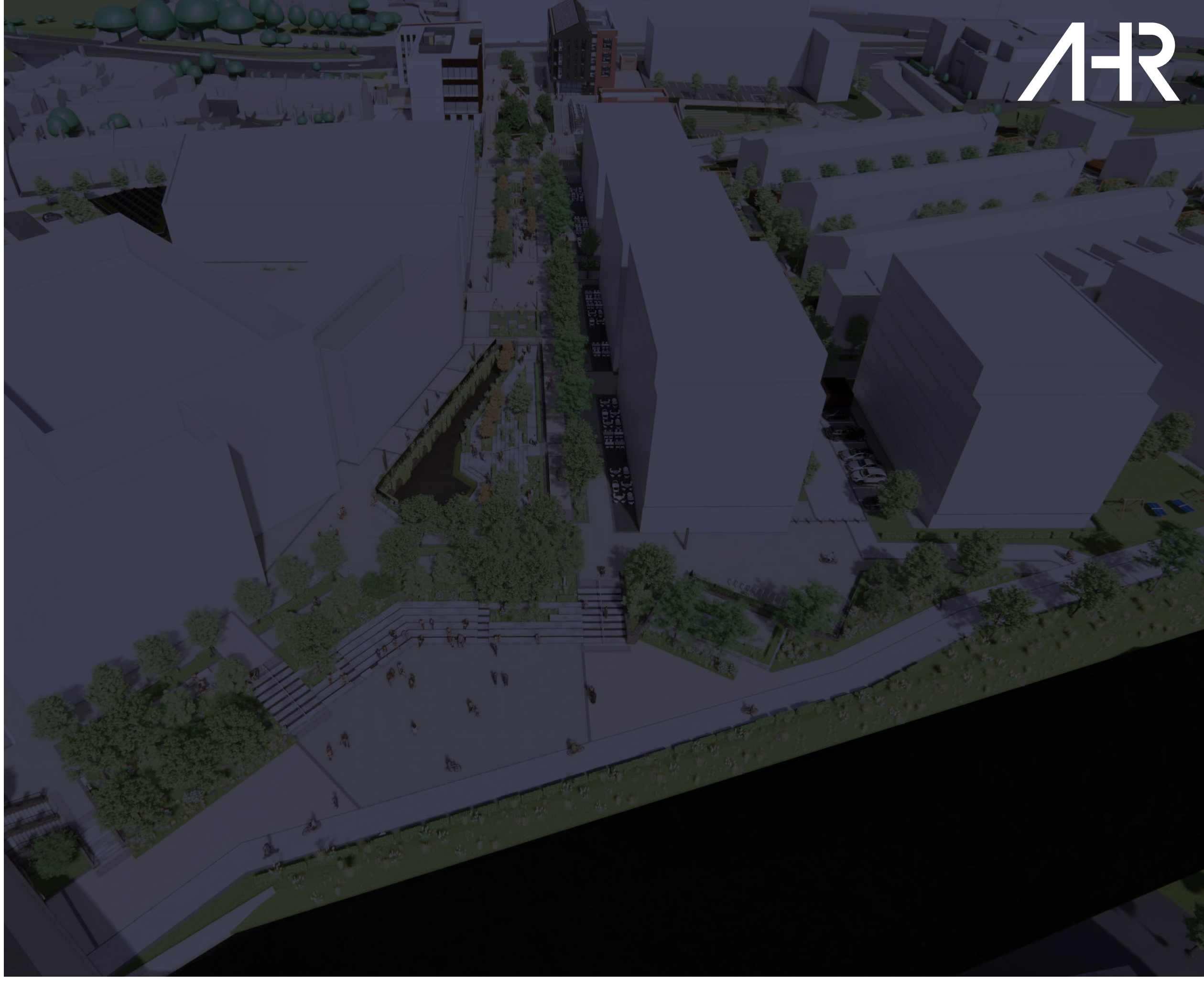


FIREPOOL MASTERPLAN

DESIGN REPORT

FB5-AHR-XX-XX-RP-A-08900



1.00	Project Background	2.00	Context Appraisal Surrounding Buildings	6.00	Design - Building Principles	DOCUMENT REVISIONS:	
1.00	Site/Project Background	2.03	Heritage			P01	Issued Draft
1.01	Taunton Garden Town Vision/Design Charter & Checklist (2019)		Offsite	7.00	Design - Townscape Views	P02	Issued for information
			Onsite & Adjacent			P03	Issued for information
1.02	Taunton Garden Town 2040 Town Centre Prospectus	2.04	Recent Development	8.00	Design - Sustainability Principles	P04	Issued for information
1.03	The climate Emergency	2.05	Local Character (TCAAP)	9.00	Parameter Plans	P05	Issued for information
1.04	Public Realm Design Guide SPD (2021)	2.00	Context Appraisal Wider Site	10.00	Delivery & Implementation	P06	Issued for information
1.05	2021 Districtwide Design Guide (2021)	2.06	Movement		Planning / FP1 Compliance & Variations	P07	Issued for information
1.06	Pre-application Involvement	2.07	Community Infrastructure		Viability Summary		
1.07	Key Design Principals		Public Open Space and Sports		Phasing & Implementation Strategy		
			Education Facilities	11.00	Review of Key Objectives		
2.00	Context Appraisal History		Commercial Facilities				
2.01	Historical Evolution		Health Facilities				
2.00	Context Appraisal Masterplan Evolution	2.08	River, Ecology & Biodiversity				
2.02	Firepool Proposals Evolution	3.00	Site Appraisal				
	Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP) and Design Code (2008)	3.01	Constraints				
	St Modwen Block 1 Outline Planning Application (2010)	3.02	Boundary Assessment				
	Taunton Deane Core Strategy (2021)	3.03	Opportunities				
	Taunton Rethink (2014)	3.04	Supporting Evidence / Reports				
	St Modwen Masterplan (2015) - Refused		TVIA / LVIA				
	St Modwen Revised Masterplan (2019) - Granted		Heritage				
	2020 Draft Masterplan (2020)		HRA / Ecology				
	Analysis of 2020 Masterplan		Active Travel & Parking				
	Innovation Centre		Site Demand & Potential Use				
	Block 3	4.00	Design - Masterplan Principles				
	Access	5.00	Design - Landscape Principles				
	Infrastructure						

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Firepool is a major regeneration area within Taunton town centre, for which there have been development aspirations for many years. The site presents a unique opportunity for development in Taunton, being in such close proximity to the train station and key services and facilities, as well as fronting the River Tone. However, high quality development needs to respond to its context and the range of opportunities and constraints present. The adopted planning policy context for the site (and the development mix in particular) is now out of date.

This Masterplan has been produced with the intention to guide development on the Firepool site, responding to these opportunities and constraints, providing an up to date policy context accounting for changed circumstances including the Council's Garden Town Vision, declaration of a Climate Emergency, wider policy and guidance changes, and other material considerations.

It proposes an ambitious mixed-use scheme which will support revitalisation and regeneration of the town centre, informed by engagement with key stakeholders, evidenced studies and consideration by the Council's Quality Review Panel. Whilst the development mix and some of the proposals are materially different to those in existing adopted planning policy, appropriate evidence is provided about changed circumstances to justify an alternative development solution for the site.

Firepool is a complex brownfield regeneration site. Making more of our brownfield sites is core to sustainability and taking housing pressure away from precious greenfield

sites. Brownfield sites are complex, expensive to develop and often marginal in terms of viability. Firepool suffers from all of these problems. Commercial developers have failed to deliver a commercially viable scheme which also responds well to the site's context and local aspirations. This is why the Council is now taking a more proactive role in bringing the site forward itself.

Somerset West and Taunton Council has dual roles in Firepool, acting as landowner, and developer as well as Local Planning Authority. These roles are distinct and sit very much independently in terms of preparation, consultation and approval of this Masterplan. However, the delivery of sustainable development on this key town centre site is of great importance to the Council in both roles.

As developer, the Council is bringing forward plans to deliver meaningful and sustainable development on a site that has sat empty for many years. Over the last 12 months, a series of detailed planning applications have been submitted by the developer team and approved by the LPA. The delivery of these elements is supported by Future High Street Funding.

This Masterplan has been produced by the developer team and approved by the LPA. [Subject to Full Council resolution] The Masterplan has been adopted by the LPA as a material planning consideration in the preparation of pre-application advice, assessing planning applications and any other development management purposes. It has been informed by consultation on a draft plan and associated evidence documents in November 2022-January 2023. Comments made during the consultation have been taken into account in production of this final plan, with a Consultation Statement providing further detail in this regard.



 Masterplan Boundary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE AND STATUS

The Firepool site is allocated for a mixed-use, office-led development by the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan (2008). A retail-led mixed-use scheme was granted planning permission in 2019. However, circumstances have changed significantly since both the original policies were written and since the retail permission was granted. As such, the adopted development plan policy context for Firepool, and in particular the development content proposed in policy can be considered out of date. It is important that development of the site comes forward in a way responsive to the modern, changed circumstances. The Council as LPA must determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. A new Masterplan is needed to provide an up to date and justified policy context.

The Masterplan has been adopted by the LPA as a material planning consideration in the preparation pre-application advice, assessing planning applications and any other development management purposes.

It is important that the Masterplan avoids being overly prescriptive so that it can be reasonably flexible to further changing circumstances. As such, it is the Key Design Principles, Landscape Design Principles, Building Principles and Parameter Plans together with the justifications provided within the Masterplan document which have explicitly been adopted as material considerations. The Masterplan includes a detailed development schedule of uses [assuming this is provided] and indicative visualisations of a detailed scheme, however, these are provided for information only as examples of how the developer team has interpreted the masterplan principles. These elements of the document will hold no planning weight.

Further site-wide work has been identified by the LPA as being necessary post adoption, before it is appropriate for detailed planning applications to be considered. As such, the Masterplan has been adopted by the LPA subject to the satisfactory resolution of these outstanding issues. These following points may be resolved through ongoing work and engagement with the LPA and other stakeholders and potentially form a future addendum to the Masterplan, or via a formal outline/full planning application for the site as a whole:

- Continued iteration of the site-wide transport statement and framework travel plan to take a fully “Vision and Validate” compliant approach which identifies truly ambitious mode shift targets split out by different uses and modes, together with quantified impacts of potential measures and an understanding of how these potential measures relate to the different uses proposed across the site. This will enable detailed applications for specific plots to then be considered appropriately in the

context of the wider approach and requirements for the site as a whole.

- Agreeing an approach for delivering Biodiversity Net Gain across the site as a whole.

- Identification of building character areas and key groupings.

- Further clarification of how the proposed heat network might be delivered across the site as a whole.

- Signing up to a Local Labour Agreement incorporating employment and skills plan for the site as a whole.

LOCATION

Somerset West and Taunton Council area covers some 463 square kilometres and ranges from Exmoor to the edge of the Somerset Levels with major settlements in Taunton, Wellington and Minehead. The County town of Taunton is easily accessible from the M5 and its position between Bristol and Exeter has led to considerable commercial and residential development. The spatial strategy for the former Taunton Deane area identified Taunton as the primary centre for growth in the district, with town centre regeneration sites an important aspect. Firepool is the flagship regeneration site and key to delivering on the vision for Taunton. In 2017, Taunton was designated as a Garden Town.

- The Masterplan focuses on the area shown via the red line boundary on the site plan.
- The site is located either side of the River Tone, adjacent to Firepool Weir, Firepool Lock and the start of the Bridgwater and Taunton Canal, and to the south of Taunton Railway Station. It’s location between the station and the town centre, and facing the River Tone are key to the site’s context and development opportunities.
- The station provides regular services to key destinations such as Exeter (25 minute journey time), Bristol (30 minute journey time), London Paddington (1hr 45m journey time) and Cardiff (2 hour journey time). This is in addition to services to local destinations such as Bridgwater and Weston-super-Mare.
- The northern parcel of the masterplan includes has areas which have already been consented (parts of Block 3 and Block 6). This design has been integrated into the surrounding masterplan design and ties in with the southern parcels. The Innovation Centre in Block 6 is currently under construction..
- Pedestrian and cycling routes along the River Tone provide existing connections to the town centre and surrounding areas.

- Somerset County Cricket Club sits to the south of the site on the south side of the River Tone.

The Firepool site has previously received planning permission for a retail-led masterplan prepared by St Modwen in 2019 (application ref. no. 38/17/0150), though this permission is now considered to have lapsed.

Subsequently, the site has been subject to a drainage and levels application (application ref. no. 38/21/0440) to raise the main part of the site out of the flood plain and remove/redirect existing drainage within the site boundary.

Parts of Block 3 in the north of the masterplan area have also been approved (28th March 2022) as a detailed planning application (application ref. no. 38/21/0436) for a new office building, conversion of the existing GWR office building and the northern section of the boulevard.

The emerging masterplan has informed the design of the, already submitted, Southern boulevard landscape application (application ref. no. 38/22/0176).

MASTERPLAN PROPOSALS

The Masterplan proposes a mixed-use residential-led development comprising of:

- Approximately 430 dwellings with a mix of apartments, town houses and student flats.
- An ambitious commercial / leisure quarter potentially capable of accommodating multi-purpose venue, hotel, cinema, bowling alley, limited commercial/ retail floorspace, health hub and nursery.
- Accommodation and integration of the already consented Innovation Centre and “Block 3” office and restaurant proposals.
- A central boulevard linking from the station to the river with onward connections to the town centre incorporating sustainable urban drainage, tree planting and high quality public realm including an amphitheatre fronting the River Tone.
- An improved and futureproofed walking and cycling connection along National Cycle Network route 3 on the north bank of the River Tone as well as other connections internal to the site and identifying relevant external connections to neighbouring areas.
- Sustainability features including centralised cycle hub containing secure cycle storage, low traffic neighbourhood design and energy centre for potential heat network delivery.
- Re-provision of the existing boat club.

- Open space and play areas integrated into wider public realm and green infrastructure.

Whilst a specific mix of uses are included within the Masterplan, there is an inherent flexibility also built in which will enable future planning applications to respond to changes in circumstances within reason whilst still complying with the Masterplan. For instance, whilst the Masterplan includes identification of a multi-purpose venue within the site, alternative leisure-focused facilities or office development would still broadly comply. More significant deviation may require review of the Masterplan.

A series of key design principles, (split across the categories of Garden Town, Transport & Movement, Site Use / Development Mix, Built Form, Sustainability and Heritage) and parameter plans are identified. These are informed by consideration of up to date context and circumstances, engagement with key stakeholders, and specific evidence studies. These key design principles and parameter plans will be fundamental aspects of the final Masterplan for future development proposals to consider and respond to.

STUDIES

A series of studies have been undertaken to inform the masterplan and provide the evidence to support the masterplan work and these include:

- Office and Retail Market Update – Broadly this demonstrates the lack of demand for office and retail development in the current market, justifying the consideration of alternative uses for the site.
- Viability Assessment – This high level appraisal demonstrates the difficulties with delivering commercially viable and policy compliant development on the site and the reason why the Council needs to act as regenerator of last resort.
- Parking Strategy – This evidences the approach taken to accommodating parking demands for the site.
- Cycle Assessment – This considers the accessibility of the Masterplan for cycling.
- Townscape Visual Impact Assessment – This analyses the Masterplan proposals and their impact on the Taunton skyline.
- Heritage Assessment – This considers the impact on relevant heritage assets. It demonstrates that there are no overriding heritage constraints that would preclude development of the site that the Masterplan proposals would not harm the settings or significance of key heritage assets.
- Ecological Impact Assessment and Ecology Survey – These demonstrate the limited ecological interest of the site as a whole but the relative sensitivity of the river corridor. They have informed development of the Masterplan and supporting green infrastructure proposals.

- Nutrient Neutrality Assessment and Mitigation Strategy – This demonstrates the ability to achieve nutrient neutrality for the scheme, subject to detail, and that the Council as developer would appear to have a good prospect of securing delivery.
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report – Prepared to evaluate the environmental effects of the masterplan as per the findings of the screening exercise which concluded that the SEA should focus on air quality, biodiversity, climate change, the historic environment, landscape, sustainable transport, and climate change.
- Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Appropriate Assessment – Demonstrates that, following implementation of appropriate mitigation measures, there will be no adverse impact on the integrity of any European site, either alone or in-combination, as a result of development set out in the Firepool masterplan. This will ensure compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)
- Flood Risk Assessment – This demonstrates that the approach of raising the main part of the site out of the functional flood plain alleviates flood risk for this part of the site and in combination with the TTC5 flood works along the left bank of the River Tone will avoid raising flood risk elsewhere.

VIABILITY SUMMARY

High level viability appraisal demonstrates that the Firepool site faces significant challenges to enabling a viable and deliverable development. This reflects the market failure which has seen the site lay predominantly dormant and undelivered for the last 15 years as commercial developers have failed to deliver a commercially viable scheme which also responds well to the site’s context and local aspirations. However, the Council has different options available to it which a commercial developer does not, and has wider interests in delivering increased economic, social and environmental value for the town centre. This is why the Council is taking a proactive role in bringing the site forward itself.

The viability appraisal demonstrates that fully policy compliant development is extremely unlikely to be viable. This means that policy compliant levels of affordable housing and other policy contributions are very unlikely to be achievable. It also suggests that delivery of the Multi-Purpose Venue is very likely to be reliant on securing significant additional public subsidy

from elsewhere.

PHASING & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

SWT has sought to maximise funding opportunities that will help deliver the key infrastructure works that enable the rest of the site to come forward. The drainage and levels works will be completed first, providing the basis for the subsequent public realm works that will see the “boulevard” link from the station to the river completed, including the Amphitheatre. These works will start in 2022 and run through 2023.

These works will complete the raising of the levels north of the river and provide the Boulevard elements of the Public Realm which is being fully funded by grant funding and not Council borrowing. This will also upgrade utilities to remove the key barriers to further regeneration. It is expected the leisure elements such as the Cinema and Hotel will come forward as early phases with the possibility of being closely followed by residential uses, subject to phosphates solutions.


The Multi Performance Venue will be dependent on receipts from Firepool from commercial development and grant funding. Some flexibility around the venue may be required but the intention this adds to the leisure offer for the Town, subject to a viable business case. Leisure uses are intended to help fuse the retail and leisure experience in the Town Centre bringing new visitors into Taunton and encouraging those that already shop here to stay longer and enjoy a regenerated leisure led waterfront offer unique to Somerset.


An aerial architectural rendering of a city development project. The scene shows a mix of modern, multi-story buildings and older, lower-rise structures. A central feature is a large, open public space with a wide staircase and a paved plaza. The area is landscaped with numerous trees and greenery. A winding path or road runs along the bottom right, adjacent to a body of water. The overall atmosphere is one of a planned, integrated urban environment.


1.00 PROJECT BACKGROUND


1.00 SITE BACKGROUND


- This report focuses on the Firepool masterplan shown via the red line boundary on the adjacent site plan.
- The site is located adjacent to Firepool Weir, and to the south of Taunton Railway Station.
- The station provides regular services to key destinations such as Exeter (25 minute journey time), Bristol (30 minute journey time), London Paddington (1hr 45m journey time) and Cardiff (2 hour journey time). This is in addition to services to local destinations such as Bridgwater and Weston-super-Mare.
- The northern parcel of the masterplan includes Block 3 which has already been consented. This design has been integrated into the surrounding masterplan design and ties in with the southern parcels.
- Block 1 lies to the south of the River Tone and has been integrated into the masterplan.
- Pedestrian and cycling routes along the River Tone provide excellent connections to the town and surrounding areas.
- Somerset County Cricket Club sits to the south of the site on the south side of the River Tone.

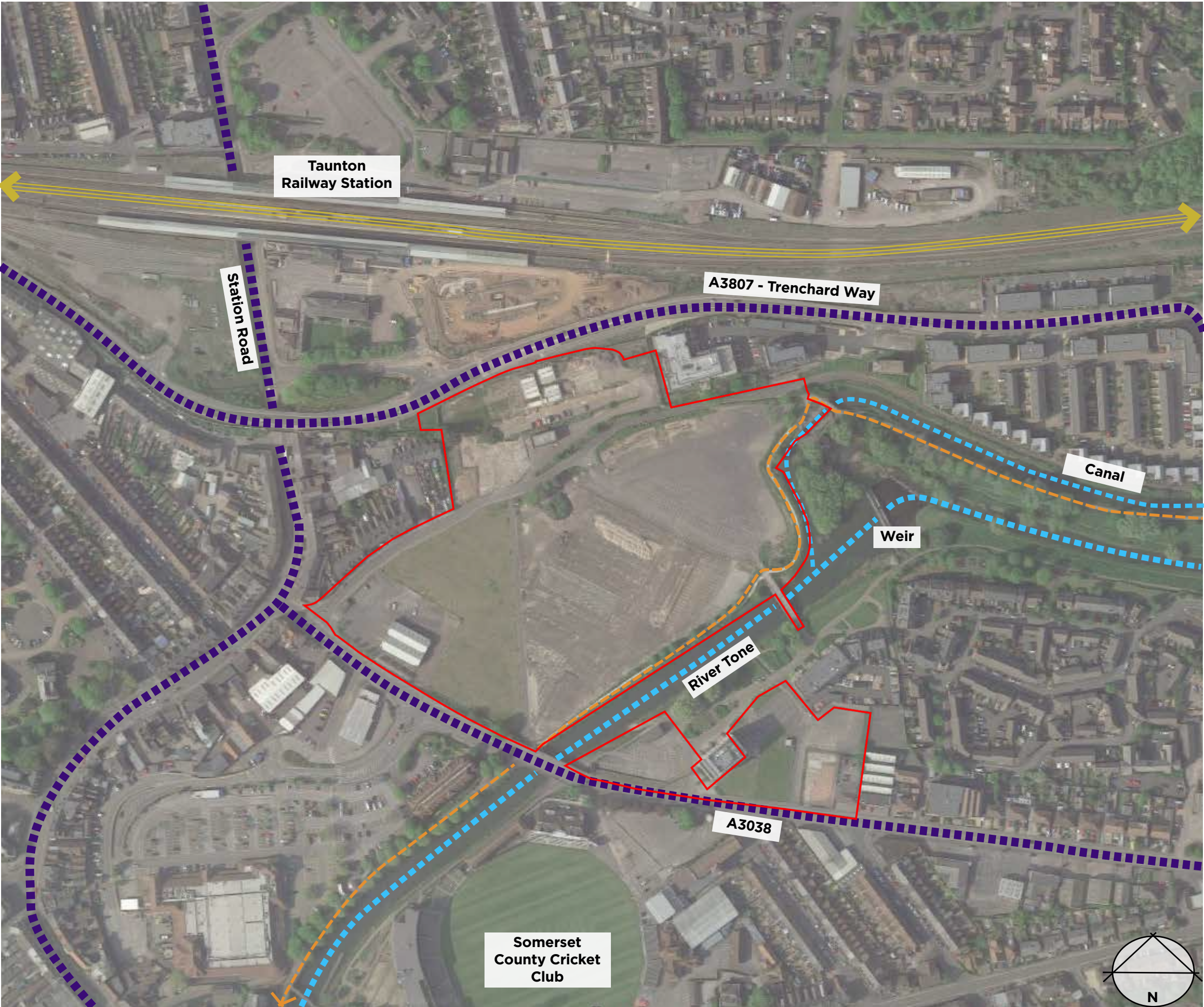
**Masterplan Boundary**

**Primary vehicle route and access point to the site**

**River/Canal**

**Established pedestrian & cycle routes**

**Railway Line**



1.00 PROJECT BACKGROUND

Somerset West and Taunton Council area covers some 463 square kilometres and ranges from Exmoor to the edge of the Somerset Levels with major settlements in Taunton, Wellington and Minehead. The County town of Taunton is easily accessible from the M5 and its position between Bristol and Exeter has led to considerable commercial and residential development including one of the first new Garden Towns.

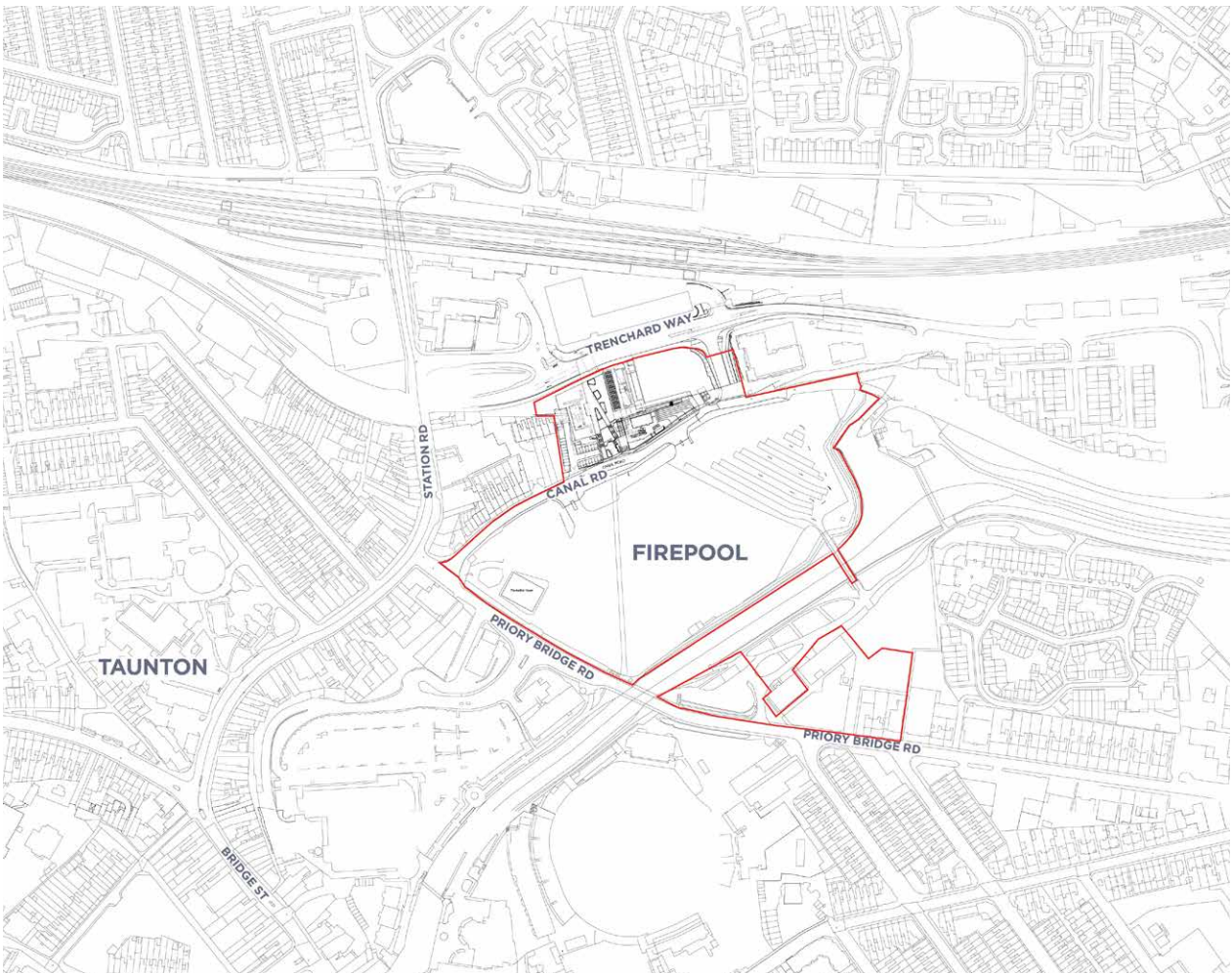
The Firepool site is a key Town Centre Regeneration Area which in 2019 secured outline Planning Consent for a commercial-led scheme. The emerging masterplan for the site has subsequently been updated to focus on a residential-led, mixed use development.

The emerging masterplan proposes six key blocks which comprise a variety of uses including:

- Residential
- Leisure and Entertainment (cinema, hotel, restaurants).
- Innovation Centre and small offices.
- Retained Railway Building.
- Pedestrianised and cycle accessible Boulevard linking the station and river.

The overall design objectives for Firepool are based on the Taunton Garden Town and various other adopted design guides, the themes of which are set out in the following pages.

This design report seeks to demonstrate the design process of the overall masterplan for Firepool.



TAUNTON TOWN MAP

 Firepool Site boundary

1.01 TAUNTON GARDEN TOWN VISION / DESIGN CHARTER & CHECKLIST (2019)

“Taunton, the County Town of Somerset will be flourishing, distinctive, and healthy – and the country’s benchmark Garden Town. We will be proud to live and work in a place where the outstanding natural environment, diverse and thriving economy and inspiring cultural offer, contribute to an exceptional quality of life and well-being”.

The Taunton Garden Town Vision was adopted in July 2019,

To further influence the thinking of developers in the evolution of the detail design of their proposals a checklist has been devised. The checklist is based on four themes which have been identified, against which the Garden Town activity will be structured:

- 1. **Grow our town greener** – Green infrastructure to be integrated in the design and connecting with the landscape, green corridors and watersides. Improve water and air management and habitat creation.
- 2. **Branching out** – Promote sustainable and active modes of travel over all others. Provisions to facilitate the use of cycles and electric vehicles. Create green town ‘Gateways’.
- 3. **Growing quality green places to live** – Creating accessible and diverse town centres and garden neighbourhoods to promote community cohesion and resilience.
- 4. **New shoots and blossom** – a dynamic and prosperous community founded on knowledge, culture and business

The Charter and Checklist will be incorporated within and endorsed by the wider Somerset West and Taunton District Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Somerset West and Taunton Council has developed a wider Town Centre Regeneration Strategy in the Taunton Garden Town 2040 Plan. The overall design objectives for Firepool are based on these themes set out in Taunton Garden Town Prospectus:

- **Building a quality new neighbourhood for in-town living** – Firepool is one of the key town centre regeneration sites and will capitalise on its proximity to the Railway Station and Town Centre through integrated walking and cycling routes for future residents. The proposals will improve accessibility to bus stops on Trenchard Way and provide the opportunity for a bus route through Canal Road. It will cater to a wide demographic, encompassing varied income and age groups, through different housing sizes, tenures and typologies. Creating a greener development – biodiversity and greening will be at the core of Firepool through the integration of open spaces, planting more street trees, preservation and enhancement of the natural green edge along the river, creation of rain gardens and swales for sustainable water management and biodiversity net gain.
- **Becoming cleaner and smarter** – Firepool will be a benchmark for carbon neutral development in the South West through adopting modern methods of construction and sustainable building materials. Sustainable surface water management and an integrated approach to mobility transport will also be key.
- **A dynamic and prosperous mixed-use community** – promoting enterprise, culture, leisure and sustainable living. Firepool will offer flexible use of blocks and buildings which will be delivered in a phased and commercially viable manner.

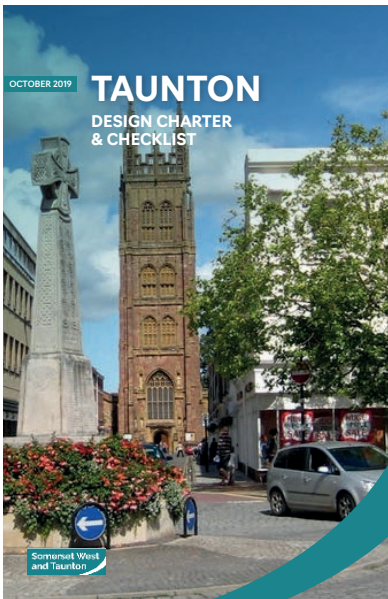


Fig.1: Future town centre - Taunton Garden Town Vision

1.02 TAUNTON GARDEN TOWN 2040 TOWN CENTRE PROSPECTUS

Taunton was designated as a Garden Town in early 2017 following a submission to Government. This submission reflected the Council's commitment to deliver significant new housing growth focused on a number of new garden communities as well as a regenerated town centre.

The Somerset West and Taunton Garden Town Prospectus sets out the advantages and benefits of Taunton in terms of physical environment, location and connections with it's surrounding area. The Prospectus also aims to outline what the town aspires to be in the near future using a series of areas for potential, as set out below:

Green Infrastructure: Integral to Taunton's growth and provides notable opportunities to deliver the Garden Town vision. The councils strategy is to ensure that new development does not obstruct green corridors. It seeks to promote links between green spaces using cycling paths and a 'garden green network' of green corridors to provide movement between parks, open spaces and waterscapes to foster healthy and communal lifestyles, which are rich in wildlife.

The need for funding: Identifying regeneration sites and developing these under a number of Government initiatives. Many of these sites were included in the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan (TTCAAP) (2008), setting out a policy framework and indicative programmes for the delivery of the sites, with an expected completion date of 2060.

Blue Infrastructure: To re-establish connections between Taunton and the surrounding landscape by making the most of its rivers, canal, streams and watercourses. Intertwining green and blue infrastructure to link regeneration sites and create enjoyable pedestrian and cycle routes to the town centre. There is also the opportunity for water management, irrigation and the creation of wildlife rich, flood resistant habitats.

Heritage - Improvements to the towns public realm are proposed which will improve the setting of the town's landmark buildings and prioritise pedestrian and cycle movement, and improve the quality of life for many in the town.

Movement - The vehicle network to the area will be safe and integrated with the landscape to provide attractive and functional places. Upgrades to the cycling, walking and bus networks will be provided to ensure connectivity and reduce the need for car travel.

Culture - The arts and cultural offer for the town will be expanded with new developments helping to make Taunton a focus for the arts, and to maximise the use of existing and new open spaces and public realm, particularly along the river frontage.

Retail - New spaces and quality developments will encourage economic, cultural, recreational and leisure opportunities, boosting the economy and creating an inspiring environment.

Employment, Skills and Inclusion - Development will bring enhanced job opportunities for residents and attract high value business to encourage growth in a post COVID-19 environment. Improved services and infrastructure will help to achieve this.

Climate Initiatives - The Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Action Plan identifies a climate routemap. One action is to deliver Firepool as an exemplar for zero carbon and climate resilient development.

Design Quality - Design should be specific to Taunton. With a strong vernacular or materials palette to compliment the town's historic features. Attractive, pedestrian-focussed public spaces are essential to create a town centre which encourages people to invest in the town centre.



Fig.4: 3. Blue infrastructure - Taunton Garden Town 2040 Town Centre Prospectus



Fig.2: 1. Green Infrastructure - Taunton Garden Town 2040 Town Centre Prospectus



Fig.3: 2. Need for funding - Taunton Garden Town 2040 Town Centre Prospectus



1.03 THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Somerset West and Taunton Council declared a Climate Emergency in February 2019 and an Ecological Emergency in September 2020.

Climate Emergency Declaration - The council vowed to work towards making Somerset West and Taunton carbon neutral by 2030. The council pledged to facilitate more cycling, walking and encourage the use of public transport and provide more EV charging points. High energy efficiency standards for new buildings, council buildings and housing. Waste reduction and generating renewable energy were also targeted.

Somerset's Climate Emergency Strategy -Somerset County Council and the 4 District Councils each declared or recognised a Climate Emergency and agreed to work together with partners to produce a Climate Emergency Strategy for the whole County of Somerset.

In summary the Climate Emergency strategy has been built around achieving 3 goals:

Goal 1 - To decarbonise Local Authorities, the wider public sector estates and reduce our carbon footprint.

Goal 2 - To work towards making Somerset a Carbon Neutral County by 2030

Goal 3 - To have a Somerset which is prepared for, and resilient to, the impacts of Climate Change

SWT Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Action Plan - Sets out the short, medium and long-term projects to begin to commit resources to taking the action.

An indicative routemap for beyond Year one has been produced for the issue of the carbon neutral economy. This summarises what we think some of the next steps might be as well as the long-term direction of travel. The delivery of Firepool is included as a major part of this plan to work towards carbon neutrality.

The Council also has long-standing aspirations to develop key sites in the town centre including Firepool which would reduce the need of residents to travel, and deliver lower environmental impacts in comparison to and reduce burdens on developing greenfield sites in future years.

Climate Positive Planning - This Interim Guidance Statement seeks to clarify existing planning policy requirements within the Somerset West and Taunton Local Planning Authority area, with regards to planning for the climate emergency.

Somerset West and Taunton Ecological Emergency Vision and Action Plan - In September 2020 Somerset West and Taunton Council (SWTC) declared an Ecological Emergency complementing its Climate Emergency declaration made in February 2019. Nature has moved up the international, national and local

political agenda. 2021's

COP26[6] focussed more on nature than ever before, calling all governments to endorse the Leaders' Pledge for Nature.

Of particular importance will be the requirement for a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG) from all new developments (from 2023) and the delivery of the National Nature Recovery Network through Local Nature Recovery Strategies which will be delivered in partnership with local government, non-governmental organisations, the private sector and the public.

SWT Vision statement:

“Our vision is a district where the needs of wildlife, people, and our local economies are integrated in a way that enables nature and communities to thrive now and in the future.”

As part of the Proposed Ecological Emergency Action Plan, Firepool is noted as a one of the projects to be part of this plan:

“Firepool development in Taunton is delivered as an exemplar site that integrates ecological protection and enhancement into the fabric of the site design.”



Fig.6: Climate emergency images

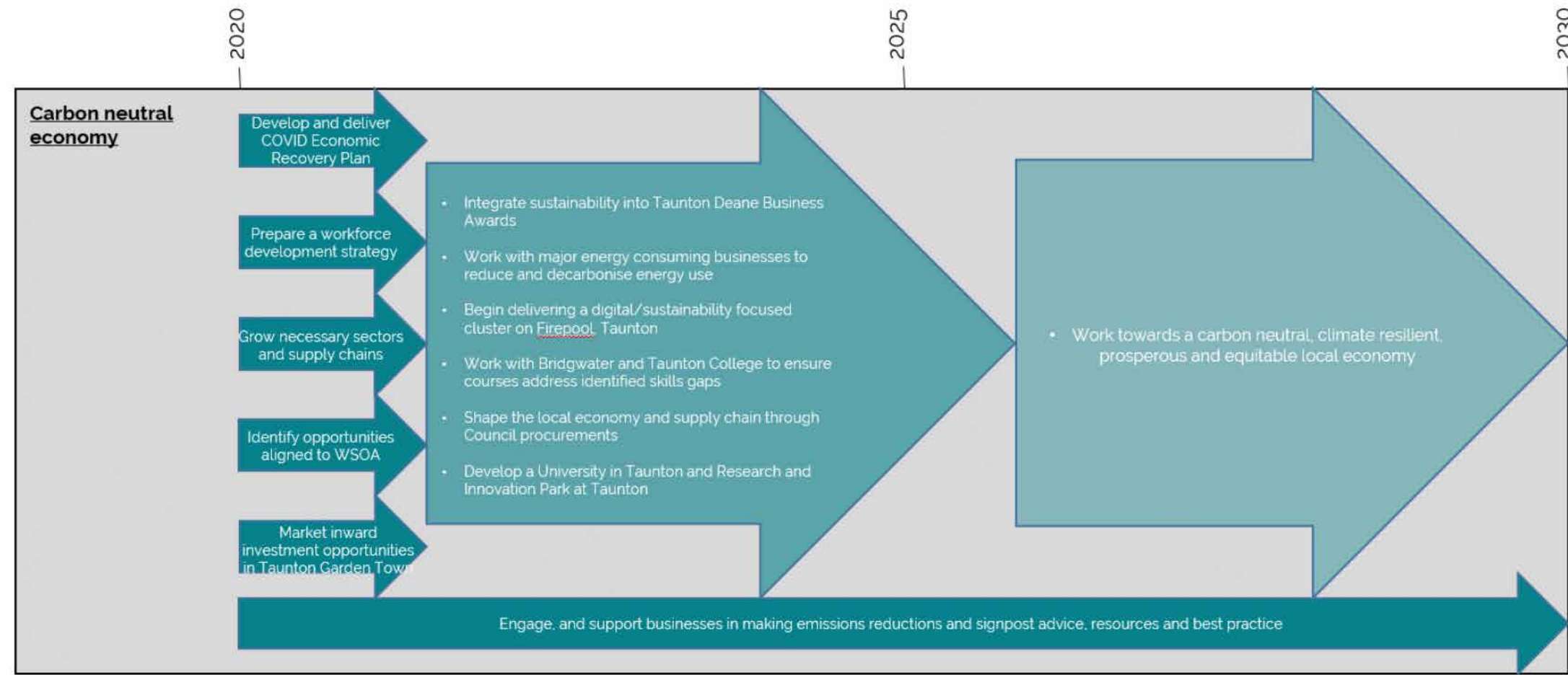


Fig.5: Carbon neutral economy routemap - Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Action Plan

1.04 PUBLIC REALM DESIGN GUIDE SPD (2021)

This document sets out Somerset West and Taunton Council planning authority’s aspirations for maintaining and improving the public realm design quality across the Taunton Garden Town area, intended to influence street design for sustainable mobility and placemaking, urban arboretum, lighting, signage, materials etc.

Below sets out some of the further design elements used to achieve this:

Public Space Improvement Project - SWT have already embarked on a public space improvement project that is reviewing traffic use of particular town centre streets in order to dedicate more street space to people walking and to bicycle users. Development of sites such as the old cattle market at Firepool, of Tangier Way and the Coal Orchard, also mean more public space with new and improved streets are on the horizon.

Opportunities for Planting/Gardens - The council has identified opportunities for ‘Greening’ the town centre, this is shown on the map opposite. Firepool has been identified for avenue tree planting around and through the site.

Street Gardens - Making hard surfaces more permeable and sponge-like will slow flows and reduce flooding impacts. Planting in footway spaces to encourage water infiltration along with the use of ‘green gyms’ and parklets are just a few methods of softening the landscape.

The River and Canal corridor - Should enhance the connection to the waterways by water edge profile treatment, with good access for recreation and create new marginal and wetland habitats to encourage new wildlife, whilst also being mindful of water safety.

Materials, Components, Signs, Roadmarkings, Lighting, Street Furniture etc. - Sets out the public realm elements for developments in different areas of Taunton, the Firepool Boulevard is included in the Core standard zone and the remaining masterplan streets are located within the Town Standard which can both be seen in the adjacent diagrams. This standardises the elements throughout public developments in Taunton and ensures quality and robustness is maintained, this also covers detailing and standard layouts.

A more specific example from the guide is the ‘Station - Inner Gateway Vision’

The key factors in the vision for the station are

- Removing physical barriers to movement in and around it.
- Improving the image of a station and so leveraging wider development

The Firepool boulevard and masterplan is an integral part of this important vision and how the National Rail land interacts with highways and the Firepool Boulevard.

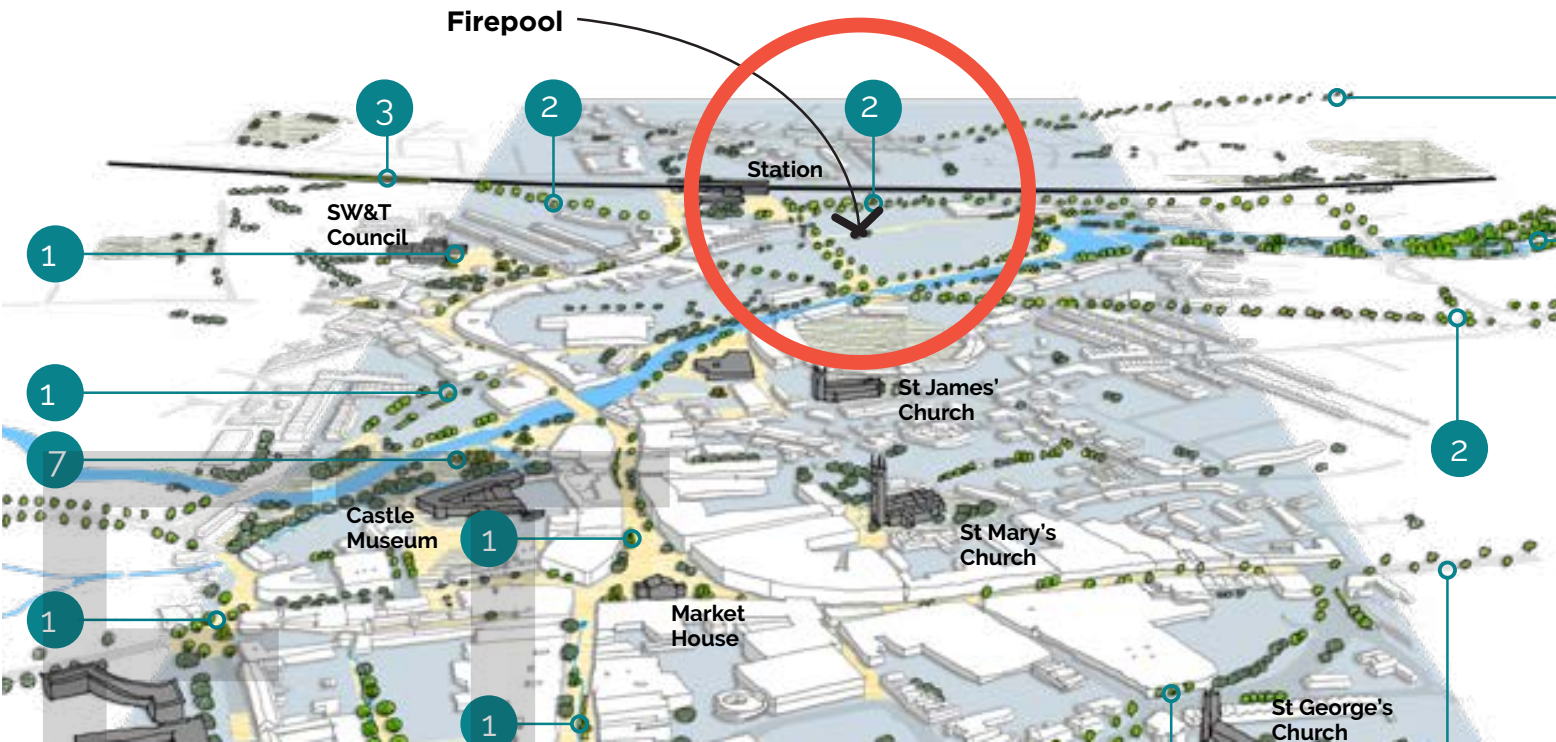


Fig.7: Street garden and planting locations in town centre - Public Realm Design Guide

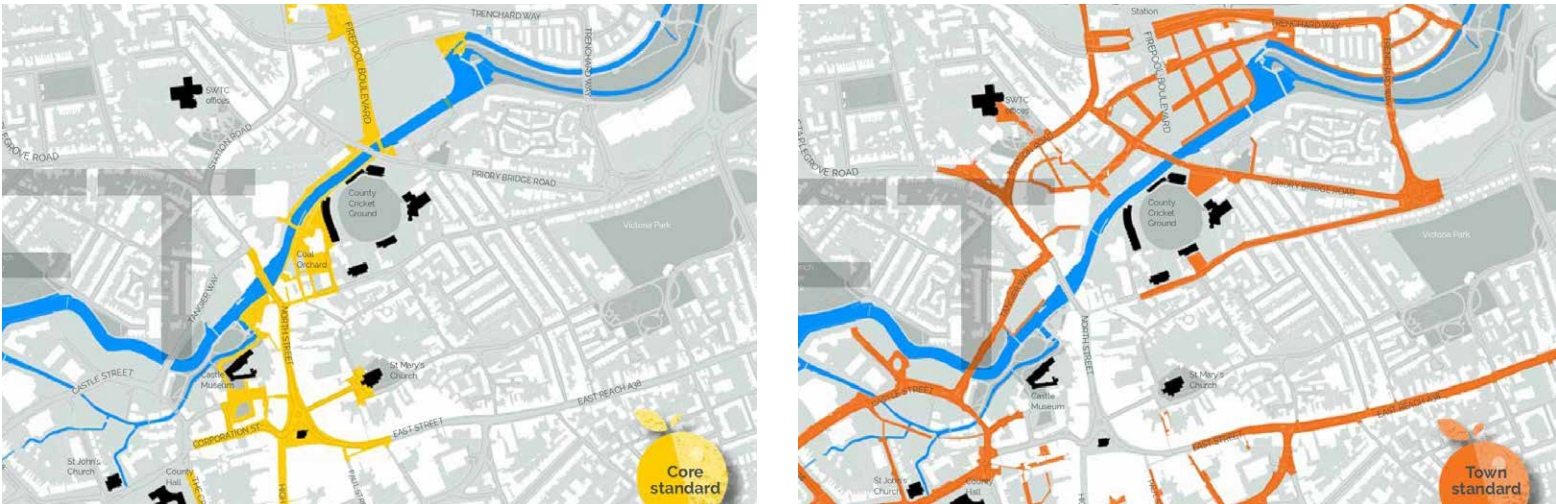


Fig.10: Standard area extent plans - Public Realm Design Guide



Fig.9: Examples of street gardens and ‘sponge towns’



Figure 129. | river edges with retained wall edges, concrete construction slip access and steps



Figure 130. | river edges with soft sloping edges, gabion construction slip access and steps

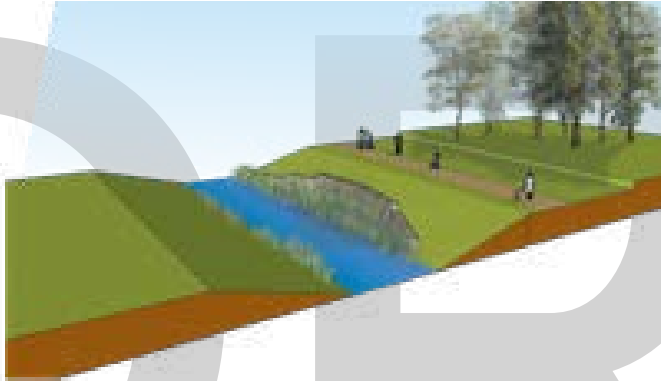


Figure 132. | river edges with soft edges, gabion construction reed wetland

Fig.8: Water edge diagrams - Public Realm Design Guide

1.05 2021 DISTRICTWIDE DESIGN GUIDE (2021)

This guide sets out how the council aims to maintain and improve the quality of design. It explains some key principles and how these can be achieved in a sustainable way.

The Recommended Design Process -

- The DDG sets out the design process to be followed for all SWT projects from project brief through to design concept and into a planning application submission. Each of these stages has it's own indepth analysis of the design as it evolves.

The masterplan has been developed using this analysis and follows the key development of a design concept below:

- Entry point/s to the development
- Frontage and boundary treatment
- Existing trees, hedges, structures or buildings to be retained
- Location of focal points/features and key groups of buildings
- Townscape character
- Coherent green and blue infrastructure
- Renewable energy methods
- Prioritise walking and cycling as the primary modes for movement
- Approach to the moving and parked vehicle.

This report follows the same format:

1. Context Appraisal
2. Site Appraisal
3. Design Concept

The masterplan has then been through the Consultation and Engagement stage to suit the DDG process and taken this input through into the Detailed Design stage to develop the plan further.

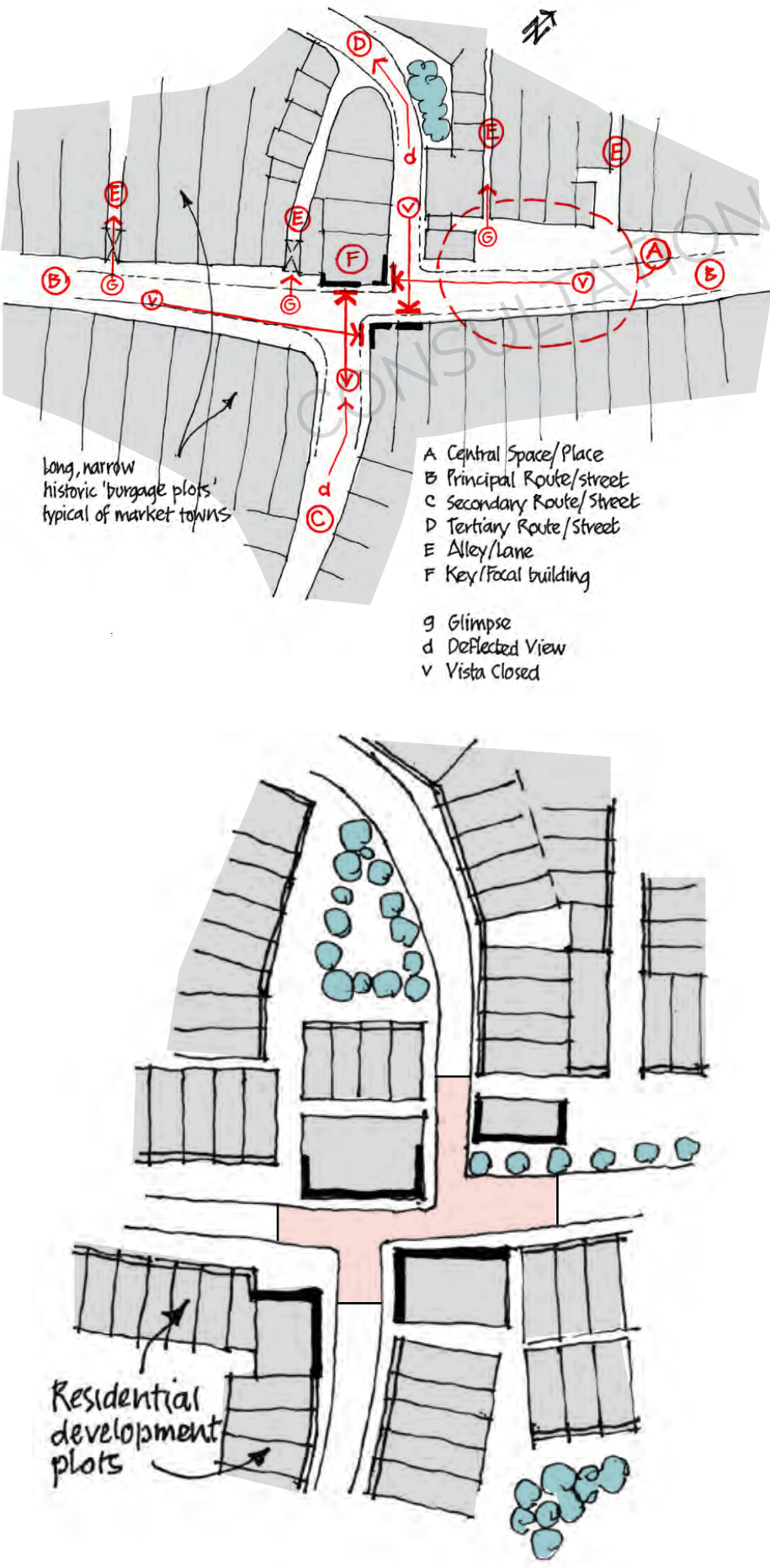
Placemaking -

The DDG looks at site structure and built form to inform placemaking decisions within the design process, some of these principles are shown in the adjacent diagrams.

The masterplan design has closely followed the block making process set out in these principles. Using focal points, corner turning, continuity of residential terraces and key grouping of buildings to development a cohesive and refined masterplan.



Fig.11: Districtwide Design Guide Diagrams



1.06 PRE-APPLICATION INVOLVEMENT - 2020 DRAFT MASTERPLAN

Somerset West and Taunton council, along with the design team, have conducted a series of consultations to date, based on the 2020 draft masterplan. This consultation has informed the design of the developed masterplan and southern boulevard.

A summary of this consultation is set out in the table:

Event:	Date:	Attendees / Comments by:	Notes:
2020 Draft Masterplan Pre-App response	20th July 2021	Comments provided by: Policy, Development Management, Landscape Officer & Conservation Officer	Comments were summarised in an extensive table and related both to the presentation of the design information as well as the design itself.
Heritage Consultees Workshop	20th August 2021	Applicant team, SWT Planning, Historic England, South West Heritage	Presentation of the 2021 BDP masterplan and discussion of heritage requirements and additional studies needed.
Block 3 Pre-App response	9th September 2021	Formal pre-app response received from LPA team	Comments considered within the Block 3 application (now submitted for approval).
Flooding & Drainage Workshop	9th September 2021	Applicant team, SWT Planning, Environment Agency, Wessex Water, Canal & River Trust	Meeting generally related to drainage & levels application but included useful feedback regarding access to the river and lock for maintenance including 8m buffer zone.
Public consultation	30th September 2021	Public Zoom event	Consultation was undertaken on Block 3 and the emerging design for the Southern Boulevard & Amphitheatre
Quality Review Panel	30th September 2021	Regional review panel organised by the LPA	Consultation on the overall BDP masterplan, Block 3 design, and emerging Southern Boulevard design
Block 1 Pre-App response	8th November 2021	Formal pre-app response received from LPA team	Block 1 design currently on hold
Block 1 Sport, Play & Community facilities pre-app response	23rd November 2021	Policy information received for consideration on Block 1	Information also relevant to the overall masterplan
Cycling Infrastructure	2nd December 2021	Applicant team and Sara Ellwood, SWT Active Travel Officer	Workshop to discuss the wider Taunton cycling strategy and how Firepool will fit in
Ecology Workshop	15th March 2022	Applicant Team, SWT, EA, Canal & Rivers Trust	Workshop to discuss ecological findings and mitigation measures
Emerging Masterplan Presentation #1	19th July 2022	Applicant Team, LPA	Presentation of masterplan to the LPA for comments - Massing and landscaping
Emerging Masterplan Presentation #2	1st August 2022	Applicant Team, LPA	Presentation of masterplan to the LPA for comments - Detailed buildings and landscaping
Quality Review Panel	15th August 2022	Applicant Team, QRP	Independent and impartial panel of built environment experts to assess the design of buildings and place
EA Meeting	11th August & 14th September 2022	Applicant Team, EA, Canal & Rivers Trust, Ecologist	Workshops to discuss river bank proposals

Illustrative Masterplan



Fig.13: 2020 Draft Masterplan

Fig.12: Summary Table of Consultation

1.06 BLOCK 1 PRE-APPLICATION RESPONSE - 2020 DRAFT MASTERPLAN

The latest pre-app for Block 1 of the masterplan was submitted for consideration on 19th August 2021. This work has not be progressed any further, whilst the team concertrates on the masterplan.

A summary of this consultation and response is set out in the table below:

Issue:	General Action Point	Developer Response
Heritage Assets	The submission of a draft Heritage Statement would prompt discussion with HE and the Council’s Conservation Officer.	This has been considered as part of the Masterplan process and will get picked up in a planning application
Design & Layout	The LPA would wish to continue discussions on this matter prior to the submission of an application. Scheduling a QRP session would seem a critical first step.	Changes have been made as shown in the parameter plans and before a Planning Application is to be made QRP sessions will be helpful. More detailed comments below.
Transport	The LPA would wish to continue discussions on this matter prior to the submission of an application. A draft Transport Assessment, Travel Plan and CEMP, plus review of some of the layout concerns, would assist those discussions.	Addressed in the wider masterplan and to be more full considered as part of any planning application
Affordable Housing	The LPA would wish to the applicant to continue discussions on this matter with the Development Enabling Specialist.	Will be subject to the scheme wide viability assessment which demonstrates insufficient viability for affordable housing. Further viability studies will accompany the B! planning application(s)
Sustainable Construction	The LPA would wish to continue discussions on this matter prior to the submission of an application	Noted and will be undertaken and please note MP consideration of a Heat Network/Energy Centre
Ecology & Biodiversity	The LPA would wish to continue discussions on this matter prior to the submission of an application	Noted and will be undertaken and please note MP consideration of this in other studies
Flood Risk	The LPA would wish you to continue discussions on this matter with the relevant bodies prior to the submission of an application	Flood Risk Technical Statement being prepared as part of the MP process
CIL	(1) To scope, undertake and understand the conclusions of the Transport Assessment in terms of mitigating impacts, to correlate with policy requirements for modal shift, active/sustainable travel and to address the climate emergency declaration. (2) To assist the LPA’s review of play, sport and community infrastructure. (3) To regularly review the requirements for pre-school, primary and secondary education contributions with SCC, through the LPA. (4) To liaise with the NHS Engagement Team, through the LPA, to understand the potential impacts or requirements for the provision of local Primary, Secondary or Community Health Care services for Block 1 and the wider Firepool site. (5) To consider the impacts of the required obligations with regard to development viability and instigate discussions with the LPA.	Will be subject to the scheme wide viability assessment which demonstrates insufficient viability for policy compliant contributions. Further viability studies will accompany the B1 planning application(s)

Design & Layout Comments	Developer Response
Design Vision for PBR	This would be helpful but FP is a large site as it is and we suggest a wider policy review for PBR would be a key subject area for the new local plan - a taster for this is already provided in the TGT40 vision document
Street Tree Zone	The buildings have been set back in the MP to allow for street trees and this will be a key feature of future planning applications
Commercial Uses	These were not public commercial uses but for building users
Spaces	This will be addressed in future planning application(s)
Green Elements	This will be addressed in future planning application(s)
Car Parking	This will become parking for Block 1 only - car park area has reduced
Building Heights	Building Heights have been reduced in response to the pre app advice and this is reflected in the parameter plans and the density calculations
Block Depth	This is also reduced in the parameter plans
Overlooking	Windows on east elevation will be removed in any aplaning application
Winters Field	82 PBR is not now part of the scheme so this comment not relevant
POS Wilson Yard	82 PBR is not now part of the scheme so this comment not relevant
Overheating	More detailed thermal modelling will accompany future planning applications
Envelope	Pitched roofs have been considered but don’t meet the site orientation and add to overall height
Materials	This will be addressed in future planning application(s)
Private Gardens	This will be addressed in future planning application(s)
LEAP	This will be addressed in future planning application(s)
Bin Stores	This will be addressed in future planning application(s)
Sub Stations	This will be addressed in future planning application(s)
Roof mounted plant	This will be addressed in future planning application(s)
Greening	This will be addressed in future planning application(s)
PV/Green Roofs	This will be addressed in future planning application(s)

Fig.14: Block 1 Pre-App Response Table

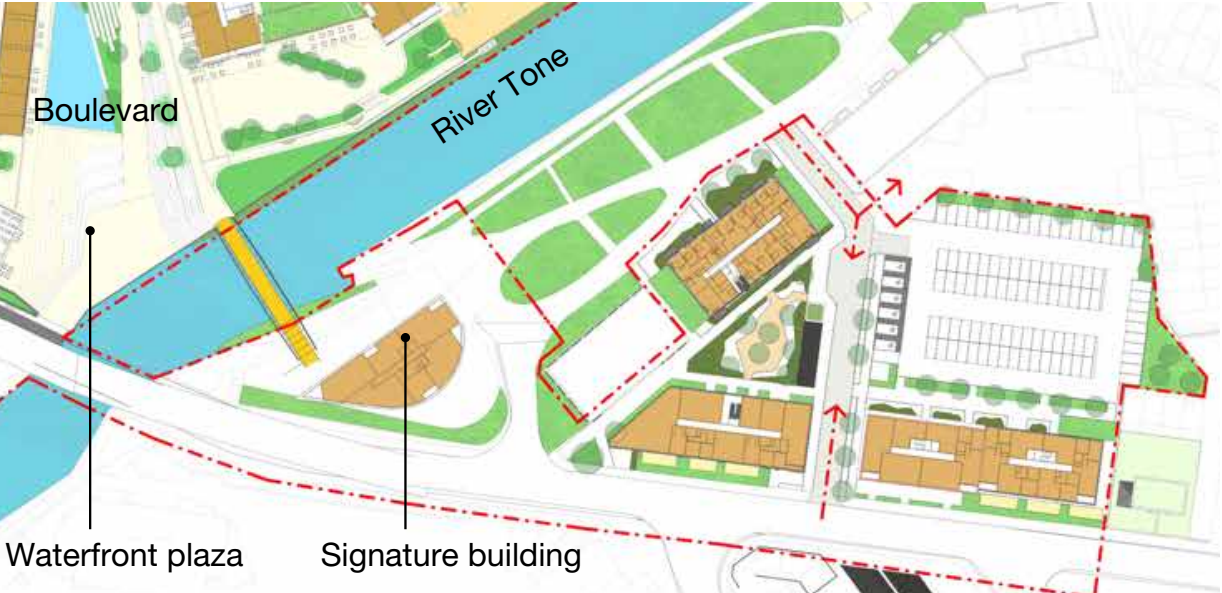


Fig.15: 2020 Draft Masterplan - Block 1

1.07 KEY DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The major stakeholders have determined a new vision for the site, these have been updated following and in response to public consultation. The key features are:

1. Garden Town

2. Transport & Movement

3. Site Use / Development Mix

4. Built Form

5. Sustainability

6. Heritage

Whilst reports accompanying the Masterplan will require reviewing and updating, the Masterplan has been designed with flexibility through Highways access and the design of Blocks to allow the scheme to adapt and allow flexibility in regard to Uses and Building Heights.

1. Garden Town

- Taunton should turn to face and address the river. The Firepool site presents an opportunity to do this through high quality placemaking
- Green corridors along the river edge and canal are an important link between the countryside and town centre: Firepool has an important role in the transition from rural to urban character
- Blue infrastructure should be used to link Taunton’s regeneration sites and the surrounding areas. This could be achieved through options for moorings, jetties and a river taxi
- A tree lined route along the river’s edge and Priory Bridge Road should be a priority
- The masterplan should create open space around Firepool Lock that benefits from views towards the Pump House and Children’s Wood LNR
- Character areas within masterplan landscaping should be used to define site hierarchy
- Consideration of where sun and shade occur can help encourage use of external spaces
- The need for safety along the river corridor should be balanced with ecological needs for reduced light spill
- SUDS should be integrated into the public realm and green infrastructure throughout the site. Where any significant attenuation infrastructure is proposed, then this should be designed to permanently hold water so that it becomes a permanent and attractive feature
- The character, scale and naming of the major public realm interventions (i.e. Boulevard and plaza) should be made more appropriate to a ‘town’ scale (e.g. Street, square, avenue)
- A public art strategy (as well as green infrastructure) should be used to create active spaces where people linger rather than just thoroughfares
- Any on street parking should be broken up with landscape features

2. Transport & Movement

- Support a shift away from car dependency by understanding the wider Taunton travel network and ensuring that the masterplan layout responds by offering convenient connections into the wider network

- Identify how cyclists and pedestrians are likely to access the cricket ground and town centre (via Coal Orchard) in order to determine whether a new bridge parallel to Priory Bridge Road is justified
- Undertake analysis of access to public transport that serves the site to ensure movement through the site is fully considered. Safeguard the option for a future bus route along Canal Road by retaining a potential ‘bus gate’ across the boulevard
- Given the scale and location, the site will be busy: cyclists and pedestrians should be segregated on key distributor routes to ensure everyone can move safely through and around the site
- Routes along the riverfront will need to be designed with surveillance and safety strategies with a particular focus on designing in improved natural surveillance and designing out potential for anti-social behaviour and perceived safety concerns along the section meeting up with Firepool Lock.
- Residential cycle storage - secure, convenient, on-plot storage to suit Districtwide Design Guide.
- Non-residential cycle storage - provide a combination of appropriately sized centralised secure facility with lockers etc. and convenient Sheffield stands close to entrances of key destinations on site.
- A strategy for car clubs and bike hire should be included
- Residential parking should be designed to discourage habitual car use
- Surface parking courts within residential areas should be avoided as they are less secure and result in areas of unbroken hard surface
- Consider whether the existing Canal Road junction can be narrowed to better serve pedestrian and cycle movement
- Consider the needs of disabled users who need to drive (and park) to visit the site
- Walking, wheeling and cycling routes to be coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive, designed in line with LTN1/20 and Inclusive Mobility Guidance.
- Streets to be designed to maximum 20mph speeds in line with Manual for Streets and avoid potential for anti-social parking
- Incorporate high quality, coherent and legible signage for those walking, wheeling and cycling, designed to fit with a wider town centre signage strategy

3. Site Use / Development Mix

- Establish who the target users of the Firepool area will be and aim to deliver a mixed use site – living, working and visiting – in order to create a community
- Balance a need to bring younger workers to the town, while catering for the established family market and potential ‘downsizer’ market who might be attracted to the riverfront
- Look for ways to increase use of the riverside including amenity, recreation, education, ecology and social events. Locate highest value developments overlooking river
- Undertake an analysis of the proposed plot uses to establish which can be made car free and rely on sustainable travel modes
- Provide a mix of green space, biodiversity, allotments, children’s play space on the site (where feasible within spatial constraints)
- Establish likely Housing tenures and affordable homes targets
- The development mix should propose a mix of uses that are contemporary, sustainable, viable and futureproofed for the site, retaining some flexibility within the Masterplan to account for potential future changing circumstances.
- Each development use should be located according to access, scale and to provide a mixed use development with complimentary uses side by side
- The site should deliver an appropriate mixed use development focused around a new commercial/leisure quarter and town centre living accommodation which will complement and enhance the town centre.
- Retail within the site should be limited in scale and focus on convenience retail and appropriate food and beverage outlets in order to avoid detrimental impacts to the primary shopping area whilst making the most of the boulevard and riverfront location.
- The Masterplan should be flexible about the specific uses permissible within the commercial/leisure quarter to avoid unnecessary prescription, and reasonably allow for changing circumstances within these overarching uses.
- The commercial/leisure quarter should consider opportunities to accommodate community uses and usage as detailed proposals develop

1.07 KEY DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The major stakeholders have determined a new vision for the site. The key features are:

1. Garden Town

2. Transport & Movement

3. Site Use / Development Mix

4. Built Form

5. Sustainability

6. Heritage

4. Built Form

- Spaces, the public realm and movement should be the driving for behind the scale and shape of development plots, while building form should be informed by environmental & sustainability factors
- Storey heights should be appropriately informed and justified through an analysis of context and protection of heritage features
- Buildings should be broken down into Character Areas following landscape and heritage cues
- Houses should be arranged within development plots so as to avoid long runs of exposed back gardens which have security concerns and can be unattractive. Back to back houses should be preferred but where not possible the property should be designed to have dual frontage and appropriate integrated garden storage
- Building form should be developed that reduces single aspect homes and avoids north facing single aspect dwellings entirely
- Building design should be contemporary, providing an appropriately evidenced and balanced response to both the historical character and context of the area and the opportunities provided by the site

5. Sustainability

- A zero carbon vision for the site to be integral to all decisions. An energy hierarchy should be followed to ensure all techniques identified flow as part of that hierarchy
- Follow the principals of “Towards Zero Carbon Buildings” in the emerging Districtwide Design Guide
- Identify potential energy-related opportunities such as district heat network, hydro, water source heat pumps, roof-mounted solar, DC share
- Facilitate sustainable, active travel as default through internal site layout design and ensure suitable connections are made onto the current wider Taunton travel network
- Whole life embodied carbon should be considered when deciding on a site-wide material palette
- Building form should be designed around sun path to optimise solar gain and shading to suit building uses
- Opportunities to adopt Passivhaus standards, particularly in housing, should be implemented
- Explore opportunities for on-site biodiversity net gain with a particular focus on how net gain can enhance the river corridor
- Incorporate water efficiency measures into the design

6. Heritage

- The area is historic and an understanding of key heritage buildings both designated and non-designated should inform the masterplan (analysis should include reference to the Historic Environment Record)
- Conservation areas should be identified to assess any impacts on them due to development
- The masterplan should enhance views of the church towers. The scale of proposed buildings should not cause harm to the setting of churches and listed buildings. Historic England should be consulted on the impact.
- The River Tone, Bridgwater and Taunton Canal, and Railways have all shaped the site (both physically and through historic uses). This history should inform site placemaking, character and naming by creating references to heritage.
- Heritage narrative should be provided to determine if the works that comprise the masterplan are enough to trigger impacts to on-site or off-site assets (without evidence a full SEA may be required)

An aerial architectural rendering of a city block. The scene features several modern, multi-story buildings with flat roofs and large windows. A central green space with trees and a small pond is visible. A river flows along the bottom edge of the block. The overall color palette is muted, with greys, greens, and blues. The text '2.00 CONTEXT APPRAISAL HISTORY' is overlaid in the upper left quadrant.

2.00 CONTEXT APPRAISAL HISTORY

2.01 HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF TAUNTON

1. Saxon Origins

- Town founded on slightly higher ground within river valley.
- Site was the centre of the Bishop of Winchester’s manor.
- The location was a convenient river crossing point.
- A ditch, bank and fort defended the settlement.
- Market place set at the junction of routes into the town.

2. Medieval Planning

- Bridge built and water mill with its mill stream established.
- The castle is enlarged: it constrains growth to the west.
- Regular ‘burgage plots’ for merchants are laid out around the market place and streets.
- Augustinian Priory NE of the town walls, constraining growth.
- Bishop establishes a fishery (Vivarium), south of High Street.
- Suburbs grow beyond the gates, along routes to the east and north.

3. Georgian Improvements

- Taunton grows new areas, following the earlier closure of the Priory and loss of the walls.
- Hammet Street and Church Square frame St Mary’s tower and link to the Parade.
- Imposing Market House becomes focus of the Parade.
- Castle is remodelled and many older buildings are re-fronted in the Georgian style.
- Elegant Crescent built, facing out beyond the former western boundary.
- Large houses built outside the town for wealthy landowners.

4. Victorian Expansion

- Canal and (later) railway greatly increase trading links.
- Industries line the river, (sawmills, tannery, breweries, gasworks, cattle market).
- Shirt and collar manufacture become main industries.
- Terraced housing for workers spring up to the East and North.
- Middle class villas / terraces located to the West, away from industries.
- Infrastructure of the County Town established, (Shire Hall and Courts, Hospital, Workhouse, three public schools, Cricket Ground, Vivary Park, police station, the garrison at Jellalabad Barracks and military prison).

5. Taunton Now

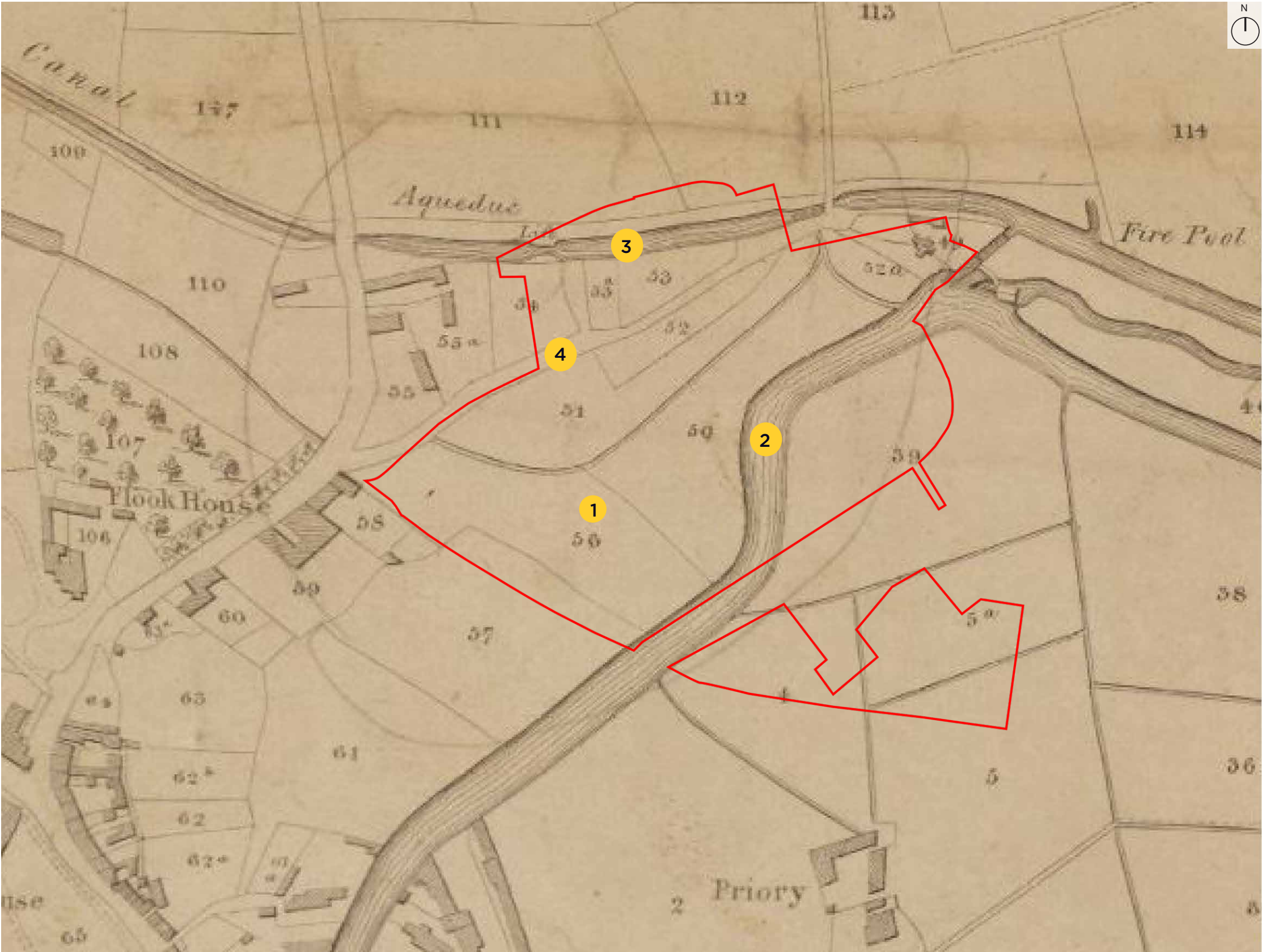
The County Town has today become an attractive place to live, work and visit due to its pleasant setting, its market town scale, culture and lifestyle, good schools and colleges, ease of access, and employment opportunities in modern, mainly service-based industries. Residential areas added in the late 20th century are suburban in character and overwhelmingly low to medium density, of two to three storeys and based on accessibility by car. Similarly, employment areas, other than local government, are mainly located in zones beyond the centre, in spacious and low-rise development. The towers and spires of the churches, the river and canal and the historic core of the centre and villages contribute to Taunton’s distinctiveness and sense of continuity.



2.01 HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

The earliest available cartographic source to depict the Site in detail is the 1840 Taunton St James Tithe Map. This shows the Site predominantly within agricultural land, comprising of a mixture of meadow and pasture. The former course of the River Tone is shown meandering through the central part of the Site, and the Grand Western Canal is depicted in the north.

A parcel of land in the north-west of the Site, to the south of the canal, is named as ‘wharf at lift’ (parcel 53), in reference to the lift depicted immediately to the north-west (22). Canal Road is shown along its current alignment in the north of the Site. Two structures, recorded as ‘house and yard’, are depicted near the eastern edge of the Site.



- KEY**
- 1. Site mainly agricultural land
 - 2. Original course of River Tone
 - 3. The Grand Western Canal to North
 - 4. Canal Road in current alignment

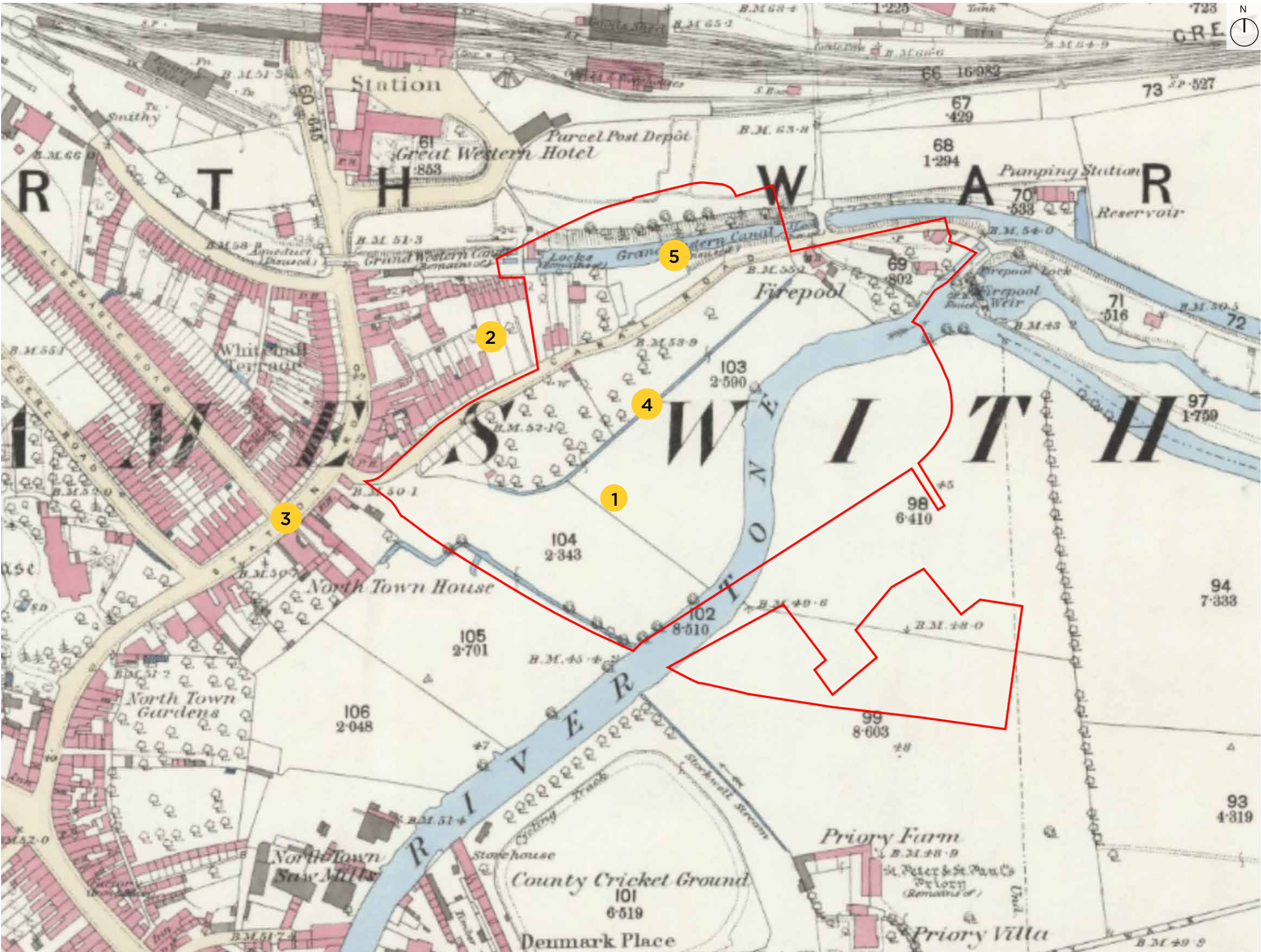
Fig.16: Firepool Area Historic Map 1840

2.01 HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

The site has substantially changed over the last 150 years. Originally the area within the site boundary and immediate surroundings was mainly fields due to its proximity to the river and the flood events linked to it.

The First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1889 records little change in the southern portion of the Site, which continues to be depicted within agricultural fields. A group of additional structures are recorded in the north-east of the Site, to the south of the canal, and two rows of terraced houses, associated with the eastward residential expansion of Taunton, are shown to the north-west, alongside Canal Road and extending in to the edge of the Site.

The only areas of development were along main historic routes like Station Road (A3038), Bridge Road (A3027) and some early residential extensions on Belvedere Road and Albemarle Road to the West. The river and some minor canals run across the site with the Grand Western Canal running on the northern section of the site.



KEY

- 1. Site remains mainly agricultural land
- 2. Residential expansion from the West
- 3. Development area along Station Rd and Bridge St
- 4. Minor canals run through site
- 5. The Grand Western Canal

Fig.17: Firepool Area Historic Map 1889

2.01 HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

Early in the 20th century the Grand Western Canal was filled in to provide more and improved railway infrastructure around the Station. This major piece of infrastructure also enabled more development to be built around the Railway Station to support its growth. Further residential developments starting to create a new street pattern around the Cricket Ground and on Priory Fields. Some new factories were also developed over this period. At this point part of the site was utilised as a football ground and a stand was built.

By the time of the 1904 Second Edition Ordnance Survey map the railway had been expanded, with the goods depot now depicted in the north of the Site. The Grand Western Canal is shown to have been infilled. A football ground and associated grandstand are recorded in the west of the Site.

KEY

- 1. Grand Western Canal filled in to make way for the railway
- 2. Development around the railway station
- 3. Cricket ground built to the south of the Site
- 4. Good depot built within the Site
- 5. Football ground on site

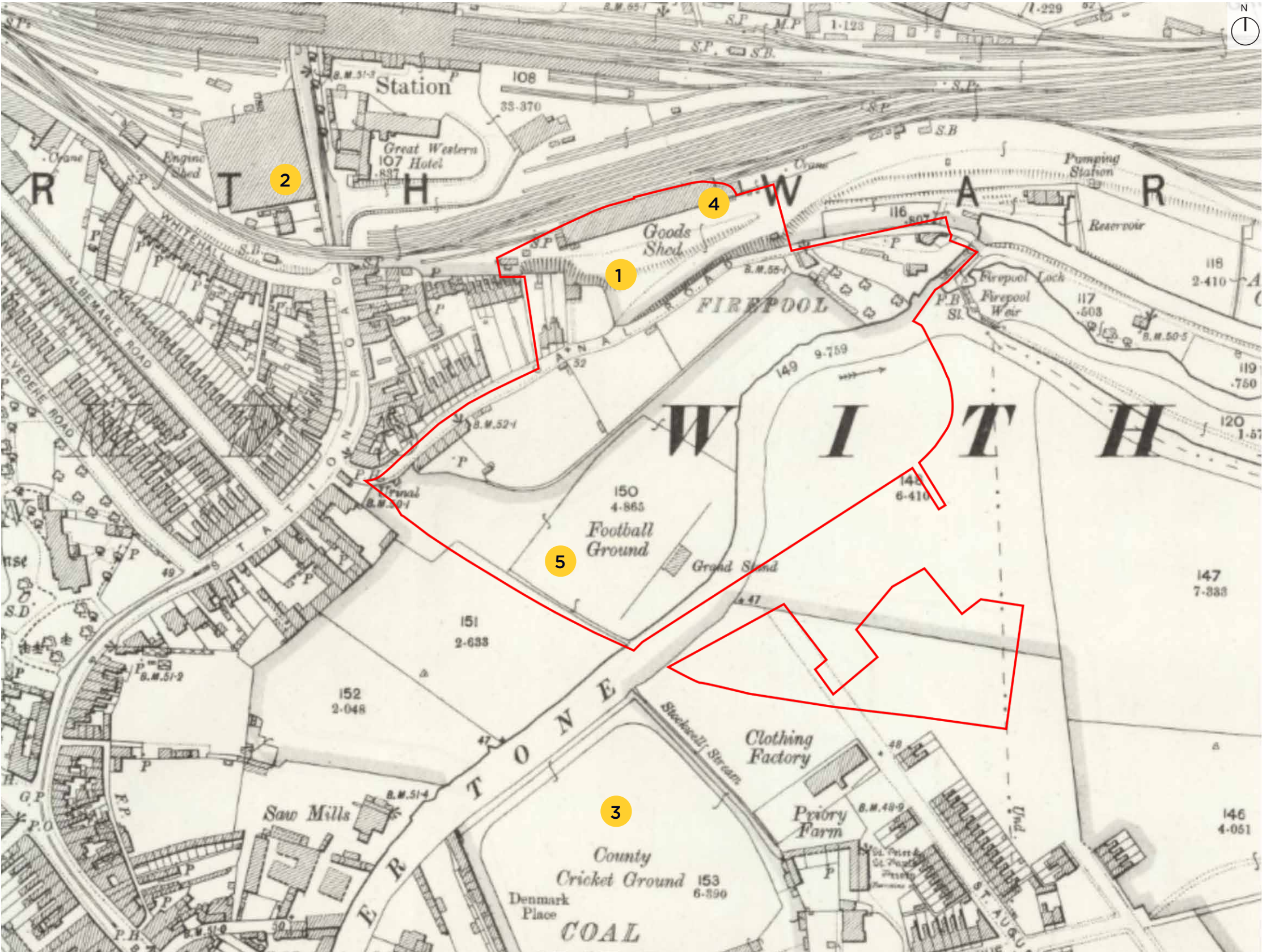
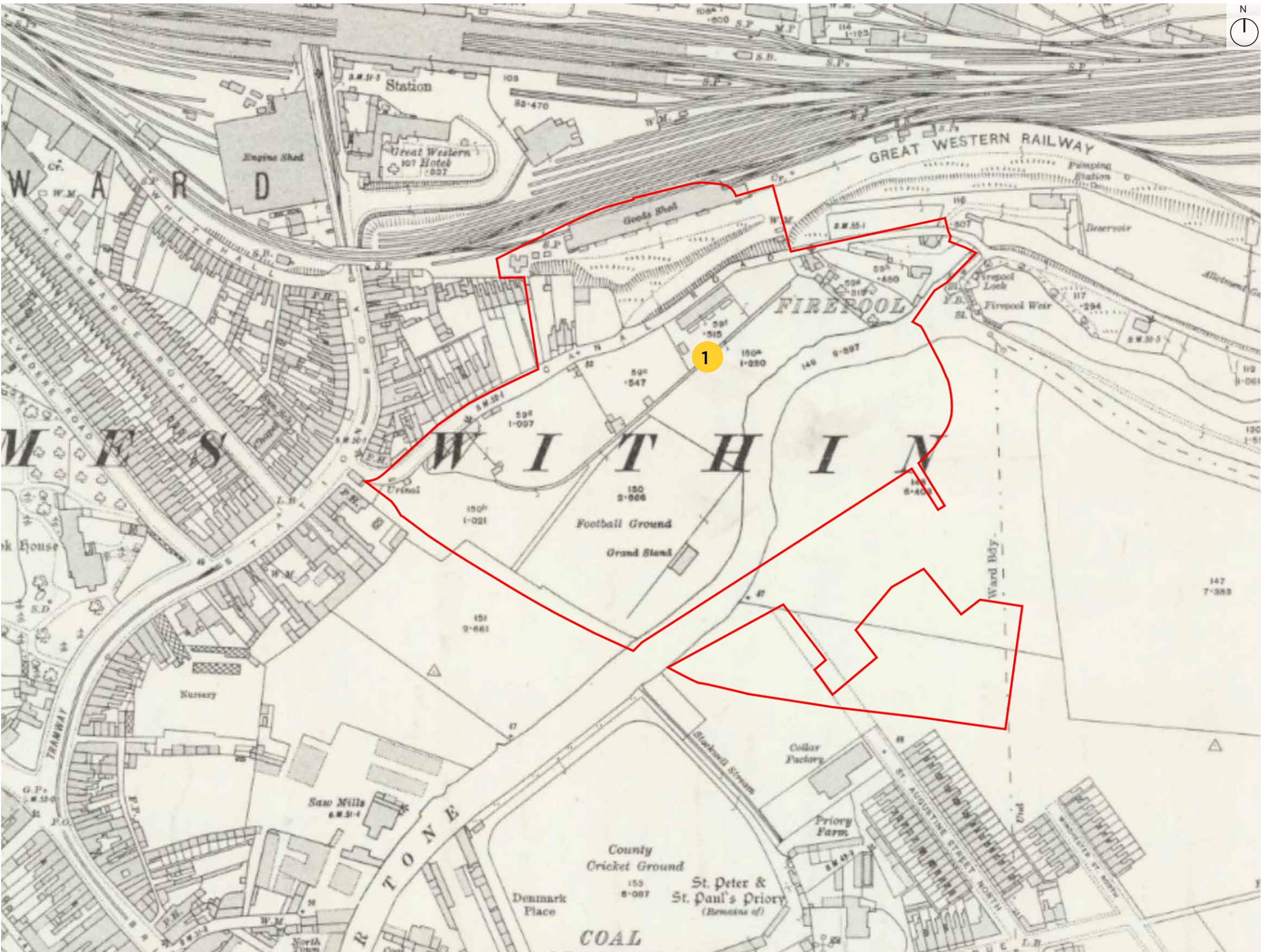


Fig.18: Firepool Area Historic Map 1904

2.01 HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

The site is shown as relatively unchanged on the 1914 Edition Ordnance Survey, although some additional buildings are illustrated to the south of Canal Road.

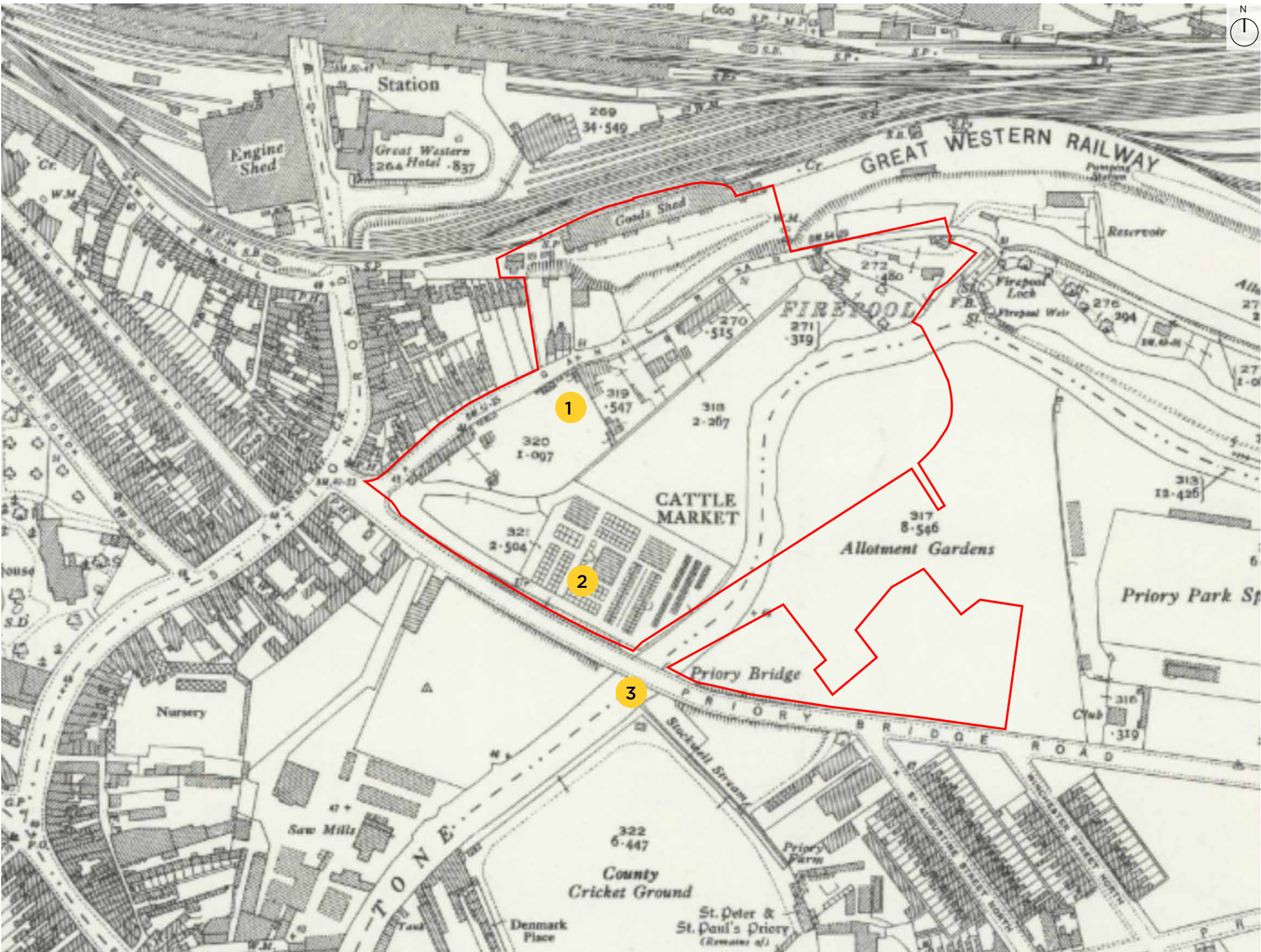


- KEY**
- 1. Buildings to the South of Canal Rd appear on Site

Fig.19: Firepool Area Historic Map 1913

2.01 HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

Some further development along Canal Road is recorded on the 1930 edition Ordnance Survey, although the most significant change is shown in the south-west of the site, which was by this point occupied by the new cattle market. The newly constructed Priory Bridge Road is also depicted along the southern site boundary. The south-east of the site is recorded as allotment gardens.



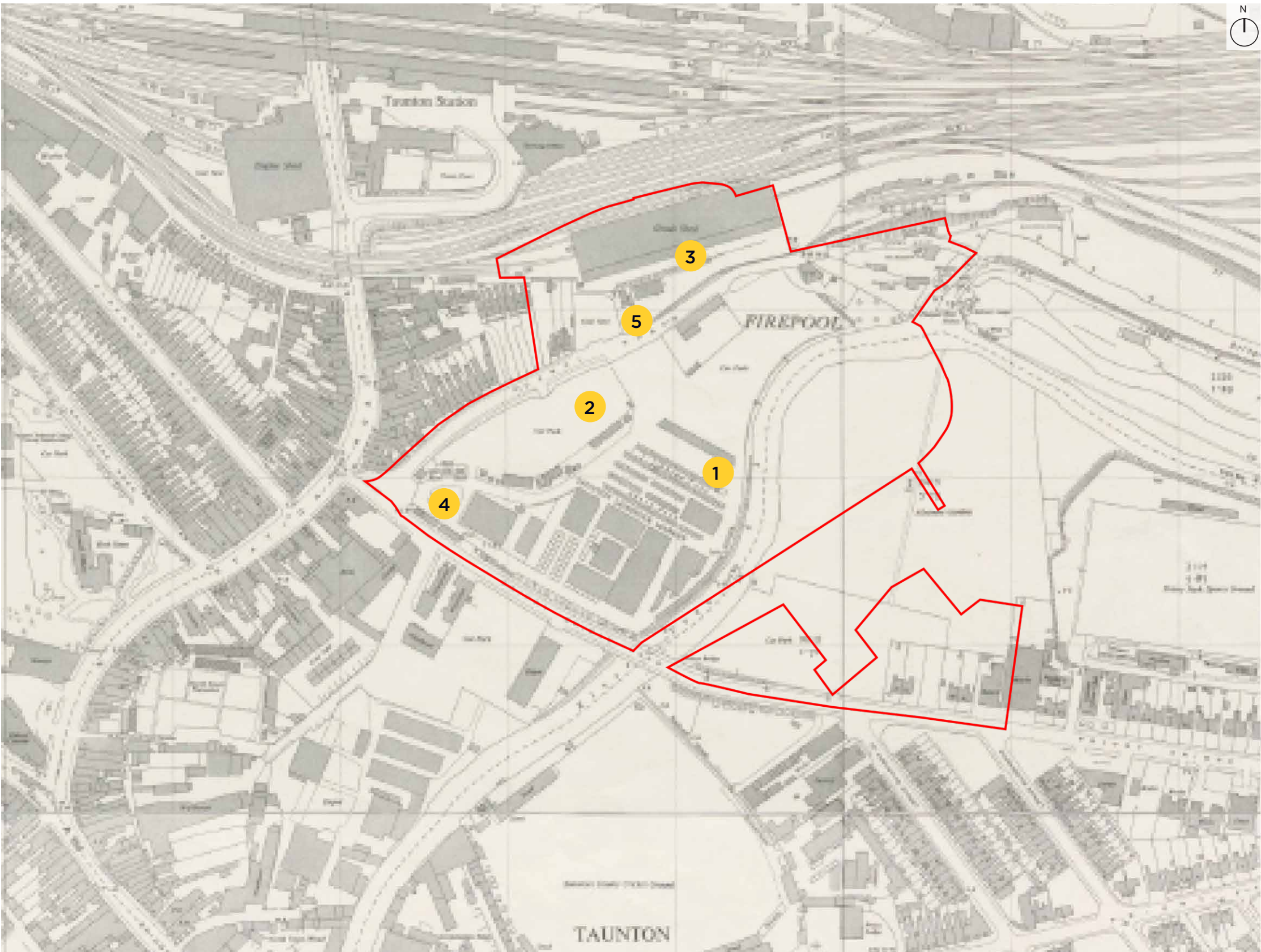
- KEY**
- 1. Further buildings erected along Canal Rd
 - 2. Cattle Market constructed to the South-West of the Site replacing the football ground
 - 3. Priory Bridge constructed

Fig.20: Firepool Area Historic Map 1930

2.01 HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

The livestock market had been expanded eastwards by the time of the 1947-1965 Ordnance Survey edition, and carparks constructed to its north and east. A coal yard is depicted in the north of the site, to the south of the goods shed. The second goods depot is also shown. The Auction House, depicted to the west of the cattle market, remains extant in the south-west of the site.

The plan shows further expansion of the livestock market, with buildings, pens and car parks now occupying much of the central part of the Site.



- KEY**
- 1. Cattle Market expanded
 - 2. Car parks appear to the North and East of the site
 - 3. Second good shed constructed
 - 4. Auction House constructed
 - 5. GWR Goods Office constructed

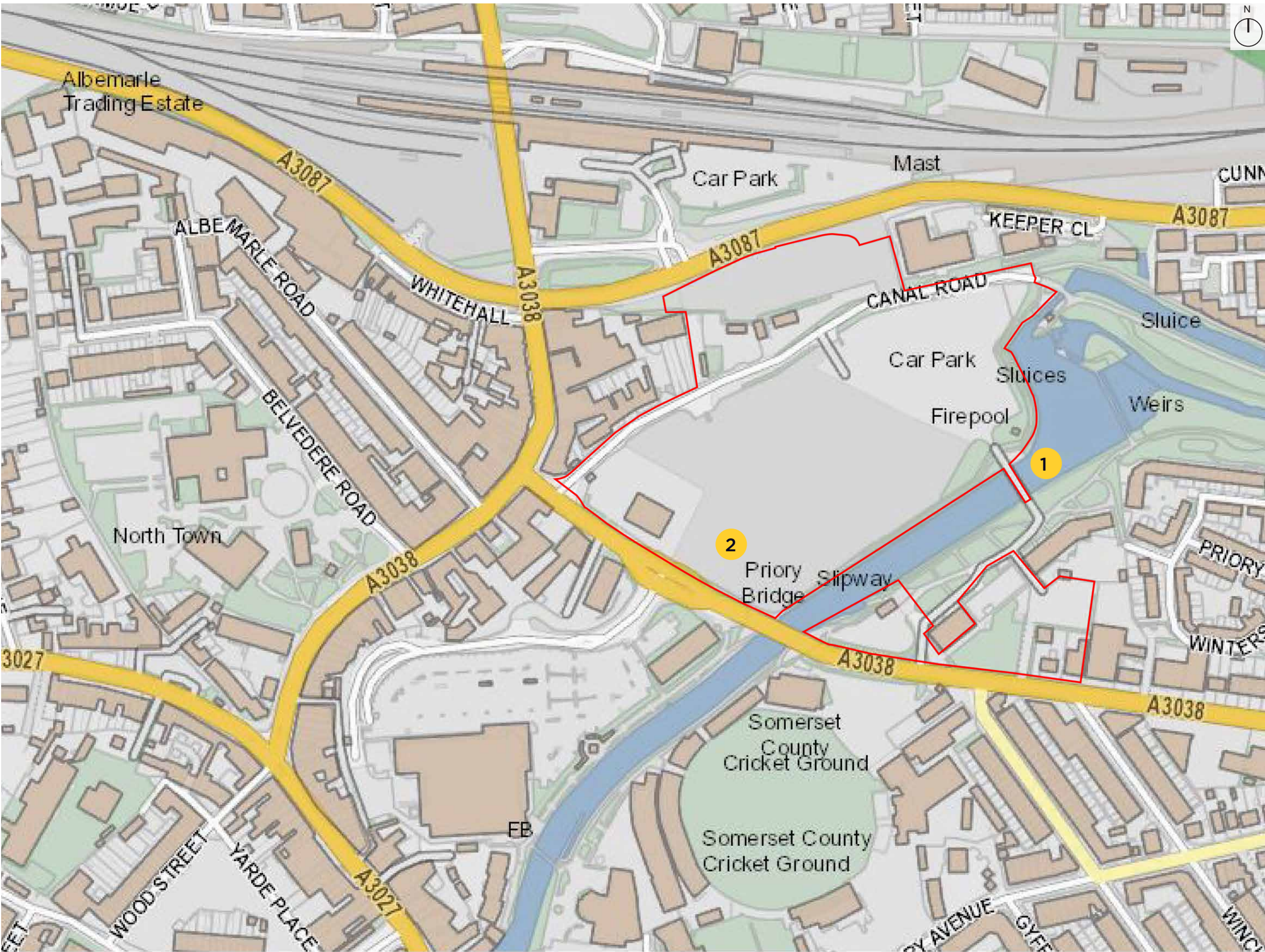
Fig.21: Firepool Area Historic Map 1947-65

2.01 HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

By 1970 the River Tone had been straightened as part of major flood mitigation works for the town, and is depicted on its present course. Car parks are recorded in the area south of the river.

The layout of the site remained largely unchanged until the early 21st century, at which time the cattle market was removed to make way for new development, along with the railway goods shed in the north of the site and the majority of the structures lining Canal Road. Two buildings were recorded within the north of the Site during the 2015 site visit, comprising No. 9 Canal Road and a former commercial garage, these have also since been demolished.

The goods depot building and former Auction House for the livestock market currently remain extant within the Site. The Auction House will be demolished as part of the drainage and levels application, so will not be standing when the Masterplan and Southern Boulevard works come forward.



KEY

- 1. River Tone straightened
- 2. Cattle Market removed

Fig.22: Firepool Area Historic Map 2019

An aerial, high-angle view of a city masterplan. The image shows a river flowing through the center, with a large, multi-level bridge or walkway crossing it. The surrounding area is filled with various building footprints, streets, and green spaces. The overall color palette is muted, with greys for buildings and roads, and greens for vegetation. The text '2.00 CONTEXT APPRAISAL MASTERPLAN EVOLUTION' is overlaid in the upper left quadrant.

2.00 CONTEXT APPRAISAL MASTERPLAN EVOLUTION