



# WILD FIGHELDEAN PROJECT

WESSEX RIVERS TRUST,  
ENVIRONMENT AGENCY,  
NATURAL ENGLAND





# The River Avon at Figheldean – a slice of history

- Long history of management
  - First mention of a mill on the river is in the 1086 doomsday book, not necessarily in the position we know.
  - River re-aligned (moved to the edge of the valley to feed the mill)
  - River was managed for multiple purposes – evidenced by the meadow showing the previous water management techniques
  - Historic channel management. Existing channel always had a bypass channel where the gabion baskets are. This would have been the primary channel to avoid flooding to the mill.
- 









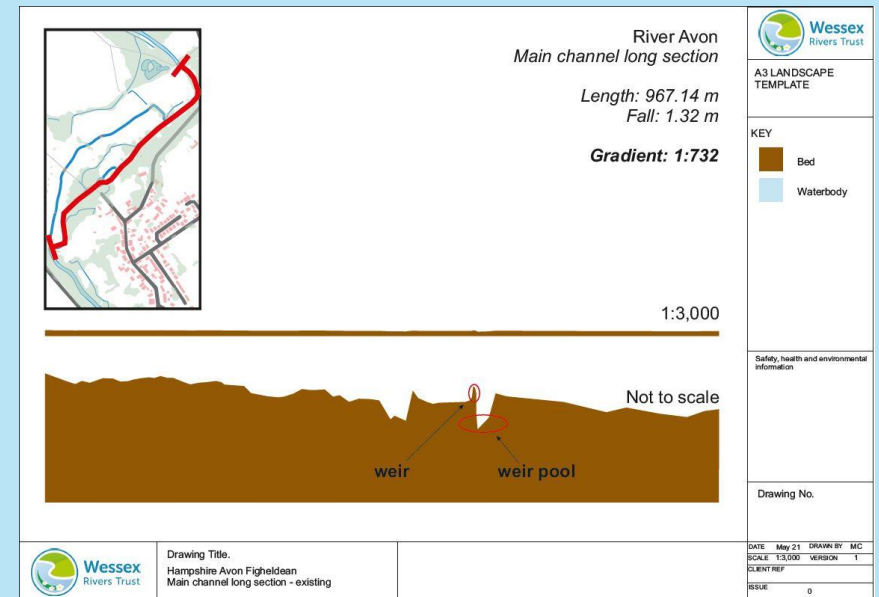
# Introducing the ‘Wild Figheldean’ project

- Background – a timeline
  - 2018 anti-social behaviour associated with Figheldean weir pool and ecological issues associated with the weir and historic infrastructure prompted the landowners (Defence Infrastructure Organisation DIO) and parish council to look at options to alleviate the issue.
  - Early spring 2019 - Parish Council, Natural England, Environment Agency, Wild Trout Trust and representatives for the DIO met to discuss options and opportunities
  - Spring 2019- Wild Trout Trust proposed potential solutions - Environment Agency/Natural England requested this be developed further with a more in-depth options appraisal/feasibility study.
  - Summer 2020, Wessex Rivers Trust secured EA funding to undertake the development of this project.
  - 2021 - Wessex RT acting in partnership with EA, NE, and DOI are undertaking detailed surveys to inform options for feasibility study.



# Existing ecological conditions in the river U/S of weir

- Impounded by the weir
- Gradient drops out
- Sediment build up behind weir
- In-stream gravels become clogged
- Fish passage issue



KEY



Bed



Waterbody

Safety, health and environmental  
information

Drawing No.

# River Avon Main channel long section

Length: 967.14 m

Fall: 1.32 m

**Gradient: 1:732**

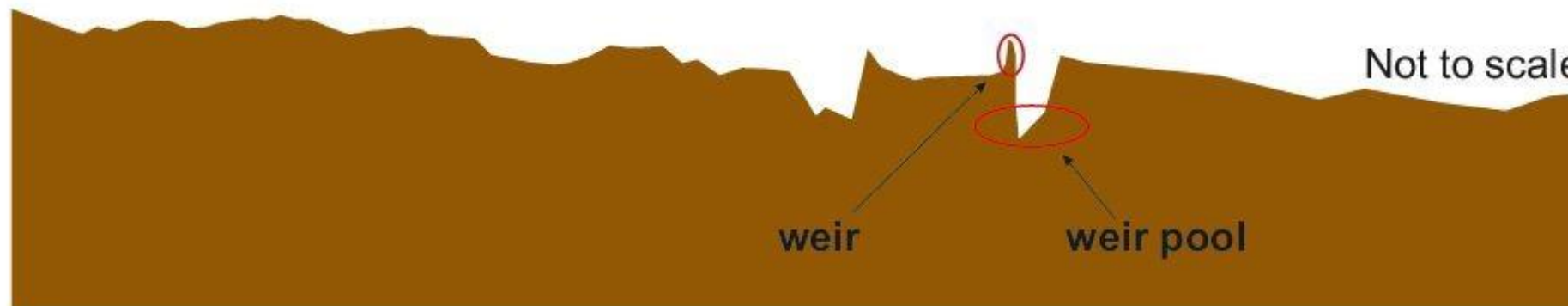
1:3,000




Not to scale

weir

weir pool



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- Largely disconnected from its floodplain.
  - High cliffing banks due to previous water control practices
  - Over wide as it was built to create a head of water
  - Lacks sinuosity





# Existing structural condition

- Weir sill is in a state of disrepair
- Wing walls are failing
- Structure is in danger of collapse
- Attractive but dangerous swimming - weir pool















# Feasibility study and options appraisal

- Carried out by Dr. Peter Stone on behalf of the Wessex Rivers Trust
- Identified seven potential options for the site
  - I. Do nothing
  - II. Remove weir
  - III. Diversion around weir using existing bypass
  - IV. Switch the existing flow split and divert main channel down the centre of the floodplain
  - V. Switch the existing flow split to the centre of the floodplain and undersize the central channel to encourage floodplain reconnection.
  - VI. Split the flow between all the existing and historic channels to create a braided system
  - VII. Fill in the main channel D/S of gated crossing bridge and allow the river to re-cut its own path through the floodplain.





# Preferred option

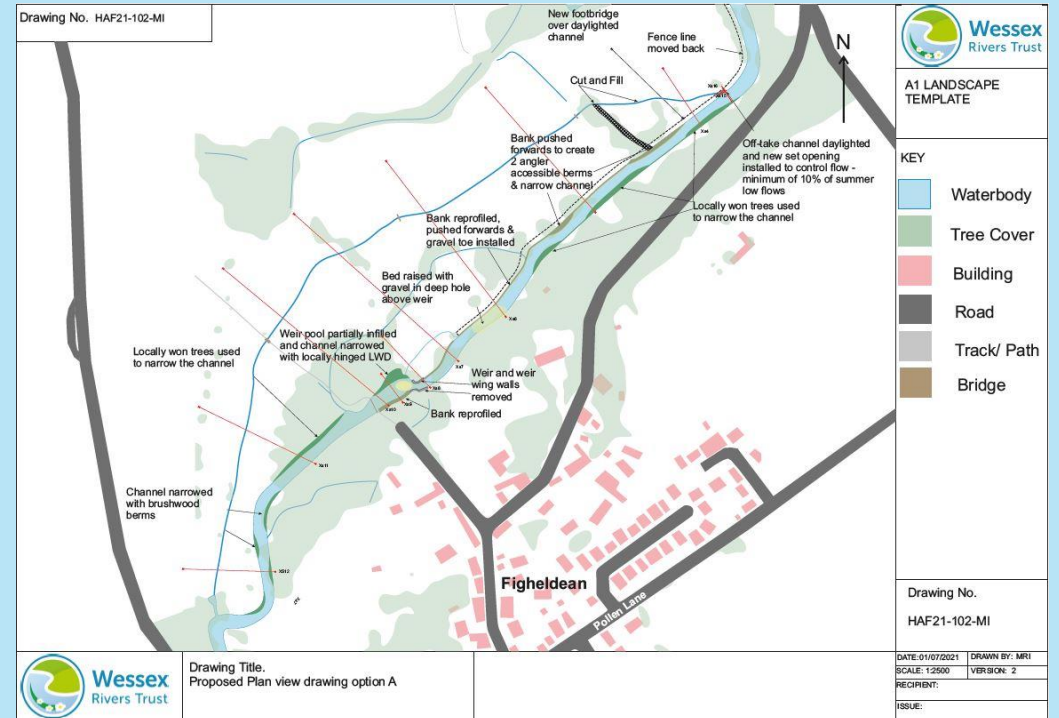
- Options were put forward to:
  - Services Dry Fly fishing Association
  - Defence Infrastructure Organisation (ecologist, land agent and senior access advisor)
  - Parish Council
  - Tenant farmer
  - Riparian owners.





# DESIGN

## - HYBRID BETWEEN OPTIONS 1 AND 5

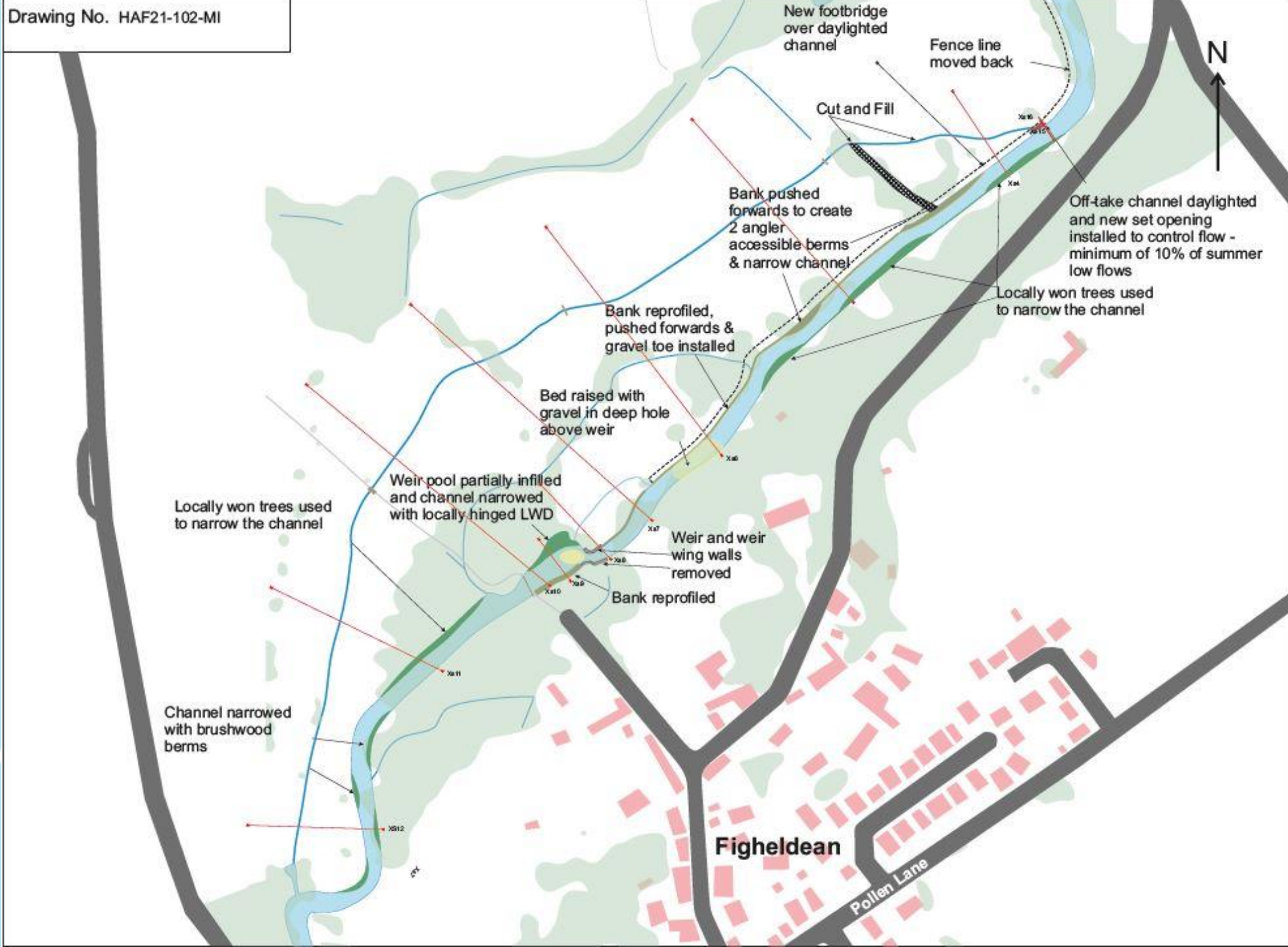


KEY

	Waterbody
	Tree Cover
	Building
	Road
	Track/ Path
	Bridge

Drawing No.

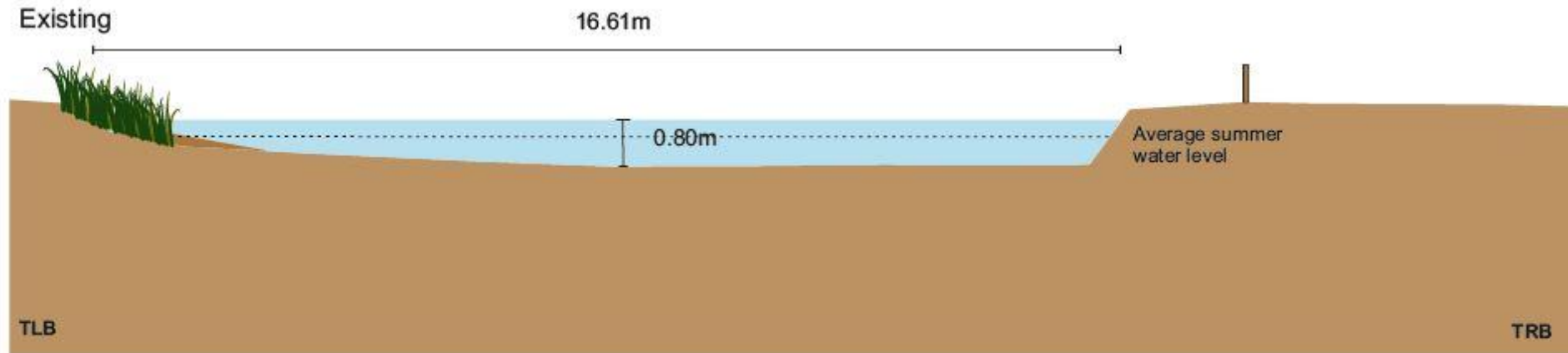
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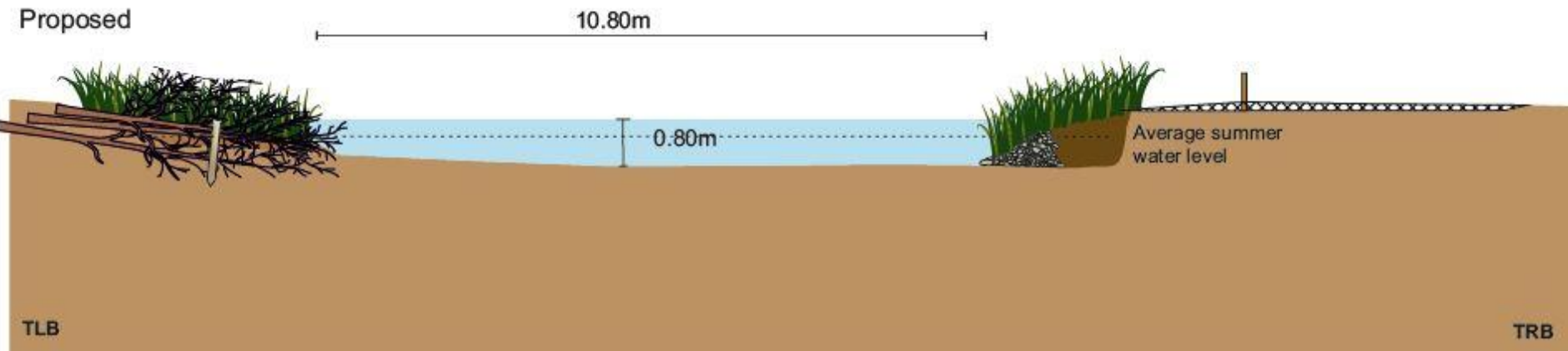
# River Avon Main channel

## A3 LANDSCAPE TEMPLATE



### KEY

-  Bed
-  Waterbody
-  Silt
-  Infill graded bank
-  10-75mm flints
-  Marginal vegetation
-  Graded bank

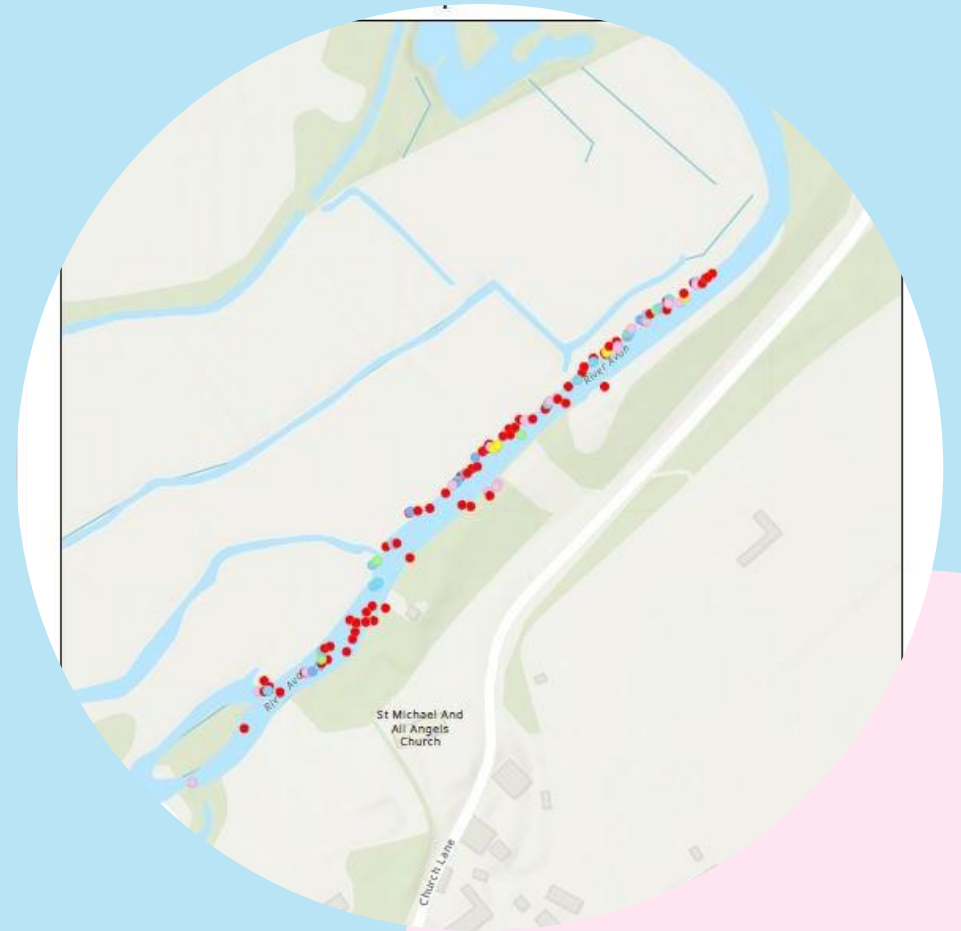


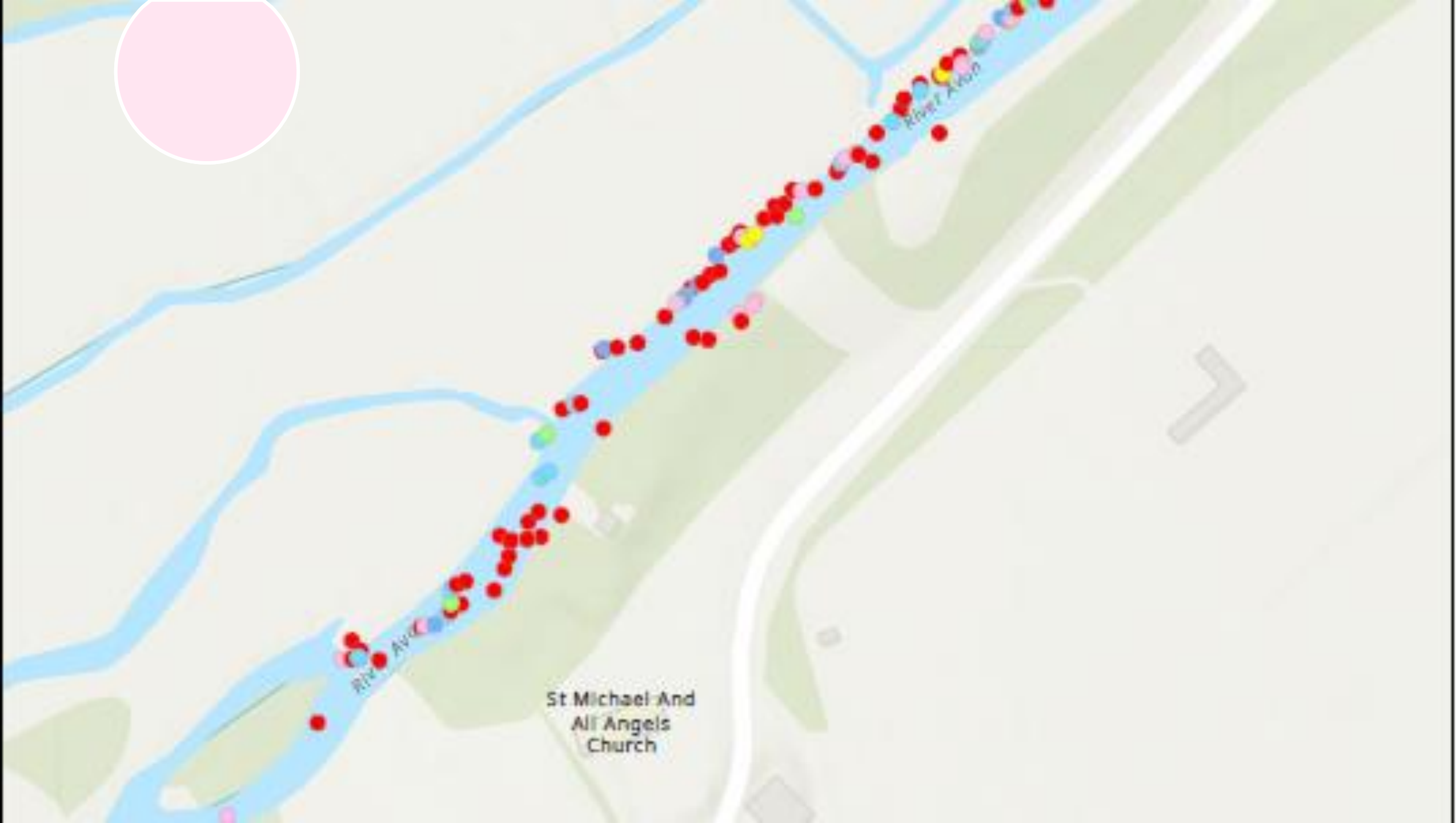
Safety, health and environmental information

Drawing No.  
HAF21-04-MC

# Main constraints

- Water voles
- Final landowner agreement









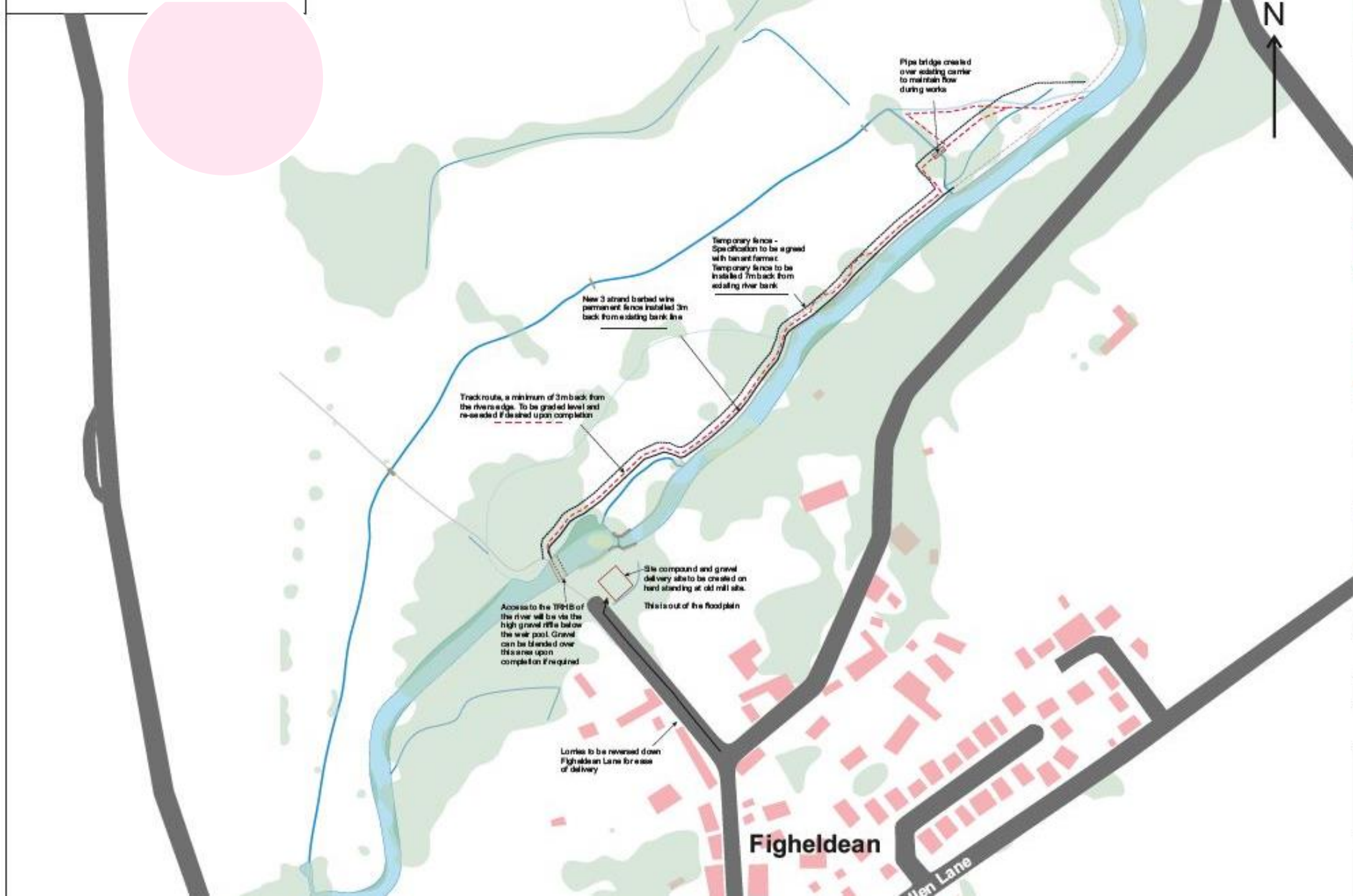


## A1 LANDSCAPE TEMPLATE

## KEY

- |  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
|   | Waterbody            |
|   | Tree Cover           |
|   | Building             |
|   | Road                 |
|   | Track/ Path          |
|   | Bridge               |
|   | Track route          |
|   | Temporary fencing    |
|  | Permanent fence line |

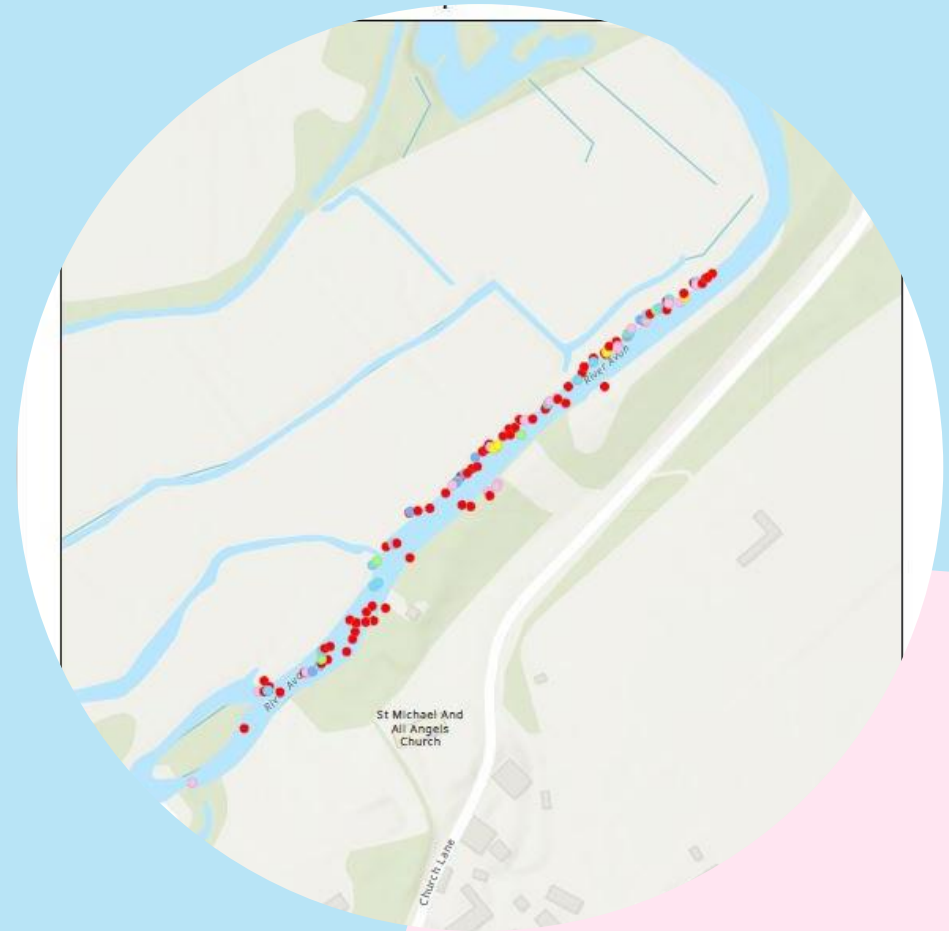
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# Added benefits

- Project happening downstream at Amesbury to make lords Walk passable to all fish species.
- Builds upon a large package of previous restorations completed up and down the River Avon:
- Coombe mill, Gated crossing, Gunville D/S, Chisenbury, West Amesbury to name a few

Filling in the gaps from RARP





# Next steps

1

Obtain Flood risk  
activity permit

2

Obtain natural  
England  
mitigation licence  
for water voles

3

Agree funding  
with the  
Environment  
Agency

4

Agree access  
licence with DIO

