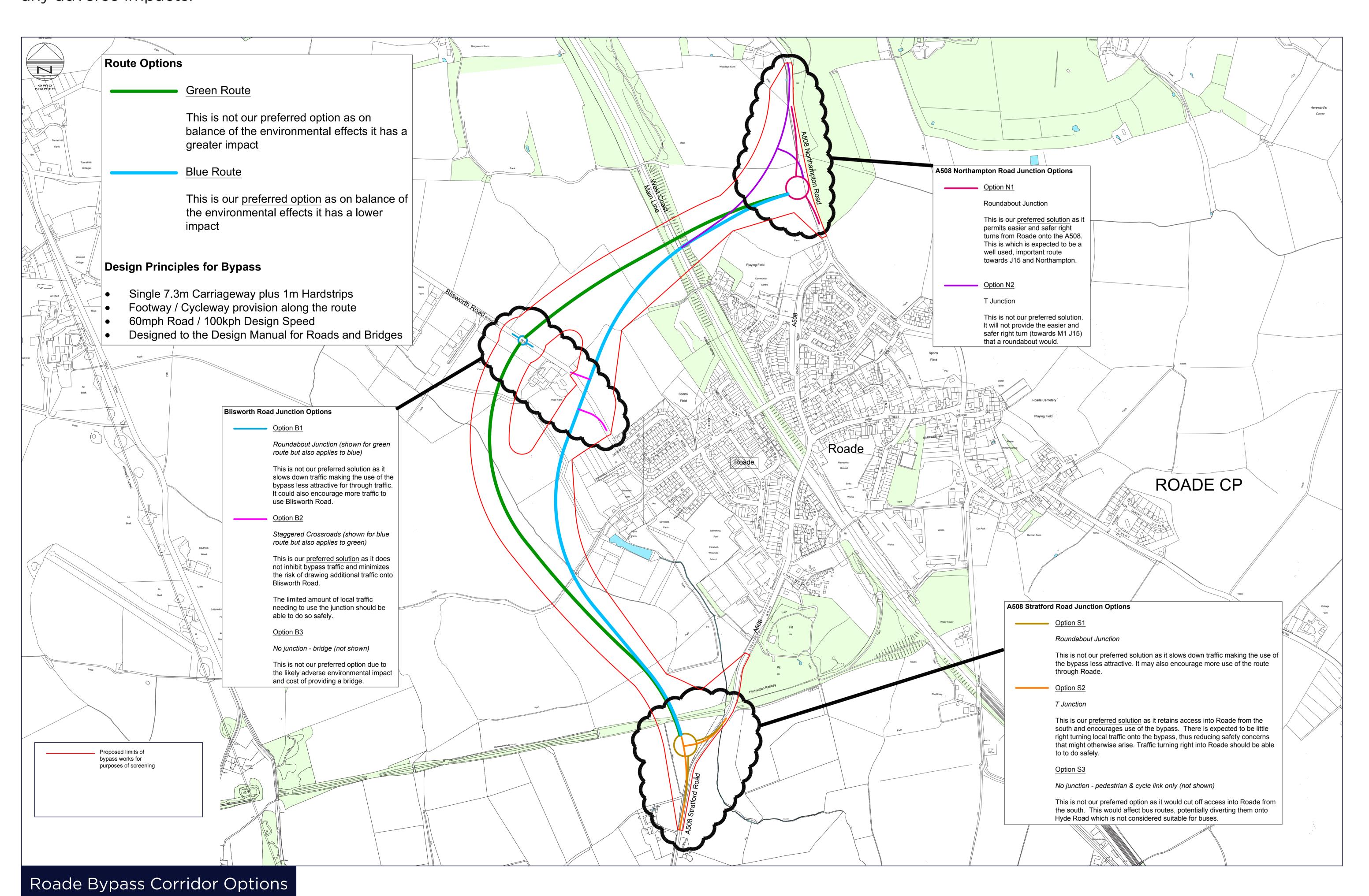
The proposals include provision of a new Roade Bypass to take through traffic out of the village centre. This would deliver a range of transport and environmental benefits, including with regard to local air quality, noise, and reduced congestion.

The proposal is for a 60mph single carriageway road, with foot and cycle provision along the length of the route, with tree planting and general landscaping.

The route of the Bypass has not yet been decided, and we are keen to understand local views and comments about the two routes shown. At present our preferred route is the Blue route as that has fewer environmental effects and has a more direct relationship with the village. We are very keen to hear the views and preferences of local people about the principle of a bypass, and also about the potential route options.

We have looked at the possibility of an eastern Bypass, but this would be much longer than routes to the west, would be less likely to remove traffic from the village and would have a greater negative impact on the environment.

We are also keen to understand any local ideas regarding the type and position of junctions with existing roads – in particular with Blisworth Road. We are aware of concerns that by connecting Blisworth Road to the Bypass the proposals may increase 'rat-running' through Blisworth. This will be examined in detail as part of the transport modelling work that is being undertaken using Northamptonshire County Council's traffic model, and we will consider appropriate solutions to minimise any adverse impacts.



Public Transport Strategy

New bus stops on the A508 close to the proposed access to the site would provide the opportunity for other services to serve development, including the X4, X7 and 33, all of which serve Milton Keynes.

Public transport will play an important role in providing access for staff coming to the site. The exact routes and any necessary supporting infrastructure will be determined as detailed work and consultation progress.

Discussions with the local bus operator suggest that two new routes might be introduced to serve the site and drop-off/pick up workers close the entrances of the various units:

- An extension of the existing service number 7, linking the site to Grange Park, Northampton town centre and Moulton Park
- A new route serving other areas of Northampton to maximise the potential catchment for workers to travel by bus.

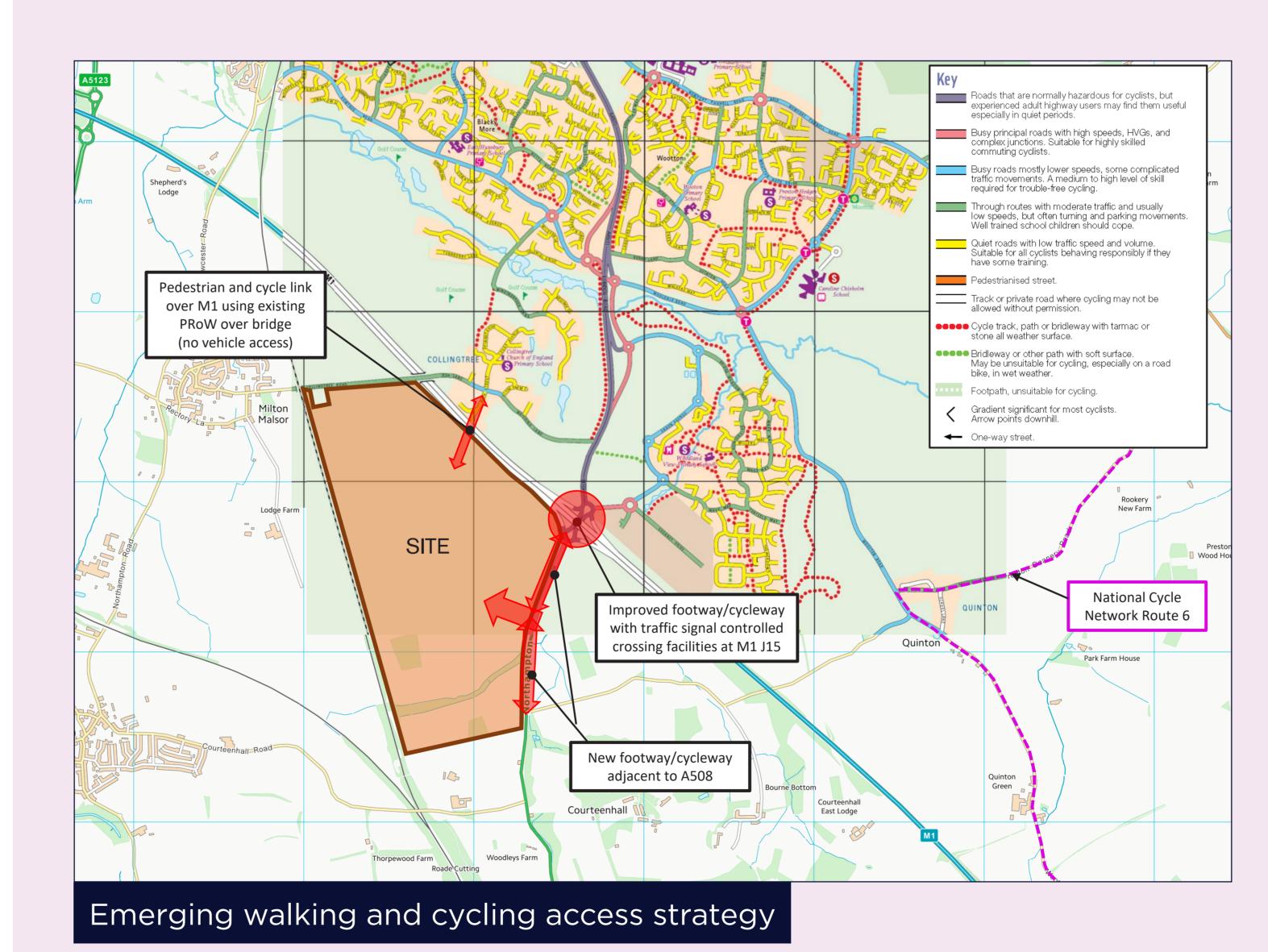
Services would be timed to be consistent with core shift patterns, with layover facilities provided to allow the service to drop off passengers before the start of the shift and then pick up passengers finishing their shift.

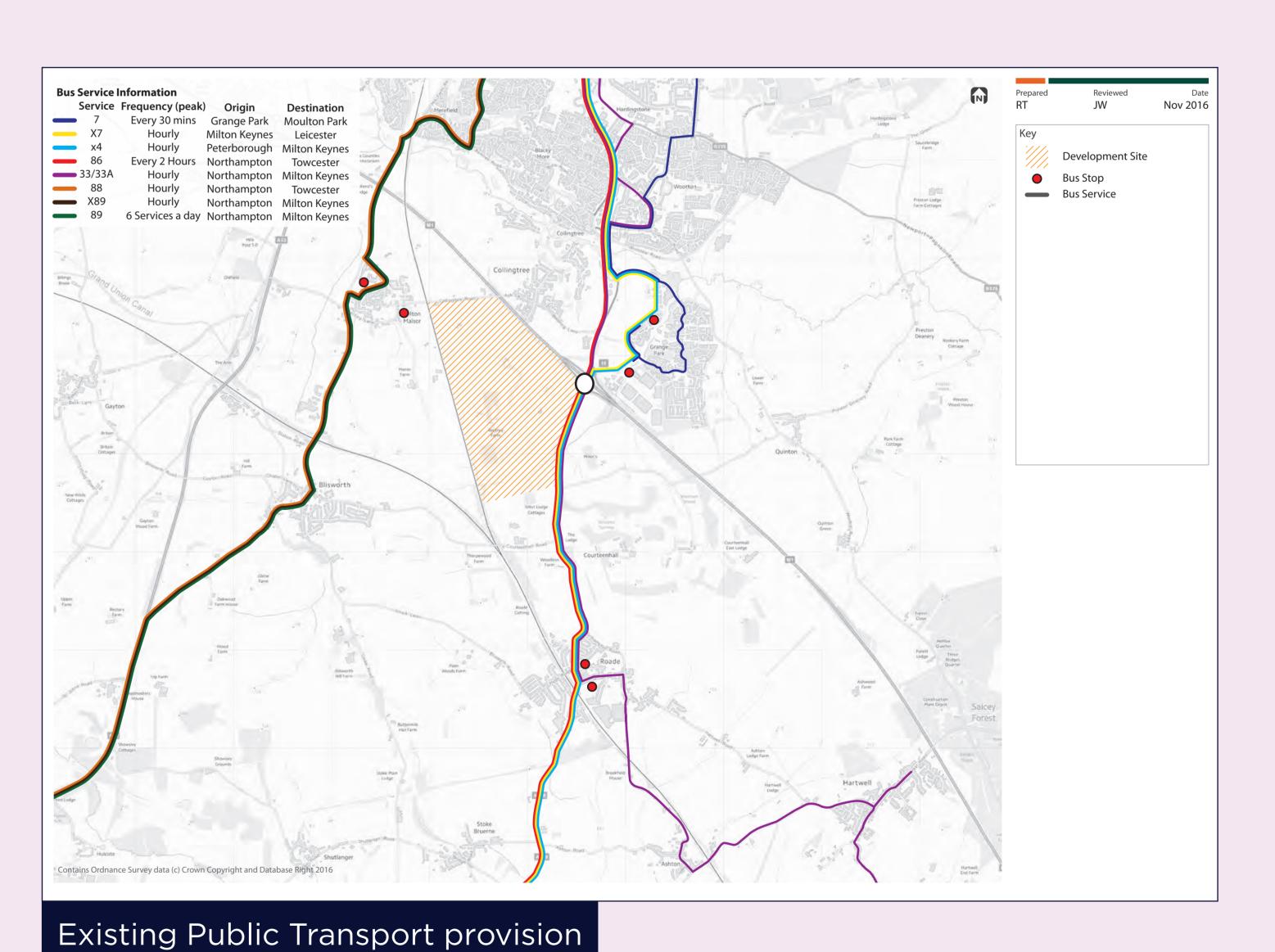
Cycling, walking, the use of public transport and car sharing would all be promoted through a bespoke site Travel Plan.

Walking and Cycling

Public Rights of Way KX17 and KX13 that cross the site would be diverted and extended to form a loop within the landscape bunding. Part of the diverted routes would be upgraded to provide a shared footway/cycleway connecting the development to Collingtree, and the wider Northampton area, via the existing bridge over the M1.

The existing footway/cycleway facilities at M1 Junction 15 would be improved and traffic signal controlled crossings provided at all crossing points. A new shared footway/cycleway would be provided adjacent to the A508, connecting Junction 15 to the new site access roundabout, and down to the junction with the unnamed road to Quinton, from where access to National Cycle Network Route 6 is available.



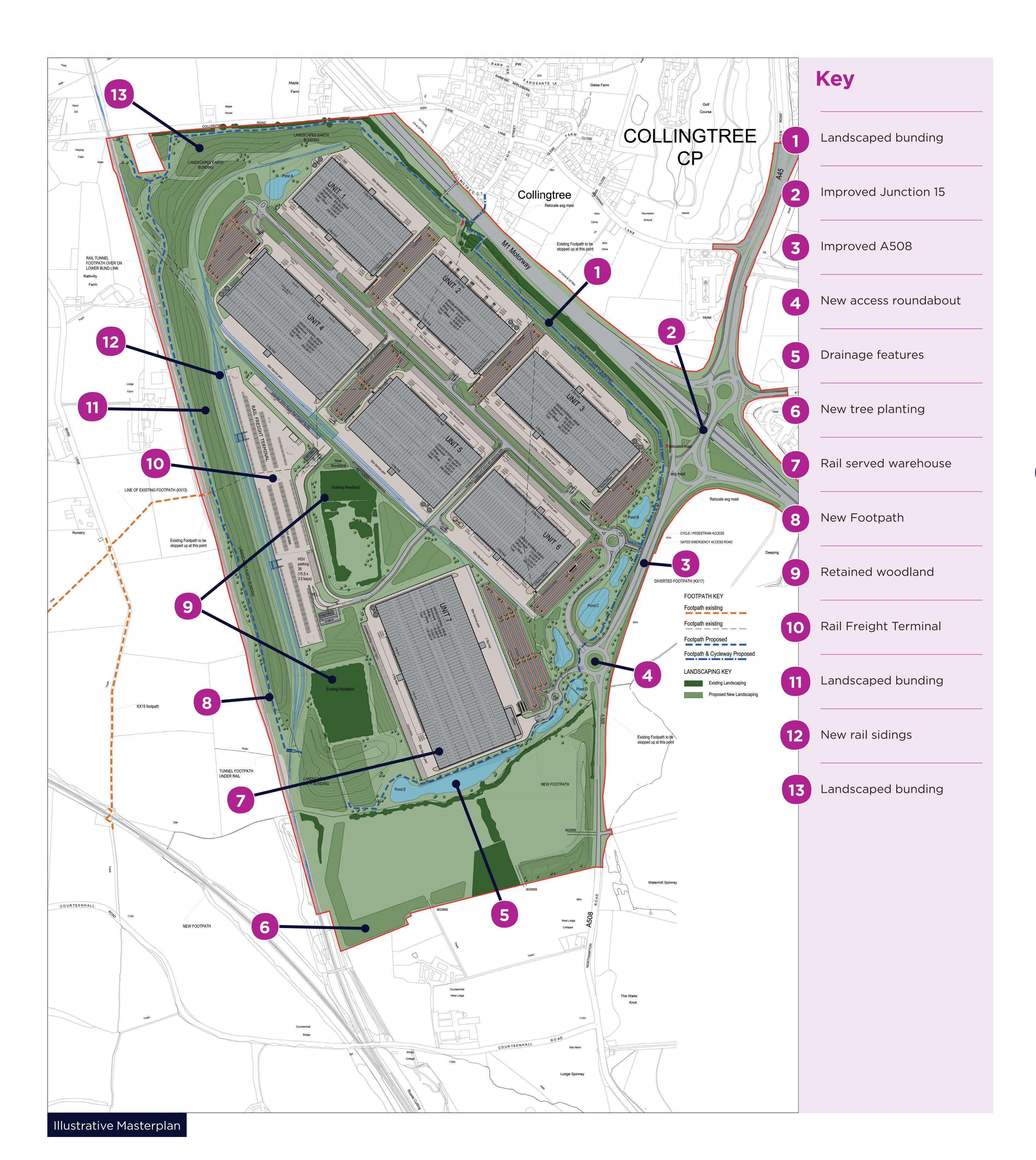


ROXHILL

12. Ongoing process and timescale







As shown below, the Northampton Gateway is at an early stage in the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) process. This consultation exhibition forms part of a first stage of community consultation, and will feed into the range of ongoing technical work which is referred to and described in the information presented today. An important part of this pre-application stage is receiving input from local people as well as a range of statutory and other consultees and bodies.

A second, statutory consultation stage is being planned for 2017 by which time we will have progressed with the ongoing Environmental Impact Assessment, and will be able to consult on our conclusions regarding likely effects of the proposals. That will include a fuller picture of the highways impacts of the proposals, including the Junction 15 improvements and Roade Bypass. On completion of the transport modelling we will also be able to undertake the detailed air quality and noise assessments.

At present we do not know when the final application will be formally submitted to the Planning Inspectorate, but expect this to be during the second half of 2017.

There is a defined process and timetable for the later stages of the process which is led by the Planning Inspectorate - this is set out below.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS: THE SIX STEPS

