

3.4 Ground conditions

3.4.1

The existing indicative limit of the flood plain is indicated in Figure 3.4, as advised by the Environment Agency. It distinguishes between areas classified as flood zone 3 (high risk area) and flood zone 2 (medium risk area). Also shown is the potential reduced flood plain area once flood alleviation measures have been introduced to the Ise Valley. This is purely indicative and Environment Agency consent will be required to any proposed development within the floodplain area.

3.4.2

The northern extremities of the site fall within an area previously worked for ironstone. Beyond the site limits, the eastern edge of the existing town has also been constructed on former clay pits.

3.4.3

A preliminary assessment of contamination risk has been prepared by MLM Consulting Engineers, based on historic records of previous land uses¹. Certain industrial uses and processes, such as gas production, tanning and iron smelting can leave a legacy of ground contamination. The level of contamination, whether mild or severe, can influence the ultimate land use of a site and can, in severe cases, for example, preclude residential development in favour of less sensitive employment uses. At this stage, the assessment has been a desktop exercise only and no testing has, as yet, been undertaken.

3.4.4

There are three areas identified on the Station Island site as having a potential risk of contamination:

- the railway sidings;
- two former industrial sites, including the former gas works;
- railway-related land at the site's southernmost tip.

3.4.5

The risk of contamination does not necessarily imply a confirmed incidence of contamination. These preliminary findings will, in due course, be subject to detailed on-site assessment.

3.4.6

No assessment has been undertaken at this stage of the site's geology and soils.

3.4.7

Northamptonshire Sites and Monuments Record details 72046/264 (the former gas works) or 6282/1 (Midland Road maltings). Whilst there is no current known evidence of significant archaeological remains, applicants will need

to follow normal archaeological investigation procedures, as set out in PPG 16.

3.4.8

As described in Chapters 4 and 5, further investigations will need to be undertaken prior to any future development and an appropriate strategy regarding remediation and foundation works agreed with the relevant authorities.

3.5 Buildings of architectural or historic interest

3.5.1

The two existing railway station buildings (main station building and goods shed) are Grade II Listed. Both date back to 1857.

3.5.2

The main station building is an attractive, modest structure built of red brick with yellow and blue dressings and slate roof.

3.5.3

The goods shed south of this is built of the same materials and remains unused. Its restoration and conversion to an alternative appropriate use is strongly encouraged. This single volume space, complete with an attractive wooden roof structure and cast iron columns, and still containing two hand cranes, would suit a variety of purposes.

3.5.4

The curtilage of the listed buildings is identified in Figure 3.4. All development proposals within this curtilage require sensitive treatment to respect their character and setting. A comprehensive assessment of the impact of the listed buildings, and their setting, will need to accompany development proposals. Any alterations to the listed buildings will require listed building consent.

3.5.5

The locomotive shed north of Mill Road also has architectural and historic interest and as such its retention and conversion to an appropriate alternative use is encouraged.

¹ This engineering analysis and the information on which it was based was prepared by a third party and has been donated to the Borough Council of Wellingborough for the purposes of informing the strategic WEAST master planning process only. It is copyright material and should not be used or relied upon by anyone other than the person for whom it was prepared. The information is included in the development brief on the understanding that no claims or liability for any loss or damages as a result of its publication in the master plan will be accepted by its authors, by those that commissioned its production by the authors or by those who agreed to permit its publication in the development brief documents. The information has been based on strategic studies and is not considered suitable to support development at specific sites within the master planning area. Those contemplating development of specific sites or otherwise seeking to use the information published cannot rely on the information included in the development brief and must carry out their own detailed investigations and engineering analysis.

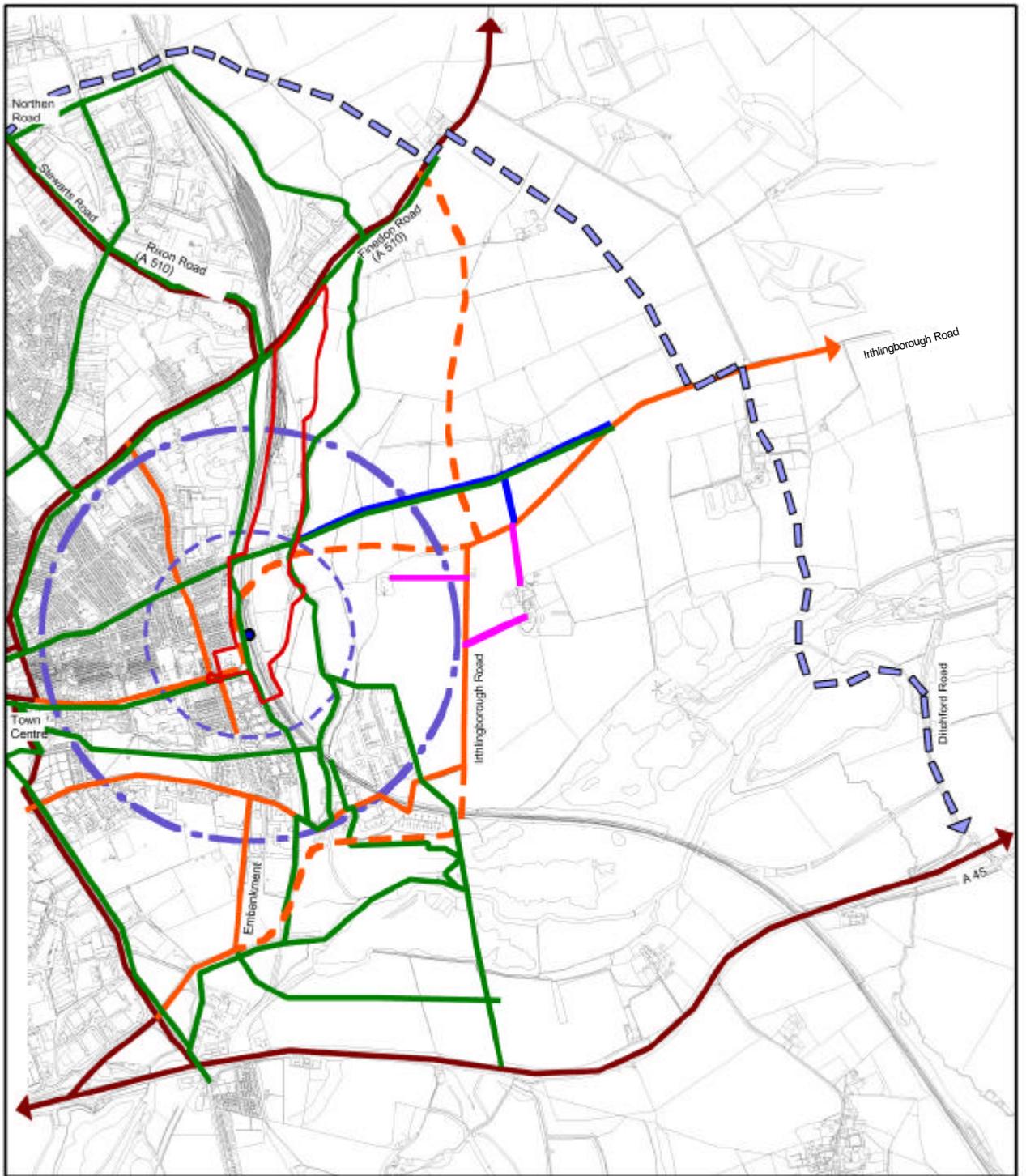


Figure 3.5 Movement network

3.6 Transport

Surrounding movement network

3.6.1

Figure 3.5 illustrates the movement network within which the site is located.

3.6.2

Finedon Road defines the site's northern boundary and is a major arterial. At present it carries significant levels of the town's through-traffic - linking northwards to the A6 and southwards to Wellingborough Town Centre and beyond to the A45 / M1.

3.6.3

The Eastern Relief Road proposed as part of the wider Wellingborough East plans is intended to significantly reduce the amount of through-traffic and the conflicts and congestion that this creates within the core of the existing town. As indicated in Figure 3.5, this will extend from Northen Way, through Finedon Road Industrial Estate and over the railway lines to connect with Finedon Road. From here it will skirt around the eastern periphery of the proposed development to link with Ditchford Road and onwards to the A45.

3.6.4

Also shown is the proposed extension to Midland Road, which is set to serve a major strategic role as Wellingborough East's principal east-west link, but will also open up local access to the Station Island site. This new link will be achieved via a bridge that will extend from Midland Road across the Ise Valley north of the railway station, to link with the new Neighbourhood Centre (see Chapter 4).

3.6.5

The southern link extending from Midland Road to the A45 and A509 via Senwick Road and The Embankment (B573) also provides an important strategic role in offering the most direct means of access between Station Island (south) and the wider highway network.

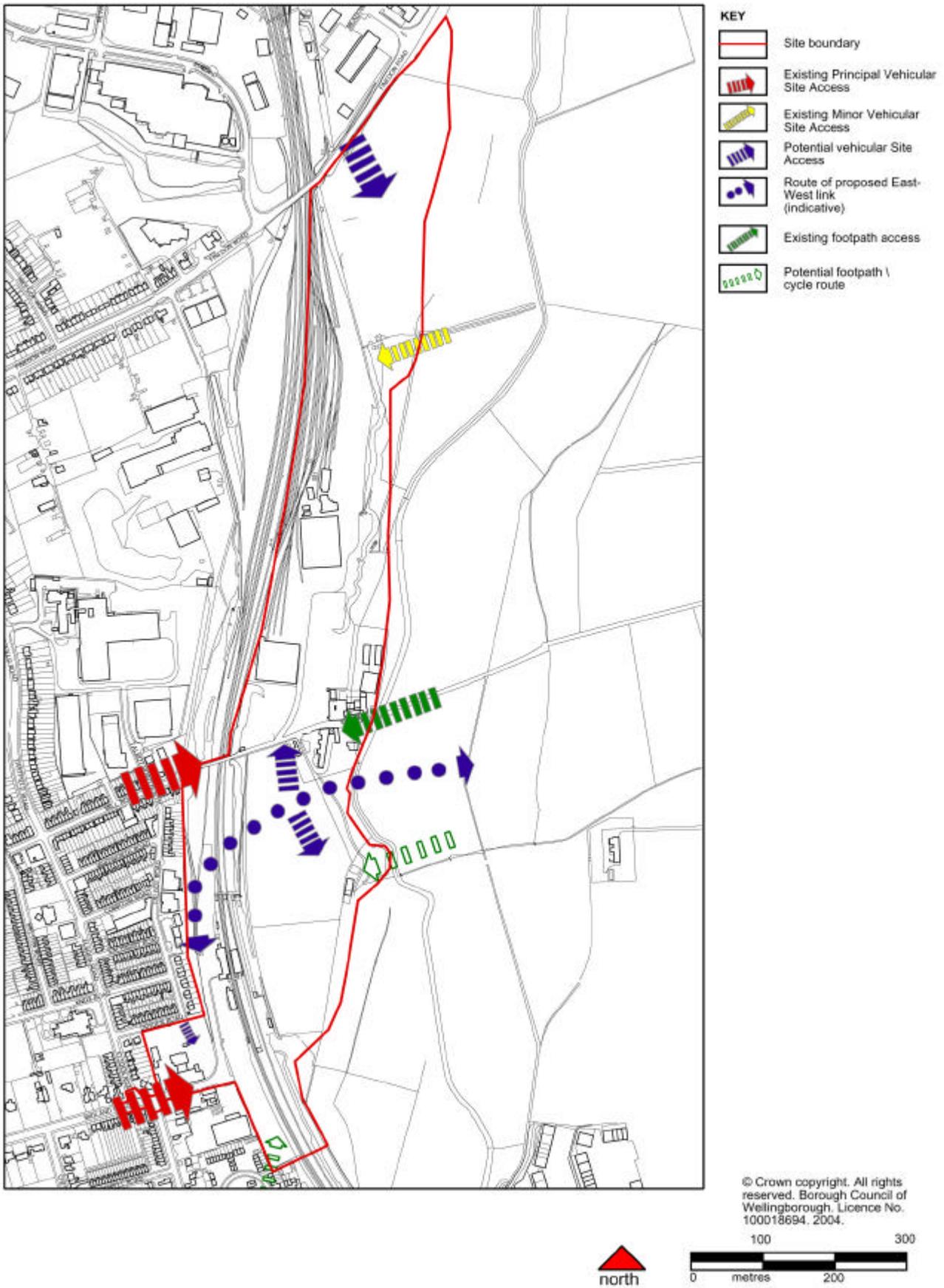


Figure 3.6 Site access

Site access

3.6.6

Access opportunities into the site are shown in Figure 3.6. The principal existing vehicular site access points comprise:

- Midland Road, which at present ends in a cul-de-sac at the railway station; and
- Mill Road, which is presently used as a means of access to the Mill Road Industrial Estate and Riverside in the valley bottom, and footpath beyond. However, both Mill Road itself and the railway bridge in particular are extremely narrow. Passing HGVs conflict with pedestrians walking over the railway bridge and as they route through Mill Road, with its informal on-street parking. In the wider Wellingborough East plan, the Mill Road crossing will figure prominently as a direct link between WEAST and the existing town, though it is envisaged to provide footpath, cycle and potentially small-scale shuttle bus access only.

3.6.7

An existing minor point of access to the northeast linking to a private trackway could also possibly be exploited.

3.6.8

Existing additional potential vehicular access points are provided:

- to the north off Finedon Road;
- via new local streets branching off from the new east-west link; and
- to the rear of the former Higgins' Builders Yard off Dryden Road.

3.6.9

Additional pedestrian access is provided via:

- the existing footpath extending from the east to Mill Road;
- the existing footpath linking along the railway embankment slope from Mill Road, west of the railway bridge, to the railway station - to be upgraded as part of the new bridge proposals; and
- a potential new footpath and cycleway to provide a direct point of connection between a new pedestrian and cycle bridge close to the railway station and the new Neighbourhood Centre.