

Banbury Civic Society

Vision for the Regeneration of Canalside



Banbury Civic Society Vision for the Regeneration of Canalside

“Good urban design interprets and builds upon the historic character, the existing landscape and the aspirations of the local communities, and arrives at a vision of what a place might become.”

Where we Live: A Guidebook to Urban Design, 2008, funded by SEEDA through South East Excellence

To achieve the potential of this new opportunity, we need a thoughtful, high quality development that provides a sustainable and contemporary environment which draws on Banbury’s extensive history to mark and root new developments. Banbury may be the ‘typical market town’ but it could be a noteworthy town where individual and unique developments reflect local concern for identity – a place of which we are proud and that we are proud to show to others.

Banbury Civic Society Canalside Working Party

Preface

As the Oxford Canal and the River Cherwell pass through Banbury, the canal and river corridor is clearly a fragile and historic, but sadly neglected, area. Once at the heart of Banbury life, the combination of river, canal, railway and road have left the area physically isolated and vulnerable to flooding. 20th-century development has broken and fragmented this part of Banbury and demonstrated how vulnerable the area is to unsuitable development.

The Banbury Civic Society believes that the proposed regeneration of the Banbury Canalside represents a major opportunity to mend past damage and to reintegrate this neglected area back into the mainstream of town life. The proposed regeneration must create a coherent, vibrant, contemporary, high quality, and sustainable environment for the benefit of Banburians and visitors alike.

The railway station provides the context for a new urban gateway and there are ample sites within the area, and adjacent to it, for sustainable residential development, including essential facilities and affordable housing. The canal and its heritage context deserve respect as one of the major sources of Banbury's historic identity and offer the potential for a future destination of character. The historic wharves and faded industrial areas offer opportunities for mixed-use communities, combining housing, employment, tourism and leisure, whilst the canal, river and their surroundings offer the potential for a green leisure lung through the south of the town.

The Banbury Civic Society welcomes the opportunity to contribute to public debate on the revitalisation of this key area of Banbury's town centre, both during the initial stakeholder discussions and through the formal public consultation process leading up to the adoption of the Council's Supplementary Planning Document for the area.

In order to inform and stimulate general interest and discussion, the Civic Society arranged two public meetings to identify issues and concerns to Banbury residents, a guided coach trip to four regenerating canal towns and a guided Sunday walk through the area.

The following comments are based on opinions expressed and notes taken at these events, comments sent to the Society by the public and discussions between the variously qualified members of the Banbury Civic Society Canalside Working Party.

Rob Kinchin-Smith (Chair, Banbury Civic Society) - Senior Historic Environment Consultant, RPS Planning & Development

Mo Mant (Vice Chair, Banbury Civic Society) – MSc in Historic Building Conservation

Laurence Carey (Banbury Civic Society Built Heritage and Planning sub-committee)

John Bell (Banbury Civic Society Transport sub-committee)

Prof. Brian Goodey – Emeritus Professor in Urban Design, Oxford Brookes University

Michael Clews ARIBA – Director, Acanthus Clews Architects

David Finlay ARIBA – Director, Acanthus Clews Architects

Vision

“... we must not sacrifice quality. To do so would be a false economy as all you end up with is places that attract crime, deter investment and harm the environment. Places that people don't like, or where they don't feel safe, soon become underused and under-loved and end up crying out for re-development.”

(World Class Places:Action Plan, Autumn 2009. Joint Foreword by Ben Bradshaw MP: Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, and Ian Austin MP: Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government)

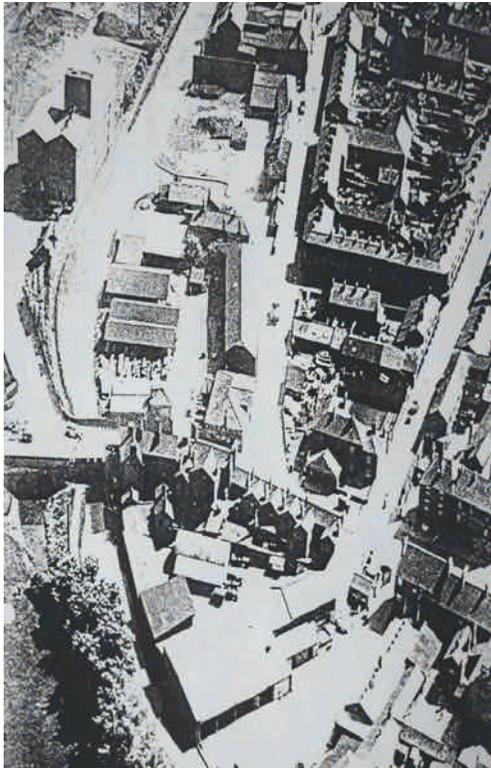
The Banbury Civic Society recognises the proposal as a major opportunity to influence the revival of Banbury. We need new facilities for the expanding local community including housing, a revival of the key canalside artery and an area which all Banbury's population adopts as its own.

The aim must be to create a varied but cohesive area that reflects both the time and place of its making: a sensitive, high quality, contemporary environment which, in reflecting its rural and industrial past, seeks to encourage pride and confidence in the future of Banbury.

Sited around such an important gateway to the town, the area should offer a distinctive world-class vision of the town to the outside world and an active world-class new environment for all the people of Banbury to enjoy.

To achieve this, we need a profitable and contemporary environment that draws on Banbury's extensive history to mark and root new developments. Banbury may be the 'typical market town' but it could be a noteworthy town, where individual and unique developments reflect local concern for identity – a place that we are proud to show to others.

Historic Background and Grain

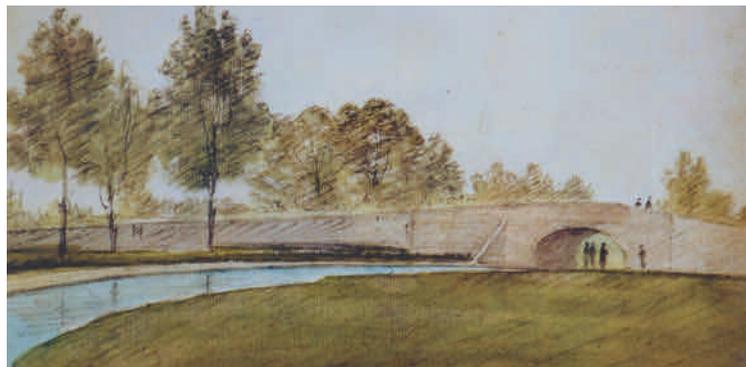
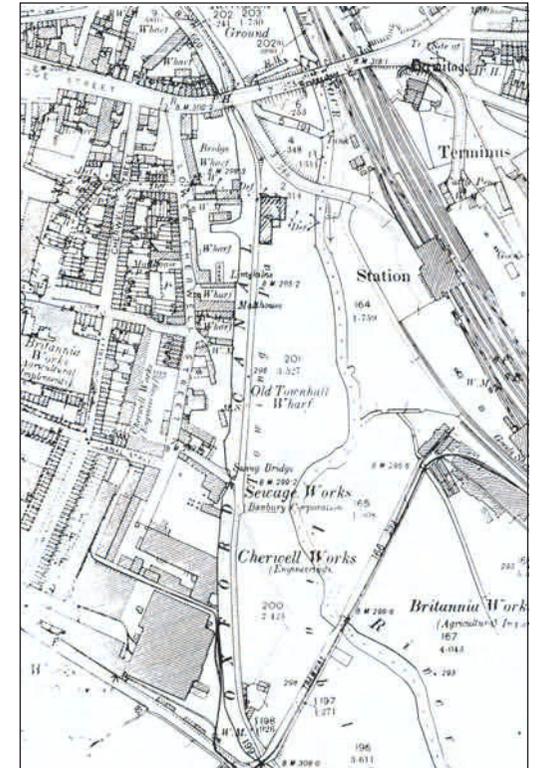


Apart from being the location for Banbury's public gallows and a short-lived river navigation during the Civil War, the 'Canalside' area comprised undeveloped, low-lying watermeadows until the arrival of James Brindley's Oxford Canal in 1779 (extended to Oxford by Banbury's John Barnes in 1790). The arrival of the canal gave access to cheap coal and to distant markets for the area's agricultural produce. Cheap coal allowed industrial growth and the production for the first time of local brick. Cheap transport and a local population of independent, non-conformist tradesmen gave rise to a new spirit of industrial and commercial enterprise. The arrival of the canal was the seminal moment in the town's transformation from a backward market town to a thriving centre of Victorian industry and commerce.

Development south of the bridge was initially limited to two wharves close to the bridge (Parker's Wharf and Bridge

Wharf), serviced by fly-boats to distant destinations and by market boats to Oxford and Coventry. These semi-public wharves were soon joined by stone landings, lime kilns and small private wharfs. All of these early wharfs were of irregular shape, with buildings set at 90 degrees to canal and / or set back behind open-fronted wharfages. Between 1840 and 1850 a thriving community of some 300 2- and 3-storey terraced artisan houses and pubs sprang up along a new grid of roads formed by Cherwell Street, Lower Cherwell Street, Cross Cherwell Street, Upper and Lower Windsor Streets, Windsor Terrace and Spring Cottages.

The area became a centre of Banbury's engineering industry at about the same time as the arrival of the railways in 1850. Samuelson's Britannia Works and Barrow & Carmichael's Cherwell Ironworks were built close together at the southern end of the area. These



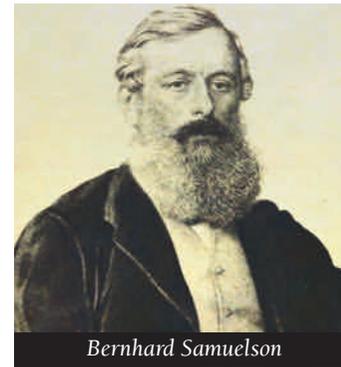
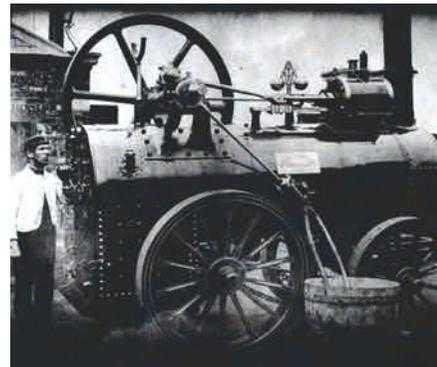
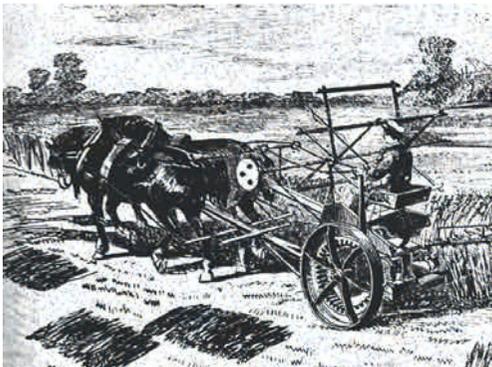
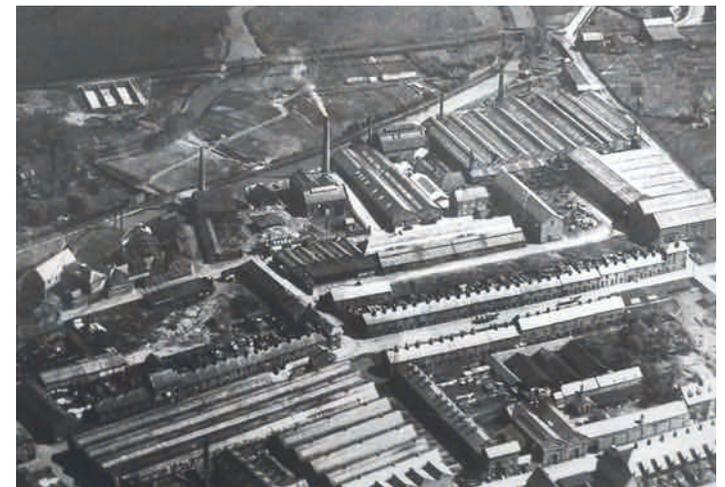
Historic Background and Grain

were by far the town's largest employers throughout the second half of the 19th Century, mass producing and supplying agricultural implements and stationary and portable steam engines respectively to global markets. These new industries were housed in large, regular single-storey ranges, laid out to the same regular grid as the contemporary residential development of Newlands, forming a complete and self-contained industrial suburb on the edge of the town. Bernhard Samuelson's paternalism and nationally famous concern for workers' education ensured that the area was well provided with all facilities at hand, including pubs, shops, churches, chapels, a police station, the Cherwell Infants' School (now Britannia Road Day Centre) and a well-appointed Mechanics' Institute (later Banbury Grammar and now Banbury Library). Samuelson was Whig MP for Banbury for much of the later 19th Century and was created a Baronet for his services to adult education.

This once-thriving area of Banbury declined in the first half of the 20th century, followed by widespread demolition in the 1960s and 1970s. Allocated for industrial development, the area became dominated by unattractive sheds that soon spread to cover the vital water meadows that still existed between the river and the canal. The arrival of the M40 and the growth of the town eastwards rendered the industrial area inconveniently placed. Its decline was hastened in the 1990s by its isolation behind a now much regretted inner relief road,

cutting it off from the town centre and isolating the town from its station.

This Vision develops a strategy for providing much-needed facilities whilst also reintegrating the area back into the centre of town life and resolving many long-standing town-planning issues that have historically split the town in two with its linear barriers of industrial development, river, canal, railway and relief road.



Existing Assets



Heritage and water are recognised internationally as providing a valuable context for residential and leisure activities.

The Canalside site is rich in existing assets and the most must be made of all of these. These assets include

- The river and canal
- Towpath on Banbury Circular Walk and National cycle network
- Good access to station and town centre
- Surviving historic street pattern, including fragments of medieval Parson's Meadow Lane and site of Banbury's gallows
- Surviving 19th-century industrial character and historic buildings, including:
 - Medieval bridge (Grade II)
 - 67-74 Bridge Street (LL)
 - 15-17 Bridge Street (LL) (Former electricity showroom)
 - ?? Bridge Street (LL) (Former Crown Inn)
 - The Blarney Stone PH, Windsor Street (former Britannia Inn) (LL)
 - Former power station, Lower Cherwell Street (LL)
 - Former corn warehouse, Lower Cherwell Street (LL)

Existing Assets

- Former Town Hall, Lower Cherwell Street (Grade II)
- Former Town Hall Wharf warehouse, office and weighbridge, Lower Cherwell Street (LL)
- Former Golden Lion PH, Lower Cherwell Street (LL)
- Abutments of Parson's Meadow Lane lift bridge, off Lower Cherwell Street (LL)
- Former sewage pump house and walls, Lower Cherwell Street (LL)
- Former Barrows and Carmichael engine works (Cherwell Ironworks), Canal Street (LL)
- Former Samuelson's agricultural implement works (Britannia Works), Swan Close Road (LL)
- North and South signal boxes, Banbury Station (LL)
- Brunel bridge, Station Approach
- Banbury Station (not particularly historic, but fit for purpose and with generous accommodation)

(Note: LL = Locally Listed. Entries in red are proposed for demolition under the draft SPD or other associated proposals)



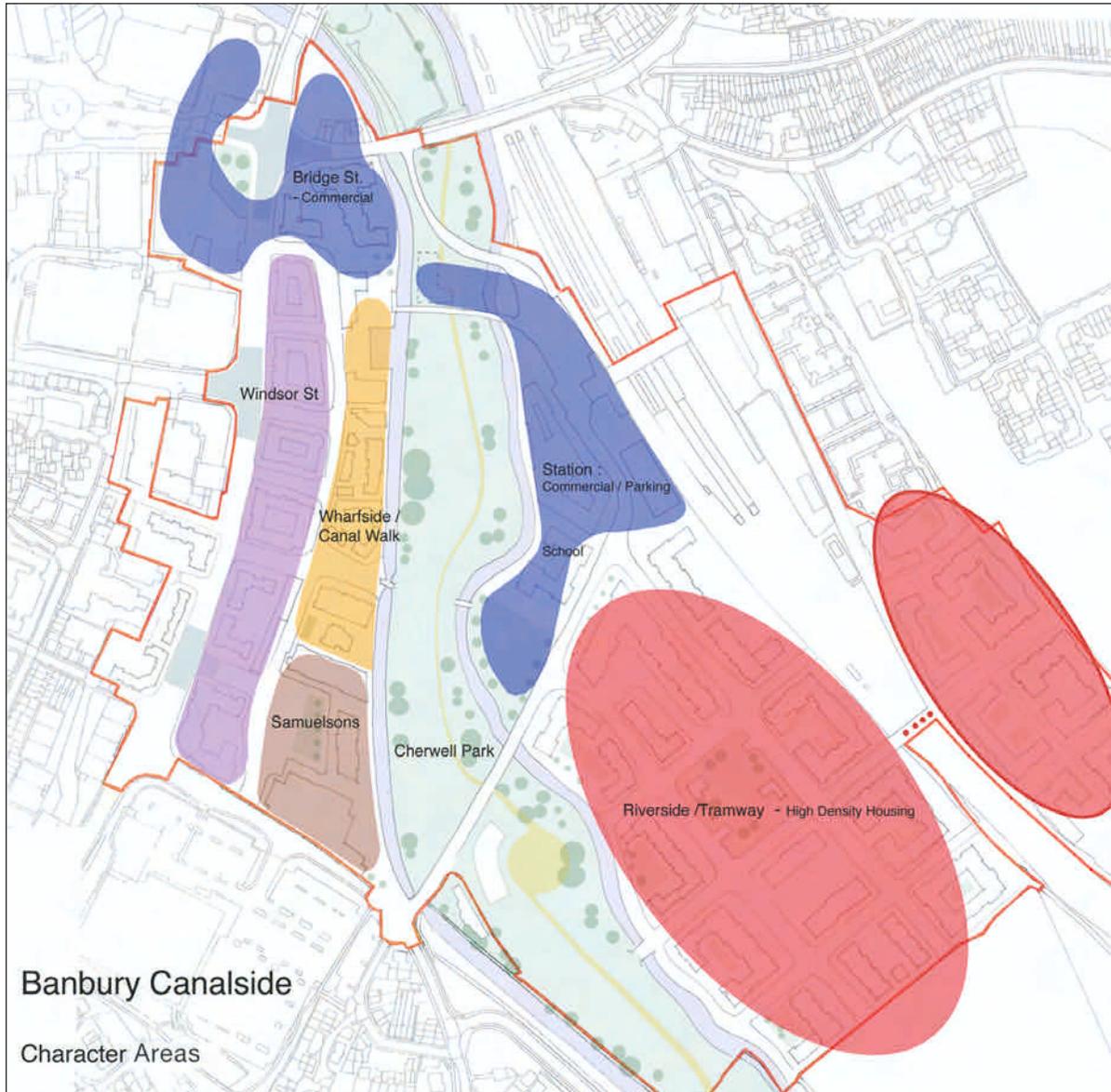
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(Where we Live: A Guidebook to Urban Design, 2008, funded by SEEDA through South East Excellence)

“Historic Buildings provide a foundation for the regeneration of many of our towns and cities. Regenerating these buildings can reinforce a sense of community, make an important contribution to the local economy and act as a catalyst for improvements to the wider area. They should not be retained as artefacts, relics of bygone age. New uses should be allowed in the buildings and sensitive adaptations facilitated, when the reuse of an historic building is no longer relevant or viable.”

Role of Historic Buildings in Urban Regeneration: House of commons Select Committee report 2004

Banbury Civic Society *Alternative* Character Areas



Banbury Civic Society Area 1: Bridge Street

Existing Problems

1. Transport

- Traffic congestion (Station Approach, Bridge Street and Bridge Street crossroads)
- Formidable pedestrian barriers (Bridge Street crossroads and Cherwell Street)
- Dislocation between bus and railway stations

2. Townscape and Building Style

- Existing haphazard and incoherent modern development (South side of Bridge Street and Cherwell Street)
- Lack of boat turning-point
- Erosion of historic wharf configuration
- Loss / privatisation of public and semi-public wharfs (notably Bridge Wharf)
- Neglect and alteration of Locally Listed Victorian buildings on north side of Bridge Street (Scheduled for demolition in draft SPD)

3. Land Use

- Poor current land use
- Existing 'big' and 'medium' retail in the lower town has steadily killed trade in the 'Old Town'
- No canalside public open space

4. Permeability

- Poor pedestrian links between town centre, bus station and railway station
- Poor access to canal
- Listed medieval openings of Banbury's 13th-century bridge are hidden and inaccessible



Banbury Civic Society Area 1: Bridge Street

Necessary Deliverables

1. Transport

- The Canalside development will not work without the much needed South-East link road (Bankside to Thorpe Way), with a link to the east side of the station
- New through route from Tramway to Bridge Street (draft SPD shows this route blocked)
- Left in / left out only from station entrance onto Bridge Street (except buses and taxis)
- Traffic taming – removal of traffic lights and street markings on Bridge Street crossroads and raised table pedestrian surfacing over the north end of Cherwell Street
- Removal of bus station to railway station forecourt.

2. Townscape and Building Style

- Retention and enhancement of historic buildings on Bridge Street, presenting an appropriate historic town gateway.
- High-quality and locally-distinctive contemporary buildings of up to

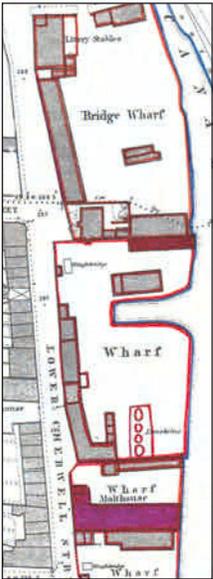
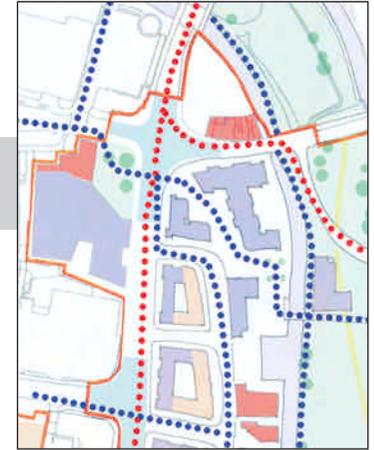
three storeys, laid out in traditional wharf pattern (buildings set at 90 degrees to canal edge or set back behind open wharfage)

3. Land Use

- Active street frontage on south side of Bridge Street
- Bridge Wharf canal basin, with active use, surrounded by public space and interesting active building frontages
- Genuine mix of uses including residential, niche retail, commercial and leisure (Big or medium retail uses would be better located on the former Sainsbury's site on Calthorpe Street)

4. Permeability

- Appealing pedestrian route from town centre to station, via Bridge Wharf and a new canal bridge, with landmark features, public spaces and implicit pedestrian guidance
- Pedestrian gateway from Bridge Wharf to Bridge Street
- Access to (and through) medieval bridge arches
- Improved pedestrian access to towpath



Banbury Civic Society Area 2: Windsor Street



Existing Problems

General Comment:

This corridor between the established town and the new development is critical in offering an interface that respects the existing characteristics of both Canalside and Newlands and which encourages integration and movement between the old and new areas of town. *This should not be a traffic-dominated interface*, but rather a mixed-use street, encouraging pedestrian use, and access to the canal and streets on either side. The area offers a good central site for affordable housing.

1. Street pattern

- Formidable visual and pedestrian barrier (Upper Windsor Street / Cherwell Street boulevard) (The draft SPD allows for road widening)

- Pollution and noise from heavy (and increasing) traffic

2. Townscape and Building Style

- Existing haphazard and incoherent modern development (Cherwell Street and Upper Windsor Street)

- Inactive Street frontages

- Coarse grain of modern development

- Broken and diluted eastern edge / lack of enclosure to the Newlands Victorian suburb

3. Land Use

- Poor use of land

- Lack of residential element

4. Permeability

- Impermeable industrial development

- Need for appealing pedestrian routes from Newlands to the canal

'We cannot solve existing problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them'.

Albert Einstein



Banbury Civic Society Area 2: Windsor Street

Necessary Deliverables

1. Street pattern

- Traffic calming, with traffic relieved by South-East link road (Bankside to Thorpe Way) and new through route from Tramway to Bridge Street (draft SPD shows this route blocked)
- Traditional side streets and pathways

2. Townscape and Building Style

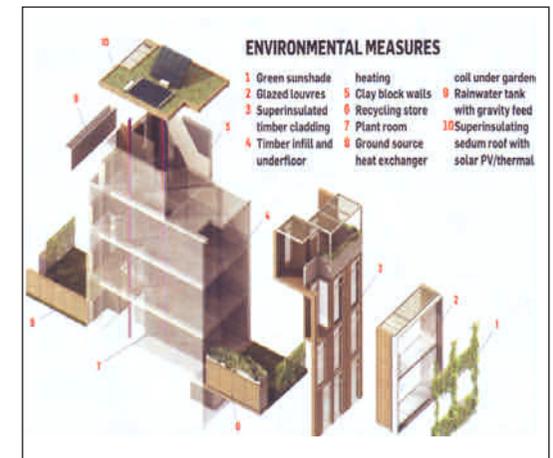
- Close-grained, rhythmic, active frontages of up to 3_ storeys, to respect the rhythm and texture of the Newlands suburb

3. Land Use

- High density, primarily residential development (social and private)
- Localised, small-scale commercial elements to extend pedestrian vitality of the town centre.

4. Permeability

- Traditional side streets and pathways
- Attractive, pedestrian-friendly road crossings



Banbury Civic Society Area 3: Wharfside (Canal Walk)



Existing Problems

General Comment:

Potentially one of the most interesting areas of the development. Its original wharf areas offer numerous opportunities for access to the canal and, potentially, areas for leisure activities. To reflect this, the area could more properly be named Wharfside. The proposed retention of locally listed buildings and the fine grain of the area provide a sound design basis for imaginative, contemporary buildings that respect their context. The area needs to maintain and improve its access to the Oxford Canal and maximise the many opportunities provided by the canal.

1. Street pattern

- Loss of traditional side streets and pathways
- Loss of / lack of canalside access and crossing points

2. Townscape and Building Style

- Neglect and alteration of Locally Listed historic industrial buildings
- Neglect and erosion of historic landscape elements

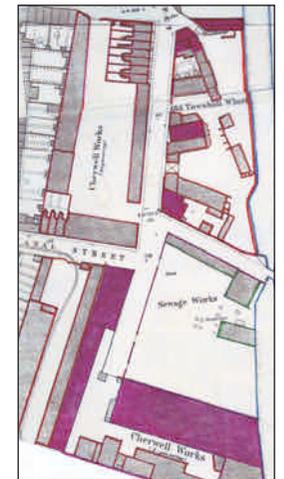
- Loss / privatisation of public and semi-public wharfs
- Insensitive and repetitive 20th-century industrial structures
- Loss of traditional enclosure on west side of Lower Cherwell Street

3. Land Use

- Exclusively commercial land-uses
- Too many low-grade uses
- Lack of public / semi-public uses and spaces

4. Permeability

- Impermeable industrial development
- Loss of side streets and paths to canal and Cherwell Street / Upper Windsor Street
- Lack of pedestrian access to Swan Close Road



Banbury Civic Society Area 3: Wharfside (Canal Walk)

Necessary Deliverables

1. Street pattern

- Retention of Canal Street, Lower Cherwell Street and Cross Cherwell Street
- Restoration of 'lost' east-west Parsons Meadow Lane
- Fine grain of new side streets, pathways and canalside wharfs

2. Townscape and Building Style

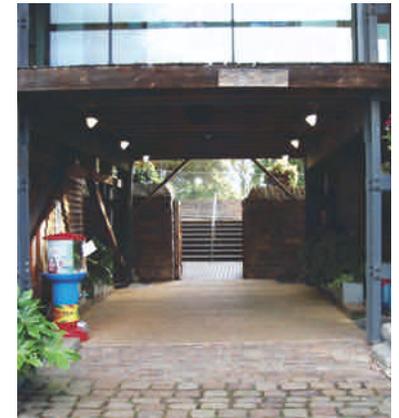
- Retention and enhancement of all Locally Listed historic industrial buildings and surviving walls, weighbridge etc
- Some close-grained, small scale 2, 2_ and 3-storey residential and commercial units on west side of Lower Cherwell Street
- Creation of new hard-landscaped, semi-public spaces with active building frontages between Lower Cherwell Street and canal (buildings set at 90 degrees to canal edge or set back behind open wharfage)
- Use of locally appropriate patterns and textures to buildings, streetscape and hard landscaping
- Creation of narrow, enclosed views and spaces

3. Land Use

- Wide range of mixed commercial uses (small-scale service, employment, live/work), to provide character and vitality
- Commercial buildings to include some new build and the historical industrial buildings
- Some small-scale residential units on west side of Lower Cherwell Street
- Bridge Wharf canal basin, with active use, surrounded by public space and interesting active building frontages up to 3 storeys

4. Permeability

- Retention of Canal Street and Cross Cherwell Street
- New and restored side streets and paths to canal and Cherwell Street Upper Windsor Street
- New pedestrian access to Swan Close Road
- Interconnected semi-public 'wharf' courtyards beside canal



Banbury Civic Society Area 4: Samuelsons

Existing Problems

General Comment:

With its agricultural implement works (Samuelsons) and its portable steam engine works (Barrows & Carmichael), this area lay at the very heart of Banbury's 19th-century engineering district, supplying thousand of machines to world markets. Despite retaining a number of Locally Listed historic buildings that commemorate Banbury's once great Victorian engineering industry, this area is proposed for complete redevelopment under the draft SPD. We believe that the surviving historic buildings could instead form an attractive courtyard housing mixed commercial / leisure / retail uses that would be both a 'destination' at the south end of Wharfside (Canal Walk) as well as forming a local leisure focus for the Canalside, Cherwell Heights and Bankside residential areas.

1. Street pattern and permeability

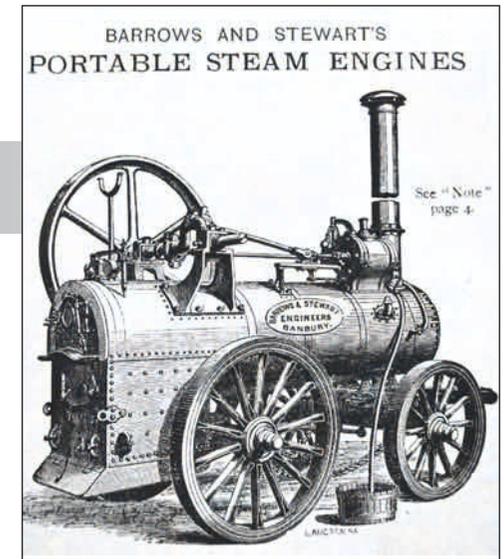
- Impermeable industrial development - No existing street pattern
- No canalside access

2. Land Use

- Exclusively commercial land-uses
- Barrows works (latterly Burgess) now in low-grade uses
- Lack of any public / semi-public uses and spaces

3. Townscape and Building Style

- Neglect and alteration of Locally Listed historic industrial buildings
- Neglect and erosion of remaining historic landscape elements
- Historic buildings blighted by later big sheds



Banbury Civic Society Area 4: Samuelsons

Necessary Deliverables

1. Street pattern and permeability

- New town square on pedestrian through routes from Wharfside (Canal Walk) to Swan Close Road and Tramway

2. Land Use

- Vibrant 'destination' mixed commercial, retail and leisure development focussed on new town square (not proposed in draft SPD)

3. Townscape and Building Style

- Retention and enhancement of all Locally Listed historic industrial buildings (not proposed in draft SPD)
- New development to reflect scale and massing of historic single-storey industrial buildings
- Use of industrial paving patterns and textures (granite setts etc)
- Creation of narrow, enclosed views and spaces



Banbury Civic Society Area 5: Cherwell Park



Existing Problems

General Comment:

This tight interfluvial site running through the centre of the Canalside development area was proposed as a linear continuation of Spiceball Park in the initial consultation masterplan for the area. Despite the unanimous public welcome for the concept and the logic of using the land between the river and canal for flood attenuation, the park is replaced with a large area of high-density flats in the draft SPD. Misleadingly, in the SPD character area plan, this area is coloured in green and titled Cherwell Park.

Heritage and water are recognised internationally as providing a valuable context for residential and leisure activities and provision should be made for public access to the area's watersides. An area which had great potential to be an extension of Spiceball Park through the town is sacrificed in the draft SPD to bland, high-density flats with poor access, located in a flood risk area. In this Vision, the original layout of a long, linear park between the river and canal has been reverted to, providing access to all areas of the new development and able to act as flood attenuation for the neighbouring areas. Lost residential opportunities here can be met in Character Area 7 – Riverside / Tramway, with some increase in height and some local loss of the green spaces proposed there.

1. Street pattern and permeability

- Poor access across river and canal
- No access to river
- No direct access to towpath



2. Land Use

- Low grade trailer park and commercial uses only
- Lack of public / semi-public uses and spaces
- Land raised above natural levels: No flood attenuation potential and creating flood risks elsewhere

3. Townscape and Building Style

- Unattractive big sheds blight views across area
- Poor towpath and river environments
- Existing buildings turn their backs to the canal and river
- Unattractive big sheds blight views across area
- Poor towpath and river environments
- Existing buildings turn their backs to the canal and river
- Historic buildings blighted by later big sheds



Banbury Civic Society Area 5: Cherwell Park

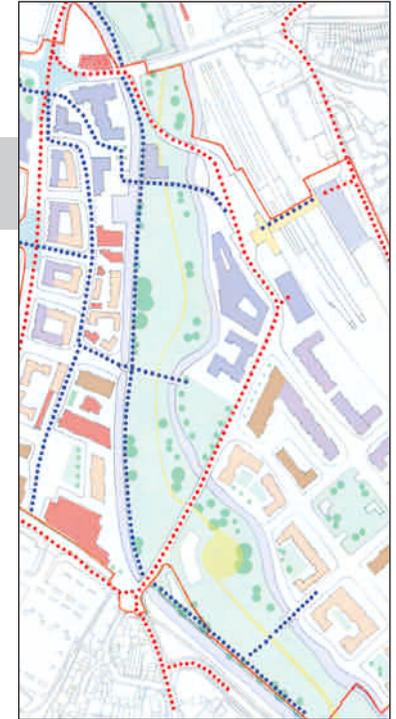
Necessary Deliverables

1. Street pattern and permeability

- Direct linkage to Spiceball Park and Cultural Quarter through medieval bridge arches
- Direct linkage to Bankside and watermeadows to the south of the town
- Direct linkages to Station (Area 6) and Tramway (Area 7)
- Reinstatement of Parsons Meadow Land lift bridge to create links with Area 3 (Wharfside (Canal Walk))
- Continuous access to river and canal

2. Land Use

- 'Green lung' linear extension to Spiceball Park between river and canal
- Playing pitches for public and primary school use
- Other areas of park at lower level as flood zones
- OCC Social Services building retained



Existing planning guidance emphasises the vital functions that urban green spaces perform as areas for nature conservation and biodiversity and by acting as 'green lungs'. Planning guidance also stresses the important role of urban green spaces, sports and recreational facilities in promoting healthy living, and in improving people's sense of well-being in the place they live (PPS17).

H.M. Government World Class Places : Action plan 2009



Banbury Civic Society Area 6: Station

Existing Problems

General Comment:

Banbury desperately needs a welcoming gateway station and practical transport interchange. The draft SPD fails to resolve bus, car and taxi access, with no through route and lack of resolution of traffic problems on Middleton Road and on the Bridge Street junction. The proposed 24-hour bridge access east/west for pedestrians together with appropriate multi-storey car parks are to be welcomed, but significant local issues need to be resolved. Recent (Nov 09) Lord Adonis recommendations regarding the customer experience of railway stations requires recognition.

1. Transport and Road Access

- Lack of integrated Rail / Bus interchange
- No through route past station
- Dispersed and inconvenient car parking
- Difficulties of peak hour access from Bridge Street to station and car parks
- Lack of station access via Tramway
- Lack of vehicular access to station access east of the bridge

2. Pedestrian Access

- Unattractive and dangerous pedestrian access from town centre
- Poor access to canal towpath and Castle Quay
- Poor pedestrian access to Spiceball and proposed Cultural Quarter
- No pedestrian access to east side of station

3. Land Use, Townscape and Building Style

- Unattractive environs round station area
- Lack of a memorable destination of character and interest
- Lack of vibrant urban activities surrounding station



Banbury Civic Society Area 6: Station

Necessary Deliverables

1. Transport and Road Access

- Integrated Rail / Bus interchange (not proposed in draft SPD)
- Decked car parks to east and west of station for exclusive station use
- New through route from Tramway to Bridge Street (draft SPD shows this route blocked)
- Left in / left out only from station entrance onto Bridge Street (except busses and taxis)
- Vehicular access to east side of station, with links to Tramway and to South-East link road (Bankside to Thorpe Way)

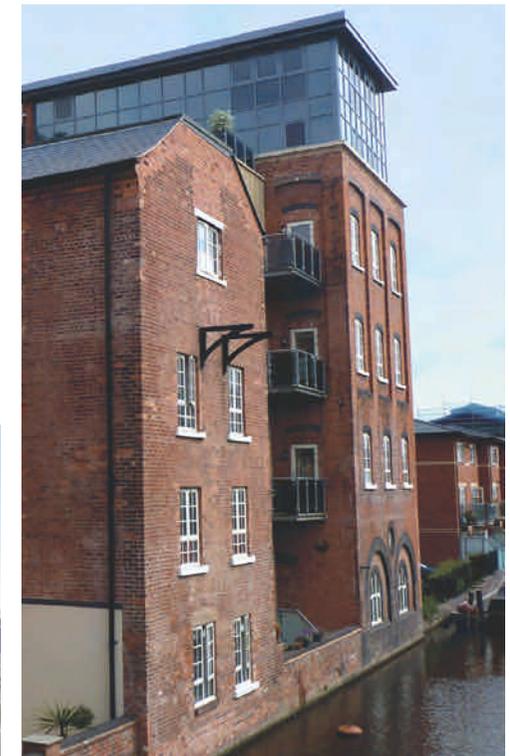
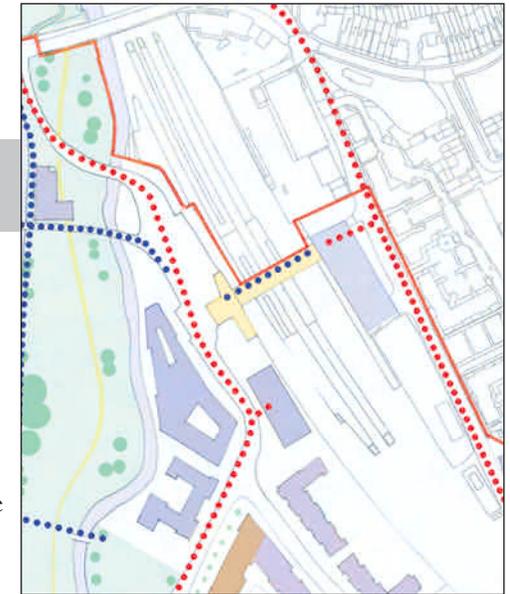
2. Pedestrian Access

- Appealing pedestrian route from town centre to station, via Bridge Wharf and a new canal bridge, with landmark features, public spaces and implicit pedestrian guidance
- Traffic calming – removal of traffic lights and street markings on Bridge Street crossroads and raised table pedestrian surfacing over the north end of Cherwell Street
- 24-hour public pedestrian bridge east/west across station
- New access through medieval bridge to Spiceball and Cultural Quarter
- Improved access to canal towpath and Castle Quay



3. Land Use, Townscape and Building Style

- Retention of existing station, considered fit for purpose
- Retention and enhancement of Brunel bridge on Station Approach bridge and locally-listed North and South signal boxes
- Enhancement of river environs and medieval bridge
- High quality, contemporary Boutique station hotel (4-storey with tower feature), overlooking Bridge Wharf and canal basin
- Gibbet to commemorate Banbury's medieval public gallows



Existing Problems

General Comment:

The industrial uses on both sides of the railway are an inappropriately sited and a poor use of land so close to the railway and town centre. In the draft SPD, both the area between the railway and the river, and between the river and canal are given over to a large, new residential zone of 2- and 3-bed houses of ill-defined character, with little or no provision for commercial or employment opportunities. There seems to be little provision of practical road or service access. There seems to be little recognition of the area's potential role to accommodate a continuation of the linear park concept, linking the town centre, the Tramway development and the watermeadows beyond. Whilst this area is designated for a primary school, the reference to a 'community hub' in the draft SPD is a mystery as there appear to be no cafes, shops or other 'casual' places where people would normally congregate within the Specifications. The draft SPD does not address the barrier of the railway to east-west pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

Natural and artificial provides a valuable context for residential and leisure activities and provision should be made for public access to the area's watersides. In this Vision, the Tramway (Banbury Island) has been given over to the 'green lung' of Cherwell Park. To compensate for this, to improve east/west traffic flows and to make use of unsightly derelict industrial land to the east of the station, in this Vision the Riverside / Tramway character area crosses the railway tracks. We are undaunted by the idea of a very strong and dramatic urban edge abutting the Cherwell meadows to the south of the town. The area lends itself well to being a

small contemporary eco-development, incorporating imaginative, sustainable design at the highest level. We believe that between four and even six storeys may be locally possible, subject to rooftop gardens, green roofs and innovative layering and modelling of façades.

1. Transport and Road Access

- Access by Tramway only
- Lack of station access via Tramway
- No through route past station
- Lack of vehicular access to east of the railway

2. Land Use, Townscape and Building Style

- Unattractive and declining
- Poor towpath and river environments
- Existing buildings turn their backs to the canal and river



Banbury Civic Society Area 7: Riverside / Tramway

Necessary Deliverables

1. Transport and Road Access

- Through route to station and Bridge Street via Tramway
- Road bridge across railway, linking development to local road network and link to South/East link road (Bankside to Thorpe Way)
- Bridge link to underused Spittal Farm allotment site

2. Land Use, Townscape and Building Style

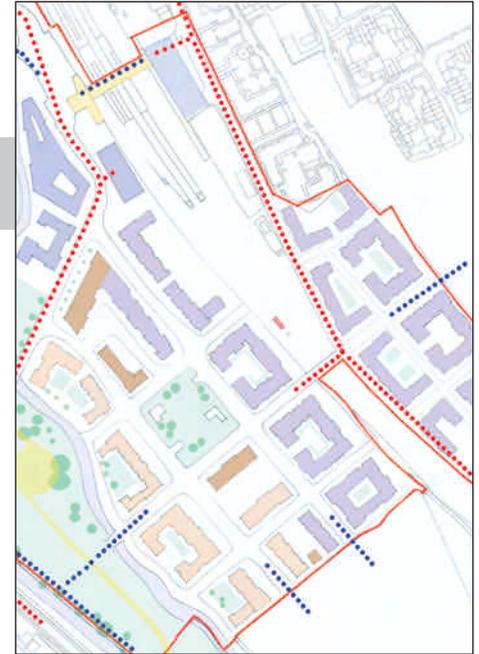
- Contemporary, high-density eco-development, incorporating imaginative, sustainable design at the highest level

- Linked public and private green areas, creating visible, and largely accessible, green areas, for the benefit of residents and visitors

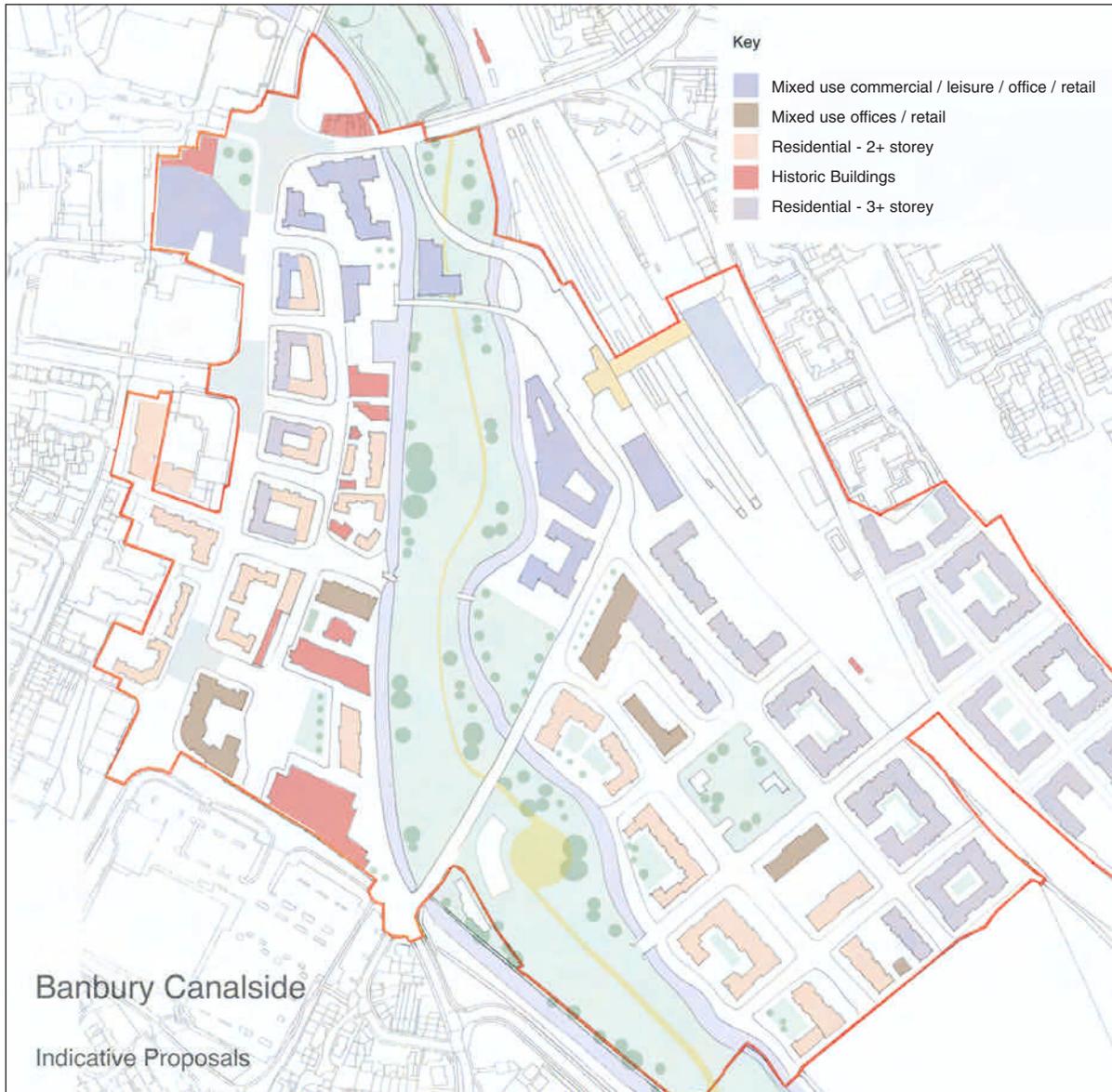
- High density private and social housing and apartments (3+ storeys) grouped to form clusters around green spaces and play areas, where social interaction can take place

- Primary school

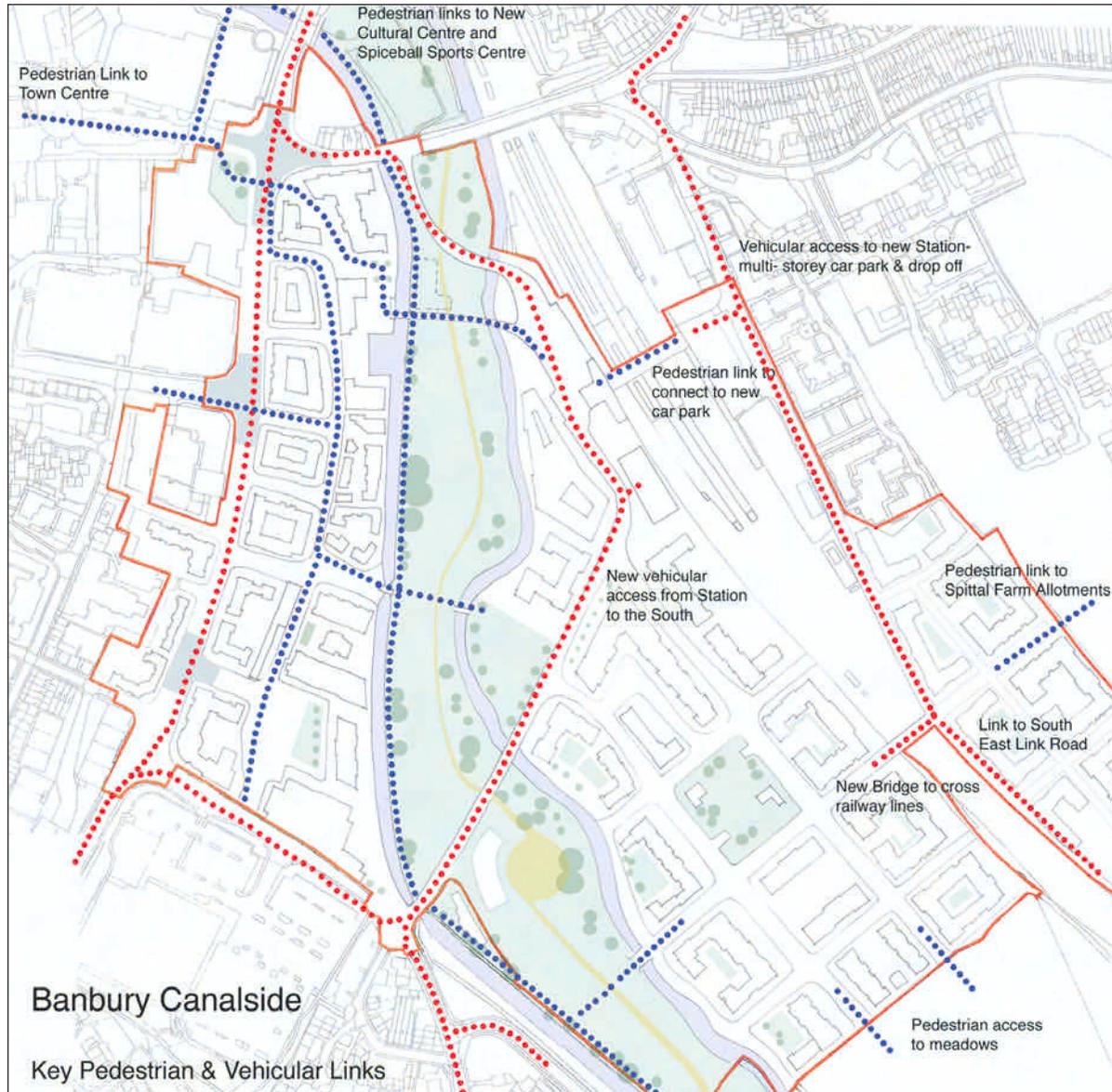
- 'Community hub' with cafes, shops and other 'casual' places for social congregation and interaction



Banbury Civic Society Canalside Vision: Indicative Proposals



Key Links



How the site will be delivered

We believe that identifying the appropriate delivery model for this site is absolutely central to its success or failure. In the post-credit-crunch world, beset with sustainability and population issues, there are very few certainties about what future development will look like and how it will be funded. We thus believe that it is very important indeed that the adopted delivery model is not reliant on models, ideas or philosophies that may already be past their real sell-by date.

With a coming age of post-recession austerity and a changing political climate, it seems very likely that 'Blair box' architecture, buy-to-let tenement blocks, monolithic, single builder housing schemes and half-completed 'regenerated' town centres will become the loathed symbols of an unsustainable 15-year boom of unfettered speculation. It also seems possible that the site may come forward in a much slower and in smaller units than may have been considered normal only a few years ago. It thus seems to be essential that the SPD, when it emerges, recognises and allows for the site to come forward gradually, organically and possibly in small parcels. It must allow for the likelihood of changing patterns in home ownership (e.g. the likelihood of more social provision of housing stock) and for changing attitudes to what has hitherto been deemed acceptable for speculative development to do to the valued environment of our historic town centres.

In such circumstances, a model we are particularly uncomfortable with is the 'super regeneration' model, comprising wholesale clearance of the site and the upfront provision of a network of new road infrastructure and fully remediated, decontaminated, fully-serviced building plots. Such a

model pre-judges the rapidly changing demands of the market, delivers plots that may be overpriced due to what may be seen in hindsight to have been unnecessary and inappropriate front-end costs. If the recovery is slow (and even if it is not), such a model runs the risk not only of leaving many currently viable businesses without affordable premises but also of leaving an enormous hole at the centre of town, containing nothing but a few boarded-up historic buildings, streets going nowhere, no new public space and a landscape of nothing but hoarded building plots surfaced only with the crushed remains of formerly useful buildings.

Because there is no requirement in the detailed Specifications for each area for community facilities, office space, live-work space, a canal basin nor for any significant areas of public open space, it is clear that the only way the whole site or the individual character area are envisaged as coming forward is under a large-scale planning application by either a single developer or a consortium of developers. We believe that this may be both an undesirable and, probably, unlikely scenario. To allow for the possibility of the site being rolled out in smaller units over a sustained period of, say, up to twenty years, we believe that the SPD must contain much more detail about the phasing of the development and much more detail in the masterplanning and Specifications for each Character Area.

It is our most strongly-held belief that there are much more successful, sustainable, low risk and less aggressive models for regeneration. The site, whilst neglected and damaged, has great assets in terms of location, historic character and, most importantly the key assets of both natural and artificial

How the site will be delivered (cont.)

water: We believe that the site stands the very best chance of regenerating itself naturally and with the highest chance of success subject to the following:

- The key areas of the site are made as attractive as possible at the earliest opportunity. This might include public realm works in the Bridge Street / Bridge Wharf area, cosmetic or external 'shell' works to the site's more neglected historic buildings and, possibly even the creation of the promised canal basin. Such works might be funded jointly by an external regeneration agency (English Partnerships / SEEDA, an English Heritage HERS grant / HLF Townscape Heritage Initiative (subject to a Canalside conservation area) and directly by the Council. Such advance works could be repaid over time through a levy on future developments.
- The entirety of the land between the river and canal be allocated as future public and semi-public open space, for reasons of flood attenuation, public recreation and providing an attractive development environment. Such a park could be rolled out in phases if linked directly to the SPD's internal phasing.
- All of the site's remaining historic assets be left intact and in use until acceptable and concrete development proposals come forward
- The final Supplementary Planning Guidance must allow adequate flexibility to accommodate changing development demands, climate change and sustainability requirements and changing public tastes and desires in terms of retail, leisure, travel and architecture

- The final Supplementary Planning Guidance must contain sufficient rigidity in terms of street pattern, access, permeability and green infrastructure to allow the site the develop in smaller plots without public facilities being squeezed out. And finally
- The SPD must contain strong guidance on the phasing of the development (currently wholly lacking) so as to give confidence that SPD area and individual Character Areas are not blighted by long-term vacancy or premature clearance.

ENDS

Appendix 1

Public Consultation Masterplan, LDA DESIGN (April 2009)



**Public
Consultation
Masterplan,
LDA DESIGN
(April 2009)**

Background

Banbury Canalside is the name by which is now known the 20Ha of land between Banbury town centre and railway station. The council identified the land as part of a wider Regeneration Area (including land known as the Cattle Market east of the railway line) in its non-statutory Local Plan (Policy S5) and promoted its transformation into a residential-led, mixed use development. This same proposal was promoted by the council in its more recent Issues & Options Report for the Banbury & North Cherwell Site Allocations Development Plan Document (sites CDA1 and CDA2) in 2006.

With the support of HCA, the council subsequently commissioned a masterplan for Banbury Canalside in order to provide sufficient information for its SHLAA to enable it then to identify the land as a Strategic Site in its Core Strategy. The council has decided that this is a more effective means of assessing the impacts of development alongside other spatial planning issues and promoting the allocation through its Local Development Framework (LDF).

Considerable consultations have been undertaken with key stakeholders, including landowners, public sector organisations, the Environment Agency and Chiltern Railways. A workshop was held with these stakeholders in July 2008, as well as two meetings of a Landowner Forum.

Banbury Canalside should be conceived as a major opportunity to create a fresh residential led development at the heart of Banbury. The site has several key attributes that make it unique. These are opportunities to shape the nature and character of the place and its relationship to the town centre:

- Canal
- River
- Proximity to public transport
- At the edge of the town centre
- Direct connection to countryside to north and south
- Adjacent to some high quality townscape
- Valley location
- Industrial archaeological assets

Vision

- A new sustainable residential neighbourhood
- A chance to live close to countryside and town
- A characterful and historic canalside location brought back into the town
- A place to live next to the river and its natural assets
- A strong link joining the town centre to the station
- A 'full stop' and destination for the town centre

Assumptions

- No school provision
- Football club will move
- Overall number of dwellings set
- Housing mix set
- Station car park will be 500 spaces each side of rail line
- Heritage issues and how addressed have been decided
- Flooding
- Access arrangements

Concept Plan



Land Budget

Gross development area	18.15 ha		
Net development area	10.43 ha		
Dwellings	1,207		
1b Flats	361	30%	3,186 m ²
2b Flats	96	8%	10,774 m ²
2b 2S terraces	307	25%	1,616 m ²
3b 2S terraces	21	2%	
3b 3S terraces	316	26%	37,177 m ²
4B 2S semi-detached houses	70	6%	
4b 3S houses	36	3%	
Public open space			2,430
Population			193
Primary pupils			

Related work yet to be done

- Phase 1 Ecology Study
- Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Exception Test
- Review of ground conditions
- Review of utility provision on the site
- Review of noise and air pollution
- Outline Transport Assessment
- Consultation events
- Ongoing work on Flood Alleviation Scheme

Appendix 2

Public
Consultation
Masterplan,
CDC / LDA DESIGN
(November 2009)

