



Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Bridge Street basins link **DEVELOPMENT BRIEF**

ADOPTED
December 2005

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Bridge Street Basins Link DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

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Bridge Street Basins Link DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

Supplementary Planning Document



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1. INTRODUCTION

The development brief was adopted on the 14th December 2005 as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This follows a period of extensive public consultation detailed at the end of the document. The SPD sets out what the Council would like to see for the area and is a technical planning document that can be afforded significant weight when considering planning applications

WHY BRIDGE STREET? WHY NOW?

The Adopted Wyre Forest District Local Plan earmarks part of Bridge Street in Stourport-on-Severn for redevelopment.

The importance of this site has been recognised by the Regional Development Agency, Advantage West Midlands (AWM), and the associated project team 'Stourport Forward' for the Market Towns Initiative (MTI).

In March 2005, the District Council, as Local Planning Authority, published a Local Development Scheme (LDS) setting out the timetable for planning policy formulation over the next three years. One of the first documents to be prepared is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the Bridge Street Basins Link (Local Plan Policy STC.4).

The timely preparation of the SPD reflects the momentum now behind the regeneration of Stourport-on-Severn and in particular:

1. Heritage Lottery Funding towards the restoration and enhancement of the canal basins.
2. Proposals to re-open Lichfield Basin to create new housing (Local Plan Policy STC.1)
3. 6 hectare mixed use redevelopment of the former Carpets of Worth site (Policy STC.2) with detailed proposals anticipated during 2005/06.
4. 'Stourport Forward' - an AWM initiative established during 2004 to provide valuable support for the town as part of the MTI project

WHAT IS A DEVELOPMENT BRIEF?

The two main purposes of a brief are firstly to improve the effectiveness and certainty of the planning and development process and secondly to improve the quality of development.

The brief lets developers know what is expected and how the guidance will be used when deciding planning applications. It will be clear on what is acceptable and what is not and what are minimum requirements whilst highlighting where there is scope for flexibility.

In short the SPD is intended to provide a clearer picture of the planning expectations for the site.



Engine Lane

2. PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE & OBJECTIVES

STARTING POINT - LOCAL PLAN POLICY

Following the introduction of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Local Plans are to be phased out. However, the Wyre Forest District Local Plan (Jan 2004) will remain the paramount planning consideration until the full introduction of a new 'Local Development Framework'.

Wyre Forest District Local Plan Policy STC.4 requires proposals for the Bridge Street site to:-

“(i) provide for a suitable mix of uses to include:

(a) at the ground floor street frontage:- small scale retail (A1) or food and drink (A3) uses and:

(b) above or to the rear:- office (B1) and/or residential (C3) uses:

(ii) preserve or enhance the character of Bridge Street, the Basins and the River Severn and:

(iii) improve connectivity between the town centre and the Basins.”

The site sits within the more strategic Local Plan Policy STC.5 (Canal Basins Area) which reads:

“Proposals for the enhancement of the Canal Basins Area, which invest in its role as a tourist and visitor attraction and recognise its Conservation Area status, will be permitted, subject to compliance with all other relevant policies in the Local Plan.”

Other policies in the Plan may facilitate housing above businesses in the town centre (Policies H.2 & TC.2) and food and drink uses may also be possible (subject to Policy RT.13).

Development Plan Policies should not contain too much detail. Therefore, whilst Policy STC.4 provides the essential information, there remains considerable uncertainty over when and how the site will be developed. This is where the Bridge Street Basins Link Development Brief comes in.

NATIONAL & REGIONAL GUIDANCE

The Local Plan is consistent with national and regional planning requirements. In preparing this development brief, the Council has had particular regard to Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 1: Delivering Sustainable Development and PPS6: Planning for Town Centres. The policies of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the West Midlands, and the Worcestershire County Structure Plan have also been fully considered and importantly the policies and proposals of this SPD are considered to be in general conformity with the RSS.

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

The changes to the planning system introduced by the 2004 Act include the phasing out of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) and its replacement with Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD). The process of preparing SPD's is now regulated and SPD's can now be afforded greater weight as part of the Development Control process. However, these documents must be consistent with the Statutory Development Plan.

At the time of preparing this development brief, the District Council already has Supplementary Planning Guidance in place for other sites in Stourport-on-Severn (Lichfield Basin and Severn Road Development Brief) and these remain in force. The Bridge Street development brief must also consider the requirements of the Wyre Forest District Design Quality SPG (July 2004) which includes a 'Town Centre Design Guide' (Chapter 4). More generally, the Design Quality SPG sets out the key design requirements in terms of perimeter block principles, active fronts, scale, massing, movement networks etc. These principles and ideas are at the heart of this development brief.

In preparing this SPD, the District Council is confirming its intention to encourage significant change and investment for Bridge Street.

3. THE SITE & ITS SIGNIFICANCE

The spatial extent of site STC.4 is approximately 0.44ha (1.1 acres). The area currently comprises five commercial units and four first floor flats between No's 4 and 8 Bridge Street. The site also includes a piece of land (behind No's 7 & 8) owned by British Waterways which fronts onto the Clock Basin. On the basis of Local Plan Policy STC.5 and the need to create improved links to the basins, this development brief covers an extended area that also includes the boat yard adjacent to Engine Lane (Stroud Water Cruisers).

Bridge Street and the STC.4 site is situated at a cross roads between the shops, riverside meadows amusements and fun fair attractions, car parking and the historic basins.



Rear of the STC.4 site viewed from Stroud Cruisers Boat Yard

STATEMENT of PURPOSE

The purpose of this development brief can be summarised as follows:

To assist the emergence of a new basins quarter in the heart of Stourport-on-Severn by actively linking existing townscape and waterscape through development that serves to redefine the role of Bridge Street as a thriving area for commerce and living.

KEY AIMS include:

- 1. Townscape Quality** - the site falls within a Conservation Area yet the quality of the built environment is poor. The brief seeks to analyse the existing townscape to suggest a sequence of required design interventions.
- 2. Regeneration** - Bridge St is a key gateway for the town centre yet the mix of land uses and general appearance are a let-down. This brief seeks to turn around the fortunes of Bridge Street through providing a focus to attract people and town centre businesses back to the area.
- 3. Connecting places** - Geographically, the Clock Basin is at the heart of Stourport-on-Severn town centre, yet is totally concealed. This brief explores how links can be improved.

OBJECTIVES include:

- 1. Land Assembly** - There are five principal land ownerships. Subject to addressing their needs, the Development Brief looks to deliver a

comprehensive redevelopment scenario.

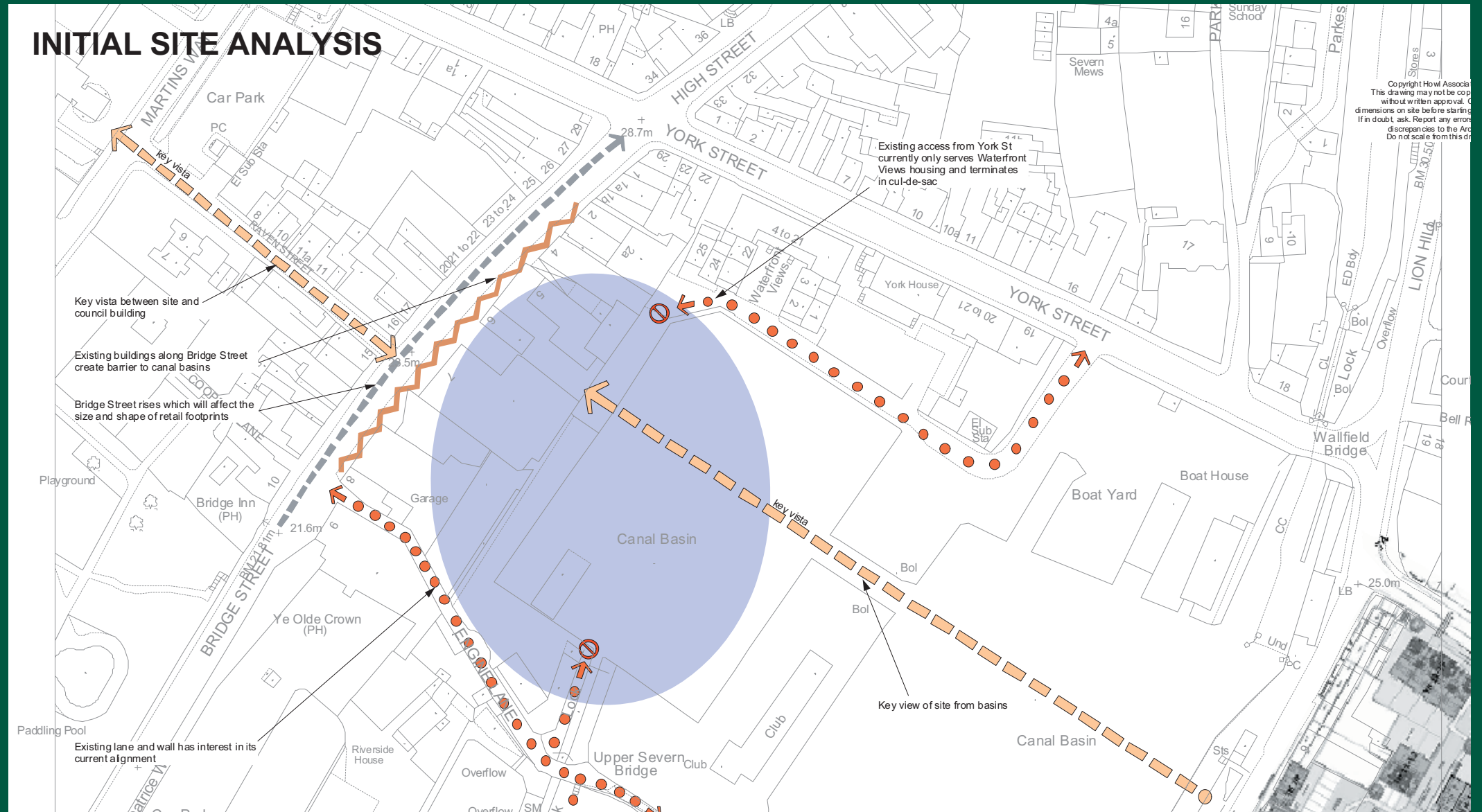
- 2. Phasing** - designs should be creative to facilitate a phased approach to development.
- 3. Delivering Mixed Uses** - There is a real need to improve the vitality of the area. Creating a critical mass of people and activity can sustain a viable and attractive business quarter. Housing and commercial units will be an essential part of the mix.
- 4. Creating places for people** - A focus on public spaces including landscaping and surface treatments and street furniture will lead to the creation of multi-purpose, multi-sensory and attractive spaces.
- 5. Ensuring Design Excellence** - creating harmony with townscape and a development that befits the unique setting yet is bold enough to symbolise a new beginning for the area.

UTILITIES & SERVICES

There are no known issues regarding services in the area. There are no mobile telecommunications installations on the site. However, gas, electricity and telephone pipelines are thought to exist under Engine Lane. This will need to be taken into account for any proposals involving significant alterations to the alignment of Engine Lane. There are also known to be electricity bollards and services for moored canal barges immediately adjacent to the site and this will need to be considered as part of any waterspace strategy (See section 7: Vitality and Viability).

Bridge Street Basins Link DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

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CONSERVATION & TOWNSCAPE SETTING

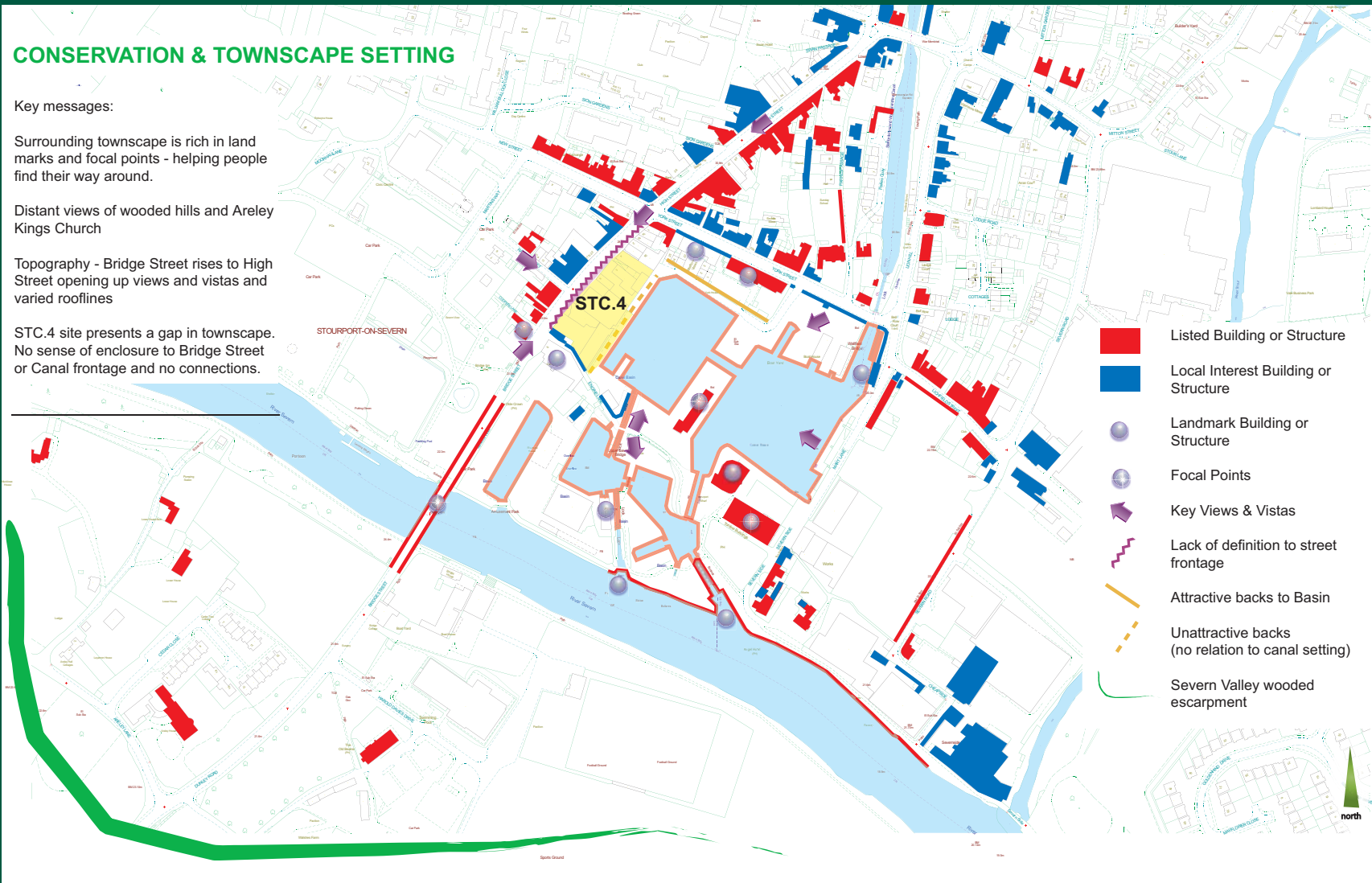
Key messages:

Surrounding townscape is rich in land marks and focal points - helping people find their way around.

Distant views of wooded hills and Areley Kings Church

Topography - Bridge Street rises to High Street opening up views and vistas and varied rooflines

STC.4 site presents a gap in townscape. No sense of enclosure to Bridge Street or Canal frontage and no connections.



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4. HERITAGE & DESIGN

The STC.4 site lies within Stourport-on-Severn Conservation Area No.1. There are no Statutorily Listed Buildings within the site, but the adjacent Clock Basin is a Statutorily Listed Structure. One building of local interest is No. 8 Bridge Street. The Conservation Area Character Appraisal also identifies the wall adjacent to Engine Lane as being of local interest. The remainder of the site has a negative impact on the area.

The majority of Bridge Street, High Street, York Street and New Street are three storey and Georgian in character. This gives rise to a series of very prominent corner premises at the cross roads to the north of the site. By contrast, the majority of the STC.4 site is covered in single storey buildings. Any historic rationale for this low density approach is not apparent.

It is accepted that No's 2 and 3 Bridge Street are also small scale (single storey and two storey), but they fall outside the STC.4 site. They are considered to be less problematic in the streetscene. However, the general policies of the Local Plan may facilitate the redevelopment of these properties. Therefore, the layout of any proposals for the STC.4 site should allow for that future possibility.

With the exception of No.8a, the STC.4 site

presents an eclectic mix of poor quality modern and functional buildings of mostly single storey construction. The most prominent and significant detractors are No. 7 and Lloyds garage. The land within the development brief area appears to have a complex industrial heritage. Developers will be expected to undertake an evaluation of existing buildings and structures to consider the possible value of retaining any such features. As a minimum any historic buildings should be recorded prior to demolition. Further advice should be sought from the District Council's Conservation Officer.

The role of the basins today is very different from its origins in freight haulage. Whilst, essential boating services are retained, they are now focused on leisure. However, despite this transition the canal basins in Stourport-on-Severn have remained relatively isolated and inaccessible. Evidence from other centres including Birmingham and Gloucester suggests that well-planned developments around waterspace draw significant numbers of visitors and spend.

The understated character of the basins area is reflected in Engine Lane which has remained little changed over the last century and is now considered inadequate as the main point of entry from the town centre. Therefore, new or improved links will be required as part of any redevelopment.



1b Bridge Street



7 Bridge Street



8a Bridge Street



Lloyds Garage



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This development brief proposes to retain Engine Lane as an important part of the areas heritage. However, careful consideration will need to be given to the detailed design of Engine Lane, the walls, surface treatments and surrounding buildings etc to ensure that the lane remains relevant and an intrinsic part of the wider regeneration project ensuring it has a more appealing aesthetic whilst assimilating into the wider movement network.

It is anticipated that the redevelopment of the STC.4 site will lead to higher levels of vitality and this should help to make business more viable. This may in turn result in greater levels of investment in the historic fabric of the street. In line with paragraph 4.37 of the Wyre Forest Design Quality SPG, this development brief is about incorporating 'the basins into the town centre movement network by visually and physically knitting these together...' and enhancing 'townscape quality east of Bridge Street...'

The emphasis of the brief is on creating a new piece of town rather than a stand alone development. In order to achieve this, consideration should be given to including more than one architectural design/ style. Designs must be complementary, but this does not rule out the possibility of both vernacular and contemporary architectural approaches. Indeed, this may present the most appropriate and symbolic design solution.

Poor quality imitations of the traditional architecture (pastiche) will not be accepted. In short, the scheme must be designed to a high standard to meet the specific characteristics and opportunities of the site.

Massing and scale will be critical to sensitively repairing the townscape. As a general rule the predominant building height should be three storey falling to two storey at 8a. Possible variations may include two storey with a third storey set back and the limited use of four storey elements may be acceptable. However, these must be carefully incorporated e.g. to create a particular feature or effect. In the Bridge Street context, four storey elements are more likely to work if the fourth storey is set back.

The topography of the town together with the openness of the basins provide a series of key **views and vistas**. Particularly important views include the panorama from York Street towards Areley Kings Church taking in the Yacht Club and the rear of the STC.4 site. Views up and down Bridge Street and along Raven Street should also be considered. Designs should respond positively to key vistas and proposals should realise the potential for new views to be created. In particular, links between Bridge Street and the basins should create new vistas e.g. as a minimum requirement, the southern link should offer a strong view of the Clock Tower.

British Waterways are understood to be working

on the preparation of a design code and master plan for the area. Appropriate consideration will need to be had to these initiatives and proposals.

Design codes can be used to specify a palette of **materials and treatments** to be applied in a given area. As a general rule proposals will be expected to use a limited range of materials and treatments. They should primarily be drawn from the traditional vernacular to reinforce local identity and conservation area character. These may be applied in traditional or contemporary approaches to architecture.



Heritage & Design requirements:

Policy HD.1 (Views and Vistas)

Designs for Bridge Street must:

- i) open up a view(s) of the basin and;*
- ii) must fully consider the views and vistas highlighted in this brief and any others contained in the Design Quality SPG;*
- iii) Consider the views from Bridge Street to the basins making the most of land marks such as the Clock Tower.*

Policy HD.2 (Architecture & Art)

Proposals for new development within the STC.4 site should incorporate:

*i) buildings of mass and scale that closely reflects that of the surrounding area;
ii) buildings and features that create a sense of enclosure to public frontages and;
iii) focal features (e.g. architectural treatment and public art) in particular to draw attention to corners and pathways and to define spaces. Finally, designs should carefully consider topography and roofscape.*

Policy HD.3 (Conserve & Enhance)

Proposals for the STC.4 site shall:

*i) retain and suitably incorporate No.8a and where practicable the Engine Lane wall and;
ii) give further thought to the inclusion of No.2-3 Bridge Street and designs should not compromise that future possibility;
iii) Include a heritage evaluation of existing properties and where appropriate explore the possible retention and/ or recording of features of historic interest.*

Policy HD.4 (Public Realm)

Active frontages are required to all public aspects to the street, links and basin and these spaces must serve as new*

public spaces incorporating quality hard landscaping softened by tree planting and structural elements.

NOTE: *active frontages provide rooms and windows to the front elevation

Policy HD.5 (Canal Basins Master Planning)

The Council will encourage the use of Design Coding. Materials should predominantly be characteristic of Stourport on Severn. Proposals should have regard to other plans & codes for the Basins area.

Policy HD.6 (Design Rationale)

Local Plan Policy D.1 and PPS1 require a Design Statement be submitted with any proposals. This must demonstrate (to the satisfaction of the District Council) that any proposals meets the specific design requirements of this Development Brief.



5. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

WATER QUALITY & CONTAMINATED LAND ISSUES

The site sits on sandstone and is a major aquifer vulnerable to contamination. There may be contaminated land issues associated with former uses and presence of made ground. Local Plan Policy NR.7 (Ground water Resources) will need to be fully considered. As a minimum, a desk study will be required to establish the former uses of the site. Further intrusive site investigation may also be needed. If applicable, developers should ensure that all contaminated materials are adequately dealt with. If in doubt, the Environment Agency should be contacted for advice at an early stage to avoid delays.

In the above circumstances, the Environment Agency have indicated that further consideration will need to be given to surface water drainage (foul must go to the mains sewer) and the design of building foundations. Any work in the area should be undertaken in such a way as to prevent pollution to controlled waters. Developers should have full regard to Planning Policy Statement 23 (Planning and Pollution Control).

Proposals will be expected to incorporate sustainable drainage techniques and plans incorporating rainwater collection for use in buildings or landscaping will be viewed favourably

(Local Plan Policy D.7). Similar consideration must be given to energy efficient design in line with Local Plan Policy D.6. The Council will expect any proposals to include an evaluation of the following techniques: passive solar gain, combined heat and power; solar hot water; solar photovoltaic; ground and air source heat pumps and; wood fuel heating.

Being near to the River Severn, an area of the site is shown to be in flood zone 2 (annual probability of flooding of 0.1%). Therefore flood risk needs to be considered together with the impact of the adjoining canal basin in accordance with paragraphs 37 and 38 of PPG25. Local Plan Policy NR.5 deals with flood risk in more detail.

NATURE CONSERVATION

Urban waterside habitats are important for numerous species including bats, amphibians and birds. Design details should provide opportunities for roosting, nesting and hibernation of species. In particular, opportunities should be sought for utilising roof voids, the creation of gaps in masonry etc in addition to artificial boxes and the like.

Landscaping schemes must include appropriate native planting regimes to facilitate bat foraging and habitat for birds and other wildlife. These measures will help to ensure that any proposals are consistent with PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

There are no trees within the site that are subject of a Tree Preservation Order. However, there are two mature trees adjoining the Clock Basin that are of some local amenity value. Local Plan Policies D.4 (Design: existing trees) and CA.4 (Trees and hedgerows in Conservation Areas) need to be fully considered.

ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES

There are a number of factors that will influence how people react to any given space within the development. Particular influences in the setting of the Bridge Street Basins Link will include microclimate including the impact of shadowfall on the indicative seating areas, proximity to water and soundscape. Designers will be expected to demonstrate full consideration of such factors and how they have influenced the design/proposed use of space. Certain factors including microclimate can also impact on the function of buildings in addition to space e.g. passive solar gain and in line with Policy ENV.3 (Energy Efficiency) full regard should be paid to this potential.



Policy ENV.1 (Contaminated Land)

Proposals must include a preliminary desk study of contaminated land issues and appropriate measures should be taken to the satisfaction of the Environment Agency.

Policy ENV.2 (Flood Risk)

Developers must consider the need for and scope of any flood risk assessment as directed by the Environment Agency. As a minimum, proposals shall incorporate sustainable drainage systems and water collection and efficiency of use measures.

Policy ENV.3 (Energy Efficiency)

Proposals within the STC.4 site shall evaluate the potential use of the energy efficient technologies set out in this brief.

Policy ENV.4 (Trees)

Where possible proposals should seek to incorporate the two existing trees of amenity value (adjacent to no.5 and 7). Proposals involving alteration to, or felling of, the two trees will be subject to scrutiny in line with Local Plan Policy CA.4 and a detailed tree survey may be required. A landscaping scheme will need to be submitted with any proposals and this should include the planting of specimen trees.

Policy ENV.5 (Wildlife Habitats)

Proposals should include measures to create appropriate habitat to sustain species including bats, birds and amphibians. Where possible, designs should include in-built features that make use of roof voids, gaps in masonry etc in addition to planting schemes. Artificial habitat features such as nesting and/ or roosting boxes should also be considered.



6. MOVEMENT PATTERNS

When considering the accessibility of the site there are two levels of interest:

1. **Strategic context** including proximity to public transport routes, access to the main road network, congestion and facilitating movement across the wider town.
2. **Localised issues** looking at more detailed movement patterns through the site.

STRATEGIC ACCESS

The site lies adjacent to Bridge Street (A451) which is a heavily trafficked main road linking Kidderminster with Stourport-on-Severn and the rural areas to the south of Wyre Forest District. Bridge Street is the landing stage for the sole bridging point of the River Severn in Stourport-on-Severn and provides the link to significant suburban estates to the south (Areley Kings and the Walshes). The nearest alternative bridging points for the Severn are about 3- miles away.

Bridge Street is a pinch point for traffic and there is significant congestion. To the north of the STC.4 site is an accident cluster site at the junction of Bridge Street and York Street. Improvements to this junction are being considered. Developers should consider the possible impact of any proposed layouts on the operation of the existing highway and off-site contributions may be sought.

Public Transport and Cycling:

Historically Bridge Street riverside was the terminus for tram services from Kidderminster. However, public transport connections are now solely based on bus operations.

The A451 is the central spine of the District's high-frequency bus corridors with services operating at 10 minute intervals. The nearest bus stops to the site can be found on York Street and High Street. The site is within 300metres of these stops and represents a sustainable location within the town centre.

However the public realm and crossing points for those routes linking the STC.4 site with bus stops could be improved and off-site contributions may be sought.

Through route 45/ canal towpath improvements and the Severn Way, Stourport is well connected to the strategic cycle network. Any scheme(s) involving the STC.4 site should seek to make connections (including off-site improvements) between the site and strategic cycle routes.

Barriers to Movement

In addition to the heavily congested streets, there are a number of other physical (natural and man-made) features that significantly limit movement choices around the town. The three most significant being the River Severn, the River

Stour and the infrastructure of Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal which obstruct movement in all directions (north to south and east to west). Therefore, it is particularly important to realise opportunities for new links to provide greater choice.

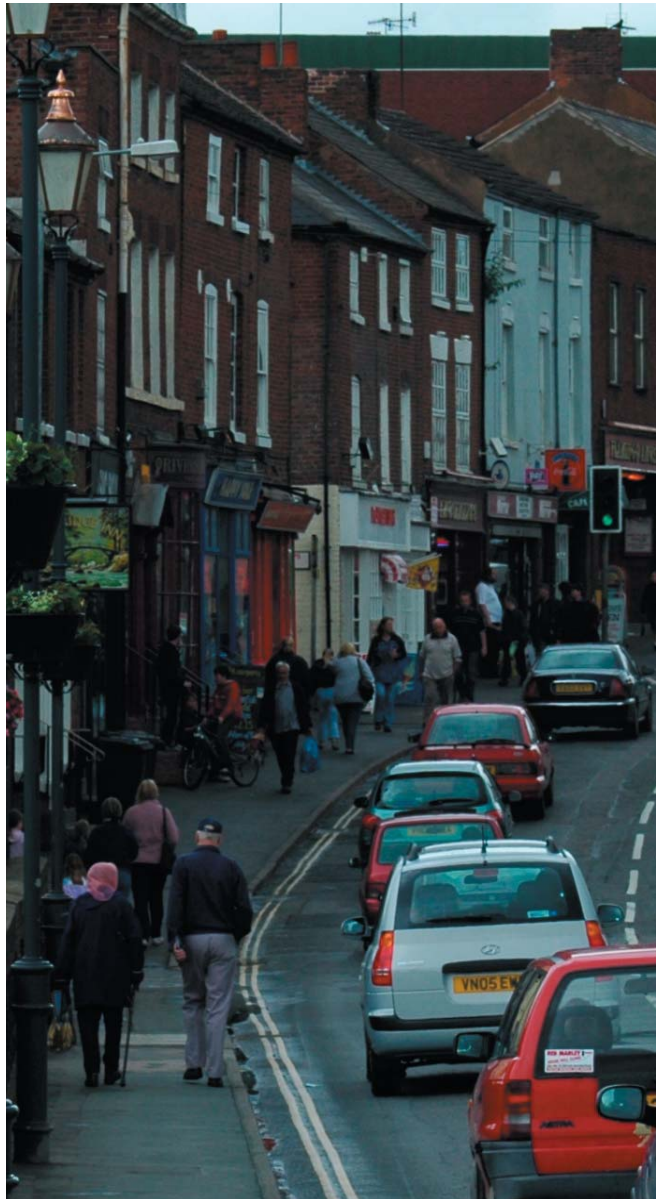
The basins are distinct and physically separate from the rest of the town. However, whilst many visitors could pass through without noticing the basins, the town owes its very existence to the canal system. It is therefore, suggested that a much more effective link should be created for the shared benefit of the basins and Bridge Street in terms of visitors numbers and access to parking.

Bridge Street itself provides a barrier between STC.4 and the main car parks. Therefore, the District Council will seek appropriate s.106 contributions towards associated works to Bridge Street, Raven Street and Coopers Lane.

The District Council in partnership with Stourport Forward is working up a public realm initiative ('Stourport Pride') to provide a co-ordinated approach across the town. Proposals involving new or improved public realm must consider the resulting guidance.

LOCAL SITE ACCESS ISSUES:

In line with Local Plan Policy D.1 (Design Quality) and the Wyre Forest District Design Quality SPG a key focus will be the need for any development to



Bridge Street, - west frontage

secure access for all in the design of public realm and buildings.

Open Access to the Basins

Engine Lane provides a central link through the area. However, the route is not intensively used. Whilst characterful and of some heritage interest, the Lane is distinctly uninviting and lacks presence in the Bridge Street streetscene. This lane provides essential access to Stourport Yacht Club (the 'Clock Tower' building) and any proposals for the site must facilitate continued and appropriate access to the yacht club through the site.

In preparing the design options (see section 9 of this brief), a number of possible scenarios have been considered from the creation of alternative links and realignment to the possible closure of Engine Lane. The Council's preferred option is to create a new link(s) and to retain and pedestrianise Engine Lane.

If the basins are to make a more significant impact on the local tourism economy it will be essential to facilitate the movement of people around the basins. To be effective this will require the introduction of commercial and craft uses that can encourage greater human interaction with space. Therefore, any development of the STC.4 site will need to create a positive and public frontage to the Clock Basin including access to the waters edge. Thought must also be given to how pathways through the site will form part of the wider

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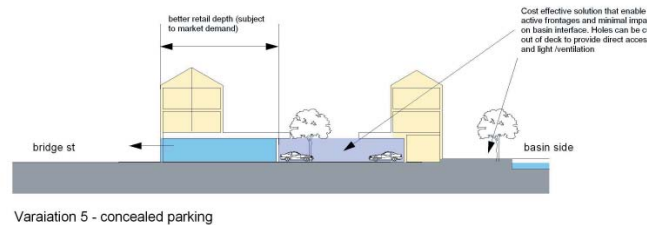
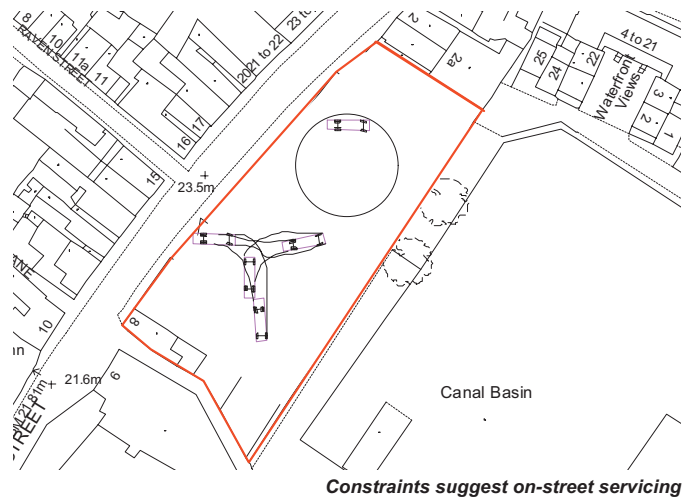
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movement network. The possibility of further links to 'Engine Basin' and adjacent car parking area should also be explored.

Parking & Servicing

The dimensions of the site are constrained. Car parking and servicing must not over-dominate any development. In order to satisfy the townscape ambitions proposals will need to demonstrate creativity. In the setting of Bridge Street and the canal, the District Council will have a strong preference for on-street servicing. However, care needs to be taken to limit the impact of traffic congestion.

Given the site dimensions and objectives for the site, it is anticipated that normal car parking expectations are unlikely to be achieved on site.



Through this development brief, the District Council would like to see the emphasis placed on providing on-site parking for housing. For the commercial units, customer car parking is likely to be focused on the existing short stay car parks nearby (e.g. Raven Street). For proposals that rely on off-site parking, the District Council may require s.106 payments for improvements to existing car parks at Raven Street or the Riverside in line with Local Plan Policy TC.5 (Town Centre Car Parking Areas).

Whilst the development scenarios set out in Section 9 (Appendix 1), indicate sufficient car parking for housing (1:1) some of the parking spaces (undercroft) in Options B & C would be provided on land currently outside the STC.4 site area. Any proposals of similar layout that do not involve the redevelopment of this land (i.e. Nos 2 3 Bridge Street) may need to look at providing off-site parking for some housing units. In line with Local Plan Policy TC.5 the District Council may seek capacity improvements to shared car parks at Raven Street or alternative arrangements involving the private sector (Engine Basin).

Provision for Cyclists.

Adequate on-site provision should be made for cycle parking and full consideration given to the movement of cyclists to/ through the site. Further guidance on cycle parking standards should be sought from Worcestershire County Council (the Local Highway Authority).

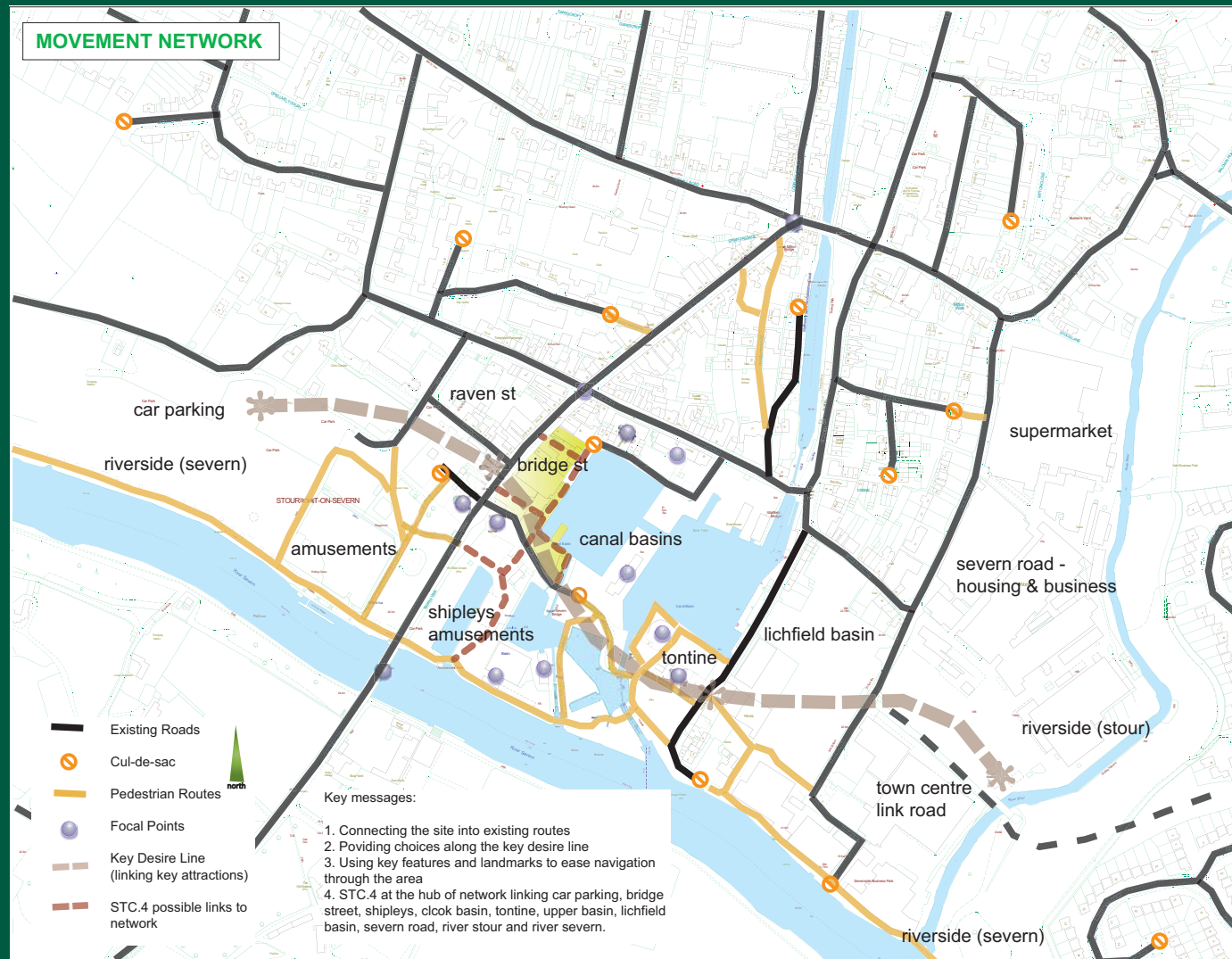
Public Realm

The District Council encourages the integration of creative design solutions. Shared surfaces may help to overcome the difficulties associated with servicing small businesses and homes within the STC.4 site. Developers should seek further advice from the Worcestershire County Council as the Local Highway Authority.



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Policy MP.1 (Accessibility for All & Shared Surfaces)

Proposals should deliver a series of pedestrian priority routes that link into the wider movement network with buildings and spaces that facilitate access for all.

Policy MP.2 (Public Transport)

Proposals should include off-site contributions for improved links between the site and nearby bus stops including public realm and crossing points.

Policy MP.3 (Car Parking)

Schemes that rely on off-site parking will be expected to fund improvements to the existing town centre car parks.

Policy MP.4 (Traffic Impact)

Developers must consider the need for, and scope of, a Transportation Assessment as directed by the Highway Authority (Worcestershire County Council).

Policy MP.5 (Provision for Cyclists)

Proposals should make provision for cyclists and connecting the site to nearby strategic cycle routes.

7. VITALITY & VIABILITY

CURRENT TRADING

Bridge Street has suffered decline in recent years as the focus of local shopping has moved north towards High Street and Lombard Street. Increasingly, the area has become reliant on specialist shopping, amusements and fast food take-aways associated with the day visitor market.

Stourport-on-Severn has been a long-standing and traditional inland holiday resort for the West Midlands conurbation. However, there are an ever growing range of visitor attractions and events across the region e.g. Alton Towers, Drayton Manor Park and locally West Midlands Safari Park. The retail and leisure sectors of the economy (shops, cinemas, food and drink) have also seen a huge growth in demand particularly as part of inner city regeneration. The market for day visitor spend appears more competitive than ever before.

The Stourport-on-Severn market is highly seasonal with most facilities based on outdoor recreation and there is little depth to the overall offer to attract visitors out of season. Therefore, it cannot be assumed that day visitors from across the West Midlands will automatically think of Stourport-on-Severn.

Evidence suggests that vacancy rates and

rateable values for Bridge Street are particularly low. Whilst it seems clear that the fun fair and riverside areas will always remain part of Stourport's attraction, the basins including the Heritage Lottery Fund initiative and wider regeneration are viewed as being particularly important to the future economy of the town.

The redevelopment of the STC.4 site should provide a new start for the economy of Bridge Street. The aim is to achieve something unique that can bring the basins into the town centre and open up Bridge Street to new business and housing opportunities. The following land use analysis provides the background to the proposed uses for the site.

The following section of the brief looks at land use which is somewhat inevitable given the nature of this 'development brief'. However, fundamental to the success of any scheme is the effective use of the adjacent waterspace. It is clear that the development proposals will require the remodelling of the waterspace and boating activity in the immediate vicinity of the site. In particular detailed consideration must be given to the residential moorings and the security and provision of services and utilities to the boaters. As with other businesses directly affected by the proposals it will be important to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to relocate any displaced service providers for the boating community i.e. Stroudwater Cruisers. Developers

will be expected to work in partnership with British Waterways to prepare a Waterspace Strategy to review existing facilities and to explore options for enhancing the waterspace layout. This should seek to incorporate the basins and surrounding land as an integral part of the redevelopment proposals with the aim of making the basins a more significant and attractive destination as an active source of leisure and commercial opportunity and not simply a visual backdrop.

8. LAND USE ANALYSIS

The site is earmarked in the Local Plan for a range of possible uses including offices, professional services, small-scale shops, cafes and housing. The challenges outlined in the brief present a unique set of circumstances and include:

- Constrained site dimensions
- Need for Active Frontages to Street(s) and Basin
- Improving Links - quality public realm
- Car Parking and servicing
- Potential contamination & water quality issues
- Land ownerships and relocations
- Need for a high quality scheme

The implementation of this brief (see section 11) will involve significant financial costs. These will need to be off-set by the returns generated

through any new development. Evidence suggests that for this type of site, the most profitable land use would be housing. However, a purely residential scheme would not meet the requirements of Policy STC.4 and would fail to achieve the overall vision and objectives set out in this brief.

Any proposal involving the STC.4 site must involve a suitable mix of land uses. As a minimum the District Council will require the incorporation of commercial units at the groundfloor to the whole of the Bridge Street frontage. Active commercial uses will also be required [at least in part] to the frontages of any link routes through the site and to the Clock Basin frontage.

Whilst recognising there may only be a limited market for commercial space the District Council would expect rents to be adjusted to reflect any weak demand. There is also significant flexibility in terms of the type of commercial uses that may be accepted within the site.

Scope for the integration of any ground floor housing will be limited and will only be considered within the frontage of any links between Bridge Street and the basins (including Engine Lane) and the frontage overlooking the Clock Basin. This reflects Policy STC.4 which limits housing to above and behind the main frontage. However, even here, building designs and internal layouts should be adaptable to enable residents to set up ground floor craft studios or live work units.

QUANTUM OF FLOORSPACE

As part of the preparation of this brief a number of possible options are being tested. These indicate the following mix:

Housing

total numbers: minimum of 30 units to >43 units

floorspace estimate of 1,000sqm to >2,000sqm

affordable units: minimum of 10 housing units

density: minimum of 65 houses per hectare

Commercial

total numbers: between 11 and 20 units

floorspace: 1900sqm to >2,600 sqm

Food and Drink (A3 units)

total numbers: minimum of 2

floorspace: minimum of 260 sqm

In line with Local Plan Policy TM.9 (Stourport Tourist Information and Heritage Centre), consideration should be given to incorporating a gateway building such as an information centre that may serve to present a “public face” for any future shared community services and/ or British Waterways (for which views over the basins would be critical). Proposals incorporating publicly accessible toilets will also be encouraged.

Paragraph 14.10 of the Local Plan highlights the suitability of town centre sites in making

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a contribution towards the district's affordable housing stock. In line with Local Plan Policy H.10 (Affordable Housing) the Council will seek for 30% of dwellings to be affordable. In negotiations with developers, the District Council will have particular regard to Development Control Practice Note 11 (available to download at www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/wfdc_docs/planning/practicenotes/practicenote11.pdf.) and the related Affordable Housing Tool kit.

Having regard to each of the preceding topic analysis, the following section aims to provide some indicative illustrations of how the scheme may look.



Policy V.1 (Mixed Uses)

Development proposals within the STC.4 area must provide a mix of commercial and housing. Any scheme must add a new dimension to the tourism potential of the area through the addition of quality public space and the possible introduction of an information centre.

Policy V.2 (Commerce)

For the purposes of this SPD, commercial uses are taken to include those town centre uses set out in paragraph 1.8 of PPS6 (2005) i.e. Use Classes A1-A3, B1, D.1, D.2 etc. Only these uses will be acceptable at the groundfloor of the Bridge Street frontage. A proportion of the units within the links and clock basin frontage will also be restricted to these uses in order to ensure appropriate levels of footfall through the area.

Policy V.3 (Housing)

Proposals for housing must include an appropriate range of types and tenures to include apartments and town houses for sale and rent.

Housing proposals will be permissible in the following circumstances:
i) on the upper floors throughout the area

and;

ii) about 50% of the groundfloor to any links between Bridge Street and the basin or;
iii) about 60% of the ground floor frontage facing the Clock Basin

Groundfloor housing should be adaptable to enable possible future conversion to commercial or live/ work units.

Housing will not be allowed at the groundfloor within Bridge Street or those areas falling outside of the STC.4 boundary.

Policy V.4 (Affordable Housing)

In line with Local Plan Policy H.10 (Affordable Housing), proposals will be expected to make a 30% contribution towards affordable housing. In deriving the number of units developers must have regard to the District Council's affordable housing 'toolkit'.

Policy V.5 (Gateway Building)

Developers should fully explore the possibility of accommodating a community facility / Information Centre within the redevelopment area.

Policy V.6 (Food & Drink)

Proposals should make provision for an element of food and drink uses. In particular those associated with Use Class A3 (Restaurants and Cafes) will be encouraged. In considering proposals for these uses the Council will consider Local Plan Policy RT.13 and in particular the relationship with existing and proposed housing.

Policy V.7 (Publicly Accessible Toilets)

Any proposals involving food and drink premises and/or a gateway building should include toilets that are open to the general public.

Policy V.8 (Waterspace Strategy)

Developers within the Development Brief area shall work in partnership with British Waterways to prepare and implement a waterspace strategy.

9. DESIGN OPTIONS

In preparing any development brief, it is necessary to sketch-up how a scheme could look. With this in mind, a local firm of architects (Howl Associates of Kidderminster) have prepared a

series of layouts and visualisations portraying what the Council believes is possible. This is an important part of the process as it provides a reality check and enables the aspirations of the brief to be mapped out. In total, six options were considered and these are set out in Appendix 7 of the Sustainability Appraisal. Following that appraisal, a number of options have been discounted and Appendix 1 of this brief sets out the three most appropriate scenarios for consideration. The preferred approach that maximises choice and movement through the area, is Option A which proved to be the favoured option to emerge during public consultation. The Council, would therefore, strongly encourage new access links to be created in the north and south of the site. This will also help to add relief in the built form and has a clear historic and planning relevance to the area. The District Council does, however, have reservations about Option C particularly in terms of linkage/ movement to the basins and also in terms of visual dominance. Any designers looking at this option will need to satisfactorily resolve these issues.



Restaurants & cafes can further increase vitality

10. IMPLEMENTATION

Land assembly will be critical to the delivery of the Council's aspirations to see the site comprehensively developed. However, given the potential complexities associated with this and the need to understand the ambitions and requirements of existing businesses, it is considered necessary to highlight options to facilitate the phased release of land and development. The options described in Appendix 1 indicate the possibilities.

Working in partnership with others, the District Council will aim to bring forward the comprehensive redevelopment of the site.

Any proposals for the Bridge Street Basins Link will inevitably have a significant impact on boating interests particularly for the Clock Basin. Section 7 (Vitality and Viability) of this brief places a requirement on any scheme to be accompanied by a waterspace strategy and this is further supported by Policy V.8 (Waterspace Strategy). Any 'strategy' must fully consider the needs of the boating community (including residential, visitor and business interests). As with any of the existing businesses operating in the area, it will be critical to understand how the needs and services of those businesses can be satisfactorily accommodated as part of any scheme.

Throughout the SPD a number of key expectations and requirements to be subject to

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s.106 contributions are identified and these are summarised as follows:

SPD Page No	In addition to on-site services and infrastructure etc, S.106 Developer contributions will be sought towards:
15	General Highway works (Strategic Access)
17	Public realm and crossing points for routes linking the STC.4 site with bus stops could be improved and offsite contributions may be sought.
16	Improving links to existing car parks i.e. via Bridge Street, Raven Street, Coopers Lane and Engine Basin.
15	Improving links to the strategic cycle network
16	For proposals that require off-site parking, the District Council may require s.106 payments for existing car parks at Raven Street or the Riverside in line with Local Plan Policy TC.5 (Town Centre Parking Areas).
17	Improvements to existing car parks e.g. Raven Street & Riverside Meadows
18-19	Any requirements to emerge through the preparation of a 'waterspace strategy'.
18-19	30% of dwellings to be affordable.
Standard Requirements	S.106 Education contributions – for further advice contact the Development Control team.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

As stated on page 5, the purpose of this development brief is to supplement the policies of the District Local Plan. As a Supplementary Planning Document, the brief will be afforded significant weight as a material consideration when deciding planning applications. However, the brief must be read in conjunction with the other adopted policies of the Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance including Design Quality and education contributions. The development brief in no way diminishes the need to have full regard to other policy guidance including the informal advice offered by Development Control Practice Notes. If you are intending to make proposals for the STC.4 site early contact should be made with the Development Control team who will be able to offer further advice.

Policy IM.1 (A Comprehensive Approach)

Proposals within the STC.4 area must not prejudice the comprehensive redevelopment of the area and/ or the creation of a satisfactory link between Bridge Street and the Basins.

11. PREPARING THE SPD

In preparing land use policy, the District Council must undertake a Sustainability Appraisal of proposals at every stage of the process to inform preparation. In accordance with requirements, a Sustainability Appraisal is available to accompany this development brief. As such, the appraisal forms an essential part of the Supplementary Planning Document and is published as a separate document.

For more information please contact the forward planning team (see contact details section at the end of the document).



CONSULTATION AND ADOPTION

In line with the latest requirements, the District Council prepared a separate consultation statement (September 2005). This explained the consultations undertaken in preparing the development brief. This included a limited scoping exercise with key groups and agencies including British Waterways, Advantage West Midlands, the Environment Agency, Town Council, Civic Society etc.

A six week period of public consultation on a draft development brief for the Bridge Street Basins Link site commenced on the 5th September 2005 and closed on the 17th October 2005. The brief generated a significant amount of interest and welcome coverage from the press. In total 269 individual responses were received from 77 respondents. The overwhelming response was one of general support for the Council's proposals. Comments received also highlighted areas where the brief could be improved and as a result, a number of modifications were made to the draft SPD and associated Sustainability Appraisal. The modifications are detailed in the Representations Statement accompanying this SPD which is available separately. If you have any further enquiries about the SPD please contact the Forward Planning Section Tel. 01562 732549.

FURTHER INFORMATION

More information is available from:

Wyre Forest District Council
Forward Planning Section
Planning, Health and Environment Division
Duke House
Clensmore St
Kidderminster
DY10 2JX
Tel. 01562 732549 or
email: forward.planning@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Wyre Forest District Council:

- Wyre Forest District Local Plan (January 2004)
- Wyre Forest District Design Quality Supplementary Planning Guidance (July 2004)
- Wyre Forest District Draft Statement of Community Involvement
- Severn Road Development Brief (2001)

The above documents are available to view on the Council's website at:

www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/wfdc_html/policy/forwardplanning.htm



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL CONTACT DETAILS:

Forward Planning (Planning Policy & Conservation)

Principal Forward Planning Officer

Tel. 01562 732557

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Conservation Officer

Tel. 01562 732536

email: conservation@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

Development Control (Planning Applications, consents and trees)

Development Control Manager

Tel. 01562 732515

email: development.control@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

Economic Development (Economy, property search, tourism and regeneration funding)

Economic Development & Tourism Manager

Tel. 01562 732752

email:

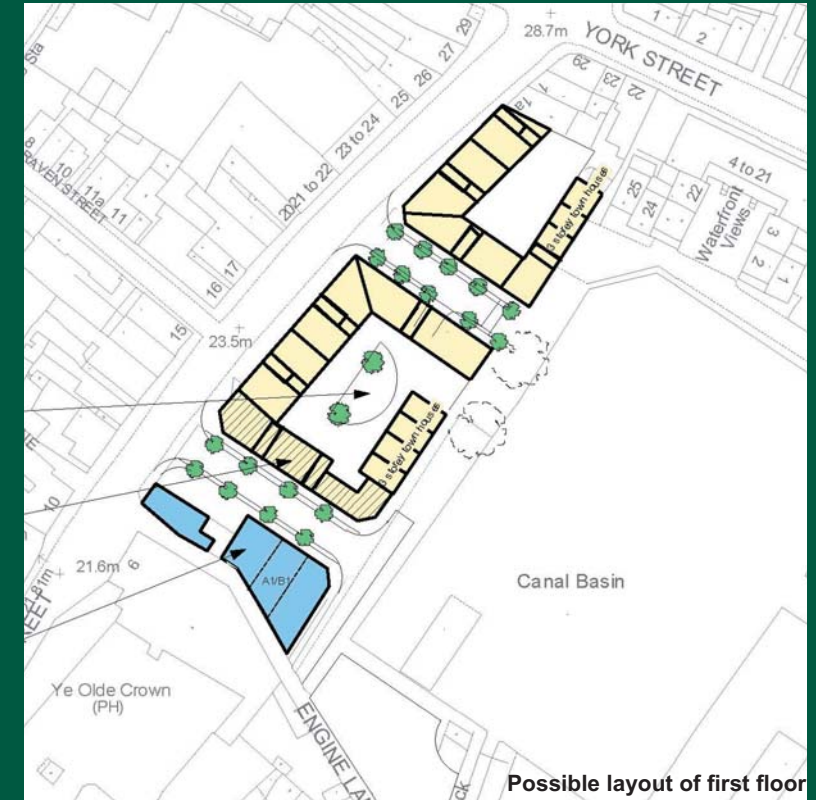
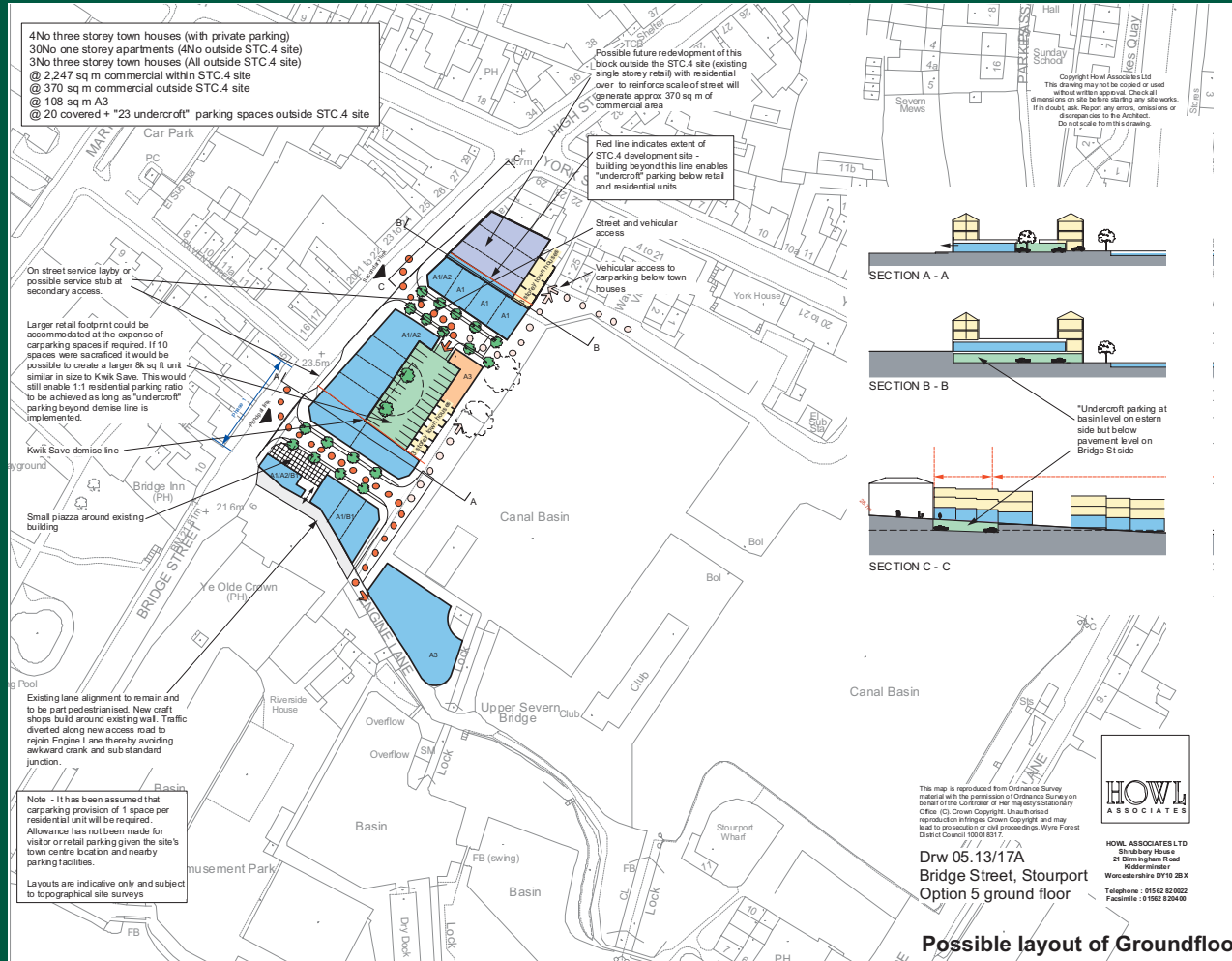
economic.development@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

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APPENDIX 1: DESIGN OPTIONS

OPTION A

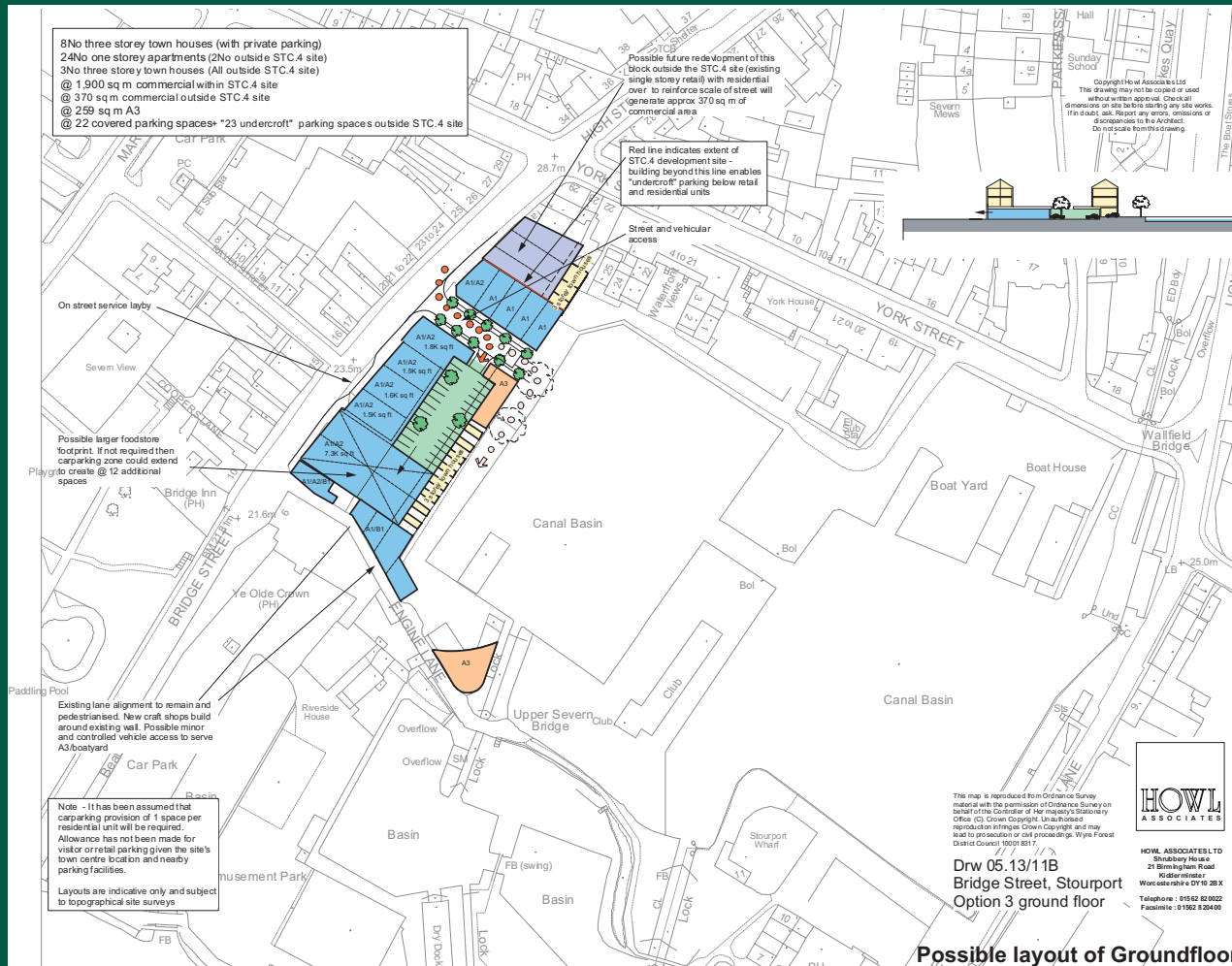


Linking Bridge Street to the basins is key. As with option B, this preferred solution could be phased. Later phases could lead to the creation of a second link offering different views and perspectives to the area and will create suitable block sizes and greater flexibility in use and movement through the site. First & second floors to be housing.

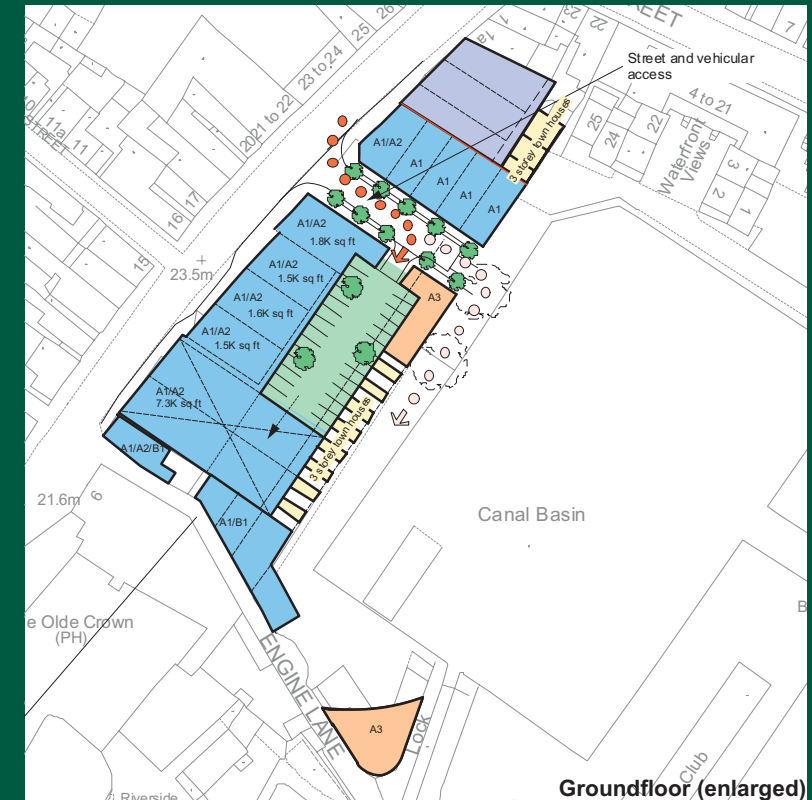
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OPTION B



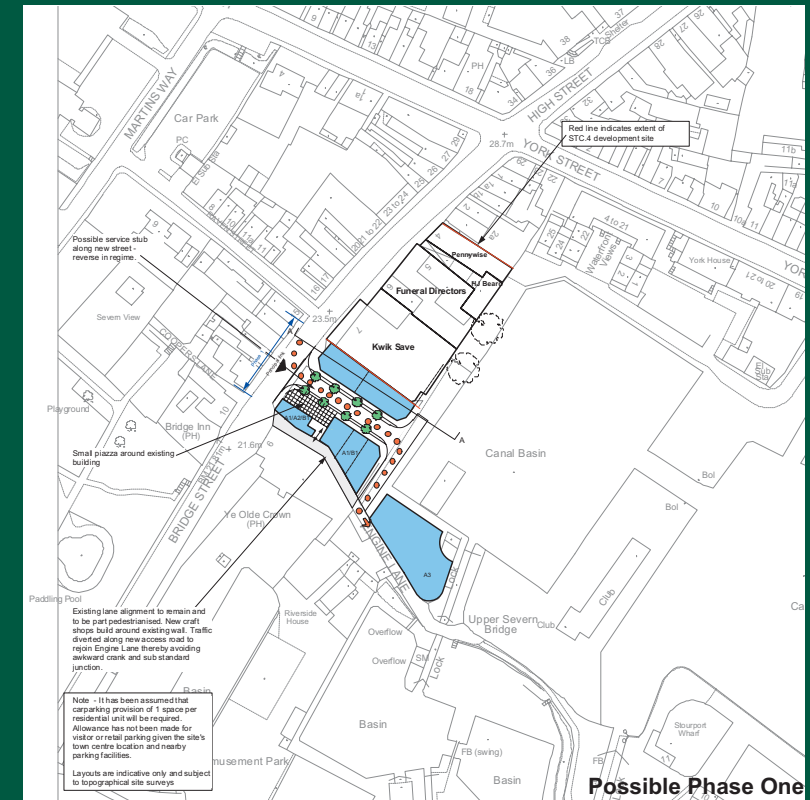
Possible layout of Groundfloor



New single access link created to basins from Bridge Street in North of the site. The sketch plans illustrate possible groundfloor layouts involving retail and craft units to basin or residential to basin. The second layout also illustrates how a medium sized foodstore might be accommodated within the site.

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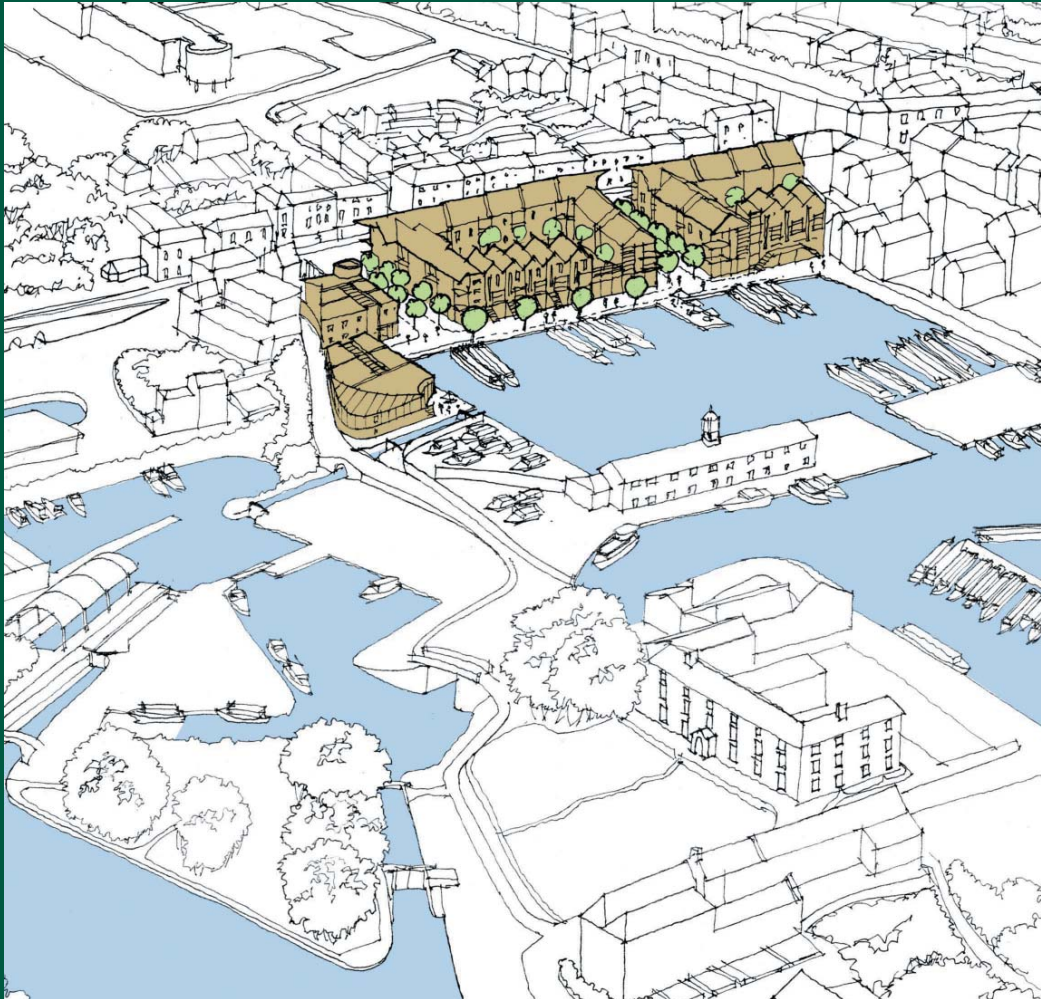
OPTION C



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APPENDIX 2: SKETCH ILLUSTRATIONS

based on OPTION A



AERIAL VIEW:

These sketches illustrate how the townscape of Bridge Street can be repaired. Axial links to the basins with enclosure created to main frontages. New treatment to Engine Lane and possible land mark A3 unit fronting onto lower basins.

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A PLACE FOR PEOPLE & BUSINESS:

The above sketch illustrates the possible view down to the basin from Bridge Street. Tree-lined shared surfaces for pedestrian priority, architectural features help to define space and provide recognisable features in the streetscene. Natural surveillance from apartments and shop units. Cafe culture introduces life to the basin edge.



CLOCK BASIN: AT THE HEART OF TOWN

Bringing life to the waters edge - attracting new types of business and redefining town centre living in Stourport



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This information can be made available
in large print or on an audio cassette
Telephone 01562 732781

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