

# Guildford Town Centre

## Stage 1 Strategic Spatial Masterplan Report

May 2021

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An ambitious town centre masterplan with a strong vision can achieve so much more than piecemeal and un-coordinated development.









This Stage 1 Strategic Masterplan Study sets the direction and principles on which a future Guildford Masterplan can be developed

It will help deliver a highly desirable, joined up riverside town centre for the future, one which follows the principals of the ‘15 minute neighbourhood’.

Living, working, shopping, leisure and cultural pursuits, education, green space and public realm, walking, cycling and public transport can all thrive together in a green’ environment which positively addresses the climate change emergency.

It envisions a future where we will be living in a more sustainable manner with more and better local facilities and some fundamental changes to our lifestyles, such as use of the car, work/life balance and living healthier, more active and fulfilling lives.

# Introduction

# Introduction

## 0. Project Team

This report is to be read alongside detailed reports on the following aspects:

Development Consultancy	JLL
Flood Alleviation	ARUP
Strategic Transport	Markides Associates
Highways	ARUP
Infrastructure	AECOM
Planning	Carter Jonas

## 1. The Existing Town Centre

Guildford is a vibrant town hosting a thriving university and research park which add significant economic benefits to the UK economy. As a town it is situated in a gap in the North Downs that historically has created channelled transport corridors. The large area of the borough designated as Green Belt makes growth difficult. The Town Centre is dominated by a 1960s designed network of transport routes sited over the original Guildford crossing of the River Wey. The three and four lane carriageways carve through the town sitting in part on top of Guildford Wharf thus separating the historic Guildford core from its ancient riverside contributing to congestion pollution and accidents to the heart of the town.

The A31 corridor before it can join the gyratory system has to manage the major bottle neck being an ageing two lane bridge crossing the railway. This bridge is the only connection between east and west Guildford after construction of the railway canyon in 1845. Major repairs are due to this bridge.

The only major transport corridor away from the town centre is the A3 – effectively a by-pass of a by-pass running from the North East to the South West. The overloaded A3 also acts a local distributor road for some journeys within Guildford at peak periods. Traffic incidents on the A3 also tend to divert traffic onto the Gyratory system already overloaded at peak times. There have been high levels of

accidents, some serious and some fatal.

Guildford Railway Station was designed for 3 million passenger journeys and is currently coping with 8m. Pre-covid it is forecast to grow to 12 million and yet further with new rail services proposed. The station will attract more traffic of all types and from further afield as its sub-regional role expands.

There is an excellent bus network radiating from a centrally located bus station in the town centre although services are currently hampered by traffic congestion. The site is due for redevelopment with potential plans to relocate a temporary bus station to Portsmouth Road car park for a number of years before relocating back to Leapale Road.

The historic core is not part of this study but it may follow in a further piece of work.

## 2. What should the Town Look Like?

The town centre needs to be planned to provide an optimal mix of Housing, Commercial, and Social Development to ensure Guildford thrives economically and continues to act as an economic hub for the area. Any plan should guard against Guildford becoming just a commuter town, so accessibility to the centre and the co-location of commercial and housing allocation is of key importance. Patterns of demand will evolve over time, so space should be designed to be as flexible as possible. The town needs to be rescued from the traffic issues that afflicts it. The town centre needs to be reconnected to the banks of the river, unlocking prime land for potential redevelopment mostly owned by just three parties GBC, Network Rail and L&G.

We support the need to improve access by public and by active modes of transport to the high employment areas in the north-west: University of Surrey, research park and the county hospital.

Unlike many of the confined town centre approaches there is scope in the actual town centre, through forward looking masterplanning and planned delivery, adding and separating modes of transport to encourage modal shift, with wider pedestrianisation and use of bikes a key aim. Access to the town using park and ride facilities and the rail network also needs to be actively encouraged.

The advent of Automatic (AV) and Electric Vehicles (EV) will potentially change transport requirements and impact, e.g. less parking space, smaller and more frequent buses, more efficient use of road space, lower pollution. However, it is still desirable in busier corridors to separate out different modes of transport.

## 3. The unique aspects of the proposed plan

Most proposals for Guildford Town centre have kept the current transport infrastructure intact making limited impact on the challenges of safety and pollution that are necessary to make walking and cycling more attractive in the town centre.

This strategic spatial masterplan involves key changes in the town centre that can be summarised as:

- Safer and greater capacity infrastructure
- More and better quality town centre housing and commercial space.
- Replace much of the existing one-way road system with pedestrianised public realm
- Incorporate modal separation of pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles in the new arrangements.
- Pedestrianisation to reunite the core of town with the riverside and station.
- Configure the Wey Navigation and surroundings to open the riverside and mitigate flood risk.

## 4. Development and Redevelopment

This strategic spatial masterplan potentially opens up a considerable area for redevelopment especially along the Wey Navigation, train station and on sites currently occupied by the police station and law courts. The redeveloped area could provide:

- New, much needed housing.
- New town squares.
- New amenities.
- Civic centre, police station and courts.
- Commercial space.
- New community support infrastructure in the form of schools and health centres.

New development in the context of an adopted masterplan could provide:

- Architectural compliance to a set of design guidelines as to height and bulk, that integrate developments within the Guildford townscape
- Buildings built to be flexible for changing use demands
- Buildings built to latest environmental standards
- Flood protection and management built into buildings and infrastructure
- Combined heat and power infrastructure.
- Delivery recognising the Climate Emergency.

## 5. Housing

A benefit of a masterplanned approach is that the town centre could accommodate more housing than is proposed by the submitted Local Plan. This is advantageous in that it:

- Reduces pressure to build on Greenbelt land.
- Utilises existing town infrastructure.
- Minimises commuting and/or supports commuting via public transport by co-locating transport, commercial property

- and housing.
- Creates a more attractive town centre and revitalized riverside integrated with the high street, removing interruptions from road traffic.
- Supports the high street and economic growth, allowing Guildford and surrounding areas to continue to prosper, and allows for commercial and population growth in an imaginative and sustainable manner.

Note: Housing developments are subject to several levies e.g. SANG, CIL, and affordable housing quotas. Many sites in Guildford due to being near open space attract SANG payments, an advantage of using town centre brownfield sites is that SANG payments can be mitigated.

## 6. Retail

The strategic spatial masterplan suggests retail and food & beverage space distributed across the study area. In the existing climate with the rise of internet shopping and the reaction to the Covid-19 pandemic being a major challenge to conventional large retail stores, the focus should be on smaller shops which have flexibility to be repurposed as commercial space. The proposed capacities shown later in this report are flexible and can be adapted to suit market demands.

## 7. Commercial

This strategic spatial masterplan suggests an element of commercial space. It is anticipated that some of this space will be used by potentially relocating courts, police station and local authority to form a civic centre and new office cluster for the centre of Guildford to attract and retain talent. As discussed above there is an opportunity to add more commercial space vs. retail depending upon market demand. The infrastructure improvements by removing traffic issues will make existing and new commercial properties more attractive and accessible.

## 8. Transport Infrastructure

This strategic spatial masterplan is based on making the town centre more accessible to a larger number of people WITHOUT increasing road traffic. The aim is to have infrastructure that positively supports and enables modal shift to rail, bus, cycles and walking.

Current traffic levels are problematic. Modal shift will be encouraged to manage growth from new housing and commercial activity, building separate, appropriately sized corridors for different modes of transport.

This plan supports the current efforts by the council to establish Sustainable Movement Corridors (SMC) in the town. The introduction of modal separation in the town centre supports the establishment of other SMC's in time and tying in of existing pedestrian paths and cycleways e.g. the cycle path south to Shalford.

### a. Road

The existing gyratory strangles the town centre. This strategic spatial masterplan aims to create a more pedestrian and cycle friendly town centre.

A deliverable option for creating a town centre fit for the 21st Century is to revise the main road links creating a main route via a new Town Bridge and an enhanced Onslow Bridge.

There are numerous potential options outlined in this report which balance the needs of vehicular traffic with pedestrian and cycles.

More detail on the possible traffic and road systems is provided by others.

### b. Rail

The rail network will become more important both for commuting, airport access (Gatwick and Heathrow), local use along the lines radiating from Guildford and as part of the outer orbital network from Gatwick, via Guildford, Reading, Oxford to Cambridge.

### c. Bus

The plan allows for the long term

redevelopment of the bus station on Commercial Road, potentially providing access from Onslow Street via a pedestrian shared space.

### d. Cycling

This scheme seeks to provide for modal separation in the town centre, and links to the existing cycle ways in addition to proposed SMCs. The increasing availability of electric bikes allows hills to be easily tackled, currently a blocker to many people using cycles in Guildford.

In addition implementation of strategies will respond to findings and advice outlined in the Guildford Cycle Route Assessment.

### e. Pedestrianisation

The potential aim is for pedestrianisation to expand from High Street/Tunsgate to encompass the riverside on east and west sides (which can be redeveloped to have attractive squares, Market etc) and the station. The pedestrianised areas could link to the SMC and footpaths leading south from the town centre into the Surrey Hills.

## 9. Flooding

The centre of Guildford is subject to a considerable flood threat. Flooding needs to be addressed through a holistic approach with interventions upstream of the town as well as a sequence of flood mitigations. The plan includes potentially raising the current Town Bridge which in extreme weather and can block the Wey Navigation flow. Potential buildings that are located in flood zones should be designed to mitigate flood issues by using undercrofts which in normal weather can be used for vehicle parking. Linear green parks on both sides of the river can provide vital flood storage.

## 10. Delivering the plan

The strategic spatial masterplan could

potentially be delivered through a series of phases and partnerships. Disruption caused by key infrastructural interventions can be balanced with immediate benefits for locals. The plan is ambitious and requires partnerships with a number of different groups. Alongside this report are a number of specific reports including: economic research, flood alleviation, strategic transport, highways, infrastructure and planning as well as a financial business case.

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This section of the report describes the town centre and identifies the constraints within the study area such as historic views, heritage, traffic, flooding.

It also sets out the overall ambition for the master plan such as a comprehensive movement strategy, opportunities for development and potential uses. It identifies all the available and strategically important pieces of land and ownerships that should be considered for inclusion, and it identifies land that can be delivered early or is already under development.

This section also identifies a number of different character areas which could be developed as sites with their own unique identities, combination of potential uses and context etc.

It means that, over time, we will of course need to change some of our habits such as car usage.

# Part 1: Review of Constraints & Opportunities



# Part 1 Executive Summary

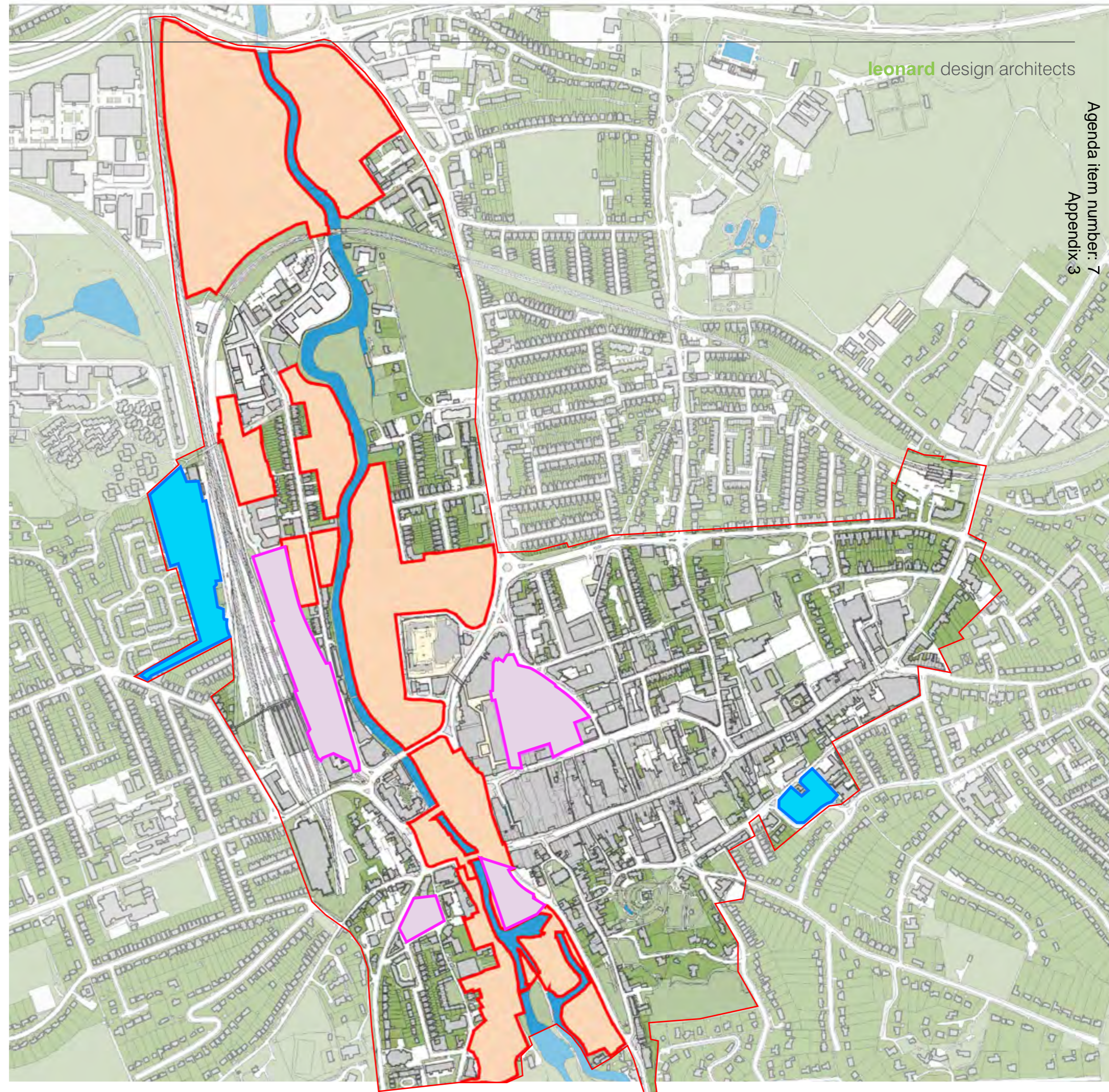
Part 1 sets out the constraints and opportunities highlighting the below factors to be key to delivering a successful masterplan:

1. Reduce traffic congestion within the town centre allowing people to walk and cycle safely,
2. Open up the riverside,
3. Create new public squares and routes,
4. Creating new uses,
5. Creating a new contemporary town centre to make Guildford an attractive place for residents, tourists and businesses,
6. A joined up approach to tackling Guildford's major traffic, flooding and connectivity issues,

This report is to be read alongside detailed reports on the following aspects:

Development Consultancy  
 Flood Alleviation  
 Strategic Transport  
 Highways  
 Infrastructure  
 Planning

JLL  
 ARUP  
 Markides Associates  
 ARUP  
 AECOM  
 Carter Jonas



- Being Developed by Others
- GBC Ownership Potential Early Delivery
- Masterplan Study Sites



# 01. A Future Vision for Guildford



# Existing Town Centre

The study area boundary defines a varied area which contains a number of unique attributes and issues. The boundary incorporates a range of important locations including the following:

## Northern River Corridor

Defined by its relationship with the River Wey, it encompasses the Woodbridge Meadows and Woodbridge Road sites to the North of the railway viaduct, the Walnut Tree Close area on the Western side and the Dapdune Wharf area on the eastern side.

## Bedford Wharf and the Station

From the station, across the river via the new Walnut Tree Bridge and encompassing the existing Odeon, Courts and Constabulary buildings and the Bedford Wharf Car Park.

## Historic Town Centre

The historic heart of Guildford has a well defined and much loved character. The masterplan seeks to protect and enhance this character whilst connecting the river into the town centre to create a sequence of beautiful public spaces.

## Southern River Corridor

South from town bridge are a series of sites identified with development potential.

The strategic spatial masterplan also considers connections to the University of Surrey, hospital and Surrey Research Park which are key assets for the town.

The established town centre and historic core are outside of this report and will be subject of a separate study.





# Existing Town Centre GBC Freehold Ownerships

A series of key sites within the town centre boundary are controlled by Guildford Borough Council. These include the key locations such as (from North to South):

1. Woodbridge Meadows
2. Guildford Park Road
3. Walnut Tree Road housing sites
4. Bedford Wharf
5. Town Wharf
6. Millbrook car park
7. Bright Hill
8. Guildford Borough Council offices

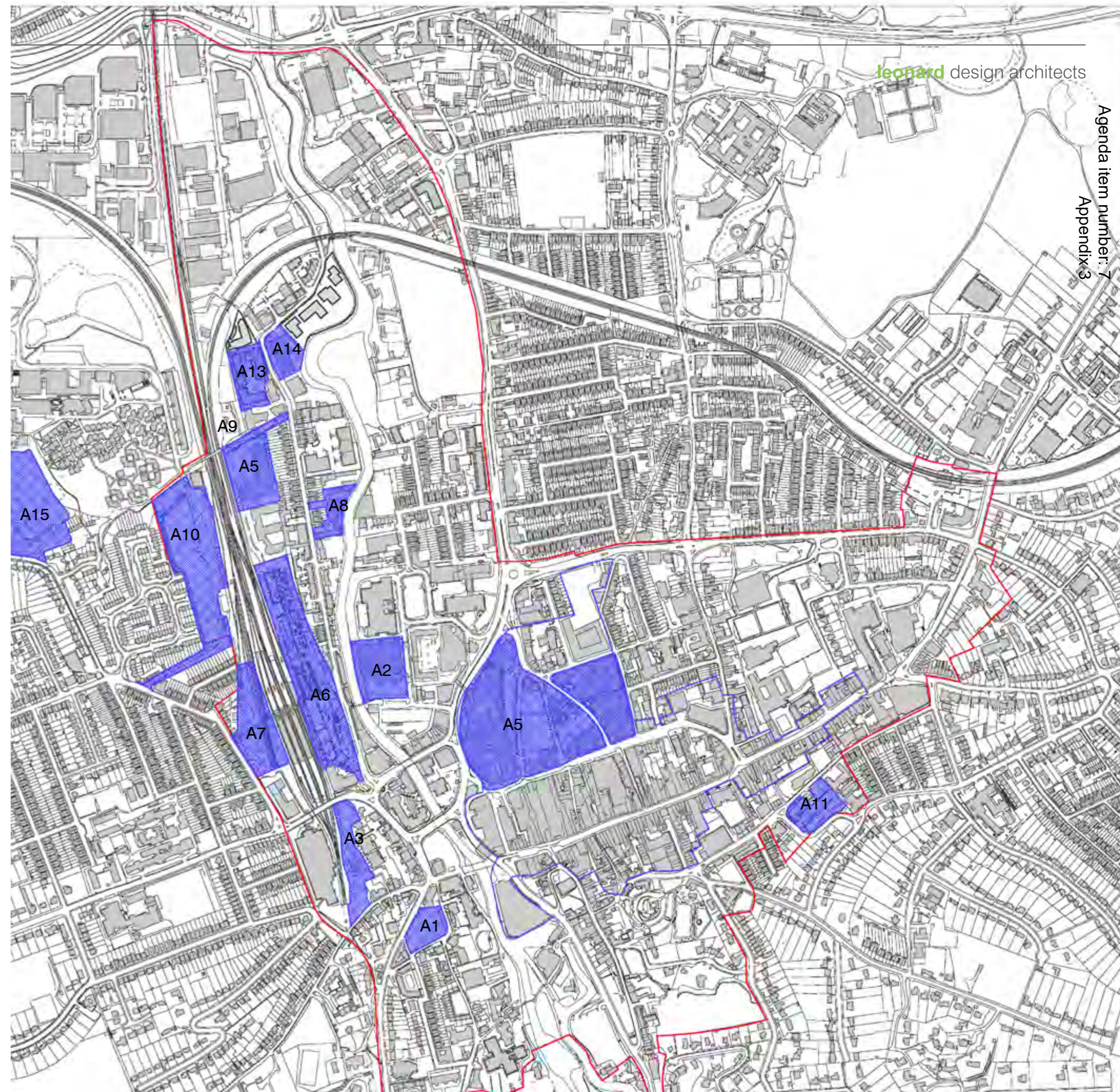




# Existing Town Centre 2019 Local Plan

The areas listed below and on the plan opposite represent Town Centre policy areas set out within the Guildford borough Proposed Submission Local Plan: strategy and sites, June 2019.

- A1** The Plaza, Portsmouth Road
- A2** Guildford Cinema, Bedford Road
- A3** Land between Farnham Road and the Mount
- A4** Jewsons, Walnut Tree Close
- A5** North Street redevelopment
- A6** Land and buildings at Guildford railway station
- A7** Land west of Guildford railway station, Guildford Park Road
- A8** 77 to 83 Walnut Tree Close
- A9** Land for Sustainable Movement Corridor
- A10** Guildford Park Car Park, Guildford Park Road
- A11** Bright Hill Car Park, Sydenham Road
- A13** Kernal Court, Walnut Tree Close
- A14** Wey Corner, Walnut Tree Close
- A15** Land at Guildford Cathedral, Alresford Road





# The Masterplan Vision

## Guildford - Ambition

### Challenges:

Guildford is a popular destination but is not achieving its potential;

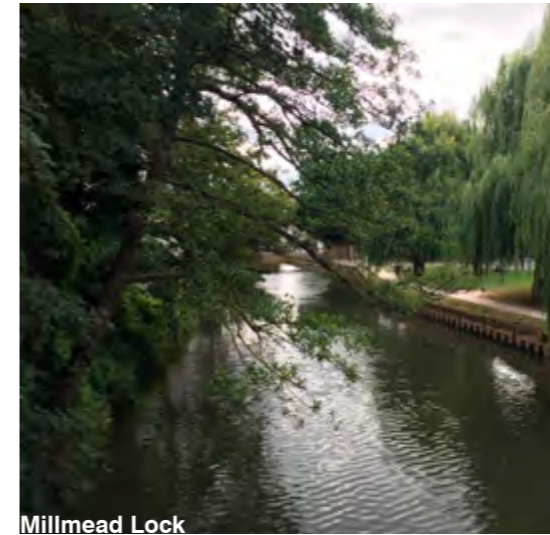
1. Traffic congestion has a detrimental impact on the vitality and economic success of the centre;
2. The pedestrian environment is poor; pedestrians are marginalised due to car dominance/priority, and pedestrian/cyclist safety is compromised;
3. 'Arrival' by car or public transport is a mixed experience;
4. The river is an under-exploited asset;
5. The town centre experiences low residential delivery rates; and
6. The centre has a wide mix of retail space in terms of size & cost, but North Street persistently underperforms.

### Aims:

1. Flood Alleviation / Defence Solutions that enables developable land to be created within the existing flood zones within the town centre
2. Provision of significant affordable residential accommodation within the regeneration area
3. Transportation with more balance towards walking, cycling, bus, pedestrian and rail with good inter modal interconnection and hub(s)
4. Highways solutions for routing to minimise pedestrian interface , reduction in accidents and improvements in air and noise quality without creating traffic issues in other areas within the town
5. Mix of commercial and community uses in the town that include retail, employment, tourism, cultural and leisure to increase the attractiveness of the town as a destination
6. A digital platform that is fit for the first half of the 21st Century
7. Significant improvement in the Town Centre environmental quality for pedestrians and non car users



Electricity Works



Millmead Lock



Millmead Lock



Dapdune Wharf



Abbots Hospital



The Billings



Guildford Castle



Guildford Cathedral



Guildford High Street



The River Wey



University of Surrey



Yvonne Arnaud Theatre

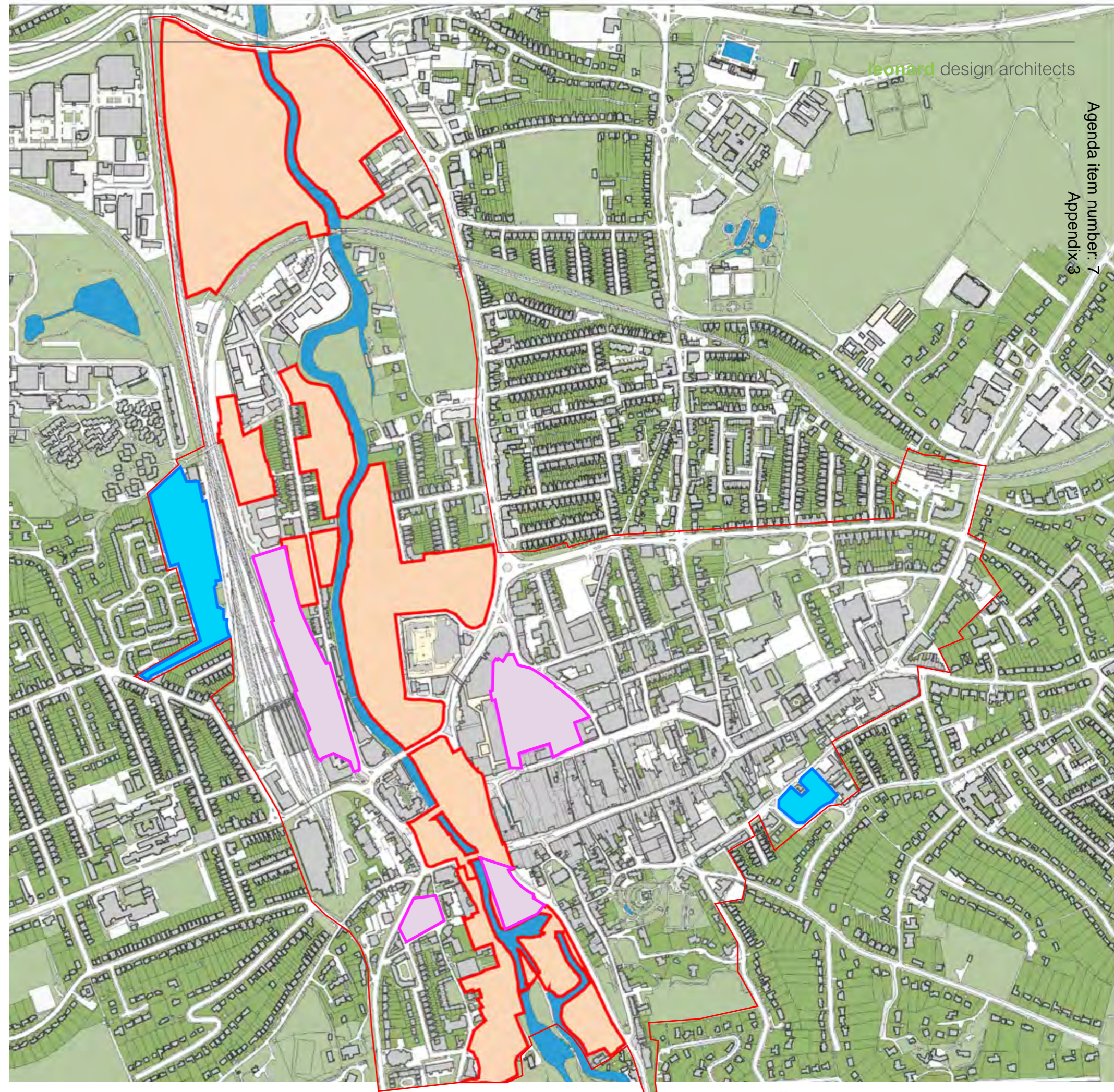





# The Masterplan Vision Potential

Building upon Guildford's existing assets, the masterplan vision intends to:

1. Create the sustainable 'town centre of the future'
2. Reduce Traffic accidents
3. Reduce Pollution
4. Improve Traffic issues
5. Retrieve our lost riverside and open it up to pedestrians and activities...plus tourism
6. The need for housing... All types for all income levels - affordable, key worker, starter and senior living
7. Student accommodation...and better integration
8. Business space
9. Flood prevention
10. Better traffic management
11. A great railway station...which is well connected to the town centre
12. Proper bus services and routes
13. Attractive cycle ways, footpaths, streets and squares
14. Social and community buildings
15. Need for access and parking
16. Arts and Education
17. Facilities for young people and children

The biggest obstacle to opening up the riverside and knitting our town together is our road system persistently underperforms.



-  Being Developed by Others
-  GBC Ownership Potential Early Delivery
-  Masterplan Study Sites



# 02. Historic Guildford



# Historic Guildford Origins

Guildford is the oldest and largest town in Surrey. The town is defined by the River Wey, and grew up in a gap in the chalk hills between the Hogsback to the West and Pewley Hill to the South-east.

The comb street pattern is typically Saxon with High Street running down to the bridge and narrow tributaries leading from it. Two roads developed parallel to High Street, Upper and Lower Backside (now North Street), and Castle Street to the South.

Guildford is the only town in Surrey to be listed in the Domesday Book of 1086. It soon became a high status town, with its own royal charter, a market and license to mint coins. The town's wealth was generated from the market, cloth weaving and finishing and chalk quarrying for building materials and lime.

The 12th century Norman Castle is positioned at a key vantage point on the Wey valley, and still commands a good view of the valley and roofscapes over the lower town.

Page 96 Quarry Street holds many of Guildford's key historic buildings, including St Mary's Church. The town's most venerable monument is the Tudor Grammar School which still exists on the high street.

Bishop Abbot Hospital was built in 1619 and founded by George Abbott, former archbishop of Canterbury.

The River Wey was canalised in 1653, one of the first rivers in Britain to be made navigable, and became the main source of commerce for the town to the Thames.

The Cattle Market was located in North Street until 1896. Granaries were built along the river, with associated activity at the flour mills, and breweries and the corn market.



9th June 1896 North Street Cattle Market



River Wey Canal



# Historic Guildford

## 20<sup>th</sup> Century Guildford

The town continued to grow in the 20th Century, with the Cathedral (1936) positioned above the town on Stag Hill with a prominent view across the town to the castle. In the 1960's Surrey University grew up at the foot of the cathedral.

In the 1960's and 70's the town suffered from heavy traffic and thereafter severance effects of roads built to deal with it.

The Yvonne Arnaud theatre opened in 1965 at the Old Mill Pond to replace a previous theatre, lost to a fire.

Shopping centres and multi-storey car parks were built, and in some cases rebuilt, from 1960 to 1990, including The Friary and Tunsgate.

The High Street has a unique character with six grade I listed buildings and a host of grade II\* and grade II listed buildings. four scheduled Ancient Monuments and a listed park and garden. These assets form an important legacy which requires a careful strategy of protection and enhancement. This is to be the subject of a subsequent report.



High Street, 1970's



Flooding at the foot of the High Street, 1968



High Street



# Historic Guildford Development

## 1871

The spine of the High Street still defines the compact historic town. The London to Portsmouth railway arrived at the town in 1845.



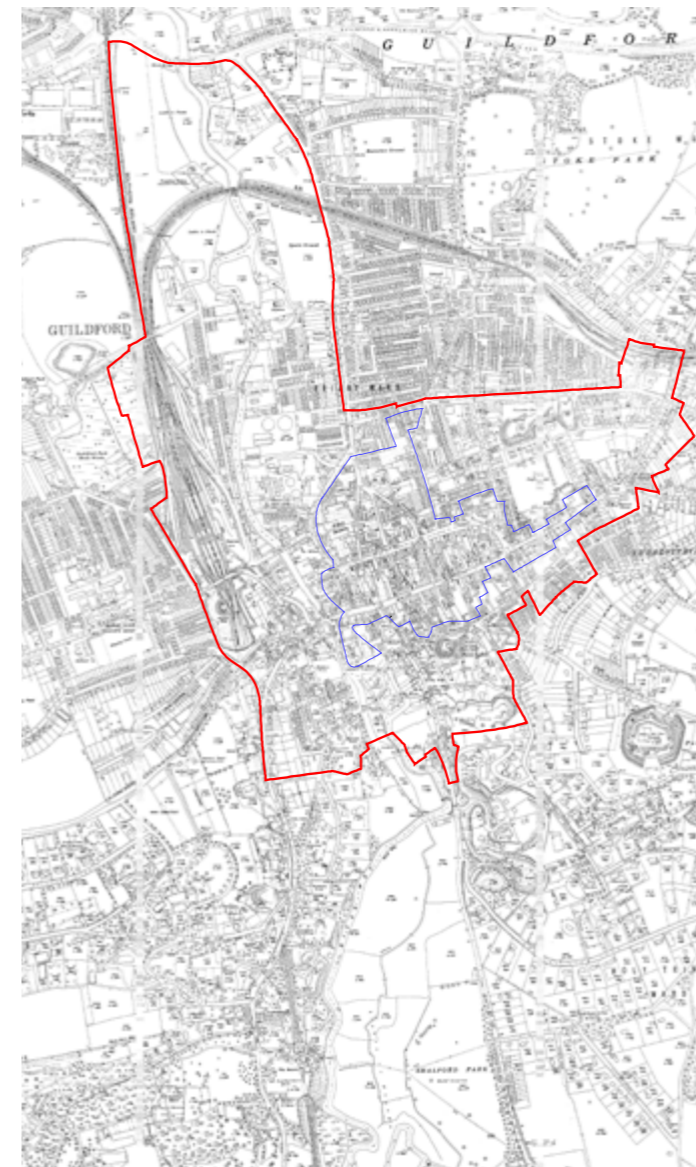
## 1896

The town has filled out noticeably, boosted by the South-west railway line. New development has begun around Stoke Fields and around the County Hospital, and Stoughton to the North.



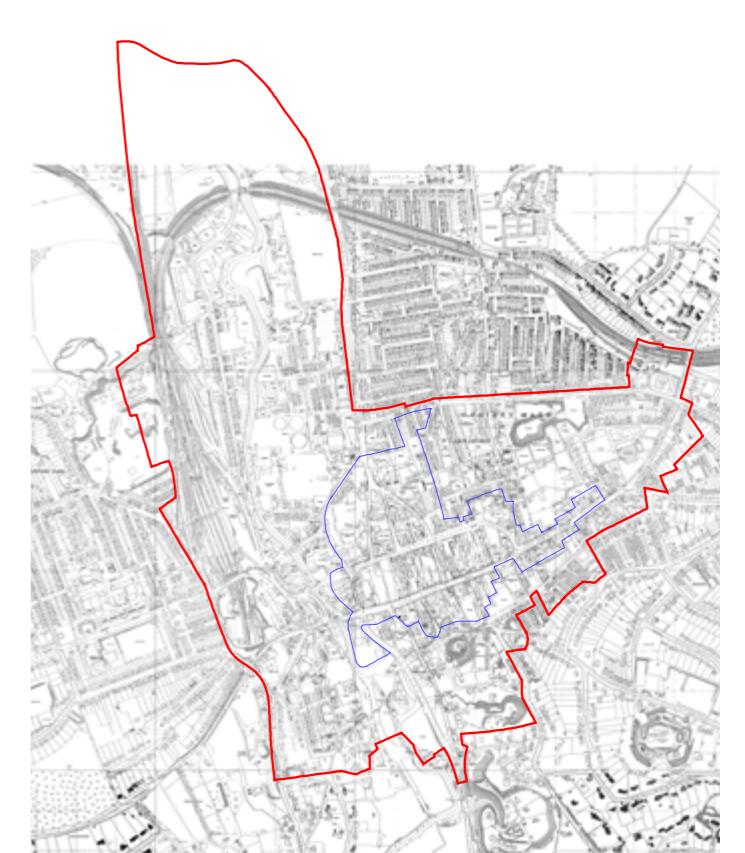
## 1935

The town continues to expand in all directions in the first few decades of the 20th Century. New development grows around Epsom Road, Pewley Hill, Stag Hill and Onslow Village.



## 1975

By 1975 the shape and character of modern Guildford can be seen. Malls, multi storey car parks and office blocks have proliferated in the town centre and the University of Surrey has formed around the Cathedral.



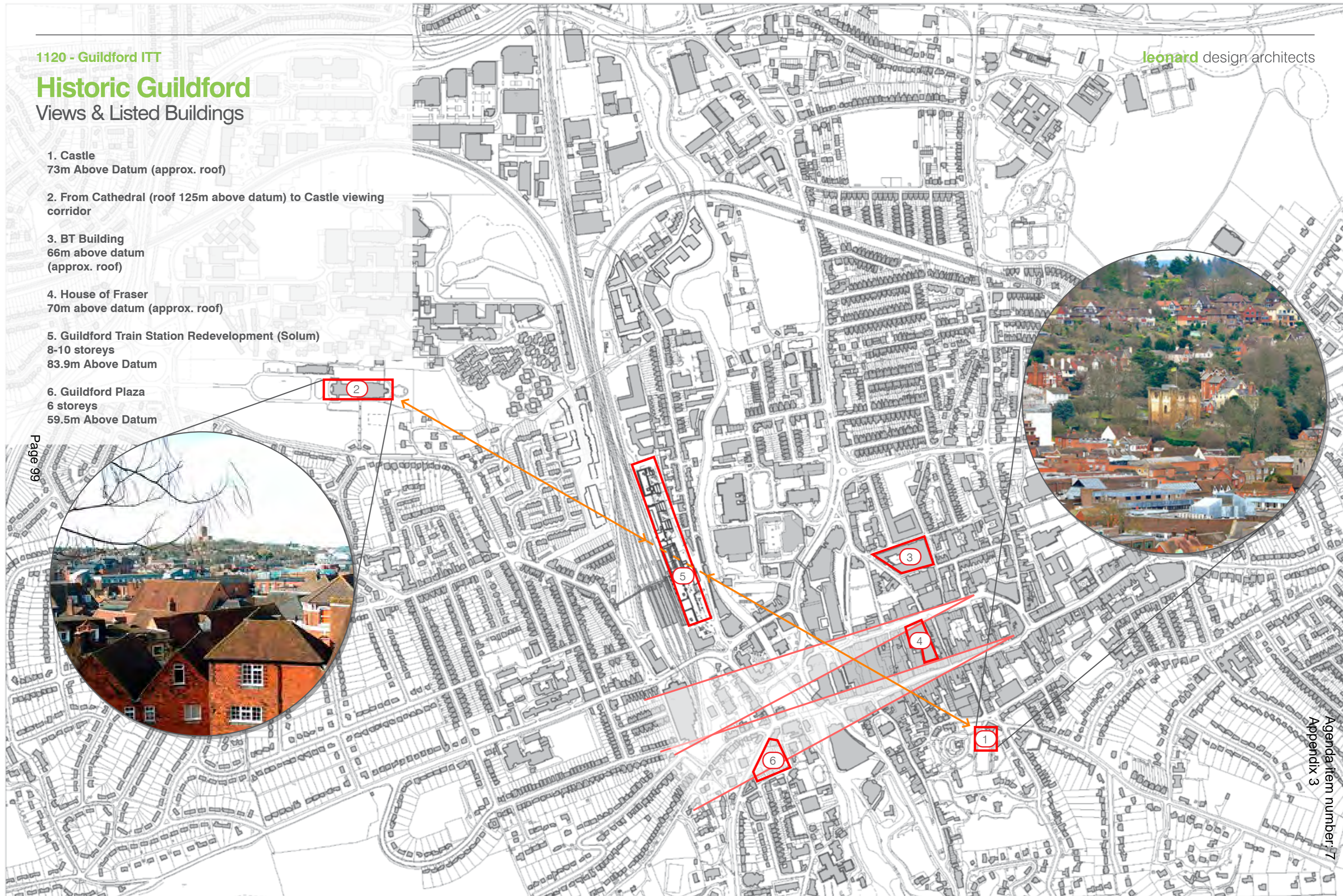


# Historic Guildford

## Views & Listed Buildings

- 1. Castle  
73m Above Datum (approx. roof)
- 2. From Cathedral (roof 125m above datum) to Castle viewing corridor
- 3. BT Building  
66m above datum (approx. roof)
- 4. House of Fraser  
70m above datum (approx. roof)
- 5. Guildford Train Station Redevelopment (Solum)  
8-10 storeys  
83.9m Above Datum
- 6. Guildford Plaza  
6 storeys  
59.5m Above Datum

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Appendix 3



# Historic Guildford

## Key Messages

### HISTORIC GUILDFORD KEY MESSAGES

The historic core forms the cornerstone of the town centre strategic spatial masterplan. It aims to strengthen and re-align Guildford to celebrate its unique historic assets.

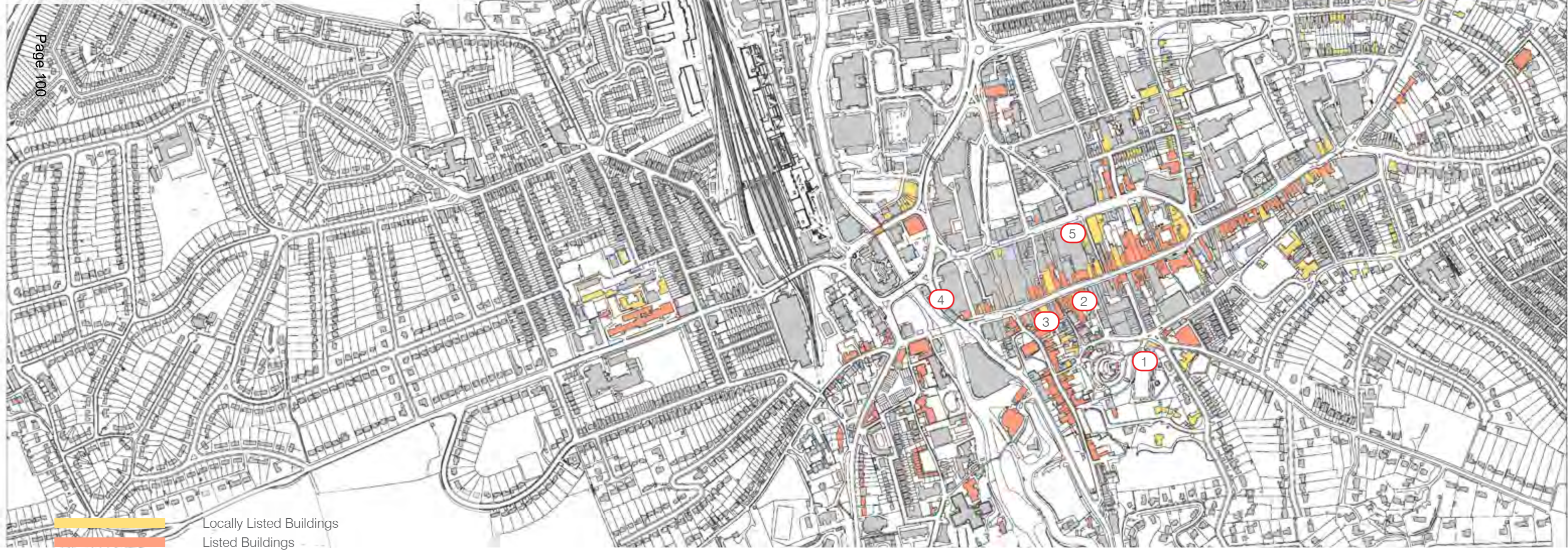
The major opportunity is to establish a landscape-led response to the River Wey to enhance the character and create a more coherent centre.

#### Scheduled Ancient Monuments:

1. Guildford Castle
2. Medieval undercroft at 72/74 High Street
3. Medieval undercroft remains at 50/52 High street
4. The Treadwheel Crane

#### Listed parks and gardens

5. The Jellicoe Roof Garden





# Historic Guildford Opportunities

Guildford is denoted by the 'concrete collar' of the gyratory and surface car parks but continues to benefit from its historic setting and attractive green outlook, . However the town centre study area contains a number of opportunities for regeneration:

- 1. The journey from the train station to the historic core has a number of negative, inactive frontages , large footprint buildings and high volume road network.
- 2. Bedford Wharf - the courts, police and Odeon - lack patterns of frontage and an address to the riverside.
- 3. Improved access to green space across the masterplan.
- 4. The gyratory is a major issue for the central part of the River Wey where it meets the historic core of Guildford, constraining the growth of the town centre and preventing a link to the riverside.
- 5. Much of the riverside in the river corridor is inaccessible and lacks linkage.

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In the context of its historic setting, the masterplan focuses on fine grain opportunities for public realm enhancements to provide a more accessible centre for cyclists and pedestrians.



Friary Bridge



Bridge Street gyratory



Debenhams and the riverside



Portsmouth Road car park and the riverside



Rear of the Crown Courts

Agenda item number: 7  
Appendix 3



# 03. The Road Issue



# The Road Issue

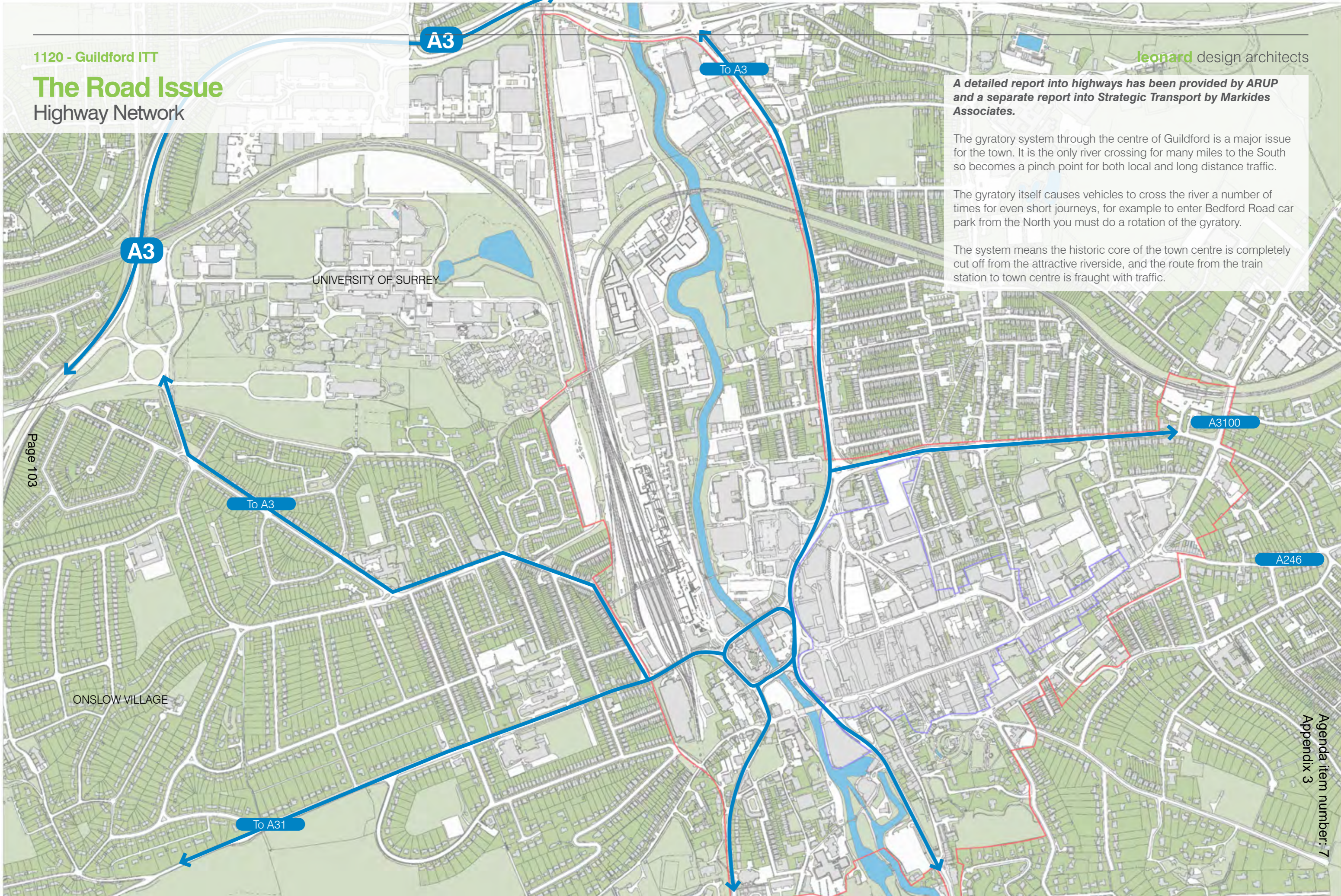
## Highway Network

**A detailed report into highways has been provided by ARUP and a separate report into Strategic Transport by Markides Associates.**

The gyratory system through the centre of Guildford is a major issue for the town. It is the only river crossing for many miles to the South so becomes a pinch point for both local and long distance traffic.

The gyratory itself causes vehicles to cross the river a number of times for even short journeys, for example to enter Bedford Road car park from the North you must do a rotation of the gyratory.

The system means the historic core of the town centre is completely cut off from the attractive riverside, and the route from the train station to town centre is fraught with traffic.



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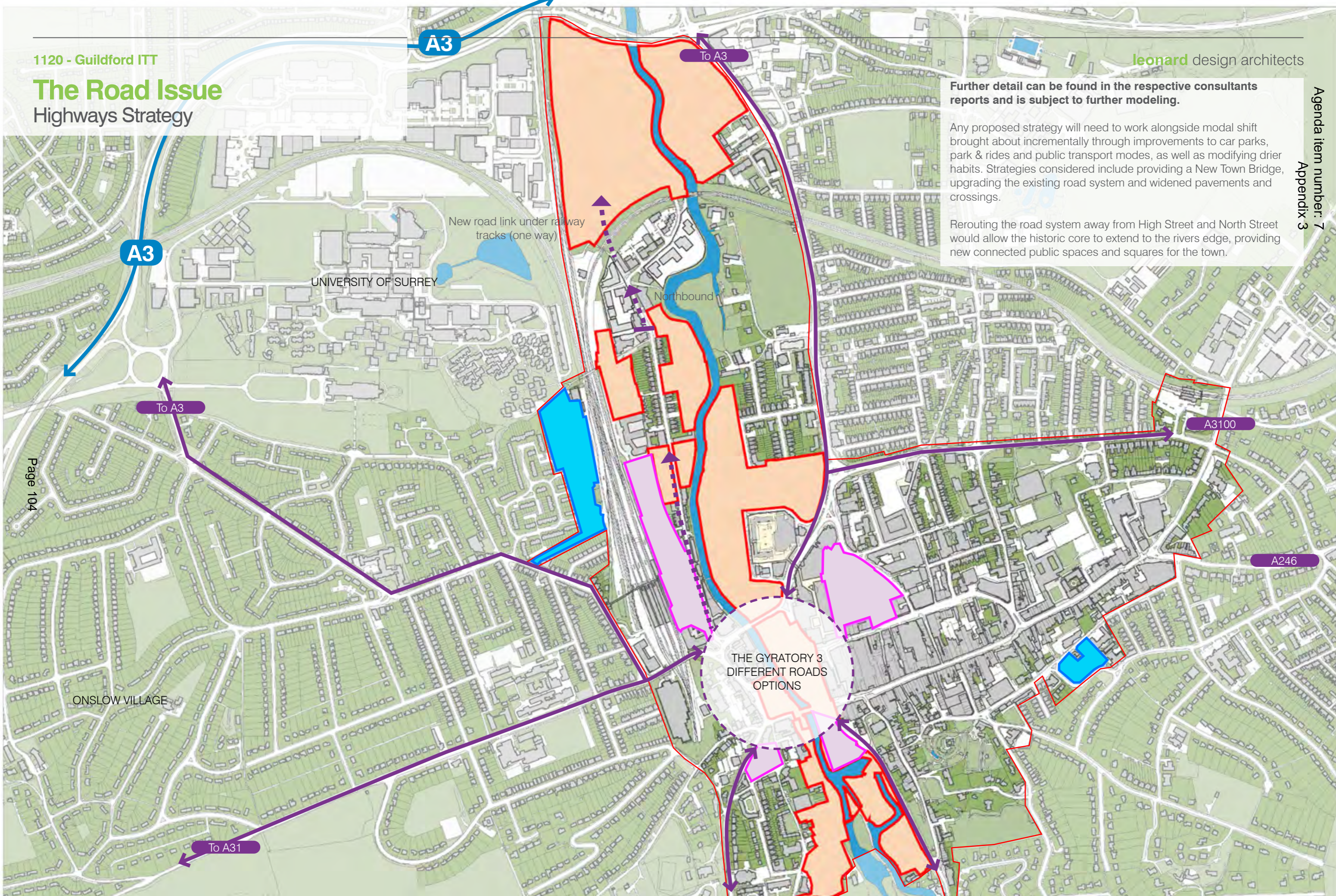
# The Road Issue

## Highways Strategy

Further detail can be found in the respective consultants reports and is subject to further modeling.

Any proposed strategy will need to work alongside modal shift brought about incrementally through improvements to car parks, park & rides and public transport modes, as well as modifying drier habits. Strategies considered include providing a New Town Bridge, upgrading the existing road system and widened pavements and crossings.

Rerouting the road system away from High Street and North Street would allow the historic core to extend to the rivers edge, providing new connected public spaces and squares for the town.





# The Road Issue

## The Gyratory

The gyratory system causes congestion, pollution and accidents between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. As demonstrated below there are a number of incidents in and around the roadway.

A comprehensive review is required to determine how to reduce congestion pollution and accidents. This is likely to take the form of several interventions under an overriding strategy.

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The existing road network



Existing Road Traffic Incident data

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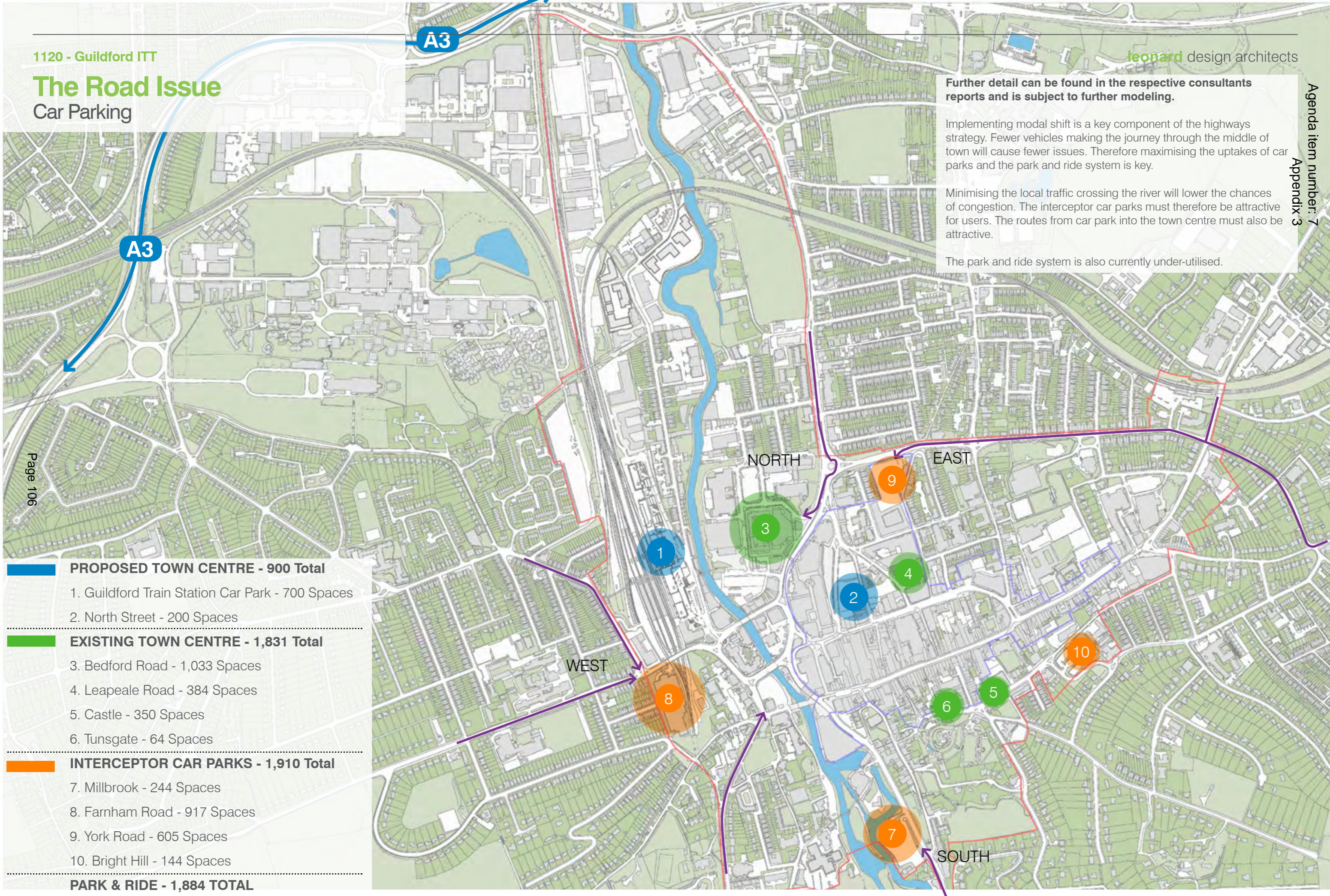
# The Road Issue Car Parking

Further detail can be found in the respective consultants reports and is subject to further modeling.

Implementing modal shift is a key component of the highways strategy. Fewer vehicles making the journey through the middle of town will cause fewer issues. Therefore maximising the uptakes of car parks and the park and ride system is key.

Minimising the local traffic crossing the river will lower the chances of congestion. The interceptor car parks must therefore be attractive for users. The routes from car park into the town centre must also be attractive.

The park and ride system is also currently under-utilised.





# The Road Issue

## Car Parking

To capture local traffic and prevent it from needlessly crossing the river, the existing car parks must be attractive propositions to visitors.

Pedestrian access to and from the car parks must also be accessible and attractive, and can form strategies for early wins in the overall masterplan strategy.



Bedford Road Car Park



York Road Car Park



Leapale Road Car Park



Farnham Road Car Park



# 04. Movement Strategy



# Movement Strategy

## Walking Opportunities

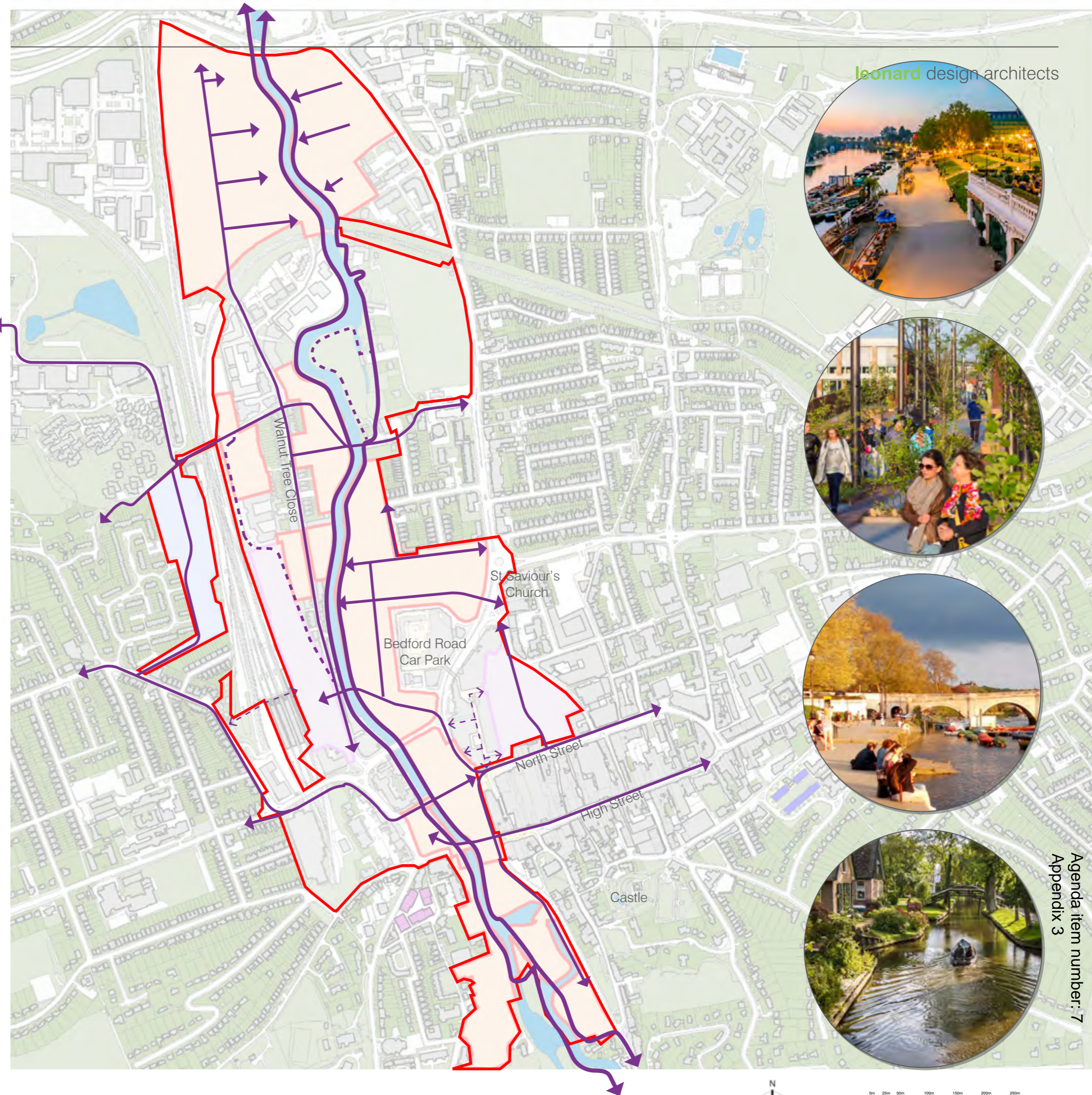
Connecting the historic core to the riverside and beyond. Potential opportunities are outlined below:

### NORTH - SOUTH

1. To upgrade the existing towpath on the West side of the river to take pedestrians from Ladymead (and to the Weyside development beyond) to the town centre and South to Millmead and beyond.
2. Create a new towpath on the East side of the river, connecting North to South and provide a sequence of new green spaces to the town centre.
3. Two new bridges at Millmead to connect the Debenhams site to the theatre and the new development at Millbrook Car park.

### EAST - WEST

1. Upgrade Yorkies Bridge to carry pedestrians, bicycles and a one way shuttle bus connection to the University and connect to, and extend, the Sustainable Movement Corridor across the train tracks.
2. Create a new pedestrian bridge connecting Farnham Road car park to the town centre.
3. The new raised Town Bridge will provide a large 5m wide green pavement to connect High Street across the river and maintain views west from High Street.
4. Friary Bridge is pedestrianised, creating a new piece of public realm at the town centre.
5. Walnut Tree Bridge connects to an attractive new Bedford Square to the train station.
6. New connections to the riverside are created through Bedford Wharf and Mary Road.
7. A new pedestrian bridge can connect Walnut Tree Close to Onslow Street and provide an extension to the East West cycle network & sustainable movement corridor. In addition to the findings of the Guildford Cycle Route Assessment.



leonard design architects





# Movement Strategy

## Cycling Opportunities

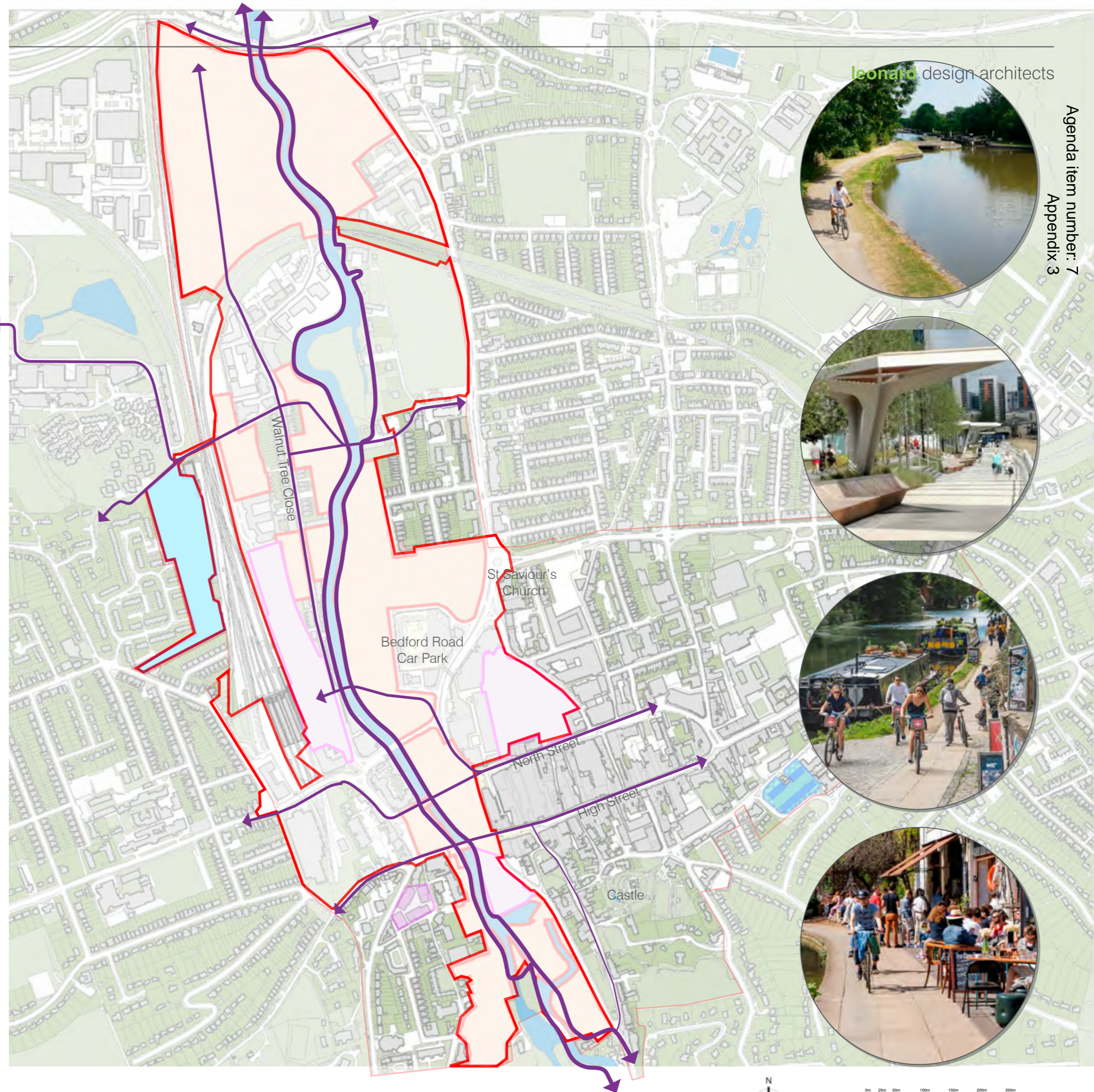
Connecting the historic core to the riverside and beyond. Potential opportunities are outlined below

### NORTH - SOUTH

1. Upgrade the Towpath to connect Ladymead to Millbrook & beyond.
2. The new towpath on the Eastern bank of the river to include cycling paths.
3. Two new bridges at Millmead to connect the Debenhams site to the theatre and the new development at Millbrook Car park.

### EAST - WEST

1. Connect to, and extend the Sustainable Movement Corridor across the train tracks & river.
2. The new pedestrian bridge at Farnham Road allows cycle lanes to be provided over the bridge.
3. The new raised Town Bridge provides an improved cycling connection between The Mount and High Street and the national cycle network.
4. Walnut Tree Bridge provides for bicycles and connects to an attractive new Bedford Square.
5. A new pedestrian bridge across the river can connect Walnut Tree Close to Onslow Street.





# Movement Strategy Public - Parks & Squares

As well as improved connections the masterplan provides a network of new pieces of public realm. Potential opportunities are outlined below

## MILLBROOK

A new park at Millmead car park as well as new bridge connections from Millbrook car park to Debenhams. New activities on the riverfront edge can take advantage of the beautiful southern outlook.

## TOWN WHARF

With the road system rerouted, Town Wharf can become the new town square for Guildford. Hard and soft landscaping steps down to the riverside. Kiosks and seasonal events can take place on a pedestrianised and improved Friary Bridge and a new market can be located at the end of North Street.

## BEDFORD WHARF

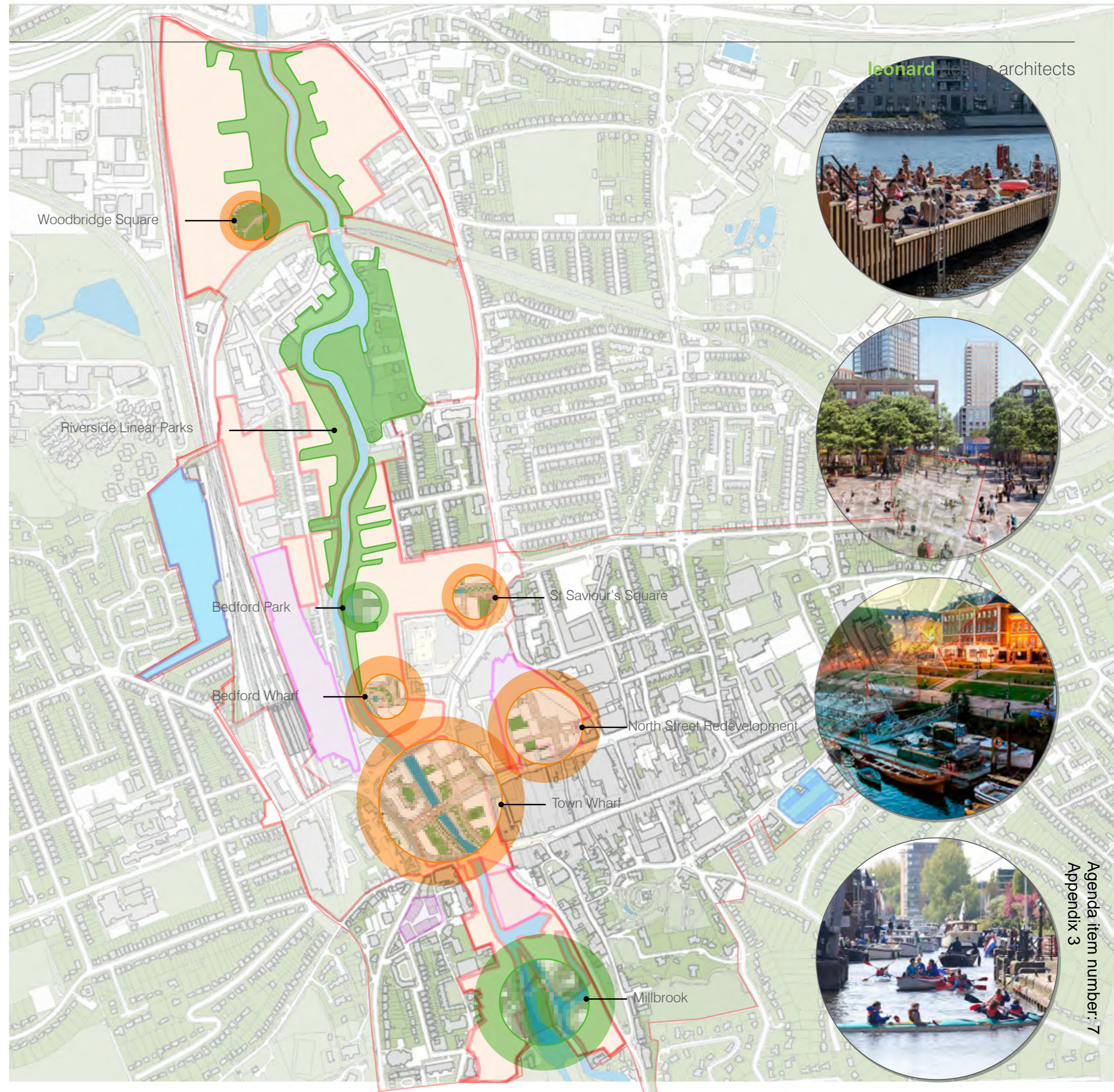
Three new squares are connected by two green boulevards providing new civic spaces. A linear green park also extends along the riverside towpath route.

## WALNUT TREE CLOSE & DAPDUNE WHARF

The linear park widens to form green amenity space, accessible from the town centre. New East-West connections connect these spaces to Walnut Tree Close and the Sustainable Movement Corridor beyond.

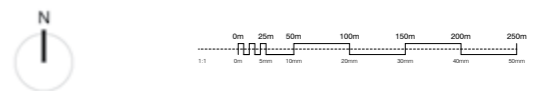
## WOODBIDGE MEADOWS & ROAD

The green lung around the river expands further to provide sports pitches and meadow parklands.



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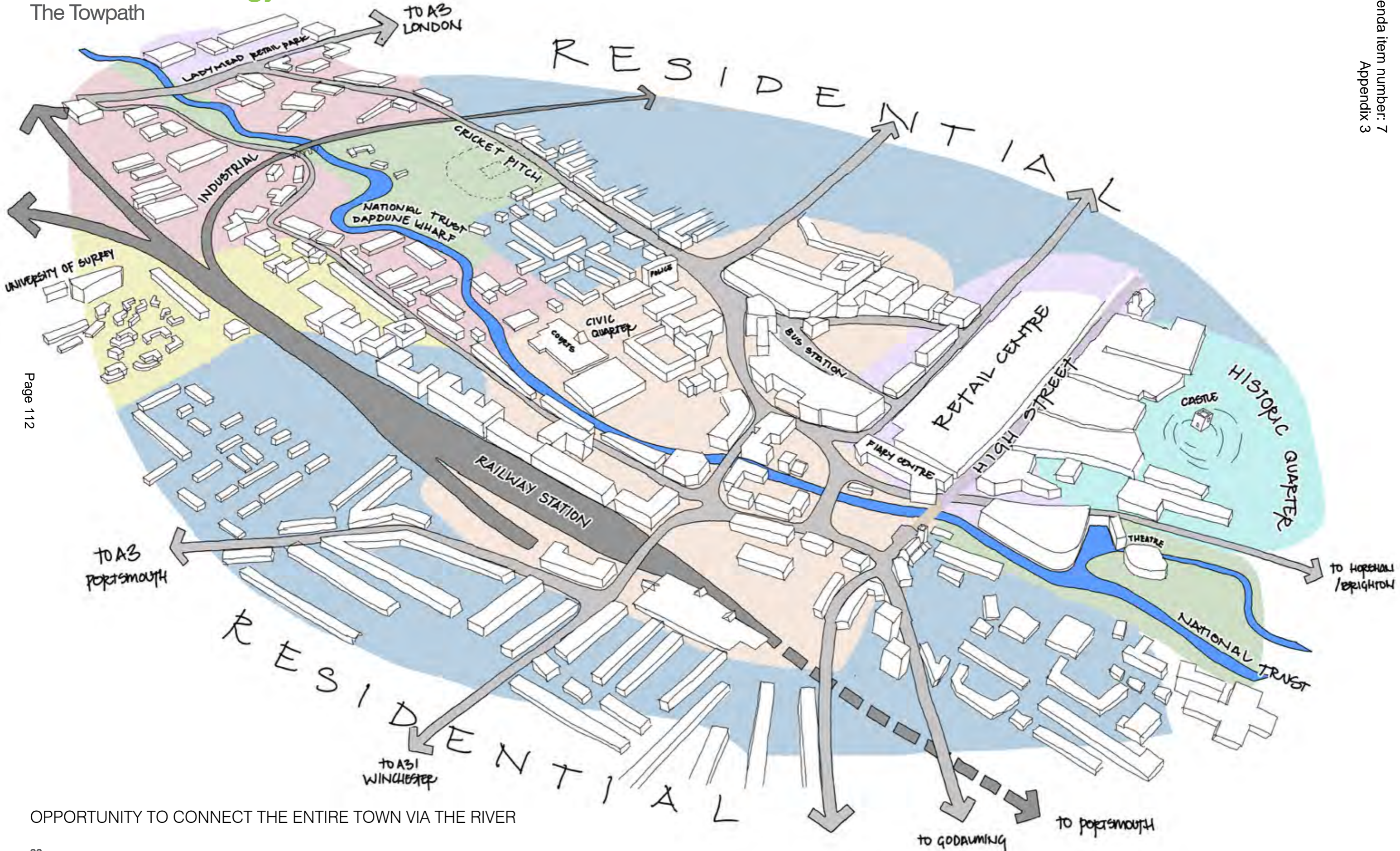
 New Green Parks  
 New Public Squares





# Movement Strategy

## The Towpath

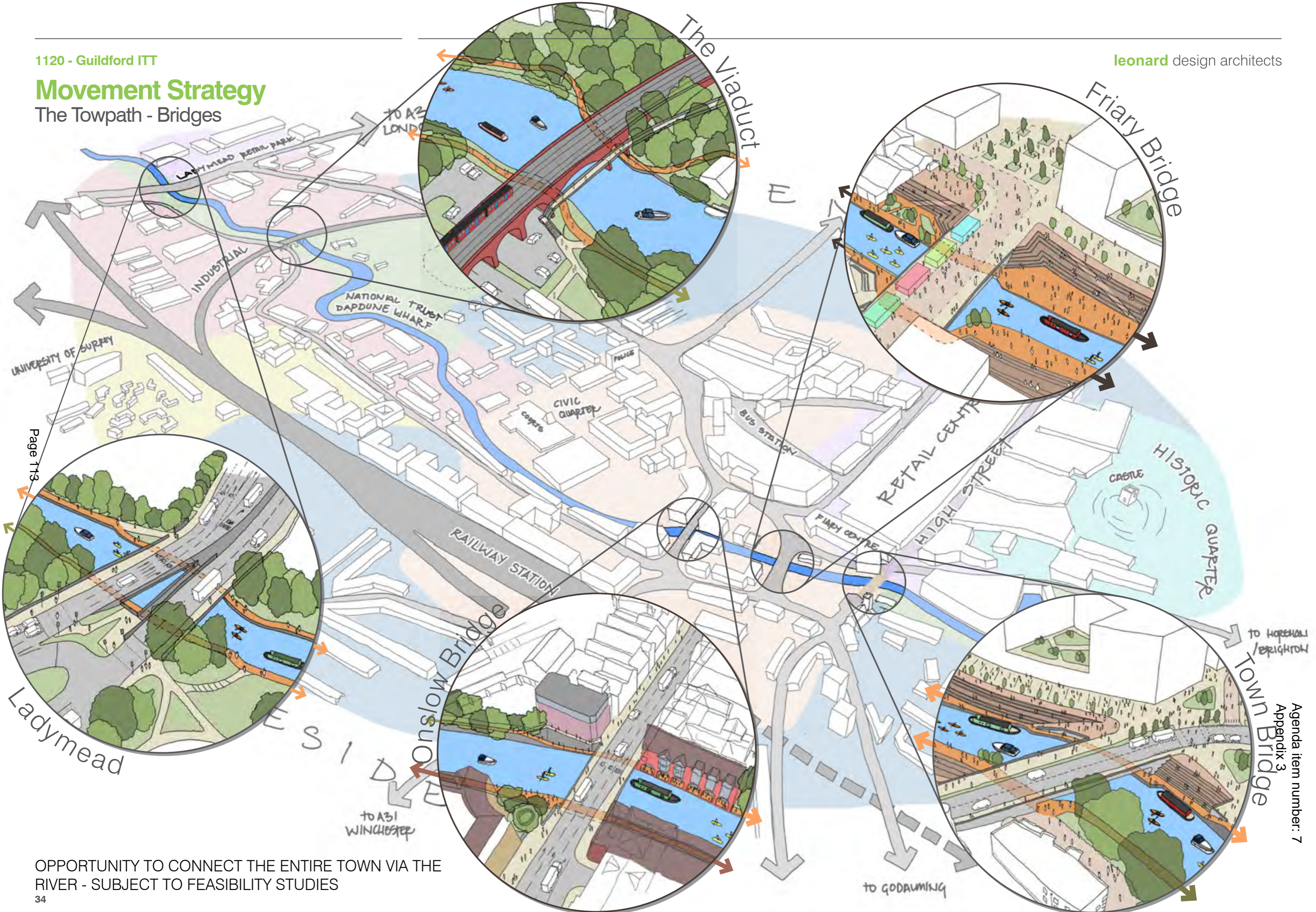


OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT THE ENTIRE TOWN VIA THE RIVER



# Movement Strategy

## The Towpath - Bridges



OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT THE ENTIRE TOWN VIA THE RIVER - SUBJECT TO FEASIBILITY STUDIES



# 05. Flooding



# Flooding Strategy

## Flood Zones

Further detail can be found in the Flood Alleviation report compiled by ARUP and is subject to further modeling.

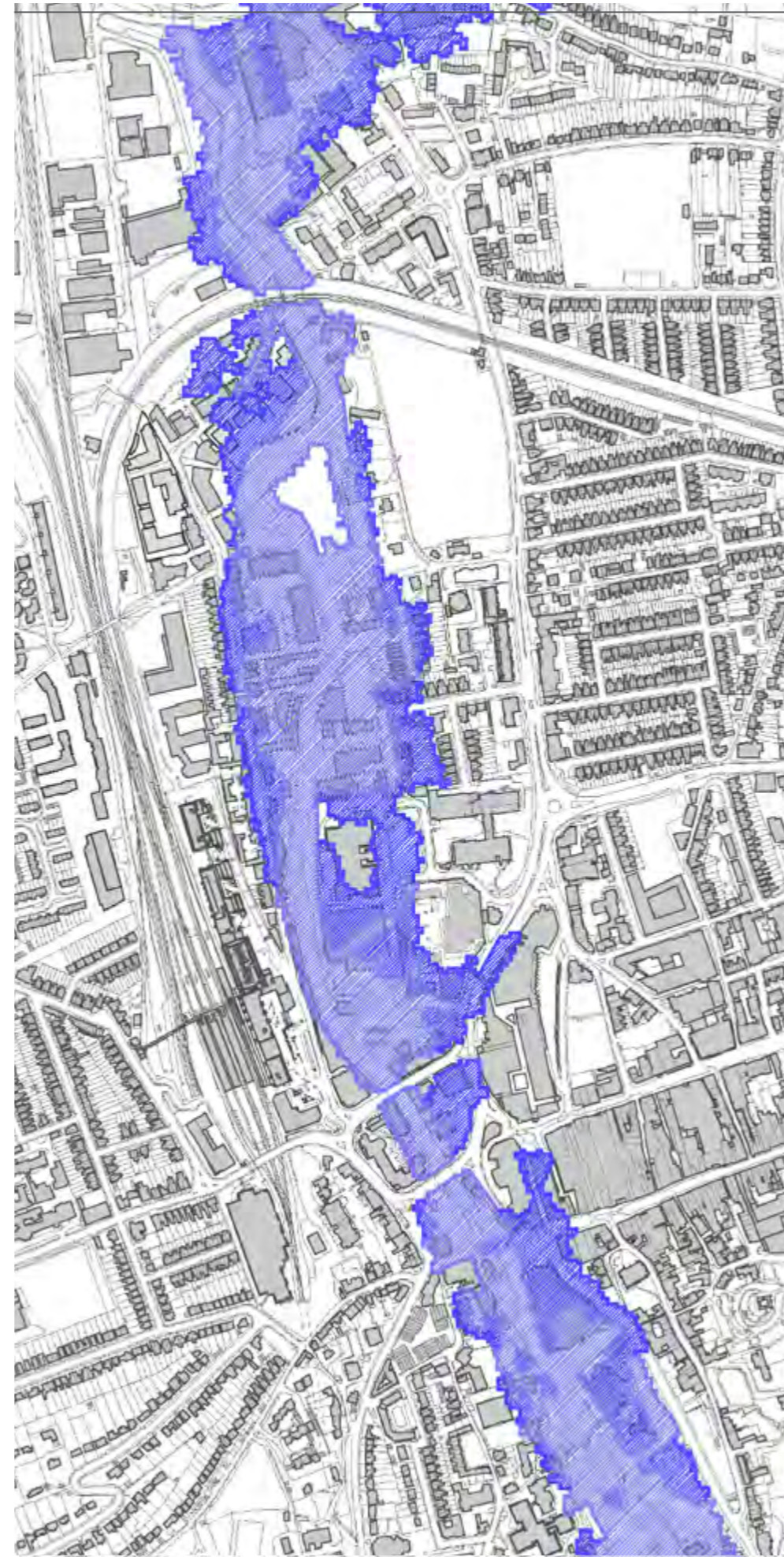
Flooding is a major issue for Guildford Town Centre. As the map shows, much of the river corridor is in flood zone 3B, the highest risk of fluvial flooding:

Areas within flood zone 3 are at a 1% probability of flooding, or a 1:100 chance.

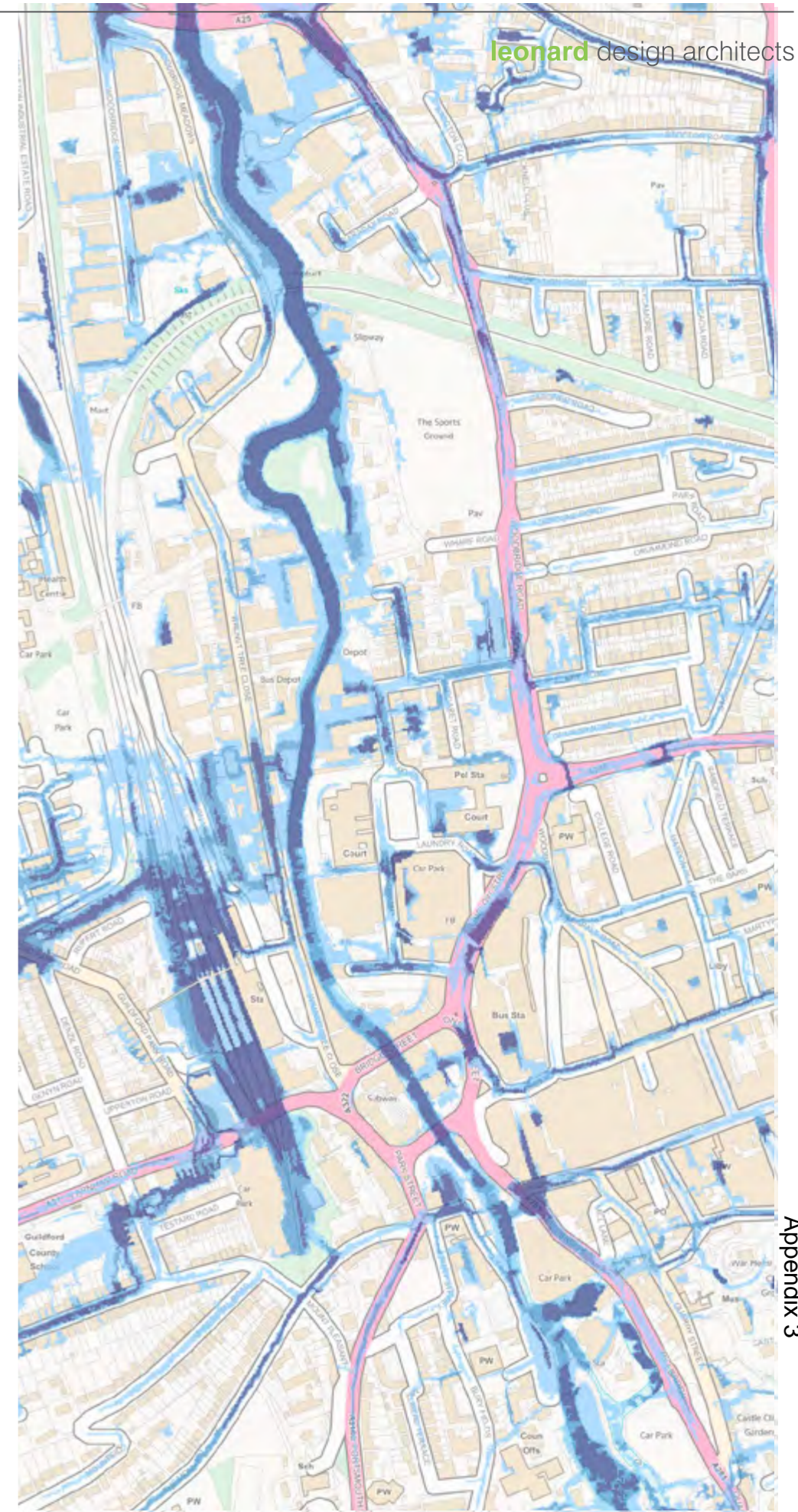
Flood zone 3B is classed as functional floodplain, which has a 5% probability of flooding, or a 1:20 chance.

In order to build development successfully in these areas sufficient flood attenuation strategies must be used. The outline of those strategies is shown overleaf.

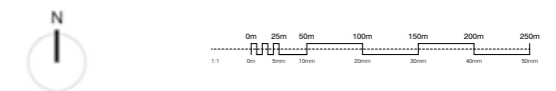
- Zone 2 - Medium Risk
- Zone 3A
- Zone 3B - Highest Risk



Fluvial Flooding



Surface water Flooding





# Flooding Strategy

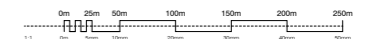
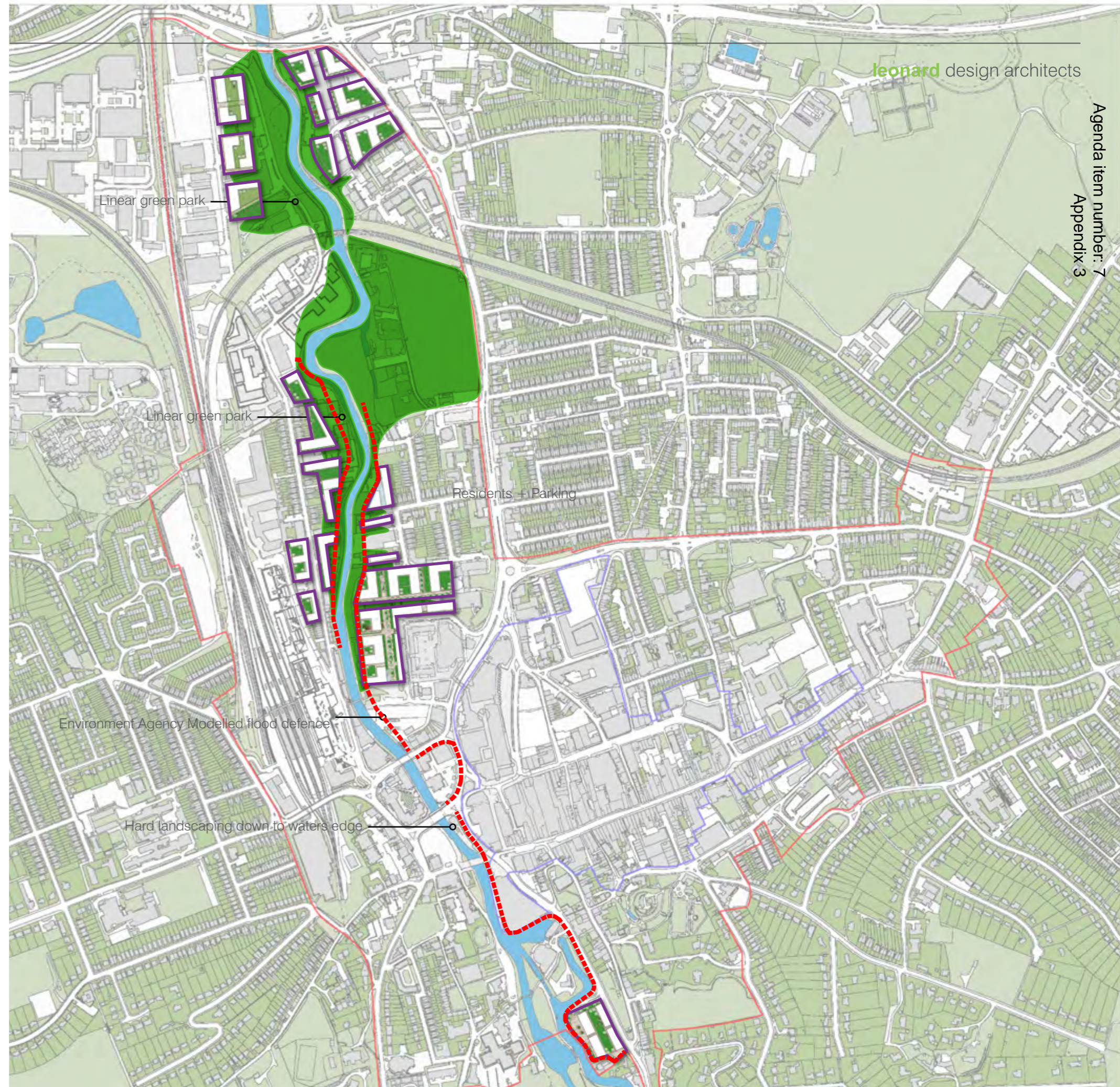
## High Level Strategy

This high level strategy is to be read alongside the holistic flooding report which looks at the wider context of Guildford and any upstream interventions which can alleviate issues in the town centre (produced by ARUP). The aim is to retain as much functional flood plain as possible, thus ensuring no ill effects are caused outside this study zone.

These strategies include:

1. **A green linear park along rivers edge, with a 20m zone left for green flood storage with water detention ponds and soft landscaping.**
2. **New flood defenses to be constructed to enable development plots to come forwards. Environment Agency modelled flood defenses shown in red here.**
3. **These buildings raised above the floodplain to have safe egress to ground outside of the floodplain as well as access for emergency vehicles.**
4. **Multiple drainage channels running back to the green linear park & river.**
5. **Intensive greening throughout the public realm & roofscapes to slow down water flow back into the flood zone.**
6. **All hard landscaping and street furniture within flood zones resilient to inundation for easy clean up and recommission.**
7. **A combination of hard and soft landscaping used in the town centre (Bedford Wharf, train station and Town Wharf) for flood storage, attenuation and prevention.**
8. **The rebuilt Town Bridge will be slightly raised to clear the flood risk zone and connect riverside walks on both banks**

\* Blocks shown are indicative to show flood defence strategies





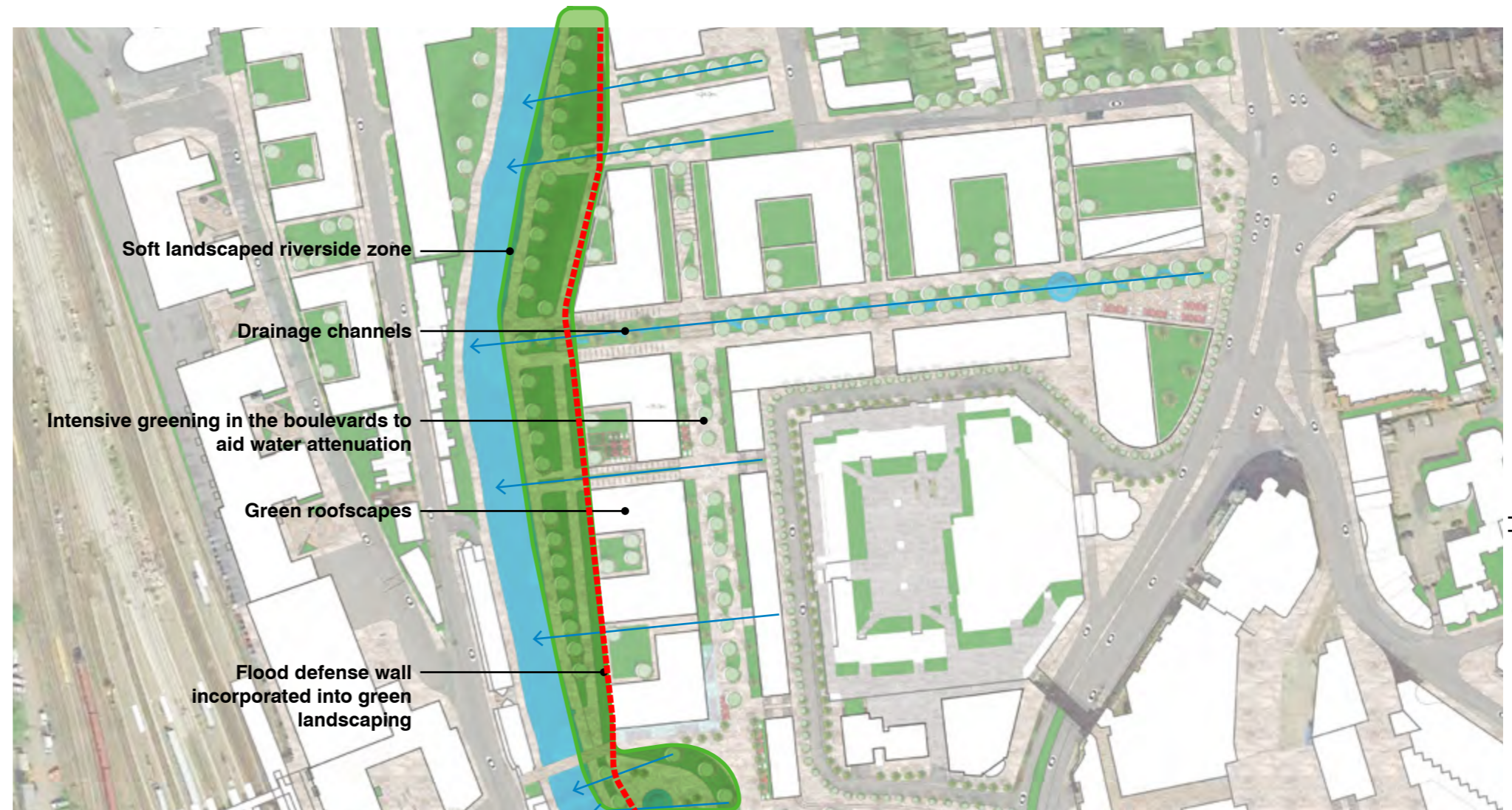
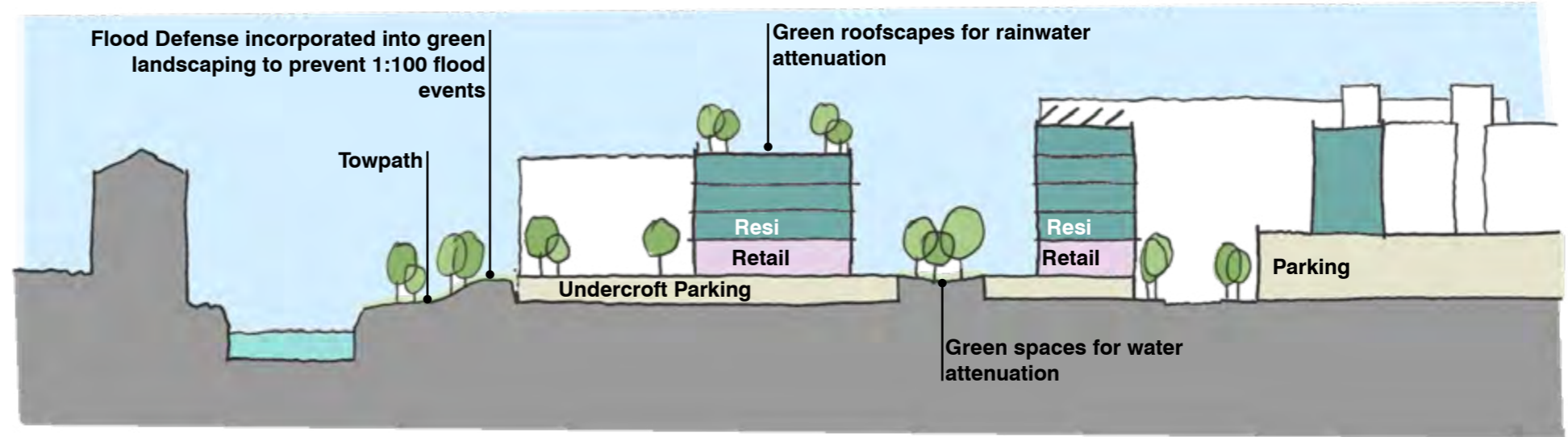
# Flooding Strategy

## River Repatriation

Where development lies in a floodplain mitigation will have to occur. The high level strategy attempts to reintegrate the riverside with the town centre, therefore a barrier free environment is created wherever possible.

The following strategies can be used:

1. Soft landscaping used in a 20m zone along the riverside for flood storage.
2. All hard landscaping & street furniture resilient to inundation for easy clean up and recommission.
3. Flood defense walls incorporated into the landscaping.
4. Undercroft car parks used in Zone 3B in the offices hub to the North.
5. Where active frontages are required flood mitigation measures used - such as raising all wiring & sockets above the flood plain level.
6. Drainage corridors in the form of swales planted with trees lead back to the river. Water detention ponds & soft landscaping are used to further slow the discharge back to the river.
7. Green roofs will be used to further slow discharge back into the river.



\* Blocks shown are indicative to show flood defence strategies



# 06. Character Zones



# Character Zones

## Defining the Zones

Within the town centre area various sites have been outlined and assessed for their potential use and delivery. Some of these sites have already been developed or in development.

In order to build a fully comprehensive town masterplan these uses and capacities need to be factored in and will inevitably impact on future proposals.

These are highlighted on the plan showing sites within and outside of GBC ownership

### Outside GBC Ownership

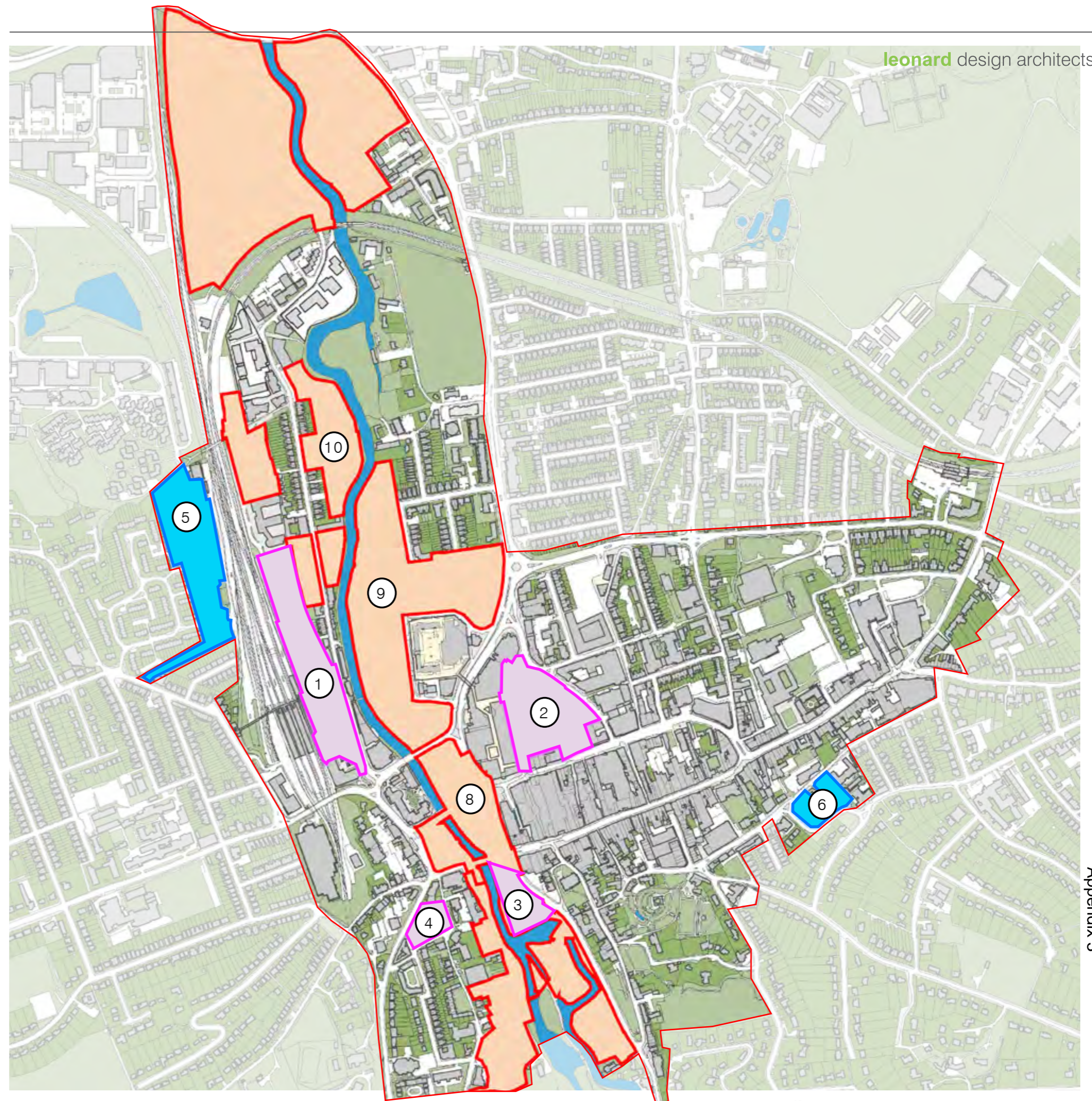
- 1. Solum
- 2. St Edwards - North Street
- 3. Debenhams - Native Land
- 4. Plaza Site

### GBC Ownership - Early Delivery

- 5. Guildford Park Road
- 6. Bright Hill

### Masterplan Study Sites

- 7. Millbrook Car park & Millmead
- 8. Town Wharf
- 9. Bedford Wharf
- 10. Walnut Tree Close
- 11. Woodbridge Meadows
- 12. Woodbridge Road





# Character Zones

## Sites Delivered by Others

### 1. SOLUM

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Redevelopment of the existing train station with additional retail, office, residential, multistorey car park and landscaped public square.

- Residential: 438 units
- Retail/F&B: 3,642m<sup>2</sup>
- Office: 2.104m<sup>2</sup>
- MSCP: 644 spaces (inc. residential)

### 2. ST EDWARDS - NORTH STREET

PRE-APPLICATION

Redevelopment of last east of the existing bus station. Mainly residential with ground floor activation to include retail/commercial and F&B units.

### 3. DEBENHAMS

OUTLINE DESIGN STAGE

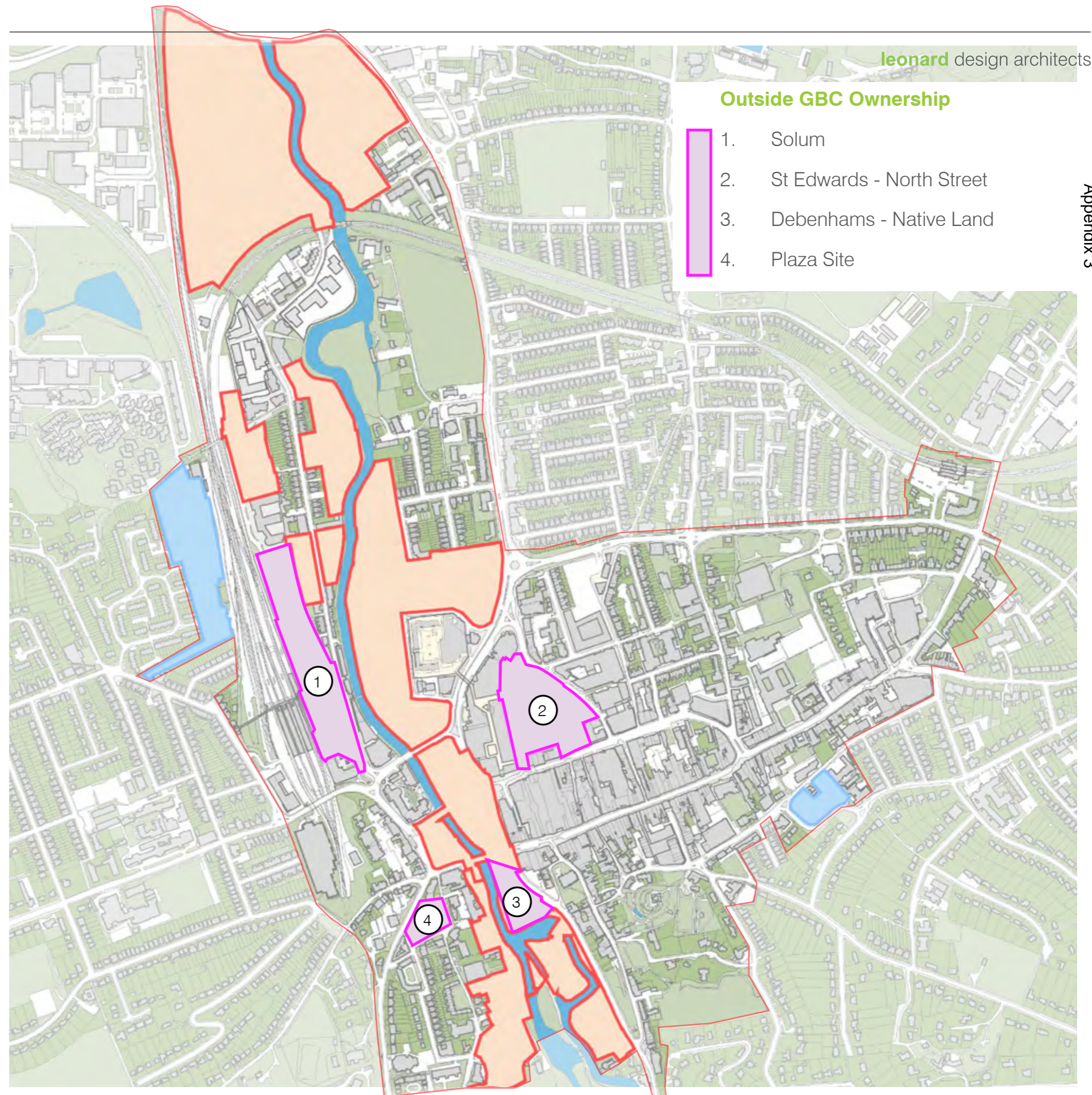
The existing debenhams building has recently been purchased by Native Land. Presumed development will be residential based with active ground floor on waterfront

### 4. GUILDFORD PLAZA

APPROVED

Existing brownfield site to have new 100 apartment assisted living scheme. Includes residents facilities and external gardens

- Residential: 100 units (assisted living)
- Parking: 57 spaces (residents)





# Character Zones

## GBC Ownership - Early Delivery

### 5. GUILDFORD PARK ROAD

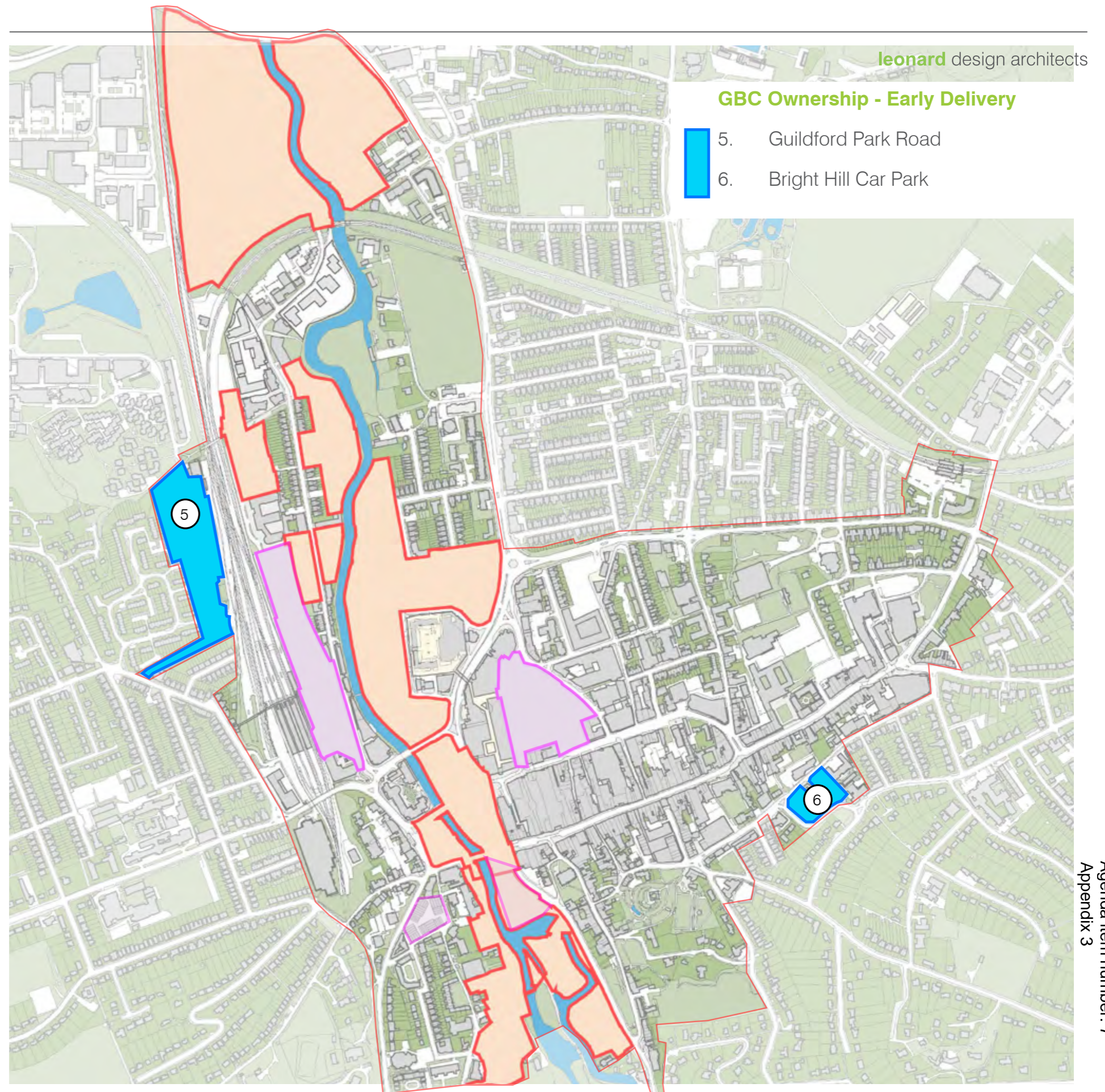
PLANNING

Existing car park site has planning permission approved for residential development (mix of apartments and townhouses) with multistorey car park and ground floor commercial space.

### 6. BRIGHT HILL CAR PARK

OUTLINE DESIGN STAGE

Existing Bright Hill and Robin Hill car parks identified as suitable for development. Proposals to be residential led with high proportion of affordable housing





# Character Zones

## Defining the Zones

The masterplan scope has been divided into different areas to assist in phasing, deliverability and defining character and use types.

Each zone will have its own best suited uses and massing depending on numerous factors. These are not set in stone and remain flexible at this stage. Factors include:

- location (in relation to town centre, train station etc.)
- existing infrastructure
- local requirements
- potential asset values
- potential capacity

Zones have been set out as below:

**ZONE 1A - GUILDFORD PARK ROAD & BRIGHT HILL CAR PARKS**

**ZONE 1B - MILLBROOK & MILLMEAD**

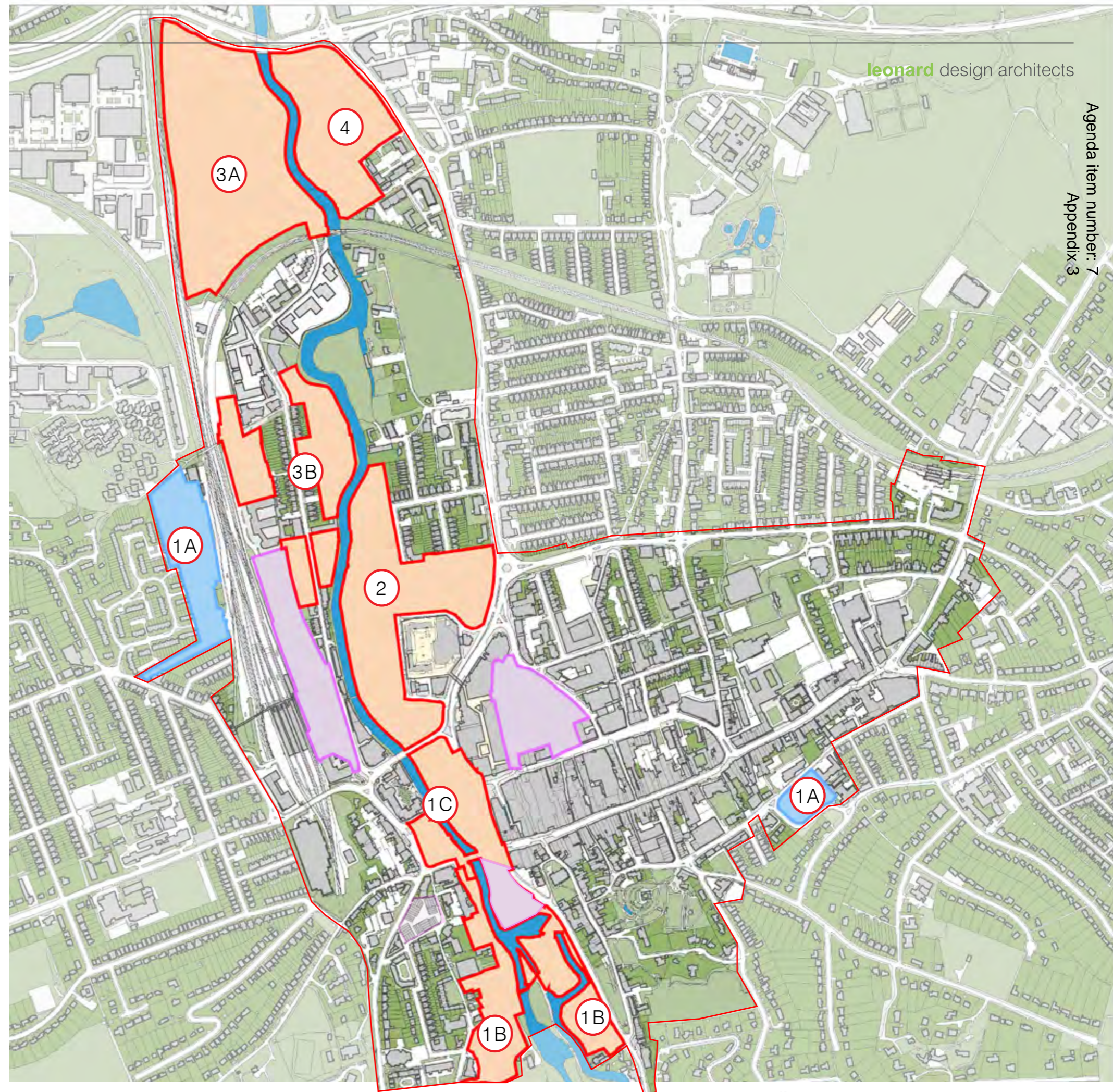
**ZONE 1C - TOWN WHARF**

**ZONE 2 - BEDFORD WHARF**

**ZONE 3A - WOODBRIDGE MEADOWS**

**ZONE 3B - WALNUT TREE CLOSE**

**ZONE 4 - WOODBRIDGE ROAD**





# Character Zones

## Zone 1A - Guildford Park Road & Bright Hill Car Parks

Proposed sites at Guildford Park Road and Bright Hill are both existing surface car parks highlighted to be suitable for early development.

Both sites, being car parks, are outside of the floodzone, already allocated and require minimal demolition. Being set to the periphery of the town centre opportunities to deliver should not impact the overall strategic spatial masterplan.

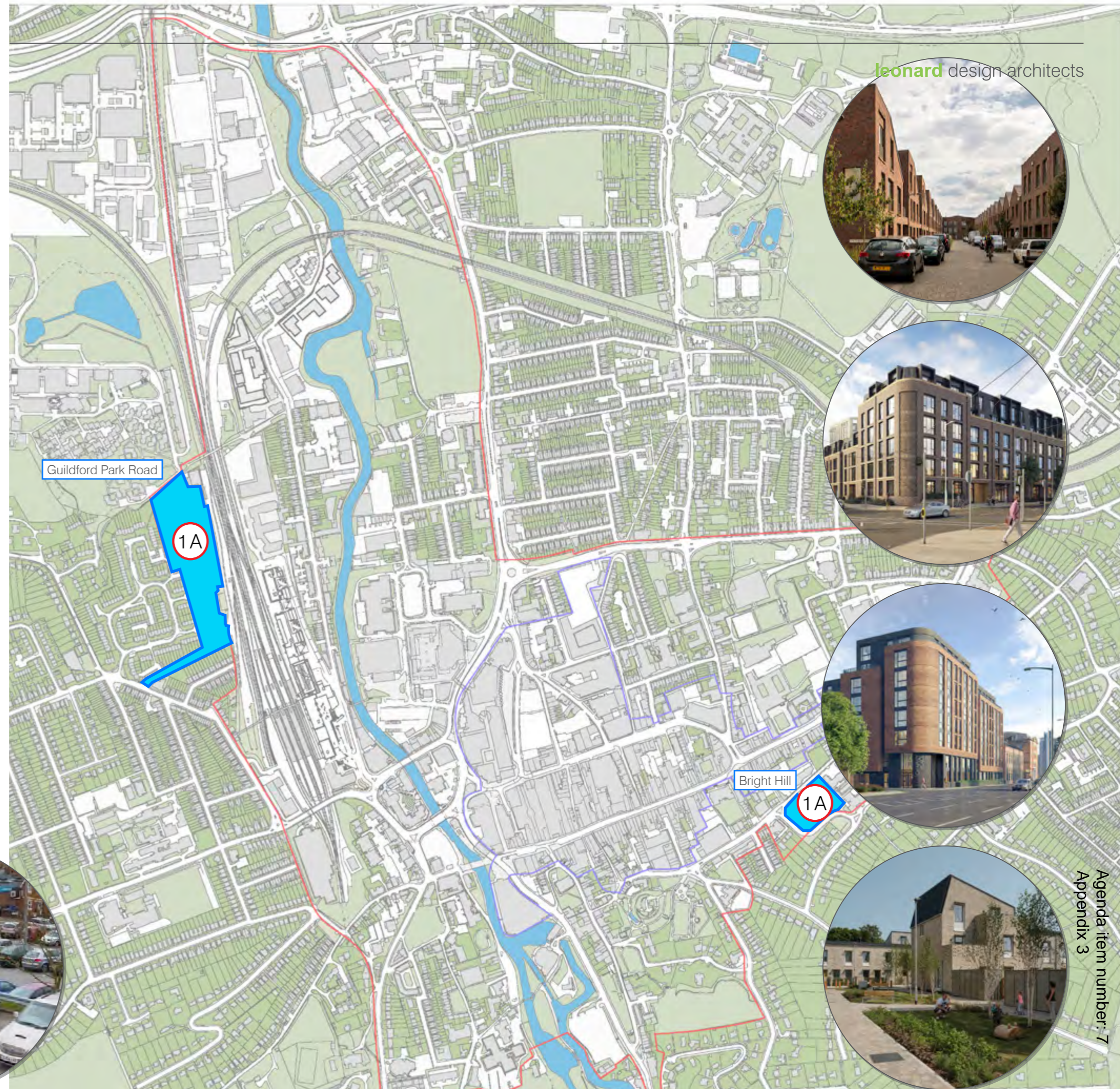
Given their respective locations both sites are suited to residential uses, perhaps with a degree of ground floor activation be it retail, grocery or community etc.

These sites are within GBC ownership and can offer an opportunity to demonstrate exemplar quality and set affordable housing standards for Guildford going forward

**POTENTIAL USES:**

**EXEMPLAR MARKET AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

**GROUND FLOOR COMMERCIAL / COMMUNITY USES**





# Character Zones

## Zone 1B - Millbrook & Millmead

Proposed sites are Millbrook surface car park and the current Guildford Borough Council offices, subject to their relocation.

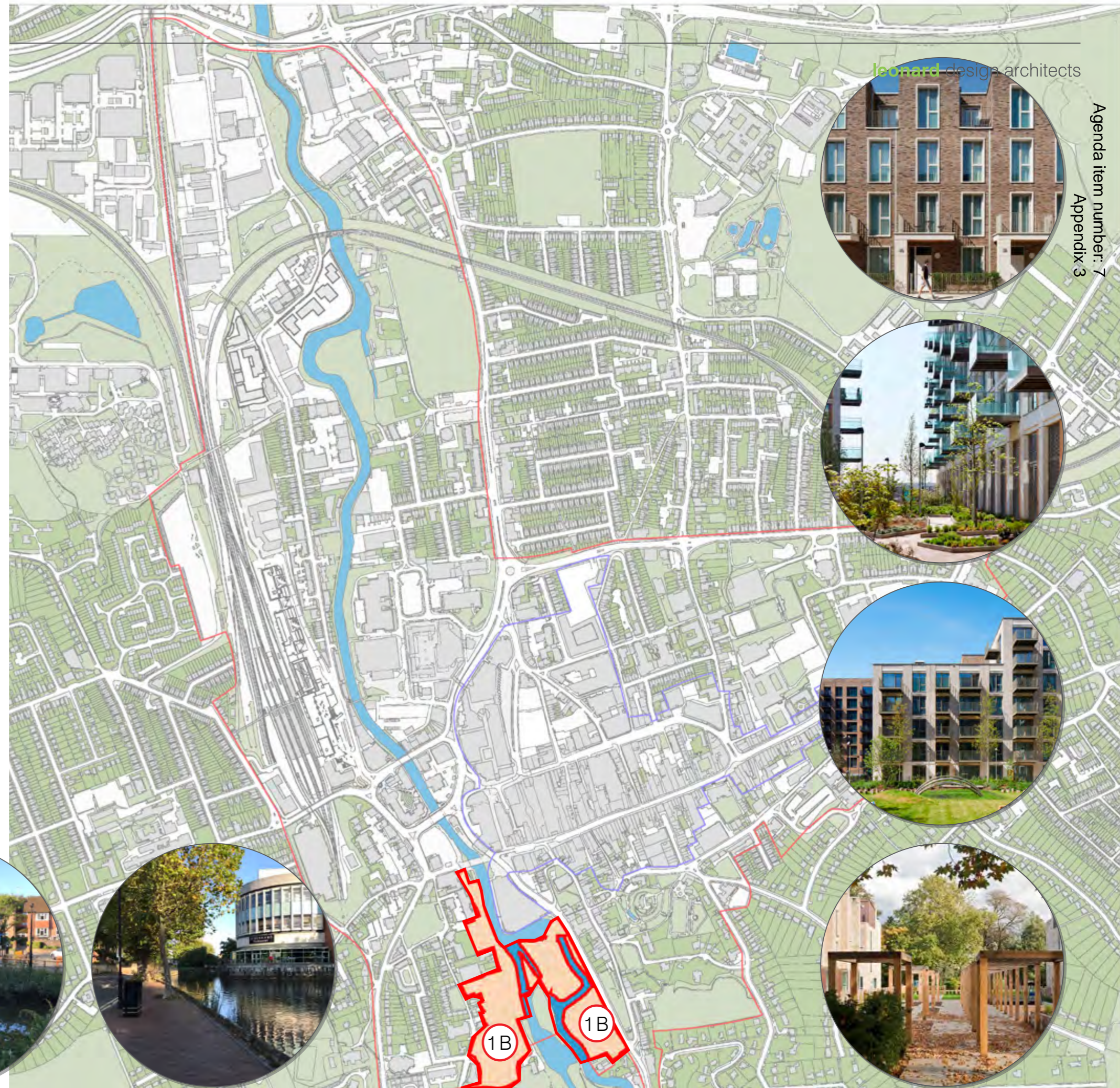
Both sites are characterised by their proximity to the river and quality of landscaping. Future design should respond to this context and seek to maximise landscaped public realm and waterfront living.

New pedestrian and cycle links along the river to the town centre could reduce car reliance and make the car park more attractive to visitors, subsequently reducing town centre traffic.

High quality residential in an attractive and high value setting. The Millbrook car park may want to be retained and, if possible, capacity for public parking increased.

**POTENTIAL USES:**

- HIGH QUALITY WATERFRONT RESIDENTIAL**
- RETAINED/INCREASED PUBLIC PARKING - MILLBROOK**



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# Character Zones

## Zone 1C - Town Wharf

Town Wharf sits at the base of North Street & High Street the main retail and F&B streets of Guildford. The existing layout is dictated by the busy roads cutting through up to the current gyratory.

The greatest opportunities could be found in reconnecting the town centre to the waterfront. This can form a vibrant public realm engaging the waterfront with the potential backdrop of an arts and culture building.

Inclusion of existing assets such as the Electric Theatre and Rodboro building could create an active environment with a mix of retail, leisure and F&B around an engaging public realm.

### POTENTIAL USES:

**EXPERIENTIAL RANGE OF RETAIL, CAFES, RESTAURANTS**

**ARTS & CULTURE**

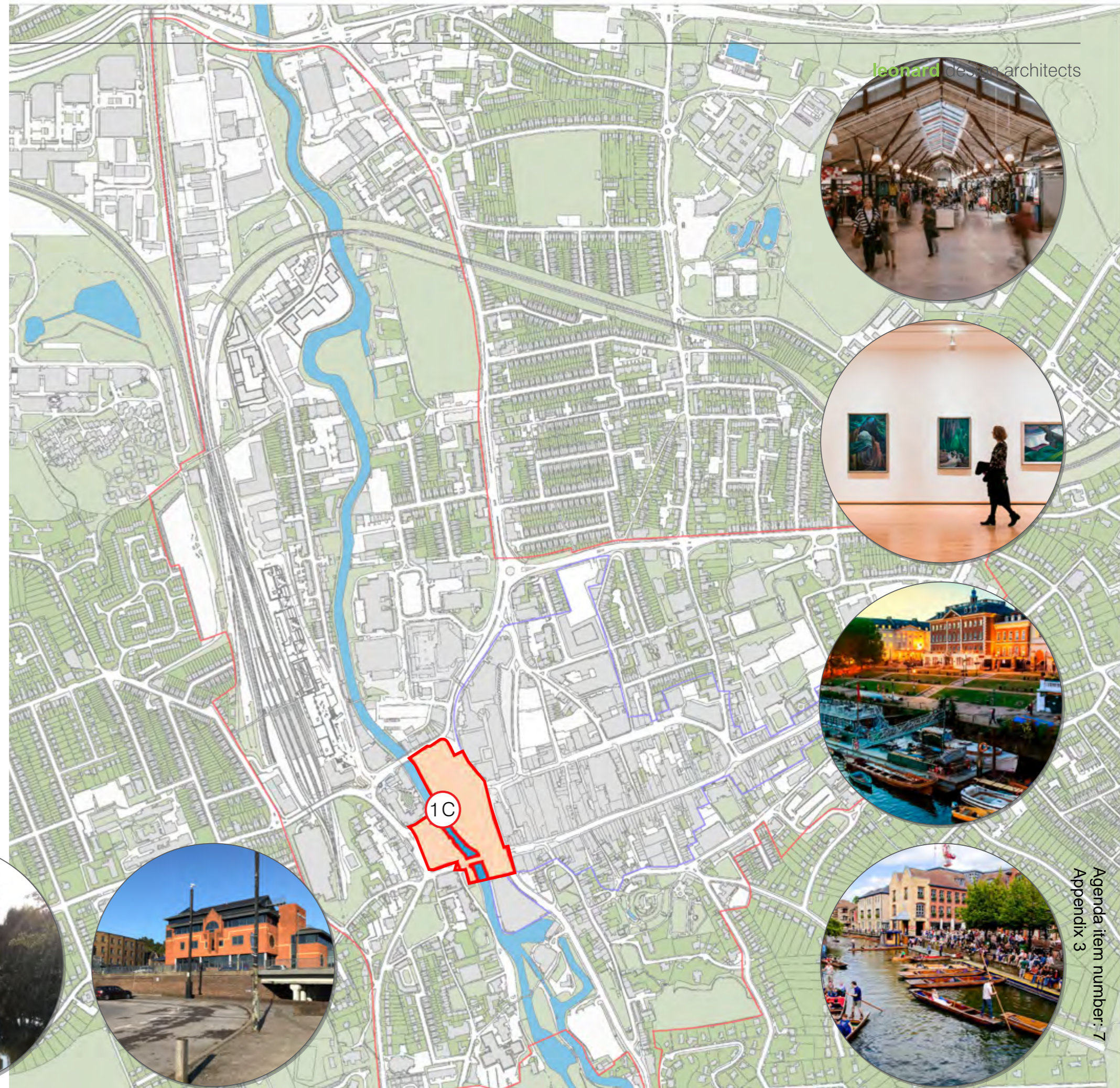
**LEISURE**

**VIBRANT GROUND FLOORS & PUBLIC REALM**

**URBAN LIVING**

**EXISTING EMPLOYMENT**

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# Character Zones

## Zone 2 - Bedford Wharf

The current tenants in Bedford Wharf include a mix of leisure (notably the Odeon Cinema), The One Estate, offices and residential.

There is the opportunity to relocate The One Estate, which includes the Crown Court, County Court and Police, to a new civic hub with additional offices. A new workspace and employment centre for Guildford

Potential inclusion of F&B and leisure uses with hotel can reactivate the underutilised waterfront and allow for high quality waterfront residential. The urban environment can potentially be landscaped with a strong public realm.

### POTENTIAL USES:

**HIGH QUALITY RIVERSIDE RESIDENTIAL**

**HOTEL**

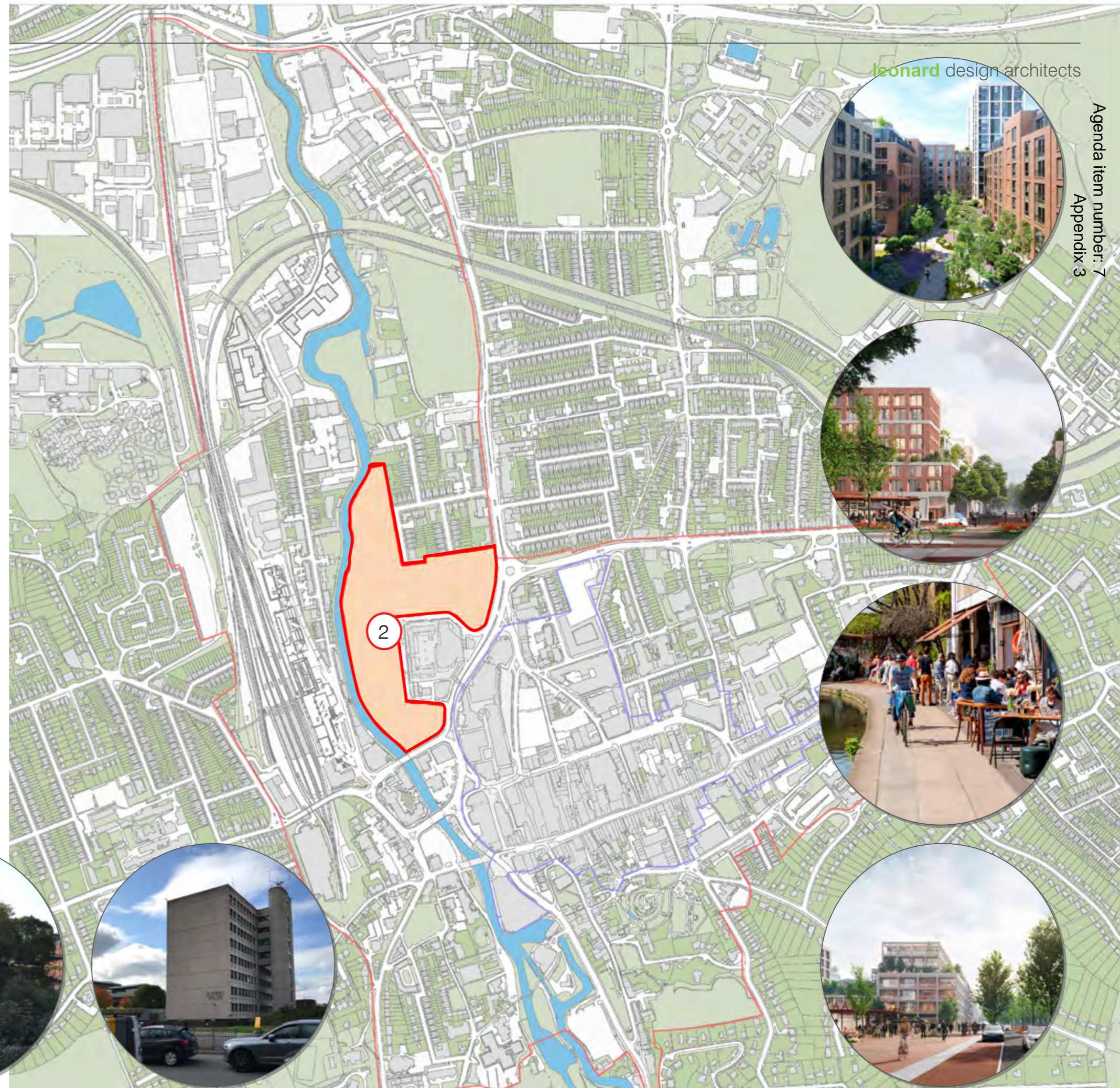
**F&B & LEISURE OPPORTUNITIES**

**OFFICE CBD**

**CIVIC - COURTS & POLICE**

**COMMUNITY - MEDICAL, DENTIST, ETC**

**GREEN RIVERSIDE PUBLIC REALM**





# Character Zones

## Zone 3A - Woodbridge Meadows

Woodbridge Meadows is predominantly made up of light industrial units, many of which are within the ownership of GBC.

Opportunities in this zone primarily appear to be residential due to its location away from the town centre. One manner in which this can be realised is the creation of a new 'urban village'.

As sites become available a residential neighbourhood can begin to develop with complimentary offers such as grocery and community uses. Retaining employment uses at ground and first floor can diversify offers to form a better mixed use 'urban village'. In addition the area would be suitable for a new school if appropriate land became available.

Location along the river can open opportunities for waterside amenity with a possible green buffer from the water to provide external amenity and leisure space.

**POTENTIAL USES:**

**NEW URBAN VILLAGE**

**RESIDENTIAL**

**WORKSPACE / EMPLOYMENT**

**NURSERY / SCHOOL**

**LANDSCAPING & WATERSIDE AMENITY**





# Character Zones

## Zone 3B - Walnut Tree Close

Land around Walnut Tree Close comprises of piecemeal plots under private ownership including a mix of residential, employment and light industrial.

Any opportunities for development will require external stakeholder involvement reducing the council's ability to bring development forward.

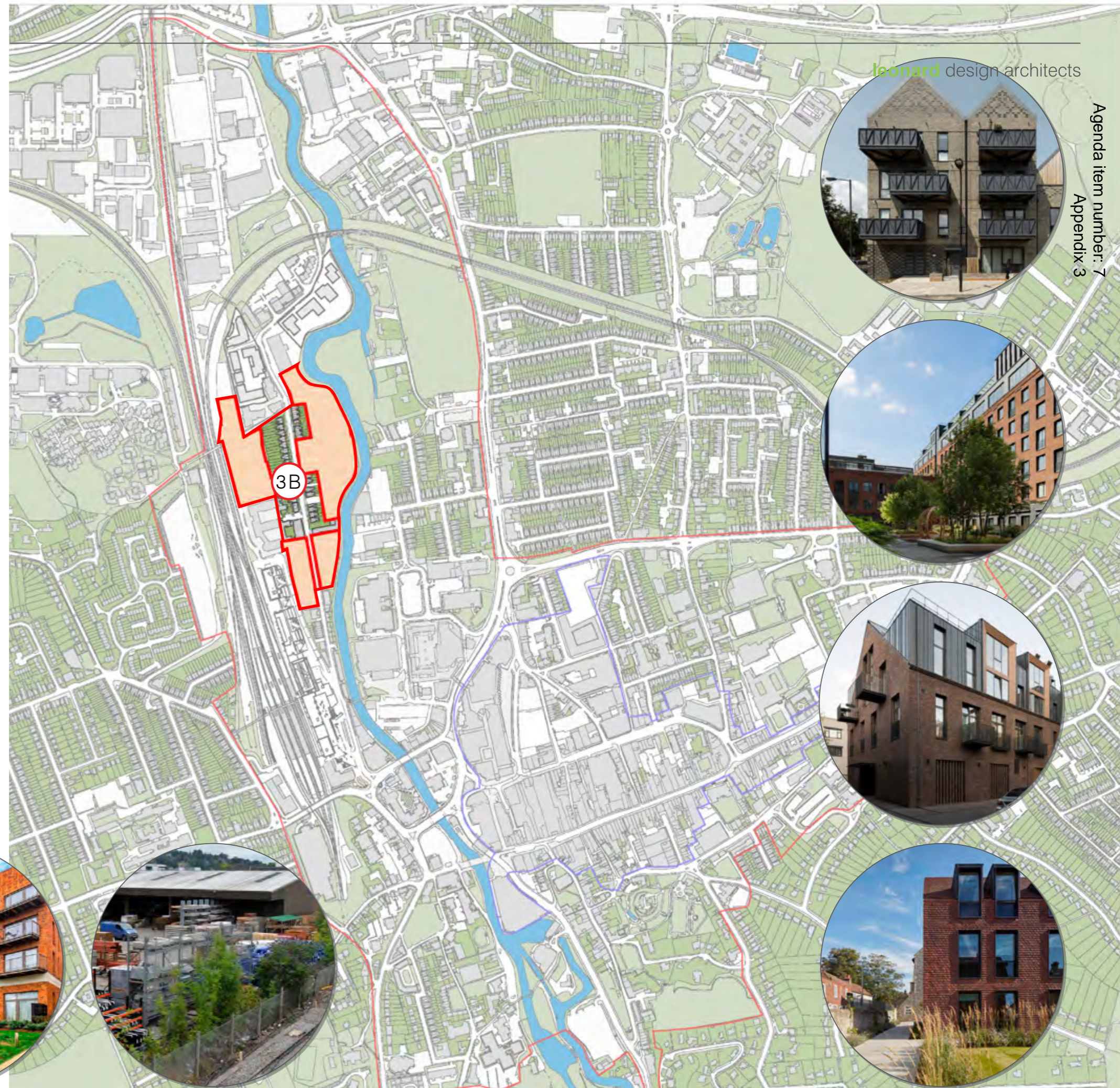
Residential uses can sit harmoniously within the context whilst improving connectivity to the riverside and towpath

### POTENTIAL USES:

**RESIDENTIAL**

**WORKSPACE / EMPLOYMENT**

**COMMUNITY - MEDICAL, DENTIST**



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# Character Zones

## Zone 4 - Woodbridge Road

The current area is currently a mix of light industrial uses including a petrol station and substation. These are outside of GBC ownership reducing ability to bring through

As at Woodbridge Meadows, the zone is set away from the town centre. This would suggest that main use opportunities are primarily residential driven with landscaped public realm and complimentary community uses.

Workspaces and employment opportunities could diversify the offers with easier access for cars, as well as pedestrian and cycle links to the town centre and train station.

Activating the waterfront will provide riverside amenity and leisure offers.

**POTENTIAL USES:**

**NEW URBAN VILLAGE**

**RESIDENTIAL**

**WORKPLACE/EMPLOYMENT**

**COMMUNITY**

**LANDSCAPING & WATERSIDE AMENITY**

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# Character Zones

## Building Heights

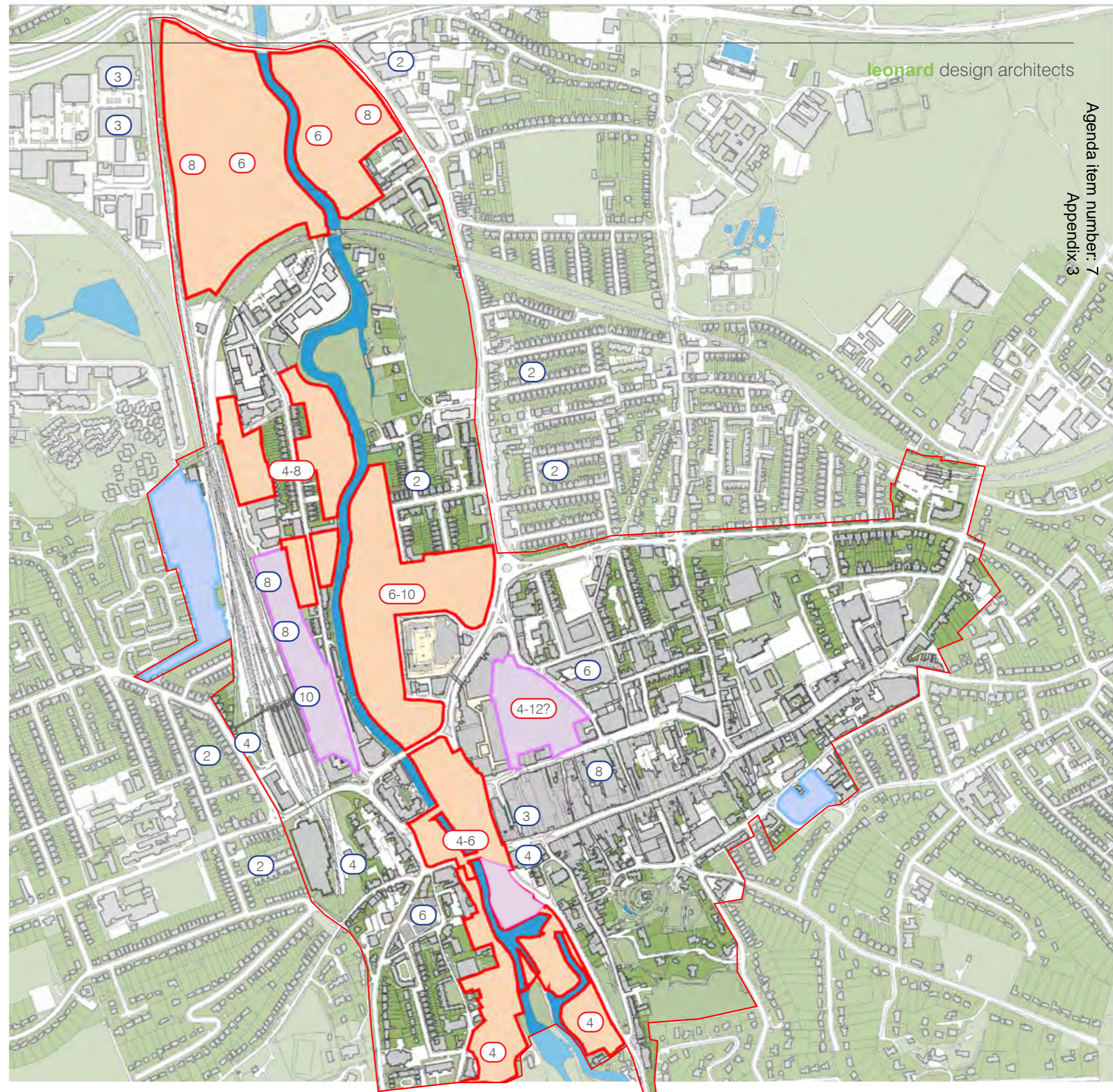
Guildford is defined by the River Wey and the basin it forms between the Castle and the Cathedral on Stag Hill. Existing buildings are generally low rise, with 3-4 storeys along the high street, rising to 6-8 at House of Fraser and the Telephone Exchange. The police tower at the Onslow Street to Woodbridge Road roundabout raises to 9 storeys.

The new developments at Guildford Station and the upcoming North Street Redevelopment are setting a new benchmark for building heights in Guildford Town Centre. They range up to 12 storeys.

Stepping down to the riverside, with a reduced massing and stepping of green garden spaces, provides a soft edge.

Building heights subject to further planning.

Character zones massing needs to fit within its local context with parameters set to inform future design





# Summary

The report seeks to outline strategic aspirations based on data collected and evaluated by the design team. Key opportunities highlighted above include:

1. Reduce traffic congestion within the town centre allowing people to walk and cycle safely,
2. Open up the riverside,
3. Create new public squares,
4. Creating new uses,
5. Creating a new contemporary town centre to make Guildford an attractive place for residents, tourists and businesses,
6. A joined up approach to tackling Guildford's major traffic, flooding and connectivity issues,

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The design team have outlined strategies to overcome the constraints and potential opportunities above.

Residential uses are likely to be prevalent in most if not all masterplan zones. This can be a diverse mix of offers including apartments, townhouses and student accommodation, as well as the opportunity for retirement or other modes.

In addition there is an opportunity to form a new civic core and CBD with exemplar purpose built civic facilities. (crown court, county court and police) along with flexible office space, including traditional modes as well as coworking spaces to suit future working habits.

Other uses include community facilities, and residential amenities, medical centre, dentists, pharmacies, local retailers as well as social functions, leisure destinations national retail restaurants, kiosks, pop-ups, a market and arts and cultural venues.

This report is to be read alongside detailed reports on the following aspects:

Development Consultancy	JLL
Flood Alleviation	ARUP
Strategic Transport	Markides Associates
Highways	ARUP
Infrastructure	AECOM
Planning	Carter Jonas



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# Summary Potential Uses

## ZONE 1A - GUILDFORD PARK ROAD & BRIGHT HILL

- EXEMPLAR MARKET AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING
- GROUND FLOOR COMMERCIAL / COMMUNITY USES

## ZONE 1B - MILLBROOK & MILLMEAD

- HIGH QUALITY WATERFRONT RESIDENTIAL
- RETAINED/INCREASED PUBLIC PARKING - MILLBROOK

## ZONE 1C - TOWN WHARF

- EXPERIENTIAL RANGE OF RETAIL, CAFES, RESTAURANTS
- ARTS & CULTURE
- LEISURE
- VIBRANT GROUND FLOORS & PUBLIC REALM
- URBAN LIVING
- EXISTING EMPLOYMENT

## ZONE 2 - BEDFORD WHARF

- HIGH QUALITY RIVERSIDE RESIDENTIAL
- HOTEL
- F&B & LEISURE OPPORTUNITIES
- OFFICE CBD
- CIVIC - COURTS & POLICE
- COMMUNITY - MEDICAL, DENTIST, ETC
- GREEN RIVERSIDE PUBLIC REALM

## ZONE 3A - WOODBRIDGE MEADOWS

- NEW URBAN VILLAGE
- RESIDENTIAL
- WORKSPACE/EMPLOYMENT
- NURSERY
- SCHOOL
- LANDSCAPING & WATERSIDE AMENITY

## ZONE 3B - WALNUT TREE CLOSE

- RESIDENTIAL
- WORKSPACE/EMPLOYMENT
- COMMUNITY
- LANDSCAPING & WATERSIDE AMENITY

## ZONE 4 - WOODBRIDGE ROAD

- NEW URBAN VILLAGE
- RESIDENTIAL
- WORKSPACE/EMPLOYMENT
- COMMUNITY
- LANDSCAPING & WATERSIDE AMENITY





[www.leonard.design](http://www.leonard.design)

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**Nottingham UK**

Albion House  
5-13 Canal Street  
Nottingham  
NG1 7EG

+44 (0) 115 945 0080

---

**London UK**

Baird House  
15-17 St Cross Street  
London  
EC1N 8UW

+44 (0) 207 440 9960

---

**Berlin**

2nd Floor  
Charlottenstraße 62  
10117 Berlin  
Germany

---

**Kuala Lumpur**

Unit 11-01A  
Vida Bukit Ceylon  
Jalan Ceylon  
50200 Kuala Lumpur

+60 (0)3 2022 2105

---

**Sydney**

Level 1, 60 Miller St  
North Sydney  
NSW 2060

+61 (0) 498 323 080

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