

AVONSIDE, MELKSHAM

Landscape Sketchbook
338_GLA_XX_XX_L_0001
April 2025

GREENHALGH

Landscape Architecture



Project Address: Avonside
Melksham

Rev	Issue Status	Date
PA	For issue	30.06.2025

For and on behalf of: **Client**
Address

In collaboration with : **BGY Architects**



Connect Consultant Engineers



SLR Consulting Engineers



Contents

Contents	2
Introduction	1
SECTION 1.0	3
context	
1.1. Site Location and Context	4
1.2. Access	5
1.3. Open Space	6
1.4. Industrial Heritage	7
1.4. Site Conditions	10
1.5. Existing Parking Provision	12
SECTION 2.0	14
Landscape proposals	
2.1. Design Vision- Key Aspirations	15
2.2. Place Making- Celebrating the architectural detailing	16
2.3. Place Making- Celebrating the history	18
2.4. Landscape Masterplan	20
2.5. Landscape Spaces- New Lane and Meoloc Square	21
2.5. Landscape Spaces- Riverside Square	25
2.5. Landscape Spaces- Block 3 Gardens and Meadow Park	27
2.6. Residential Refuse Strategy	28
2.7. Hard Surface Strategy	29
2.8. Boundary and Furniture Strategy	30
2.9. Tree and Softworks Strategy	31
2.8. Trees and Softworks Strategy	32

Introduction

As part of a multi-disciplinary team, Greenhalgh Landscape Architecture (GLA) has been appointed to prepare landscape proposals as part of the Full Planning Application process for the Avonside site in Melksham.

This document is split into two parts: context and the proposals. The site context outlines the site in relation to its surroundings, history and a summary of the site's current conditions before leading to how this has informed the landscape proposals.

The landscape proposals and associated design explorations have been a collaborative process between Buckley Grey Yeoman (BGY) Architecture, Connect transport engineers and SLR drainage engineers to provide proposals for the site that looks forward to the resiliency of the future (socially and environmentally) and acknowledges the rich historical development of the site.





Figure 1. Location Plan

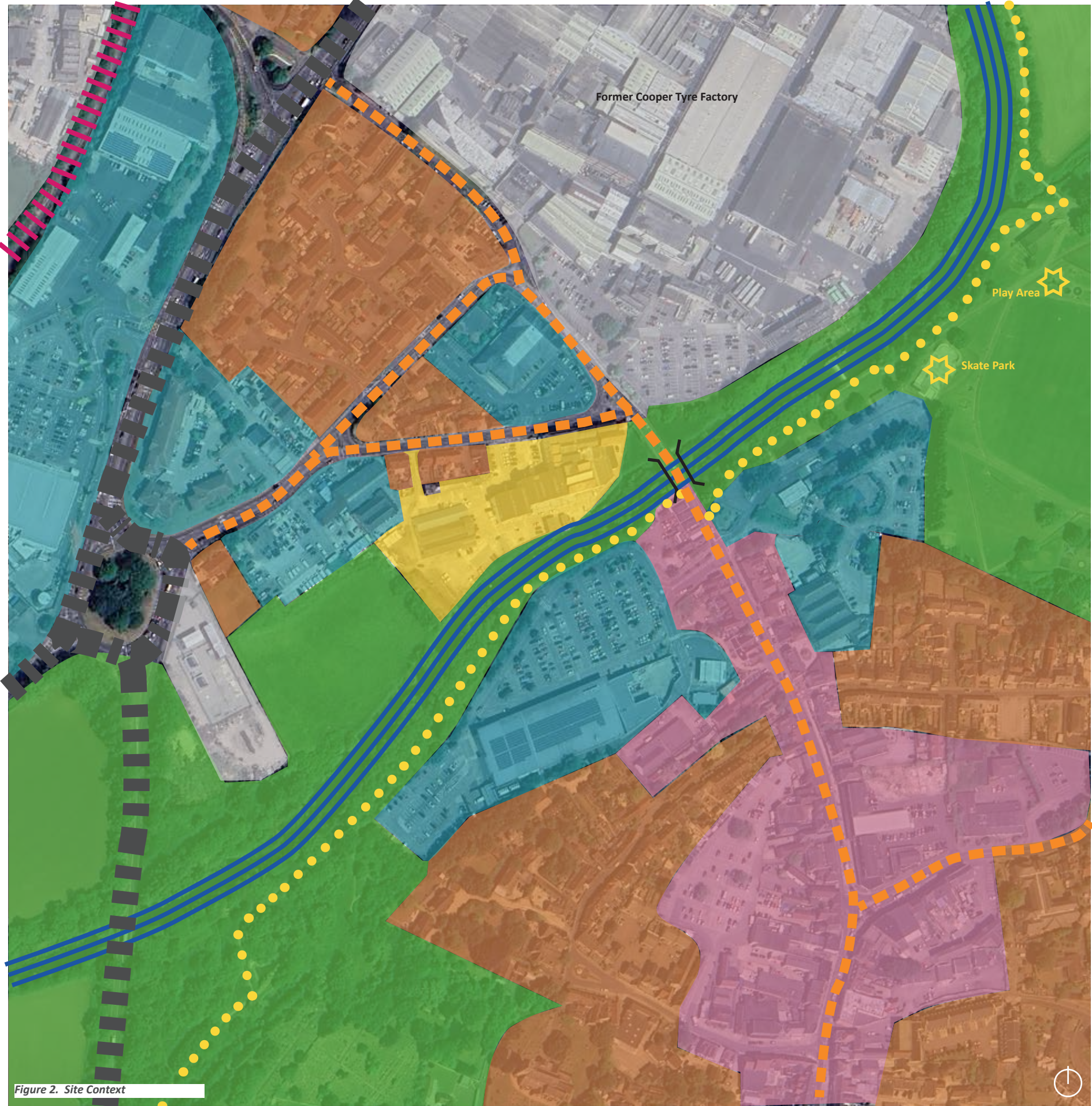
1.1. Site Location and Context

The adjacent diagram shows the nearby setting of the site. The River Avon runs along the sites southern boundary, dissects the town and creating a green link which flows between open countryside to the north and south of the town centre.

Land use north of the site is a mix of commercial and residential wit the former Cooper Tyre and Rubber factory forming a dominant feature due to it's scale and dilapidated nature.

South of the River Avon is Melksham's high street including a number of large car parks associated with shopping centres and for access to the riverside open spaces.

-  The Site
-  Commercial and car parking
-  Residential
-  High street and main shopping district
-  Industrial/infrastructure sites
-  Open space
-  River Avon
-  Key vehicular routes
-  Secondary vehicular routes
-  Millennium Riverside Walk
-  Leisure facilities



1.2. Access

The site is centrally located within Melksham and as a result benefits from the towns transport connections as illustrated on Figure 4. Melksham Train Station is a 5 minute (800m) walk and offers direct trains to Swindon and Westbury with onward connections to Southampton, Bristol and London Paddington.

The A350 runs close to the site and provides a direct road connection with Chippenham, the M4 motorway, Trowbridge and Warminster.

Melksham High Street lies approximately 70m from the site and includes a wide selection of restaurants and shops.

The Millennium Riverside Walk runs along the opposite side of the River Avon and provides a walking route through Melksham into the surrounding countryside.

The primary vehicle access for the site itself is from New Broughton Road along with a pedestrian access point to the north east on to Bath Road as shown on Figure 3.

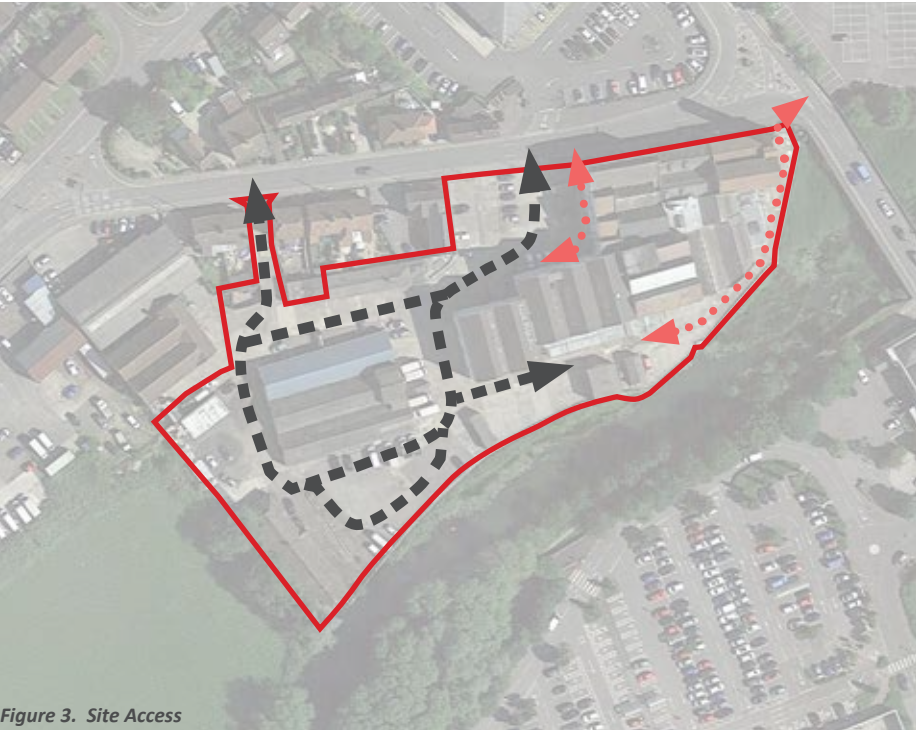


Figure 3. Site Access

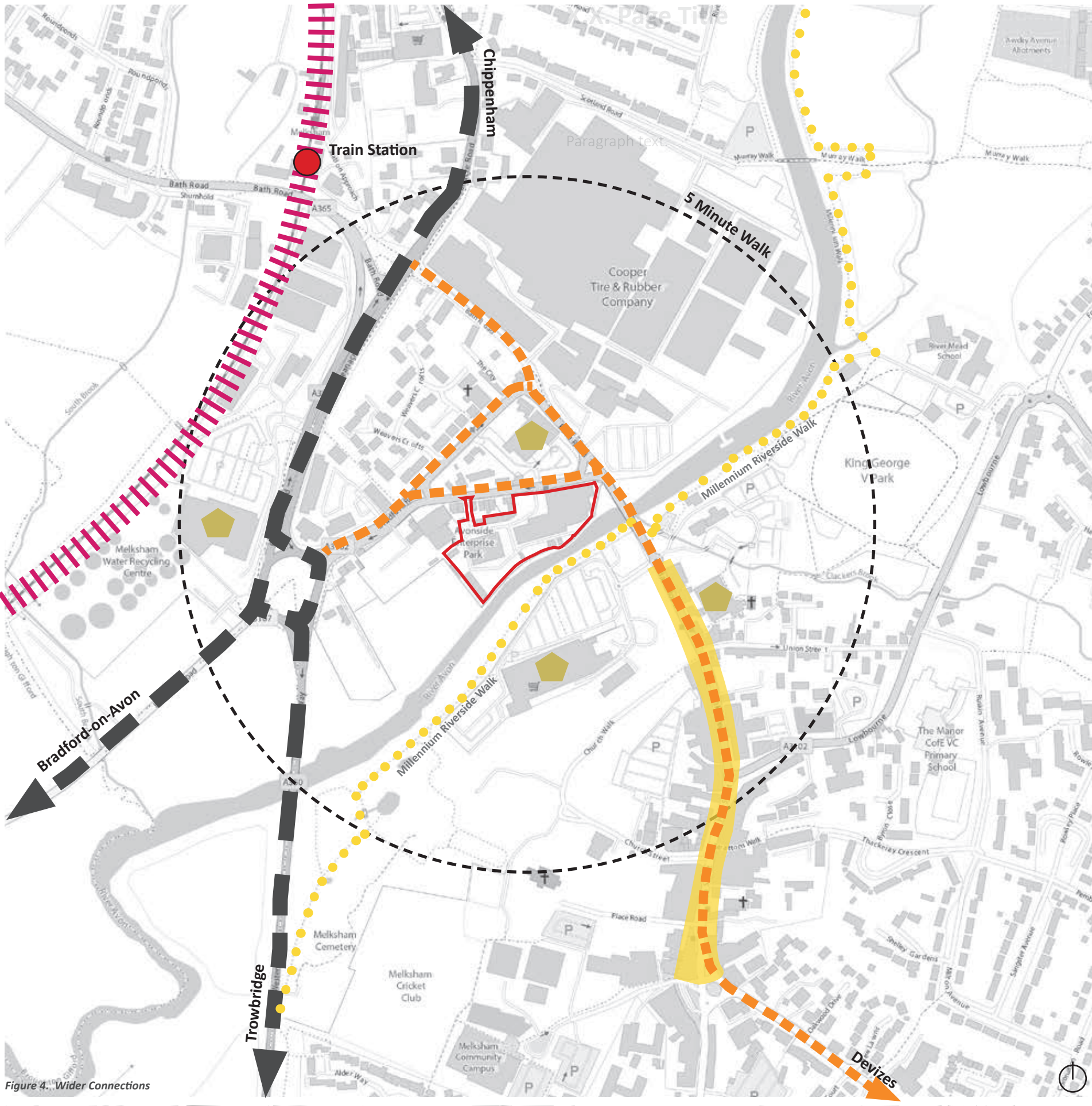


Figure 4. Wider Connections

1.3. Open Space

LOCAL OPEN SPACE

The site sits alongside the River Avon which connects a network of open spaces as identified within the Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2020 - 2026 as illustrated by the plan opposite. The open spaces include an undeveloped field which abuts the south western edge of the site.

King George the V Park lies within a 5 minute walk east of the site and includes a skate park, play area and splash pad along with large areas for recreation. Within 5 minutes walk to the south west of the site is the Conigre Mead Nature Reserve; a large area of natural open space with areas of woodland, grassland and ponds.

ON SITE OPEN SPACE

Due to the historic industrial nature of the site it currently offers no designated public amenity space with external areas consisting of hard surfacing to facilitate access to the buildings and parking. Recent diversification of commercial facilities along the river frontage including a cafe and brewery with taproom have resulted in some areas along the river frontage having a more pedestrianised focus and will be an important factor in the sites development.

Key to the proposed scheme is the diversification of the site by introducing a residential element including 21 flats. Wiltshire Open Space Assessment Update (2020) states that developments of the size proposed should provide Amenity Green Space provision in accordance with the table below.

The following calculations are based on:
Wiltshire Open Space Assessment Update (2020) – Final Report March 2023 (Table 41).

number of dwellings	22			
persons per dwelling	2.3			
proposed population	50.6			
FORM OF PROVISION	QUANTITY STANDARD (ha/1000)	SITE REQUIREMENT		GLA COMMENTS
		ha	m²	
Allotments	0.25			Below unit threshold
Amenity Green Space	0.9	0.05	455.4	
Parks and Recreation Grounds	1.1			Below unit threshold
Play Space (Children)	0.25			Below unit threshold
Play Space (Youth)	0.3			Below unit threshold
Natural Green Space	1.8			Below unit threshold
TOTAL		0.05	455.40	

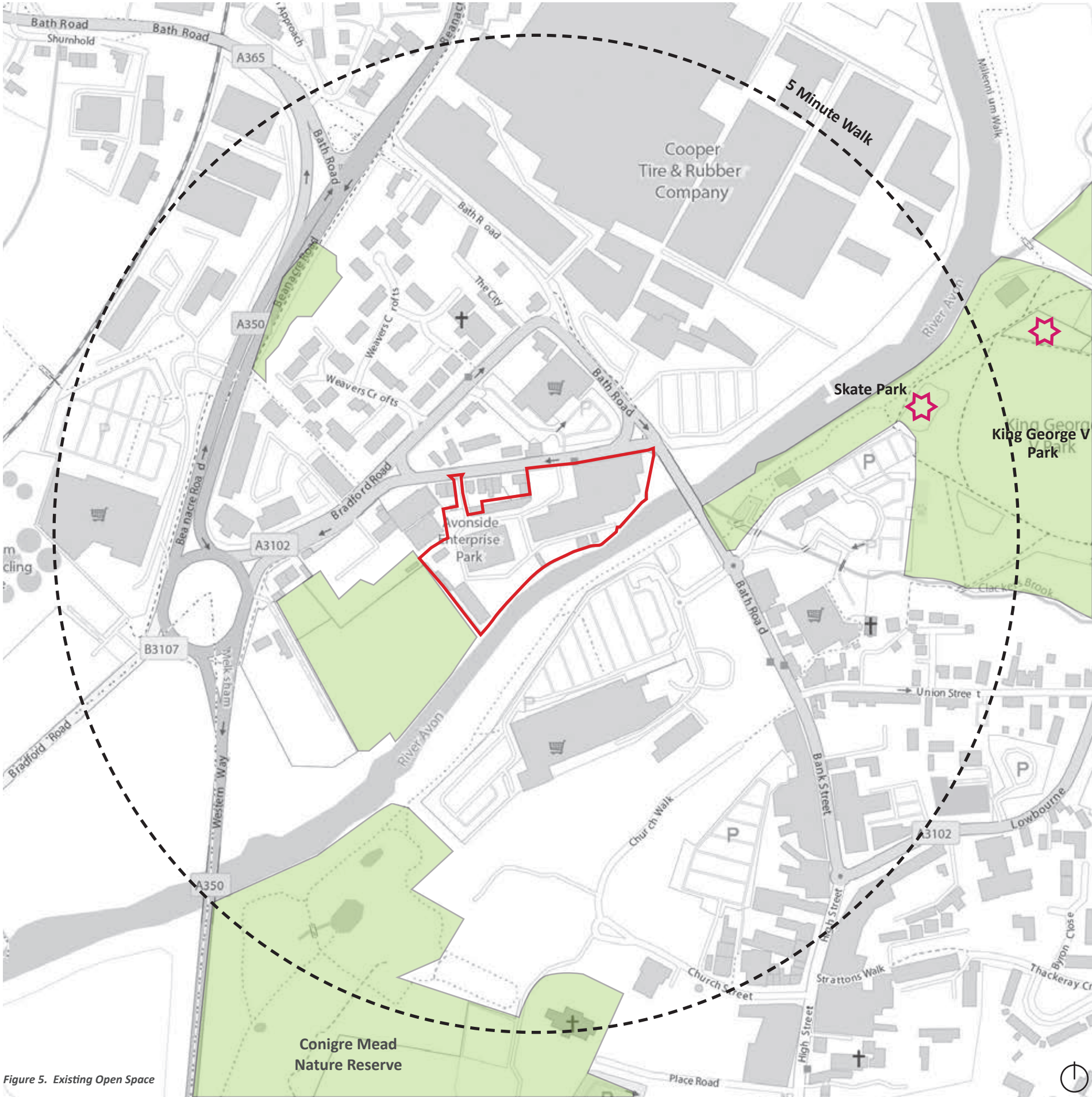


Figure 5. Existing Open Space

1.4. Industrial Heritage

The River Avon runs alongside the sites southern boundary and created the basis for industrial development within the town centre.

THE LANDSCAPE

The sites landscape, from what can be depicted from the 1885 OS map, was originally developed along New Broughton Road including two buildings and a Smithy (Blacksmith). The area adjacent the river was open and likely a meadow type landscape with trees shown lining the waters edge. Bath Road bridge on the eastern edge of the site dates from the 18th century and once spanned a much wider section of river with early maps depicting 'The Island' to the north including a Corn Mill (Melksham Flour Mills).

THE INDUSTRIES

Throughout the years, the site has been a key employment spot in the town. While the exact date of the current buildings are unclear, the earliest structures are thought to have been built as part of a Dyehouse. Around 1888 Charles Maggs bought the site and converted it into a milk collecting depot and butter factory. Shortly after this the factory amalgamated with another producer to form Wilts. United Dairies Ltd and soon started producing condensed and later dried milk.

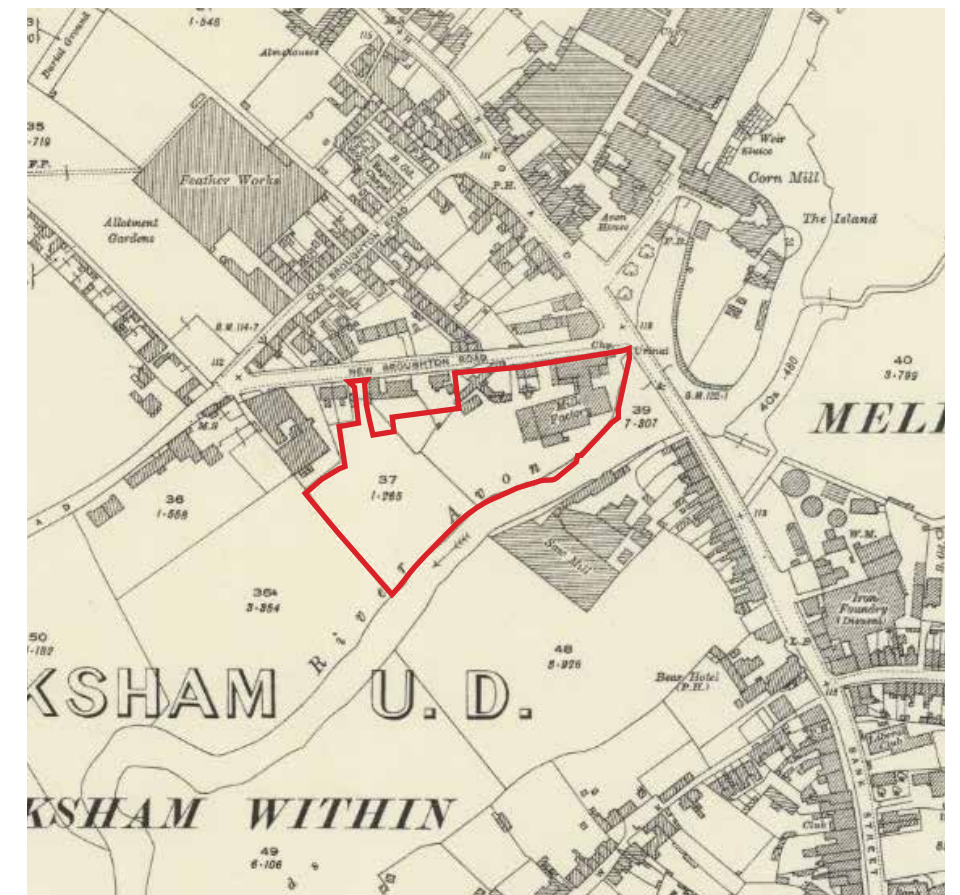
Around 1903 the chimney was constructed with the main factory building seen today being constructed between 1930-1933. The river wall was built in 1930 to prevent flooding in the factory and also Melksham town itself.

The sites association with milk is not unique to the town, with the name 'Melksham' likely originating from the Old English 'meoloc' which translates to 'milk' and reflects the towns early history in pastoral and dairy farming.

The photos and maps opposite and on the following pages help illustrate the sites historic industry and uses.



1885 OS Map



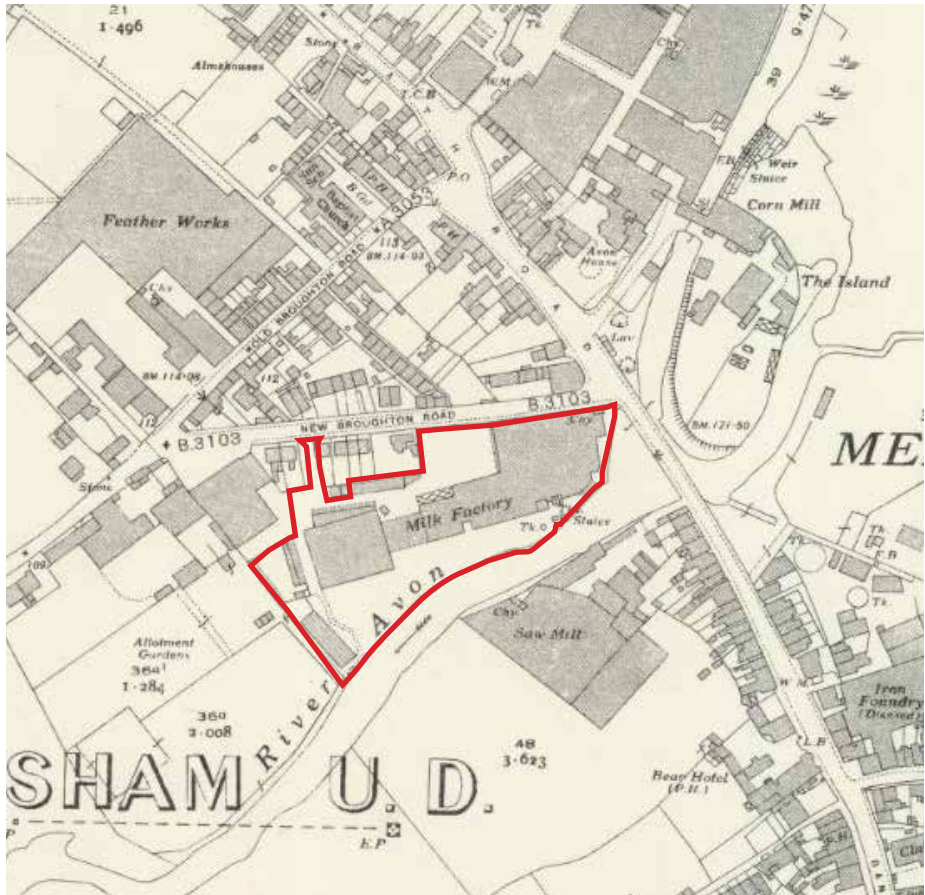
1922 OS Map



New Broughton Road. Dyehouse chimney in back ground. Mid C19th (exact date unknown)



New Broughton Road 1968



1842 OS Map



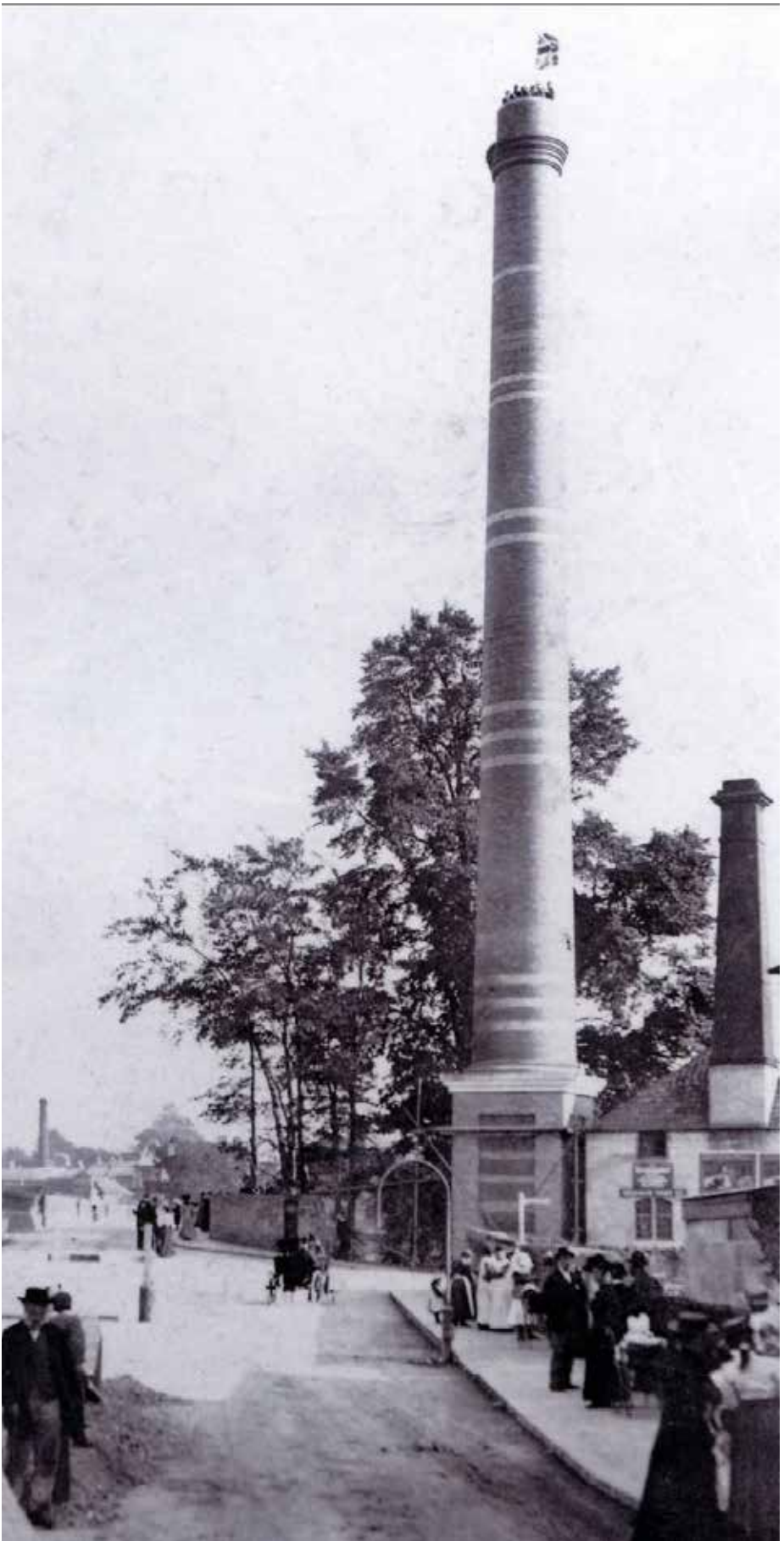
1948 Aerial



United Dairies carnival float, New Broughton Road, 1967



United Dairies bottle tops



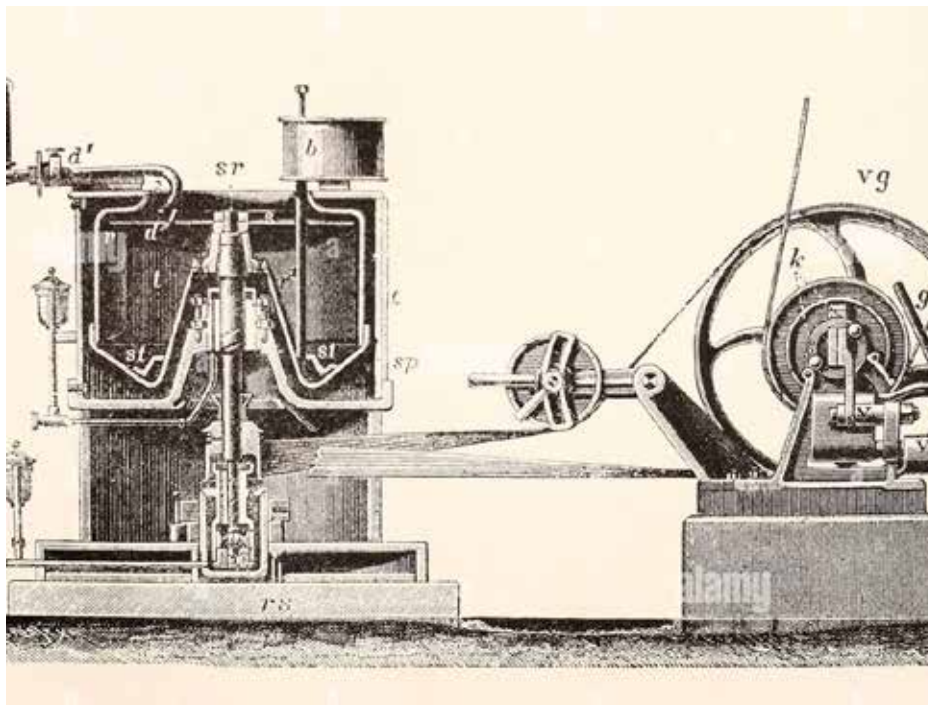
Band playing from the top of the United Dairies chimney when it was completed in 1903



A Danish separator, similar to the model used at the Milk Factory in the C19th



United Dairies milk float used in the 1960's



Danish Cream Separator, similar to the model used at the Milk Factory in the late C19th



United Dairies copper milk churn



United Dairies milk bottle

1.4. Site Conditions

The sites external areas reflect the ad hoc nature of development during its industrialisation. Large open areas surround the key buildings and are primarily utilised for worker parking, storage and by a car cleaning business. The surfacing is a mix of tarmac and concrete with repair patches prominent throughout and the surfacing conditions being poorest in the northern car park and western area of the site. The mismatch of surfacing types creates legibility issues for parking zones and vehicular and pedestrian access.

The sites boundary to the River Avon is defined by a low concrete flood wall on top of which key clamp railings are mounted along approximately half the length from Bath Road. The railings are a mix of ages and colours and originally specified as a barrier for workers at the milk factory.

There are few historical objects within the external areas which offer clues to the sites industrial heritage with the exception of a set of gates at the north eastern entrance and gate tracks at the north western entrance.

The site itself is void of any notable vegetation. However the river corridor to the south provides a significant green connection with mature trees and marginal vegetation and the sites western boundary is bordered by mature tree planting and scrub.



1 - Concrete flood wall without railing



2 - Victorian gate



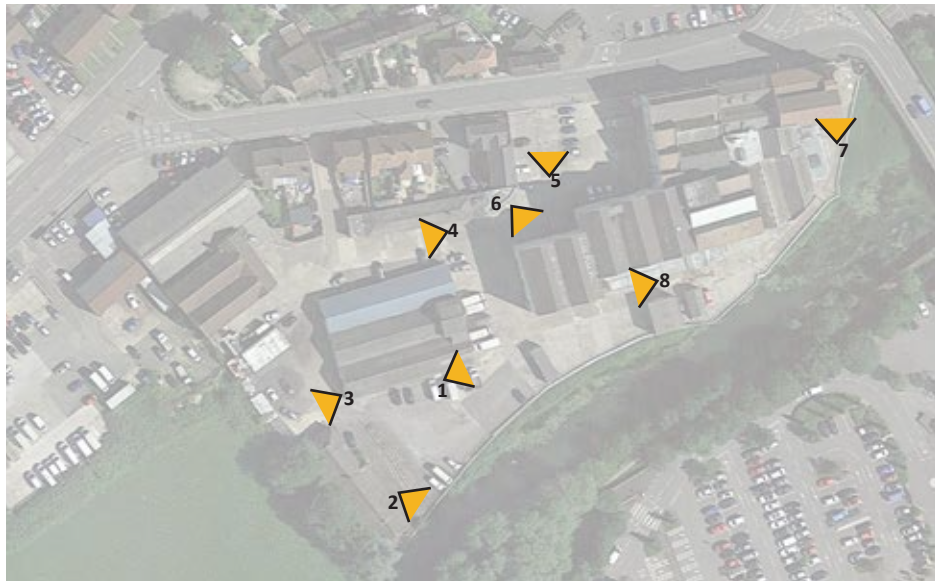
3 - Galvanised key clamp railings



4 - Victorian gate track



5 - Mixture of recent key clamp and older railings



1 - Degraded tarmac and concrete surface



2 - Degraded concrete surface and historic foundation



3 - Subsided tarmac and fractured concrete surface



4 - Mix of concrete and tarmac surfaces with localised fractures and subsidence



5 - Mix of concrete and tarmac surfaces with localised fractures and repairs



6 - Layers of existing surfacing



7 - Fractured coloured concrete surface with block paving print



8 - Large cast in situ concrete slabs

1.5. Existing Parking Provision

GLA have undertaken a review of the sites existing parking provision based on parking bays which are currently delineated and aerial imagery of spaces between 2002 and 2023. We estimate approximately 130 parking spaces have been used however a number are very tight to access and if all bays were in utilised approximately 13 bays would become blocked in and very difficult to access as demonstrated by Figure 6 opposite.



Northern car park



Northern car park



-  Parking space currently delineated on site or used between 2002 and 2023
-  Parking space which would be blocked in if all parking spaces were full or where parking blocks wider vehicular access

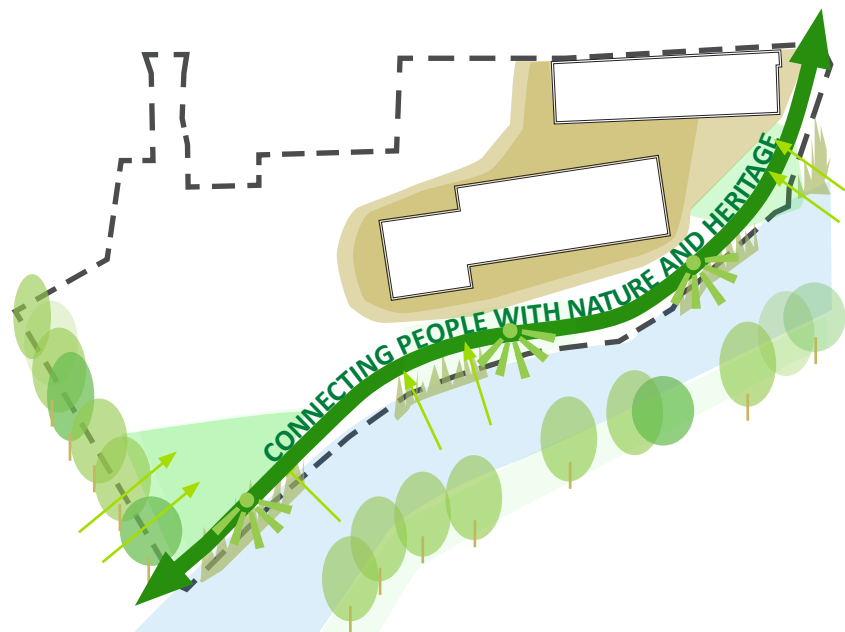
Figure 6. Existing parking provision





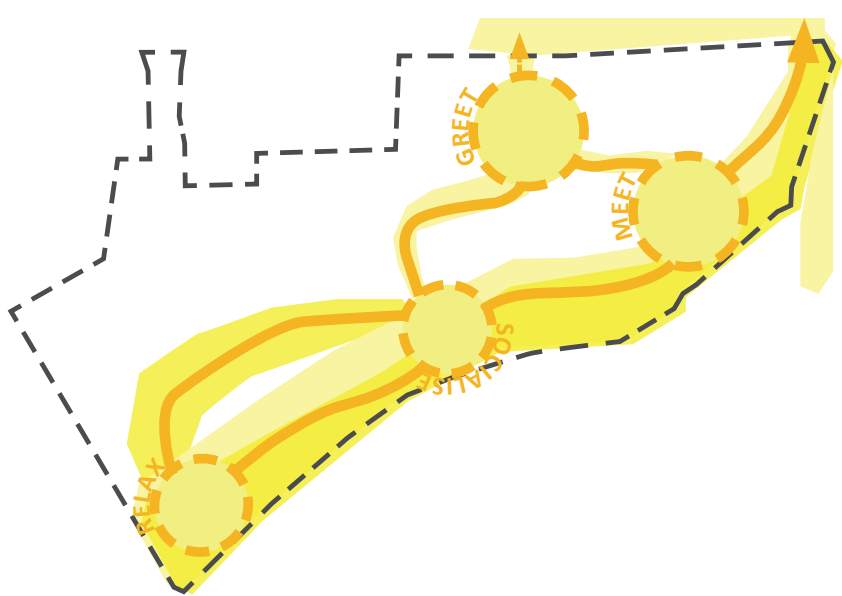
2.1. Design Vision - Key Aspirations

The overall landscape vision has been led by three underlying aims which have steered the landscape design.



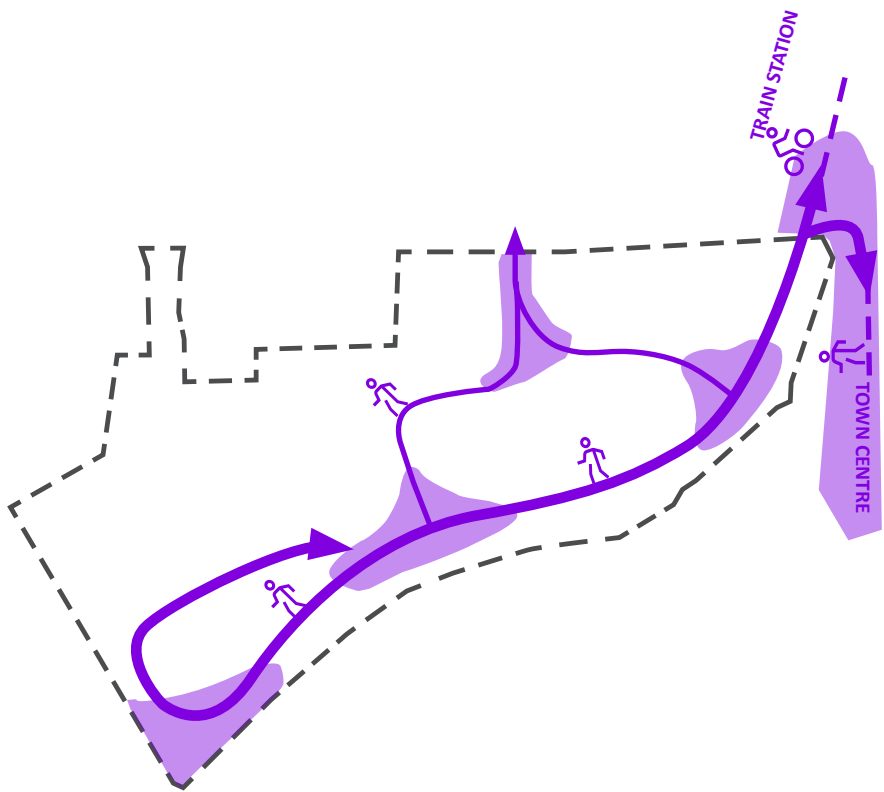
Connecting people with the river and heritage

- Celebrate the sites relationship with the river by providing safe viewing areas and a riverside walk.
- Reveal the sites history by integrating playful shape associations into the landscaping.
- Use of new hard landscape materials which complement those historically used on site while also complementing the materials and colours of the retained warehouse buildings.
- Incorporate new areas of planting across the site to enhance the existing green corridor down the river.



Social spine

- Create a new social spine through the site along the river edge which connects the three key spaces and provides a flexible framework for outdoor cafe seating, market stalls and socialising.
- Enhance the main vehicle entrance off of New Broughton Road to create a welcoming space for visitors which is subtly enclosed from traffic passing the site.
- Provide spaces for both worker and resident use which are varied in character and improve legibility as users travel through the site.



Connectivity

- Improve site connections to the train station and town centre by pedestrianising large areas of the river frontage and creating new links through the site.
- Improve pedestrian access to the river frontage.
- Provide a designated pedestrian link at the main entrance off New Broughton Road and delineate pedestrian areas and access across the site to improve safety and legibility.

2.2. Place Making - Celebrating the architectural detailing

The site's history and original function as a milk collection and processing factory played a central role in shaping the existing buildings and surrounding external areas. The patterns and forms found on the building façades and former factory equipment offer an opportunity for the landscape design to subtly reference the site's heritage, while also creating a cohesive connection between the outdoor spaces and the architectural style.

The retained historic building façades feature subtle detailing expressed through their concrete grid framework, creating a distinctive focal point along the River Avon. This grid presents an opportunity to be echoed in the hard landscaping and paving, helping to unify the external areas while also providing subtle delineation for functions such as street vending, vehicle access, and pedestrian movement.

The images below and on the following page illustrate how the façade's grid pattern can be translated into the design of the external spaces.



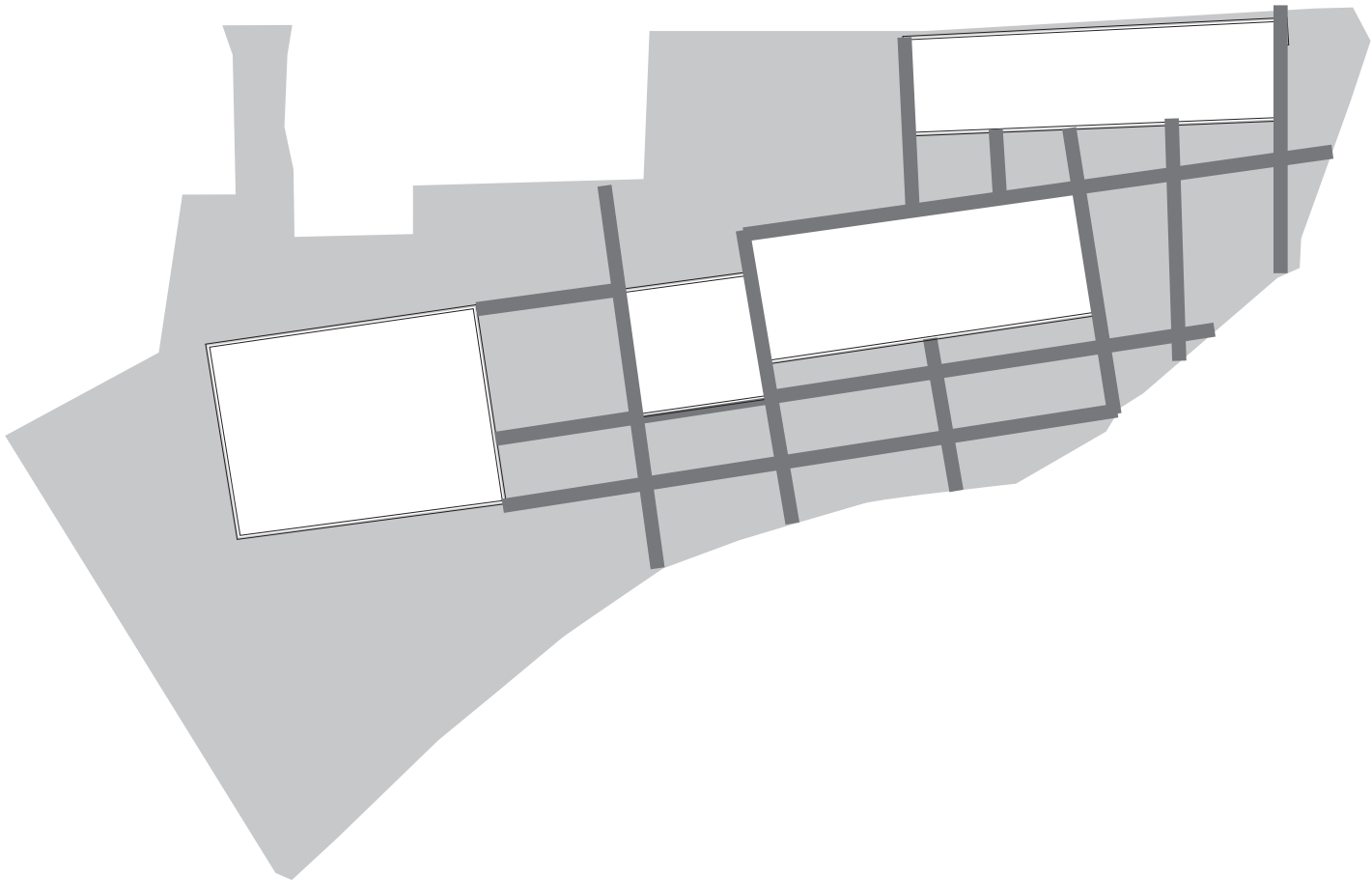
New Broughton facade and structure over northern car park c.1968



New Broughton facade



Block A facade



The building grid translated on to the external surfaces

2.3. Place Making - Celebrating the history

During its time as the home of the Wilts United Dairies company, a range of unique machines and objects were used in the milk processing and production stages. One of the primary operations was the separation of cream from milk, which relied on centrifugal separators—also known as cream separators. These machines typically featured a prominent cylindrical form. This recurring theme of cylindrical and circular shapes, common in many of the tools and products

associated with milk production, presents an opportunity to incorporate similar forms into the hard landscaping, subtly referencing the site’s industrial heritage. The shapes also provide an opportunity to create another layer of space definition on top of the grid structure through the playful use of colour and contrasting materials to highlight key areas and uses.

The images below and on the following page illustrate how the circular shapes can be translated into the design of the external spaces.



A United Dairies bottle



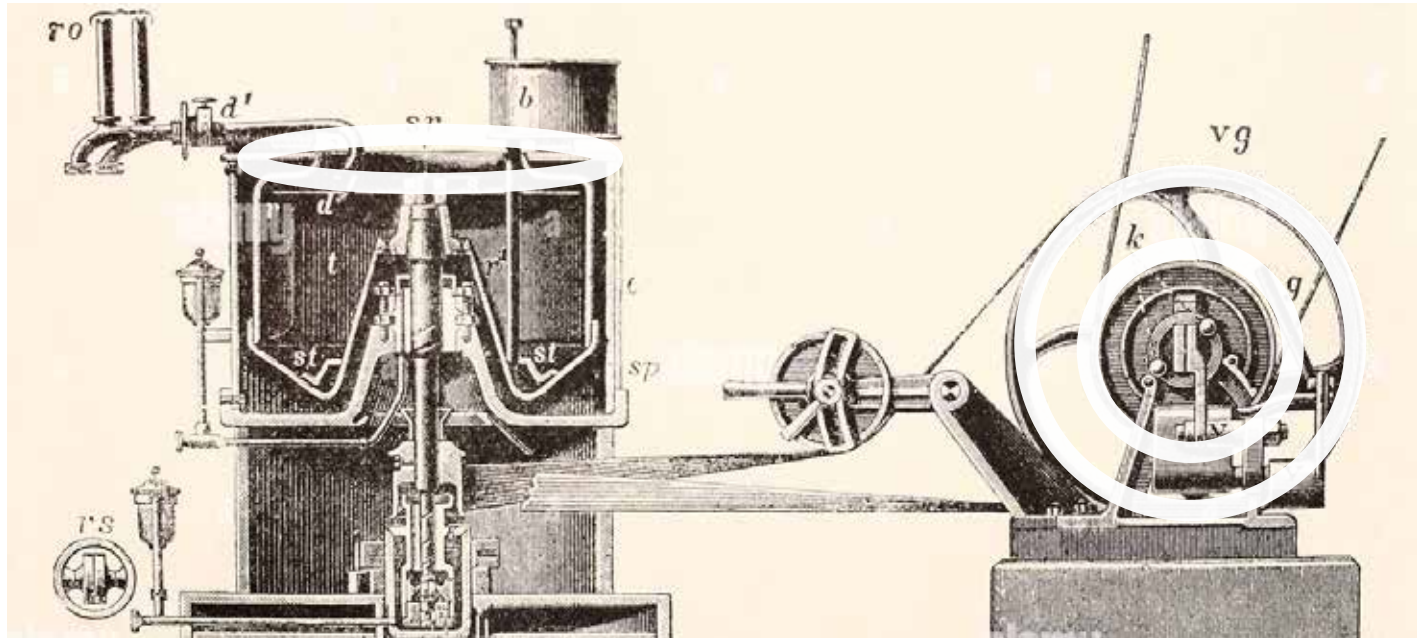
A Danish separator, similar to the model used at the Milk Factory in the C19th



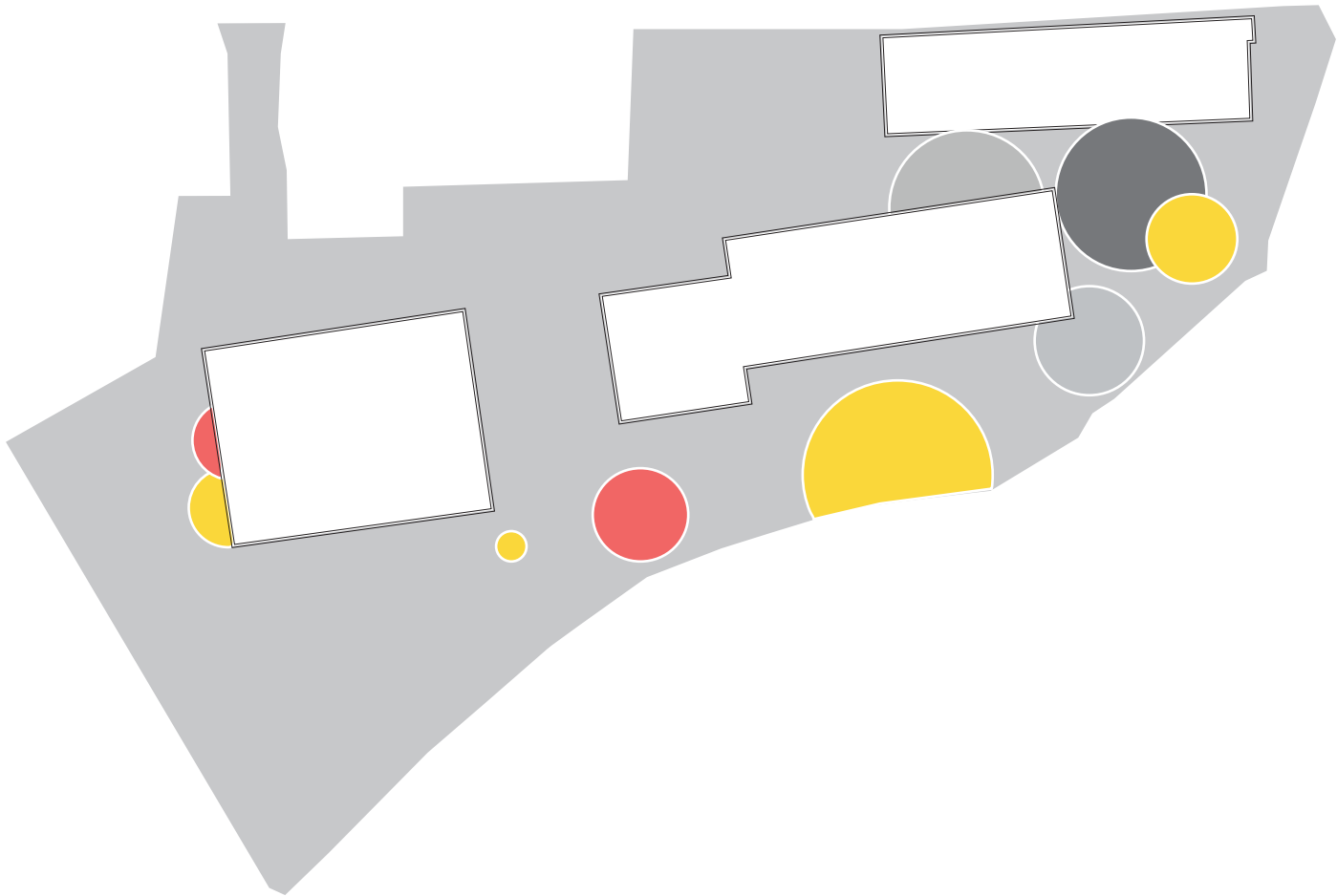
The United Dairies logo



United Dairies milk top



Danish Cream Separator, similar to the model used at the Milk Factory in the late C19th



Circular shapes and colours translated on to the external surfaces

2.4. Landscape Masterplan

The landscape and peacemaking principles helped drive the masterplan development by the consultant team, the final version of which can be seen opposite.

Legend:

1. Entrance Square
2. New Lane
3. Meoloc Square
4. Pedestrian entrance from Bath Road
5. Resident cycle store and plant area for Block F
6. Spill out space for commercial units in Block B and C
7. Riverside Square
8. Block 3 garden
9. Riverside Garden
10. Western parking area



Figure 7. Landscape Masterplan



2.5. Landscape Spaces - New Lane and Meoloc Square

New Lane and Meoloc Square are open spaces emerging from the demolition of Blocks C and D. These interconnected, open areas are designed to be flexible, allowing for various events while enhancing the site's connection with the River Avon.

Grid and circular patterns in surfacing define key zones and building thresholds, while calisthenic gym elements are subtly integrated into the changes in level and surrounding structures to facilitate warm-up and cool-down activities for users of the Block F gym.

Three large trees form focal features in the centre of the square while also providing shade during summer months.

Long seats are subtly integrated within the central circle to help define the space, while smaller disc-shaped benches are casually arranged—sometimes in groups—to encourage social meet-ups and work meetings.



Figure 8. New Lane and Eastern Square



The eastern square features a partially covered structure on the eastern elevation of Block C to house the secure residential cycle spaces along with plant equipment.

The cycle and plant storage areas are contained within a steel framework that mirrors the grid proportions of Block F’s façade. Perforated metal mesh walls enclose the cycle storage and plant areas, providing a lightness to the structure while complementing the materiality of Block B’s external staircase cladding.



Figure 9. Eastern Square cycle and plant store



Eastern elevation



Southern elevation



Northern elevation

- Key:
- 1. Curved bench
 - 2. Frame proportions of existing building continued into store structure.
 - 3. Kerb step ups
 - 4. Black metal mesh walls
 - 5. Planting for visual interest and softening
 - 6. Pull up bars and strop clips integrated into frame for gym workouts





2.5. Landscape Spaces - Riverside Square

Riverside Square opens onto the River Avon, creating a flexible public space along the newly established riverside walk.

Circular colour patterns and a white framework help define key zones—such as café frontages, the taproom, temporary market stall areas and commercial spill-out spaces—while also guiding pedestrian movement across the site.

Large trees will be planted to further distinguish these zones, soften views of the buildings from the river, and provide shade during the summer months.



Figure 10. Riverside Square





2.5. Landscape Spaces - Block 3 Gardens and Meadow Park

At the western side of Riverside Square pedestrians can continue their journey along the river and explore Meadow Park and Block 3 Gardens. These spaces offer a green transition to the fields west of the site and will provide a softer character for residents and workers to relax and socialise.

Block 3 Gardens offers spill out spaces for the adjacent studio with raised metal edging and planting providing enclosure to smaller pockets within the gardens.

Meadow park will have a natural character with long native grass and a play tree trunk helping to enclose a viewing area over the river.

Both spaces are interconnected by a footpath through the car park providing a circular route back towards Riverside Square.



Figure 11. Block 3 Gardens and Riverside Park



2.6. Residential Refuse Strategy

In developing the landscape design there are a number of parameters that need to be factored in when considering the practicalities of residential refuse collection access.

These parameters include:

Maximum distance for residents to take refuse and recycling waste to bins,

Maximum drag distance for refuse operatives to drag bins from bin stores or holding areas to refuse trucks,

A strategy has been developed that allows bins to be collected by private refuse truck operatives without them having to move bins beyond the maximum drag distance allowed.

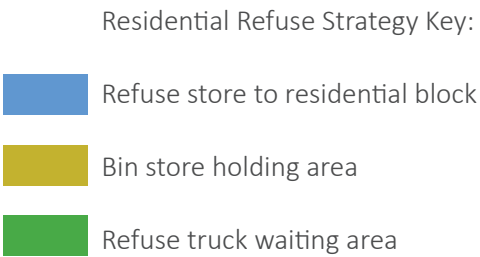


Figure 12. Refuse Strategy

2.7. Hard Surface Strategy

The materials strategy seeks to establish a simple yet elegant palette of robust and sustainable materials that complement and enhance the surrounding landscape and buildings.

Where existing surfacing is of an acceptable standard, its current build-up will be retained, with only minor interventions undertaken to improve the surface course as necessary. New surfacing will be introduced in areas where the existing condition is poor or where buildings are being removed, requiring new surface treatment.

All materials will be carefully selected from local and UK-based sources, with particular attention paid to embodied carbon. This approach aims to minimise transportation impacts and reduce the overall carbon footprint of the project.



Figure 13. Hard Surface Strategy

						
Black macadam	Thermal plastic treatment applied to macadam in red, yellow, and white	Footpath Gravel composed of granite and quartzite materials	Bracken PCC block	Slate PCC block	Silver PCC setts	Petanque court - gravel surface with timber border

2.8. Boundary and Furniture Strategy

The proposed scheme will retain the open nature across the site with minimal boundary intervention while street furniture will provide pops of colour and ‘stepping stone’ features to draw people through the site and along the river edge.

Due to the increase in public access along the river a new flat top vertical railing will be mounted on the existing flood wall.

The boundary separating the northern car park from New Broughton Road will be delineated by new tree and low level planting with year round interest to help softened views from the road while also defining a new gateway into the site.



● Tall multi head lighting columns



● Coloured seating of various shapes including some with integrated planting



Figure 14. Boundary Strategy
Proposed Boundary Features



1200mm high flat top vertical bar railing



2000m high black close board fence with matching gates



Existing vegetation to be retained, chain link fence to be replaced



Existing piers and wall to be retained



New tree and ornamental planting along New Broughton Road

2.9. Tree and Softworks Strategy

The existing site is an industrial hard space with no notable planting. This presents an opportunity to green and soften the space so it is enjoyable for residents and workers, as well as providing habitat and food for wildlife.

Tree species have been selected for their resilience within flood zones and industrial settings.

Native riverside tree species form the core of the palette in the south west of the site to complement the existing riverside green way and rural aesthetic to the west. Further into the site native tree species are complemented by ornamental varieties which offer variations in form and leaf colour to provide focal features and year round interest.

Ground level planting complements the tree strategy and provides a layering of form and texture which will help reinforce the character areas, assist way finding and increase the biodiversity value of the site.

While the overall plant palettes across the key areas are notably unique species such as *Deschampsia cespitosa* are repeated to help tie the overall scheme together.



Gleditsia triacanthos Skyline



Alnus spaethii



Ulmus 'New Horizon'



Liriodendron tulipifera



Betula utilis Jacquemontii



Amelanchier lamarckii



Acer campestre 'Elsrijk'



Betula nigra



Cornus mas



Betula pendula



Calamagrotis x acutiflora 'Karl Foerster'



Deschampsia cespitosa



Astrantia maxima



Campanula persicifolia



Cyrtomium fortune



Luzula nivea



Salvia nemorosa 'Caradonna'



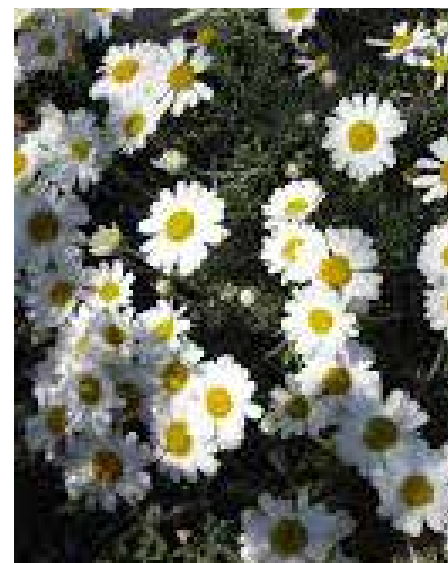
Santolina rosmarinifolia



Stachys byzantina 'Silver Carpet'



Phlox russeliana



Rhodanthemum hosmariense



Rosmarinus officinalis



Molinia caerulea 'Moorhexe'



Cornus stolonifera 'Flaviramea'



Dryopteris cycadina



Sarcococca confusa



Pachysandra terminalis 'Green Carpet'



Astrantia maxima

2.9. Parking Strategy

The proposed scheme distributes parking across the site while also enabling pedestrian access along the river.

Covered resident cycle parking is positioned in Meoloc Square close to the residential blocks while covered worker parking is distributed south of Blocks B and C and south west of Block 3. Short term cycle parking is provided across the site by way of Sheffield cycle stands located at key building entrance points.



Falco Pod bike hanger



Figure 15. Planting Strategy

- Parking Strategy Key:
- Resident parking
 - Worker and visitor parking
 - Covered resident parking
 - Covered worker parking
 - Sort term cycle parking area

GREENHALGH LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

7 Sydney Wharf,

Bath,

BA2 4EF

Registered in England

Company number 09118428
