



3.0

Conceptual Framework

3. Conceptual Framework

The aim of the conceptual framework is to create a context which relates to the existing urban fabric for proposals which ensure that they promote the objectives derived from the baseline study. The Conceptual Framework sets proposals within each of the Character Areas that are identified and numbered appropriately as under each of the Objectives headings:

- **Development (DEV)**
- **Urban Environment (UENV)**
- **Gateways (GATE)**
- **Water Environment (WENV)**

Elements of the Conceptual Framework are then explored in more detail to produce schematic designs for some of the important streetscape works and for the Severn Meadows area.

3.1 Character Areas

The town centre has been divided into four main character areas:

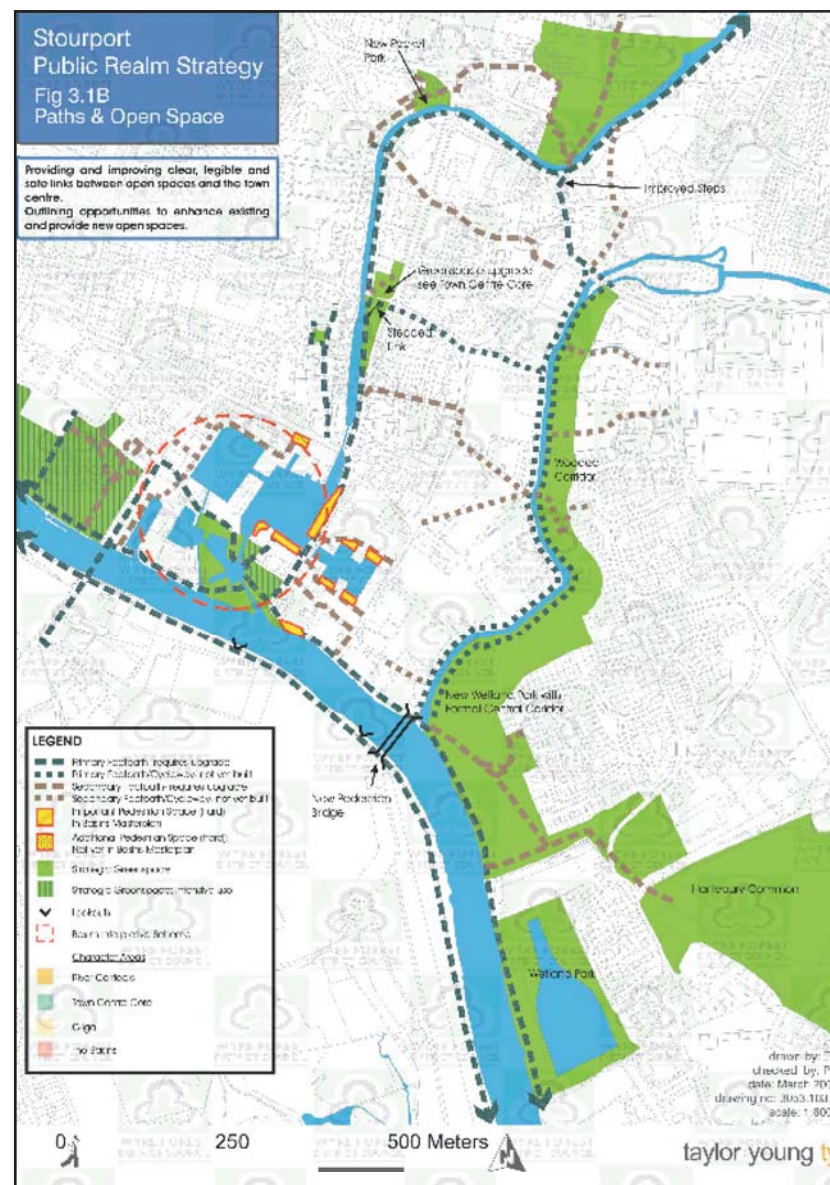
- **Town Centre Core**
- **The Canal Basins**
- **Rivers Severn and Stour**
- **Gilgal**

The character areas define the type of street, space, built development and public realm that any new development should relate to within the town. Functions, Themes and Proposals for each character area are described in the remainder of this section and shown on Figures 3.1A and 3.1B. Section 5 of this report details the styles of street furniture that is appropriate in these areas.

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Figure 3.1B
Paths and Open
Space



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3.2 Town Centre Core Proposals

The Town Centre Core constitutes the main Georgian Town which was built after the introduction of the canal and basins. The built fabric is of a coherent and largely complete character, but it is largely let down by the public realm which does little to recognise this historic environment.

Functions: retail commercial core, pedestrian environment, accommodating traffic, services, public transport, parking, loading, recreation.

Themes: link with historical setting, improve pedestrian and urban environment to promote the retail core and attract residents to use the town centre.

Proposals:

- **Improve streetscape and pedestrian environment by reducing car dominance through alterations to junction and street layout and improvement in surfacing. These are shown schematically in Section 3.7 (UENV1).**
- **Good quality furniture and lighting selected to be sympathetic with conservation area designation status but hint of forward looking dynamism rather than pastiche, shown in Section 5 (UENV2).**
- **Define gateways to the Town Centre Core at canal crossings using visually permeable balustrades and lighting (GATE1).**
- **Create southern gateway at River Severn crossing with artwork, road surfacing and lighting to reinforce natural gateway of the bridge and the twin pubs. This in-carriageway gateway feature is in-part designed to slow traffic speeds as they approach the courtesy crossing at Engine Lane (see Section 3.7) (GATE2).**
- **Improve paving and lighting on Parkes Passage (UENV3)**
- **Formalise shared surface on Engine Lane by improved surfacing and lighting (UENV4)**
- **Formalise shared surface on Coopers Lane by improved surfacing and lighting (UENV5)**
- **New stepped link down to canal opposite the Star pub (UENV6)**
- **Improve War Memorial gardens and Villeneuve-le-Roi Gardens (UENV7).**
- **Feature artwork for entrance to Methodist Chapel Gardens from High St (UENV8).**
- **Re-claim Vale Road as a pedestrian friendly environment through improvement to pavements, lighting and a long-term development strategy (UENV9)**
- **New pedestrian crossing on Vale Road opposite the public car park (UENV10)**
- **New pocket park between the library and the canal on Foundry Street (UENV11)**
- **New gateway artwork feature visible from Minster Road junction associated with the proposed pocket park (GATE3)**
- **Investigate possibility of two-way traffic on York Street and Lion Hill to reduce traffic levels on High Street. This may require removing the existing right turn from Lickhill Road into Lion Hill, to avoid the need for traffic light controlled junctions (UENV12)**
- **Investigate alternate, contra-flow cycle lane on Lion Hill (UENV13)**
- **Propose one-way (west to east) traffic on Lichfield Street and build pavement on southern side (UENV14)**
- **Improve pedestrian safety and convenience for crossing the Vale Road / Mitton Street junction from all directions (UENV15)**

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3.3 The Canal Basins Proposals

The Canal Basins area extends from the Severn Bridge in the West to the banks of the River Stour in the East. It includes the frontage to the River Severn within this area and encompasses the larger industrial scale developments on the old vinegar works and the Carpets of Worth Site. Functions and themes have been largely established through the Canal Basins Restoration scheme. On going consultation regarding the establishment of a sub area may determine that there is a stronger relationship with the River Stour in this vicinity.

Functions: The main central space of Stourport, working canal basins with associated services, public access area to open spaces and waters edge, facilitating views to/from the town and waterside areas.

Themes: improve public access and links to the town, further the industrial character based on traditional materials and techniques, but interpreted in a modern context.

Proposals:

- **Ensure that the design of any new roads, upgrades to existing roads and junctions are primarily designed within the existing, surrounding urban context and do not further the dominance of the vehicular environment (DEV1)**
- **Extend the character and quality established within the Canal Basins Restorations Scheme to new developments in the character area (DEV2)**
- **Good quality furniture and lighting based on palette used in Canal Basin Restoration Scheme, shown in Section 5 of this document (UENV16)**
- **Develop tourist office and viewing area around the existing historic ticket office (UENV17)**
- **Promote foot and cycle access along the Severn and Stour**

with improved paving and lighting, see indicative cross-sections in Figure 3.4A (WENV1)

- **Create new and improve existing foot / cycle routes through the area as shown in Figure 3.1B (WENV2)**
- **Issues concerning built form will be considered having regard to the Design Quality SPG, but will relate to surrounding industrial, natural and residential influences as appropriate**

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3.4 Rivers Severn and Stour Proposals

There is little built form in the meadows and banks of the Severn and Stour, the existing treatment is generally soft, taking either a formal or informal character.

Functions: formal and informal, naturalistic areas, water access, activity, contemplation, relaxation, structured open space, riverside walk and cycle for leisure and commuting, improved night time appeal, for all age groups, exhibition and events, nature and wildlife habitats

Themes: water, movement, decorative lighting

Proposals:

- Establishment of quality, well-designed formal public parkland on Severn Meadows with entrance features, pedestrian plaza, water feature and river viewing piers

combined with strong promenades and walks, reinforce avenues of trees. See concept design in Figure 3.4B (WENV3)

- Upgrade north-bank Severn footpath to Bewdley to create a shared cycle way (WENV4)
- Informal wetland park on the Stour Meadows with boardwalks and educational, interpretive signage providing a different character of destination to that on the Severn Meadows and reinforcing the environmental tourist offer (WENV5)
- New foot/cycle path along both sides of the Stour up to the Worcester Road bridge, see indicative cross-section in Figure 3.4A (WENV6)
- A practical walk/cycle path to access Sandy Lane Industrial Estate including lighting winter use (WENV7)
- Promote foot/cycle links to Hartlebury Common (WENV8)
- New foot/cycle links from the east bank of the Stour to Worcester Road (WENV9)

- New iconic Severn Footbridge near the Stour confluence to create a round-walk and promote views of the Basins from the southern bank of the Severn (WENV10)
- New footbridge over the Stour associated with any development on the Carpets of Worth Site (see Section 5.6) (WENV11)
- Ensure that the design of any new roads, bridges (see Section 5.6), upgrades to existing roads and junctions are primarily designed within the existing, surrounding context and do not further the dominance of the vehicular environment (DEV3)

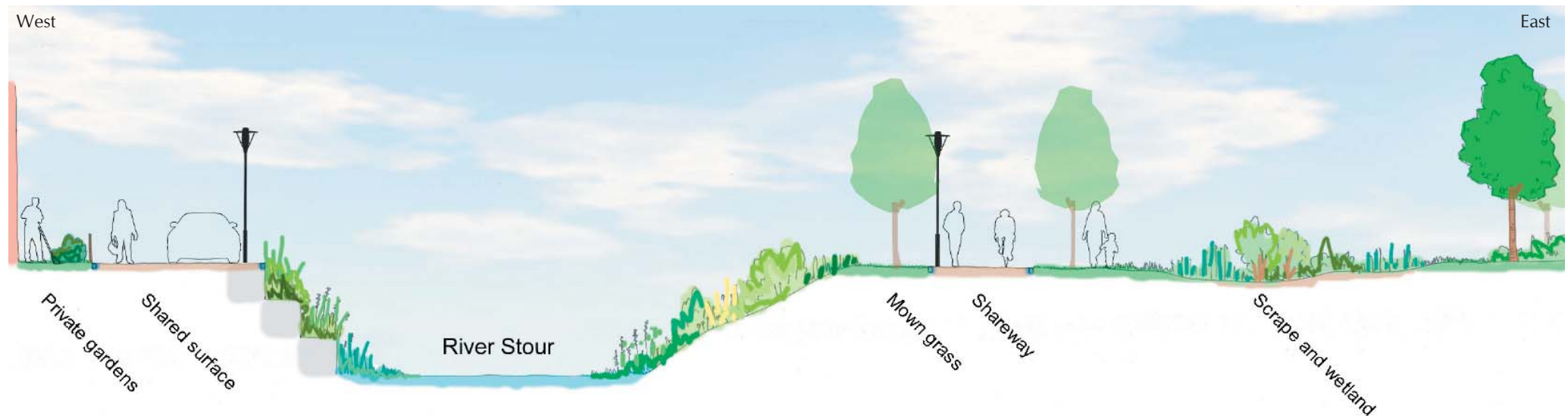
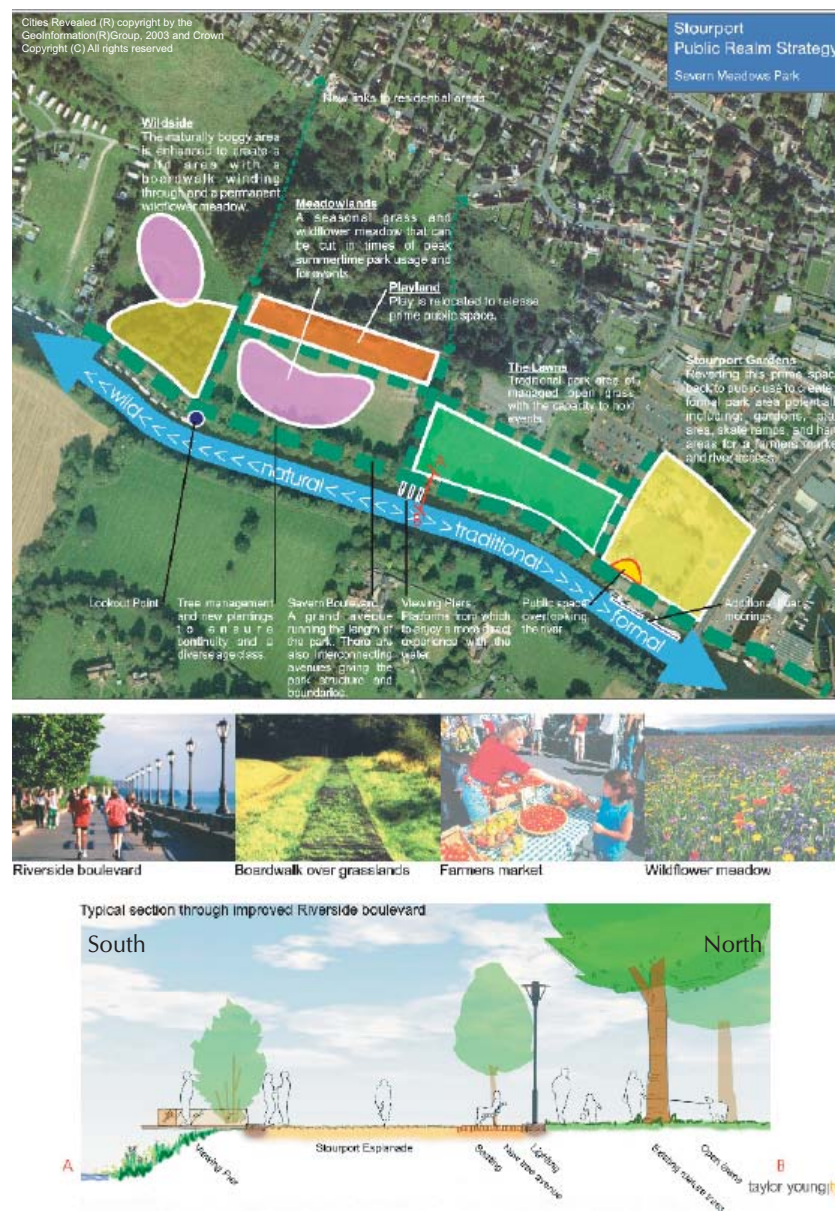


Figure 3.4A River Stour Cross Section

Wyre Forest District Council: Stourport Pride Public Realm Design Guide

Figure 3.4B
Severn Meadows Park Concept



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3.5 Gilgal Proposals

The Gilgal is the original hamlet that pre-dates the introduction of the canals. In its present form the small cottages are over-whelmed by the busy traffic and highway infrastructure that allow little room for pedestrians.

Functions: residential with commercial and some industrial, historic core pre-canal, accommodating traffic

Themes: Improve pedestrian environment. Mitigate against vehicular dominance of this historic area. Link with historical setting but mindful of mixed quality and uses, furniture and materials selected for function and durability

Proposals:

- Improve pavement and lighting quality (see Section 5) (UENV18)
- Create a gateway feature at the Stour Bridge with artwork and lighting (GATE4)
- Prioritise the footpath between the Stour Bridge and the stepped link to the canal as this can be an important link in a round-walk (UENV19)
- New artwork feature gateway at canal access point though the historic sandstone wall on Gilgal designed to frame the view to/from the canal (UENV20)
- Improve lighting and surfacing in the historic alleyways in the Gilgal (see Section 5) (UENV21)
- Improve the stepped link and associated ramped access to the canal with new lighting and surfacing. The stepped link will also require construction. (UENV22)
- Ensure that the design of any new roads, upgrades to existing roads and junctions are primarily designed within the existing, surrounding urban context and do not further the dominance of the vehicular environment (DEV4)
- Long-term aim to reduce carriageway widths to enable pavements to be added or widened. (UENV23)

3.6 Cross Cutting Area Proposals

There are a number of proposals that are applicable more widely and affect a number of the character areas. Figure 3.6A provides a wider view of the town and proposals beyond the four character areas.

Transport

- Alternative car park locations should be considered as well as measures to encourage other transport modes, e.g. park and ride from High School (UENV24)
- Improved coordination between transport modes should be investigated e.g. train/bus as should opportunities for special tourist/weekend users e.g. linked to walkers/cyclists (UENV25)
- Increasing access by river and canal should be investigated. Could include ties with adjacent river towns e.g. Bewdley (WENV12)

Edge-of-town Gateways

- Edge-of-town gateways are proposed at the Minster Road junction with Kingsway/St John's Road and on the Bewdley Road near Burlish Farm. These can consist of artwork and lighting. Plans for town centre gateways are identified previously under the character area headings. (GATE5)

Tourism

- Encouraging greater use and access to the wider town is essential. Widening the spread and location of facilities, improved way marking, instigation (or re-establishing) of themed trails. Graded walks should be considered linked to open space provision and visitor guides (UENV26)
- Rivers/canal and canal basin present opportunity for high grade interpretative measures. Basin developments should address current insularity of the basins from wider town (WENV13)
- Links along the Severn (terrestrial and water borne) with Bewdley need to be exploited using carefully selected quality attractions to appeal to the heritage / environmental tourist.

Teaming up, the two towns can create a critical mass in the way Evesham and Pershore do to promote the Blossom Trail. (WENV14)

Public Art

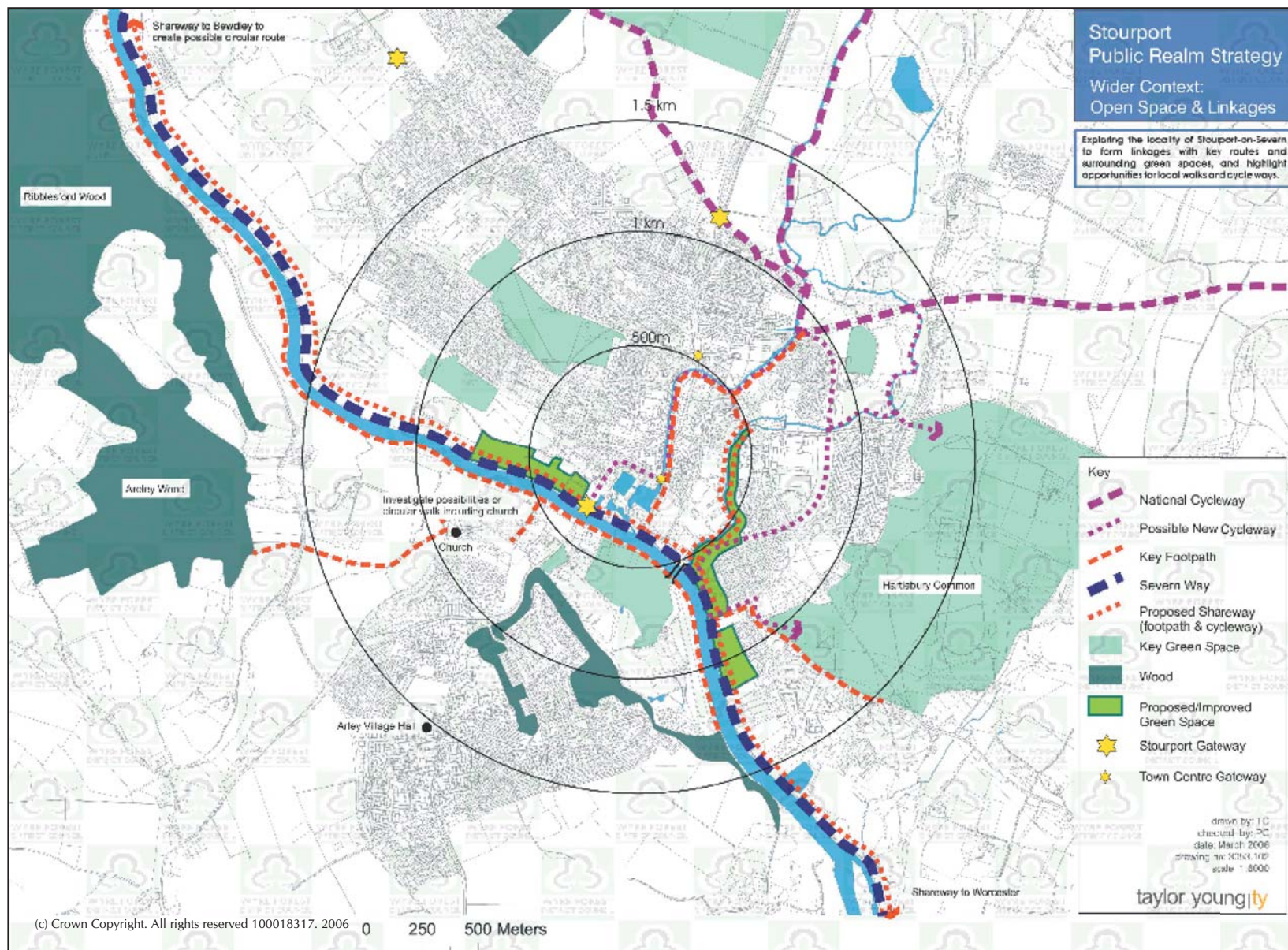
- Potential trail as part of wider River Severn or local towns e.g. Bewdley, initiative(UENV27)
- Develop existing town trail in association with Civic Society with markers and interpretation features on the ground as part of public realm renewal (UENV28)
- Aural reminiscence works using digital technology to create soundscape interpretation at key points around basin and beyond, and included where possible as part of structured trails (UENV29)
- Lost buildings and structures can be interpreted using fragments and incorporated into public realm/interpretative works (UENV30)
- Installation of unique street nameplates to core streets with history of street or derivation of name influencing the design. (UENV31)
- Installation of plaques to buildings celebrating and commemorating people special to the town (UENV32)
- Undertake an environmental colour assesment study with applicable colour pallettes for public realm development and planning guidance.

Access for All

- Clear, uncluttered pedestrian routes with minimum subjugation to the needs of the vehicular environment. Pedestrian routes need to be wide enough for two wheelchairs or two side-by-side twin pushchairs to pass in opposite directions to provide benefits to those with impaired mobility or vision.
- Tactile paving should be set out in solid natural stone complementing the palette in the area and the historic surroundings.

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Figure 3.6A
Wider Context:
Open Space &
Linkages



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3.7 Outline Design Proposals for main Town Centre Core Streets

Outline designs have been produced for the following streets and junctions in the Town Centre Core area to inform the proposal identified previously as Urban environment (UENV1), where the desire is to improve the urban and pedestrian environment by mitigating the impact of vehicular flows and congestion through streetscape works:

- **Figure 3.7A – Southern Gateway, Severn Bridge (UENV1a)**
- **Figure 3.7B – Bridge Street and the Engine Lane Junction (UENV1b)**
- **Figure 3.7C – Bridge Street/York Street/High Street Junction (UENV1c)**
- **Figure 3.7D – High Street (UENV1d)**
- **Figure 3.7E – High Street/Lickhill Road Junction (UENV1e)**
- **Figure 3.7F – Lombard Street (UENV1f)**
- **Figure 3.7G – York Street (UENV1g)**

These proposals aim to re-create a traditional street environment defined by built elements and the urban realm, and less dominated by highway infrastructure. The proposals will increase the perception of pedestrians' rights on the carriageway by creating uncertainty in the minds of motorists which requires them to engage with and respond to their surroundings rather than relying on signage and highway infrastructure to tell them how to behave. Engaging with their surroundings, motorists become more aware and respectful of pedestrians and their speed becomes a function of the environment in which they find themselves.

Courtesy Crossings are introduced at pinch points to create regular crossing points on the busy High Street. Further Courtesy Crossings without pinch points are laid out on

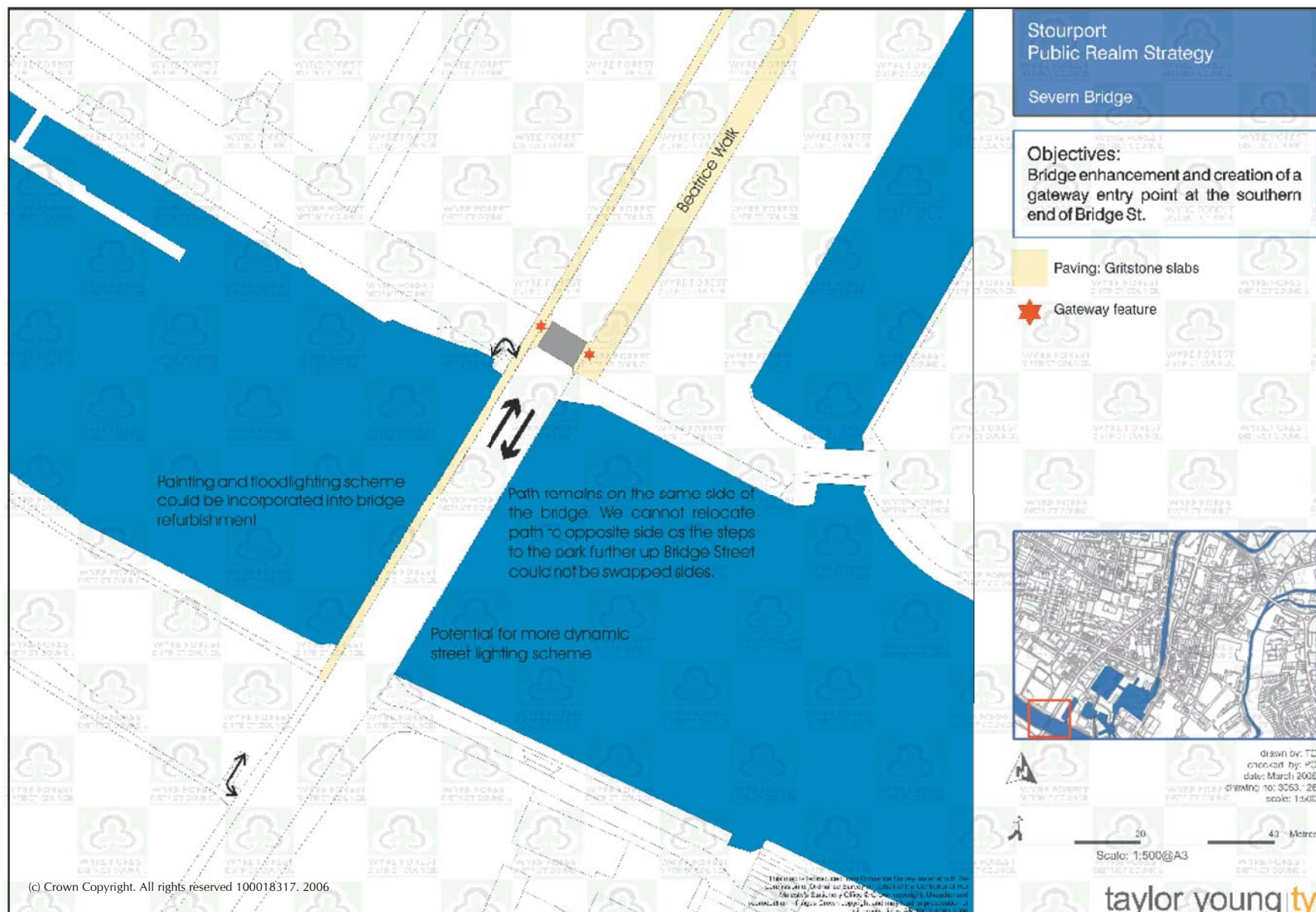
Bridge Street and York Street, traffic must be slowed prior to approaching these crossings. On York Street traffic is naturally slowed as it has to negotiate the sharp corner from Lion Hill. On Bridge Street, motorists from the north should be travelling at the slower speeds associated with town centre driving as they will have come through a large section of the new style road environment. Coming from the south motorists are presented with a strong visual gateway crossing the River. This is reinforced by the entrance feature created by the two Pubs either side of Bridge Street. These will be enhanced with lighting and by the Southern Gateway artwork which is emphasised by a speed table surfaced in granite setts or the change in texture of the setts if a vertical deflection is inappropriate.



Plate 3.1 Courtesy crossing in Shrewsbury

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Figure 3.7A
Severn Bridge



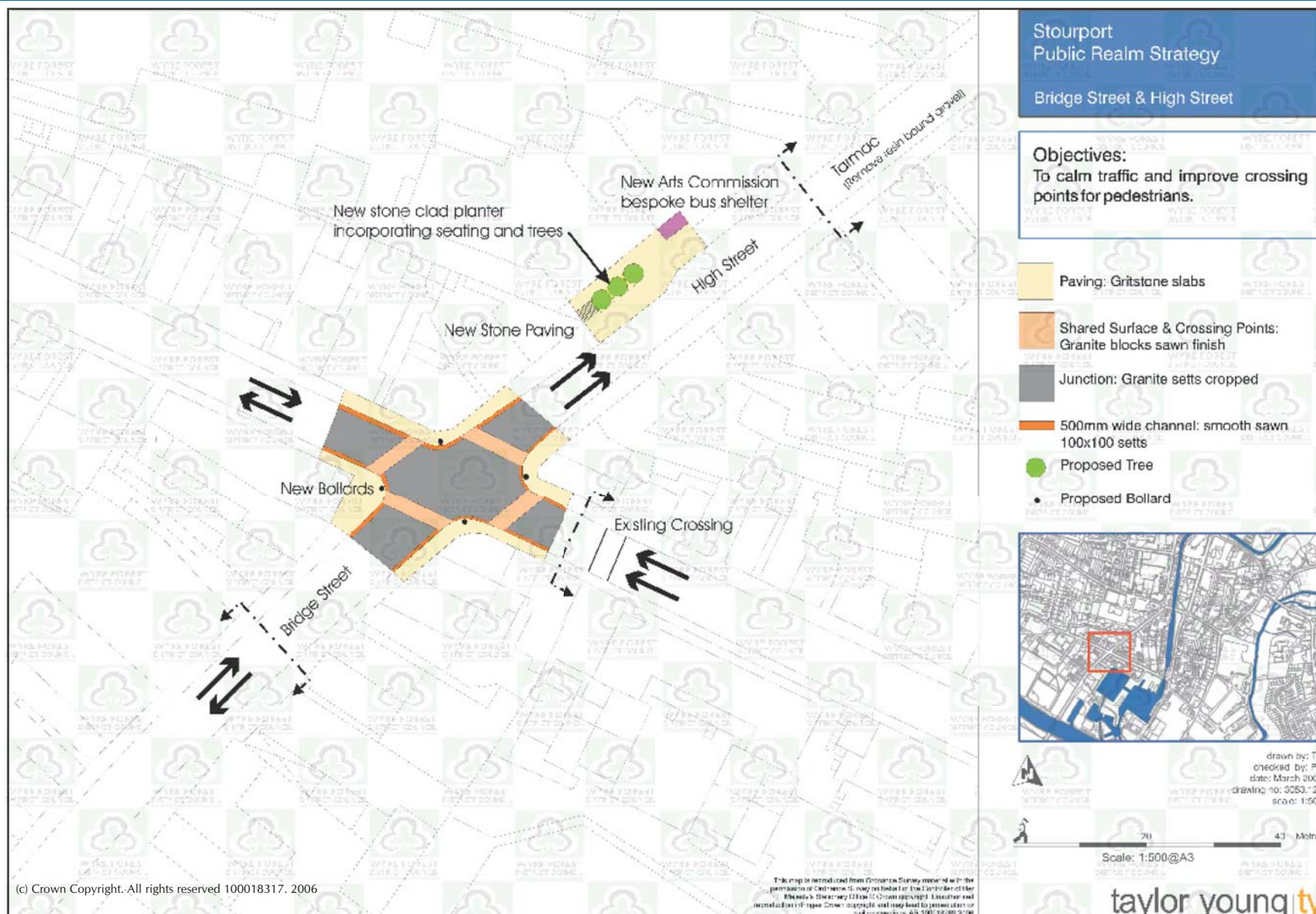
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Figure 3.7B
Bridge Street



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Figure 3.7C
Bridge Street &
High Street



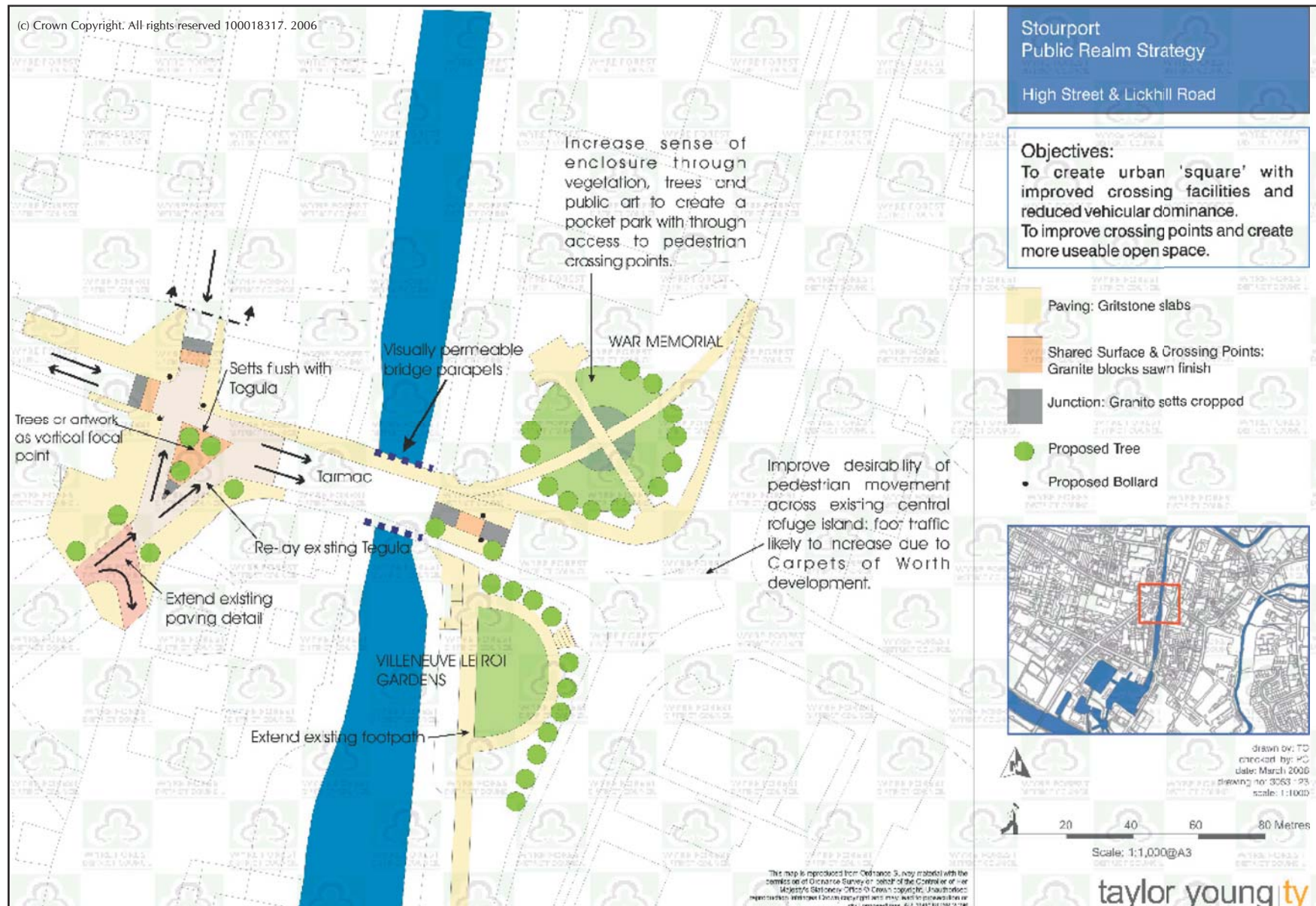
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Figure 3.7D
High Street



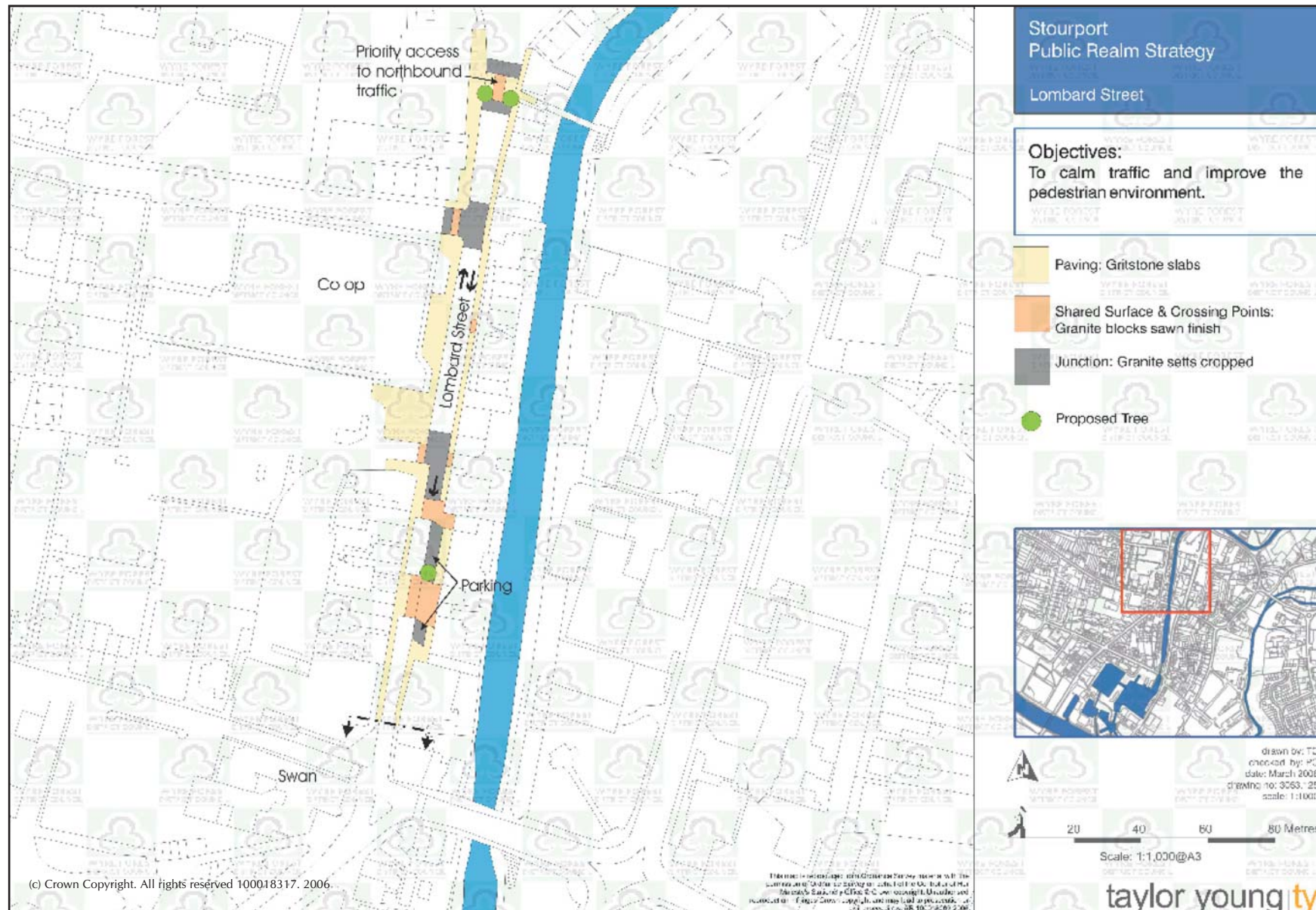
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Figure 3.7E
High Street &
Lickhill Road



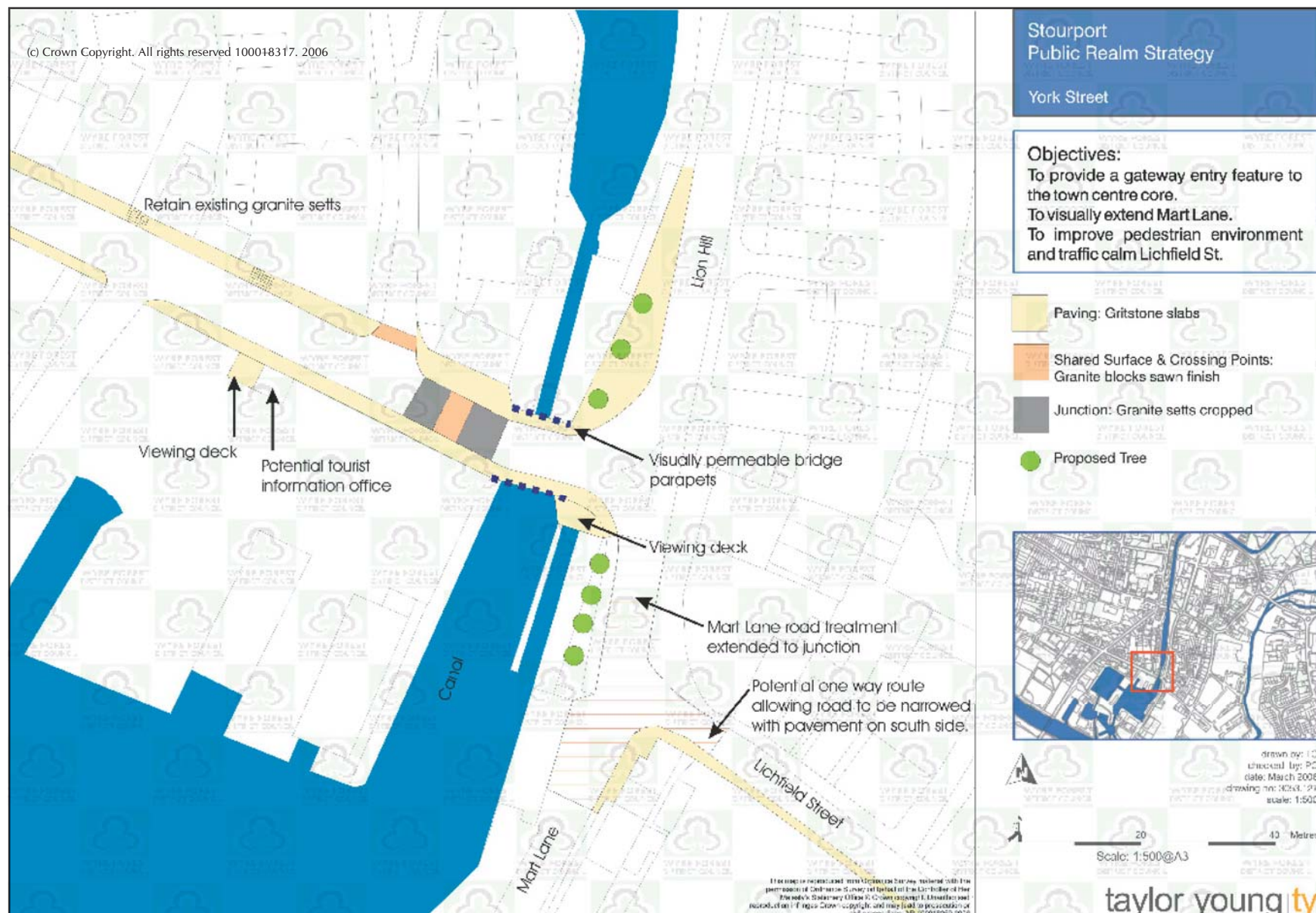
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Figure 3.7F
Lombard Street



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Figure 3.7G
York Street



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3.8 Outline Design Concepts for the Severn Meadows and the Rivers Severn and Stour

The Severn Meadows and River Severn (WENV3)

The Severn Meadows is the main park area for Stourport and has excellent publicly accessible play facilities with a new skate park area planned. However, the present layout is disconnected from the adjacent river environment and dominated by an area of restricted access (Playland) at its centre.

A long-term strategy and park design is required under proposals WENV3 to develop the meadows and respond to Stourport's evolving tourist trade, and to maximise the benefit for the local population. Figure 3.4A outlines some broad concepts around which the development of the park can be based, but a more considered and complete design is required as part of a public consultation process.

A new design could consider relocating the Playland area, to a less central area, thereby releasing a key area to public access. In its place a new plaza could be created as a centrepiece to the park drawing together the existing play elements, proposals for the skatepark and the river environment. A pavilion café and water/play feature would help define the setting and form a spectacular, valuable new park that can significantly improve the quality of life in Stourport for the residents and tourists.

Public access to the river can be improved with a better quality pathway, benches, signage and improved pedestrian lighting. The lighting of the area will have to be carefully considered with regard to the anti-social behaviour which takes place in the car parks. The best way to reduce anti-social behaviour is by improving access for the general public. This can be done alongside management measures to restrict access to the car park areas and toilets in the evenings. Pedestrian only access will provide the natural surveillance required to reduce the anti-social behaviour.

The over-sized bins in the meadows can be replaced with more discreet bins that respond to the demand that exists for the vast majority of the time and do less to detract from the quality of the meadows. Temporary wheelie bins can be introduced for summer weekends and events when demand is high.

Viewing piers (see Figure 3.4A) are proposed to create vantage points on the river and increase public interaction with the water environment. The piers shown are designed to present a minimal cross-section to flood waters by cantilevering out from the bank and using a continuous low seat (0.5m high) as a barriers rather than railings, which can trap debris. The piers would also provide ideal opportunities for integrated interpretation artworks relating to the history of the Severn and its flora and fauna. Further discussion is required with the Environment Agency to agree this principle.

River Stour (WENV5 and WENV6)

The Stour is the boundary between the Canal Basin Character Area and the Rivers Character Area and as such the indicative cross-section in Figure 3.4B depicts different character and edge treatment for the east and west banks of the river.

The west bank within the Canal Basins Character Area is shown with a hard stepped profile softened by naturalistic marginal planting on the ledges. There would be a close relationship with new development overlooking the river similar to the style found traditionally along canals. A shared surface (vehicles, pedestrians and cycles) in large smooth stone blocks forms the public access along the riverside.

The east bank is much softer and more natural and as it is bound by a wet grassland area, public access would be via a shared foot/cycle way. The meadows themselves could provide increased ecological value and become an educational resource if linked to boardwalks and interpretive signage. A new ecological park

could be a counterpoint to the more formal Severn Meadows and attract different visitors to this part of the town.

Reference is also made in section 5.6 to design codes in relation to bridge design.