RIVERSIDE + LUDWELL VALLEY PARKS

MASTERPLAN 2016 - 2026

DRAFT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This master plan develops a compelling vision and coherent identity for the Parks. It establishes a series of 'character zones', each with a distinctive identity and function, but informed by the coherent identity of the Parks.

The master plan gives emphasis to the function and connectivity of different elements, and proposes a strong vision for the parks, suggesting strategies for signage, entrances and gateways and habitat creation, along with specific project suggestions for each character area.

There are many organisations and groups with a stake in how the parks are used and managed, and several have been involved with the creation of this plan. The master plan is an eye catching product that can be used to bid for funding, and secure public support.

"The Riverside and Ludwell Valley Parks Masterplan addresses many of the major issues that affect the quality of life of Exeter's residents and visitors. This is vitally important at a time of continued growth of the city, which we are seeking to achieve whilst also protecting and enhancing its most beautiful natural features. The plan sets out where new areas of public recreational space can be created, which will play their part in improving the health and wellbeing of those who live in, work in, or visit Exeter."

Cllr Keith Owen
Portfolio Holder for Health and Place
Exeter City Council

RIVERSIDE + LUDWELL VALLEY PARKS MASTERPLAN 2016 - 2026

Date: 22/01/2016
Revision:
Team: LE+CF
Checked + Approved:

Leighton Pace
Director

footprint ECOLOGY

EXTERIOR ARCHITECTURE

Exeter City Council

Exeter and East Devon Growth Point

BACKGROUND, CONTEXT + DRIVERS | 1.0

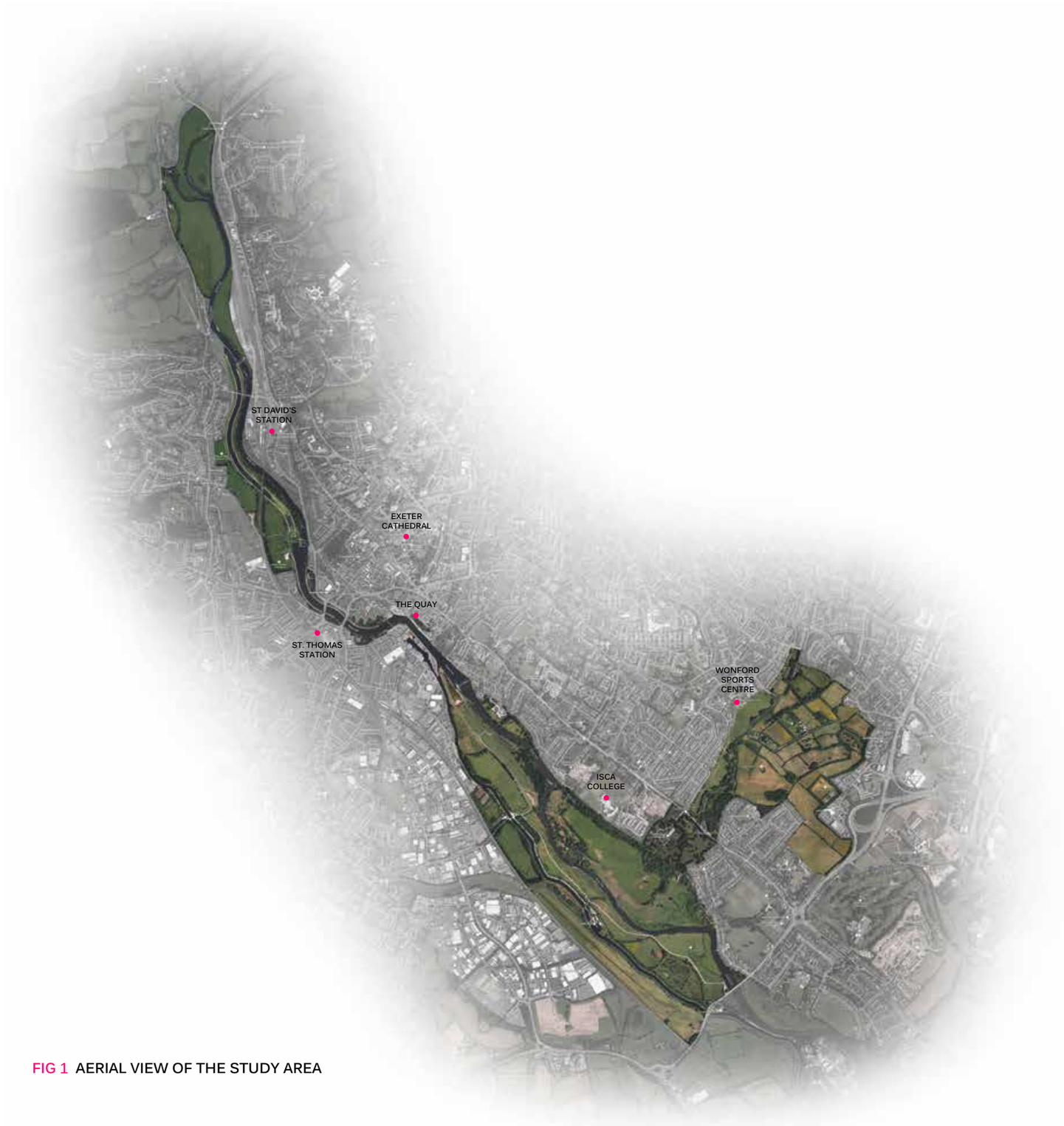


FIG 1 AERIAL VIEW OF THE STUDY AREA

The following document sets out a masterplan for the Riverside and Ludwell Valley Parks. The site covers just over 300 hectares and encompasses some of the city's key green infrastructure, with important green space that serves both the city centre, as well as key suburban communities in the South East of the city. Currently, the land is owned and managed by a variety of landholders, including the Environment Agency, Network Rail, private landholders and the university, with the majority of the land owned and managed by Exeter City Council (ECC). The green space is critical for first line of flood defence, so future plans need to acknowledge and work with this major catalyst for change in the site.

The River Exe has been integral to the city's development, and this change is echoed in features along it. From medieval bridges and leats at Exe Isle, to the UK's earliest existant ship canal and the 1960/70s flood defence scheme, human activity has been defined by, and defined the character of the Exe as it meets its estuary at Exeter. Open, grazed flood plain marshes characterise the lower stream, where intertidal salt marshes begin to occur. A bird spotter's paradise, the conservation area of the Riverside Park is bringing estuary birds into the city. Numerous council operated playing fields take advantage of the flat, flood plain meadows.

The Northbrook (or 'The Panny' as it is locally known) flows through Ludwell Valley Park to connect with the Exe at the old Paper Mill through the Crematorium and the Northbrook Golf Course. With its high point at Pynes Hill, Ludwell Valley Park contains some unique, elevated views, across traditionally managed fields over to the city, as well as out to the estuary. To the North of the Northbrook, Wonford Playing Fields serve the Wonford community, and connect Topsham Road with Heavitree and St Loyes.

The Exe Estuary Trail is a landmark project by Devon County Council (DCC) to bring more people to the Exe Estuary, in order to improve health of local communities and encourage sustainable transport usage. An incredibly successful scheme, this masterplan looks to build on the success of this well used green corridor, and manage users in order to protect local wildlife whilst encouraging more people to access natural green space.

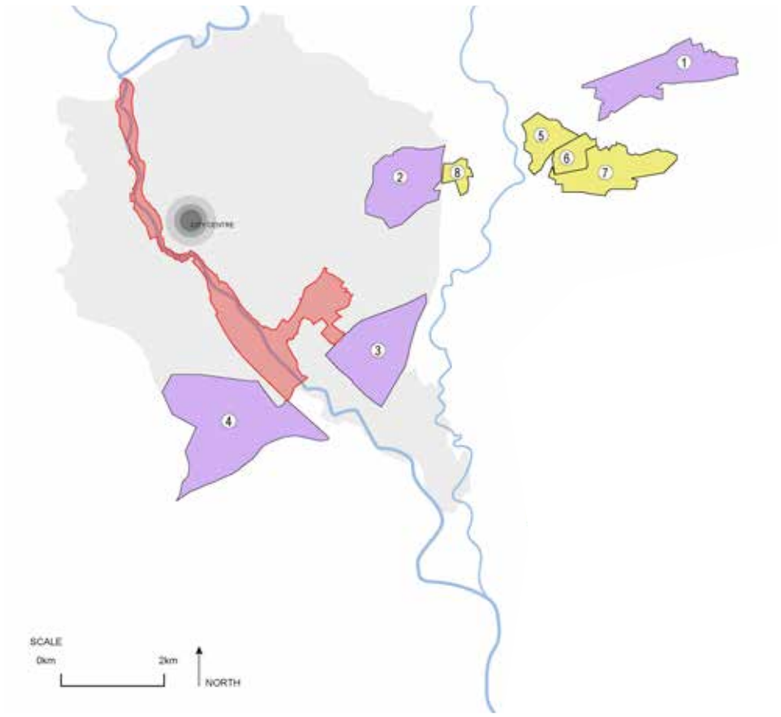


FIG 2 GROWTH AREAS

KEY

Site Boundary

Exeter City Administrative Boundary

Residential Growth Areas
1. Cranbrook New Town (2900 homes)
2. Monkerton and Hill Barton (2300 homes)
3. Newcourt (3700 homes)
4. South West Exeter (2300 homes)

Commercial Growth Areas
5. Freight Terminal
6. Sky Park
7. Airport and Business Park
8. Exeter Science Park

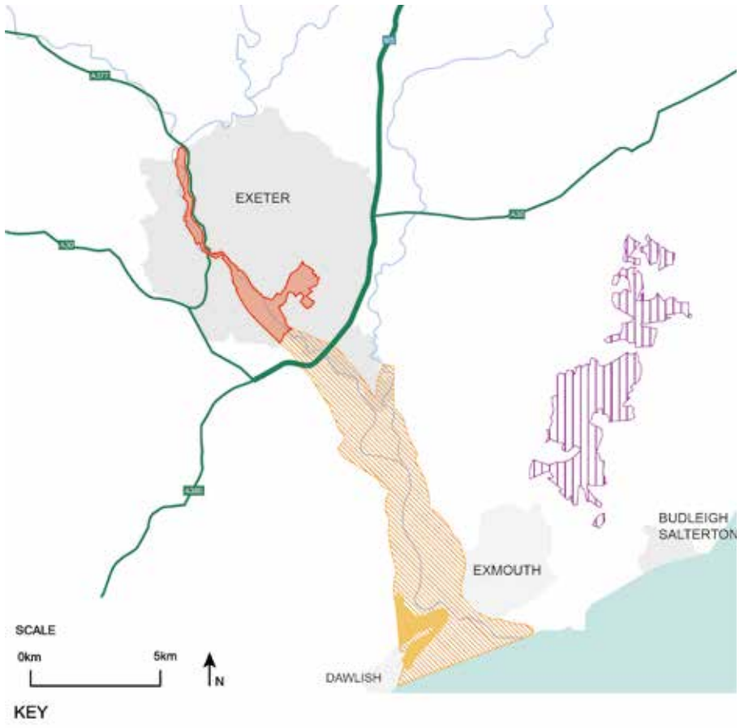


FIG 3 PROTECTED HABITATS MAP

KEY

Special Protection Area /
Special Area of Conservation **Pebblebeds**

Special Area of Conservation **Dawlish Warren**

Riverside and Ludwell Valley Parks

RAMSAR Special Protection Area **Exe Estuary**

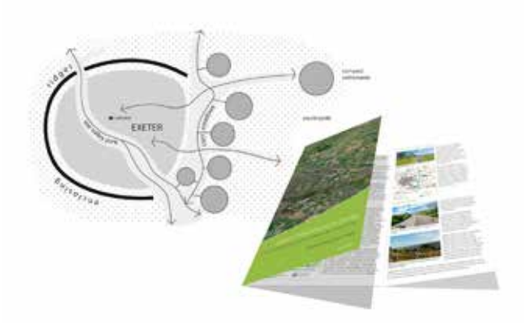


FIG 4 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

The need for this plan is driven largely by housing growth (Figure 2). Exeter and East Devon Growth Point is managing the development of sustainable economic growth in the region, with new housing as well as commercial activity. This new housing will bring new people who will also need green spaces to enjoy.

Close to Exeter, there are 3 special habitats that the Local Authority need to protect (Figure 3) and improving the Valley Parks within Exeter can reduce pressure on these Special Protected Areas. The resulting increase in population in the region will have an indirect impact on the Exe Estuary, which is a protected European wildlife site. The impact of more potential footfall has to be mitigated by law.

One of the elements of the mitigation strategy is the enhancement of alternative natural green space, and the Council has identified Riverside and Ludwell Parks for this purpose. We need to make the Parks more attractive for people, particularly those walking the dog, thus taking pressure off the estuary and its wild bird populations.

The Green Infrastructure Strategy for Exeter and East Devon (December 2009) (Figure 4) produced by Exeter City Council and other regional partners provides a framework for green infrastructure to be taken into account in planning for the significant amount of new growth in the area. The GI Strategy identifies the Exe Valley Park as a significant green finger running through the city, along with Clyst Meadows to the East. This masterplan will look at improving the quality of this important piece of Green Infrastructure.

Exeter lies on the Exe Valley Flood Plain, and is at a high risk of flooding. Careful management of the green space can help to mitigate against some damage caused by extreme flood events. The Environment Agency are also in the process of constructing new flood defences along the Exe through the city, so the masterplan will work together with the Environment Agency to manage access and recreation as the new defences are constructed.

The master plan will set out a clear, ambitious but deliverable vision for both Valley Parks, and will meet the following objectives:

- An increase in the amount, quality and accessibility of public open space
- An increase in the use of both Valley Parks across all social classes and age groups in Exeter, whilst ensuring that sensitive environmental or heritage features are not damaged
- Enhancement of natural habitats and associated species, heritage assets, and landscape quality
- Enhancement of infrastructure to support increased public use, particularly the quality and inter-connectedness of paths, clear signage, information, toilets, shelter, and opportunities to purchase food and drink
- High quality interpretation and public art
- Greater opportunities for unsupervised wild play and informal sport and recreation
- Enhancement of the regional profile of the Valley Parks, and of the national and international profile of the Riverside Valley Park
- A vision which is at least no more expensive on the maintenance budget for ECC, in real terms.

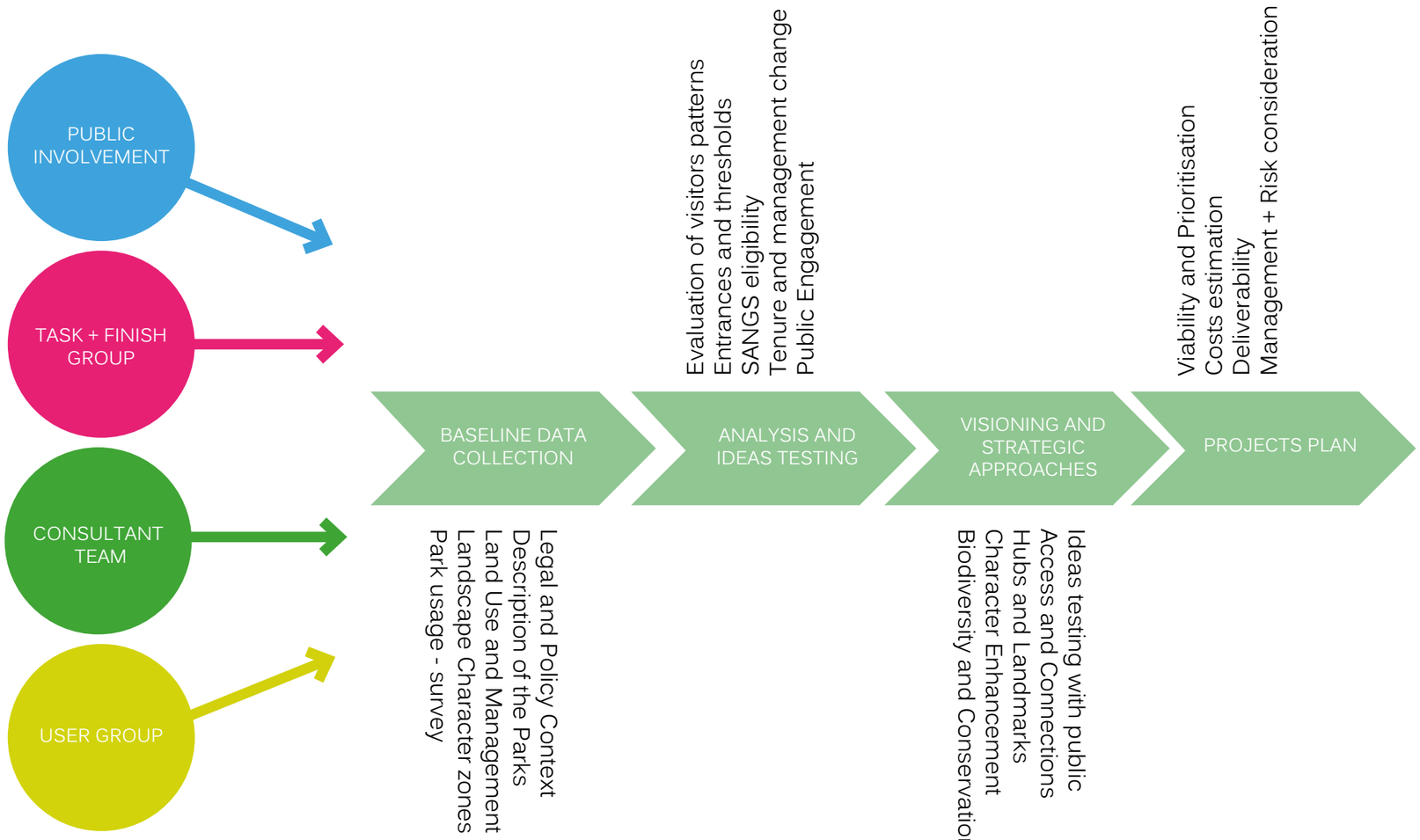


FIG 5 PROJECT METHODOLOGY

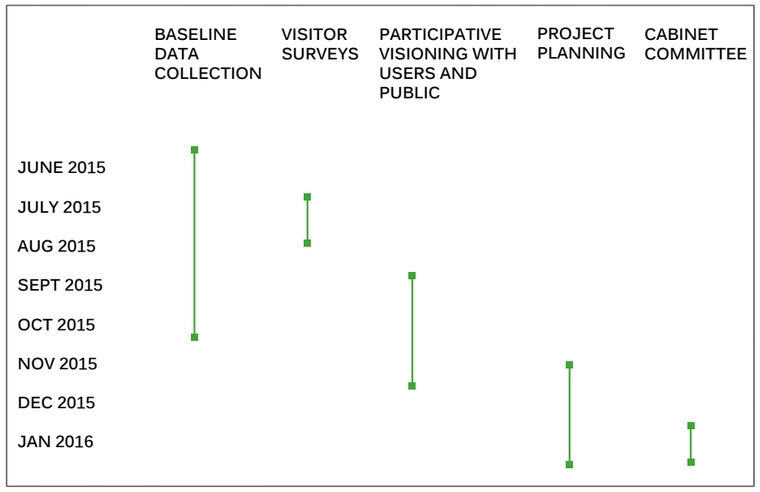


FIG 6 PROJECT TIMELINE

Exeter City Council has appointed landscape consultants Exterior Architecture Ltd. to produce a master plan for the Riverside & Ludwell Valley Parks. A masterplan will suggest improvements to the green space that is at the centre of Exeter life, and consider aspects such as signage and wayfinding, facilities improvements and access, in order to make the park better for everyone.

The masterplan seeks to give an appraisal of the parks' current condition and highlight the key opportunities and constraints through Character Area Assessment and proposals. The key projects are described in chapter 05, with a full project plan found in Appendix A.

The CABE Guidelines for creating Open Space Strategies identify multiple benefits to producing a strategic plan for green spaces, with social (play and recreation, outdoor education, connected routes), environmental (enhanced ecological habitats, improved physical character of an area) and economic benefits (boosted tourism, urban regeneration). The masterplan aims to create city centre green space that provides the appropriate physical environments to support strong communities and a rich and pleasurable quality of life for inhabitants and visitors, connects people and places by providing ease of movement within, and through, developments and creates places of distinction and enduring quality.

The process for compiling the masterplan has been driven by local users. The consultant team supported the project lead, the Green Infrastructure Project Manager to formulate two working groups – a 'Task + Finish Group' to act as a steering group made up of experts from a variety of backgrounds, including ECC + DCC representatives, Devon Wildlife Trust, The Environment Agency, Exeter Parks Watch. The aim of this group was to ensure the project delivered according to the objectives of the masterplan, and also ensure good communication between overlapping projects, particularly in relation to transport and parks strategy, and the Flood Defence Scheme, as well as the Art in the Exe project. An Art Plan has been written for Riverside Valley Park, and this works together with this masterplan to develop and reinforce the identity of the Parks into the future.

A 'User Group' was created to supplement the Task and Finish Group and represent local people with a vested interest in the greenspace. Representatives came from community groups, clubs, charities, and landowners. The role of this group was to propose Park improvements and comment on a draft plan. In the first User Group we looked at the idea of character areas and worked on a Vision for the Valley Parks. The process gathered perspectives of local people, and enabled interdisciplinary team work with people in the charitable, private and voluntary sector in order to create a shared vision for green spaces and work in partnership to progress an action plan for change. Through the interactive process people could express their opinions while speaking to experts about green space design and planning.

Another essential component of the masterplan was the completion of a visitor survey in July 2015 throughout the Valley Parks (See Appendix B). Interviewers were located near Countess Wear, in Ludwell Valley Park, at Exwick Playing Fields and near Salmonpool Bridge. 110 visitors were interviewed over 4 days. The survey returned some interesting results, and have been central to forming the following proposals for the future of the parks. Questions assessed the type of typical user to the parks, and asked questions about how the green space could be improved. It also had a focus on the types of activities undertaken, and how people visited the park. The full questionnaire can be found in Appendix B, and the results in Appendix C.

EUROPEAN HABITAT PROTECTION

The designation, protection and restoration of European wildlife sites is embedded in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, commonly referred to as the 'Habitats Regulations'. These are in place to transpose European legislation set out within the Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) and the Birds Directive (Council Directive 2009/147/EC). This European legislation seek to protect, conserve and restore habitats and species that are of utmost conservation importance and concern across Europe. European sites include Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), and can be either marine or terrestrial. Ramsar sites are internationally important sites that receive similar protection under the Habitats Regulations. European sites have the benefit of the highest level of legislative protection for biodiversity. The sites near Exeter are identified in Figure 3 on page 7.

There are also specific requirements for European sites set out within national planning policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). All public bodies, known as 'competent authorities,' need to adhere to a range of requirements that contribute to securing the long term maintenance and restoration of European sites.

SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE NATURAL GREEN SPACES (SANGS)

The concept of SANGs is simple; that by providing alternative greenspaces that are easy to access and provide a similar recreation experience to the European site, some of the recreation pressure that would otherwise take place on the European site can be diverted. The provision of SANGs seeks to absorb the additional recreational pressure of new development, and are therefore funded and provided in accordance with the level of new residential growth coming forward.

The Exeter City Core Strategy provides for a minimum of 12,000 new homes. The South-east Devon Mitigation Strategy (Liley et al. 2014) was produced on the basis of a total housing figure of nearly 15,000 dwellings for Exeter and Exeter's Development Delivery DPD (publication version currently at consultation stage) sets out a total of 15,105 dwellings, of which 11,060 have been completed/under construction or have the benefit of planning permission. The level of development that the Valley Parks need to provide mitigation for is therefore in the region of 4,000 dwellings. This figure is a minimum and could be increased because additional growth comes forward in Exeter or because the parks may provide mitigation for development outside of Exeter and beyond the current plan period.

THE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STATEGY, 2009

The Green Infrastructure Stategy, 2009 identifies the Exe Valley and Ludwell Valley as key structural green spaces for the city, and highlight some key issues that the masterplan should address:

"To raise the profile and enhance the landscape, recreational and wildlife value of the sequence of parks and open spaces along the Exe Valley from Cowley to Countess Weir and including Ludwell Valley Park. The Exe Riverside Valley Park performs a multitude of functions and meets often competing demands including those arising from formal and informal recreation, habitat provision and movement corridors. Activities and initiatives within the Park will, in places, be constrained by geographical and topographical constraints and land ownership issues, however there is potential for its enhancement and promotion.

Investment for this project should focus on developing a Vision and Framework/ Masterplan for the Exe Riverside Valley Park. This will develop a coherent and strong vision and identity to the Park. The Framework should also establish a series of 'character zones', each attributed with a strong local identity and function, but all guided by the coherent vision for the Park.

The Framework should give emphasis to the function and connectivity of different elements, and a consistent use of furniture, interpretation, construction materials and signage to contribute to a bold, coherent and accessible identity. This piece of work will help to establish where investment should be focused within the Valley Park;

•Potential provision of new assets, such as a park café, city play zone and sculpture areas;
•Habitat enhancement and strengthening a semi natural river meadow character;
•Improving access points. These will be important 'gateways' into the park, and present an opportunity to provide interpretation, navigation materials and notice of park events;
•Ensuring existing historic and cultural elements are positively incorporated into future projects including the historic canal; riverside quays, weirs, kilns and other riverine industry sites;
•Improvements to Ludwell Valley Park, further increasing recreational opportunities and enhancing the overall image of the Exe Riverside Valley Park. However, special attention will be given to ensuring their separate identity, character and function is maintained;
•On-going management and maintenance to retain a clean, safe and attractive environment;
•Branding and marketing - promoting the Park locally, regionally and nationally to raise its profile and make people aware of what it has to offer.

EXETER WILD CITY

'Exeter Wild City' is an existing partnership between the Devon Wildlife Trust and Exeter City Council. They have established The Exeter Wild City River Corridor Initiative which plans to improve the wildlife potential of the land alongside the river and to make it an even more appealing place for people to take their leisure. All initiatives for the River Exe should be integrated and coordinated so that they work together to a common vision.

LOCAL PLAN (VALLEY PARKS)

The Exeter Core Strategy also provide guidance for the development of the Valley Parks moving forwards, along with saved policies of the Local Plan. Policies L1, L2, LS1-LS4 protect the Valley Parks as important informal green space in the city.

EXETER CITY COUNCIL CORE STRATEGY

Policy CP16 of the ECC Core Strategy states that:

New multifunctional areas of green space and green corridors will be created to meet the needs of...new communities. The character and local distinctiveness of the areas identified below, will be protected and proposals for landscape, recreation, biodiversity and educational enhancement brought forward, in accordance with guidance in the Green Infrastructure Strategy, through the Development Management Development Plan Document:

- The hills to the north and north west;
- Knowle Hill to the south west;
- The strategic gap between Topsham and Exeter;
- The Valley Parks: Riverside, Duryard, Mincinglake, Ludwell, Alphington to Whitestone Cross, Savoy Hill and Hoopern.

Opportunities to provide green corridors, open space and allotments, to enhance cycling and walking opportunities, to link existing habitats, to incorporate environmental assets and to integrate biodiversity, proposed by the Exeter Green Infrastructure Strategy, will be secured through partnership working, direct implementation and the application of Policy CP18 (developer contributions).

Policy CP17 of the ECC Core Strategy states that:

Development in Newcourt will....be set around a high quality sustainable movement network to encourage pedestrian and cycle trips and to provide easy access to the Exe Valley strategic greenway and to Ludwell Valley Park.

Opportunities to achieve this include:
Building a new footbridge across the A379 from Old Rydon Lane and a new direct footpath link to Ludwell Valley Park;
Creating a new road crossing on Topsham Road for cycles and pedestrians;
Enhancement/possible re-routing of the footpath/cycle link to the west of Newport Park down to the Exe Riverside Valley Park;
Enhancing footpath/cycle links eastwards to the Clyst Valley.

Development in the Quay and Canal Basin area will:

- Respect the historic character of the area and incorporate uses that realise the potential of existing high quality historic buildings;
- Provide a high quality public realm that adds to the interest and draw of the area
- Establish an attractive environment that encourages social interaction and relaxation within the Piazza Terracina and along the Riverside walk;
- Include attractions that tell Exeter's historic story as an important industrial centre and port;
- Create vibrancy that encourages visitors and tourists to linger longer within Exeter;
- Provide a permeable built form with good connections to an enhanced Exe Riverside Valley Park;
- Retain and enhance the biodiversity of the canal basin and adjacent areas.

EXETER VISION

A key strategic target of The Exeter Vision is to "encourage cultural creativity so everyone enjoys activities that are inspirational and creative, bringing rewards of improved personal health and social well-being". A specific target in the Exeter Cultural Action Plan, produced by Exeter's Cultural Partnership and supported by ECC, is to develop opportunities linked to the City Centre Strategy, green spaces and public realm agendas to animate and contribute to their delivery. This project is important to the realisation of these goals.

BASELINE INFORMATION + SITE ANALYSIS | 2.0

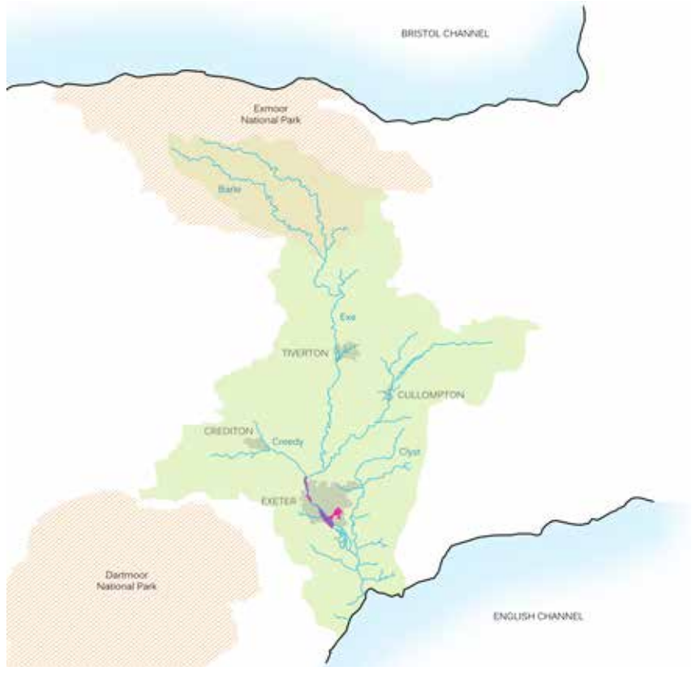


FIG 7 **EXE DRAINAGE BASIN**

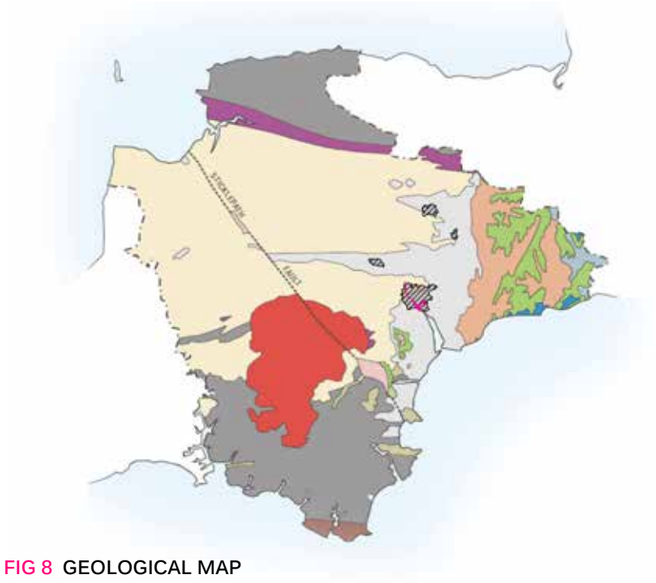


FIG 8 **GEOLOGICAL MAP**

KEY

- Carboniferous Sandstones and Slates
- Permian Breccias, Sandstones and Mudstones, and Exeter Volcanics
- Riverside and Ludwell Valley Parks
- Urban areas

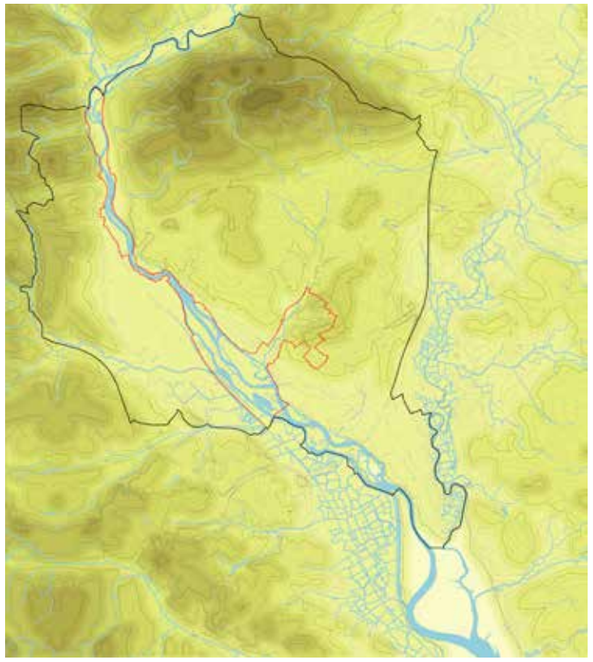


FIG 9 **TOPOGRAPHY AND HYDROLOGY MAP**

KEY

- Site boundary
- ECC administrative boundary
- 0 - 150m AOD

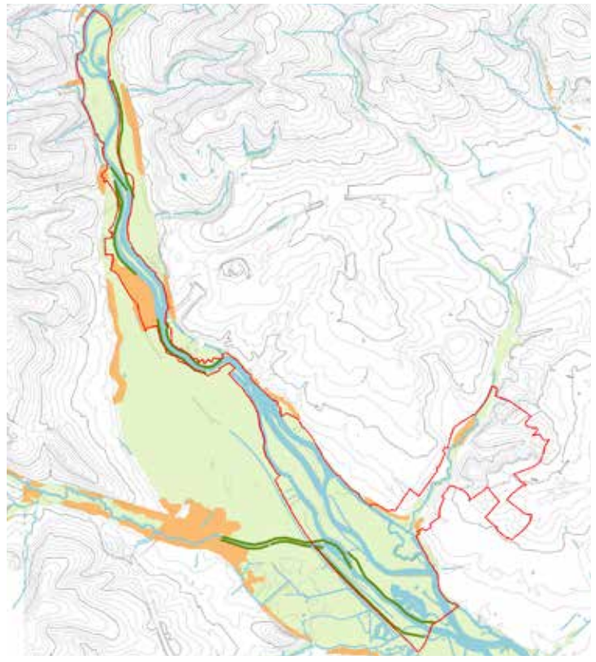


FIG 10 **FLOOD RISK + ZONES**

KEY

- Flood zone 3
- Flood zone 2
- Existing flood defences

The River Exe is Devon's main river. It flows south 50 miles from its source in Exmoor, not far from the Bristol Channel (see Figure 7). The source of the river is near Simonsbath on Exmoor, and it reaches the sea at Exmouth.

The geology of the local area (Figure 8) reflects the fact that the River is the dominating physical process and system influencing the nature of the area, with fluvial deposits overlaying Permian Sandstone, which is reflected in the red bed rock found in the city. You can also find igneous basalt in the purple rocks through the city.

Exeter focuses on the Exe valley and has spread predominantly to the east on undulating land where parts border the low lying Clyst valley (Figure 9) . This meets the River Exe just south of Topsham. Rounded hills and ridges border the city to the north reaching 150m AOD and to the west reaching 130m AOD. The hills to the north form a strong natural barrier shielding the valley to the north from the city.

As is to be expected nearing the estuary of a river, the flood plain widens with a wide, flat area around the river, as it meanders to the sea. In Exeter this has been altered, straightened and modified with various flood and water management techniques, from Medieval leats and weirs, to the 1560s Ship Canal and the 20th century artificial channels that were created to accelerate flow through the city to prevent flooding. As can be seen in Figure 10, a large proportion of the city lies within the Zone 2 Flood Plain (between 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 year flood event likely) and some in Flood Zone 3 (1 in 100 year flood event likely). Flood defence proposals are current for Exeter in order to manage flooding in the city, and this Masterplan will work with these proposals and ensure proposals are sensitive to these vulnerabilities.

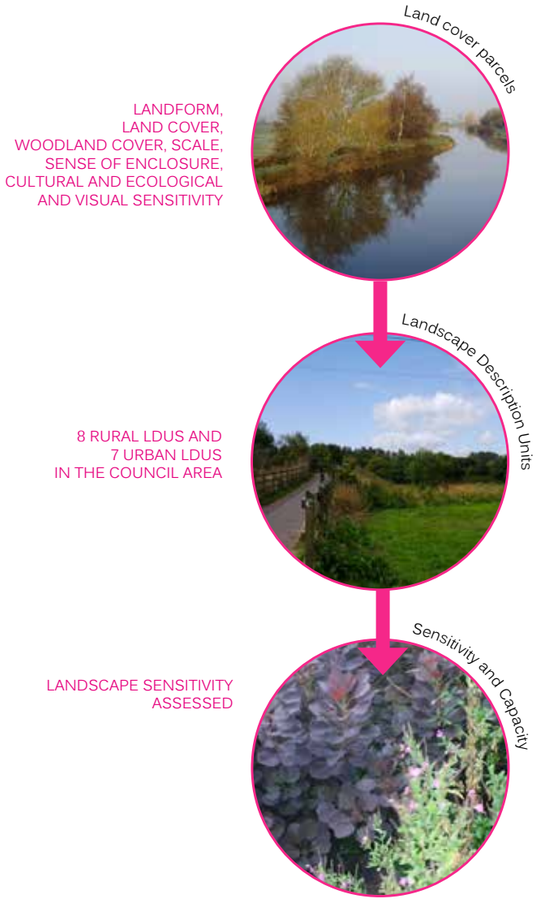


FIG 11 PROCESS FOR DETERMINING LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

As mentioned on the previous page, Exeter's regional character is determined strongly by the river and the underlying bed rock. Exeter lies within the 'Devon Redlands' character area, and the hilly landscape cut with steep sided valleys are typical of the city. Large woodlands 'hang' from the steep valley sides, such as Stoke Woods in the north of the city. The open flood plains which characterise the lower valley parks have little tree cover and extend to the salt marshes which reach the coast via the Exe Estuary SPA. The Exe and its associated flood plain form a strong green wedge between the east and west of the city.

The River Clyst meets the River Exe just south of Topsham, and the hills that surround the city give the city a broadly rural character. The centre of the city is focused to the east of the river on the rising land with prominent historical buildings such as the cathedral and castle, as well as numerous old churches. It was in this central area that the Roman legionary fortress was built upon, on a spur above the valley. The M5 skirts the city to the south and east and provides a significant artificial barrier between Topsham and Exeter, and acts as the city's administrative boundary to the east. Topsham also remains separated with a green belt of fields and open spaces. The small river valleys of the city have been a key open space provision in the city since the designation of the Valley Parks as key natural open spaces.

A Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study was carried out to ascertain where residential growth opportunities could occur within the city, and assessed the quality and value of different green spaces in the city. The gap between Topsham and Exeter is highly regarded and desirable to retain. The Valley Parks, and the Exe Valley through Exeter are key green networks to be retained.

One key item to note, which is emphasised over the next pages, is the critical relationship Exeter has with its river system, and the river is a defining force in creating the landscape character of the city, combining to influence visual, ecological and historical aspects of Exeter's character.

The Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study identifies the following key characteristics of Exeter as facets to protect, and this masterplan seeks to enhance and protect them. It identifies the Exe Valley and associated linkages as primary to the character of the city.

- the ridgelines that define the city to the north, west and south;
- the Exe Valley and the associated valley parks and linkages that help to structure the city and provide routes to the coast and countryside;
- the Clyst Valley, associated biodiversity reserves and linkages that provide connections between the settlements to the east of Exeter to the city;
- the network of routes allowing for easy sustainable accessibility between the urban area of Exeter and the surrounding countryside and, in particular the compact settlements;
- the high quality countryside within which the compact settlements sit;
- sustainable accessibility between the compact settlements and the countryside within which they sit; and bringing the countryside into the city

FIG 12 DEVON REDLANDS REFERS TO THE RED BEDROCK THAT RUNS BENEATH THE CITY

Devon Wildlife Trust have created a biodiversity reference map to identify key ecological assets, habitats of principle importance, and County Wildlife Sites (Figure 15).

Figure 13 shows the primary designations in Exeter, and highlights the value of Riverside Park and Ludwell as County Wildlife Sites. Special Protection Areas are strictly protected and classified in accordance with Article 4 of the EC Birds Directive 1979. Sites of Special Scientific Interest are designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and represent the Country's very best wildlife and geological sites. County Wildlife Sites are a non-statutory designation for sites of county significance for wildlife or geology. Positive management of CWS is encouraged and development affecting them is controlled by Local Plan policies.

Figure 14 identifies the Valley Parks and Schedule Gardens in the city which are protected in the Local Plan. The Green Circle Walk connects them.

Figure 15 shows how the Exe Valley and Ludwell Valley provide valuable green infrastructure, which is not designated, but provides rich habitats for a variety of species. Type A habitats contribute to the natural ecosystem but are not habitats of principle importance. Type B habitats have been modified by human activity but still offer valuable habitats for wildlife. The project site is almost all Tier A and Tier B habitat – an essential green corridor.

FIG 13 PROTECTED HABITATS

KEY
- County Wildlife Sites
- SSSIs
- RAMSAR Special Protection Area **Exe Estuary**

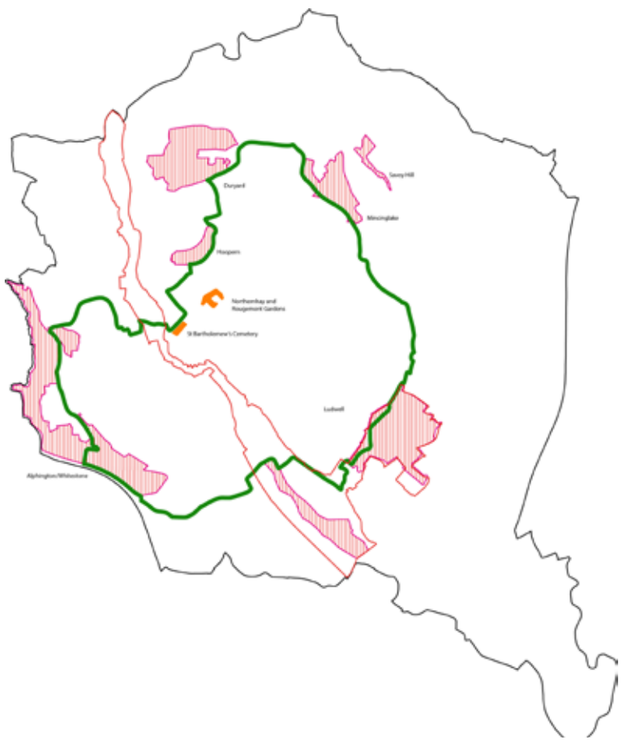


FIG 14 VALLEY PARKS + GREEN CIRCLE WALK

KEY
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Green Circle Walk
- Valley Parks

FIG 15 HABITATS OF PRINCIPLE IMPORTANCE

KEY
- Type A habitats
- Type B habitats

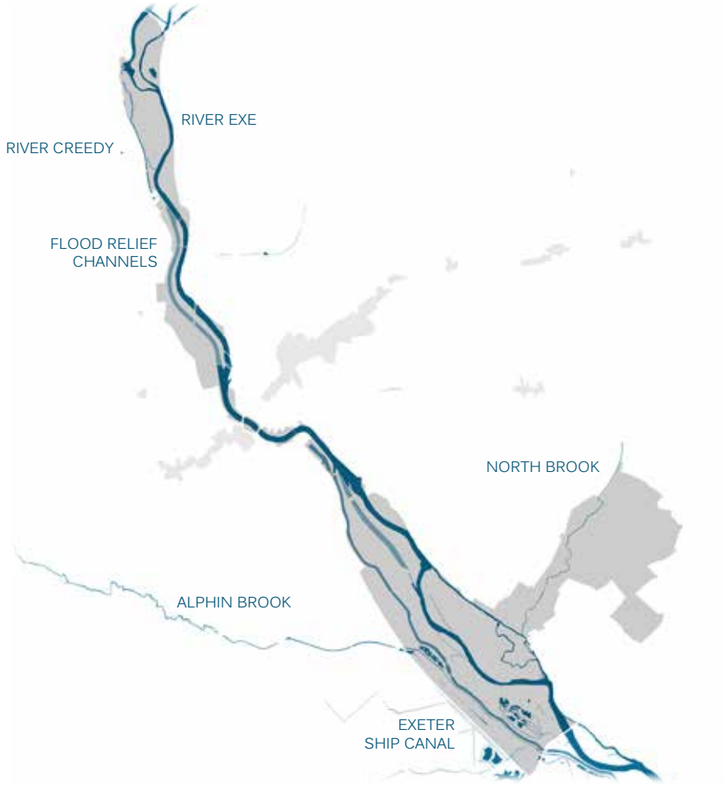


FIG 16 WATER COURSES IN EXETER

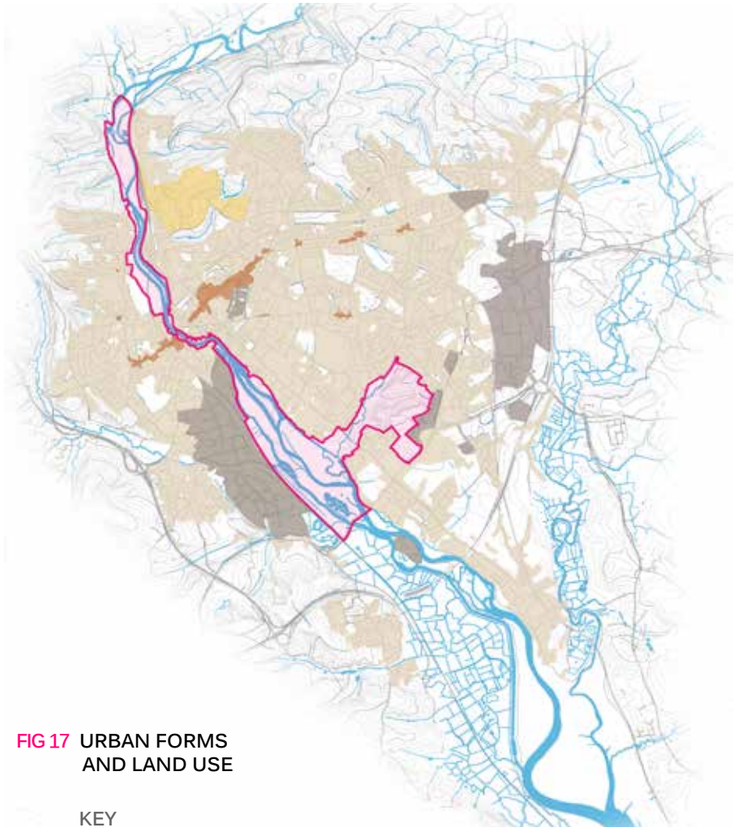


FIG 17 URBAN FORMS AND LAND USE

KEY
- Residential
- Employment
- University
- Central / Retail areas

Exeter has developed as Devon's country town and it is thanks to the River Exe. Figure 16 shows the multiple river course that feed into the site, and they are a variety of ages, sizes, and determined by human and physical activity in the Exe Valley. Figure 17 shows the current urban structure of Exeter, and as described in Section 2.2, it shows the main urban development that has taken place to the east of the Exe. The historical centre remains, but the key employment zone runs alongside the site to the south west. The university provides more potential users close to the site in the north.

The original settlement was established by the Romans with a fortress called Isca Dumnoniorum. It became the regional capital, built at the lowest crossing point of the River Exe.

Development through the Middle Ages was concentrated around the earlier walled city, and gradually expanded along routes outside. The marshy ground of the flood plain around Exe Bridges began to be drained, and leats were dug to power mills. By the 1400s, Exeter was an important centre of woollen production. However, Isabella, Countess of Devon built a weir across the Exe and boats could no longer arrive into Exeter, boosting Topsham as the key port for the region. Exwick Mills also developed with a leat that remains today. By 1500, Exeter probably had a population of about 8000. In 1566 the canal was dug to enable ships to return to Exeter, which continued to support the wool and tanning industry.

Through 18th and 19th centuries, the trade of wool and associated ship industries declined after c. 1800, so the shape of the city remained fairly constant through the 1400s – 1600s.

World War II left significant damage in the city, along with other historical towns in the UK that were targeted. Many houses were destroyed and the city centre was badly damaged. After the second world war the University was built and the service sector developed in the city, with cultural industry developing, with many workers now employed in tourism, education and public administration.

In December 1960 water rose to 2m above the normal street level in the streets surrounding the river and rushed through the city. Exwick, St Thomas and Alphington were particularly badly hit, and citizens took months to recover. Work on the flood channels began in 1964 and continued through into the 1970s to modernise Exe Bridges and construct 3 flood relief channels in the city, which are still in use today, controlled by the automatic flood gate at Station Road. The 'Exwick Spillway' was opened to the public in 1977, marking a new era in the character of the Exe Valley.

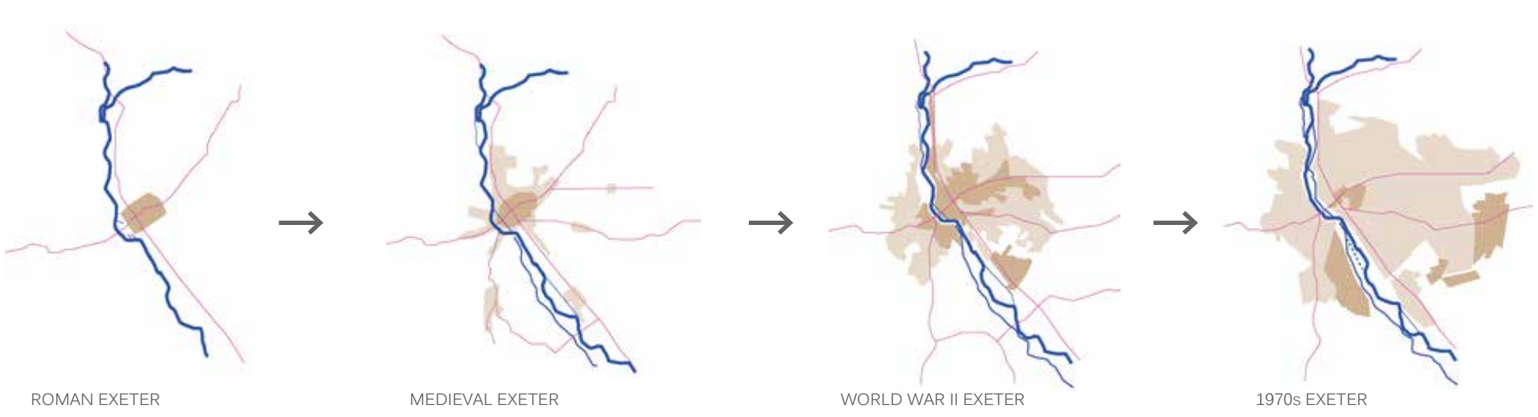
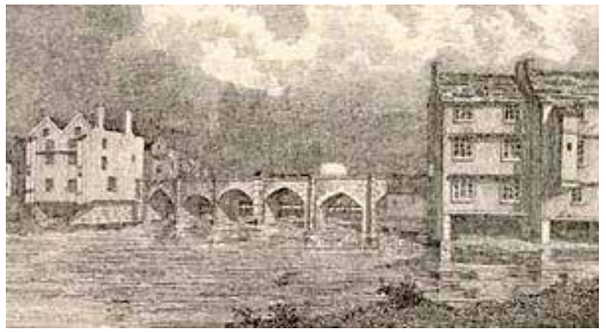


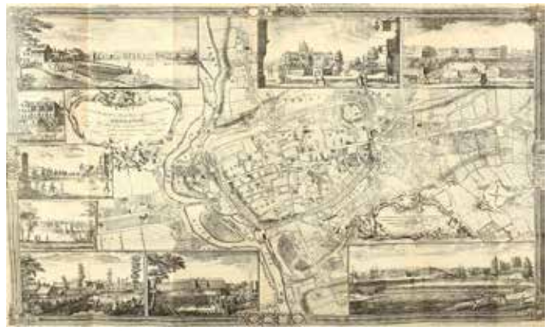
FIG 18 URBAN DEVELOPMENT

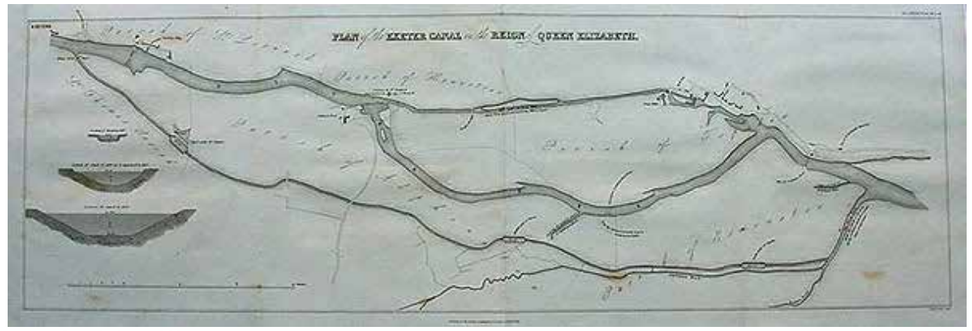
KEY
- Running water
- Main streets
- City boundary
- Commercial areas


Roman Exeter


Hogenburg's 1587 map of Exeter

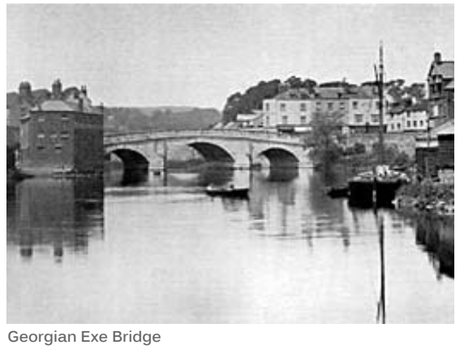

Medieval Exe Bridge


Roque's Map of Exeter, 1744



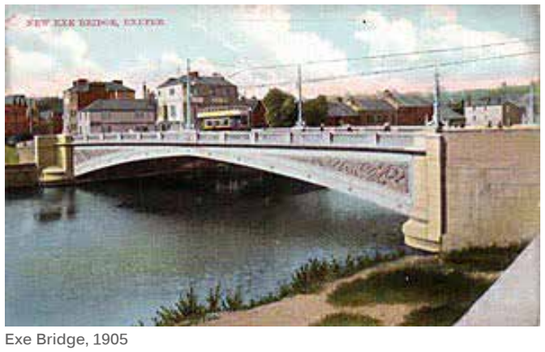
Exeter Canal Plan, 1839


19th Century map of Exeter


Georgian Exe Bridge


Historic Quay


Ship Canal



Exe Bridge, 1905


Exeter Map, 1974

FIG 19 HISTORICAL PHOTOS

Exeter is a historic city with a wealth of cultural assets and resources. As was discussed on the previous page, the city's growth has been tightly linked with the river as a resource, particularly via the historic quay and canal. These were the key drivers for the success and development of the city after the 1560s. As is shown in Figure 20, the listed buildings are concentrated in the historic centre, along with conservation areas and scheduled monuments. Double Locks Public House is the key building with a listing, along with the Paper Mill at Countess Mill within the study area. In the city centre, the historic quay and canal basin contain some listed buildings.

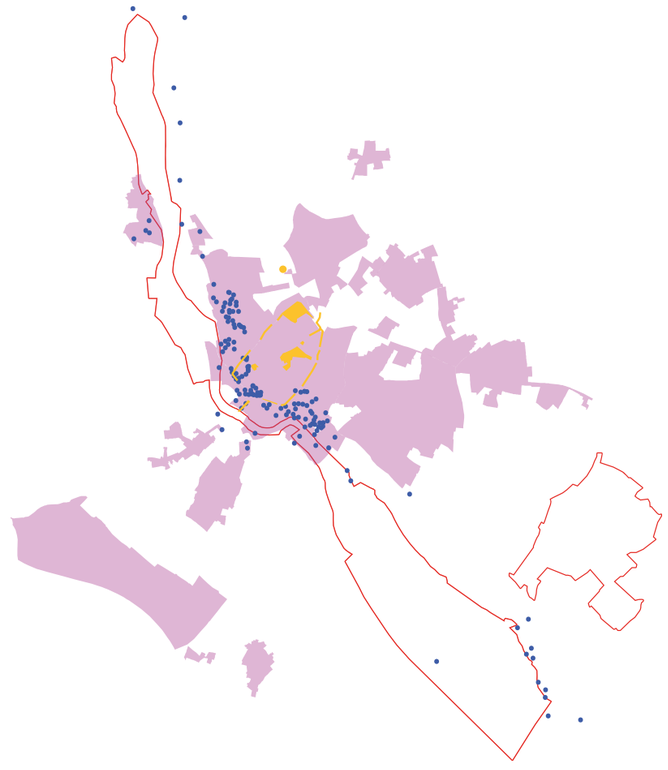


FIG 20 LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS CLOSE TO THE SITE

Key evidence of the rich history of the Exe is found in the landmarks and features found along the river and water courses. These include a variety of mills, leats and bridges, as well as weirs, which contribute to the character of the river system. They lie is varying states of repair, ownership and accessibility and some require enhancement or maintenance.

FIG 21 **BRIDGES**

COWLEY BRIDGE

It crosses the Creedy and was first recorded as a crossing point in 1286. Today's bridge dates from 1814. A contemporary bridge crosses the Exe.

STATION RD BRIDGE

The floods of 1960 destroyed the original Station Bridge, and today two bridges span the flood channel and the Exe.

MILLERS CROSSING

A suspension bridge built in 2002. The concrete mill stones are a reminder of the many mills that lined the leats of Exeter in former times.

EXE BRIDGES

There has been a bridge here since the middle ages. The actual bridges were built in 1969 (North) and 1972 (South).

CRICKLEPIT BRIDGE

This is the primary footbridge for the city centre. It was built in 1988 to link the quayside with Haven Banks.

CANAL SWING BRIDGE

They are designed to allow shipping to pass up but rarely open now. They date from 1936 (swing) and 1972 (bascule).

BELLE ISLE SUSPENSION BRIDGE

It was built in 1935 to provide a crossing for the new estates at Burnthouse Lane, to walk to work in the nearby foundry.

ALPHINBROOK SWING BRIDGE

It joins Alphinbrook Road with Riverside Meadows. The wooden bridge is swung by hand to allow boats to pass the canal.

COUNTESS WEIR BRIDGES

Before the bridge was built, in 1774, it was a dangerous fording point. In 1938 the road was widened for increased traffic.

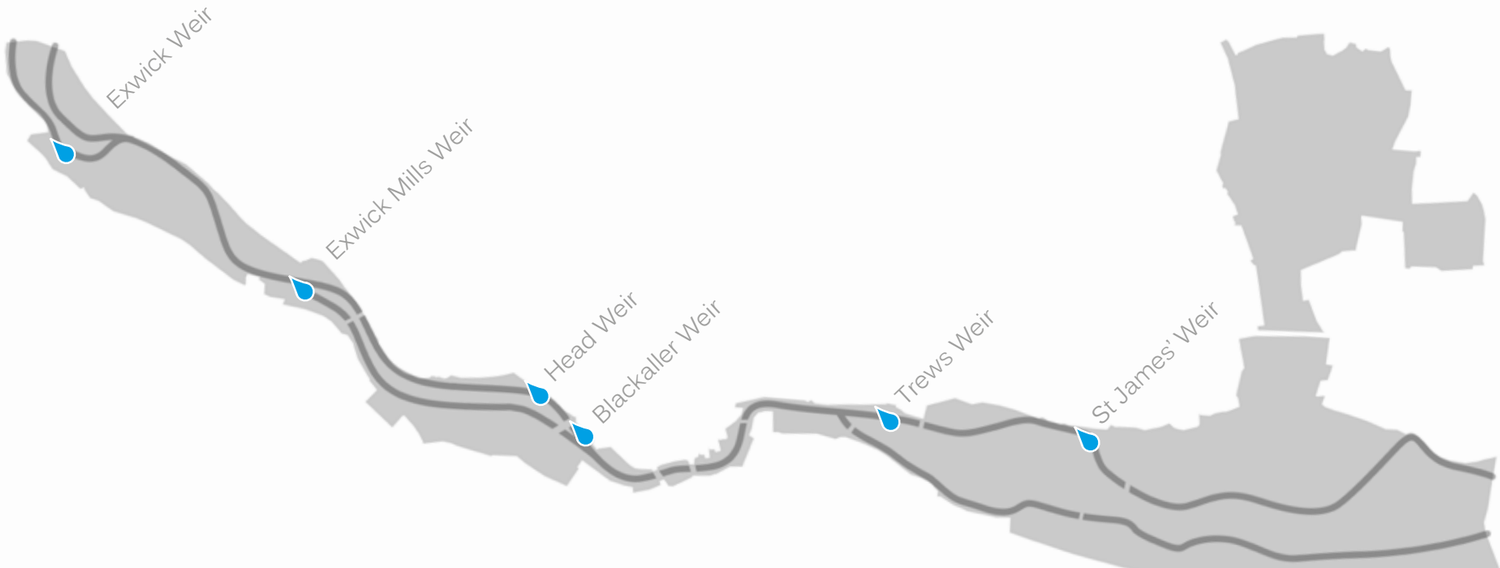


FIG 22 WEIRS

EXWICK WEIRS

It was built to create the long leat that provide water to Exwick mills. It is thought to be one of the oldest weirs of the city.

EXWICK MILLS WEIR

It was opened in 1977 as part of the Flood Relief Scheme. It manages the flow through the flood relief channel.

HEAD WEIR

After a heavy winter, a second leat and weir was built above Blackaller, in 1609 and named Head Weir.

BLACKALLER WEIR

Of medieval origin, it originally raised the river level to feed the Higher and lower leats, creating Exe Island. In 1863 a salmon ladder was constructed.

TREWS WEIR

It was built in the 1560s to raise the river to feed the new ship canal. It replaced the old St Leonard's Weir.

ST JAMES' WEIR

It was built by the priests of the nearby St James Priory to supple power for the mills of Countess Wear. Salmon are often seen leaping the weir.

FIG 23 MILLS

EXWICK MILL(S)

Exwick Mill is currently semi-derelict and privately owned. Since 1086 there have been as many as 3 Exwick Mills and their locations have been the centre of Exwick district

HEAD WEIR MILL

Now a pub, this was an important paper mill since the 19th century.

CRICKLEPIT MILL

Built in the 1220s as a corn mill, it is one of the oldest mills of the town. Today it is the headquarter of the Devon Wildlife Trust.

TREWS WEIR MILL

A listed building, now occupied by flats, it was built in 1633 and has changed from cotton to wool to paper mill.

COUNTESS WEIR PAPER MILL

There has been a mill at this site since the 11th century. It had been one of the biggest mills of Exeter, as it had as many as three working wheels.

FIG 24 LEATS

EXWICK LEAT

It served the old Exwick Mills and is probably of medieval origin. The leat has a length of 1.19 km and today seperates St. Andrews Road from the private land behind.

HIGHER LEAT

It was part of a complex of leats that powered the mills and industries of 'Exe Island' which was the original industrial part of ancient Exeter. Today many parts of the Higher Leat are still visible.

ST JAMES MILL LEAT

It leaves the Exe at St James' Weir and forms the eastern boundary of the University playfields.

The location of different types of habitats within the parks is key to identifying and defining different character areas.
There is a great diversity of habitats found within the parks and securing, motioning and extending this diversity will ensure sustainable habitats will persist in the parks.

This plan (Figure 25) highlights the primary habitats found through the site, and how they overlay with the protected CWSs and SSSIs. The area predominantly falls into the category of 'Floodplain Grazing Marsh' and features some chunks of deciduous woodland. The beginning of the SPA is reflected in the Coastal Salt Marsh and lowland fen that occurs just to the south of the site boundary.

Ludwell Valley Park is 80 hectares of rolling Devonshire farmland. There are traditional orchards, semi-improved and unimproved neutral grasslands, species-rich arable fields and hedges, and young woodland. A cherry orchard planted around 1830 has ten veteran trees, with a new generation planted between them. Some of the steeply sloping grasslands which have not been fertilized are rich in plants, including grass vetchling and corky-fruited water dropwort. The arable fields are sown every spring with barley/linseed, but no chemicals are used. Consequently, the impressionist colours of corn cockle (purple), cornflower (cyan), corn marigold and corn chamomile (white) are a joy to visitors, and provide food for Cirl buntings, skylarks, linnets and harvest mice. A patch of calcareous grassland associated with the disused tennis courts has a small population of bee orchids.

The **River Exe/Creedy** between Miller's crossing and Cowley Bridge, together with the Exwick Mill Leat are characterised by similar, but more impoverished habitats, as a result of artificial bank reinforcement and fertilisers. However, otters are known to breed where there is good cover from alder and willow, and there is a significant salmon spawning area. The landowner reports spawning lamprey and nesting dippers, and freshwater pearl mussels were known from the confluence of the Exe/Creedy in the 1960s. Sand martins nest on earth river banks and on the radial flood gates. The Exwick Mill Leat is excellent for aquatic plants. The invasive Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam need to be removed.

Between the swing bridge at Countess Wear and the St James Weir, the river floodplain is a tapestry of grazing marsh, swamp, tall herb fen, open water, wet woodland and scrub. The Doubler Locks Wetland, constructed by Exeter City Council in the 1990s, is a refuge for breeding and migrating water birds. Some of the marshy grasslands support notable plants such as corky-fruited water dropwort and greater tussock sedge. The swamp below the Trews check weir did support sweet galingale and lesser reedmace. The constantly shifting silts and shingles of the river bank are vital to the survival of rare annual plants such as the pink water speedwell. Here the white-legged damselfly, otter, and kingfisher also breed.

Exeter Canal is a linear freshwater with narrow marginal vegetation, which nevertheless support plants notable in Devon; cyperus sedge, common club-rush, yellow loosestrife, greater pond-sedge, water dock and flowering rush. The submerged vegetation in the canal also supports notable plants; three species of Potamogeton pondweed, rigid hornwort, spiked water-milfoil and Nuttall's waterweed. Together these habitats are breeding grounds for the hairy dragonfly, red-eyed damselfly and other rare aquatic insects. Dense scrub provides breeding habitat for the Red Data Book Cetti's warbler, and otters feed in the canal and loaf on its banks, though there are no breeding holts.

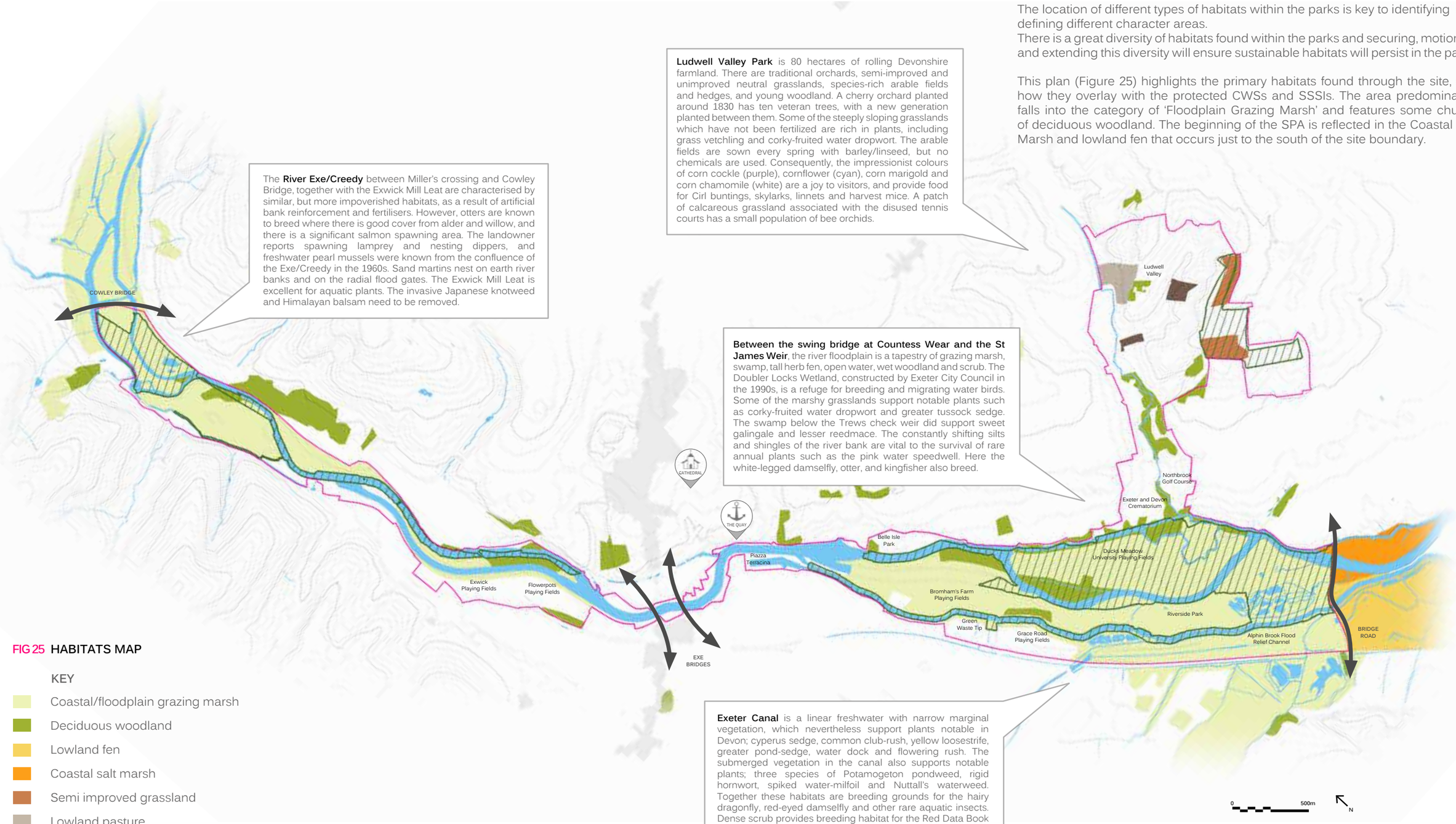


FIG 25 HABITATS MAP

KEY

- Coastal/floodplain grazing marsh
- Deciduous woodland
- Lowland fen
- Coastal salt marsh
- Semi improved grassland
- Lowland pasture
- Traditional orchard
- County Wildlife Sites and SSSIs

The primary complexity to the site comes from the cooperation between the Environment Agency and Exeter City Council in sharing land associated with the flood and water management in the valley. ECC own and manage much of the land, and usage to date is linked closely with tenure. Analysing current tenure (Figure 26) helps to understand key opportunity areas, and areas that are currently in private ownership.

All types of open spaces (except private gardens) are napped irrespective of ownership and public access. The north is dominated by private land and fields, and there are additional private fields in Ludwell Valley Park. Some of these are managed by ECC. Alongside the River Exe to the east there are numerous fields privately owned and contained in the CWS, and these are key habitat sites, despite being in private ownership.

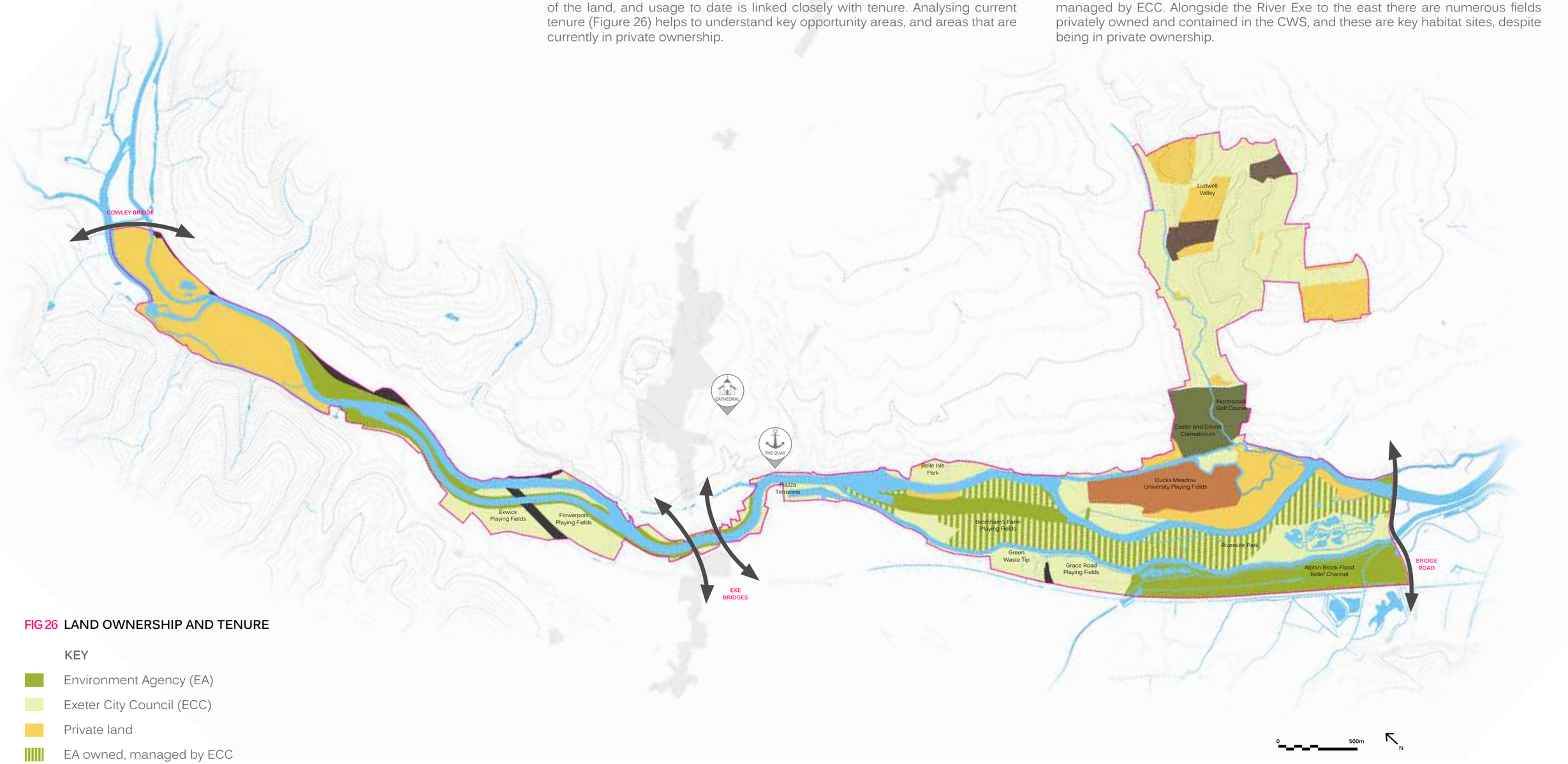


FIG 26 LAND OWNERSHIP AND TENURE

KEY

- Environment Agency (EA)
- Exeter City Council (ECC)
- Private land
- EA owned, managed by ECC
- University
- Privately owned, ECC managed
- ECC owned, externally managed
- Network Rail

There are a variety of land uses which are closely linked to ownership and management, so can be cross referenced with the previous and subsequent diagrams. Figure 27 shows that there is a large amount of undefined 'amenity space' which suggests opportunity for improvement to biodiversity in these spaces, or better integration into the wider character of the area.

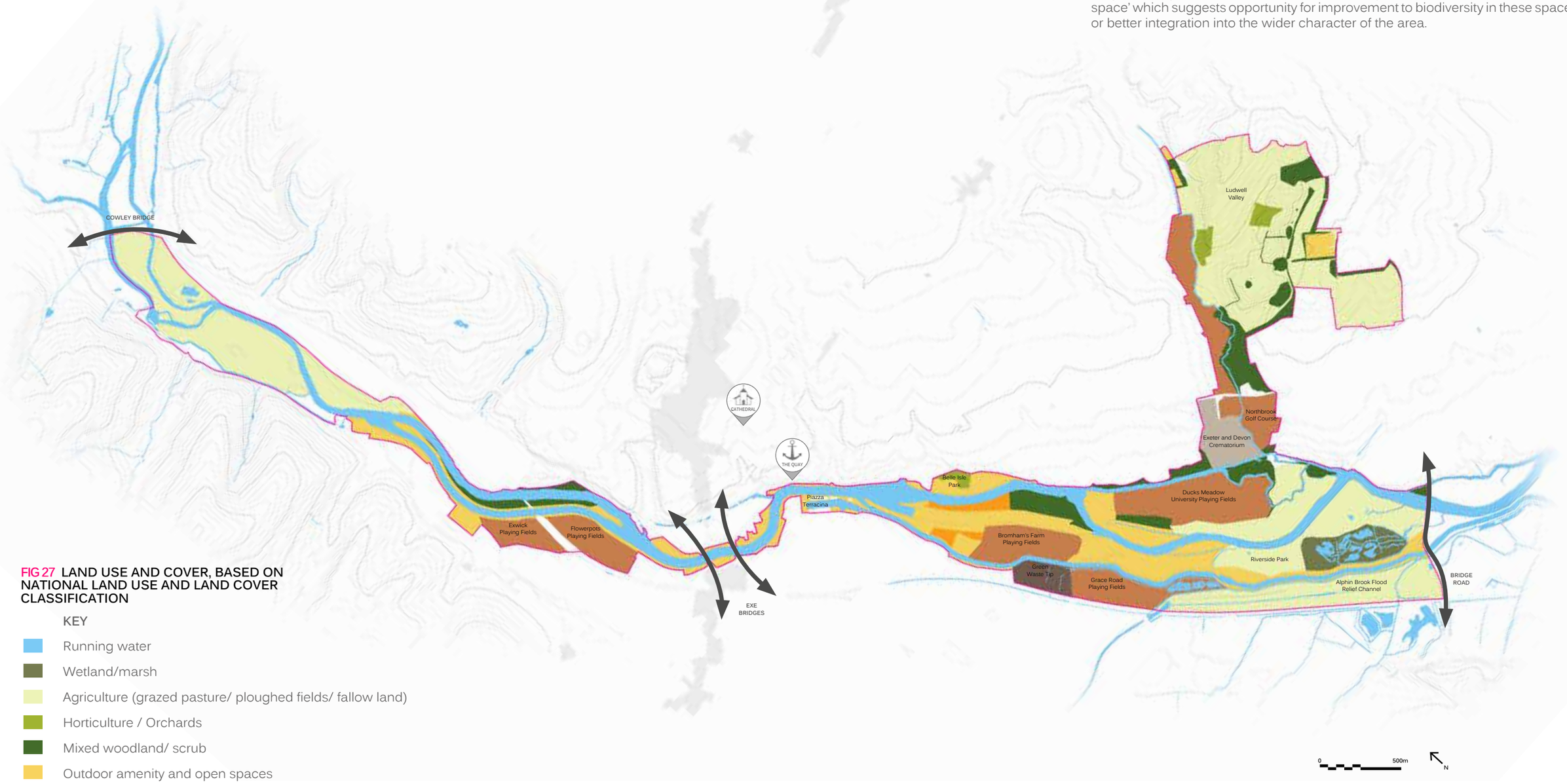


FIG 27 LAND USE AND COVER, BASED ON NATIONAL LAND USE AND LAND COVER CLASSIFICATION

KEY

- Running water
- Wetland/marsh
- Agriculture (grazed pasture/ ploughed fields/ fallow land)
- Horticulture / Orchards
- Mixed woodland/ scrub
- Outdoor amenity and open spaces
- Allotments and city farms
- Sports facilities and grounds/ recreation
- Refuse disposal
- Cemeteries and crematoria

The Valley parks accommodate a range of uses, from playing fields, to traditionally managed farm land and a selection of parks and open spaces. Figure 28 displays the land that is publicly accessible, and categorises it according to the Parks Strategy for Exeter (2009). There is a large amount of 'local green space' that lacks definition however, and these provide opportunity areas. There has been a decline in adult football use at Bromham's Farm and Grace Road some of the area could be re-purposed for other uses.

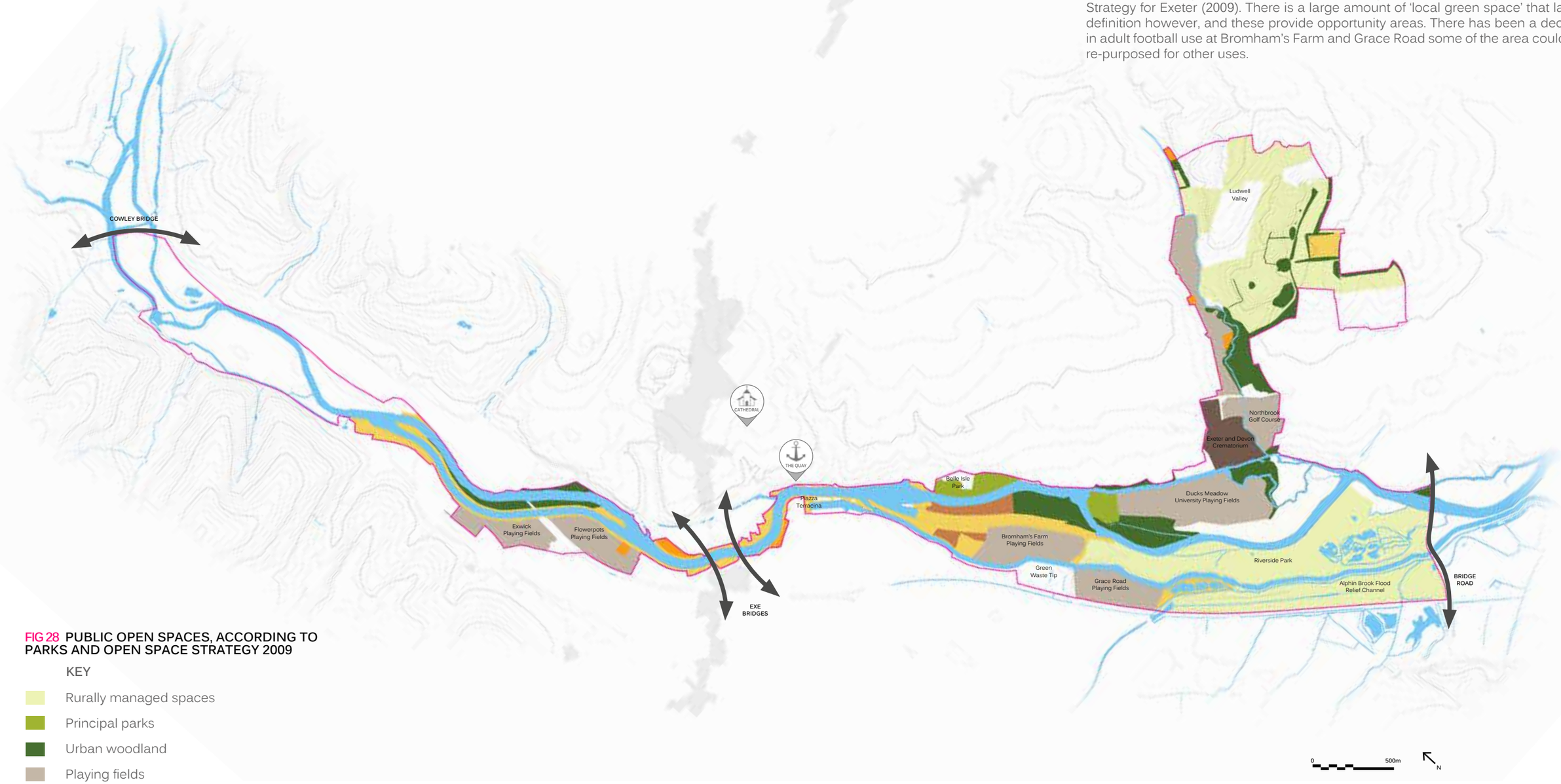


FIG 28 PUBLIC OPEN SPACES, ACCORDING TO PARKS AND OPEN SPACE STRATEGY 2009

KEY

- Rurally managed spaces
- Principal parks
- Urban woodland
- Playing fields
- Local greenspaces
- Neighbourhood and pocket parks
- Allotments
- Cemeteries and Churchyards

The Exe Estuary Trail is a key piece of cycling and walking infrastructure that passes through the site, and has been an integral part of policy development in Exeter on sustainable transport. The link aims to connect walkers and cyclists along the Exe Estuary out to Exmouth and Dawlish. The masterplan can take advantage of this well-developed network of cycle routes that bring recreational users to the area. The Exe Estuary along hosts a public right of way along the canal, and is another key recreational facility to the Exe Valley.

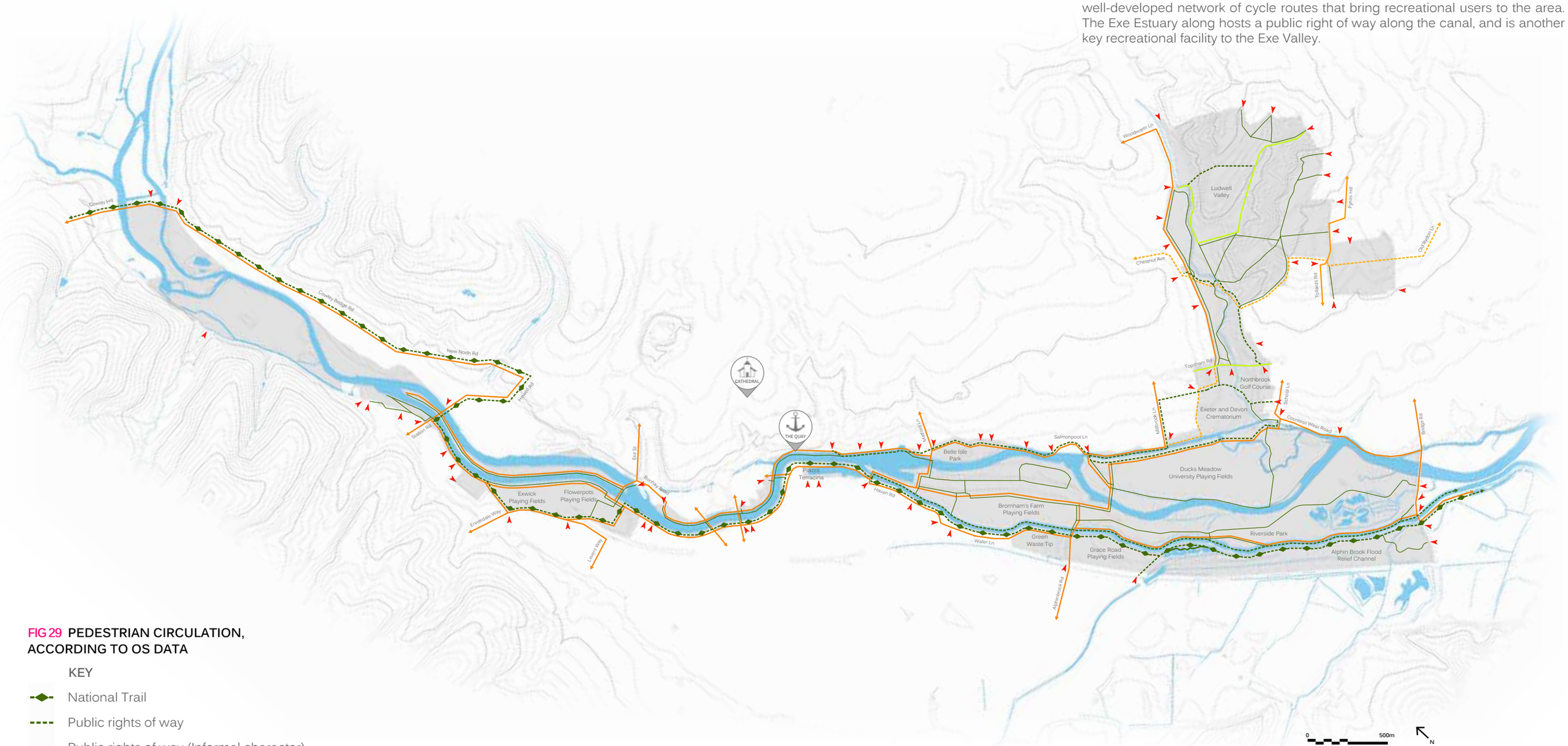


FIG 29 **PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION, ACCORDING TO OS DATA**

KEY

- National Trail
- Public rights of way
- Public rights of way (Informal character)
- Cycle routes
- Proposed cycle routes
- Roads
- Entrances

The biggest opportunity for the masterplan comes from the network of stopping service trains in the valley, along with a new train station proposed at Marsh Barton. This will be a key gateway for the park. Parking is also illustrated on Figure 30 and demonstrates how there is a good spread of parking around the parks, but they need improved signage and branding to be fully utilised. Ludwell does lack informal car parking provision on the eastern side.

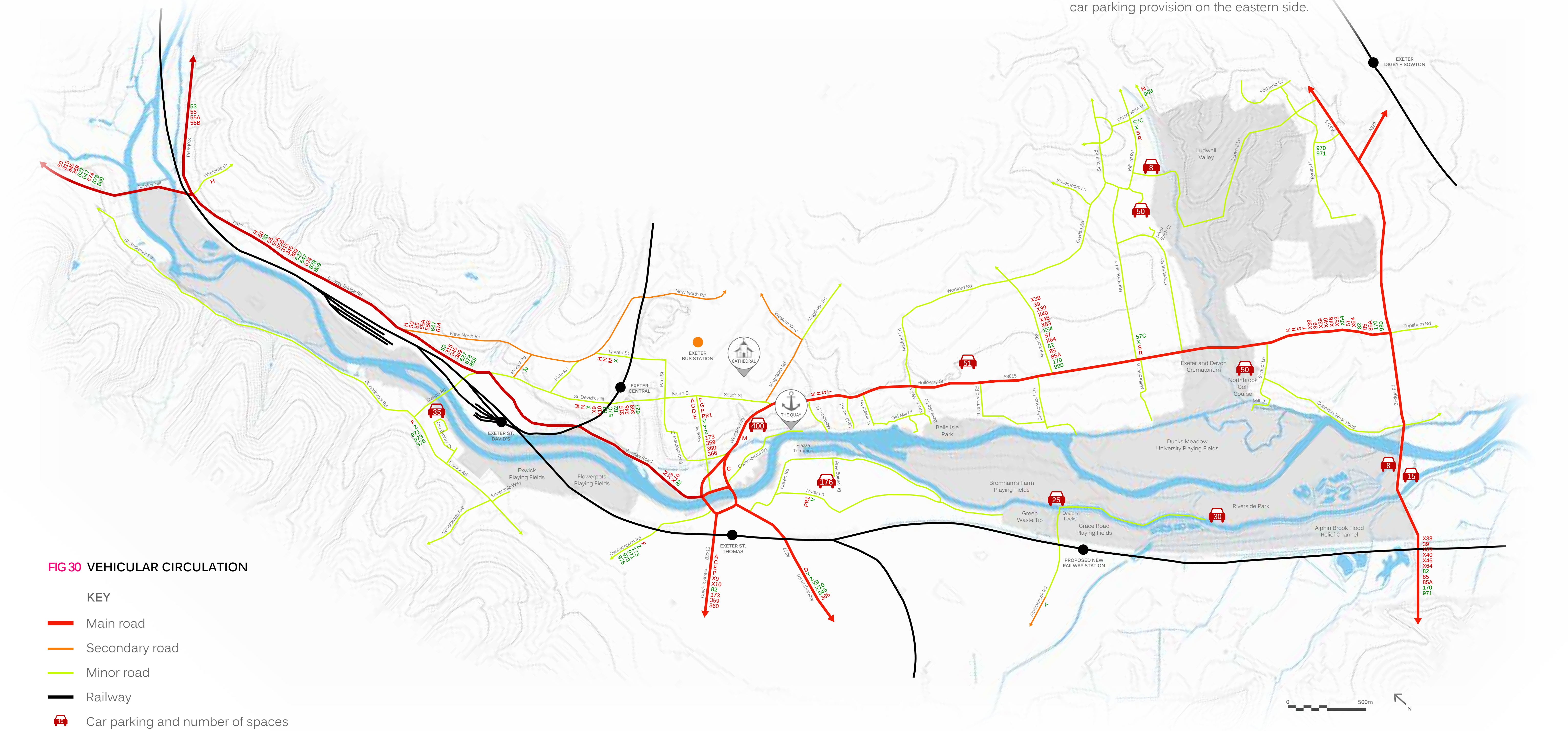
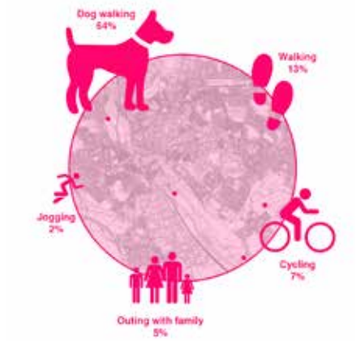


FIG 30 VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

KEY

- Main road
- Secondary road
- Minor road
- Railway
- Car parking and number of spaces
- Railway station
- Bus station
- X9 X10 Regular Bus route
- 82 173 Restricted Bus route

2. WHAT IS THE MAIN ACTIVITY YOU ARE UNDERTAKING TODAY?

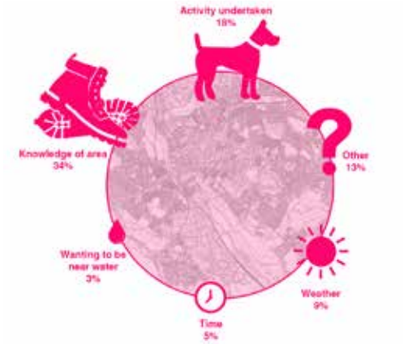


The majority of those interviewed were visiting the parks to walk a dog. The survey did not intercept cyclists at speed, but the survey still indicates cyclists are a considerable user group in the area.

9. HOW DID YOU GET HERE TODAY?

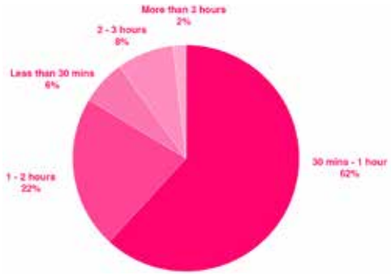
There was a good share of users visiting the site by non-motorised means, compared with visitors to the Pebblebeds where 75% visit using a car.

11. WHAT INFLUENCED YOUR CHOICE OF ROUTE TODAY?



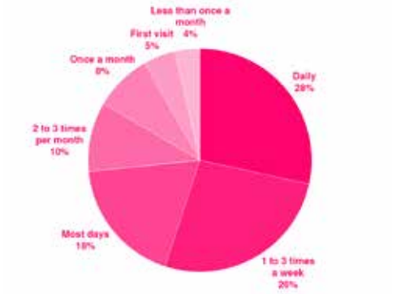
Previous knowledge of the site was the primary reason for visits, suggesting that with more information more people would visit the site.

4. HOW LONG HAVE YOU SPENT AT THE PARK TODAY?



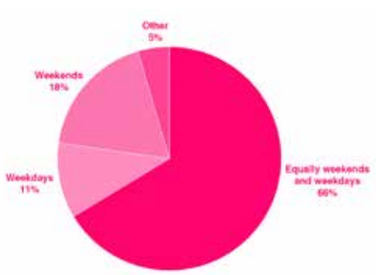
Most people are spending between 30 minutes and 1 hour in the parks, but the majority of visitors had also been visiting the site for more than 10 years

5. OVER THE PAST YEAR, ROUGHLY HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU VISITED THIS PARK?



The survey did not ask visitors whether they came more regularly than daily, but nearly 3/4 of visitors came at least once a week

6. WHICH DAYS OF THE WEEK DO YOU TEND TO VISIT THIS PARK?



Most people tended to visit equally across the weekend and weekdays.

12. WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO VISIT HERE, RATHER THAN ANOTHER LOCAL SITE?

The main reason people visit the parks was due to previous knowledge of the park - indicating improving signage and branding could help to attract new users

16. WHAT PARTICULAR REASONS INFLUENCE YOUR CHOICE OF THESE OTHER SITES?

A range of factors influenced interviewees choice of site, with close to home being the most common factor, given by 52% of interviewees

17. WHAT EFFECT WOULD DIFFERENT CHANGES HAVE TO HOW OFTEN YOU VISIT?

Responses to potential changes indicated that a cafe, improvements to habitats and scenery and toilets would result in interviewees visiting more.

FIG 31 USER ANALYSIS DIAGRAMS

As well as engagement with the public through the User Group and the Public event, the major baseline informing the Masterplan comes from a Visitor Survey of 110 people that took place over 4 days in July. Survey Points can be seen in Figure 32. The figures across this spread indicate the key findings from the report, and the questionnaire and results can be found in full in Appendix B and C. The survey data indicated that Pebblebeds SPA is the main site that users consider visiting, if not at Riverside or Ludwell Parks and a 2012 survey highlights the reasons people enjoy visiting the Pebblebeds area reference. Factors such as views, peace and quiet, no dog restrictions, variety of habitats were the reasons people visited Pebblebeds, so if the parks can provide these facilities then they offer a viable alternative to the protected area.

The end of the questionnaire asked where people visited the park from, and 92% of respondents gave their postcode. Analysis revealed an even spread of visitors from across the city - cementing the Valley Parks as a city wide recreational landscape. It also highlighted that currently Ludwell is used mainly by people from surrounding neighbourhoods, whereas Riverside attracts people from across the city. With improvements, Ludwell could attract more users from a wider area of the city.

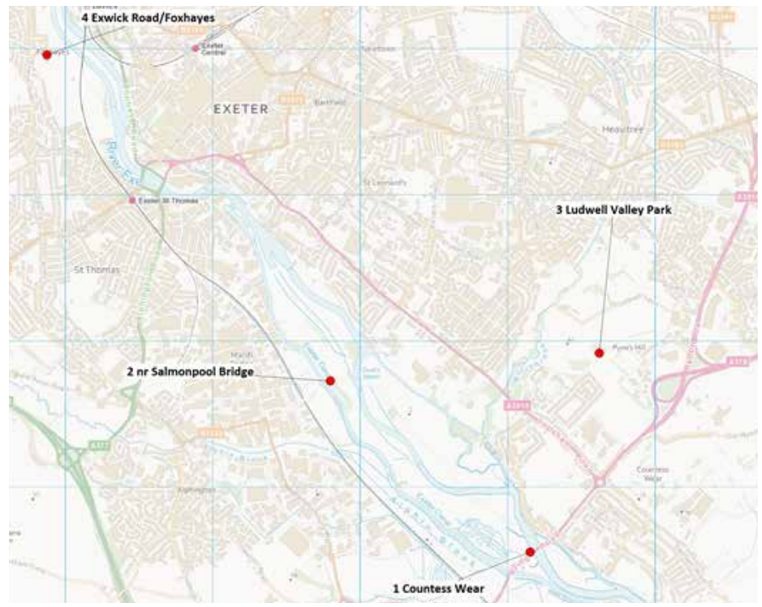


FIG 32 SURVEY POINTS FOR VISITOR SURVEY


Short-cut


Cycling


Dog walking


Jogging


Meeting up with friends


Outing with family


Walking


Others

FIG 33 TYPICAL USERS

FIG 34 REASONS FOR CHOOSING VALLEY PARKS

12. Free text: Why did you choose to visit here rather than another space

Size of lettering reflects the frequency with which given words appeared in the responses

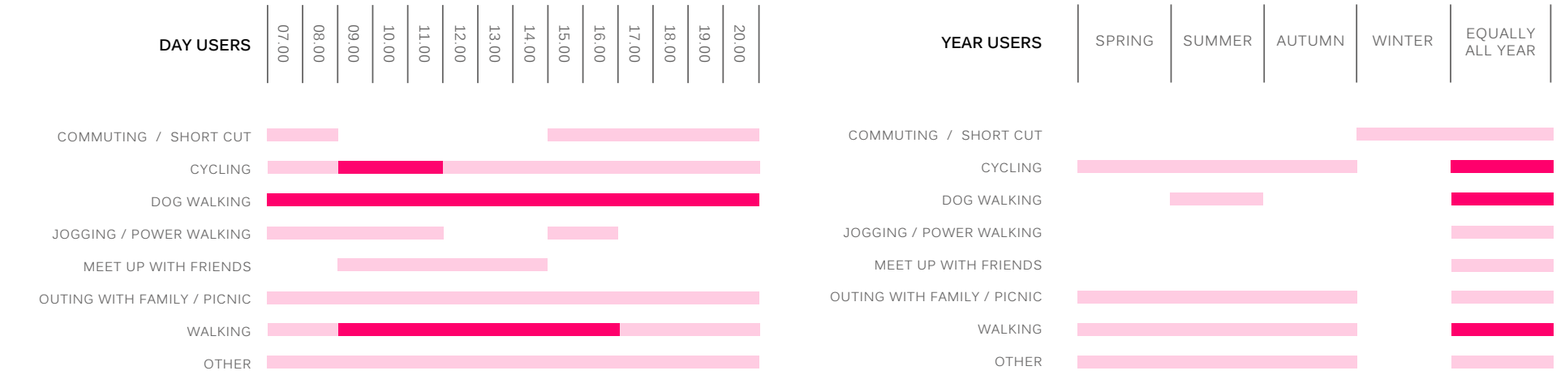


FIG 35 DAYTIME USER ANALYSIS

7. Do you tend to visit this park at a certain time of day?

There was a relatively even pattern of the times of day people tended to visit

KEY

From 1 to 5 users

More than 5 users

FIG 36 SEASONAL USER ANALYSIS

8. Do you tend to visit this park more at a particular time of year

Most visitors came all year round to the park.

KEY

From 1 to 5 users

More than 5 user

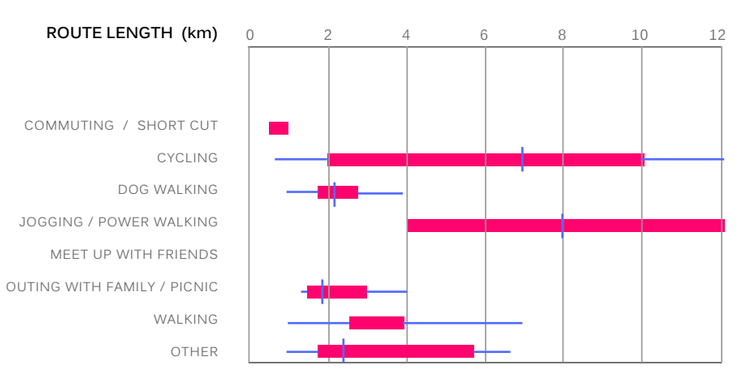


FIG 37 ROUTE LENGTH BY ACTIVITY

Route length varied according to activity. Dog Walking is of most interest, the median route was 2.2km and the routes ranged from 0.7km to 5.8km

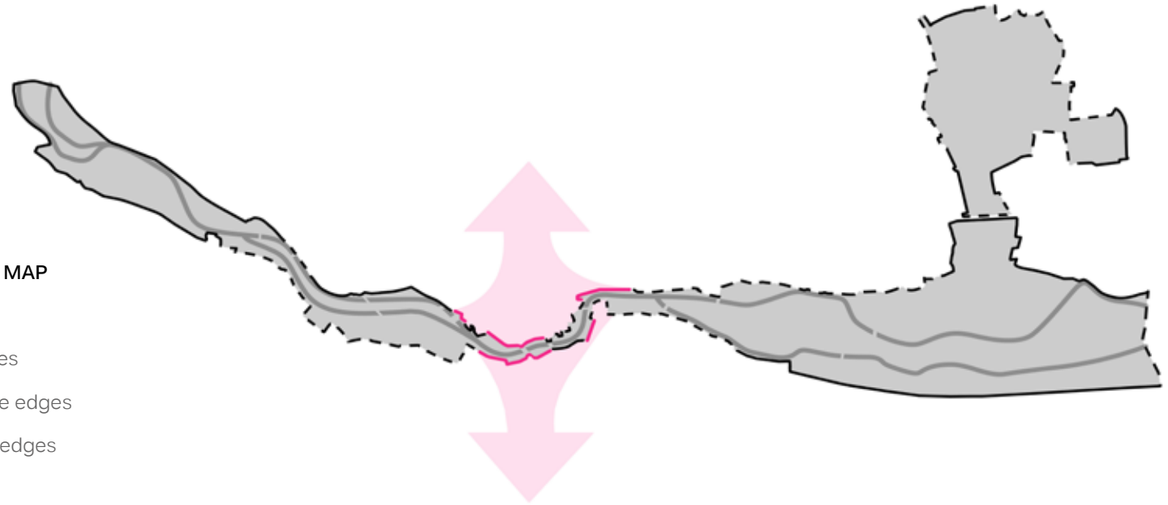


FIG 38 **PERMEABILITY MAP**

KEY

- Permeable edges
- Semi-permeable edges
- Not permeable edges

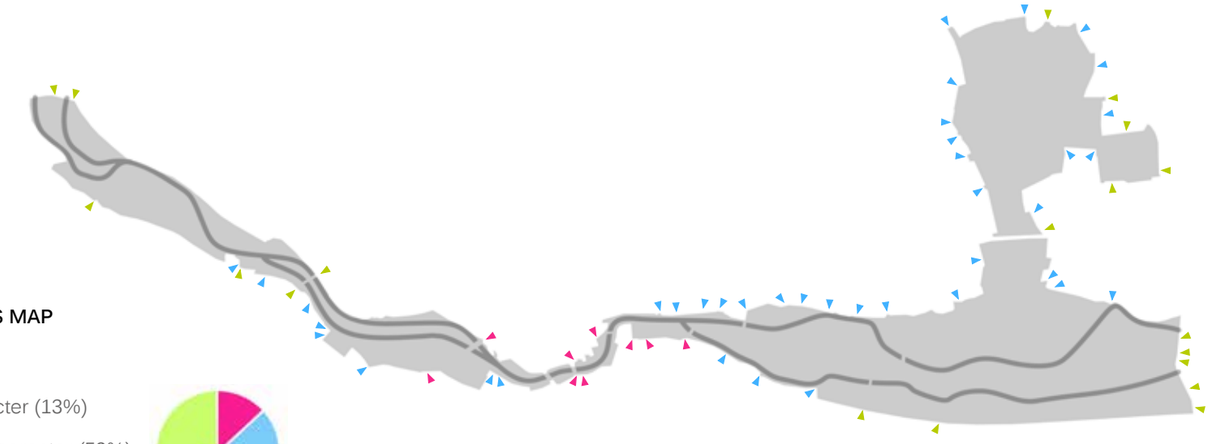


FIG 39 **ENTRANCES MAP**

KEY

- Urban character (13%)
- Residential character (59%)
- Rural character (28%)

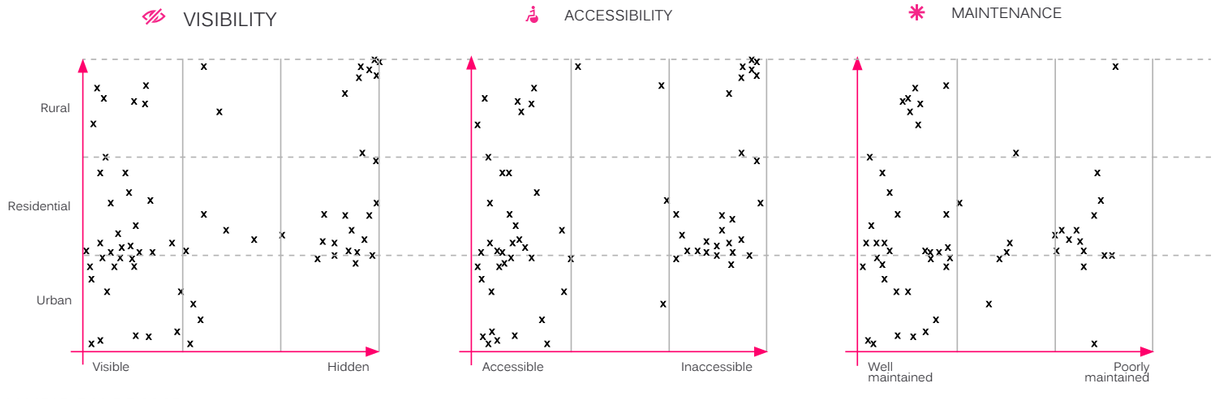


FIG 40 **ENTRANCES ANALYSIS DIAGRAMS**

A comprehensive entrance study can be found in Appendix D. This evaluates and compares the different types of entrances to the parks, and classifies them according to whether they are 'rural', 'urban' or 'residential' (Figure 39). Figure 40 summarises some key variables that were assessed – accessibility, visibility and level of maintenance, particularly in relation to soft landscaping.

Figure 40 shows a number of Entrance Analysis Diagrams that qualitatively assess the quality of the entrance experience. It shows there are quite a high number of entrances that are either difficult to see, difficult to access and are poorly maintained.

The study highlighted that most entrances could do with some attention with regards to maintenance, but also few had clear entrances that were visible in rural, urban and residential areas (Figure 41).

The site is also bound tightly by private property and also the railway line in the north east and south west, which created impermeable edges. In the city centre in some areas the site is open completely, and these areas should be taken advantage of with regards to signage and wayfaring.

FIG 41 **TYPOLOGIES CONSIDERED IN THE ENTRANCES STUDY, SEE APPENDIX D FOR THE FULL ENTRANCE STUDY**

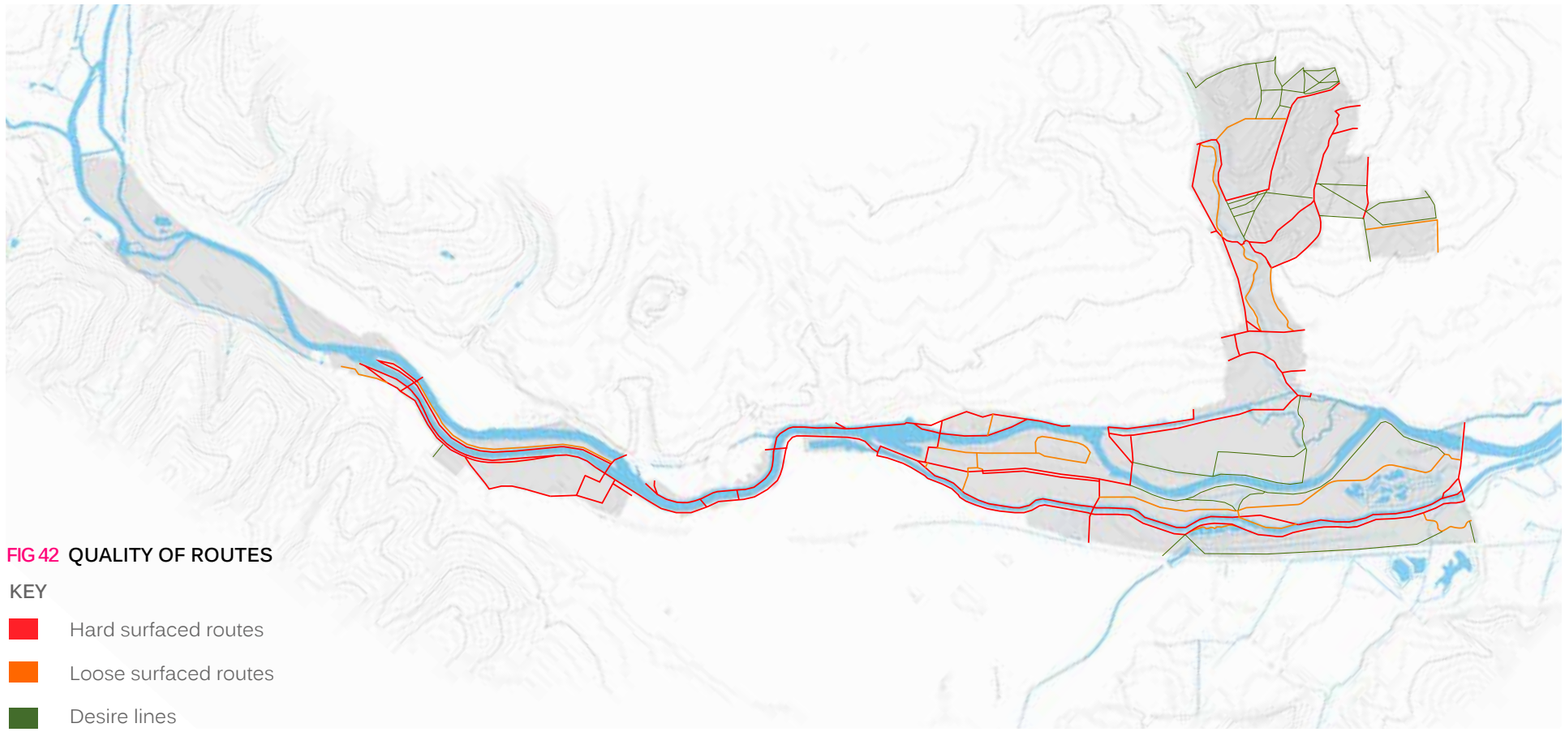


FIG 42 QUALITY OF ROUTES

KEY

- Hard surfaced routes
- Loose surfaced routes
- Desire lines

FIG 43 ROUTE USAGE

KEY

- 7 to 47 visitors
- 4 to 7 visitors
- 1 to 4 visitors
- 0 to 1 visitors

Figure 42 summarises the quality of paths in the park and emphasises how most surfaced routes in the site run linearly with the river and water bodies, which means visitors are making circular routes using mainly desire lines and unmarked routes. This is particularly common in Ludwell. The Cowley Bridge end of the site has no public access .

Figure 43 is extracted from the Visitor Survey and shows the routes people commonly access in the site. It shows there is a high concentration of visitors to the area around Double Locks Pub and through the central Riverside Valley Parks, but some areas are unvisited – such as the Alphin Brook, and some areas of Ludwell. This provides significant opportunity.

Figure 44 highlights some of the wayfinding that exists in the site. The majority of signage is associated with cycle routes and provided alongside transport infrastructure. There are some informative boards, but they do little to locate you or navigate you around the site. In Ludwell there is insufficient information outside of posts marking the entrances to the park.

FIG 44 EXISTING SIGNAGE + INTERPRETATION

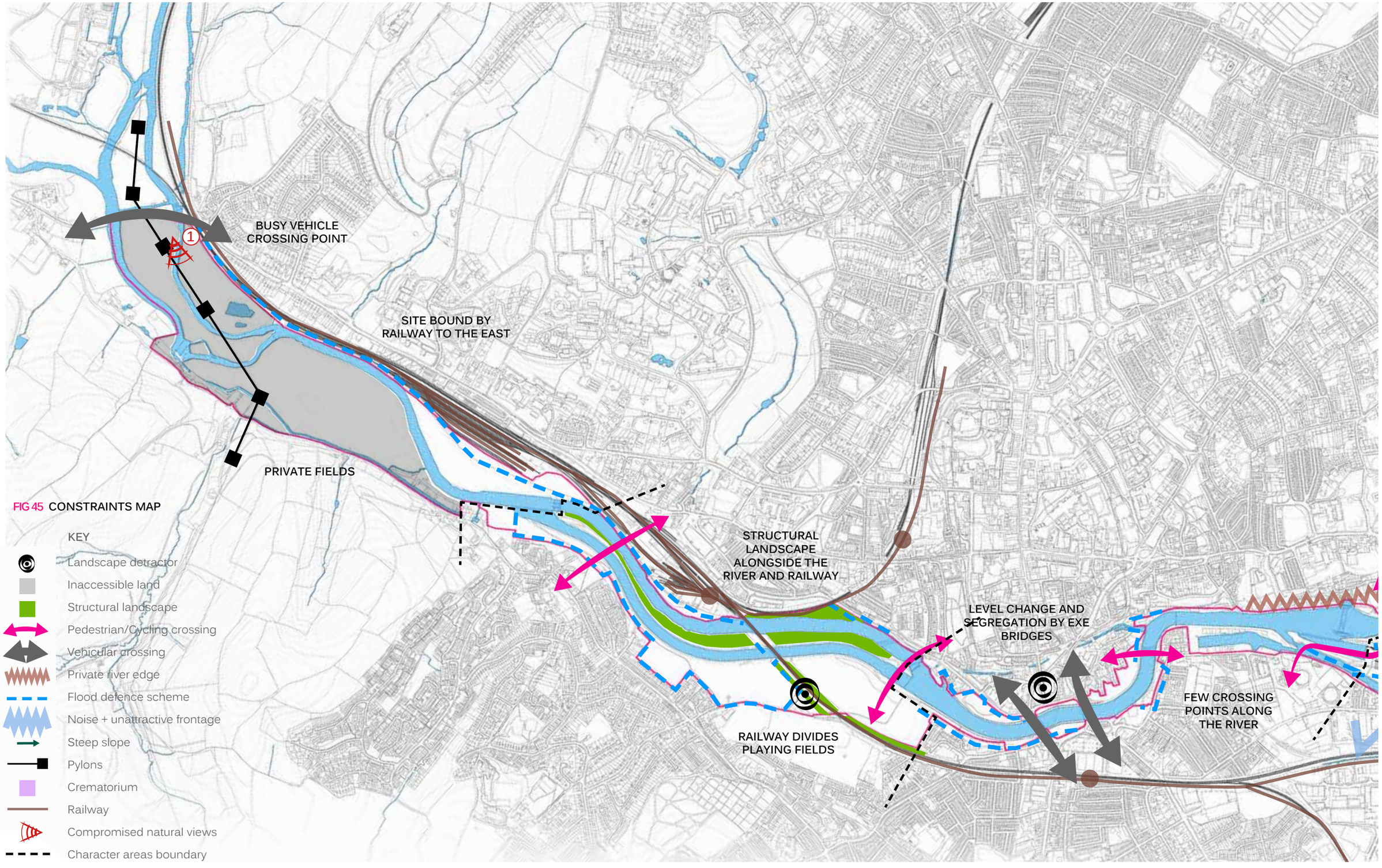
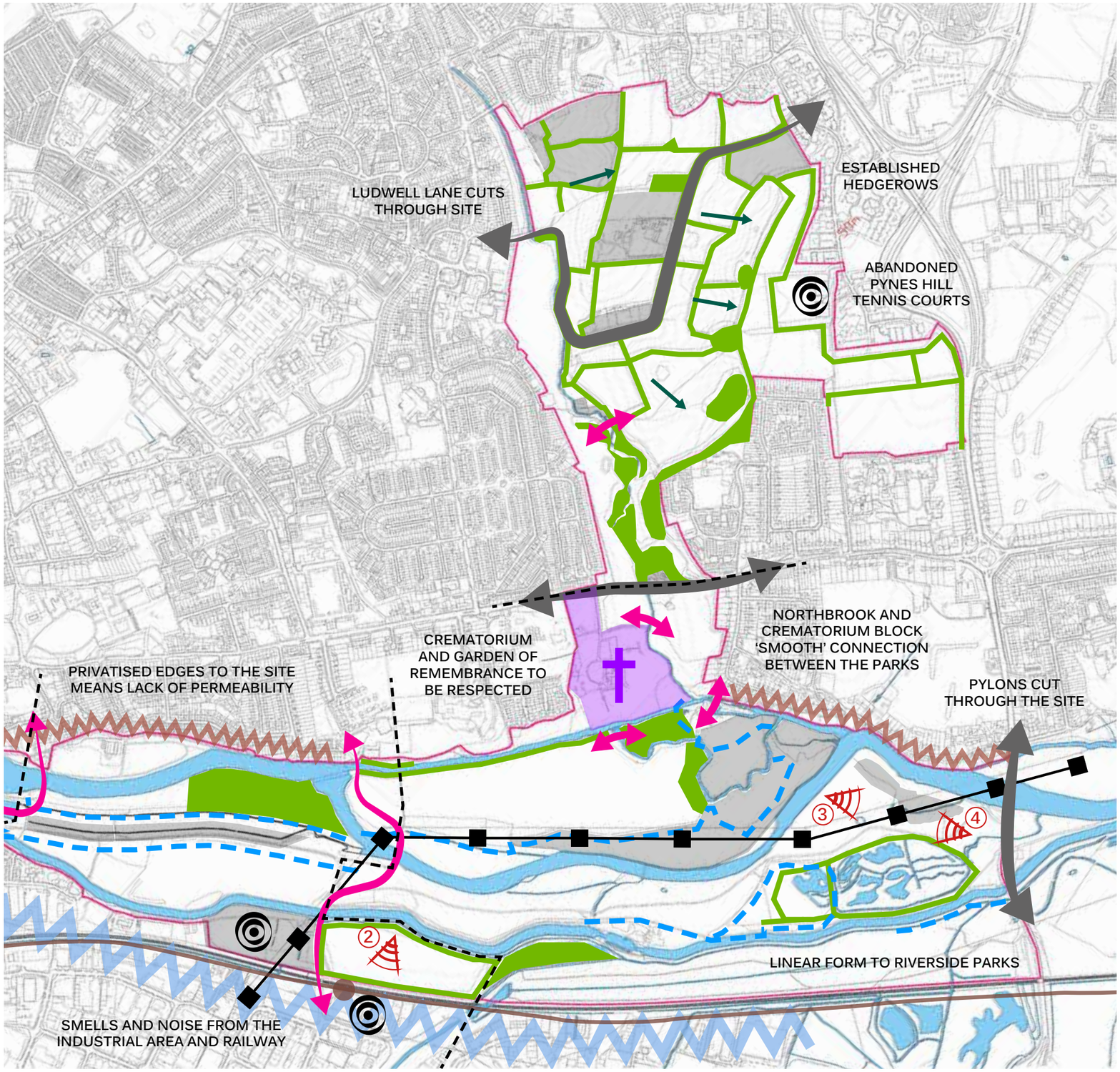


FIG 45 CONSTRAINTS MAP



This diagram (Figure 45) summarised the major site wide constraints that need to be considered in preparing the masterplan. The Flood Defence Scheme will limit the green space development, but also the limited crossing points and positioning of the railway also limit the site in some regards. In Ludwell, there are large areas of structural landscape in the form of hedgerows which need to be respected.

The railway that extends from Exeter St David is a major barrier to movement, as is the head of the flood defence scheme. To the south of the city centre a high proportion of private properties reduced permeability to the rivers edge. At Marsh Barton smell and nice from the adjacent industrial area detract from the natural setting of the parks. The linkage of Ludwell Hill over Topsham Road to the park is poor and difficult to navigate. Significant views exist within the site although the presence of pylons impact of the quality of these views.

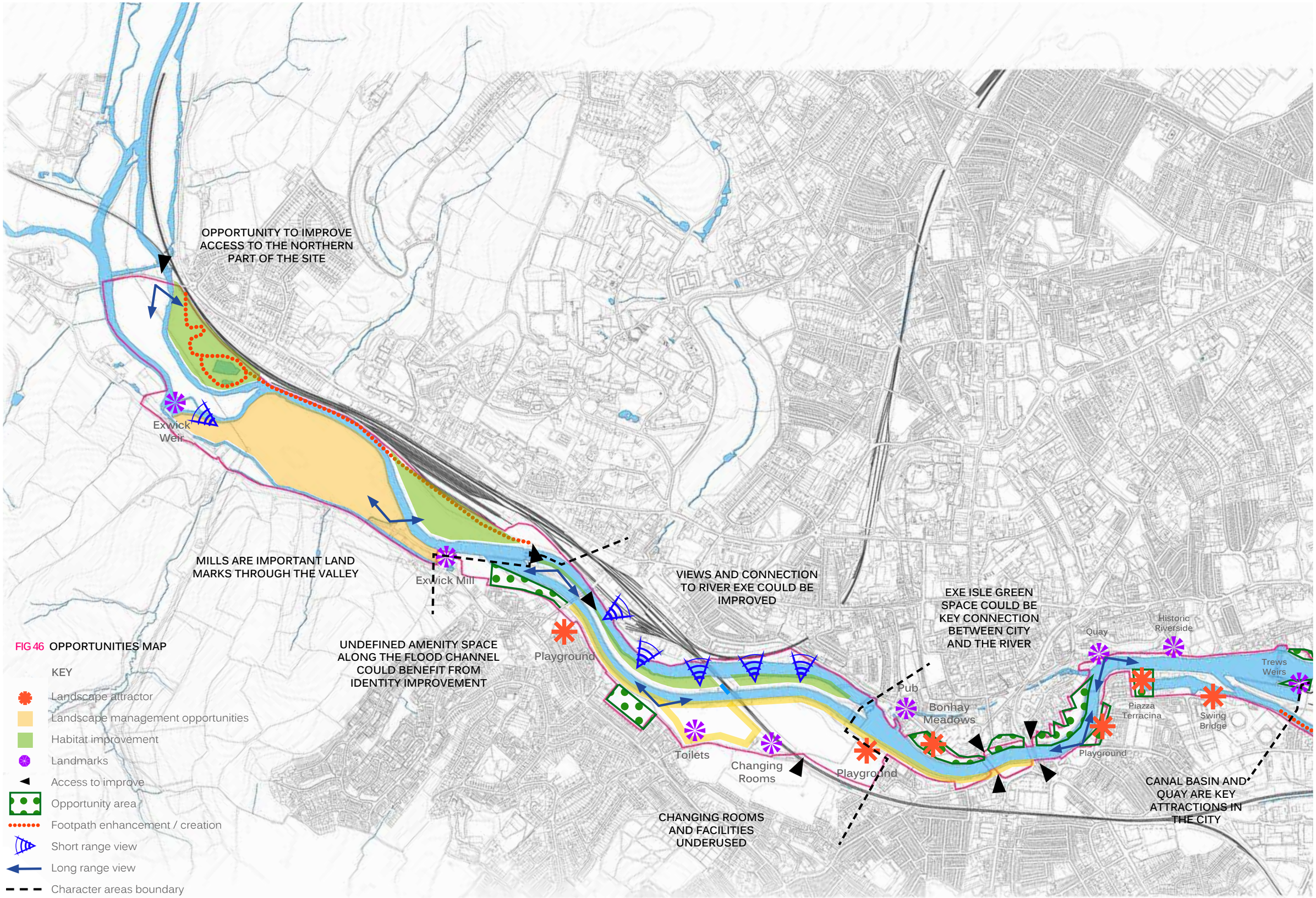
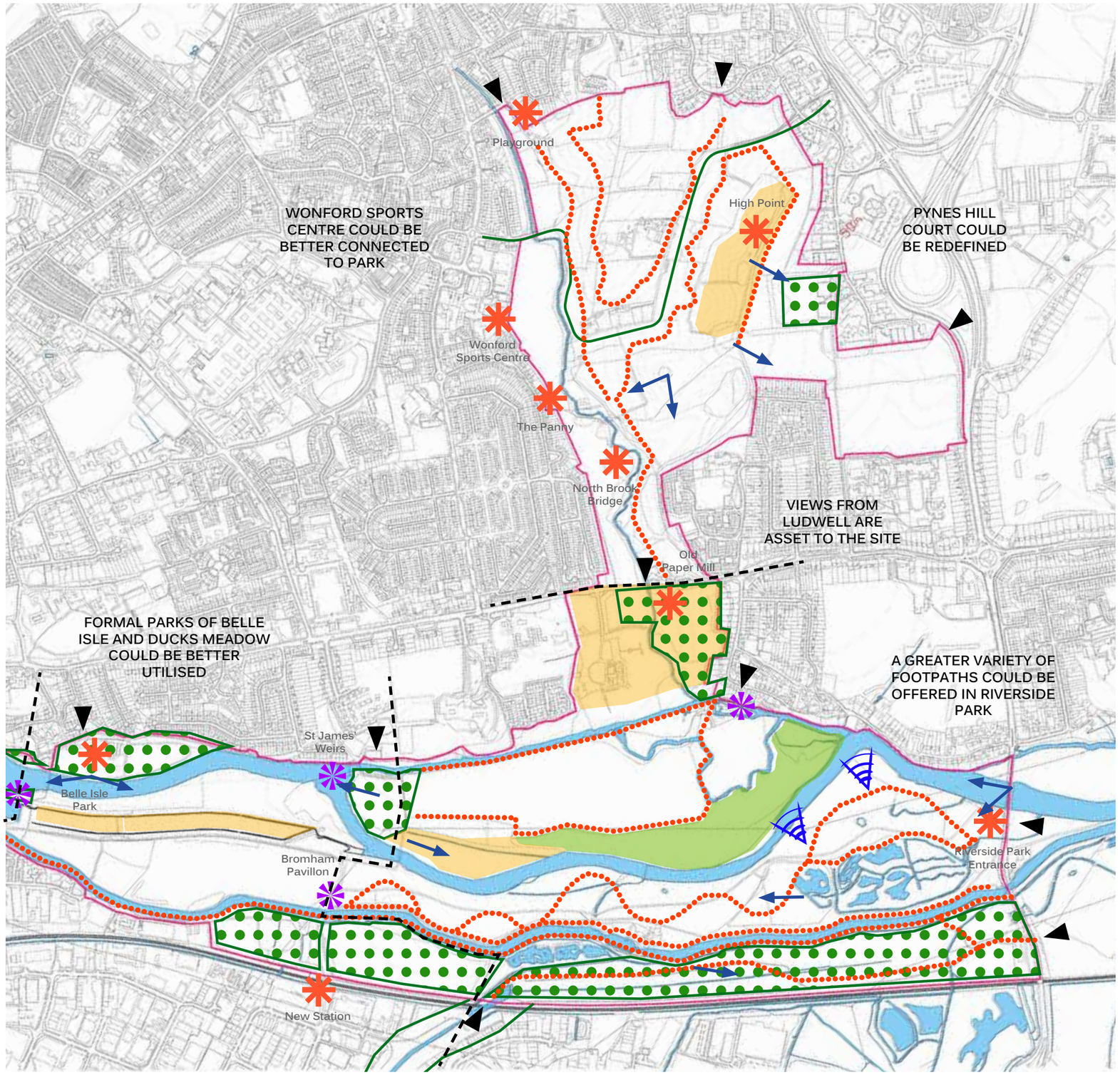


FIG 46 OPPORTUNITIES MAP



This plan highlights some of the key opportunities, such as landscape attractors and land marks and some views that could be better exploited across the site. Several areas are highlighted that could benefit from management improvement of change, and key opportunity areas are highlighted where space could be re-designated or reformatted. Access points which could be improved are also identified.

There existing a number of excellent opportunities to increase bodiveristy and the natural setting of the parks though habitat recreation and planting. A significant amount of this has been identified thought the Flood Defence Scheme although inclusion of land currently outside the ownership of ECC or the EA reduces this opportunity, especially near Cowley Bridge.

The introduction of a landscape attractors, or elements located with the landscape that make it a 'destination' such as play grounds, hubs or significant view will draw people to the parks and increase their dwell time. Retention of existing Landmarks, such as historic building, trees, mills, and other features aids with orientation and navigation while contributing to the setting and character of the parks.

There are significant views to be had all though the parks and these offer opportunities to dwell and contemplate vistas as people move thought the parks. Retaining and enhancing these views plays a fundamental role is maintaining and progressing the identity and character of the experience to be had within the parks. New walking routes, paths and upgrades entrances will increase the usability of the park for pedestrian and cyclists.

LANDSCAPE ATTRACTORS


Piazza Terracina


Waterwood Lane playground


Wonford Sports Centre


Old Paper Mill

LANDMARKS


Bromham Pavillon


Exwik Mill


St James Weir


The Quay

LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES


Private field between River Exe and Exwick leat


South bank of Flood Relief Channel and River Exe

HABITAT IMPROVEMENT


Strip of woodland between River Exe and Flood Relief Channel


Carr Meadow

FIG 47 OPPORTUNITIES SPECIFICATIONS AND EXAMPLES

OPPORTUNITY AREAS


Ducks Meadow Park


Northbrook Golf Course


Belle Isle Park

Ludwell Lane

FOOTPATH ENHANCEMENT


Footpaths along the Ship Canal


Footpath on south side of Ducks Meadow University Playing Fields

ACCESS TO IMPROVE


Cowley Hill entrance


Mill Lane entrance

SHORT RANGE VIEW


View of Exewick weir


View of River Exe from Riverside Valley Park

LONG RANGE VIEW


View of Exeter from Ludwell


View of the Estuary from Ludwell

CHARACTER AREA ASSESSMENT | 3.0

THE MEADOWS

FLOOD PLAIN
GRAZED MEADOW
MEANDERING RIVER
RIVER CREEDY TRIBUTARY
EXWICK LEAT
SIDINGS FIELD

CITY CENTRE OLD + NEW

EXE BRIDGES
MEDIEVAL EXETER
CANAL BASIN + QUAY
HAVEN BANKS ACTIVITY HUB
CITY CENTRE LINKS

LUDWELL

HISTORIC FIELD PATTERNS AND HEDGE BANKS
TRADITIONAL FARMING METHODS
VILLAGE GREEN FOR WONFORD
VIEWS AND VISTAS
FARMLAND FEEL

THE MODERNISED RIVER

1960S FLOOD DEFENCE SCHEME
BARRAGE AND CHANNEL
STRUCTURAL, LINEAR FORM
CONCRETE STEPS AND FEATURES
EXWICK AND FLOWERPOT PLAYING FIELDS

ISLAND PARKS

RURAL TRANSITION AREA
PLAYING FIELDS
3 WATER BODIES DISSECT THE PARK
CREATING ISLANDS
RESIDENTIAL TO THE EAST
INDUSTRIAL / EMPLOYMENT TO THE WEST

GATEWAY TO THE ESTUARY

WETLAND HABITATS
NATURE CONSERVATION AREAS
LARGER FIELDS
WIDER RIVER
LINK TO EXE VALLEY SETTLEMENTS
FLOOD PLAIN

FIG 48 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

The study area is over 300 hectares, so it is useful to divide the site into smaller units for analysis and proposals. An initial site visit enabled the breakdown into instinctive character zones, making a judgement about usage, tenure to be access and landscape characteristics to divide areas (Figure 48).

The breakdown of the site enables proposals to be considered at a more human scale and manageable through the public events and user group. This also helps to identify the sorts of changes that would strengthen the existing character coherently.

FIG 49 LANDSCAPE PERCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

Historic Mill

River Exe

Exwick Spillway and St Michael's Church

Cathedral from Riverside

Estuary

Canal

FIG 50 SOME KEY VIEWS FOR CONSIDERATION

Key views in the park are noticeable around the outside of bends, which provides long views along the water bodies. Landmarks and features are also highlighted in Figure 51, which show key opportunity areas from a visual perspective.

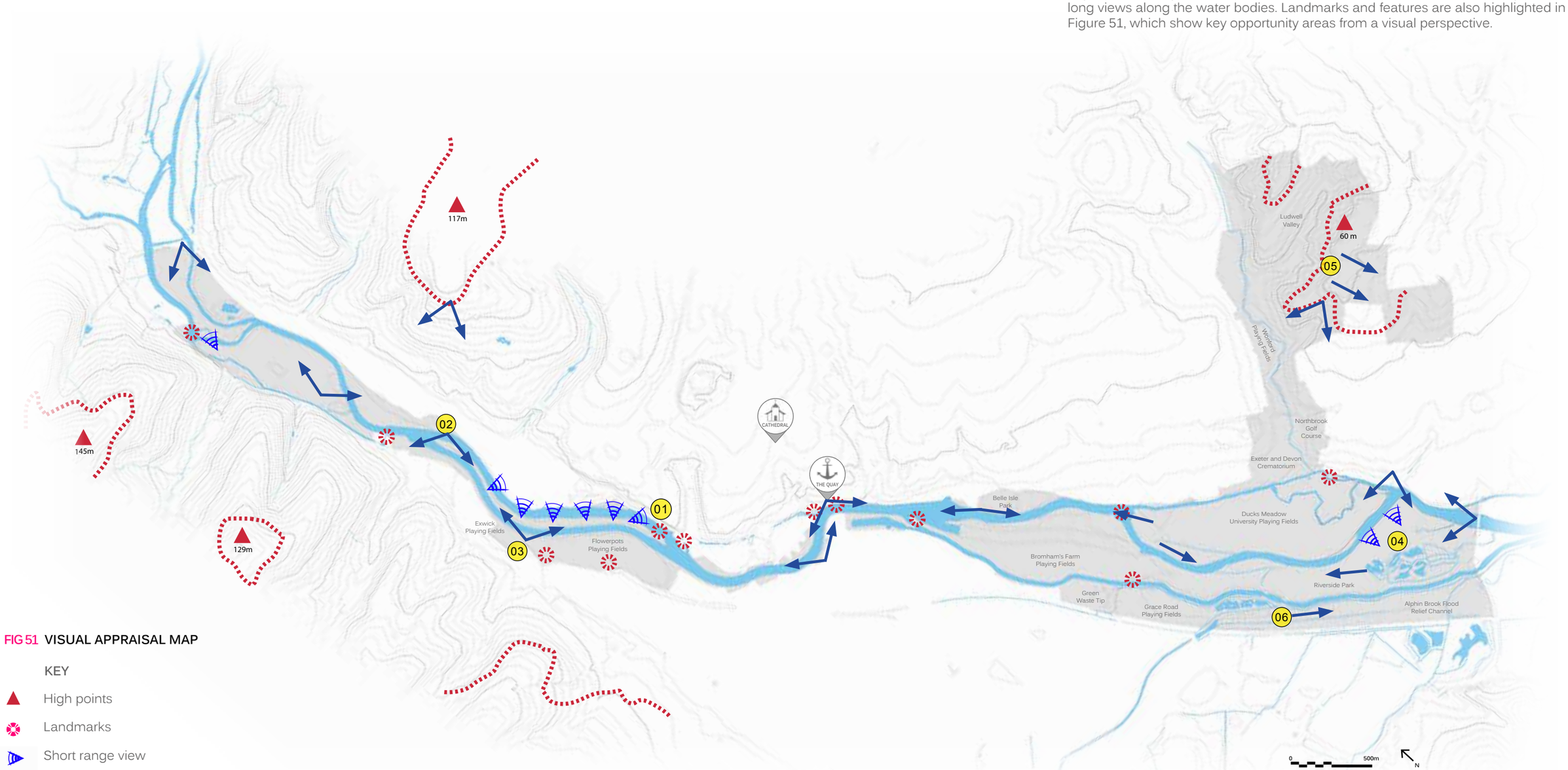
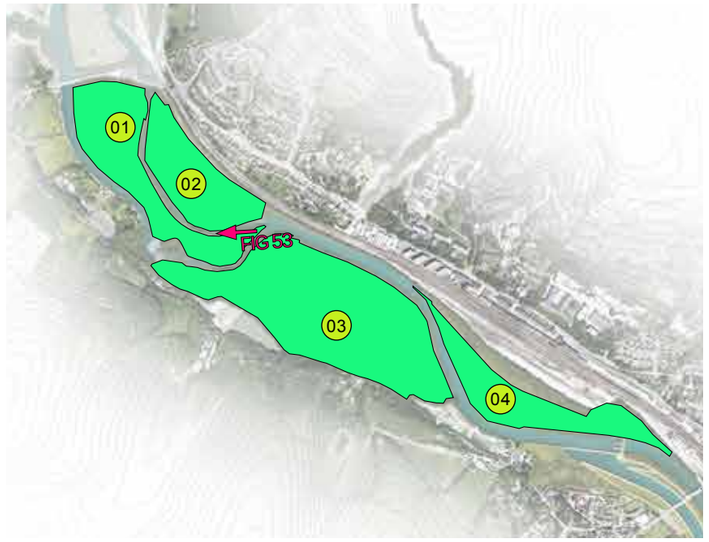


FIG 51 VISUAL APPRAISAL MAP

KEY

- High points
- Landmarks
- Short range view
- Long range view



01 Exwick Field West (6.6 ha)

02 Exwick Field East (5.1 ha)

03 Cowley Bridge Field (15.2 ha)

04 Sidings Field (5.2 ha)

LAND TYPOLOGIES	AMOUNT
PLAYING FIELDS	0 ha
PRIVATE LAND	26.9 ha
ACCESSIBLE AMENITY GREEN SPACE	0.28 ha
ACCESSIBLE FORMAL GREEN SPACE	0 ha
ACCESSIBLE NATURAL GREEN SPACE	0 ha

FIG 52 LAND TYPOLOGIES AND QUANTITIES

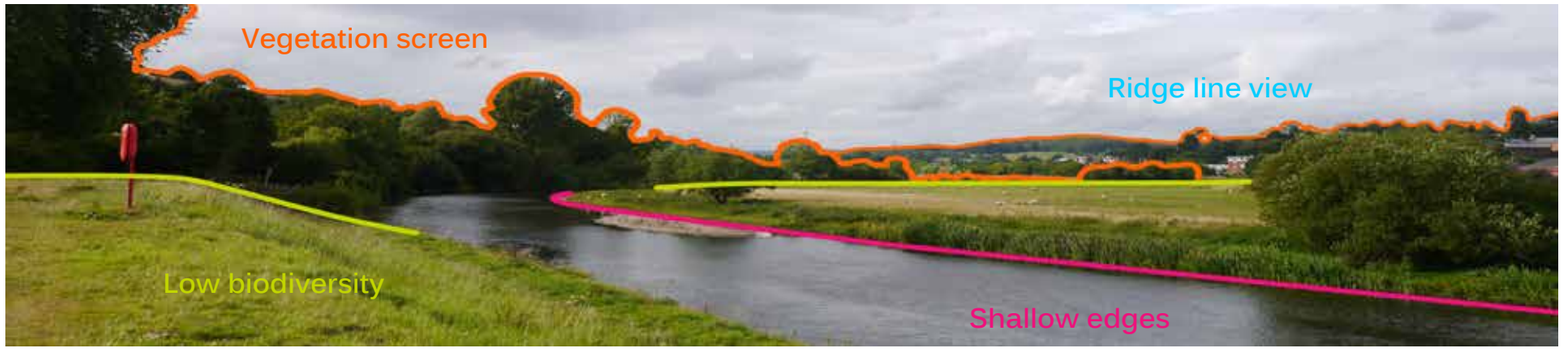


FIG 53 LANDSCAPE PERCEPTUAL ANALYSIS


Exwick Weir


Pylons cut through grazed meadow


River Creedy meets River Exe


Overgrown perennials


Some new tree planting


Unmaintained grass


Exe Mill


Naturalistic bends in the river

FIG 54 PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF AREA

The Meadows area is currently characteristic of the grazed flood plains found further north of the city of Exeter, and the proposals should aim to maintain and bring this rural character into the city from the north. Wide flood plains offer views between the university and Exwick ward, and there is a sense of tranquillity which is associated with the pastoral character and enclosed valley sides.

There is a strong sense of enclosure, particularly in summer, created by the tall, thick hedgerows supporting a variety of flora and fauna. The lush meadows connect fast flowing streams including the River Creedy and its tributary with the Exe. The traditional hamlets between the city of Exeter and Cullompton typically connected with deeply sunken lanes – such as St Andrews Road. This road has poor visibility for cyclists.

To the east, The Meadows is bound by the mainline railway, which opened in 1841, and now minimises access to the area. Station Road is an ancient crossing way, and is a listed bridge, and recognised in the English Civil War as a crossing point when Cromwell occupied and fortified the site of Exwick Mills in 1646, during their siege of Exeter.

The Mill is a focal building and has potential for re-development, and is a key landmark in this charater area. Along with the historic leat, the features contribute to the industrial heritage of the area. The mill is thought to be associated with a Benedictine Priory from the 12th century. The leat is likely to originate from this time.

The wards surrounding The Meadows feature a large population of 20-24 year olds, as well as the highest count of ethnic minorities in the city, and this is closely associated with the nearby university. Exwick ward has one of the highest proportion of under 16s (22.4%) in the city.

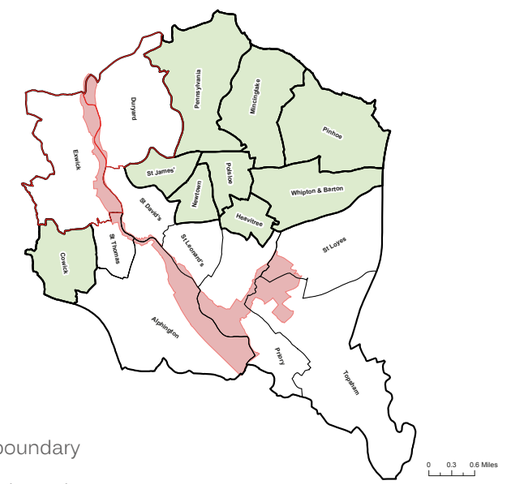


FIG 55 DEMOGRAPHICS

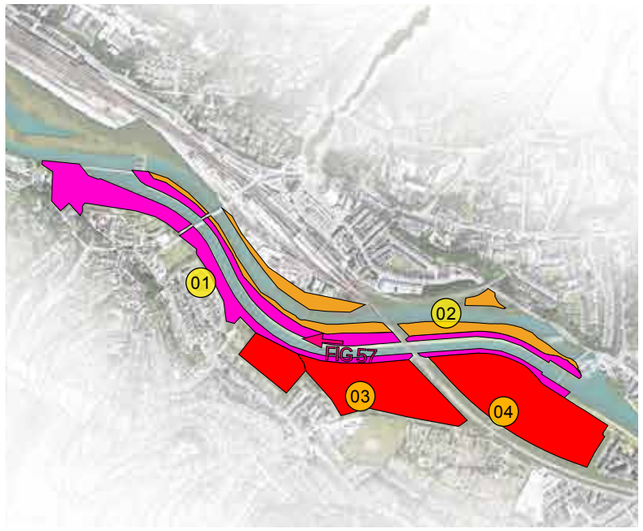
KEY

Site boundary

ECC Administrative boundary

Wards outside of site boundary

Wards inside 'The Meadows'



01 Flood Defence Amenity Green Space (7.56 ha)

02 River Exe Woodland (3.51 ha)

03 Exwick Playing Fields (5.85 ha)

04 Flowerpots Playing Fields (6.32 ha)

LAND TYPOLOGIES	AMOUNT
PLAYING FIELDS	12.17 ha
PRIVATE LAND	0 ha
ACCESSIBLE AMENITY GREEN SPACE	9.07 ha
ACCESSIBLE FORMAL GREEN SPACE	0 ha
ACCESSIBLE NATURAL GREEN SPACE	0 ha

FIG 56 LAND TYPOLOGIES AND QUANTITIES

FIG 57 LANDSCAPE PERCEPTUAL ANALYSIS


Exwick Spillway and weir


Glimpse views to station sidings


Station Bridge


Miller's Crossing


Blackaller Weir


Open view across channel


Footpath along the river bank

FIG 58 PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF THE AREA

The name The Modernised River has been chosen as the area is now characterised by the major engineering works that took place in the 1960s and 1970s to create the Exwick Spillway, or flood relief channel. Before this time, large, open fields prevailed in the area, typically drained with ditches and providing some amenity open space for the settlement at St Thomas.

The area is dominated by linear concrete footpaths and a strong segregation between the River Exe and the flood channel. Whilst the area around the flood channel is a low biodiversity corridor with mown grass and playing fields, whilst the River Exe channel has woodland developing along either side.

The Exwick and Flowerpots Playing Fields are dissected by the high speed railway line which crosses the site via a bridge and embankment, and recent work in the area includes the development of more tarmacked paths for cyclists. The Flowerpots Skate Park is a venue for youth activity, and the Exwick Fields have toilets and changing rooms.

The Blackaller Weir and historic Head Weir are contained within this area, and the Millers Crossing (2002) provides a good viewpoint to them, along with the Mill on the Exe, one of the oldest mills in the city. The higher weir (Head Weir) forms a natural historic boundary for the character area.

The Modernised River is contained within the Exwick and St David's Wards (Figure 59) which have a high youth population. St David's ward has a growing population and is the ward with the lowest car ownership in Exeter.

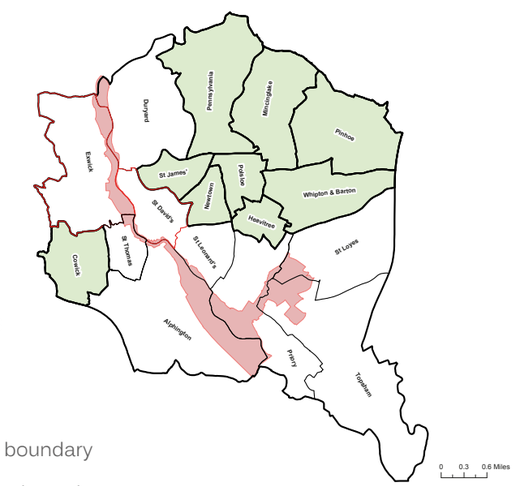
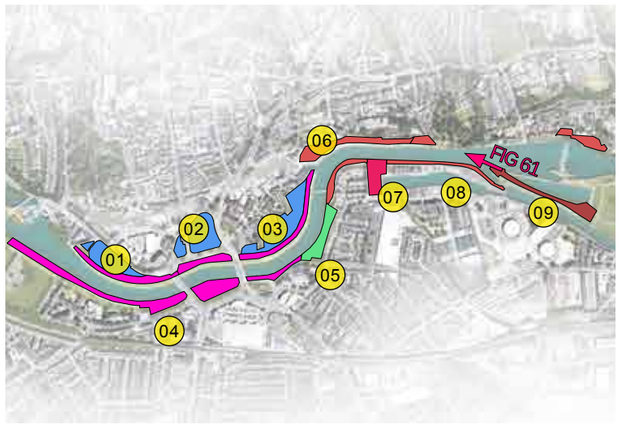


FIG 59 DEMOGRAPHICS

KEY

- Site boundary
- ECC Administrative boundary
- Wards outside of site boundary
- Wards inside 'The Modernised River'



01 Bonhay Meadows (0.64 ha)
02 Medieval Exe Bridge (0.75 ha)
03 Shilhay Meadows (0.89 ha)
04 River Exe Amenity Green Space (2.84 ha)
05 Haven Banks Play Area (0.43 ha)
06 The Quay and Historic Riverside (0.59 ha)
07 Piazza Terracina (0.49 ha)
08 Canal Basin Riverside Path (0.28 ha)
09 Kings Arms Gate Isthmus (0.47 ha)

LAND TYPOLOGIES	AMOUNT
PLAYING FIELDS	0 ha
PRIVATE LAND	0 ha
ACCESSIBLE AMENITY GREEN SPACE	4.96 ha
ACCESSIBLE FORMAL GREEN SPACE	1.07 ha
ACCESSIBLE NATURAL GREEN SPACE	0 ha

FIG 60 LAND TYPOLOGIES MAP

FIG 61 LANDSCAPE PERCEPTUAL ANALYSIS


Pockets of green space with positive views


Contemporary Exe Bridges


The Historic Quay


Exeter Quay Cellars


Cricklepit Bridge


view through private development


The Quay as viewed from the South

FIG 62 PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF AREA

This character area reflects the area of the city where there is only one primary channel of water, the River Exe, primarily with canalised edges resulting from the 1960s flood defence scheme. The ancient network of leats and minor channels are primarily hidden under the modern city, but some is evident at Cricklepit Mill.

The contemporary Exe Bridges replaced an Edwardian bridge after the floods of 1960 with a dual carriageway and associated footbridges which give access to the flood channel. Remains exist of the medieval bridge, for which building commenced in the 12th century. Today it lies in an area of open space in the centre of the Exe Bridges roundabout.

This area includes the historic industrial and port area outside of the city wall and the river. Through medieval times, the primary industry focused around Exe Isle with leats providing water to mills that processed wool into cloth. The area was reclaimed from marshland in the 12th century. The construction of the canal and basin in the 1560s reoriented industry to the south, around today's quay and canal basin.

Currently the open spaces are disjointed from the river thanks to flood defence measures. Some pleasant views can be had from open spaces such as Bonhay Meadows and Haven Banks. Currently some open spaces are underused, with areas such as Shilhay and Exe Bridges less occupied on sunny days than parts of the Quay and Haven Banks. The historic townscape of the Quay is complemented by the more contemporary Piazza Terracina, which is a popular gathering space with cafés and shops. The Quay highlights the red sandstone typical of the region. There is a sight line retained through to Cricklepit Bridge.

The city centre area is incorporated into St David's and St Thomas ward, and also the Riverside Conservation Area. St David's has a large proportion of people who identify as non-white ethnic, and has the second highest count in the City according to indices of deprivation, according to income, health, crime, housing condition and education.

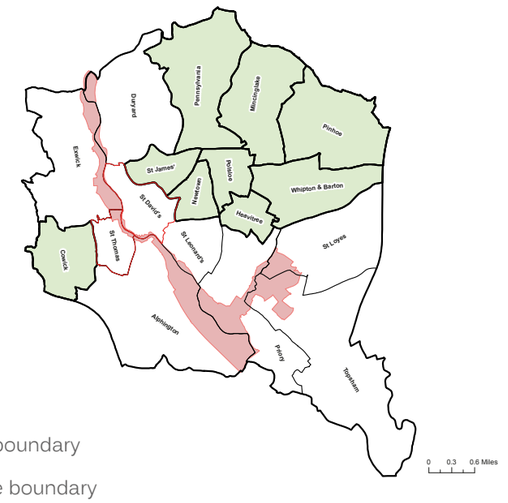


FIG 63 DEMOGRAPHICS

KEY
Site boundary
ECC Administrative boundary
Wards outside of site boundary
Wards inside 'City Centre Old + New'

FIG 64 LAND TYPOLOGIES MAP

01 Trews Weir Allotments
02 Belle Isle Park
03 Flood channel amenity space
04 New Haven Field
05 Bromham Playing Fields
06 Grace Road Playing Fields
07 Water Lane Tip
08 Community Woodland
09 Ducks Meadow Park

LAND TYPOLOGIES	AMOUNT
PLAYING FIELDS	14.49 ha
PRIVATE LAND	0 ha
ACCESSIBLE AMENITY GREEN SPACE	8.84 ha
ACCESSIBLE FORMAL GREEN SPACE	5.87 ha
ACCESSIBLE NATURAL GREEN SPACE	3.82 ha

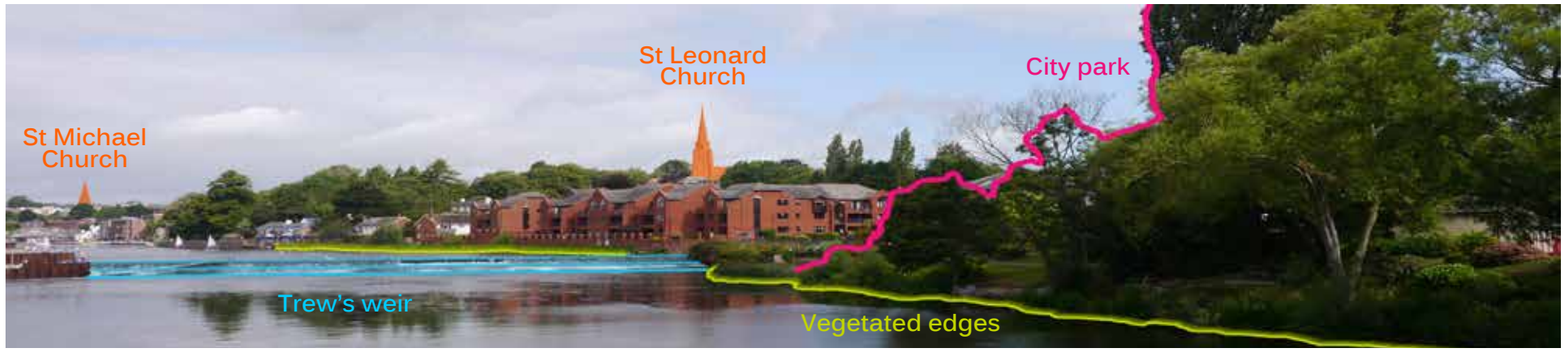


FIG 65 LANDSCAPE PERCEPTUAL ANALYSIS


Vegetated edges to the river


Hard surface footpath and cycle way


Possibilities to get close to the canal


Salmonpool swing bridge


Suspention bridge


Pedestrian and Cycle ways

FIG 66 PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF AREA

This is the main gateway to the naturalistic Riverside Valley Parks and there is a significant change in character as you reach the Belle Isle Suspension Bridge. From here you can look back towards the historic centre and quay, whilst also having attractive views down the River Exe. This area of the park is currently dominated by flood defence work, and since the 1960s the area has been relevelled and the Trew's Weir channel dug. Allotments take advantage of the fertile land in the River's natural flood plain, whilst playing fields have been formed from the spoil extracted from the flood defence scheme excavations.

Belle Isle Park provides a quiet haven and overlooks the River Exe channel, which is inaccessible by water craft, so is a quieter channel than the busy canal, which hosts a variety of watersports and activities spilling out from the quay and canal basin. The section of the River Exe that flows through Island Parks also contains St James' Weir, which was built in the 14th century to feed a mill at Countess Wear. Similarly to further up the River valley, the segregated water courses give three channels of activity in this area, creating 'Islands' in the flow of water. The canal is the most well used water feature, with entry points for kayaks, and a tow path on both sides. There is a naturalistic feel alongside the canal, and due to the fact the canal was hand dug, it has a less industrial feel than some of England's 19th century canals.

Grace Road Playing Fields and the Water Lane tip are currently disjointed from the parks located on the west side of Salmonpool Swing Bridge. Bromham Changing Rooms are closed to the public. Activating this area of the site can help to improve the area to make it a desirable recreation area for all. Island Parks is soon to benefit from the Devon Metro Project, which will bring a train station to Marsh Barton, alongside Clapperbrook Lane, and provides significant opportunity for the area to develop as a main gateway to the Valley Parks.

This area is bordered by Alphington to the west, which remains a primary industrial area of the city, and lacks a distinctive townscape character and there is a poor sense of place in the roads immediately to the west of the site. As such, the Island Parks should be an attractive amenity space for workers in the industrial estate. Conversely, St Leonards ward borders the site to the east, which is a historical area of the city with the highest proportion of university educated population in the city, and is a desirable area of the city to live.

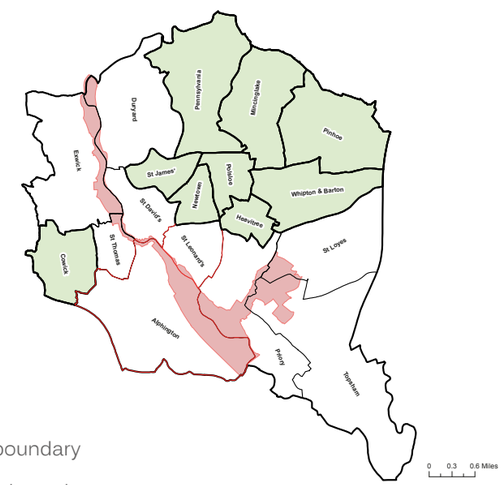
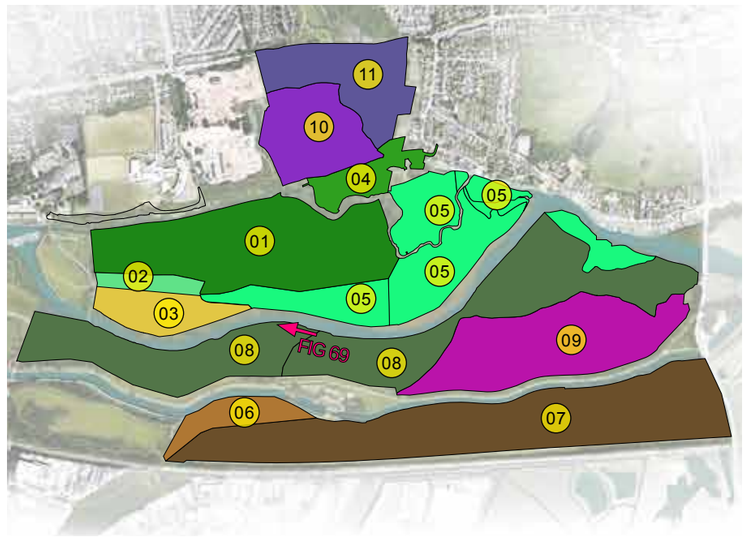


FIG 67 DEMOGRAPHICS

KEY
Site boundary
ECC Administrative boundary
Wards outside of site boundary
Wards inside 'Island Parks'



01 University Playing Fields
02 Ducks Marsh Woodland
03 Ducks Marsh Flood Channel
04 Old Paper Mill Woodland + Leat
05 Carr Meadows
06 Harper's Fishing Lakes
07 Alphin Brook Flood channel
08 Riverside Park (N + S)
09 Riverside Park Conservation Area
10 Crematorium
11 Northbrook Golf Course

LAND TYPOLOGIES	AMOUNT
PLAYING FIELDS	14.88 ha
PRIVATE LAND	14.01 ha
ACCESSIBLE AMENITY GREEN SPACE	0 ha
ACCESSIBLE FORMAL GREEN SPACE	5.77 ha
ACCESSIBLE NATURAL GREEN SPACE	44.76 ha

FIG 68 LAND TYPOLOGIES MAP

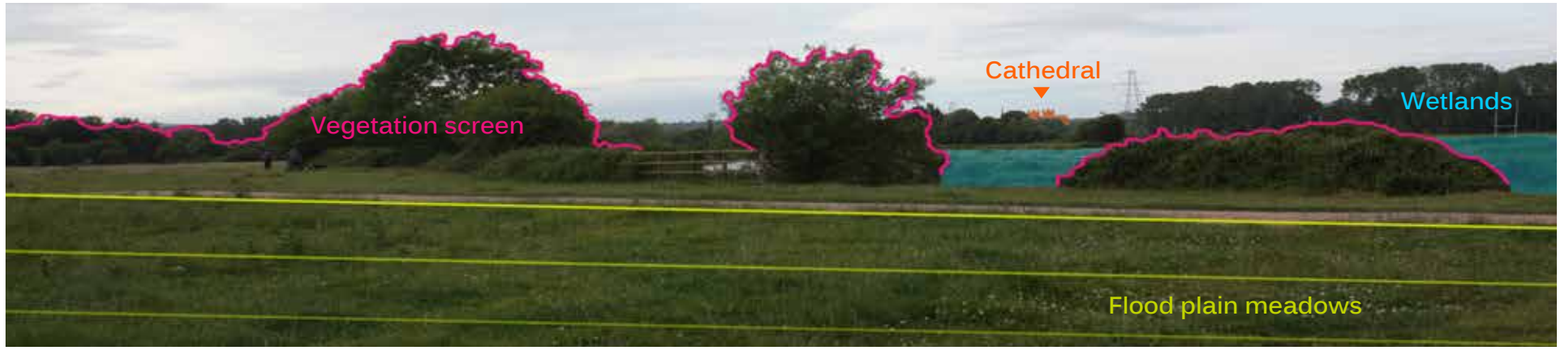


FIG 69 LANDSCAPE PERCEPTUAL ANALYSIS


Grazing


Vegetated edges along the Exe


Flood plain and open view to the city


Timber bridge on the Mill Leat


Northbrook running through the golf course


Old Paper Mill


Wild Mill Leat

FIG 70 PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF AREA

In this character area the flood plain widens and a significant amount of green space is provided between the west and east of the city. The bounds of the green space are provided by infrastructure, which forms the boundary of the city to the south and east. Bridge Road at Countess Wear is the boundary of the site to the south, and also marks the beginning of the Ramsar/ SPA site of the Exe Estuary. In the conservation area the indigenous habitats of reedbeds and wetlands have been created to encourage wildlife up the Exe.

The National Cycle Network Route 2 cuts through this area, following the canal past the Double Locks Pub towards Salmonpool Bridge. This is a popular route for leisure and commuter cyclists. Active recreation also occurs on the east side of the River Exe, with the University Playing fields. This area is segregrated from the residential area to the east by Mill Leat, which was built to serve the old Paper Mill (currently derelict) and the Northbrook, which flows through Northbrook to join the Exe at the private fields around Carr Meadow. This area is designated at a County Wildlife Site due to the presence of otters in the area.

The fields are a mixture of private, ECC and Environment Agency managed, and operate as grazed marshes, with cattle and sheep occupying them. The Alphin Brook is bound by the main line railway and canal to the west and east, and public access is not common, but currently is a wildlife corridor between the Matford Marsh RSPB site and the Riverside Conservation Area. The Alphin Brook is 550m in length and the channel was created in the 1960s flood defence work, and discharges onto Exminster marshes. The area provides a range of habitats, from wet woodland carr to marshland and grazed areas. Despite human intervention since medieval times, and significantly in the 20th century with the flood defence scheme, wildlife continues to thrive, and needs to be protected.

Demographically, the Northbrook Golf Course and Crematorium provide a critical link and gateway to greenspace for the two most density populated wards and communities to the east of the city. Priory ward is the most deprived in multiple indices of deprivation according to the 2011 census.

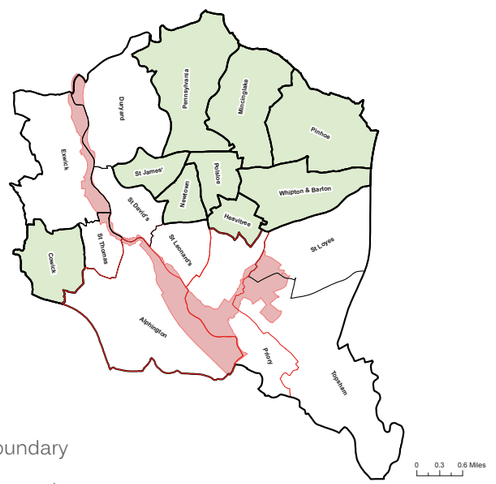
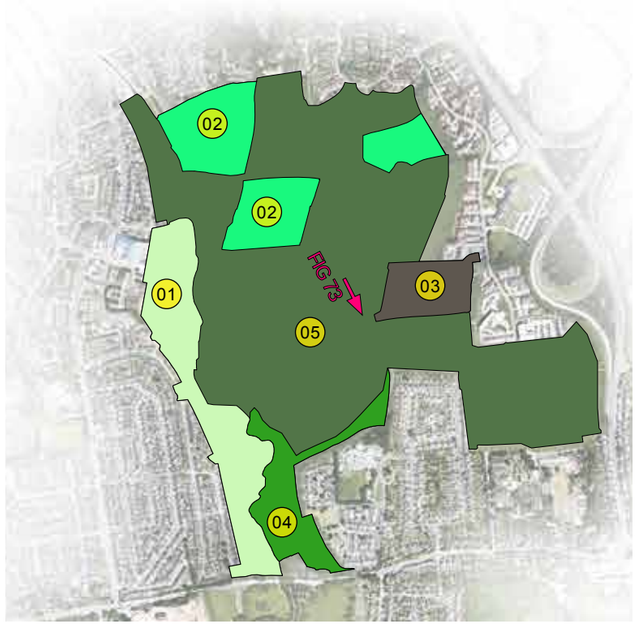


FIG 71 DEMOGRAPHICS

KEY
Site boundary
ECC Administrative boundary
Wards outside of site boundary
Wards inside 'Gateway to the Estuary'



01 Wonford Playing Fields

02 Privately owned, privately managed fields

03 Pynes Hill Court

04 Northbrook Woodland

05 Ludwell Accessible Fields

LAND TYPOLOGIES	AMOUNT
PLAYING FIELDS	10.2 ha
PRIVATE LAND	10.23 ha
ACCESSIBLE AMENITY GREEN SPACE	0 ha
ACCESSIBLE FORMAL GREEN SPACE	3.38 ha
ACCESSIBLE NATURAL GREEN SPACE	50.96 ha

FIG 72 LAND TYPOLOGIES MAP

Ludwell, remains as landscape characterised as natural green space, soon to be encompassed by future development. The construction of the motorway in 1977 first enclosed the city, but the land at Ludwell has never been developed. Traditional mixed farming predominates, with irregular field patterns and dense hedgerows constructed on top of earthbanks. The field structure is considerably smaller than on the large grazed flood plain marshes along the River Exe. On a clear day, there are long views out to the estuary from Pynes Hill, the high point at 63m AOD.

To the south east, on the elevated part of the park, the Pynes Hill Business Park has a range of commercial businesses and is close to the M5.

The landscape has a strong sense of place and an overriding spontaneous affinity with farmland, rolling fields and hedgerows, and a 'rural' look. Similar to St Andrew's Road in The Meadows, Ludwell Lane is a typical Devon lane, as a sunken, winding lane with high banks.

This area rises steepy to the south east, from 'The Panny' (North Brook) after the flat Wonford Playing Fields, affording views back across the city. Wonford Playing Fields serve St Loyes and Wonford areas, which are places with a high proportion of lone parent households, under 16s and the highest number of people in social housing in the city. Health in Priory ward is reported as 'bad' or 'very bad' by 6.5% of the population.

FIG 73 LANDSCAPE PERCEPTUAL ANALYSIS


Rural entrance


Far view of the sea


Grazing and traditional farming


Wonford Sports Centre


Orchard

Ludwell Lane


View of the city

FIG 74 PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF AREA

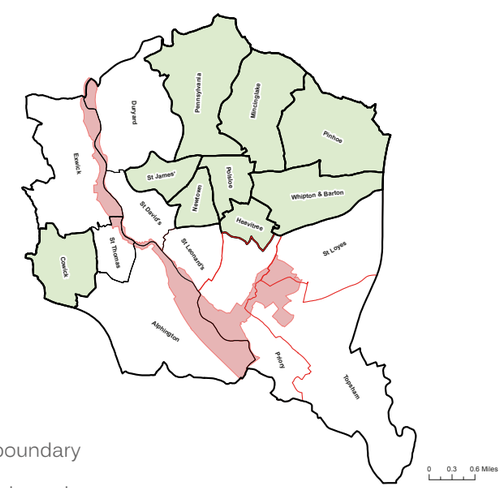


FIG 75 DEMOGRAPHICS

KEY

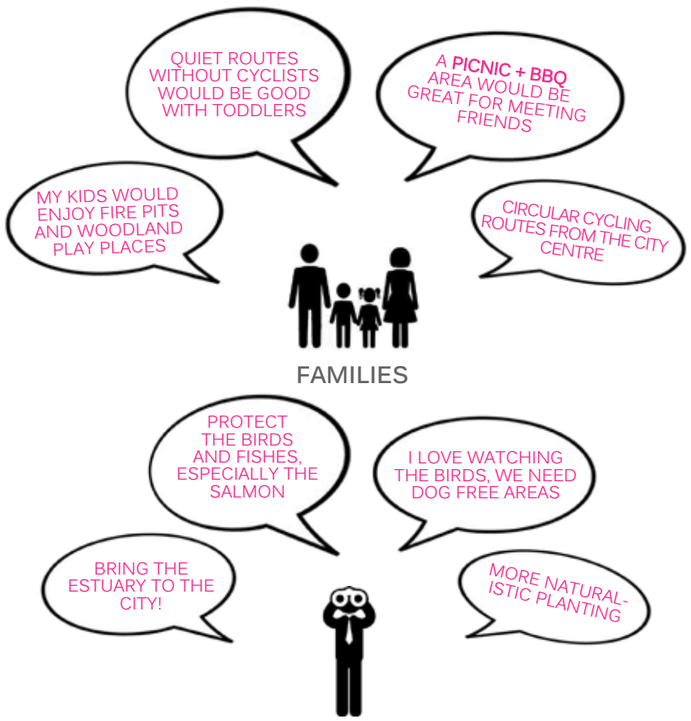
Site boundary

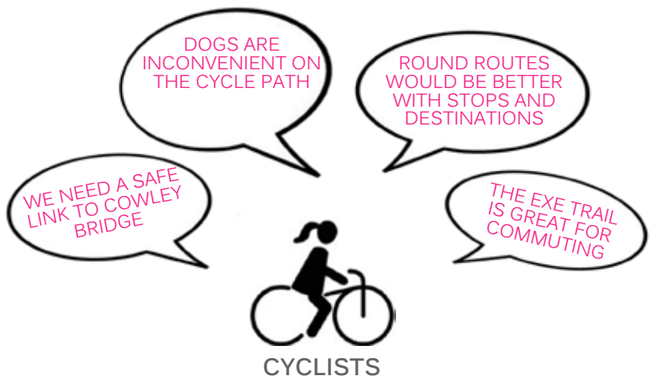
ECC Administrative boundary

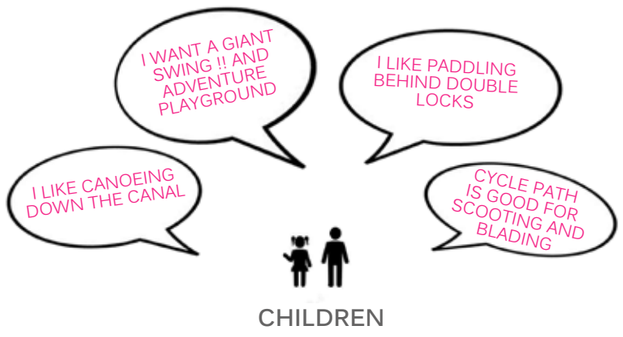
Wards outside of site boundary

Wards inside 'Little Devon'

VISIONING | 4.0







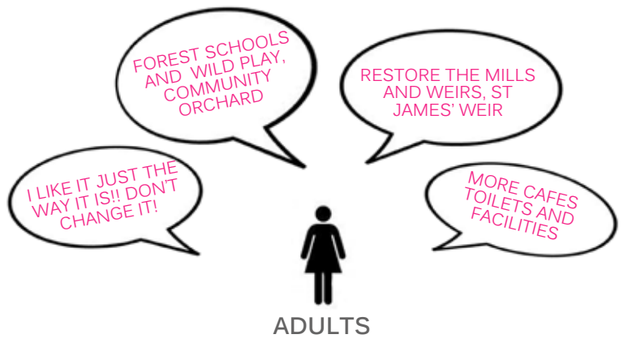


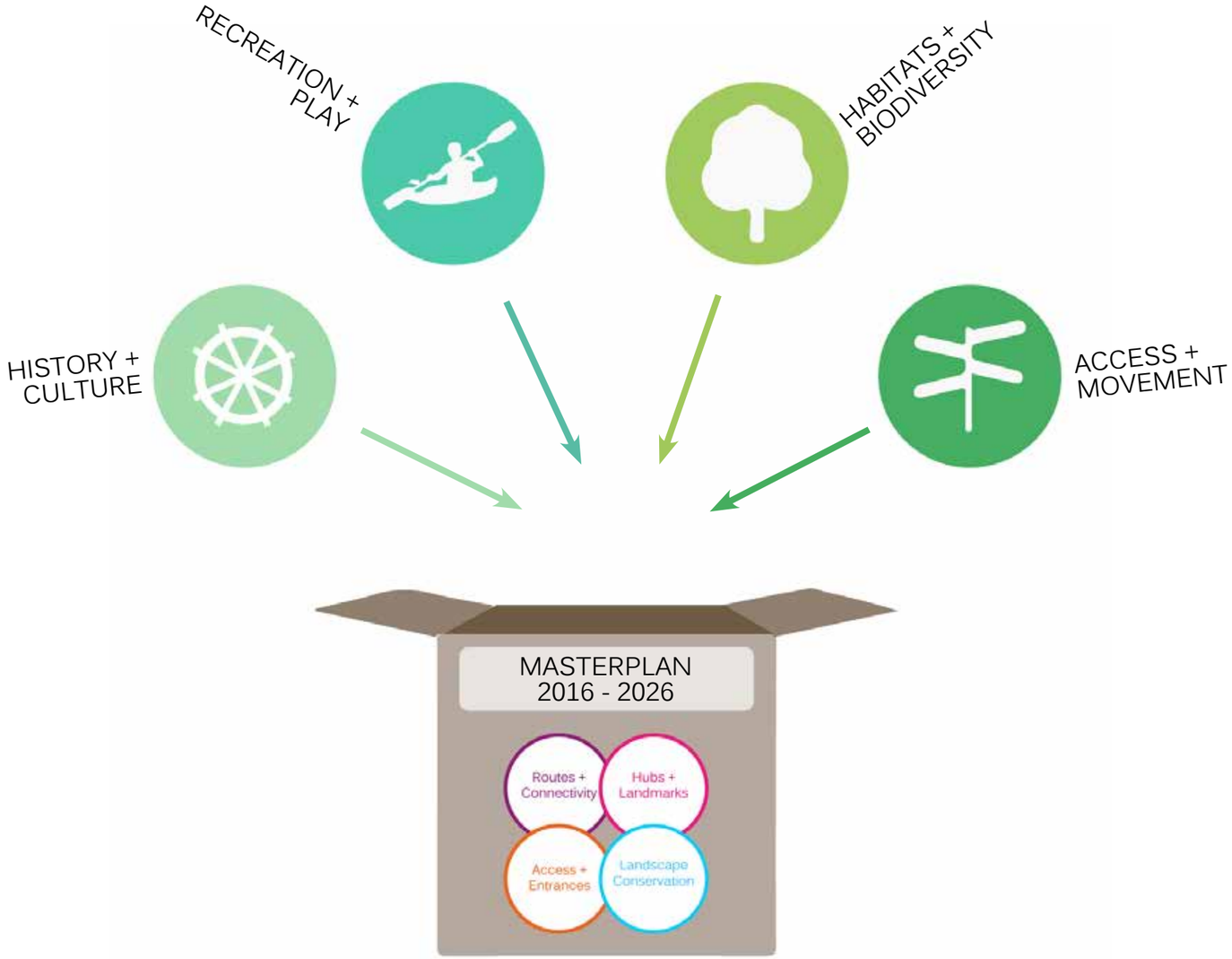
FIG 76 COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC EVENT

Once baseline information had been collated and evaluated, an open, public session was held alongside a wider public event that encouraged people to share their thoughts about the parks.

This built on the work of the User Group, who had tried and tested the process of participation, and assisted with the visioning process, representing key users in the Valley Parks.

Participants were asked to use flags to highlight likes and dislikes and suggest ideas for future improvements. This information is summarised in Appendix D. Some key ideas are highlighted on this page.

FIG 77 PHOTOS FROM PUBLIC EVENT



This strategic vision will be delivered by enacting four deliverable tranches of objectives associated with:

+ROUTES AND CONNECTIVITY
+HUBS AND LANDMARKS
+ACCESS AND ENTRANCES
+LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION

FIG 78 **CONCEPT FOR MASTERPLAN**

The Riverside + Ludwell Valley Parks Masterplan 2016 - 2026 aims to:

- CONSERVE AND PROTECT THE HISTORICAL AND HERITAGE ASSETS ASSOCIATED WITH THE RIVER, CANAL AND FLOOD CHANNEL SYSTEM, SUCH AS THE UK'S OLDEST SHIP CANAL AND CANAL BASIN, MILLS, WEIRS, LEATS AND OTHER ASSOCIATED FEATURES
- FOSTER THE VALLEY PARKS AS A FACILITY AND VENUE FOR A RANGE OF STRUCTURED AND UNSTRUCTURED RECREATIONAL EXPERIENCES AS WELL AS SUPPORTING DAILY USE
- ENHANCE AND PROTECT THE GREEN SPACES ASSOCIATED WITH THE RIVER SYSTEM AS A CITY ASSET, BRINGING NATURAL ECOSYSTEMS TO THE CITY CENTRE, AND ENHANCING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONNECTIONS WITH NATURE
- IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY AND PUBLIC IMAGE OF THE PARKS TO INCREASE VISITORS VIA NEW ROUTES, ENTRANCES AND SIGNAGE WHILST BALANCING THE DIFFERENT USER GROUP INTERESTS

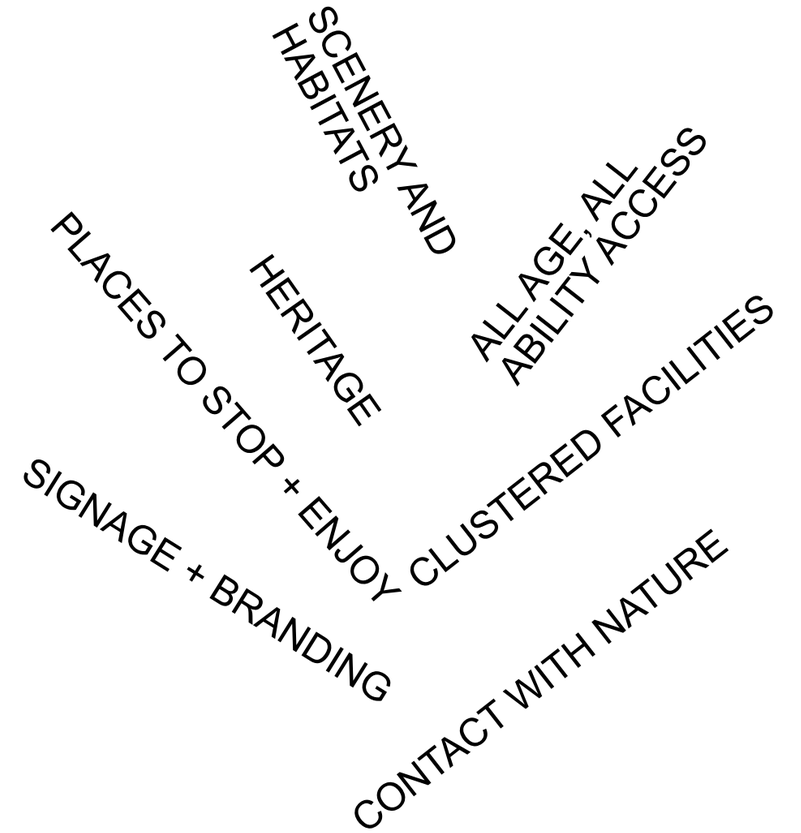


FIG 79 MASTERPLAN COMPONENTS

Routes + Connectivity

ESSENTIAL

INCREASE NUMBER OF VISITS TO EXISITING OPEN SPACE

ATTRACT NEW USERS TO VALLEY PARKS

IMPROVE THE NUMBER OF ROUTES IN THE PARKS

OFFER A RANGE OF PATHS OFFERING ROUTES FOR WALKERS AND DOG WALKERS

DESIRABLE

IMPROVE CYCLE CONNECTIONS AND FACILITIES THROUGH THE VALLEY PARKS

IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THE EXISTING ROUTES

Hubs + Landmarks

ESSENTIAL

UPGRADE/NEW TOILETS TOGETHER WITH EXISTING/NEW/UPGRADED CAFE/ VISITOR CENTRE

HIGH QUALITY INFORMATION ABOUT THE AREA THROUGHOUT THE PARKS

DESIRABLE

WELL PROGRAMMED SPACE THAT PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES AND ACTIVITIES TO CATER FOR A VARIETY OF USERS

FOSTERING THE PARKS AS A VENUE FOR OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES, BOTH STRUCTURED AND UNSTRUCTURED

STOPPING, EXPLORING AND RESTING OPPORTUNITIES CREATED, ALONG WITH MEETING POINTS AND ATTRACTIONS ALONG ROUTES

Access + Entrances

ESSENTIAL

INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF PUBLIC SPACE - GUARANTEE 75HA OF NEW COUNTRYSIDE SPACE IN PERPETUITY

IMPROVEMENT TO ENTRANCES AND THRESHOLDS OF THE PARKS TO ENSURE PARKS ARE EASY TO LOCATE AND WELCOMING, TO AID PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE PARK

MANAGE DIFFERENT LAND USES AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIFFERENT USERS TO AVOID CONFLICT

BOOST THE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF TOURISM, LEISURE AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES FOR VISITORS

DESIRABLE

ACCESS ENHANCED FOR SUSTAINABLE MODES SUCH AS FOOT, CYCLE WHEELCHAIR AND BOAT

OFFER DOORSTEP ACCESS FOR WORK AND PLAY, AS WELL AS FOR PASSERS BY

Landscape Conservation

ESSENTIAL

HABITAT CONSERVATION AND BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION TO MAKE PARKS ATTRACTIVE FOR VISITORS LOOKING FOR A NATURAL SETTING

SCENERY IMPROVEMENT TO PROVIDE INFORMAL COUNTRYSIDE VENUE FOR VISITORS ACCORDING TO LOCAL CHARACTER

CONSERVE AND ENHANCE THE RURALITY OF THE PARKS ACCORDING TO LOCAL CHARACTER

PROTECT BIODIVERSITY AND CONSERVE IMPORTANT WILDLIFE CORRIDOR ACCORDING TO REGIONAL BIODIVERSITY RESOURCES

DESIRABLE

DAMAGED LANDSCAPES ENHANCED AND RESTORED E.G. WASTE SITES, DERELICT HISTORIC FEATURES OR INTENSIVELY FARMED AREAS

PROTECT AND ENHANCE HISTORIC AND CULTURAL LANDSCAPES, E.G. WEIRS, MILLS, LEATS

FIG 80 CHARACTER AREA CONCEPT

PROTECTING THE GREEN CORRIDOR AND LINK TO THE NORTHERN EXE VALLEY

In THE MEADOWS, biodiversity and conservation will be the primary objective. A new cycle connection and some walkways around new habitats will improve access to a currently inaccessible part of the Valley Parks.

CELEBRATING THE ENGINEERED CITY AND ENHANCING IT FOR PEOPLE AND WILDLIFE

In THE MODERNISED RIVER, the unbalance in access and biodiversity will be addressed between the flood channel and river. They will be developed as equally significant aquatic corridors, with improved access to the river's edge and improved biodiversity along the channel. The strengths of the flood channel as an accessible backbone to the city will be enhanced with accessible trails.

A NECKLACE OF HISTORIC AND CONTEMPORARY URBAN POCKET PARKS CONNECTED WITH THE RIVER

In CITY CENTRE OLD + NEW, the green space alongside the water body will be maximised and conserved to create a linear network of pocket parks that will re-centre the urban green space at the riverside.

ISLAND PARKS FOR THE PEOPLE OF EXETER, BRINGING NATURE TO THE CITY, AND PEOPLE TO NATURE

The ISLAND PARKS will be the key recreational area in the Riverside Park. A variety of opportunities and recreational activities will be springboarded from here, including wild play and forest schools. The new Marsh Barton Station will act as a hub for the character area, connected with the Bromham Pavillion.

BRINGING THE ESTUARY AND ITS WILDLIFE TO THE CITY

The GATEWAY TO THE ESTUARY brings the biodiversity and wildlife of the Exe Estuary closer to the city. More trails and routes will be developed to disperse visitors and improve experience of nature and naturalness. New areas of no access will be created to ensure wildlife conservation.

CONSERVING DEVON TRADITIONS, CULTURES AND PRACTICES IN A LIVING LANDSCAPE

LUDWELL continues to preserve the heritage and tradition of Devon rural livelihoods, but using traditional land management techniques to enhance priority habitats as well as giving opportunity for young people to experience traditional ways of life.

Critical to ensuring that the vision is successfully delivered is the creation of character area with a string vision, as the way objectives are applied will be different in each character area. Figure 81 shows the balance of a natural and rural feel versus an urban feel in the character areas. It was clear from the public event and sessions with the User Group that the River Exe and the Exe Valley running through the city was an important asset to residents, and they felt strongly about it's value in bringing nature to the city. It is envisaged that Ludwell, Gateway to the Estuary, Island Parks and The Meadows will have a strong naturalistic character, whilst City Centre: Old + New and the Modernised River will be more urban in character.

In order to locate new facilities and services to the parks according to the objectives, it is suggested that 'clusters' or 'hubs' are created in each character zone to act as a main gateway and facility to the character area, where visitors can orientate and gather.

FIG 81 'NATURALNESS' INTERPRETATION

SITE WIDE STRATEGIES + PROJECT PLAN | 5.0

COASTAL MARSH "SEASONALLY FLOODED"

Seasonally flood wetland meadows, periodically grazed by cattle. Neutral grass species - this habitat is more of a landscape type defined by topography and land use practice such as flood defence.

TYPICAL SPECIES PROTECTED

Common snipe, lapwing, dragonflies, great silver water beetle, corky-fruited water dropwort, greater tussock sedge, sweet galingale.

TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURE

Pastoral (ditches and hedges), arable (seed mixes) and mixed farming traditional methods bring about the habitat, rather than certain species. Spring sowing, smaller fields and low pesticide usage support the ecosystem

TYPICAL SPECIES PROTECTED

Cirl bunting, skylark, harvest mouse.

HEDGEROWS

Traditional hedgerows are a haven for wildlife and these are essential to the character of Ludwell. Species such as *Malus sylvestris, Rosa canina Acer campestre, Sorbus aucuparia* will thrive in traditional Devon hedgebanks.

TYPICAL SPECIES PROTECTED

Dormouse, cirl bunting.

TRADITIONAL ORCHARDS

Urban orchards consist of trees often planted in rows with long meadow grass underneath, traditionally mowed or grazed. Species include mainly *Prunus avium in Exeter,* but also *Malus domestica, Prunus domestica, Pyrus communis.*

TYPICAL SPECIES PROTECTED

Variety of small birds, invertebrates including a range of pollinators.

ORNAMENTAL VEGETATION + IMPROVED GRASSLAND

Mixed species not necessarily corresponding to habitat type. There is an opportunity here to protect and proliferate some Vetch species and special local species such as the Lucombe Oak.

TYPICAL SPECIES PROTECTED

Protected as green corridor and link in green network.

WETLAND

These marshy areas include woodland species and low growing shrubs where birds can nest. They can be effected by tides and changing water levels mean they are good for wading birds.

TYPICAL SPECIES PROTECTED

Dragonflies, Cetti's warbler, wildfowl and wading birds.

WET WOODLAND

Species such as Salix, Alnus and Frangula contribute to a woodland rich in species associated with damp, waterlogged soils and dark understoreys. These woodlands need maintenance to prevent from succession to dry woodland.

TYPICAL SPECIES PROTECTED

Bottlebrush shield lichen, siskin, redpoll, otter.

The habitat strategy aims to protect and enhance a diverse range of habitats that occur in the Exe Valley. In accordance with the Priority Habitats, traditional farming methods and land use are to be encouraged, from grazing and flood plain management, to traditional orchards and rotation farming methods with traditional sowing and fertilisation timings and methods. Land management options will work to maintain, restore and create priority habitats and support priority species that depend on these habitats.

The coastal and flood plain grazing marsh is a key habitat, along with the riparian habitats associated with this priority river system. It is especially important that the riparian system is protected with the proposed adjustments with the new flood scheme proposals.

Increasing woodland will create some appealing diversity to the Valley, but this woodland will need to be managed to prevent dominance and succession from a wet woodland habitat.

Encouraging marshland and wetland habitats will help to slow flood water movements as well as provide a priority habitat for estuary birds and wildlife.

FIG 82 **BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY**

FIG 83 CYCLE ROUTE STRATEGY

KEY

- Existing
- Proposed
- Aspirational

Critical to improving accessibility in the valley parks is the creation and maintenance of new footpaths, to offer a variety of walking routes at a variety of distances, for a range of different abilities and types of users. Particularly important is the formalisation of paths through Ludwell, and the increase in number of routes around Riverside Valley Park. Opening up the Alphin Brook with more formal connections and a link through Grace Fields will also improve walkability of the area.

Using a carefully selected palette of materials to resurface the existing pathways and create new paths with express hierarchy and also improve aesthetics and routing.

The primary routes will be accessible and suitable for wheels, enabling and offering facilities for scooters, rollerblades, wheelchairs and pushchairs. A sharing ethos will be encouraged in the Riverside Valley Park, where cyclists, walkers and other users can enjoy using the park together.

FIG 84 PEDESTRIAN ROUTE STRATEGY

Indicative and subject to alteration

KEY

- Primary routes
  HARD MATERIAL +
  ACCESSIBLE +
  WELL SIGNED
  E.g. Tarmac

- Secondary routes
  NARROWER +
  FREE DRAINING
  E.g. Hoggin, gravel, timber boardwalks

- Tertiary routes
  CASUAL PATH +
  UNMAKE GROUND
  E.g. Natural earth, grass, bark

FIG 85 ENTRANCE TYPOLOGIES

A clear entrance strategy helps to improve the profile of the parks and also create clear access points, which correlate to the hierarchy of routes and pathways.

The main gateways to the park will be associated with the hubs in each of the character area, which offer an opportunity to gather, share and rest, and help to manage visitor activity in certain areas in order to protect others (i.e. land towards the estuary).

The typologies below (Figure 86) help to identify the way the different entrances and by establishing clear entrances the sites will improve their proofread image in the public domain. Art projects could also contribute to the entrance and gateway strategy

RIVERSIDE CHARACTER

THE MEADOWS, MODERNISED RIVER, CITY CENTRE OLD + NEW, ISLAND PARKS, GATEWAY TO THE ESTUARY

TYPOLOGY 1

- Car access
- Pedestrian and cycle access
- Entrance sign
- Cycle parking
- Location, historical and recreational information
- Finger post signage
- Landscape improvement



TYPOLOGY 3

- Pedestrian access
- Entrance sign
- Finger post signage
- Location and historic information



ROLLING FARMLAND CHARACTER

LUDWELL

TYPOLOGY 2

- Car access
- Pedestrian and cycle access
- Entrance sign
- Cycle parking
- Location, naturalistic and recreational information
- Finger post signage
- Landscape improvement



TYPOLOGY 4

- Pedestrian access
- Entrance sign
- Finger post signage
- Location and naturalistic information



FIG 86 ENTRANCE TYPOLOGIES PALETTE

FIG 87 SIGNAGE STRATEGY

Currently, information, signage and resting opportunities are limited, so by creating typologies it can better formalise the parks routes systems and make them legible and transferable.

The hierarchy of routes correspond to a signage and interpretation strategy that defines specific trails and routes, such as a history trail, or a biodiversity trail. It is important that there is a consistent design language across the typologies to create a strong brand for the parks.

Using digital technology with interpretation and information can help to give targeted interpretation to specific user groups, potentially in different languages and different narratives. A benefit of this strategy is reduced 'clutter in the parks with an 'op't in' system.

A variety of trails can support and reinforce the character of the river system and help build public understanding for the variety of features that exist along river. Trails could be sponsored by private companies and change throughout the year

Figure 87 illustrates the key locations of signage throughout the site.

TYPOLOGY 1A
CAR ENTRANCES

- Entrance sign
- Finger post signage
- Information board
- QR code / digital link

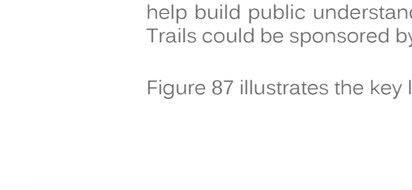
TYPOLOGY 1B
PEDESTRIAN ENTRANCES

- Entrance sign
- Finger post signage
- Information board
- QR code / digital link

Gateway shelters marking entrances, suble colouring

TYPOLOGY 2
PRIMARY ROUTE INTERSECTION

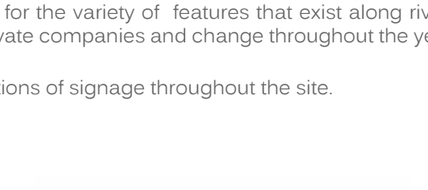
- Finger post signage
- Information board



Traditional signage and information boards

TYPOLOGY 3
PRIMARY + SECONDARY/TERTIARY INTERSECTION

- Finger post signage
- Marker post



Simple information posts

FIG 88 SIGNAGE TYPOLOGIES

Furniture plays a key role in providing facilities for the public to use as part of their experience within the parks. Its appearance and design contribute to the creation of different characters within the parks,

The selection a a furniture palette should ensure there is continuity in materials and 'style' across the park so to add to the coherency and legibility of public spaces. Selection should ensure furniture is robust and resistance to environmental conditions and public use and be composed of sustainable materials and constructed using sustainable practices.

The inclusion of sculptural features within the furniture strategy offer a way to introduce sculpture into the parks. Art components could be stand alone art pieces or be integrated into the furniture in defined location

Figure 89 Furniture Strategy show the intended location for a range of different furniture types, which are further explored on the following page. Furniture has been distributed in across the parks to provide resting points for walkers at regular intervals, capitalise on significant views and vistas, create facilities within notes and activities for children. There is a significant amount of existing furniture within the park and its review and sequential replacement should be undertaken over the life of this plan.

FIG 89 FURNITURE STRATEGY

KEY

- Seating opportunities
- Pic-nic tables
- BBQ area
- Sculpural features
- Bycicle parking
- Playground (existing + proposed)
- Adventure playground
- Teenager hangout

SEATING OPPORTUNITIES



Urban context seatings



Rural context seatings

PICNIC TABLES





Picnic area furniture

PLAYGROUND



Urban context playgrounds



Rural context playgrounds

BIKE PARKING



Urban context bike parkings



Rural context bike parkings

BBQ AREA



Danish style covered BBQ areas

SCULPTURAL FEATURES



Landscape sculptures

ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND



Adventure playgrounds

TEENAGERS HANGOUT



Teenagers areas

FIG 90 PRECEDENT IMAGES SHOWING POPOSED FURNITURE

PROTECTING THE GREEN CORRIDOR AND LINK TO THE NORTHERN EXE VALLEY

FIG 91 THE MEADOWS PROPOSALS MAP

PROTECTING THE GREEN CORRIDOR AND LINK TO THE NORTHERN EXE VALLEY

In THE MEADOWS, biodiversity and conservation will be the primary objective. A new cycle connection and some walkways around new habitats will improve access to a currently inaccesible part of the Valley Parks.

FIG 92 **ILLUSTRATIVE SECTION**


Informal water contact


Grazing and traditional farming


Shallow edges to water


Varied vegetated edges


Waterside cycle route


Possibility for pond dipping and waterside access in new wetlands


Marshy wet areas


Resting opportunities

FIG 93 **PRECEDENT IMAGES**

KEY PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

2) NEW CYCLE CONNECTION

A key project to improve recreational and commuter cycle connection between Exeter and Tiverton.

Potential Partners
ECC, DCC, Sustrans, Environment Agency, Network Rail, Private Landowners

Priority - HIGH
High priority project which provides key missing link in Exeter cycle network, and encourages more users to a currently inaccessible part of the park.

Deliverability
Long term objective requiring considerable capital, not essential in the immediate stages of the masterplan

3) PERMISSIVE PATH AGREEMENT

Currently the fields in 'The Meadows' character area are privately held, with no permitted access. Subject to the agreement of the owner, a circular walking route could enable people to enjoy the heritage of the area; the old mill and leat, the weir and associated cottages. The walk could return via the river.

Potential Partners
Private Landowners, Community Land Trusts, Exeter City Council

Priority - MEDIUM
Although this will be a considerable positive change in the Valley parks , changes in the south of the parks are more important to provide accessible greenspace to more residents of the city.

Deliverability
Long term objective, not essential in the immediate stages of the masterplan

5,6,8.) EXWICK LEAT AND WEIR CONSERVATION + ENHANCEMENT

As one of the oldest Mill complexes in Exeter, it is an important part of the city's heritage. The water course should be preserved and made accessible as a historic asset.

Potential Partners
Exeter Civic Society, Heritage Lottery Fund, Waterways Trust, Private Landowners

Priority - MEDIUM
Condition of the leat is unknown but water flows freely through it.

Deliverability
Long term objective, not essential in the immediate stages of the masterplan

CELEBRATING THE ENGINEERED CITY AND ENHANCING IT FOR PEOPLE AND WILDLIFE

FIG 94 THE MODERNISED RIVER PROPOSALS MAP

KEY

- Primary Entrance (numbers refer to Entrance study, App. A)
- Secondary Entrance (numbers refer to Entrance study, App. A)
- Key signage opportunity
- Hub / Facilities provision
- Mill

1. Wild play adventure playground to connect with Exwick Play Area
2. Possible access for pedestrians and cyclists
3. St Davids Station enhanced signage
4. Sculptural trail adds interest to the flood channel and seating
5. Biodiversity enhancement around the edge of the playing fields delivered as part of flood defence scheme
6. Meadow planting along the flood channel to create B-line for inserts
7. Teenage hangout zone enhanced and possible additional separate scooter park for under 11
8. Station Road as key gateway to this area
9. 'B-line' wildflower planting on new flood bank
10. Explore opportunities for sensory garden with Exeter College
11. Explore opportunities for enhancement with Exeter College
12. Exwick Changing Rooms enhanced as a hub with facilities and parking for Exeter College

SAFE PEDESTRIAN LINK
PEDESTRIAN + CYCLE LINK TO ST DAVIDS STATION
River Exe
Flood Relief Channel
Exwick Playing Fields
Flowerpot Fields
B
B'

VISION 2016-26
Routes + Connectivity
Hubs + Landmarks
Access + Entrances
Landscape Conservation

0 200m

CELEBRATING THE ENGINEERED CITY AND ENHANCING IT FOR PEOPLE AND WILDLIFE

In THE MODERNISED RIVER, biodiversity enhanced through the flood defence scheme. New signage and art will enhance use of the river pathways, and opportunities to improve facilities for young people will be explored with Exeter College.

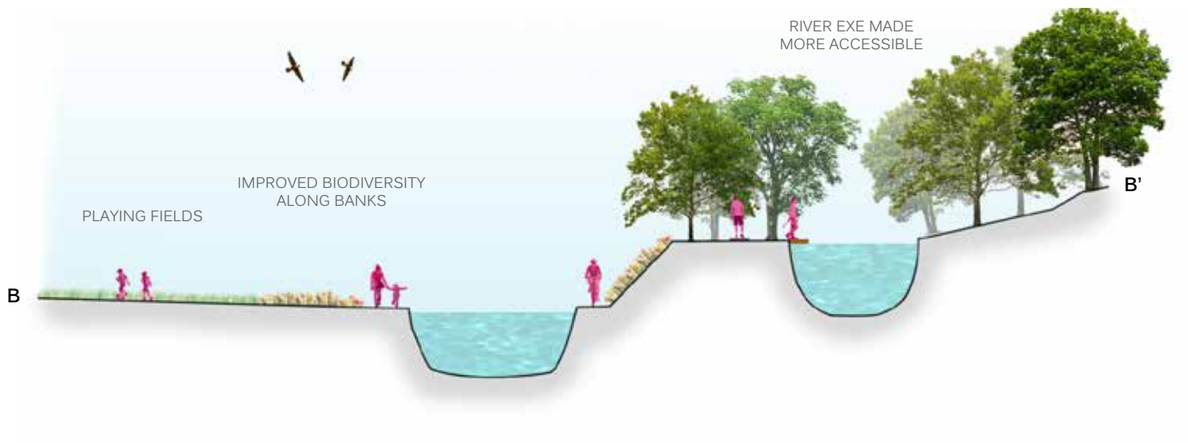


FIG 95 ILLUSTRATIVE SECTION


Land art in natural setting


Temporary art and play trails


Sensory Garden


Interactive sculptures


Accessible routes


Inclusive activity space

FIG 96 PRECEDENT IMAGES

FIG 97 CONCEPTUAL VISUALISATION

KEY PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

2) EXE RIVER ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS

The Exe River is currently poorly accessed in The Modernised River section of the site. Many people walk along the flood defence scheme but do not visit the upper bank, which has some pleasant views to woodland across the river by the railway line and gives a chance for rest and contemplation. This proposal suggests improving the footpath through the wooded area, and creating some stopping platforms that enable people to experience the natural river Exe, in contrast to the flood relief channel. Careful tree planting and species selection can also improve the space for wildlife.

Potential Partners
Devon Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency.

Priority – HIGH
This project will improve accessibility and biodiversity in this area of the city, and make it more inviting.

Deliverability
This project is viable in the immediate term, and would be a significant improvement to this area.

1) EXWICK WILD PLAY

There is currently an underutilised area to the north west of Station Road, which is currently amenity green space. This seems the perfect location to enhance a wild play facility, for example using trees and logs that may have been removed with the flood scheme further downstream. Earthworks and mounds can provide opportunities for rolling and toddling with young people. Small areas of woodland planting can provide small scale opportunities for forest school with young children, and the space would connect with the existing Exwick Playground, which is popular and well used. Natural sculpture and den creation could be possible activities, as well as providing opportunity for contact with mud and water.

Potential Partners
WildZone, Devon Wildlife Trust, Exwick Community Association, Exeter Community Initiatives, Active Devon.

Priority – MEDIUM
This project is a popular idea with participants at the public event and with the User Group.

Deliverability
This project is a quick win for improving facilities in the Valley parks, at a relatively low cost.

8) STATION ROAD GATEWAY

Central to the masterplan is linking 'hubs' and facilities to existing infrastructure. The Station Road / Exwick Playground car park is a clear area for improvement, as it will help to enhance the entrance to the valley parks from St David's Station. By improving signage and the profile of the park here, it can help people to understand what the park can offer and the range of opportunities available. A gateway structure could supplement the parking provision and raise the profile of the Valley Parks in the area. It would also be a key gateway for attracting University users into the Valley Parks.

Potential Partners
DCC Transport Team

Priority – MEDIUM
This project would help raise the profile of the parks and encourage sustainable transport.

Deliverability
The project could be delivered in the short term.

A NECKLACE OF HISTORIC AND CONTEMPORARY URBAN POCKET PARKS CONNECTED WITH THE RIVER

FIG 98 OLD + NEW CITY CENTRE PROPOSALS MAP

KEY

- Primary Entrance (numbers refer to Entrance study, App. A)
- Secondary Entrance (numbers refer to Entrance study, App. A)
- Key signage opportunity
- Hub / Facilities provision
- Mill

1. Bonhay enhancement via flood defence scheme
2. Higher leat improve signage and interpretation from Bonhay Road to Cricklepit Mill
3. Shilhay Meadows created as a city centre green space
4. The Quay conserved as historic attraction of Exeter
5. The canal and basin as a historic waterway and a living feature, busy with boats
6. New footbridge improving access between St.Thomas Station and the City centre via Medieval Exe Bridge
7. Connecting green space improvement
8. Bioengineering solutions to provide marginal habitats
9. Piazza Terracina as open space hub, and vibrant centre to River Exe

LINK BETWEEN QUAY AND CITY CENTRE
CITY WALL
CUSTOM HOUSE VISITOR CENTRE
The Quay
Trews Weir
Canal Basin
Haven Banks Car Park
WATER LANE REGENERATION AREA
Higher Leat
Medieval Bridge
Shilhay Meadows
Bonhay Meadows
C
C'
15
21
22
26

VISION
Routes + Connectivity
Hubs + Landmarks
Access + Entrances
Landscape Conservation
2016-26

0 200m
North

A NECKLACE OF HISTORIC + CONTEMPORARY URBAN POCKET PARKS CONNECTED WITH THE RIVER

In THE OLD + NEW CITY CENTRE, the green space along side the water body will be maximised and conserved to create a linear network of pocket parks that will re-centre the urban green space at the riverside.

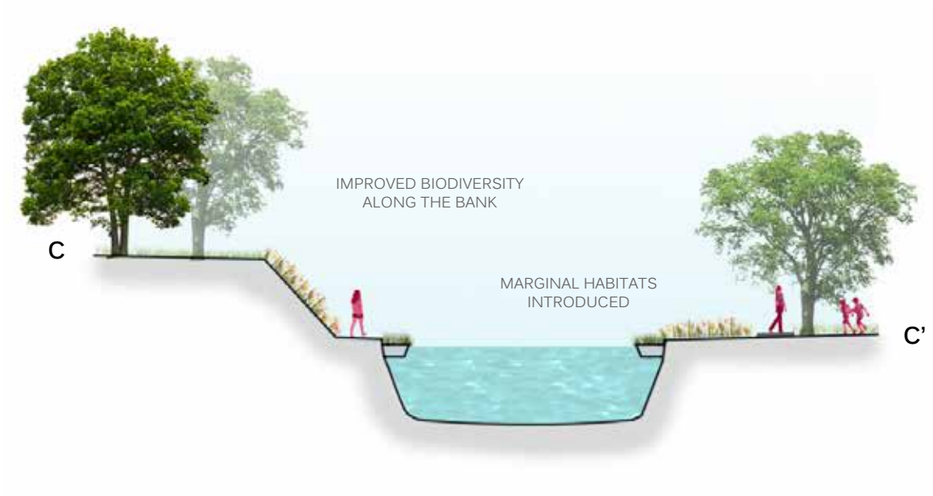


FIG 99 ILLUSTRATIVE SECTION


Interactive multi functional space


Bioengineering to improve biodiversitry of the river


High quality public realm


Improved low impact seating opportunities


Activated river edges


Seating opportunities next to river


Naturalistic pocket parks


Naturalistic pocket parks

FIG 100 PRECEDENT IMAGES

KEY PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

1, 3, 7) POCKET PARK CREATION + ENHANCEMENT, CITY CENTRE AS A BIODIVERSE CORRIDOR

The primary improvement to the city centre area comes from biodiversity improvements in the pockets of green space that lie alongside the water course of the River Exe. Bonhay Meadows, Shilhay Meadows, Medieval Exe Bridge and Haven Banks Play Area could all benefit from a consistent design language that promote stopping and resting and connecting to the river for the city centre users. They offer picnic areas and places of rest for lunchtime workers, and areas of relaxation where people can listen and watch the flow of water. A clear palette of materials and planting will help to tie these together to give a consistent feel to the green spaces along the river. Creating marginal habitats using bioengineering methods will enhance biodiversity and make the area more appealing. Meadow and orchard planting will also work to improve biodiversity and make the areas more appealing.

Potential Partners
Local businesses

Priority – MEDIUM
This project is not essential for achieving the essential objectives of the masterplan, but is desirable in improving the profile of the valley parks

Deliverability
Long term. In the short term the flood defence scheme will enhance these 'pockets' as key city centre green spaces.

ISLAND PARKS FOR THE PEOPLE OF EXETER, BRINGING NATURE TO THE CITY, AND PEOPLE TO NATURE

FIG 101 ISLAND PARKS PROPOSALS MAP

KEY

- Primary Entrance (numbers refer to Entrance study, App. A)
- Secondary Entrance (numbers refer to Entrance study, App. A)
- Key signage opportunity
- Hub / Facilities provision
- Mill

1. Wetland created in channel by flood defence scheme
2. Wildlife enhancement, Veitch heritage planting, play areas and cafe in Belle Isle Park
3. Community woodland enhanced for wild play and forest school opportunities
4. Swimming access point
5. Enhance Ducks Meadow with art, wildflowers, picnic area and cafe
6. Possible restoration of St James' Weir by Flood defence scheme
7. Access point to 'permitted access' circular routes around University fields
8. Canoa/kayak/wild swim access point
9. Low-impact artistic bridge
10. Camping ground with BBQ areas, fire pits, rentable festival space
11. Bromham Farm as new outdoor activities hub
12. New canal basin
13. Old Swing Bridge primary to cycle and pedestrian use
14. New two platform rail station with cycle/pedestrian overbridge as key access hub for Riverside Park
15. Make Road Bridge safe for pedestrians/cyclists
16. Water lane tip restored as pump track for mountain bikes, low ropes course
17. Green Frog gas-power station
18. Biodiversity enhancement with woodland around Bromam Playing Fields, including 6m buffer strips for biodiversity
19. Forest garden or allotments
20. Community orchard delivered by flood defence scheme

28 37 36 2

Belle Isle Pa
Trews Weir Allotments
Flood relief channel
Bromham Playing Fields
Ducks Meadow Park
Grace Road Fields
WATER LANE REGENERATION AREA

VISION 2016-26
Routes + Connectivity
Hubs + Landmarks
Access + Entrances
Landscape Conservation

0 200m
NORTH

ISLAND PARKS FOR THE PEOPLE OF EXETER, BRINGING NATURE TO THE CITY, AND PEOPLE TO NATURE

The ISLAND PARKS will be developed as a new recreational hub in the Riverside Park. A variety of opportunities and recreational activities will be springboarded from here, including bike hire, pump track, low ropes, refreshments, wild play, forest gardens, allotments. The new Marsh Barton Station will bring more people to the character area sustainably, from where they can continue on foot, bike or canoe.

FIG 102 CONCEPTUAL VISUALISATION


BBQ areas


Fire pits and gathering


Contact with nature


Glamping and resting


Eye-catching Information points


Multisurface paths


Wildplay opportunities


Landmark discovery centre

FIG 103 PRECEDENT IMAGES

KEY PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

11) BROMHAM FARM HUB

The 'Bromham Farm Hub' is envisaged as the primary entrance to the parks from the south west. By encouraging people to visit from the northern end of the Gateway to the Estuary character area, people should be able to carry out walks of a variety of lengths without impacting on the Exe Estuary protected habitat. This hub would connect with the Marsh Barton proposed train station, providing sustainable transport access to the park, for users such as school groups or tourists from the primary Exeter stations. It may also encourage regular commuters to enjoy the park. Improving facilities at Bromham Changing Rooms with toilets and refreshments, as well as the opportunity for bike and canoe hire; will enhance use considerably. Car parking will be brought to the western side of the canal to alleviate pressure on the Clapperbrook Swing Bridge and create a quieter entry.

Potential Partners
DCC, Network Rail, Sport England, Active Devon, Heritage Lottery, Canal + River User Group.

Priority – HIGH
Improving this gateway will make a well signed, accessible park, with opportunities for sustainable development.

Deliverability
This project should be developed in the medium term, after the flood defence work has been carried out.

10) GRACE ROAD FIELD IMPROVEMENTS AND ACCESS TO ALPHIN BROOK

The Grace Road Playing Field is currently underused as a football pitch – playing fields need to be located closer to communities that will use them. Instead, this space can provide a revenue generating opportunity for the city council. The space is a key place for woodland planting, and forest clearings and openings can be created to provide opportunities for picnicking and fire pits for families to gather around. A picnic and barbecue area could be developed with a seasonal camping ground, and the field could be rented for festivals and events, from country fairs to farmers markets or folk festivals. This can all be supplemented by a peripheral walking route that will connect to the Alphin Brook to enable people to access 20 hectares of new natural green space.

Potential Partners
Environment Agency, Exeter Cultural Partnership, Canal + River User Group.

Priority – MEDIUM
The access across the back of Grace Road Field is a key entry point to the Alphin Brook, and walking opportunities can be enhanced here.

Deliverability
Renting out the field and providing a camping ground can be longer term objectives, but walking access can be improved in the short term.

3, 9) UPGRADE OF COMMUNITY WOODLAND ACCESS AND LOW IMPACT ART BRIDGE

The improvements to the Trews flood relief channel will have significant impact in cutting off the community woodland on the east side of the channel. In order to maintain a circular walking route, and keep it as an attractive, usable space, the south end of the flood relief channel provides an opportunity for an artistic crossing. This will provide a fun and interesting attraction in the ISLAND PARKS and continue to keep the community woodland accessible. In the community woodland itself, woodland maintenance and clearing of paths will continue to keep the place safe and welcoming. There is opportunity here for new wild play, art and ecological woodland management.

Potential Partners
Gingko Art Projects, Woodland Trust, Wildzone, Environmental Agency, Arts Council.

Priority – MEDIUM
This project aims to maintain and improve the Island Parks as an attractive place for all.

Deliverability
Medium term - this project will be delivered after the flood channel work is complete.

BRINGING THE ESTUARY AND ITS WILDLIFE TO THE CITY

FIG 104 GATEWAY TO THE ESTUARY PROPOSALS MAP

KEY

- Primary Entrance (numbers refer to Entrance study, App. A)
- Secondary Entrance (numbers refer to Entrance study, App. A)
- Key signage opportunity
- Hub / Facilities provision
- Mill

1. Wildflower meadow
2. Northbrook Golf Course as facilities and parking hub
3. New Crematorium car park
4. Temporary footpath upgraded cycle path
5. New foot / cycle bridge
6. New permissive footpath within new hedged route (subject to agreemento to owner)
7. Medieval St. James Mill Leat conservation by flood defence scheme
8. Wildlife enhancement in channel as part of flood defence scheme
9. Wildflower meadow enhancement and parkland tree planting with new benches
10. Harpers Lakes youth fishing opportunities
11. Access across the Alphin Brook at Double Locks improved by new footbridge
12. Alphin Brook with new double loop circular walks and wet meadow creation, accessed via Grace Road Fields, Double Locks and Bridge Road
13. Upgrades bird hides
14. Conservation area for estuary and wetland birds
15. Riverside Park enhanced as naturalistic country park, with variety of footpaths and routes for range of users
16. New circular footpath and footbridge (subject to owner agreement)
17. New tower hide
18. Paper Mill madesafe for public, with interpretation
19. Diverted section of Northbrook delivered by flood defence scheme
20. Promenade through Northbrook for cyclists and pedestrians, tree lined to be inviting and clear route following the water course

PRIVATE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREA WITH NO PERMITTED ACCESS

D
D'

44
40

VISION 2016-26
Routes + Connectivity
Hubs + Landmarks
Access + Entrances
Landscape Conservation

0 200m

UP/N

BRINGING THE ESTUARY AND ITS WILDLIFE TO THE CITY

The GATEWAY TO THE ESTUARY brings the biodiversity and wildlife of the Exe Estuary closer to the city. The area is naturalistic and quiet, with areas of no access. More trails and routes will be developed to disperse visitors and improve the experience of nature and naturalness.

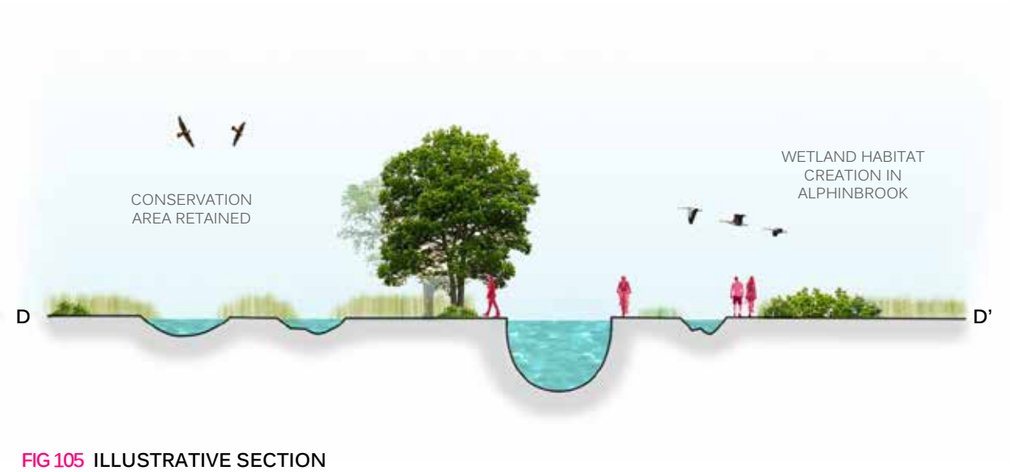


FIG 105 **ILLUSTRATIVE SECTION**


Marshes for estuary birds


Stepping stones though Alphin Brook


Visually sensitive shelters


New bird hides


Simple and clear signage


Conservation of the Canal


Natural shelters


Boardwalks through wetlands

FIG 106 **PRECEDENT IMAGES**

KEY PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

11) FORMAL ACCESS TO ALPHIN BROOK, INCLUDING HABITAT CREATION

Providing and promoting access to the Alphin Brook, which is currently owned and managed by the Environment Agency, will create nearly 20 hectare of newly accessible natural green space. It is envisaged that the key access will be through the back of Grace Field, so as to provide a sustainable transport connection from the new Marsh Barton Railway Station. Further foot access can be provided from Double Locks and Bridge Road, although the latter will be a more secondary access point. By enhancing the wetland meadow habitat here, and providing information and signage, this area can become an exciting wildlife zone suitable for dog walkers.

Potential Partners
Environment Agency

Priority - HIGH
This project is key in achieving 75 hectares of new accessible green space in the south of the Valley Parks.

Deliverability
This should be a short term goal of the masterplan, as it will immediately provide some key new walking routes for visitors to the Valley Parks

2) NORTHBROOK HUB

The masterplan seeks to improve accessibility to the parks, and this is not only via sustainable means such as rail bus and cycle connections, but also via car parking. Northbrook Golf Course Club House is currently underused, and only open seasonally to visitors. This Exeter City Council resource is currently let to a private leisure provider, but negotiation could enhance this as a key landing pad for both the Riverside Park and Ludwell.

Potential Partners
Parkwood Leisure, DCC Transport team

Priority - HIGH
This project is high priority as it is a key connector between Ludwell and Riverside

Deliverability
This project should be developed in the medium term, as it involves negotiation around the lease with Parkwood Leisure. Then work improving signage and directing people to this area can take place

20) NORTHBROOK CONNECTION + PROMENADE

The Northbrook Hub scheme would be complemented by an improved access route along the North Brook, to enhance the connection between Ludwell and Riverside. This route would be suitable for cyclists and pedestrians, and provide a avenue linking the parks. If public access and conservation of Paper Mill can be achieved, it could be a destination at the other end of this route. This project would also consider the crossing of Topsham Road, as Topsham Road is a key barrier between the two green spaces.

Potential Partners
English Heritage, Exeter Civic Society, Environmental Agency, DCC Transport team

Priority – High
This project is high priority as a key connection between Ludwell and Riverside and will substantially be delivered by the flood defence scheme.

Deliverability
This project should be developed in the short term, working closely with the Environmental Agency.

6, 16) NEW AND IMPROVED CIRCULAR FOOTPATHS

Two new circular paths can be created. One will be a permissive footpath around the University sports field, the other along the southern bank of the river, both subject to landowner agreement. Along the footpaths will be provided signage and furniture. New habitat can be created e.g. meadows, ponds.

Potential Partners
Exeter Parks Watch, Devon Wildlife Trust, University of Exeter, other private landowners

Priority – MEDIUM
This area is well used, but the amount, quality and connectivity of routes could be improved. Additional signage will help to show people to the Alphin Brook.

Deliverability
This project should be developed in the medium term, after the flood defence work has been carried out.

1. New circular route (subject to owner agreement)
2. Renaturalised 'Panny' with stepping stones for wild play
3. Traditional methods of land managment including orchards, cornfield annual, wildflower meadows and hedgebanks
4. Pond re-excavated and enlarged as wildlife habitat
5. Traffic calming and restrictions on Ludwell Lane
6. Wonford Inclusive Sports Hub to include toilets, cafe and new water play area/trampoline
7. Restoration and maintenance of 'The Panny' for pond dipping and accessibility to Brook
8. Youth activity space e.g. scooter/skate park, pump track, shelter with PV power
9. Reduce height of hedge screening to Topsham Road to encourage connection between two parks
10. Improved crossing at Topsham Road to encourage connection to Riverside Valley Park
11. Improvement to quality and quantity of footpaths e.g. to ensure main routes prone to mud are hoggin or similar
12. Community farm/allotment facility/farmers market site at Pynes Hill - community hub
13. New car parking facility to access Ludwell Valley Park
14. Indicative locations of key signage points

50 54 56 57 58 59 60 61 63 66

E E' 3

FIG 107 LUDWELL PROPOSALS MAP

KEY

- Primary Entrance (numbers refer to Entrance study, App. A)
- Secondary Entrance (numbers refer to Entrance study, App. A)
- Key signage opportunity
- Hub / Facilities provision
- Mill
- Playful art at viewpoints to encourage ascent of hill

VISION 2016-26

Routes + Connectivity
Hubs + Landmarks
Access + Entrances
Landscape Conservation

0 200m

NORTH

CONSERVING DEVON TRADITIONS, CULTURES AND PRACTICES IN A LIVING LANDSCAPE

LUDWELL continues to preserve the heritage and tradition of Devon rural livelihoods, using traditional land management techniques to enhance priority habitats and create opportunities for people to experience traditional ways of life.

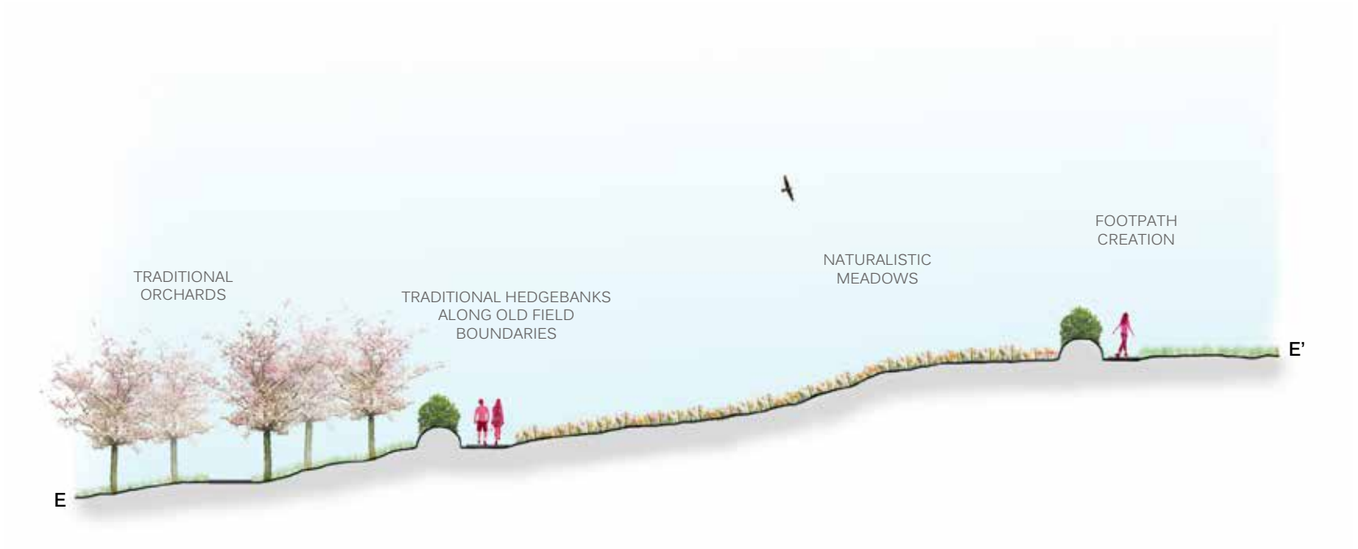


FIG 108 ILLUSTRATIVE SECTION


Traditional hedgelaying


Footpath through orchard


Elevated views enhanced


Farmers' market opportunities


Family learning


Traditional cattle grazing

FIG 109 PRECEDENT IMAGES

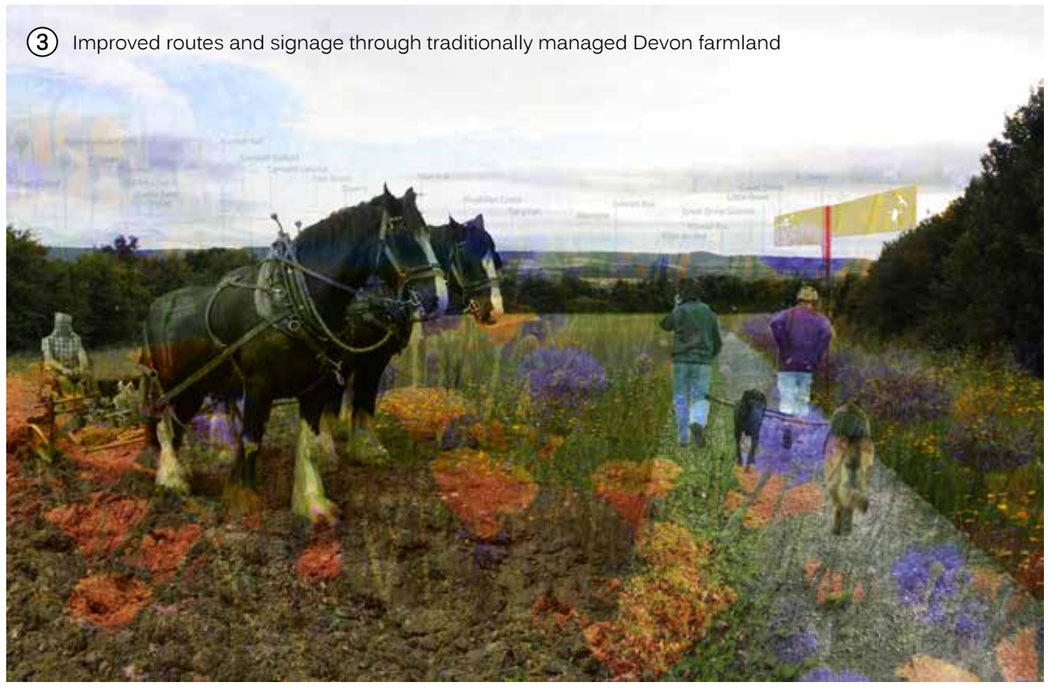


FIG 110 CONCEPTUAL VISUALISATION

KEY PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

12, 13) NEW HUB AT PYNES HILL AND WONFORD

By supporting the growth of a community hub at Wonford, and renovating and enhancing the existing facilities, the centre can act as a launch pad for visitors to Ludwell Valley. Improved signage for car parking, information about history, routes and wildlife interest will invite people into the Valley Park and act as a facilities base with toilets, parking and shelter. At Pynes Hill, a new 50 space car parking, designed to be low impact, with orchard tree planting wildflowers and pop-up cafe, provides a new hub.

Potential Partners
Ludwell Life, Wildlife Trust, The Phoenix Youth Club, Active Devon, Business Sponsorship

Priority – HIGH
Providing a base, gateway and clear landing pad for Ludwell will help to increase numbers of visitors and make the green space more accessible

Deliverability
This project, particularly the upgrade of the disused tennis courts to parking, should be investigated in the short term, as planning permission will be needed.

11, 14) NEW FOOTPATHS AND ASSOCIATED SIGNAGE, AND MAINTENANCE

This project aims to improve circulation around the Ludwell Valley, introducing people to under visited areas and by revising and improving the existing network so people wich have more walking and recreational opportunities. Surfacing some muddy paths and improving signage and navigation, using both digital technology and conventional interventions. Looped walks that start and finish at access points and offer reasonable terrain for a variety of users to enjoy are proposed. Creating routes that follow contours will help to disperse people around the site.

Potential Partners
DCC, Ludwell Life, Exeter Parks Watch

Priority – HIGH
Providing more walking routes will disperse visitors through Ludwell, and enable more green space to be accessed by more people. Some parts of Ludwell are currently underused, so more footpaths and improved signage will improve permeability of people across the parks.

Deliverability
Much of the land is owned by ECC so delivery can proceed immediately.

6) LUDWELL LANE TRAFFIC CALMING

This project aims to make Ludwell Lane a safe, country lane for walkers and cyclists. Currently high hedgebanks and sharp bends with fast moving traffic using the lane as a short cut make the site dangerous for users, particularly young people. Introducing traffic calming measures, will help to improve safety and accessibility.

Potential Partners
DCC, Ludwell Life, Exeter Parks Watch

Priority – MEDIUM
Although this project is important for general improved experience of the park, it should come second to after improving footpaths in Ludwell.

Deliverability
Consultation with local residents and the highways and Traffic Order Committees is necessary.

3) LAND PURCHASE FIELDS TO MAINTAIN INTO PERPETUITY

10 hectares of land at Ludwell are currently in private ownership, although 2 fields are managed by Exeter City Council to improve biodiversity. If Exeter City Council were to purchase these fields public access in perpetuity would be secured. These fields are protected from development by policies LSI and CPI6.

Potential Partners
Private Landholders, Ludwell Life, ECC

Priority – MEDIUM
Currently, ECC have a good relationship with the landowners at Ludwell so access and traditional land management techniques are being implemented in cooperation, with ECC owning the land.

Deliverability
Because the private fields at Ludwell complement the proposed schemes, this objective is a long term aim for Ludwell.

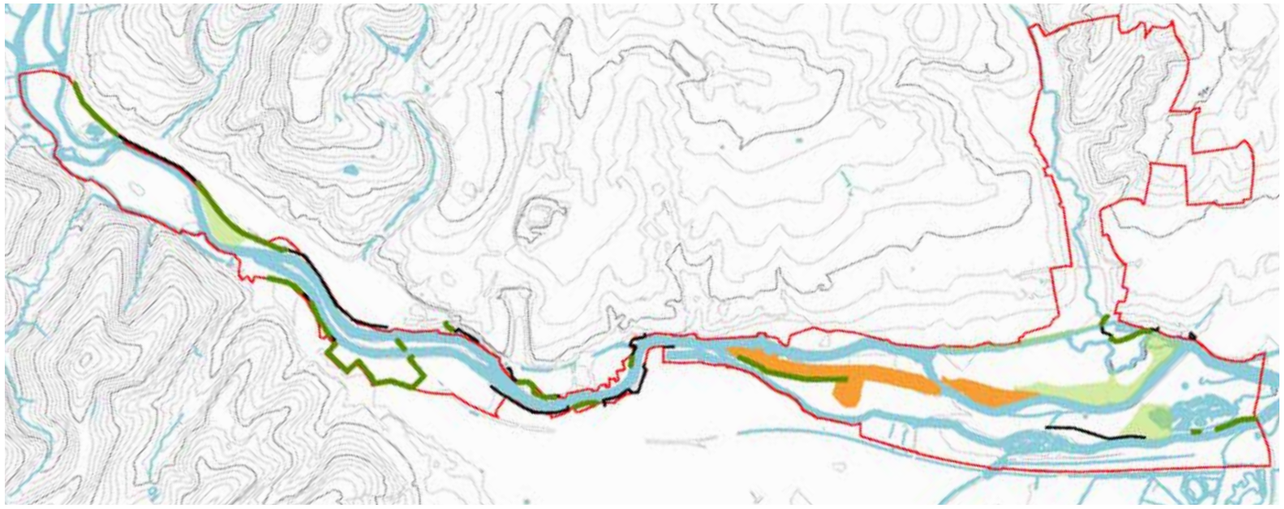


FIG 111 PROPOSED FLOOD DEFENCES

KEY

- Channel improvement
- Habitat creation
- Proposed flood bank
- Proposed flood wall
- Site boundary

The flood scheme offers an opportunity rather than a constraint. Although now progressing through planning, there is an opportunity to suggest interesting design features, at reserved matters, which enhance the space for nature conservation and biodiversity, as well as at reserved matters users.

A series of walls and embankments are proposed for areas of green space around the city centre. Inventive, creative soft landscaping working with the constructed features can make more appealing spaces.
By varying the topography of the soft landscaping, the look and feel of the flood defence scheme can be varied greatly. Additional planting can take place not only along the banks of the flood defence scheme, but also along the water's edge, in order to enhance the marginal habitats that have been removed with the canalisation of the water course.
Trews Weir flood channel has been deepened and biodiversity enhanced. The environment will be wetter and different wildlife will thrive. Crossing points are limited, but this is an opportunity to think of creative ways to traverse water. Sculptures could add interest along the channels, and also boardwalks across wetlands can provide low impact accessible routes.

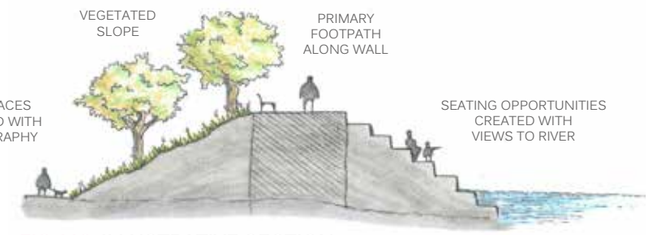


FIG 112 ILLUSTRATIVE SECTION

WALLS


Green wall improves biodiversity


Concrete wall with integrated seating and amphitheatre


The wall as a sculptural feature


Play areas added around wall


Outdoor swimming pool reinforced with flood wall


Using gabions can create ecologically sensitive defence


Seats made of natural materials add interest


Glass sections of walls improve visibility


Interactive elements such as climbing wall

Markings for sport and activity

LANDFORM, TOPGRAPHY + BANKS


Creation of ecological corridors


Seats and stairs in a naturalistic shape can give impressive visual form


Well vegetated landform


Interest added to mown grass with landform features

CHANNEL ALTERATIONS AND DEEPENING


Artistic bridge over water


Board walks across wetland habitats


Sculptures emphasize changing tide and water levels


Landmarks crossing of flood channel

FIG 113 PRECEDENT IMAGES SHOWING WALL, TOPOGRAPHIC AND CHANNEL INTERVENTIONS

Throughout the masterplanning process a variety of management strategies and techniques have been discussed with the Task and Finish Group and the User Group, as well as key stakeholders in Exeter City Council. A careful management strategy will be essential to realise full potential but minimize expense.

The parking provision will need to be designed for park users, not commuters and shoppers. The parking is likely to remain free, but if not possible, pricing needs to be minimal to that users are encouraged to park on nearby verges to avoid charges. Perks to a parking management strategy via membership and promotion could help.

The management strategy for facilities and services such as toilets, cafés and rentable indoor spaces also needs to be established. Toilets can be a concern as an attractor of antisocial behaviour, and so a management strategy needs to be introduced to prevent this. There are a variety of mechanisms to manage these facilities, and issues such as equality of opportunity will need to be considered.

Management and maintenance of the green space will be no more expensive in real terms for ECC. The city council will look to other funding sources, and also try to choose low maintenance options in order to reduce their overheads for park maintenance and management.

In terms of land management, there is an option for ECC to consider the formation of a Land Trust or some community supported projects which would transfer responsibility for land management to external bodies, and these bodies may be in a better position to apply for funding as a non-for-profit / non-governmental organisation. Charitable organisations have a wider network of potential funders that local authority in current times. In the full project plan found in Appendix A, management issues and associated risk are considered.

REFERENCE + BIBLIOGRAPHY | 6.0

FIG 1 AERIAL VIEW OF THE STUDY AREA
Source: Google maps

FIG 2 GROWTH AREAS
Source: Exeter City Council, LDA Design et al. (2009). *Green Infrastructure Study- Exeter Area and East Devon Growth Point.*

FIG 3 PROTECTED HABITATS MAP
Source: www.magic.gov.uk

FIG 4 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY
Source: Exeter City Council, LDA Design et al. (2009).*Green Infrastructure Study- Exeter Area and East Devon Growth Point.*

FIG 5 PROJECT METHODOLOGY

FIG 6 PROJECT TIMELINE

FIG 7 EXE DRAINAGE BASIN
Source: www.gov.uk

FIG 8 GEOLOGICAL MAP
Source: www.devon.gov.uk

FIG 9 TOPOGRAPHY AND HYDROLOGY MAP
Source: www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk

FIG 10 FLOOD RISK + ZONES
Source: www.magic.gov.uk

FIG 11 PROCESS FOR DETERMINING LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY
Source: Consultant Photograph

FIG 12 DEVON REDLANDS REFERS TO THE RED BEDROCK THE RUNS BENEATH THE CITY
Source: Google Images

FIG 13 PROTECTED HABITATS
Source: Exeter City Council, Devon Wildlife Trust (2015). *Exeter Biodiversity Reference Map.*
www.magic.gov.uk

FIG 14 VALLEY PARKS + GREEN CIRCLE WALK
Source: ECC Local Plan

FIG 15 HABITATS OF PRINCIPLE IMPORTANCE
Source: Exeter City Council, Devon Wildlife Trust. 2015. *Exeter Biodiversity Reference Map.*

FIG 16 WATER COURSES IN EXETER
Source: OS Data

FIG 17 URBAN FORMS AND LAND USE
Source: ECC Local Plan

FIG 18 URBAN DEVELOPMENT
Source: OS Data, Oldmaps.co.uk

FIG 19 HISTORICAL PHOTOS
Source: Google Images

FIG 20 LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREA
Source: www.magic.gov.uk
www.exeter.gov.uk

FIG 21 BRIDGES
Source: www.exetermemories.co.uk

FIG 22 WEIRS
Source: www.exetermemories.co.uk

FIG 23 MILLS
Source: www.exetermemories.co.uk

FIG 24 LEATS
Source: www.exetermemories.co.uk

FIG 25 HABITATS MAP
Source: www.magic.gov.uk

FIG 26 LAND OWNERSHIP AND TENURE
Source: ECC Tenure Data

FIG 27 LAND USE AND COVER
Based on National Land Use and Land Cover Classification

FIG 28 PUBLIC OPEN SPACES, ACCORDING TO PARKS AND OPEN SPACE STRATEGY 2009

FIG 29 PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION
Source: ECC Walking and Cycling Map
OS Data

FIG 30 VEHICULAR CIRCULATION
Source: OS Data

FIG 31 USER ANALYSIS DIAGRAMS
Source: Footprint Ecology Survey

FIG 32 SURVEY POINTS FOR VISITOR SURVEY
Source: Footprint Ecology Survey

FIG 33 TYPICAL USERS
Source: Google Images

FIG 34 REASONS FOR CHOOSING VALLEY PARKS
Source: Footprint Ecology Survey

FIG 35 DAYTIME USER ANALYSIS
Source: Footprint Ecology Survey

FIG 36 SEASONAL USER ANALYSIS
Source: Footprint Ecology Survey

FIG 37 ROUTE LENGTH BY ACTIVITY
Source: Footprint Ecology Survey

FIG 38 PERMEABILITY MAP

FIG 39 ENTRANCES MAP

FIG 40 ENTRANCES ANALYSIS DIAGRAMS
FIG 41 TYPOLOGIES CONSIDERED IN THE ENTRANCES STUDY

FIG 42 QUALITY OF ROUTES

FIG 43 ROUTE USAGE
Source: Footprint Ecology Survey

FIG 44 EXISTING SIGNAGE
Source: Consultant Photographs

FIG 45 CONSTRAINTS MAP
Source: www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk

FIG 46 OPPORTUNITIES MAP
Source: www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk

FIG 47 OPPORTUNITIES SPECIFICATIONS AND EXAMPLES
Source: Consultant Photographs

FIG 48 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

FIG 49 LANDSCAPE PERCEPTUAL ANALYSIS
Source: Consultant Photographs

FIG 50 SOME KEY VIEWS FOR CONSIDERATION
Source: Consultant Photographs

FIG 51 VISUAL APPRAISAL MAP

FIG 52 LAND TYPOLOGIES AND QUANTITIES
Source: ECC Tenure Data

FIG 53 LANDSCAPE PERCEPTUAL ANALYSIS
Source: Consultant Photographs

FIG 54 PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF AREA
Source: Consultant Photographs

FIG 55 DEMOGRAPHICS
Source: www.exeter.gov.uk
Data refer to 2011

FIG 56 LAND TYPOLOGIES AND QUANTITIES
Source: ECC Tenure Data

FIG 57 LANDSCAPE PERCEPTUAL ANALYSIS
Source: Consultant Photographs

FIG 58 PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF THE AREA
Source: Consultant Photographs

FIG 59 DEMOGRAPHICS
Source: www.exeter.gov.uk
Data refer to 2011

FIG 60 LANDSCAPE PERCEPTUAL ANALYSIS
Source: Consultant Photographs

FIG 61 LAND TYPOLOGIES AND QUANTITIES
Source: ECC Tenure Data

FIG 62 PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF AREA
Source: Consultant Photographs

FIG 63 DEMOGRAPHICS
Source: www.exeter.gov.uk
Data refer to 2011

FIG 64 LAND TYPOLOGIES MAP
Source: ECC Tenure Data

FIG 65 LANDSCAPE PERCEPTUAL ANALYSIS
Source: Consultant Photographs

FIG 66 PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF AREA
Source: Consultant Photograph

FIG 67 DEMOGRAPHICS
Source: www.exeter.gov.uk
Data refer to 2011

FIG 68 LAND TYPOLOGIES MAP
Source: ECC Tenure Data

FIG 69 LANDSCAPE PERCEPTUAL ANALYSIS
Source: Consultant Photograph

FIG 70 PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF AREA
Source: Consultant Photograph

FIG 71 DEMOGRAPHICS
Source: www.exeter.gov.uk
Data refer to 2011

FIG 72 LAND TYPOLOGIES MAP
Source: ECC Tenure Data

FIG 73 LANDSCAPE PERCEPTUAL ANALYSIS
Source: Consultant Photographs

FIG 74 PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF AREA
Source: Consultant Photographs

FIG 75 DEMOGRAPHICS
Source: www.exeter.gov.uk
Data refer to 2011

FIG 76 COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC EVENT
Source: User comments from consultation

FIG 77 PHOTOS FROM PUBLIC EVENT
Source: Consultant Photograph

FIG 78 CONCEPT FOR MASTERPLAN

FIG 79 MASTERPLAN COMPONENTS

FIG 80 CHARACTER AREA CONCEPT

FIG 81 'NATURALNESS' CONCEPT

FIG 82 BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY
Source: Google Images

FIG 83 CYCLE ROUTE STRATEGY

FIG 84 PEDESTRIAN ROUTE STRATEGY

FIG 85 ENTRANCE STRATEGY

FIG 86 ENTRANCE TYPOLOGIES PALETTE
Source: Google Images

FIG 87 SIGNAGE STRATEGY

FIG 88 SIGNAGE TYPOLOGIES
Source: Google Images

FIG 89 FURNITURE STRATEGY

FIG 90 PRECEDENT IMAGES SHOWING POPOSED FURNITURE
Source: Google Images

FIG 91 THE MEADOWS PROPOSALS MAP

FIG 92 ILLUSTRATIVE SECTION

FIG 93 PRECEDENT IMAGES
Source: Google Images

FIG 94 THE MODERNISED RIVER PROPOSALS MAP

FIG 95 ILLUSTRATIVE SECTION

FIG 96 PRECEDENT IMAGES
Source: Google Images

FIG 97 CONCEPTUAL VISUALISATION

FIG 98 OLD + NEW CITY CENTRE PROPOSALS MAP

FIG 99 ILLUSTRATIVE SECTION

FIG 100 PRECEDENT IMAGES
Source: Google Images

FIG 101 ISLAND PARKS PROPOSALS MAP

FIG 102 CONCEPTUAL VISUALISATION

FIG 103 PRECEDENT IMAGES
Source: Google Images

FIG 104 GATEWAY TO THE ESTUARY PROPOSALS MAP

FIG 105 ILLUSTRATIVE SECTION

FIG 106 PRECEDENT IMAGES
Source: Google Images

FIG 107 LITTLE DEVON PROPOSALS MAP

FIG 108 ILLUSTRATIVE SECTION

FIG 109 PRECEDENT IMAGES
Source: Google Images

FIG 110 CONCEPTUAL VISUALISATION

FIG 111 PROPOSED FLOOD DEFENCES
Source: Environmental Agency et al. (2015) *Exeter Flood Defence Scheme*

FIG 112 ILLUSTRATIVE SECTION

FIG 113 PRECEDENT IMAGES SHOWING WALL, THOPOGRAPHIC AND CHANNEL INTERVENTIONS
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