

Swindon Borough Council
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
SWINDON CENTRAL AREA ACTION PLAN
POSITION STATEMENT No SBC01b

STRATEGIC POLICY ISSUES [1]

Strategic policy issues and matters to be examined:

The Canal (Policy 4)

- Is the proposal to reinstate the canal through Central Swindon sufficiently advanced to be included in the CAAP? Will safeguarding an area of search for the canal basin prejudice, restrict or delay the regeneration of sites affected by this designation and result in blight? What is the appropriate period to review progress on the detailed design scheme and implementation plan? How will progress be monitored? What will trigger a decision to delay or abandon the proposal? If the scheme does not come forward in the timescale envisaged, what effect will this have on other developments in Central Swindon? [7, 8, 9]

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Context

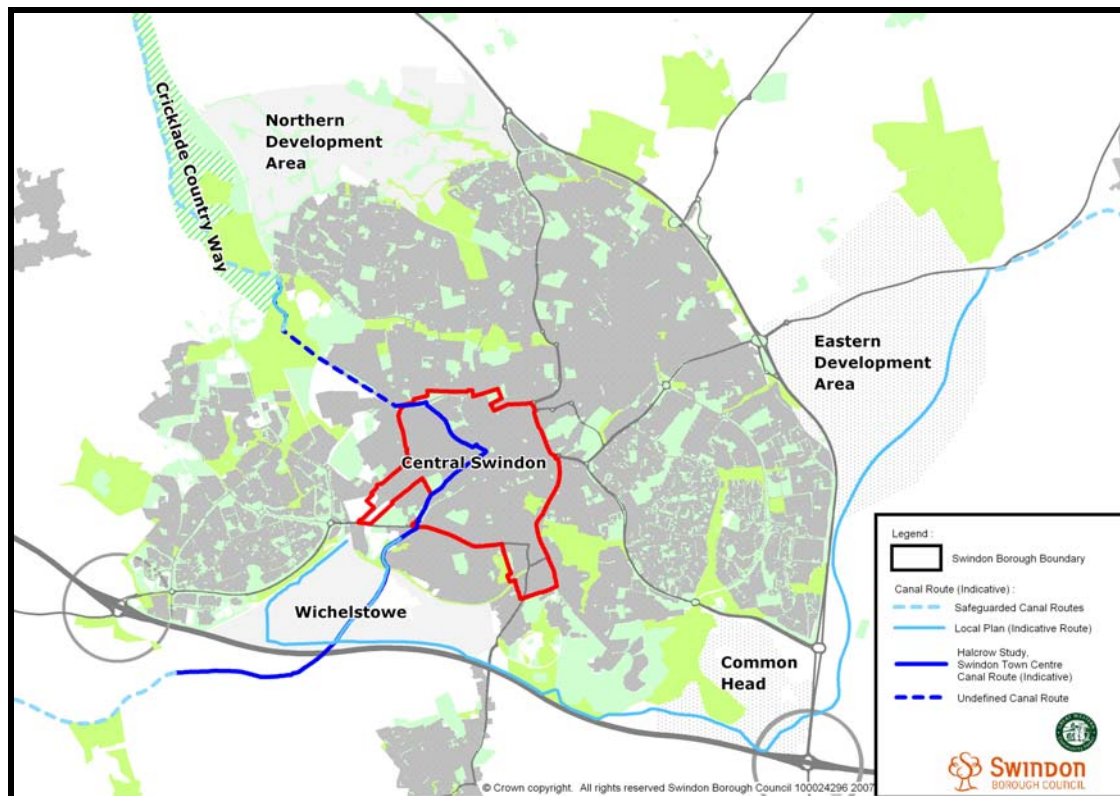
The Central Area Action Plan safeguards land for a canal into the centre of the town on a route which maximizes the profile and benefits of the canal and forms a focal point for the town to encourage maximum use of this asset. The route is essential to link two historic alignments of the wider canal network. The CAAP also identifies a location for a canal basin in a Town Centre location that would allow the area to be enhanced through the waterside development opportunities that would be created.

Paragraph 12 of PPG13 (CD308) states that Local authorities should work with all those concerned in the inland waterways industry - British Waterways and other navigation authorities, private operators and the voluntary sector concerned with restoring currently disused waterways - to develop the potential of inland waterways. Paragraph 13 goes on to state that local authorities should identify and where appropriate protect disused waterways (by allocating the land in development plans and ensuring sites and routes are not severed by new development or transport infrastructure) where there is a reasonable degree of certainty of a restoration.

Why have a Canal?

The Wilts and Berks Canal (including the North Wilts Canal) forms an important link within the waterways system to the Kennet and Avon Canal, Thames and Severn Canal and the River Thames. Significantly, the Government Waterways Advisory Body - the Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council has re-classified the status of the Wilts and Berks canal to a nationally important scheme and is now in the top twenty projects. "British Waterways in Waterways 2025: Our Vision for the Shape of the Waterway Network" includes the Wilts & Berks canal as a nationally significant restoration project that British Waterways will support. The Kennet and Avon Canal underwent major restoration and regeneration and re-opened in 1990. The Thames and Severn Canal is currently under restoration and the regeneration of the Cotswold Canals would ultimately link the Thames and Severn rivers.

The Council aspires to recreate the canal through the Borough with the aim of linking the Wilts and Berks Canal to the North Wilts Canal.



The Proposed Route

The Wilts and Berks Canal runs from the Kennet and Avon Canal at Semington and would enter the Borough from North Wiltshire to the south of the M4. A stretch of the canal route at Wootton Bassett (just to the south of the M4) has recently been restored. The route would then pass beneath the M4 into the 'Wichelstowe' development area (Wichelstowe is an urban extension to the south of Swindon which benefits from outline planning consent (S/02/2000MWT) for 4, 500 dwellings, other development and associated infrastructure). The Wichelstowe development is committed to delivering the stretch of the canal that lies within the development area.

The canal route through Wichelstowe would meet up with a section of restored canal at Kingshill. From Kingshill, a lock would lower the canal sufficiently to allow boats to pass under Kingshill Road. The canal would then travel north-eastwards through Central Swindon and run along Westcott Place, Faringdon Road and Fleet Street before turning north and traveling under the Bristol to London main railway line, through North Star, under the Bridge Street Bridges Roundabout, along the Swindon to Gloucester line before joining up with the planned North Wilts Canal route at Mouldon Hill.

At Mouldon Hill, the canal would then travel along a route that coincides with the 'Cricklade Country Way'. The Cricklade Country Way project aims to create a green recreational and wildlife corridor linking Swindon to Cricklade and the Cotswold Water Park.

The Halcrow Feasibility Study

The Council commissioned Halcrow to undertake a comprehensive canal feasibility study into the preferred canal route through Central Swindon. The Swindon Central Canal Route Study (August 2007) (CD125) investigated the opportunities for reinstating a canal into the centre of the town along the route safeguarded in the CAAP.

This feasibility study considered a range of challenges, including water supply, transport and engineering issues on the proposed canal from Kingshill through to Fleet Street.

Benefits of the Canal

The canal will deliver many positives to Central Swindon, including tourism, regeneration, biodiversity and health & wellbeing benefits. The benefits of canals were well summed up by Rt Hon Alun Michael MP, Waterways Minister (DEFRA), at The Waterways Renaissance Awards 2005:

“The regeneration of our waterways has gained such momentum that it is hard to think back to the time only a couple of years ago when canals were widely considered a liability rather than the asset we now know them to be. Reviving our waterways has transformed the environment, created business opportunities, and injected new life into areas which were once forgotten.”

“The waterways now provide a powerful focus for people - and in particular for communities. In both urban and rural areas our waterways have enormous potential as catalysts for bringing people together and making things happen.”

Waterways are recognised for the value they add to developments and their role as catalysts for development. Schemes to enhance waterways and the public's experience of waterways gain even more value by the development of sustainable and inclusive communities.

Canals bring with them diversity, beauty, history and natural environment which contribute to the well-being of individuals and society and raise quality of life. Positive effects on health and psychological well-being are well documented and evidence suggests that simply being near to water makes people more content and relaxed. The Swindon Primary Care Trust Delivery Plan's objectives focus on reducing stress and improving well-being and the canal provides an opportunity to enhance the overall well-being of communities.

Canals involve people and are inclusive - they underlie sustainable communities by creating public enjoyment, sense of ownership and community involvement. They provide opportunities to build partnerships between the public, private and voluntary sectors within the community through consensus and commitment.

Canals provide a leisure and amenity resource of great impact. Swindon's Economic and Development Vision and Framework incorporates projects within the Economic Development Block of the Local Area Agreement that 'we

will establish Swindon as a national destination for cultural and leisure events.’ The re-creation of a fully functioning canal network through Swindon Borough would improve Central Swindon as a tourist destination and create a unique leisure and amenity resource for walkers, anglers, cyclists, boaters, restaurant boats and an array of other uses including community events. Canals further provide access to disabled visitors who also benefit from the resource.

The canal and canal basin will bring an extra dimension to the regeneration of Central Swindon. The opportunities that it will provide for delivering a highly distinctive and potentially spectacular new development in the upper Bridge Street / Fleet Street area, will enhance the character and perception of the whole of Central Swindon.

The proposed route of the canal will co-coincide with, and provide an excellent accompaniment to, the route of the “Green Spine” as it travels through North Star. (The Green Spine is a key north-south route, which will link North Star with Old Town via the Town Centre and Victoria Road), by providing a linking corridor from West Swindon).

The proposed route of the canal through Central Swindon runs along the southern boundary of the Great Western Railway Conservation Area. The proposed canal route south of the railway will help to better link the Town Centre with the Railway Heritage Area, and will also provide a means for Central Swindon’s residents to access the countryside to the south of Swindon along a safe and pleasant green route. This route can become a strategic cycling and walking route that can ultimately become a greatly valued new Green Corridor from the centre of Swindon into the countryside.

Canals together with adjacent towpaths would create opportunities to conserve, extend and create habitats to enhance biodiversity and create a further green corridor within Swindon providing greenway linkages.

Canals provide valuable opportunities for community education on a number of levels - from school groups studying the biodiversity of the canal environs, visitors exploring adjacent historic areas (as proposed with the canal through Central Swindon running along the southern boundary of the Railway Village Conservation Area) to learning the finer skills of boating.

Central Swindon is undergoing major regeneration within the Central Area to create a high quality urban environment through sustainable development, to fulfil its role as a ‘Strategically Significant Town’ within the South West Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). Reinstating a canal into the centre of the town on a route which maximizes the profile and benefits of the canal would form a focal point for the town to encourage maximum use of this asset within area regeneration.

The economic benefits of canal restoration are widely recognized. Studies following the completion of the Kennet and Avon Canal restoration show significant economic benefits from visitor spend and investment in waterside

developments. At Page 91, the Swindon Central Canal Route Study estimates that a canal through Central Swindon would generate a direct retained income to the Swindon economy of £6,881,708 per annum (based on 2007 figures). Direct economic benefits from tourism and recreational use would be generated through boats and equipment, marinas, shops, pubs and restaurants and special events amongst others such as licence fees, mooring, and other income through wayleaves and freight.

Canal restoration and regeneration would sustain livelihoods and create employment. The Kennet and Avon Canal has seen the generation of 385 additional leisure and tourism jobs in addition to the 700 jobs safeguarded. Indirect economic impacts would be seen from area regeneration through improved residential property values, markets created for retail and marketing and faster sell-on of offices within the canal environs. Studies on other restoration projects such as the Kennet and Avon Canal restoration, Birmingham Waterfront and Llangollen Mooring Basin have found that waterside properties command an average premium of 15 to 20% compared to similar properties away from the water.

Premises such as restaurants and hotels, that aim to create an attractive environment for the visiting public, are particularly likely to benefit. Another source of potential uplift arises from the ability to increase the density of properties in waterfront locations and hence lead to a more efficient and effective use of land in accordance with PPS3 paragraph 10, 14, 16 and 45-51.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004 encourages the development of plans and strategies, with emphasis on the importance of improving the environment and quality of life. In particular, Local Authorities have been encouraged to embrace Green Infrastructure (GI) planning. The Council is currently working on a Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and the canal would play an important role within the Borough's Green Infrastructure providing multi-functional uses, i.e. wildlife, recreational and cultural experiences as well as flood protection and microclimate control. It would also operate at all spatial scales, from the town centre through to the open countryside.

Through a comprehensive approach to the design of both the canal and the adjoining public realm improvements, the profile of the Railway Heritage Area would be improved by highlighting the area's historic and cultural legacy. A canal along the proposed route would provide the opportunity to create a worthy 21st Century contribution to Brunel's legacy by raising the profile of the Railway Heritage Area.

For all of these reasons, the safeguarding of a canal route through Central Swindon is integral to our strategy of delivering holistic regeneration.

Responses to Issues and Matters Raised by the Inspector

Is the proposal to reinstate the canal through Central Swindon sufficiently advanced to be included in the CAAP? [7,8,9]

The proposed route has been agreed between the Council and the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust. Only a very minor length of the canal route has yet to be confirmed (the route through Shire Court). Details of the exact location of the canal basin has also yet to be finally agreed - the basin is discussed later in this statement.

The safeguarding of the canal route as identified in the Central Area Action Plan Submission Paper will be an important stage in achieving the wider aims of linking the Wilts & Berks Canal with the North Wilts Canal. Whole historic alignments are safeguarded in the adopted Local Plan (CD101).

The Council commissioned Halcrow to undertake a Feasibility Study (CD125) into the proposed route. The Study comprises the key evidence base informing the safeguarding of the canal. The Study focussed on the stretch of the canal to the south of the railway line (Kingshill – Fleet Street). This is the stretch of the safeguarded route that will pose most challenges. The Halcrow Feasibility Study (CD125) considers the key issues associated with the construction of a canal along the safeguarded route (water quality, flood risk, impacts on the transport network, highway issues, environmental impacts, urban design issues, health & safety, finance and geotechnical issues). The Study, which was both comprehensive and objective, concluded at Page 88 that “the introduction of a narrow beam canal into the centre of Swindon is technically possible on the proposed route from Kingshill to Fleet Street via Westcott Place and Faringdon Road”. The Inspector is advised that Halcrow would be available to respond to any technical questions on the Study at the Hearing on the Council’s behalf.

Its feasibility having been positively determined, the next stage in making the canal a reality is safeguarding the canal route in the Council’s Development Plan. The Council are therefore safeguarding the canal route through the Central Area Action Plan (for the Central Swindon stretch), and through the Swindon Borough Core Strategy – currently at Preferred Options Draft stage (CD20) - (for the canal route through the wider Swindon Borough area). This is a necessary step in progressing the canal. Once the route has been secured through the Development Plan, the Council can then proceed to progress the detailed design for the scheme and to finalise the canal funding strategy. The safeguarding of the canal route in the Development Plan will be a vital component of the Council’s strategy to secure external sources of funding to deliver the canal. This concept is not new. The adopted Local Plan safeguards a ‘new’ canal route to the east of Swindon, linking the Commonhead development to the historic alignment at Acorn Bridges to the east.

Its feasibility having been established, the safeguarding of the canal in the Development Plan is the next logical step in the process of delivering a canal route through Swindon, which will ultimately link the Wilts and Berks Canal

and the North Wilts Canal, and which will deliver many benefits to Swindon. If the final CAAP fails to confirm the safeguarding of the canal, Swindon's bold vision for delivering a water course through the centre of Swindon would collapse.

The Inspector is advised that the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust would be available to attend the Hearing on the Council's behalf to provide an overview of the wider Wilts and Berks canal restoration and to explain the strategic importance of the route through Swindon the restoration of the canal network. An overview of the Wilts and Berks canal restoration project is provided at Appendix 1.

Will safeguarding an area of search for the canal basin prejudice, restrict or delay the regeneration of sites affected by this designation and result in blight? [7,8,9]

The Central Area Action Plan identifies 'an area of search' for the canal basin within the Fleet Street/Upper Bridge Street area. This area is currently home to a number of unattractive buildings and in recent years has been dominated by bars and clubs, becoming a crime hot spot. A canal basin in this area would bring regeneration and create waterside development opportunities that would bring benefits such as crime reduction. Furthermore, the construction of a canal basin within Central Swindon will be important to the success of the canal.

The area of search approach adopted will provide significant flexibility (Soundness Test 9) in bringing forward the regeneration of the upper Bridge Street / Fleet Street area. A Master Plan for the upper Bridge Street / Fleet Street area is being progressed. This pro-active approach by the Council will not restrict or delay new development in the area. On the contrary it will help bring forward the much-needed redevelopment of the area.

It should be noted that Blighted Land is defined as land which may be required for the purposes of "the functions of a government department, local authority or statutory undertakers" (Schedule 13 2. of the 1990 T&CP Act) or land defined in the plan as the site of a proposed development for the purpose of such functions. The proposed canal is not required for the function of Swindon Borough Council, government departments or statutory undertakers, therefore the issue of blight does not apply to a Development Plan canal safeguarding policy.

What is the appropriate period to review progress on the detailed design scheme and implementation plan? [7,8,9]

In the event that a detailed canal design scheme and implementation plan have not been sufficiently progressed (this would be monitored by the Canal Task Group at its regular meetings (see below) – and then decided upon by Cabinet) within the first 2 years of the adoption of the Central Area Action Plan the safeguarding of the canal route would be subject to a review.

How will progress be monitored? [7,8,9]

A Canal Task Group has been established, with inaugural meeting held on 10th April 2008. The Group is chaired by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Economic Development, comprises a cross-departmental team of officers from Planning, Transport, Communications, Economic Development and Property along with the Chief Executive of the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust. The Task Group meets on a regular basis and its terms of reference, which derive from a resolution of the Council's Scrutiny Committee, is to provide: *a) A detailed evaluation of potential funding sources to deliver this section (ie Kingshill to Fleet Street) of the canal, b) Implementation of the project within the Transport Strategy, c) Assess the value of the canal with or without links to the wider network, d) Produce an implementation plan, with resource needs, e) Report back to Cabinet on an evidence base to support the canal or with minor variations if they enhance the viability.*

The safeguarding approach in the CAAP provides a degree of certainty to this group that the project can be pursued and that its delivery is legitimised.

What will trigger a decision to delay or abandon the proposal? [7,8,9]

Three potential triggers would delay the decision to progress the proposal:

- **Further detailed feasibility work identifying insurmountable constraints.** The Halcrow Feasibility Study (CD125) considers the key issues associated with the construction of a canal along the safeguarded route (water quality, flood risk, impacts on the transport network, highway issues, environmental impacts, urban design issues, health & safety, finance and geotechnical issues). As already noted, the Study concludes at page 88 that "the introduction of a narrow beam canal into the centre of Swindon is technically possible on the proposed route from Kingshill to Fleet Street via Westcott Place and Faringdon Road". However, the Study also notes that there are a number of difficulties which would need to be overcome. Further detailed feasibility work will therefore need to be undertaken to inform the detailed design of the scheme rather than its principle and route, which would be safeguarded in the CAAP. Even so, it is considered that sufficient work has been undertaken to give confidence that there will be no insurmountable feasibility constraints.
- **Spiralling Costs or failure to secure a robust funding strategy.** At Page 73, the Halcrow Feasibility Study (CD125) estimates the cost of constructing the canal at £52,193,500 at 2007 prices (this includes a £4,300,000 risk contingency). This cost does not take account of the costs associated with reconfiguring the wider transport network to alleviate the traffic impacts that the closure of Westcott Place / Faringdon Road as a route through would create.

Funding for the canal will be secured from a variety of sources, including S106 contributions, the Council's Transport Tariff, enabling development in the vicinity of the canal route, lottery funding, growth point funding, regional funding, British Waterways, Corporate Sponsorship, Supplementary Business Rates and European Funding.

Failure to secure sufficient funding from the above sources would delay delivery of the canal. An economic downturn may delay the enabling development that would accompany and help deliver the canal basin. However, in an economic downturn the canal may become an essential catalyst.

- **Failure to secure public support for detailed proposals.** The Halcrow Feasibility Study (CD125) notes at Page 89 that the key to the success of this scheme will be ensuring that the majority of the public are behind the scheme. Ongoing public consultation and awareness-raising will therefore be important in preparing the detailed designs of the scheme. Opposition to the principle of the canal is inevitable as it is for all major development proposals. A scheme of this nature will inevitably split opinion and civic leadership and commitment will be important.

If the scheme does not come forward in the timescale envisaged, what effect will this have on other developments in Central Swindon? [7,8,9]

The canal will be delivered in 2 sections. The 1st section (Kingshill to Fleet Street) has been subject to detailed analysis through the Halcrow Feasibility Study (CD125), with only the exact location for the basin and a small stretch of the canal in the Shire Court area to be confirmed.

The Planning Framework provided by the Central Area Action Plan Submission Paper allows development to come forward in advance of the canal and canal basin, provided that the development is in accordance with the Master Plan for that area. Any Master Plan will need to address regeneration objectives including a canal. Abandonment or delay will have no impact on other schemes coming forward. An early review of the safeguarding policy could allow for alternative public realm and access arrangements to be considered on the safeguarded route. If the canal proposals were to be abandoned, the safeguarded route and location for the basin could be directly replaced by public realm improvement measures.

Whilst the 2nd section is expected to be delivered after 2016, it is considered important to safeguard this route nonetheless given longer-term aspirations to link the Wilts & Berks Canal with the North Wilts Canal up as sought in the Swindon Borough Core Strategy Preferred Options (pages 30-31) (CD20) and the Swindon Sustainable Community Strategy (page 10) (CD142).

Furthermore this stretch of the safeguarded route is entirely in ownership of SBC and the route co-coincides with the route of the proposed “Green Spine” (i.e. no built development would occur along the safeguarded route with or without the canal).

Appendix 1: Wilts and Berks Canal Trust Overview of The Wilts & Berks Canal Restoration



Overview of The Wilts & Berks Canal Restoration

**Strategic Plan for restoration of the
canal in relation to proposals for a
central (town centre) route in Swindon**

Prepared by **Ken Oliver**
December 2007

Rev 1.1 May 2008

Strategic Issues

Swindon Central Route and its relation to the overall plan

Background

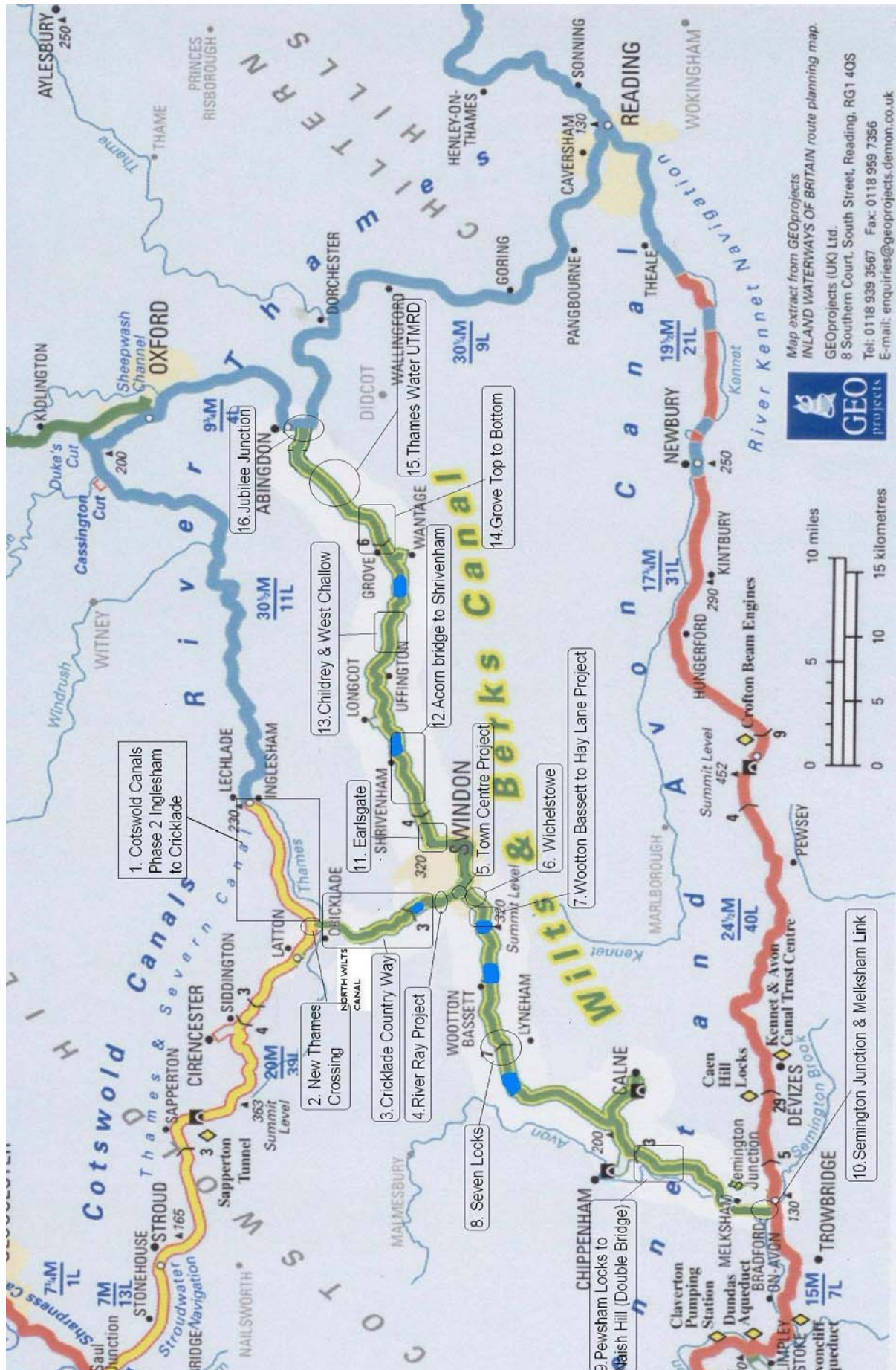
The Wilts & Berks Canal was formally abandoned by Act of Parliament in 1914. Ownership of the canal was returned to adjacent landowners and Local Authorities. Over 25 years the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust (WBCT) [formerly the Wilts & Berks Canal Amenity Group] has formulated a scheme to restore the main line of the canal from Abingdon on the River Thames to Semington on the Kennet & Avon Canal, the North Wilts branch of the canal from Swindon to Cricklade, and the branches to Calne & Chippenham. In formulating the restoration plan account has been taken of the obstruction caused by building development to some of the original route and where appropriate alternative routes have been chosen.

The strategic document used by WBCT as the basis for restoration is the Scott Wilson Feasibility Study report published in 1998. This has been subsequently modified and augmented by a number of further studies at specific locations (e.g. Cricklade, Abingdon, Melksham), including the latest by Halcrow in 2007 exploring the feasibility of a new route into Swindon town centre.

WBCT working with its partners in the Wilts & Berks Canal Partnership has demonstrated the overall technical feasibility of the full restoration scheme, its economic and environmental benefits and the strategic nature of the project linking waterways activities from the River Thames to the Kennet & Avon Canal. The scheme was endorsed by British Waterways in 2005 by its inclusion as a viable scheme in their report Waterways 2025. The Wilts & Berks Canal is also linked to the British Waterways project to restore the Cotswold Canals. Figure 1 shows the relationship of these waterways.

Swindon Central Route

The decision to amend the canal route for the North Wilts Canal to go via the town centre instead of bypassing it as proposed by Scott Wilson should be viewed in conjunction with the overall restoration plan for the canal. The following pages give some detail of the Trust and Partnership strategic plans for restoration.



South West Waterways

Linking to the National Waterways Network

The project has been listed in three sections in the order WBCT anticipates delivery as follows:

- **The Navigable River Thames to Swindon**

It has been part of the strategy of the Trust for some time to give high priority to linking Swindon to the Thames. Projects 1 to 5 give details of specific projects in this scheme.

- **Swindon to Melksham**

The Trust identifies this as the easier of the two parts of the main line of the canal. Projects 6 and 7 have earlier deliverables which will create a substantial useable length of the canal from Swindon Town Centre to Wootton Bassett. Projects 6 to 10 identify current plans.

- **Abingdon to Swindon**

The uncertainty of the UTMRD (Abingdon Reservoir) in timescale and certainty of delivery have left the eastern section of the canal with a large unknown factor. Projects 12 to 14 and 16 are currently planned or completed.

It has always been noted that the restoration of the canal may for practical and financial reasons have to be carried out in phased sections to deliver significant but isolated sections of restored waterway.

Project 1 Lechlade (Inglesham) to Cricklade

Scope of Project:- Restoration of original route of Thames & Severn Canal to a new Cricklade Junction 1km to the west of Eisey Lock.

- Length: 13km
- Locks: 4
- Inglesham, Dudgrove Double, Eisey
- Bridges/ Aqueducts 15
- Timescale: 2020
- Estimated cost: £15m

Issues:-

- Land owners, Water Resources

This is Phase 2 of the Cotswold Canals restoration being carried out by the Cotswold Canals Partnership and is outside the direct control of WBCT.

WBCT is working closely with the Cotswold Canals Trust to try to make some early progress. The restoration of sections of the canal to the east of Cricklade is included in the Cotswold Water Park restoration strategy, and Cotswold Canal Trust volunteers are working on Eisey Lock and Rucks Bridge. The junction with the River Thames was cleared in 2004. BW own Inglesham Roundhouse and lock.

Project 2 Thames Crossing (Eisey Junction to Cricklade Basin)

Scope of Project:- New Route for North Wilts Canal from a new junction with Thames and Severn Canal. Current proposal:-

- Riverscapes design for re-routing section of upper River Thames and impounding nearby local river course as navigation
- Length: 1km
- Locks:- 2
- New weir and river profiling
- Timescale 2015
- Estimated cost £5m

Issues:-

- Project requires Environment Agency approval for flooding issues and water quality aspects.

Commercial in Confidence

Project 3 Cricklade Country Way

Scope of project:- New route for North Wilts Canal from Cricklade Basin to River Key Aqueduct, and restoration of historic route from River Key to Mouldon Hill.

- Outline design completed
- Length: 8km
- Locks: 5
- Bridges and other Structures: 20
- Timescale 2014
- Estimated Cost £9m

Issues:-

- Alternative funding source required following Big Lottery Fund decision on Living Landmarks scheme.
- WBCT projects:
 - River Key Aqueduct – completed.
 - Mouldon Hill canal - completes 2007.
 - Hayes Knoll Lock - completes 2009.

Project 4 River Ray Project

Scope of project:- Restoration of historic route from former power station site to Hreed Parkway School.

- Length: 0.8km
- Locks: 2
- Bridges: 1
- Estimated Cost £300k
- WBCT project
- Work starts 2008 –
- Canal restoration 2009
- Lock Restoration 2011

Issues:-

- Permissions, funding.
- Connecting canal to Mouldon Hill (0.4km) - design to be completed
- Connecting Canal to historic line at Great Western Way (1.2km) - design to be completed

Commercial in Confidence

Project 5 Swindon Town Centre Route

Scope of project:- To Connect Restored Section of Canal at Kingshill to new basin in town centre.

- Length: 1.2km
- Estimated Cost £50m
- Timescale 2012
- All details shown in 2007 Halcrow report.

Project 6 Wichelstowe

Scope of Project:- To connect restored section at Kingshill to Motorway Crossing and to construct canal to Croft Road.

- Length: 2.5km
- Estimated Cost: £8m
- Timescale: 2012
- Issues: Construction of Motorway Crossing to be resolved. Design and build of canal south of M4 to be resolved.
- Developer lead project as part of new housing scheme at Wichelstowe (Southern Development Area)
- Construction of eastern route to Junction 15 & onwards to historic route at South Marston (See also I I Earls gate)

Project 7 Wootton Bassett to Hay Lane Project

Scope of Project:- To fully restore canal from Templars Firs Wootton Bassett to Hay Lane Swindon.

- Length: 3.5km
- Locks: 2
- Bridges & Structures: 7
- Estimated Cost: £1m
- Timescale: 2012

Issues:-

- Land Acquisition of 800m section

WBCT has fully restored a 1.2km section at Wootton Bassett. At Chaddington the summit lock has been fully restored and the spill weir for the section will be completed to allow a further 0.4km to be re-watered.

Next phase for the project is design and build of Chaddington Lane Bridge and acquisition and restoration of the 0.8km section from Chaddington Lane to Hay Lane. Most of this section is owned by Biffa Waste and negotiations are under way to start restoration following publication of engineering report.

Project 8 Seven Locks Project

Scope of project:- To fully restore lock flight.

- Locks: 7
- Estimated Cost: £1m
- Timescale: 2014

Issues:-

- Acquisition of Locks 1, part of 5, 6, 7.
- Completion of design of Bowds Lane road crossing at Lock 2

WBCT has completed Lock 3, and Lock 4 is 70% complete

Project 9 Pewsham Locks to Double Bridge

Scope of project:- To fully restore Pewsham Locks and associated structures as Wilts & Berks Canal Heritage Centre and to fully re-water section from Pewsham Locks to Double Bridge.

- Locks: 3
- Length: 1.8km
- Estimated Cost: £800k
- Timescale: 2014

WBCT has carried out some work on this section and as soon as a lease is signed work on the capital projects can commence.

Project 10 Semington Junction and Melksham Link

Scope of Project:-

- Phase 1:- To construct new junction and canal to first lock.
- Phase 2:- To construct new canal and structures to River Avon from Lock 1.

- Locks Phase 1:1 Phase 2: 3
- Length Phase 1: 1.0km Phase 2: 2.3km
- Estimated Cost £7m (Total)
- Timescale Phase 1 2009 Phase 2 2012

WBCT is discussing with British Waterways implementation of Phase 1 in 2008 / 2009.

Project 11 Earlsate Swindon

Scope of Project:- To be confirmed. Development opportunity for canal as part of eastern development area. Preliminary discussions have taken place.

Project 12 Acorn Bridge to Shrivenham Project

Scope of Project:- Restoration of canal bed from Acorn Bridge (A420) to Tuckmill brook Shrivenham.

- Locks: 0
- Length: 3.5km
- Structures: 5
- Estimated Cost: £900k
- Timescale: 2012

Issues:-

- Landowner negotiation.
- Funding of two road crossings.

WBCT has possession of a number of sections of the canal and is negotiating a lease for a further section. Project structures are designed and are being built sequentially. Current construction is at Steppingstones Lane Bridge with completion in 2008.

Project 13 Childrey & West Challow Project

Scope:- To restore canal and structures from Childrey Wharf to West Challow.

- Length: 1.8km
- Locks: 0
- Structures: 3
- Estimated Cost: £500k
- Timescale: 2010

Issues:-

- Landowner negotiation.

WBCT have carried out restoration on much of the section and are in the process of linking a number of restored sections.

Commercial in Confidence

Project 14 Grove Top to Bottom Project

Scope of project:- To restore canal and structures from Grove Top Lock to Grove Bottom lock.

- Locks; 3
- Length ;1.9km
- Structures; 4
- Estimated Cost; £1.8m
- Timescale; 2012

Issues:-

- Confirmation of design.

WBCT is keen to engage with partners to restore this section as part of the proposed development at Grove.

Project 15 Thames Water UTMRD (Abingdon Reservoir)

Scope of project:- To create canal on new route from around then proposed reservoir to Jubilee Junction. This is subject to the proposal receiving planning consent. The Partnership will otherwise restore the canal on it historic alignment.

- Length: 5km
- Structures: 5
- Locks: 3
- Estimated cost: £8m
- Timescale: 2018

Issues:-

- Planning consent for reservoir.
- Confirmation of canal construction around reservoir.

Project 16 Jubilee Junction

Scope:- Create new junction with River Thames.

- Project Complete

General

WBCT intends during 2008 to investigate how it can maximise the length of restored canal by agreement/ licence to work with landowners. This approach is being pursued because negotiations to lease or buy the canal continue to be protracted and will leave an ongoing revenue burden on the Trust without any options for financial gain. The Trust is also exploring a more strategic policy with Wilts & Berks Canal Partnership to investigate the use by Local Authorities of powers of the 2004 Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act.

Structures completed:-

- Mouldon Lock
- River Ray Aqueduct
- River Key Aqueduct
- Double Bridge
- Foxham Top Lock
- Spill Weir
- Foxham Lift Bridges (2)
- Lift Bridge
- Dauntsey Lock
- Dauntsey Wharf
- Seven Locks Lock 3
- Chaddington Top Lock
- Beavans Bridge
- Childrey Wharf

Canal Restored and re-watered:-

- Jubilee Junction
- East Challow/Grove
- Shrivenham Station Road Pocket Park
- Swindon Kingshill Rushey Platt
- Swindon Mouldon Hill
- Wootton Bassett Templars Firs
- Dauntsey
- Foxham
- Naish Hill