

Official: External Briefing Note

Update for Salisbury and District Angling Club

March 2020

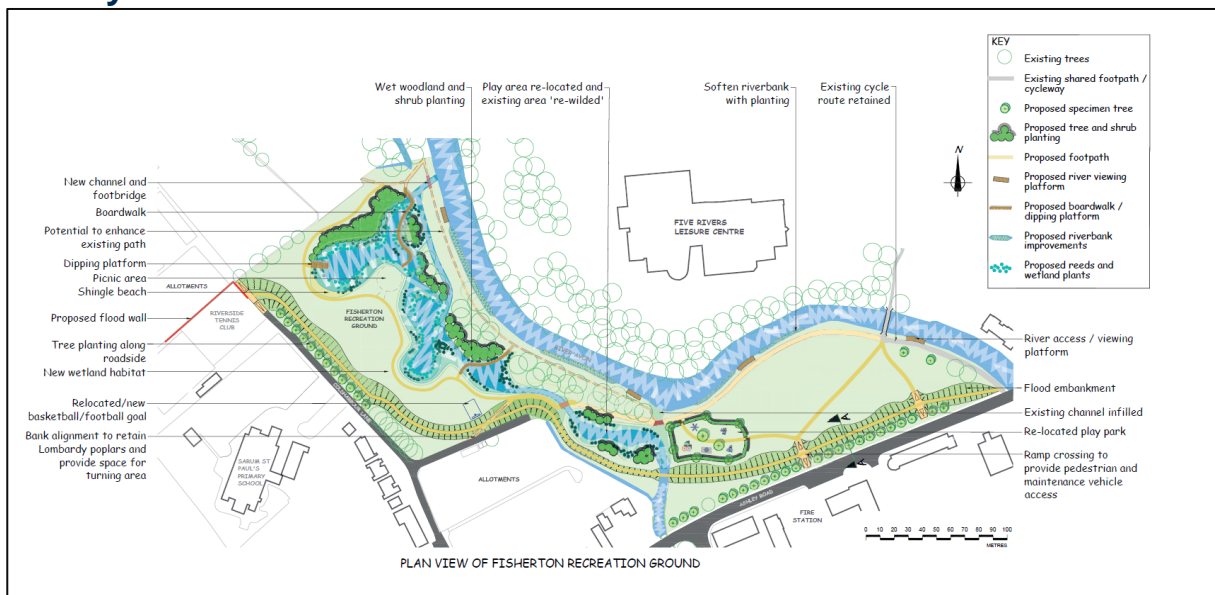
The Environment Agency are working in partnership with Wiltshire Council and other stakeholders on a project to improve a number of watercourses within the centre of Salisbury. This work will contribute to a new River Park, which forms part of the Central Area Framework (CAF) being developed by Wiltshire Council. Further information on this can be found at <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/salisbury-future>.

The River Park is still in the development phase and we have consulted with stakeholders, including Salisbury and District Angling Club representatives, to gain feedback and valuable input to the proposals.

The project has a number of key objectives including connecting fragmented green spaces, reducing flood risk to existing properties and businesses, enabling regeneration of key development sites and improving the ecological and amenity value of the watercourses.

There are two main sites where we are proposing works that will have some impact on the in-channel habitat watercourses. These are described in more detail below.

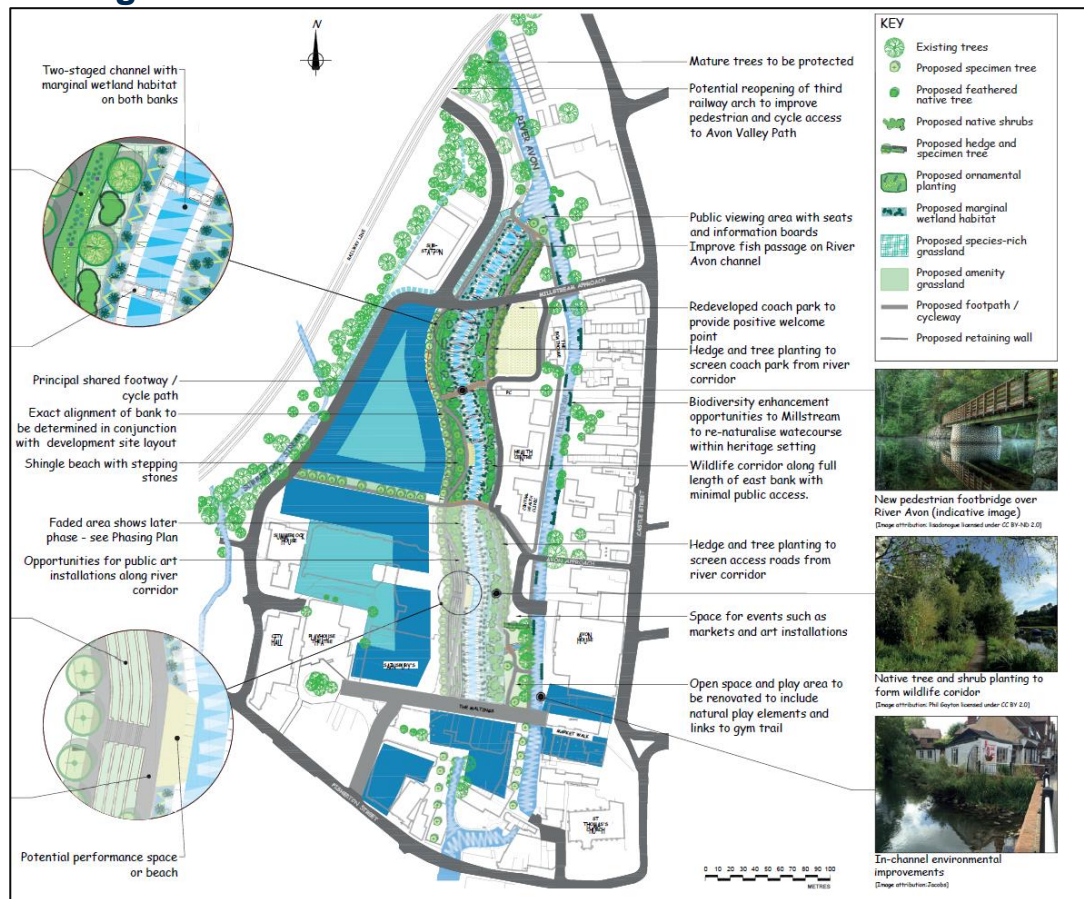
Ashley Road



Within the Ashley Road and Fisherton Recreation Grounds we will construct a new flood embankment and improve the ecological and amenity/recreation value of this area. There will be some minor improvements to the main River Avon channel around enhanced access to the channel and landscape and vegetation works along the bank. The main change, though, will be to the Summerlock Stream. The existing connection to the Avon is to be infilled, with a new connection being created further upstream. This will then allow the channel to pass through Fisherton Rec, linking to a wider wet woodland area. During low flows water will be constrained to a single channel, which will be designed to maximise opportunities for fish passage. The wet woodland area will provide refuge for fish from predators, whilst increasing the productivity and variety of invertebrates present in the area. The channel will be connected to a number of fry-bays and backwater areas that will provide habitat for juvenile fish and educational/participation opportunities for junior anglers.

During high flows, water will be allowed to spill out into the wider wet woodland area with a connection also to the wet woodland just upstream. A control structure will be in place on the Summerlock Stream beneath the new embankment to limit the passage of floodwater downstream. This will be provided by a limited size opening at this point. Currently we do not intend to include any hatches on the Summerlock Stream as one of the project objectives is to reduce the number of structures the EA operate. However, this will be reviewed as part of ongoing low flow analysis.

Maltings/Central Car Park



More extensive works are proposed within the current Maltings/Central Car park site. Minimal works are proposed on the Summerlock Stream here. On the Mill Stream minor works are proposed to reduce the low flow channel width (where necessary), the incorporation of marginal habitat and improving the existing fish pass at Bishops Mill.

The main works are to the River Avon channel that runs through the centre of this site. It is intended to construct a much wider (~40m) green corridor that will act as the main channel for water during flood flows. This will also become the primary route for fish migration through this area during lower flows. The radial gate (another EA operated structure) at the top of this channel will be removed and in its place a series of rock ramp weirs will be introduced down through the channel. The radial gate is currently a complete barrier to all fish species attempting to move upstream via this route. By replacing this structure with a design that allows coarse and salmonid fish species to migrate, fish populations will be better linked up, the channels will have better resilience to changes in flow levels and spawning success will be improved. The design of the channel itself will maintain important fish nurseries and spawning areas and improve public access to the river (at certain designated places).

We propose to lower the retained water level slightly (~0.5m) at the top of this channel (i.e. around the existing radial gate). This will provide both flood risk and environmental benefits in this area. During low flows there is likely to be an impact from this up as far as the footbridge to the Five Rivers Leisure centre. If these works do go ahead we will also look at what improvements are required to the existing river bank to ensure that adequate access to the river is maintained.

Timeframe and contact

We currently anticipate this work being completed over two summer periods in 2021 and 2022, although this is subject to ongoing investigations. The first summer is likely to mainly involve the works at Ashley Road, during which access to the River Avon will be maintained for the majority of the time. During the second summer there will be more disruption with all flows in the Maltings site being passed down the Mill Stream or Summerlock channel.

Any queries on this project can be sent to wessexenquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk