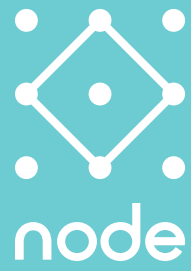


Stratford upon Avon, Riverside Green Corridor

Concept landscape design

November 2020





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1. Introduction

A journey of discovery and adventure

The project comprises a major new public space for Stratford, delivering a well-connected, green riverside corridor that creates a journey of discovery and adventure. This document provides an initial concept landscape design to support a funding bid. The site is shown on the plan opposite.

The design has incorporated and overlaid concepts onto previous work undertaken by Design with Nature for the southern part of the riverside with the central riverside and the northern riverside to create a coherent whole. A clear vision, inspiration, analysis, key opportunities and design evolution is set out in this document resulting in an overall concept design for the riverside corridor which is split into north, central and south sections.

This is not only seen as a regeneration project for the riverside but for Stratford upon Avon as a whole. It links with other projects such as the creation of 'The World of Shakespeare' and other public realm projects in the town centre which could include widening pavements and changing traffic circulation in the future.

The vision and inspiration for the project identifies a series of key threads that tie all the elements together in an exciting and visionary design. This project will use green space as an enabler to trigger behavioural change and improve air quality and encourage more walking, cycling and zero emission vehicles by intercepting traffic and car parking to the north and south of the riverside to reduce congestion, conflicts between pedestrian and vehicles and to help to repurpose parking in the centre of Stratford in the long term. Access to open space is seen as a key driver for early economic recovery. The Stratford riverside green project seeks to:

- Revitalise river frontage
- Create new high-quality public realm
- Open up new routes into the town
- Reduce congestion
- Improve air quality
- Ensure Stratford upon Avon maximises its potential in delivering economic recovery in the post COVID-19 world.

As highlighted in the initial bid for funding the project has a wide range of benefits set out overleaf.

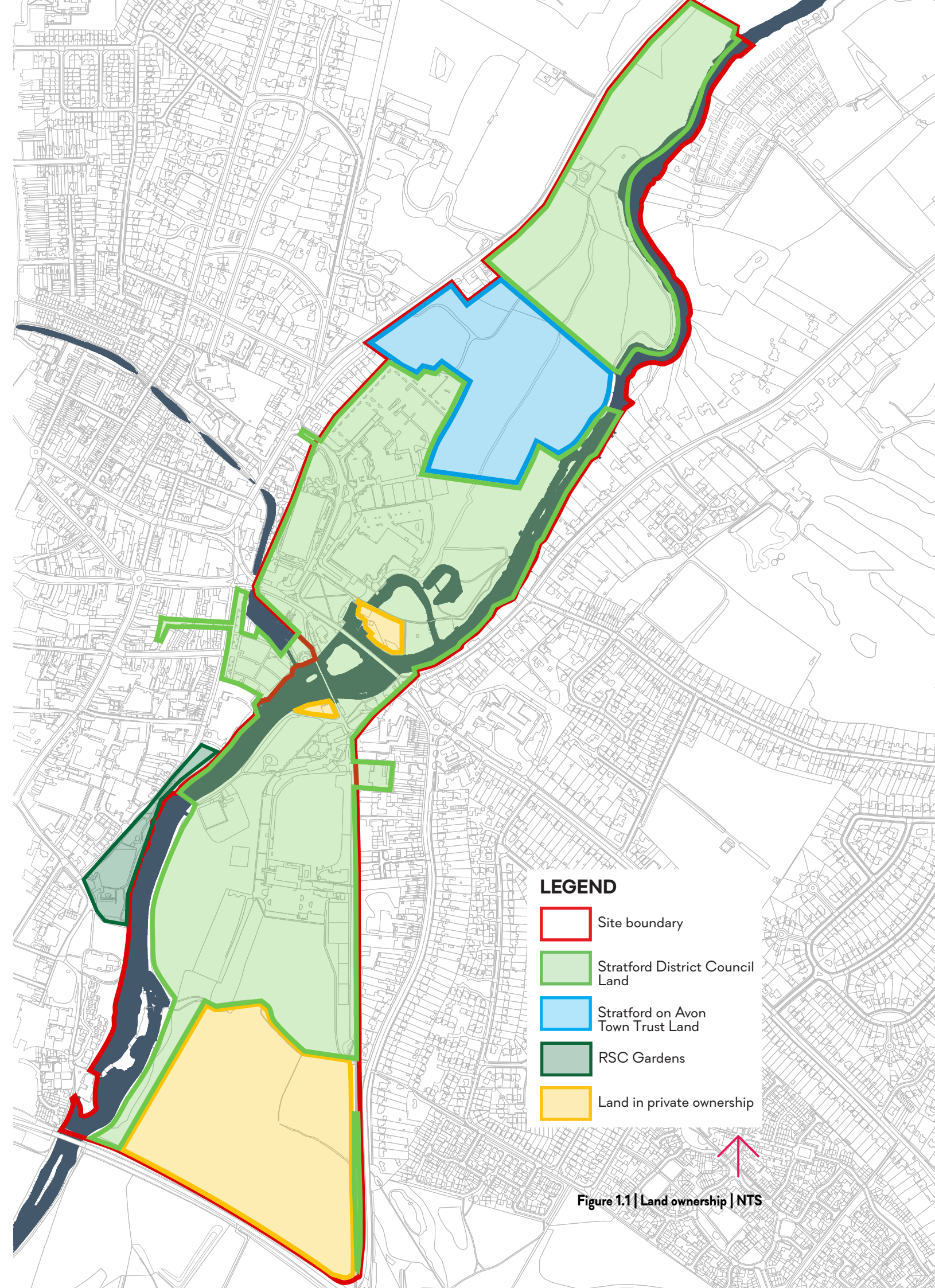


Figure 1.1 | Land ownership | NTS

Economic

The scheme will provide vital support and enhancement to the visitor economy supporting valuable businesses and jobs. By creating attractive open space the scheme will deliver the visitors on which the many businesses within Stratford rely and will diversify our offer whilst the RSC and SBT recover. The scheme will enable the creation of a number of small businesses and extend visitor dwell time. Over the longer term, the scheme has the potential to release some town centre land.



Transport

The project has the potential to significantly improve traffic congestion issues which frustrate road users and cause issues with air quality. By enhancing the existing car parking at the Fisherman's car park off Warwick Road, drivers approaching from the M40/ Warwick direction can be encouraged to leave their cars outside of the centre of town. By providing alternative vehicle access to the Recreation Ground for car approaching from the South pressure can be taken off Swans Nest Lane.



Environmental

By including state of the art electric charging infrastructure, public cycle hire and accessible walking routes the scheme should be an ambassador for modal shift within transport and demonstrating the environmental benefits this can deliver. It should also lead to improvements in air quality and there is the potential to include further flood alleviation measures within the scheme subject to Environment Agency consultation.



Wellbeing

The creation of a major new accessible public open space will deliver significant well-being benefits to both residents of and visitors to Stratford upon Avon. The space will be set out of a semi-formal basis as parkland allowing people to spend quality time outdoors communing with nature and enjoying the mental and physical health benefits that this can deliver.



2. Analysis

Key issues

Having undertaken a desk top assessment and site visit and reviewed previous work our initial analysis has identified a number of key issues to be addressed. The whole area is within the flood zone apart from some small pockets of land but opportunities do exist to design a landscape which see flooding as an opportunity rather than a threat. These key issues have been split into three key areas as the areas are all different, as set out below.

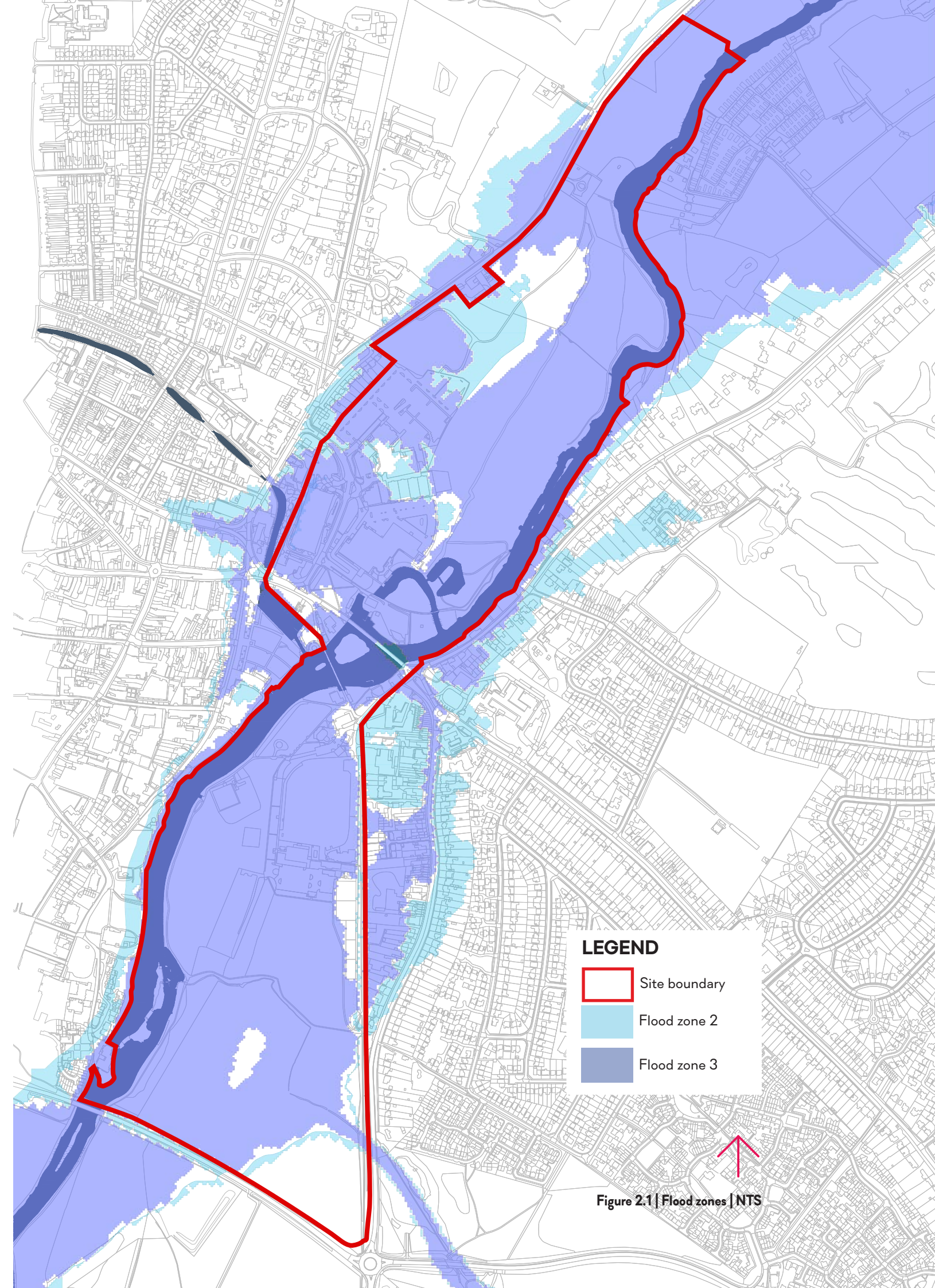
Riverside North

- Large area of underutilised land with great potential
- The Fisherman's car park off Warwick Road is not well signposted and is too small for current demand
- Potential conflicts with different users i.e. swimmers, fishermen and watersports currently
- Little access into large parts of Riverside north as lack of connected footpaths that create circular routes
- Opening up access and protecting ecology and wildlife at the same time

- Lack of toilet facilities, places to eat
- Lack of signage and interpretation

Riverside Central

- Severance of the riverside green corridor by highway infrastructure
- Lack of legibility for pedestrian and cyclists how they continue journey along the riverside
- Access and links from leisure centre to Riverside
- Conflicts between vehicles, pedestrian and cyclists
- Narrow pavements
- Busy at peak times not allowing social distancing
- Little signage and interpretation for riverside corridor



LEGEND

- Site boundary
- Flood zone 2
- Flood zone 3

Figure 2.1 | Flood zones | NTS

Riverside South

- Links across the river are congested
- Footpaths not wide enough to accommodate social distancing and different users i.e. pedestrian and cyclists
- Areas are screened off by existing planting which does not aid legibility
- Conflicts with pedestrians and cyclists and vehicles along access to car parking for sports centre and recreation ground
- Lack of picnic facilities and seating areas
- Lack of gym and signposted walking and running routes
- Lucy Mill Bridge in need of improvement across River Avon

LEGEND

- Site boundary
- ★ Key landmarks / Destination
- CARAVAN PARK Land uses
- View
- P Vista
- Areas in need of improvement
- W Physical barrier
- Noise
- Main grass
- O Open scrub
- H Enclosed footpath
- Public footpath
- A Road
- B Road

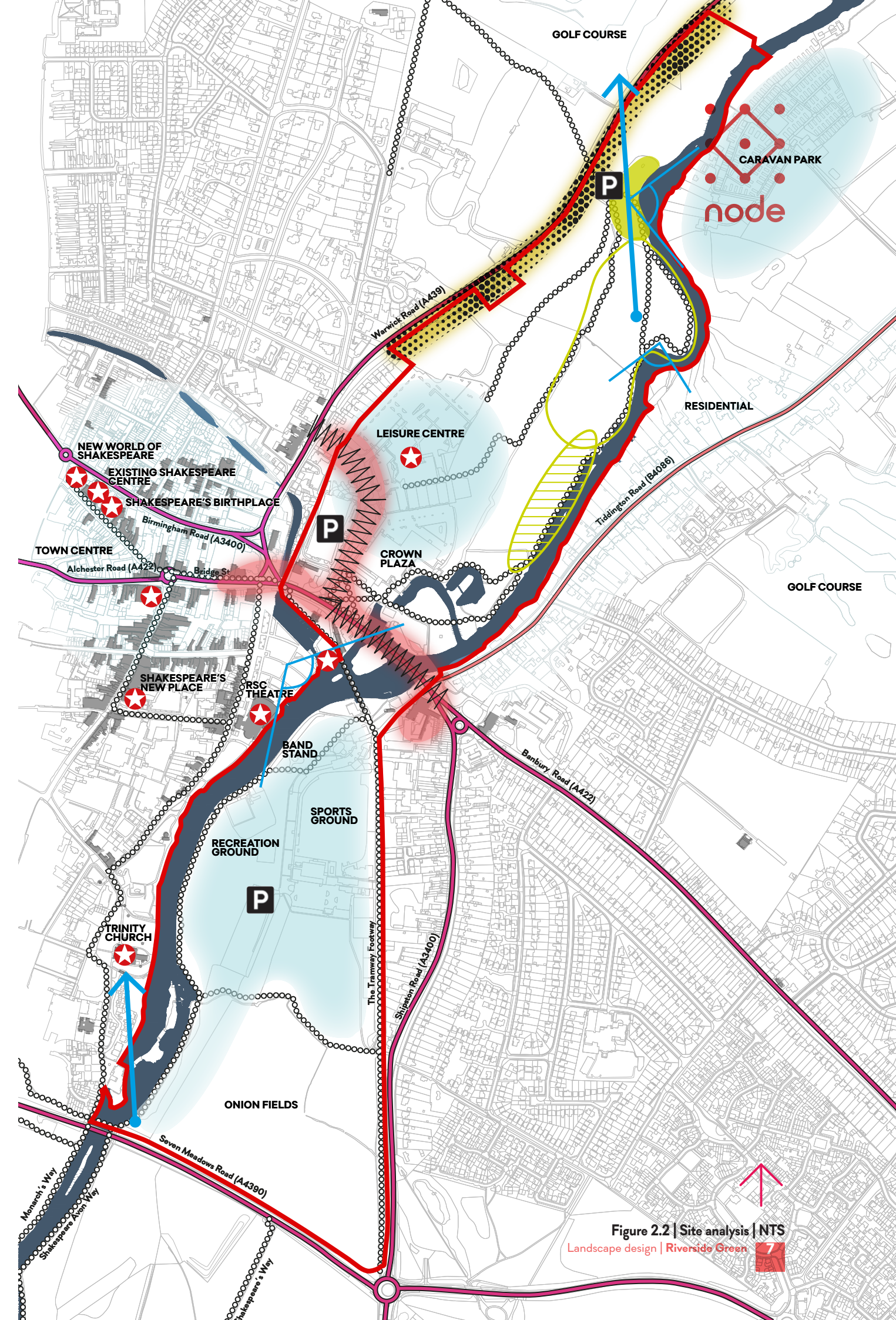


Figure 2.2 | Site analysis | NTS
Landscape design | Riverside Green

3. Opportunities

Opportunities

The initial key opportunities are as follows:

Riverside North

- Create new 500 space car park to intercept traffic along Warwick Road
- Create modal shift by encouraging people to park and walk, park and cycle
- Provide new café/ restaurant/ information point
- Create mosaic of habitats to improve biodiversity
- Create country park to provide a greater range of facilities and activities for all
- Creation of river taxi point
- Creation of safe bathing area
- Creation of wider footpaths and circular routes for walking, running and cycling

Riverside Central

- Improve connectivity across highway infrastructure for pedestrian and cyclists

- Improve signage and interpretation of all that the riverside has to offer
- Provide improved links to the town centre
- Repurpose land by reducing parking provision and providing elsewhere

Riverside South

- Providing new arrival spaces with improved signage
- Providing new car parking off Seven Meadows Road
- Improving access across the river
- Opening up the area by taking out overgrown planting and replacing it with new planting
- Providing new fitness equipment
- Providing new ecological areas and wetlands
- Providing camping and additional event space
- Creating a series of circular trails

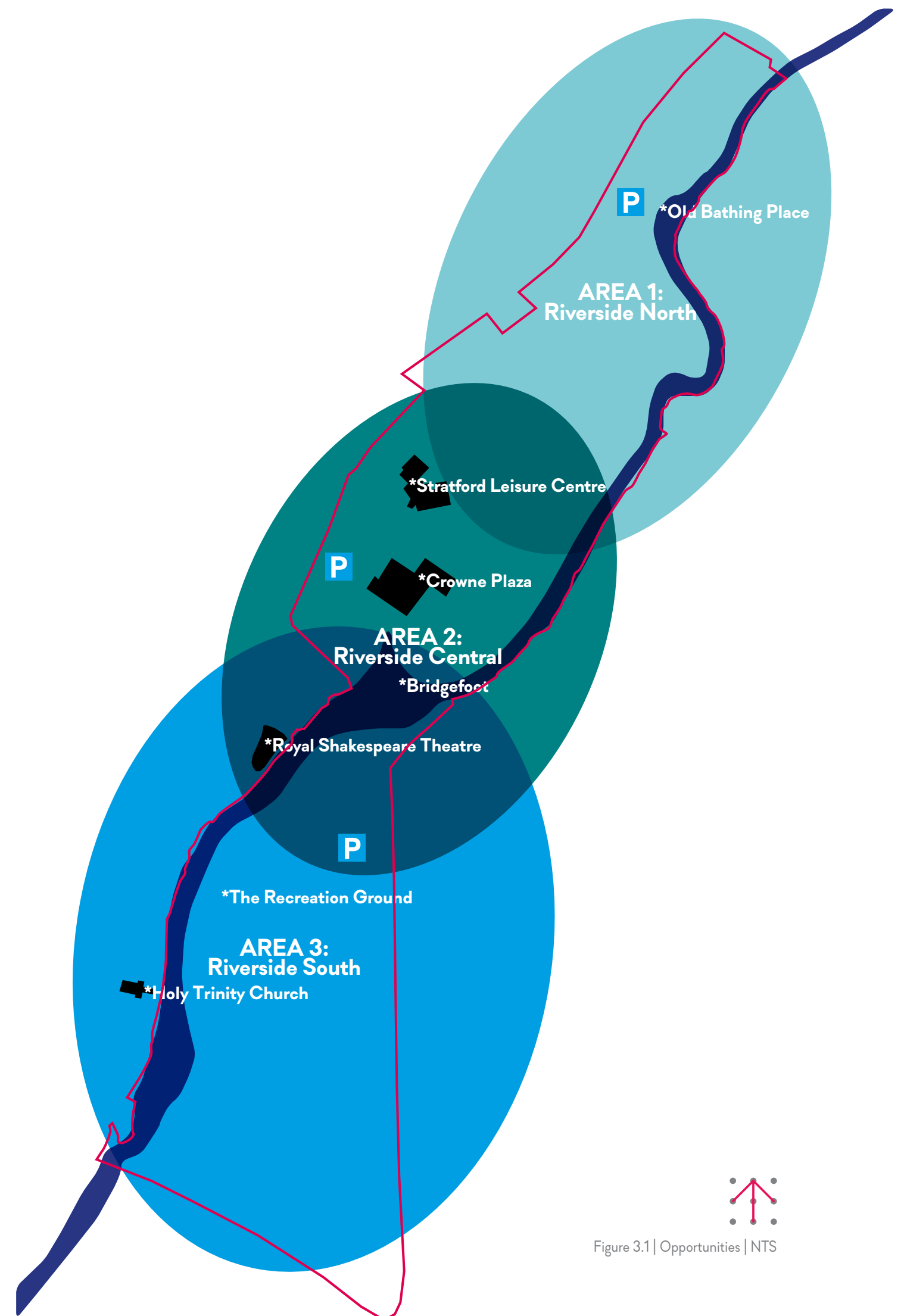


Figure 3.1 | Opportunities | NTS

Connectivity

The adjacent diagram shows existing and proposed key routes within the site and in the surrounding area to highlight how it will contribute to radically enhanced connectivity in the immediate vicinity and the wider town. Key connectivity opportunities are as follows:

- Reducing the need to travel by car right into the centre of Stratford Upon Avon by providing new car parks to the north and south of the riverside to intercept traffic.
- Provide fast walking and cycling route from these car parks to city centre
- Creating new pedestrian and cycle links to encourage a modal shift
- Creating well signed, circular routes
- Widening existing pavements
- Improved pedestrian crossing points within the central area of the riverside
- Improving pedestrian crossing point across the River Avon
- Providing a river taxi to the north of the riverside to the centre of the town to connect with existing routes

LEGEND

-  Site boundary
-  Solving severance caused by town centre road infrastructure
-  Improved connectivity across the River Avon
-  Improved riverside route
-  Circular walking, running and cycling routes
-  New car parks
-  River taxi points
-  Fast route to town centre for cycling and walking
-  Existing paths
-  Potential enhancements to existing town centre route

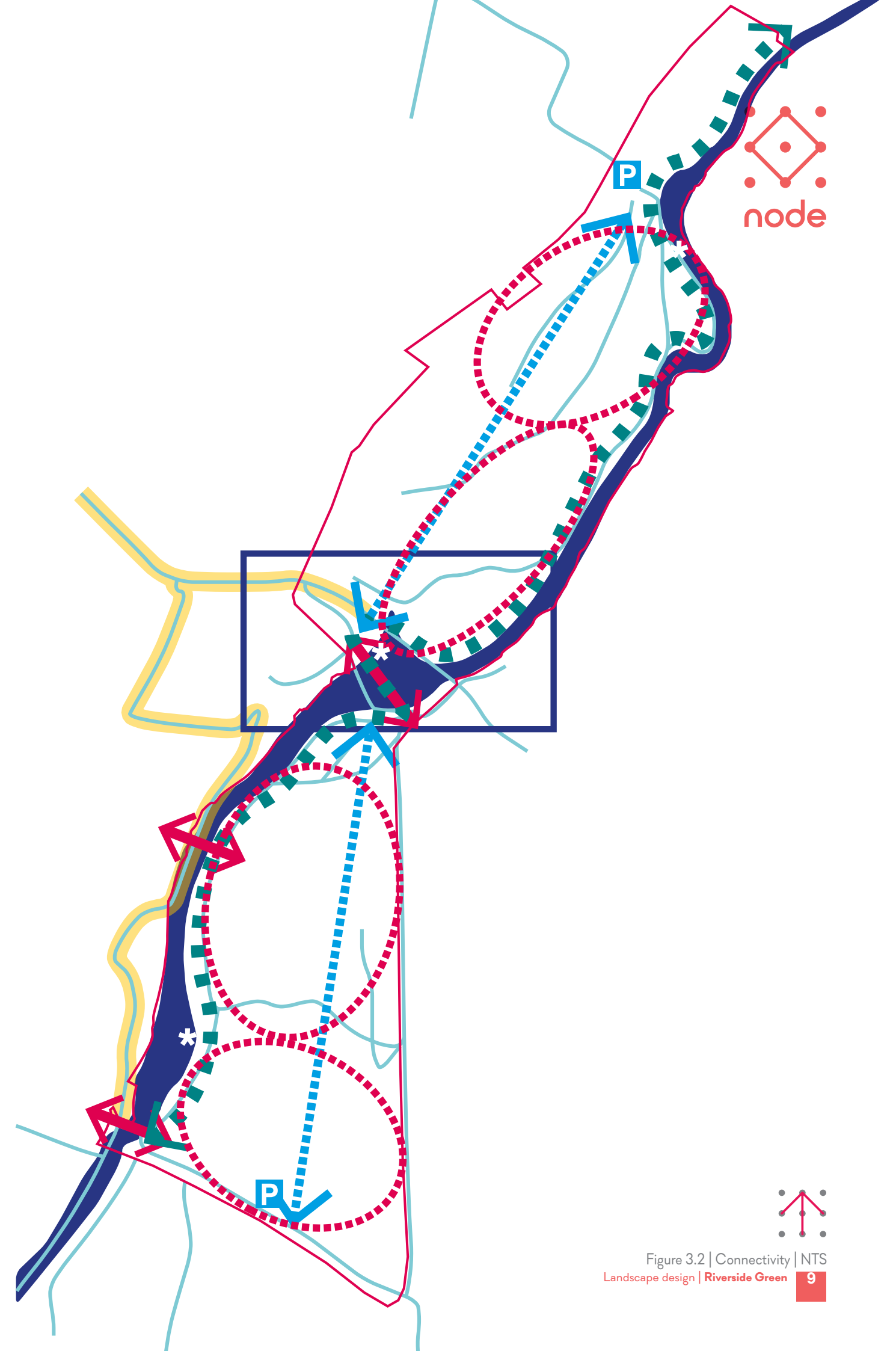


Figure 3.2 | Connectivity | NTS
Landscape design | Riverside Green 9

Ecology

The critical importance of ecology and biodiversity to the character of the existing site and the future success of the project is recognised. The design team will be working alongside an ecologist to identify existing constraints and opportunities for enhancement within the detailed design of proposals.

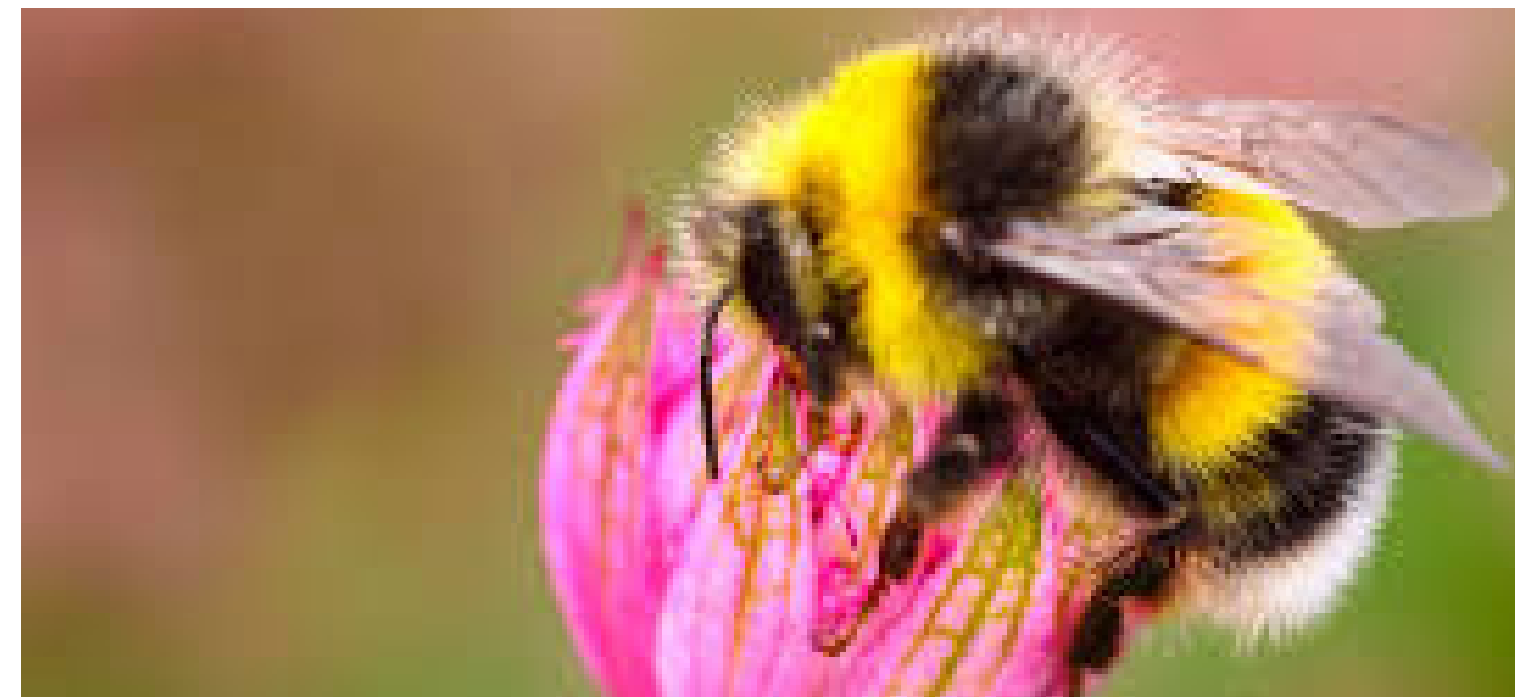
Opportunities to protect and enhance ecology include:

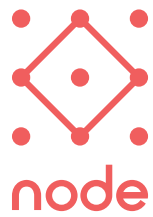
- Protection of existing trees and hedgerows
- Creation of mosaic of landscape types
- Creation of new habitats

The aerial photograph opposite shows existing tree and hedgerow cover. Any further identified ecological constraints will be overlaid and considered as part of the iterative process of design evolution.



Figure 3.3 | Ecology (TBC) | NTS





4. Vision and inspiration

Vision

The riverside provides a journey of discovery and adventure and a green lung in the centre of Stratford upon Avon. It is a place for recreation, health and well-being, stories, art and nature.

Inspiration

Inspiration has come from a number of themes, which provide structuring elements to the overall design. The design of the riverside provides a series of overlapping threads that intertwine to create a narrative that responds to place, people and local identity and reinforces Stratford upon Avon as a great place to live, work and visit.

The design of the riverside requires a number of levels of interpretation and be accessible to all. It also needs to reinforce other initiatives and attractors within the town and be seen to be part of the wider experience of Stratford upon Avon itself.

The riverside has the opportunity to unlock and get people interested in the history of the town and celebrate, in an accessible way, the unique heritage of the town as Shakespeare's birthplace.

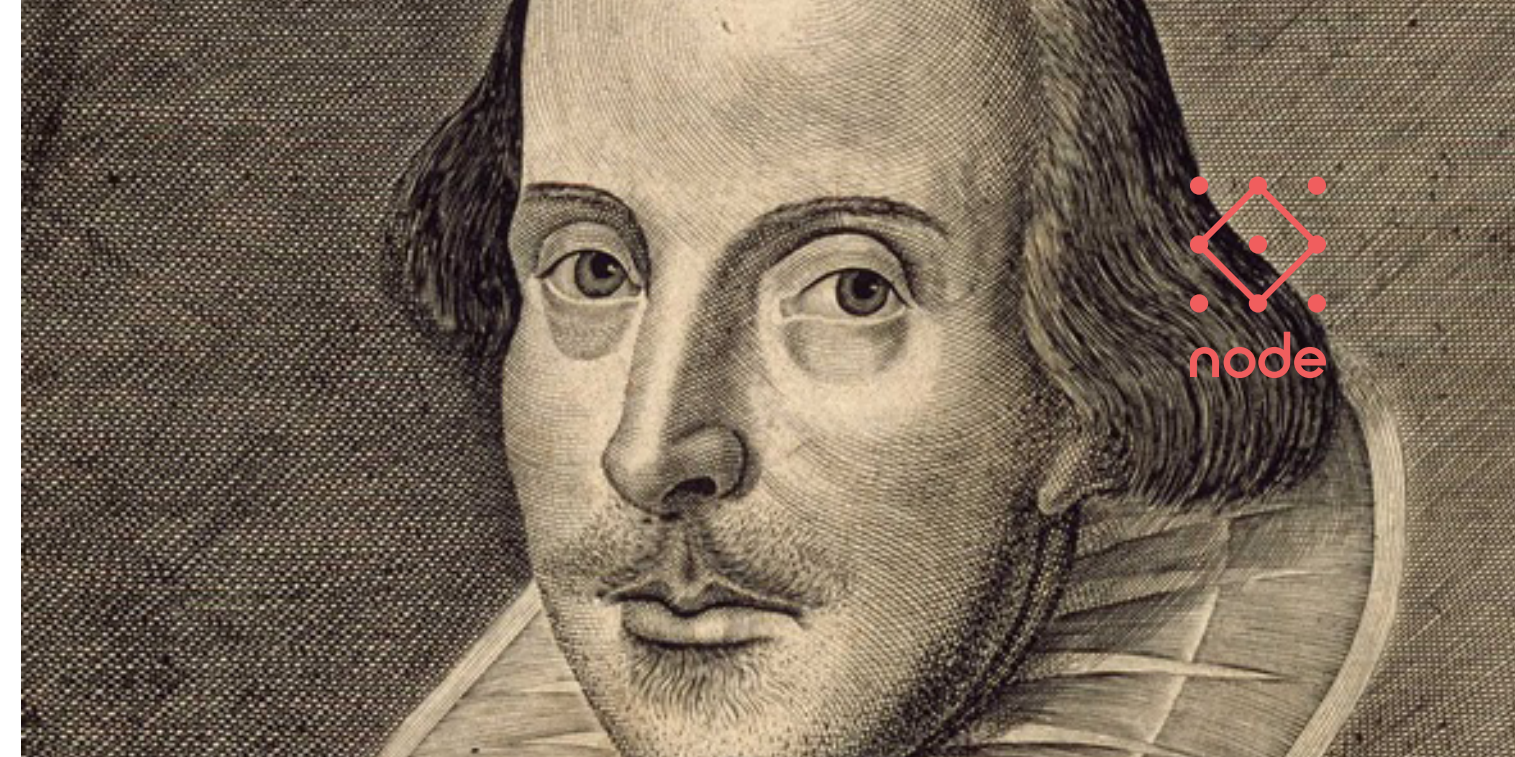
The design of the riverside and encouraging more sustainable modes of transport will also help alleviate traffic issues within the town and unlock connectivity opportunities at the heart of the riverside.

Inspiration for the 14 key threads comes from Shakespeare's sonnets, which are 14 line poems. These threads are then translated into the landscape design in a number of ways: some more obvious than others, but which helps reinforces a strong narrative for Stratford upon Avon which celebrates its uniqueness that other places cannot offer.

Threads

These threads provide a strong narrative in the landscape design and help to connect from north to south with a series of different trails and routes encouraging adventure, discovery and learning. They also help to signpost other attractions within Stratford upon Avon, encouraging people to visit and linger for longer helping the local economy. They ensure that the design is not just about creating a series of interventions, but giving people a fun and exciting reason to want to come to Stratford. The design engages all the senses from sight, smell, touch, and hearing and appeals to all ages and interests.





1. Shakespeare (dark blue route)

With the exception of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, currently little reference is made to Shakespeare in large parts of the riverside corridor. The design for the riverside uses Shakespeare's plays, sonnets, life and stories as inspiration, flagging other attractions with the town and opening up the world of Shakespeare to a wider audience.

The design explores the three themes of Shakespeare plays of Comedy, Tragedy and History in an inventive way. This is delivered by creating a literature trail that celebrates Shakespeare's work, with interpretation, art, performance spaces, storytelling areas. Shakespeare frequently references landscape in his plays, and a number of quotes could be inventively incorporated into the design.

This literature trail will start in the north of the riverside from the existing Fisherman's car park through to Lucy Mill Footbridge in the south of the riverside. A colour coded route and potential for children to collect stamps in a booklet, unusual and unknown facts to be found along the route and a treasure hunt map will engage audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

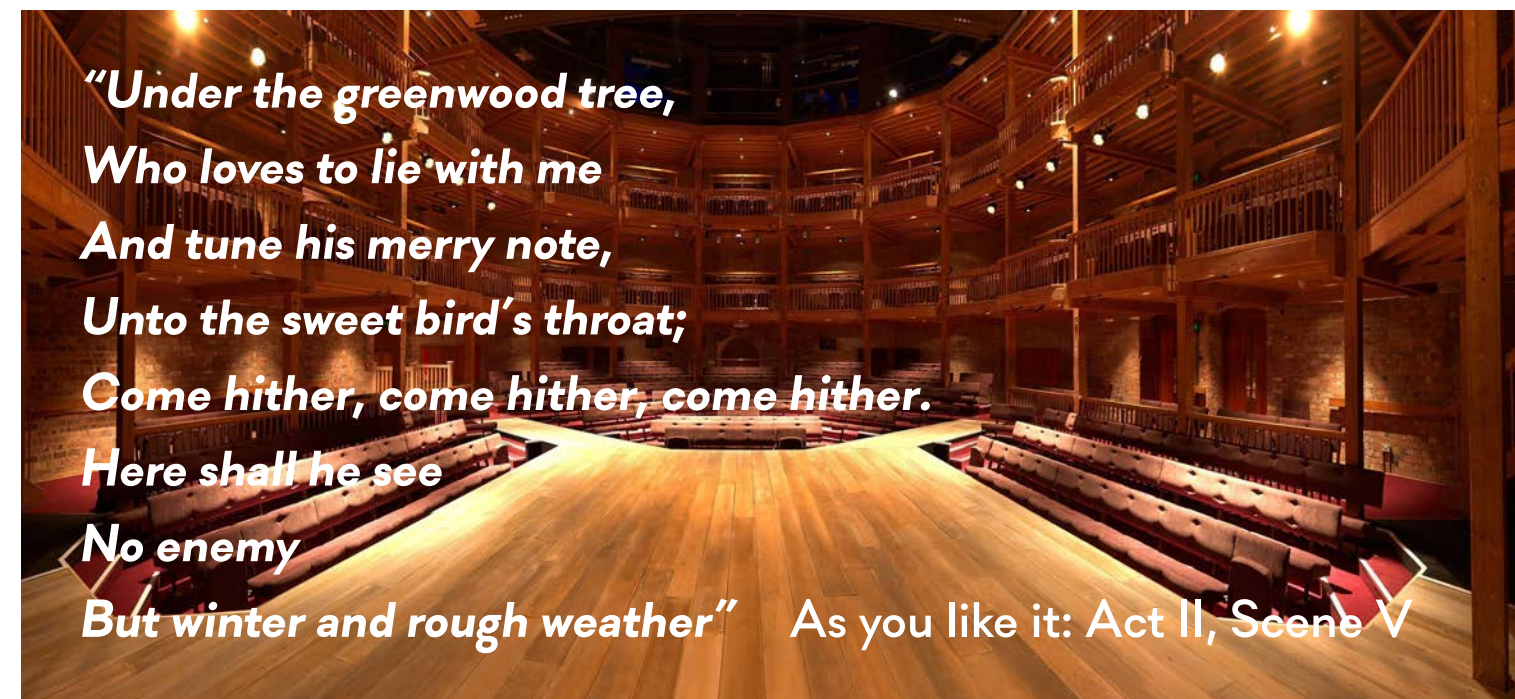
2. River Avon (light blue route)

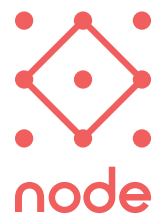
A celebration of the changing character of the River Avon, is also a key element to the design. Understanding the source and mouth of the River Avon and the activities and the habitats that are found along its route will provide a key context for the riverside park.

This light blue route will provide a water taxi, boating, and other water activities such as canoeing, fishing, and swimming. To ensure conflict between different users is minimised and to ensure safe swimming, zones will be designated for different activities.

It is proposed to create a new safe bathing area by creating a new channel which redirects water into the existing site and which can be designed in a way to create a shallow area of water for children and a deeper area for swimming that does not conflict with river traffic and fishing. The creation of an artificial river beach is likely to be popular over the summer months.

A pedestrian and cycle route will also provide alongside the river which will lead to the town centre. Along this route will be picnic spots, areas for people to fish and board walks and jetties that will give greater access to the waterside.





3. Nature (green route)

The integration of wildlife corridors, nature reserves, habitats, biodiversity, bird hides, and tree planting is a key thread running through the design. The north of the riverside is viewed by some as an ecological haven, whilst to others as derelict wasteland with overgrown scrub.

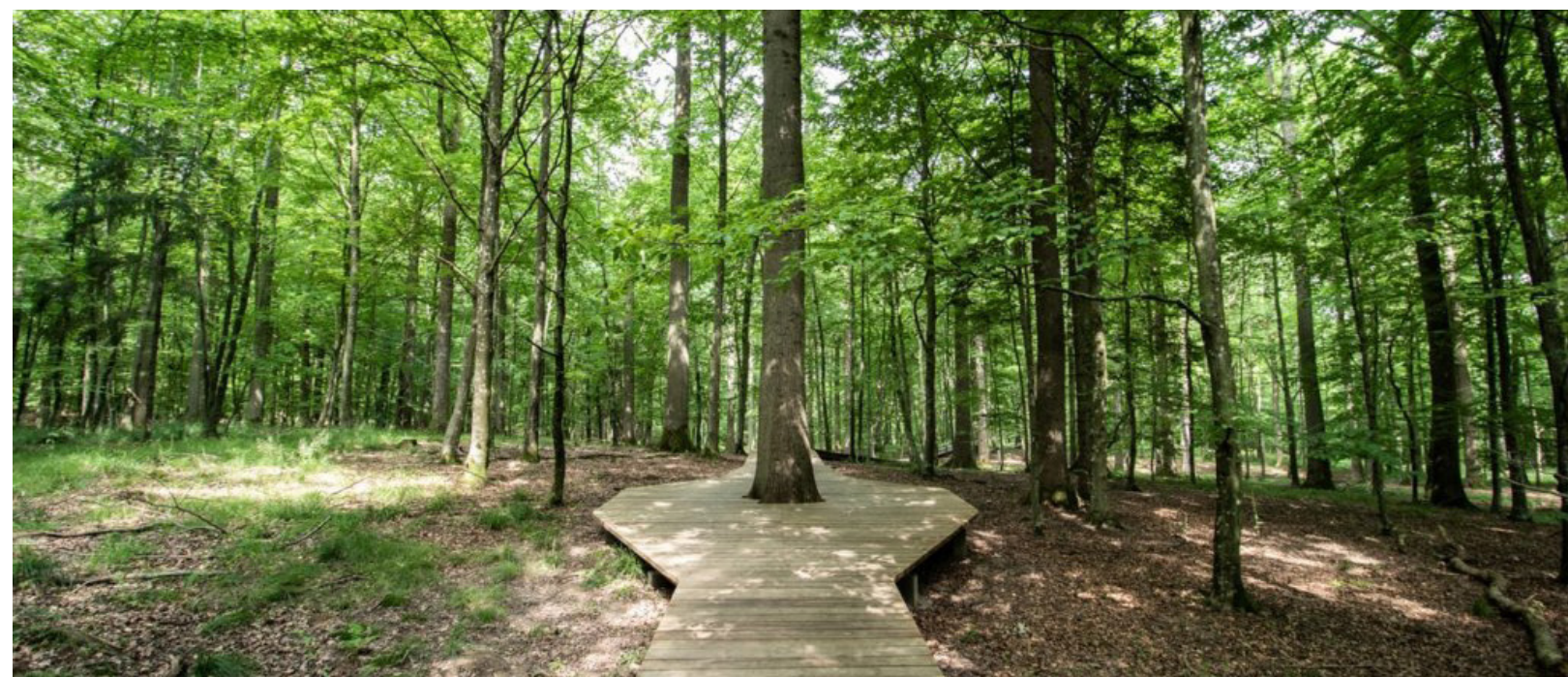
The design creates a mosaic of different landscape habitats from woodland, grassland, and wetlands with different levels of access to allow nature to thrive. The intention is to have areas where wildlife is undisturbed which could be achieved through screening along certain routes allowing viewing hides to watch birds, badgers, bats and other wildlife. A colour coded nature trail route would lead to these areas with interpretation provided on wildlife species. Engagement with the local wildlife trust would help to design and manage these areas. Activities and events would also attract additional visitors.

Consideration has been given to creating a transition from informal landscapes in the north to a more formal landscape in the central riverside back to a less formal landscape which encourages wildlife in the south.

4. Health and Fitness (orange route)

The provision of circular routes for health and fitness for walkers, runners and cyclists is crucial to people's well-being, reducing obesity, type 2 diabetes (known to result in a higher Covid-19 death rate) and reducing demand on the health service. It is proposed to have a series of different distance routes (1/5/10km) that appeal to different age groups and abilities. These could be combined to make longer distance routes or linked into routes beyond the riverside. These routes will include a fitness trail with obstacles and gym equipment.

A dedicated route for fast cycle and walking access to the town centre will also be provided. It is proposed to elevate this route on a bund of higher land in consultation with the Environment Agency so even when the river is in flood, access to the town centre remains. Signage will inform the time it will take on each of these routes to encourage people to park and walk/cycle rather than drive. A dedicated bike ability course will be provided to the south of the riverside and in the north a mountain biking trail through woodland incorporating twists turns and undulating landform will provide an exciting mountain bike course.



5. Recreation

The provision of sports, play, fishing, boating, canoeing and swimming are key elements of the design. Currently, the main location for formal sports provision in terms of sports club and pitches can be found to south riverside in the recreational area and will look to be enhanced. Consideration of other recreational areas such as multipurpose games area (MUGA), skate park has been considered to appeal to different groups.

Area for informal recreation, such as picnic areas, event space and children's play are provided in the southern part of the riverside but less so in the north of the riverside.

With an enlarged car park and more visitors in the north of the riverside, additional facilities need to be provided for barbecue areas, picnic and adventure play. A large designated area for picnics with picnic tables and barbecue areas will be provide to the north.

It is also proposed to include an adventure playground set within woodland to the north which could include zip lines, high wires and other adventure play for children of different age groups.

6. Sustainability

Integration of economic, social and environmental sustainability is a key element of the proposed design for the riverside corridor.

Economic sustainability includes enhancement to the visitor economy supporting valuable business and jobs. The opportunity to provide and create new business and jobs such as boat and cycle hire companies, EV charging providers, cafés / restaurants and food and beverage provided will extend visitors dwell time.

Over the longer term, the scheme has the potential to release some town centre land currently used for car parking for development to meet housing or employment needs. Consideration has been given to providing additional built development in the small area which sits outside the flood zone to the north for employment generation.

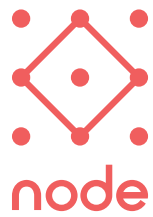
Social sustainability will be provided by providing much need green space and places for friends and family to meet and to undertake recreational activities.

The creation of running and cycle, walking, swimming, canoeing and fishing clubs will help mental well-being and social isolation for some.

Environmentally the project will help deliver a wider range of environmental benefits including:

- Additional habitat creation and a mosaic of landscape types
- Net increase in biodiversity
- Encouraging modal shift to more environmental forms of transport including e-buggies, e bikes, cycling and walking
- Help to improve air quality
- Additional flood alleviation measures





7. Art (purple route)

It is proposed to create an art trail that runs from north to south that will include sculpture, a maze, land art, integration of art into surfaces, street furniture and boundary treatments. The use of landform will be inspired by the work of land artist Andy Goldsworthy.

The art route is proposed to intersect and combine with the literature route providing inspiration for the art and a juxtaposition of different cultural artistic elements. A visitor centre/community space at the café at the northern end of the riverside could also serve as a small gallery/ studio.

Inspiration has been taken from Kroller Muller Museum in Holland and Yorkshire Sculpture Park which combine art and landscape in a way that is engaging to all.

8. Journey

Creating journeys at different speeds and experiences is a key thread of the design. Not only will it provide physical recreational journeys, but cultural journeys through art and literature, history and nature.

9. Stories

Creating stories as Shakespeare did is a core design concept, providing memories from the past and visions for the future. Story telling within the landscape as well as story telling areas will look to promote literature in its widest forms.

10. Food

Growing, consuming and enjoying food appeals to all our senses including taste, smell, sight, hearing and touch. Stratford riverside corridor provided the opportunity to celebrate food in a number of ways

- Growing food – Orchards, allotments and kitchen gardens
- Foraging food – Trout, blackberries, mushrooms, sorrel, wild garlic etc
- Eating food – Cafés, restaurants, food markets, dining clubs, picnics, barbecues
- Buying food and drink – farmers' markets, beer festivals etc

A food festival along the riverside would be an opportunity to celebrate local Warwickshire suppliers and producers.





11. Knowledge

Creating an environment that encourages learning and knowledge about the history of the town, literature, nature or future technologies is a key thread that ties together the Shakespeare (dark blue), River Avon (light blue), Nature (green) and Art (purple) threads.

Providing interpretation and knowledge of what to do and see in Stratford at key arrival points will ensure people stay longer and more likely return.

The riverside could also be a location for school visits covering diverse areas of the curriculum including biology, geography, art, English, history and science.

12. Discovery

Creating places that are hidden landscapes which need to be discovered is a way of getting people to move away from the beaten track and explore the area more fully. In Victorian times follies and grottoes were created to be organically discovered. Modern version of these elements could be recreated or linked to the other trails such as the literature and art trails.

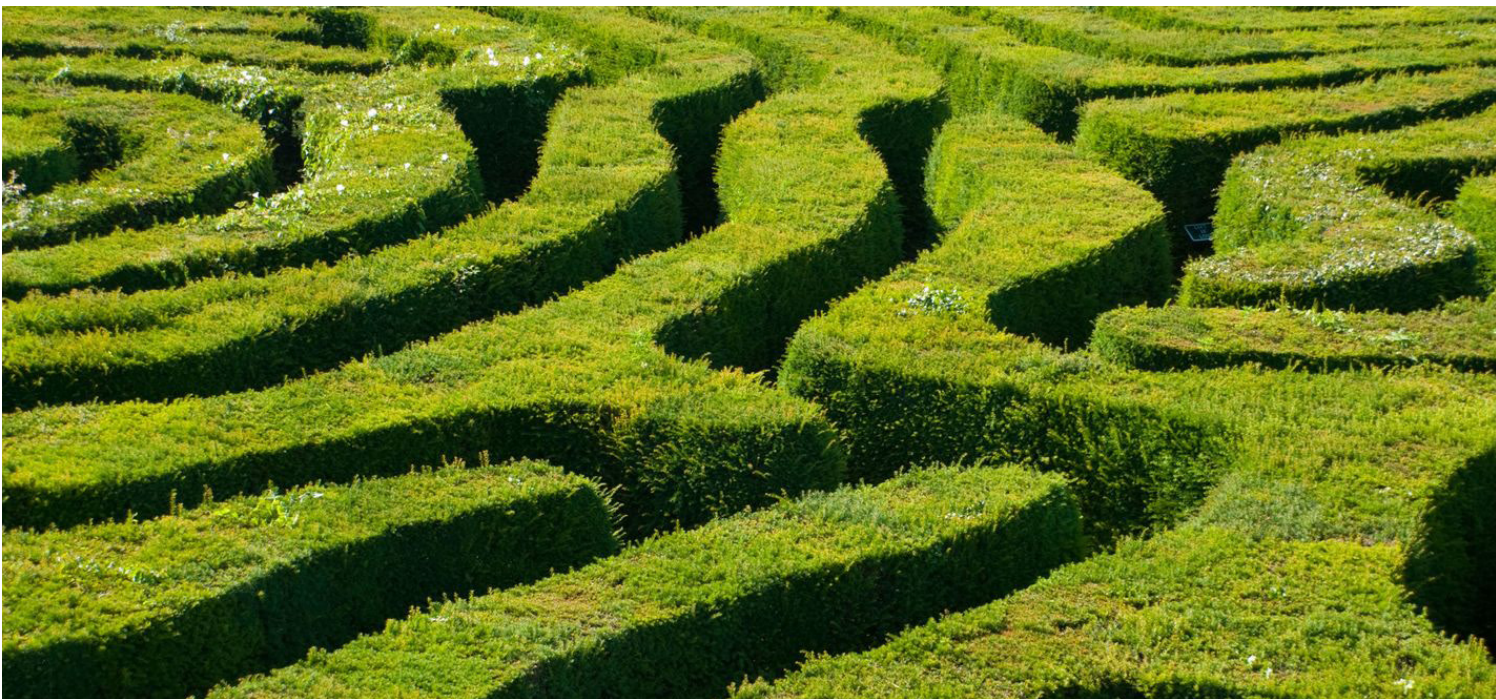
13. Adventure (red route)

Providing a sense of adventure whether it be an adventure playground, to camping in the woods, setting sail on a raft or building a bivouac will all help to create a sense of adventure.

It is proposed to have a campsite in the extension to the southern area of the riverside, a maze and bivouac in the northern part of the riverside, along with different types of adventure play in the north and south of the riverside.

14. Destination

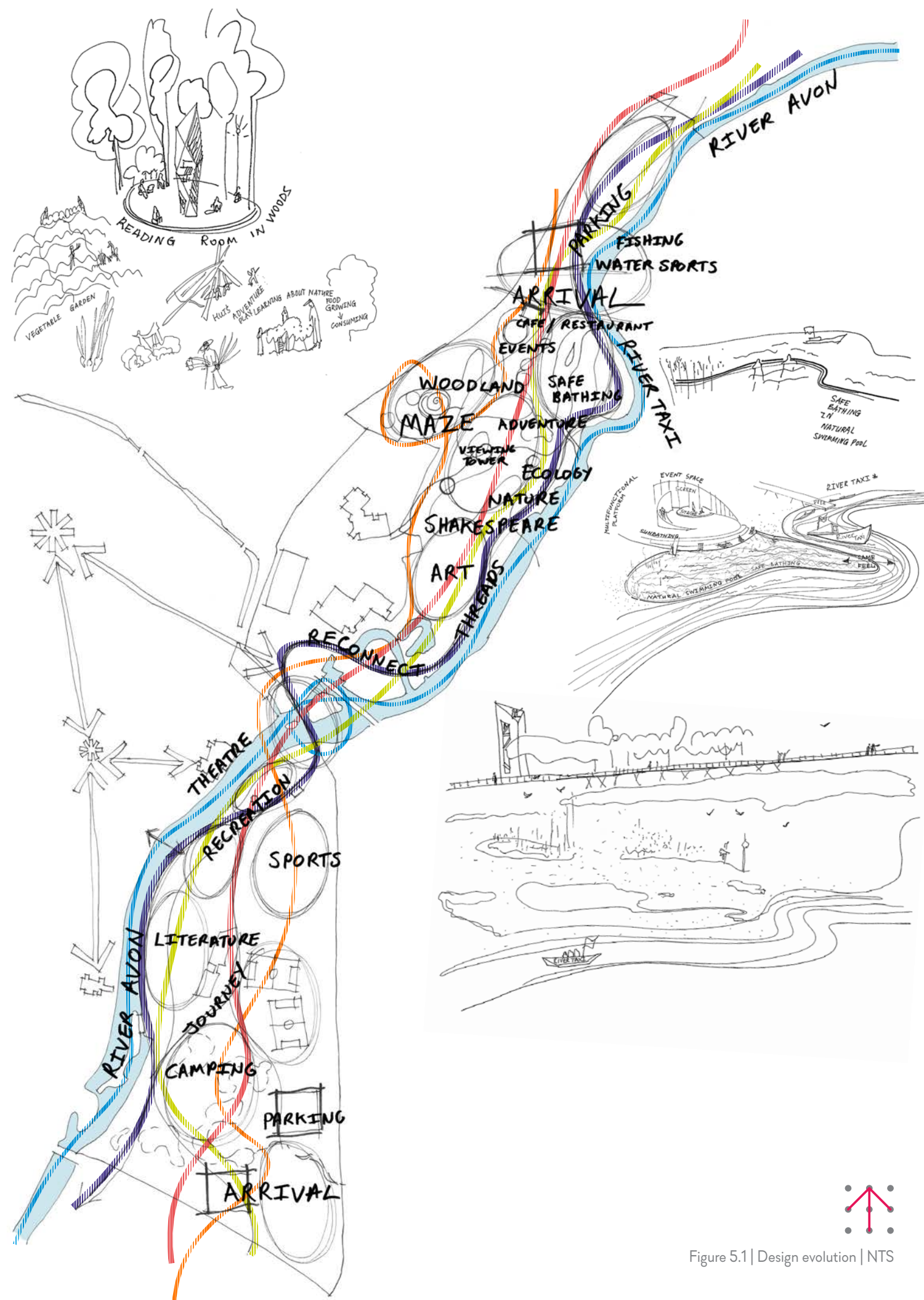
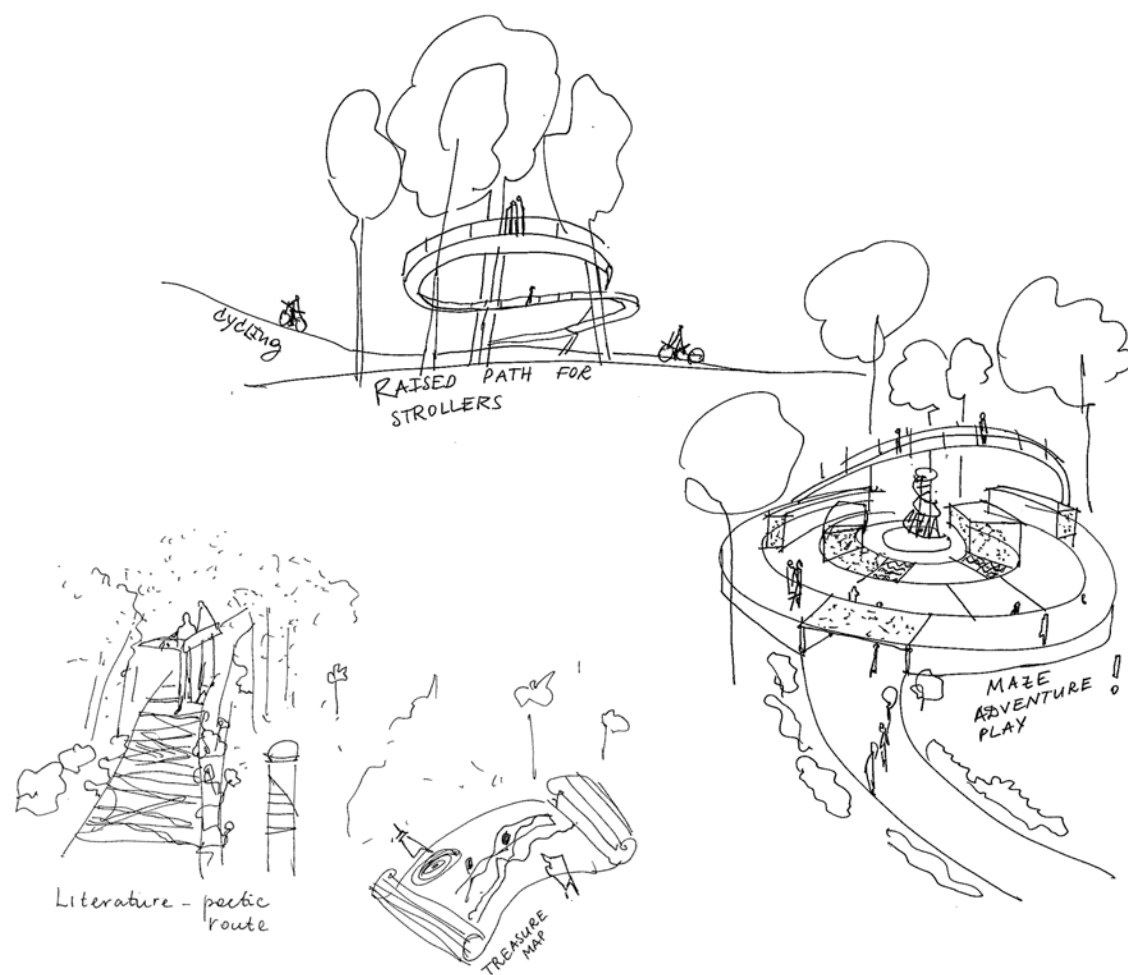
Proposals as outlined not only ensure that the riverside itself becomes a destination, but the town of Stratford upon Avon become a bigger tourist attraction and destination that encourages both visitors and residents to linger for longer and visit more regularly.



5. Design evolution

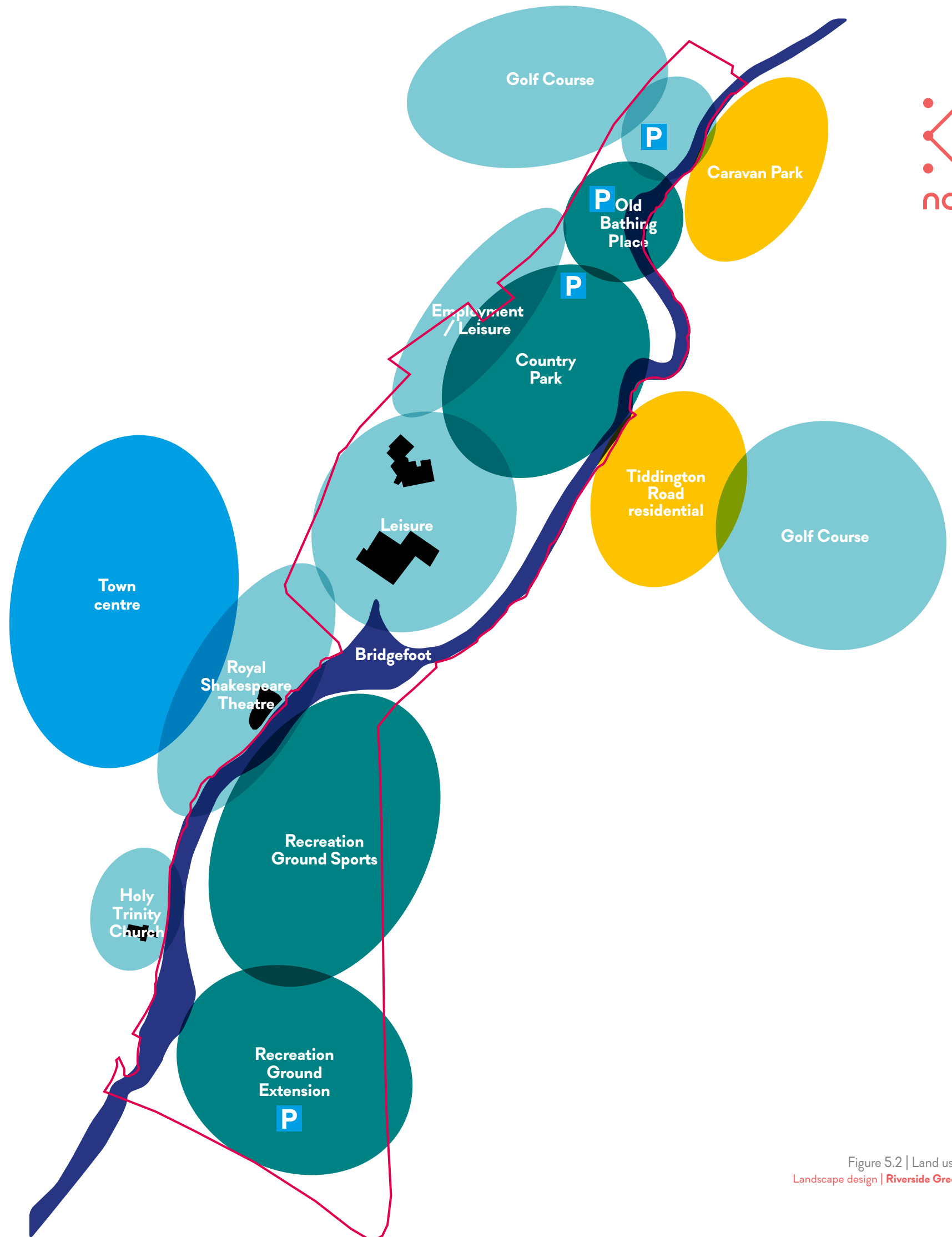
Design concepts

The adjacent diagram and sketches show the conceptual ideas and evolution of the design.



Proposed land uses

The adjacent diagram shows how the headline land uses described within the 'threads' section intertwine along the river corridor, creating a continuous leisure destination.



6. Design

Overall concept design

The adjacent concept design provides an overview of the proposed scheme as a whole.

The following pages show each of the three areas in greater detail with annotated notes setting out the key design features.

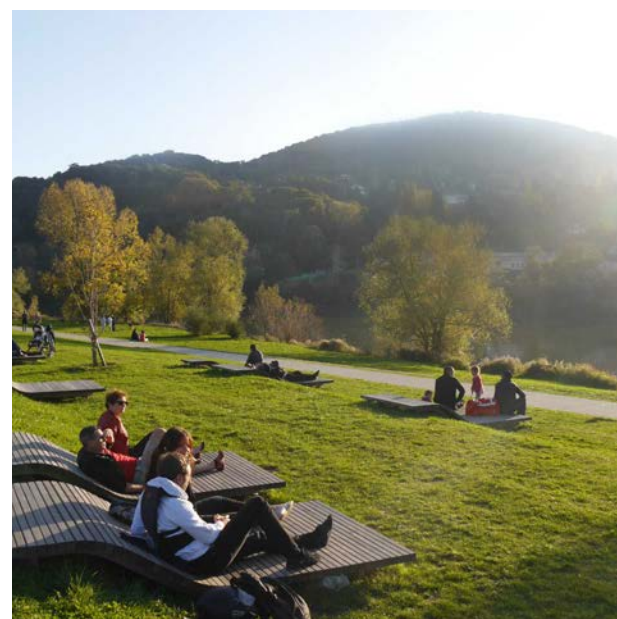


Figure 6.1 | Concept design | NTS

Riverside North

- 1) New arrival space – Information point/ signage
- 2) Woodland planting to Warwick Road
- 3) New enlarged tree lined car park for approximately 500 spaces to reduce traffic and parking in town centre
- 4) Ecology area/ potential future extension of car park
- 5) Improvements to riverside footpath link
- 6) New improved picnic area
- 7) New timber decking area with jetty for water sports such as canoeing
- 8) Disabled parking and electric parking spaces
- 9) Formal arrival space for new visitor centre which leads to river taxi
- 10) New visitor centre including bike and buggy hire, gallery, café and restaurant
- 11) New event/ performance space
- 12) Adventure route (red) through woodland leading to new maze
- 13) Health and fitness route providing quick and easy access to town centre. To include route for walking, cycling and electric scooters/ buggies
- 14) Art and literature route leading celebrating Shakespeare and other authors and leading to a series of land art installations and a viewing tower.
- 15) Reading room within woodland glade
- 16) Toilets and changing rooms and café kiosk
- 17) Riverside beach

- 18) New riverside bathing in new redirected channel to avoid conflicts with river traffic and fisherman
- 19) Nature trail (green) leading to new wetland areas, bird hides and information on flora and fauna that can be found along the riverside.
- 20) New wetlands and viewing areas
- 21) Improved riverside trail with widen route for walking, running and cycling
- 22) Creation of designated fishing areas with timber boardwalks
- 23) New timber bridges crossings across new river bathing area
- 24) New wetland nature reserve to encourage wildlife
- 25) New viewing mound overlooking riverside green corridor
- 26) New maze
- 27) Adventure playground and mountain biking route in woodland
- 28) New vehicular access to back of Leisure Centre car park
- 29) One of a series of land art installations
- 30) New entrance from leisure centre into riverside green corridor
- 31) Health and fitness route providing 1k, 5k and 10k circular loops
- 32) New link from leisure centre to riverside
- 33) River ferry terminal
- 34) Designated fishing areas along River Avon
- 35) Designated picnic areas along River Avon
- 36) New wooden viewing tower



Figure 6.2 | Riverside North | NTS



Riverside Central

- 37) Retention of land drains and creation of ecology rich grassland
- 38) Retention and enhancement of River Avon loop
- 39) Improved pedestrian/ cycle humpback bridge
- 40) Helicopter landing pad improvements/ signage
- 41) New entrance to riverside park to create obvious entrance to riverside north
- 42) Improvements to Bridgefoot Park
- 43) New shared service crossing with pedestrian/ cycle priority
- 44) Information point on new routes to north and south of the riverside corridor
- 45) Important pedestrian bridge link that connects riverside north with riverside south
- 46) Need for improved pedestrian and cycle priority. (Long term public car parking reallocated to car park off Seven Meadows Road to reduce conflicts)
- 47) Existing car park reallocated for bike parking.
- 48) Creation of new semi-circular gateway/ entrance point and with new signage and information point.

Riverside South (overleaf)

- 49) Existing promenade footpath in front of riverside café to be widened
- 50) Improved rear entrance to riverside café/ toilet facilities so they are visible and have pedestrian priority.
- 51) Integration of art and literature trail and seasonal fairground rides for young children
- 52) Activity area for adults and children play to include table tennis, table football, chess
- 53) Table/ seating area adjacent to mini golf/ refreshment kiosk
- 54) New circular space with seating and interpretation for chain link ferry
- 55) Redeveloped mini golf with Shakespearean theme which will link in with literature trail that runs north to south along the riverside corridor.
- 56) Existing shrubs along here removed and replaced with 1.4m high hornbeam hedge to open up views but also to screen parking
- 57) Small 'splash pad' to be installed adjacent to existing paddling pool
- 58) Public car park eventually to be reduced in size once new car is created off Seven Meadows Road in order to reduce pedestrian/ cycle / vehicular conflicts
- 59) Timber fence realigned to incorporate additional play space/ picnic area
- 60) Mini gym extended in this area to link in with new health and fitness routes provided



Figure 6.3 | Riverside Central | NTS

61) Integration of art and literature trail and seasonal small to medium fairground rides.

62) Avenue of trees alongside new art and literature trail to include cherries and acers for spring and autumn colour. Gaps to allow views of Holy Trinity Church. Flowering bulbs in gaps.

63) Interpretation provide alongside nature and health and fitness trail

64) Wonder world fun fair/ temporary overflow car park until additional parking provided off Seven Meadows Road.

65) Arboretum linked to existing memorial trees

66) New mooring location for watersports access and egress before the weir. Opportunity for new picnic seating area.

67) Potential future roundhouse café

68) Health and fitness facilities provide on health and fitness and adventure route linked to 1k, 5k and 10k routes

69) New wetland habitat created

70) New picnic / BBQ areas provided on site of existing seating areas

71) Ponds with dipping platforms for wildlife and educational use

72) New entrance signage and interpretation of new trails and facilities along the riverside

73) Improvements to Lucy Mill Bridge -appearance, widening and new cycle link

74) New parking provision off Seven Meadows Road to reduce impact of traffic in town centre. Facilities for electric charging and to hire bikes, electric scooters/ buggies

75) Bird hide linked to new wetland habitat

76) New camping field / events area incorporating toilet facilities

77) Raised landform to view riverside park south

78) Overspill parking area

79) New arrival space and signage from Seven Meadows Road

80) Adventure play within forest setting. Opportunity for forest school

81) Community orchard

82) Community garden / allotments

83) Creation of additional parking to reduce traffic congestion in the town centre

84) Improved vehicular/ pedestrian/ cycle link from Shipston Road and new signage

85) Improved access under old railway arch

86) Small cycle training area aimed at younger riders with bike ability course.

87) New natural play facility to include climbing ropes and logs, cantilevered basket swing and embankment slide

88) Gym apparatus on health and fitness route

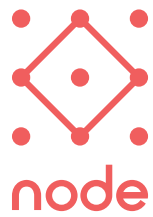
89) Seating to overlook sports pitches

90) Gym apparatus on health and fitness route include interpretation of the 1km, 5km and 10km routes

91) Tramway footway. Selective thinning to increase light levels and views across to Holy Trinity Church. Improvements to route as health and fitness trail



Figure 6.4 | Riverside South | NTS



7. Engagement

Stakeholder engagement

Ensuring that meaningful engagement with stakeholders and the general public has taken place in developing the detail of the landscape design will be key to the eventual success of the Riverside project.

An initial site wide consultation programme will be taking place from November 2020 to January 2021. A full consultation engagement plan is being established to include a wide range of stakeholder, which include but far from being limited to:

- General public
- Adjacent landowners / businesses
- Coventry and Warwickshire LEP
- Warwickshire County Council Highways
- Warwickshire Wildlife Trust
- The Environment Agency
- Stratford Climate action
- Heart of England Forest
- Canals and River Trust
- Shakespeare's England

- Shakespeare's Birthplace Trust

Following this, the proposed concept design will be updated and more detailed landscape work will take place to identify specific projects to prioritise in line with the funding secured from the Local Enterprise Partnership.

Early feedback

Initial consultation has taken place with Stratford Town Trust and a summary of key comments can be found below:

- Overall support for the scheme and if designed, managed and implemented well, it was considered that it would result in a positive economic impact.
- A lightly managed approach was supported, with an emphasis on conservation of the natural environment, including preservation of existing planting, habitats, topography and the site's role as flood plain.
- Include more 'wilding' and tree planting within the scheme. Greater detail and practical involvement from an ecologist was suggested to feed into this process.

- It is vital that the scheme delivers traffic calming and improvement to air quality - there should be a greater focus on creation of a 'Green Corridor for Active Travel.'

- Increased car parking will require access modifications, bringing a road off the Warwick Road into the back of the leisure centre car park

- A focus on opening up the landscape and widening access for all, whilst managing site security.

- Expanded and safe river bathing would be an asset.

- The need for supporting facilities, including a visitor centre, toilets and changing facilities was identified.

- Consideration must be given to day to day site management and ongoing maintenance costs.

- Creation of pathways for runners/walkers/cyclists must recognise that their needs are not always compatible.

- Creation of greater linkage with the Birmingham Road scheme.

- The linkage between the North and South areas of the scheme along with resolving access over the river at the Lucy's Mill Bridge end are key aspects to ensure the scheme works practically.

- Concerns about the location of performance space in relation to noise from adjacent road, together with the location of the viewing tower and maze.

- All materials within the scheme should be of a high standard and complement the natural environment.

Response to early feedback

We have responded to this feedback by making the following changes:

- A new access road has been provided to the leisure centre car park.
- The locations of the maze, performance space and viewing tower have been moved.
- Greater emphasis has been placed on active travel.
- Additional work has been commissioned on ecology and biodiversity enhancement.

8. Delivery

A deliverable scheme

In addition to being ambitious and transformational for Stratford upon Avon, the proposals are readily deliverable, with the land required already controlled by Stratford District Council and Stratford Town Trust.

Initial funding has already been secured from the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (October 2020), allowing the development of proposals in greater detail.

Next steps

The following sets out a broad timetable for the development of more detailed proposals:

- November 2020: revise initial proposal to reflect engagement undertaken to date
- December 2020 - January 2021: undertake further engagement with a broad stakeholder group and the general public.
- February - March 2021: revise and finalise proposals.

Conclusion

The Riverside Green Corridor project will create a world class riverside destination space for Stratford upon Avon, which is entirely appropriate to the town's global significance.

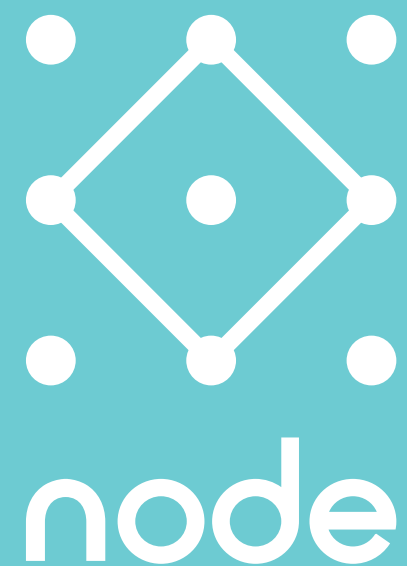
The design reflects Stratford's international status as the home of Shakespeare, together with celebrating and enhancing its existing natural landscape assets, and creating new, exciting interventions which prompt a sense of discovery, adventure and promote physical activity.

The completed riverside would radically enhance Stratford upon Avon's environmental, social and economic sustainability and significantly help to mitigate the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on the prospects of Stratford as a visitor destination.



***"And this our life,
exempt from public haunt,
finds tongues in trees,
books in the running brooks,
sermons in stones,
and good in everything."***

As you like it: Act II, Scene I



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