



WILTS & BERKS CANAL TRUST

Canal Route at Eastern Swindon

Introduction

Wilts & Berks Canal Trust is a charitable organisation working to preserve, conserve and improve the route of the Wilts & Berks Canal.

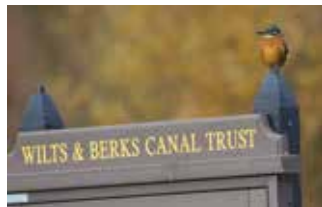
WBCT is committed to restoring the full length of this historic canal; from Wiltshire through Swindon and into Oxfordshire. The aim is to create a sustainable and bio-diverse blue and green corridor that, as it winds through our region, provides a host of attractive life style and economic benefits to our communities and to visitors, as well as providing a safe and welcoming habitat for wildlife.



The trust works with other community organisations to develop and use this resource on their doorsteps and become part of our project.

An indicative route for restoration is protected by the borough's Local Plan 2026. The trust has now developed several options for the route through Wanborough and seeks views about them from local residents, landowners and the general public as well as the authorities which have to be consulted before a route can be chosen.

The trust's work is supported by the Wiltshire, Swindon and Oxfordshire Partnership, members of which include the local authorities, statutory bodies and major businesses.



The canal is part of our heritage, but our waterway can also, today, add so much to our busy and crowded 21st century lives. 95% of canal users use the canal towpath which can be an ideal focus for easy access to exercise: from running groups, cyclists, wheelchair users, parents with prams, dog walkers, fishermen, bird watchers or people who want to just stand and stare. The canal habitat, through both urban and rural areas, supports a wide variety of wildlife including the rare water vole and the kingfisher.





WILTS & BERKS CANAL TRUST

Canal Route at Eastern Swindon

Mouldon Hill

A partly-restored section of the North Wilts Canal, and when restored through Swindon, this will be the connection with Cricklade Country Park, the Heritage Railway at Blunsdon, and the Thames and Severn Canal at Cricklade.

Waitrose Landing Stage

Why not step onto our canal boat *Dragonfly* for a trip along this restored section?

Seven Locks

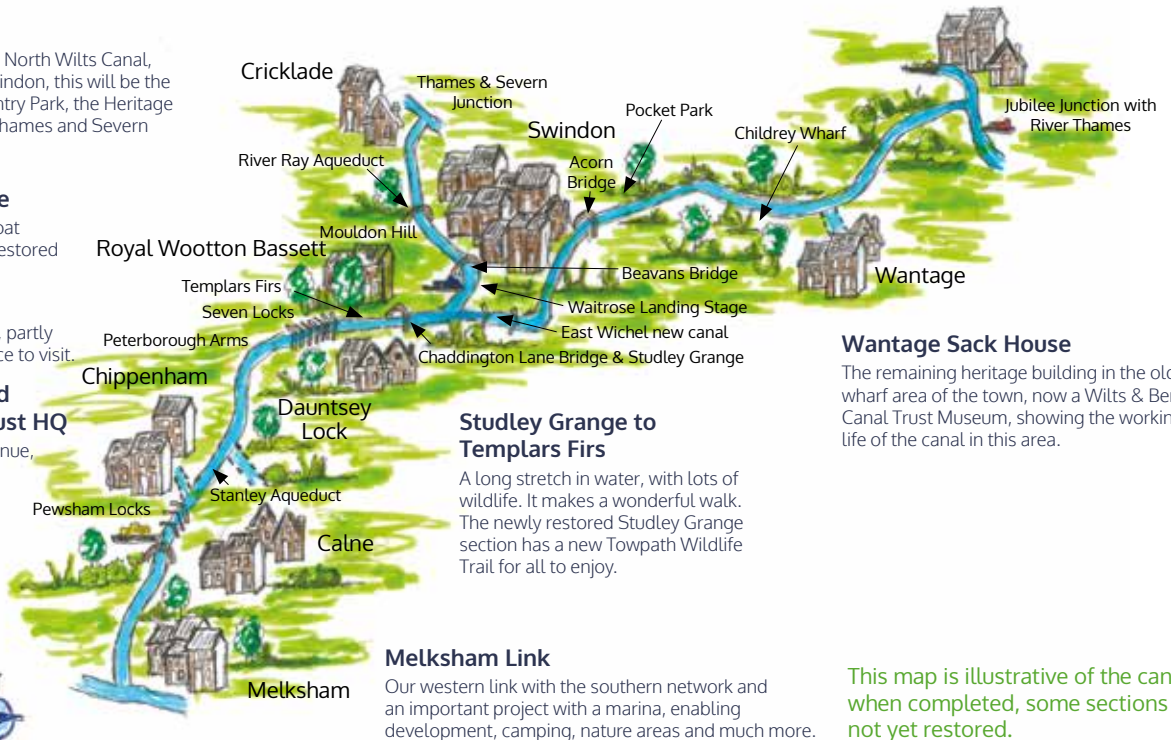
Our stunning staircase of locks, partly restored and a very special place to visit.

Peterborough Arms and Wilts & Berks Canal Trust HQ

Our community and training venue, and canal-side public house.

Pewsham Locks

A joint heritage project with Canal & River Trust and Help for Heroes, and a beautiful section to walk along with a horseshoe spill weir, a rare dry dock, three locks and a lock-keepers cottage, all about to be restored.



Wantage Sack House

The remaining heritage building in the old wharf area of the town, now a Wilts & Berks Canal Trust Museum, showing the working life of the canal in this area.

Studley Grange to Templars Firs

A long stretch in water, with lots of wildlife. It makes a wonderful walk. The newly restored Studley Grange section has a new Towpath Wildlife Trail for all to enjoy.

Melksham Link

Our western link with the southern network and an important project with a marina, enabling development, camping, nature areas and much more.

This map is illustrative of the canal when completed, some sections are not yet restored.

The Local Options

In the fields south of Pack Hill road the line of the canal be seen in the gap left in the recent forest planting scheme. North of Wanborough Road the route along the edge of the proposed Lower Lotmead Village has been agreed as shown here and in the recent planning application for that development.

The canal route from the crossing of Pack Hill road to the crossing of Wanborough Road is a particularly difficult length. The canal route is dependent upon the route chosen for the Southern Connector Road which has now been published. Local constraints such as the important archaeological remains recently discovered there and the drainage in the area are also very important.

The route options shown differ from the route shown in 2015 because of the revised road scheme and the discovery of the archaeological remains. All routes have positive and negative consequences. Striking the balance will be difficult.



The western route has to cross the new road twice and may interfere with the major water pipelines. Disruption of access to land is minimised but a route sandwiched between two roads is unlikely to produce a pleasant environment for users.

The central route looks simpler but it cuts into the archaeological remains which may not be acceptable. The straighter canal route passes under the centre of the roundabout. Going around it in a tight curve requires more excavation and wider bridges to make navigation safe for narrow boats.

The eastern route avoids the largest area of archaeological remains but is slightly longer.

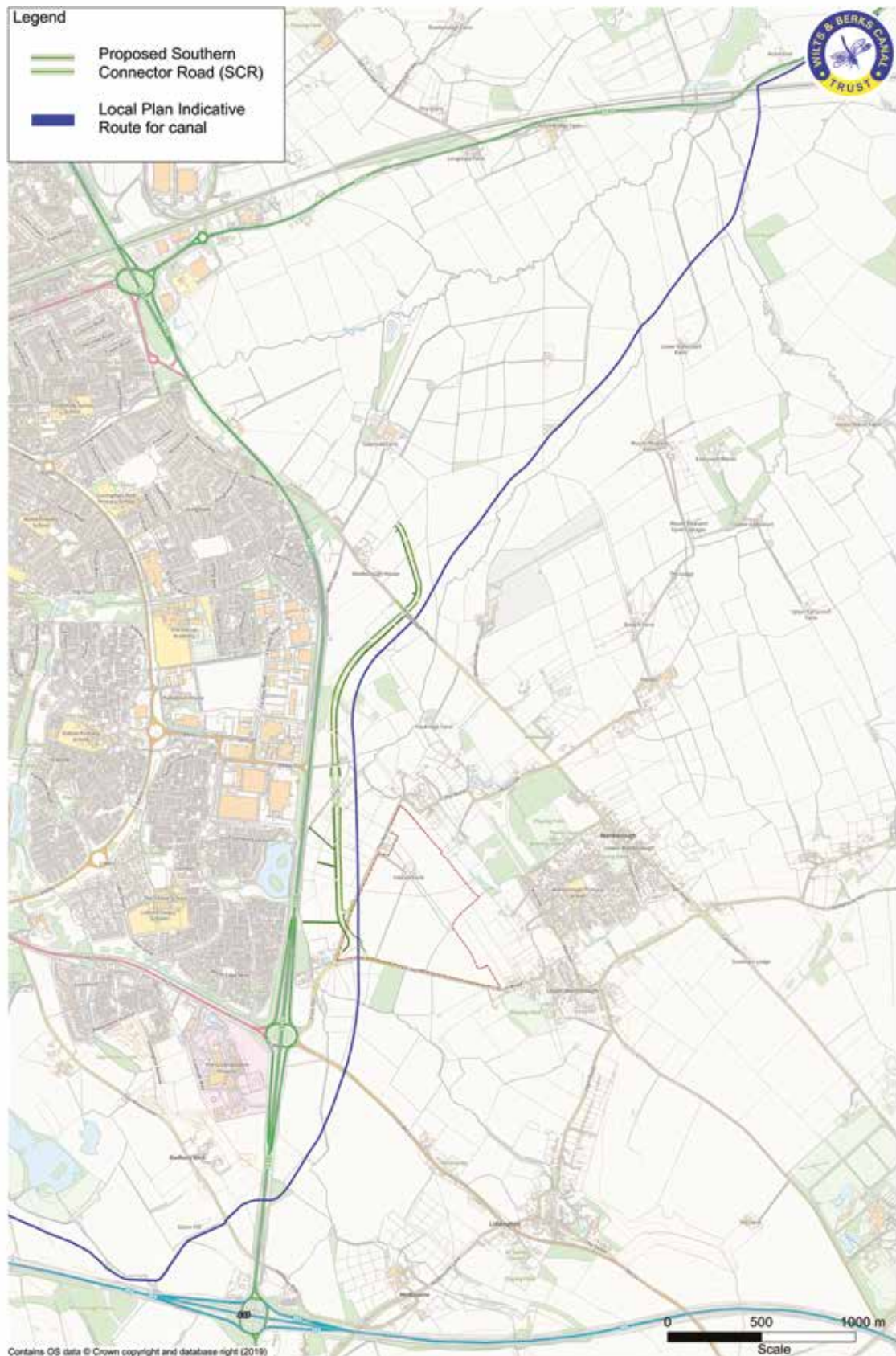
There will be eight locks between the crossing of the A419 and the connection to the existing canal route near Acorn Bridge on the A420. Careful positioning of these allows a little flexibility to get under the roads and minimise excavation.



WILTS & BERKS CANAL TRUST

Canal Route at Eastern Swindon

Overall map of Local Plan Indicative Canal Route

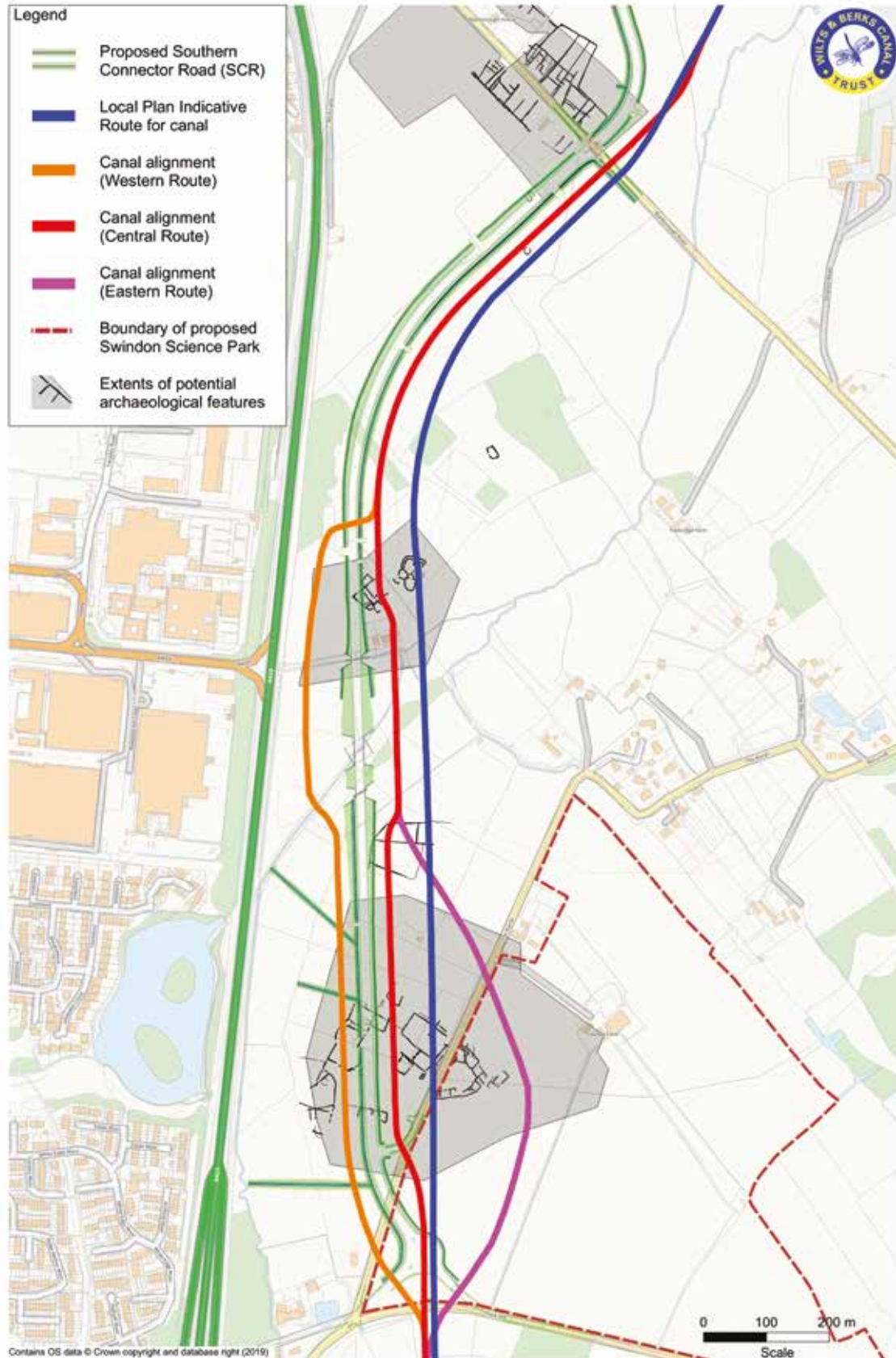




WILTS & BERKS CANAL TRUST

Canal Route at Eastern Swindon

Detailed map of canal alignments

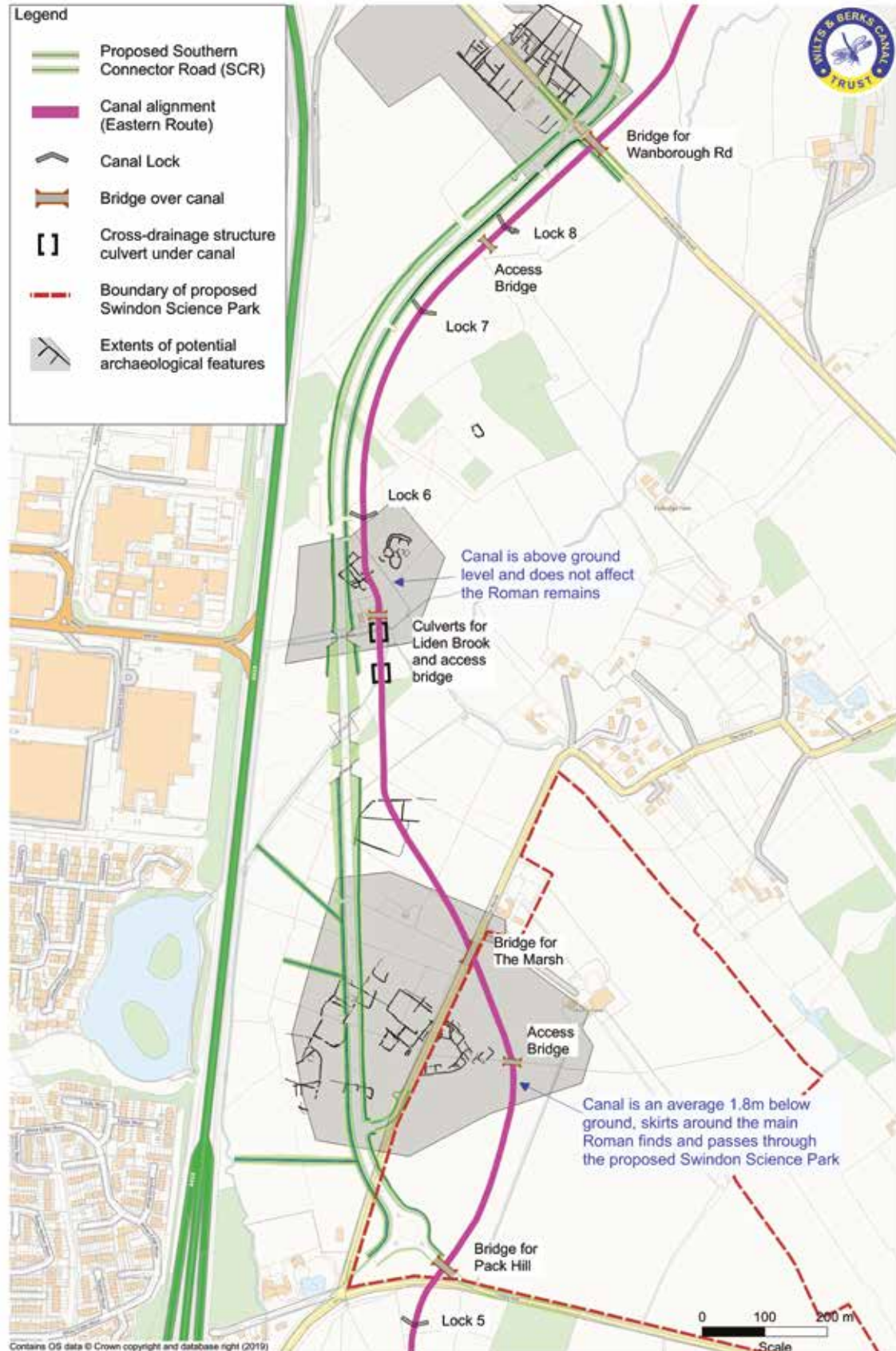




WILTS & BERKS CANAL TRUST

Canal Route at Eastern Swindon

Detailed map of canal Eastern Route

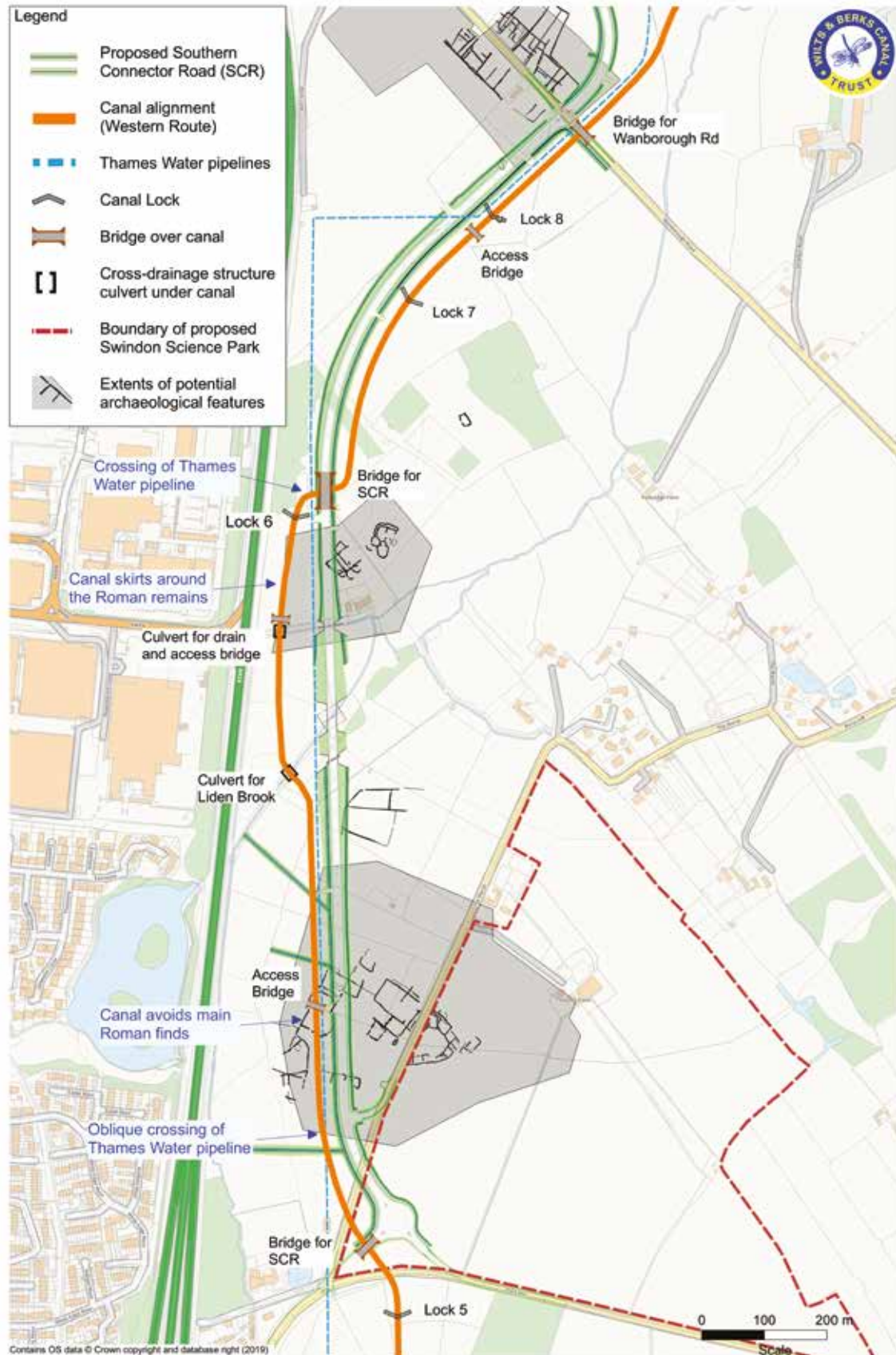




WILTS & BERKS CANAL TRUST

Canal Route at Eastern Swindon

Detailed map of canal Western Route

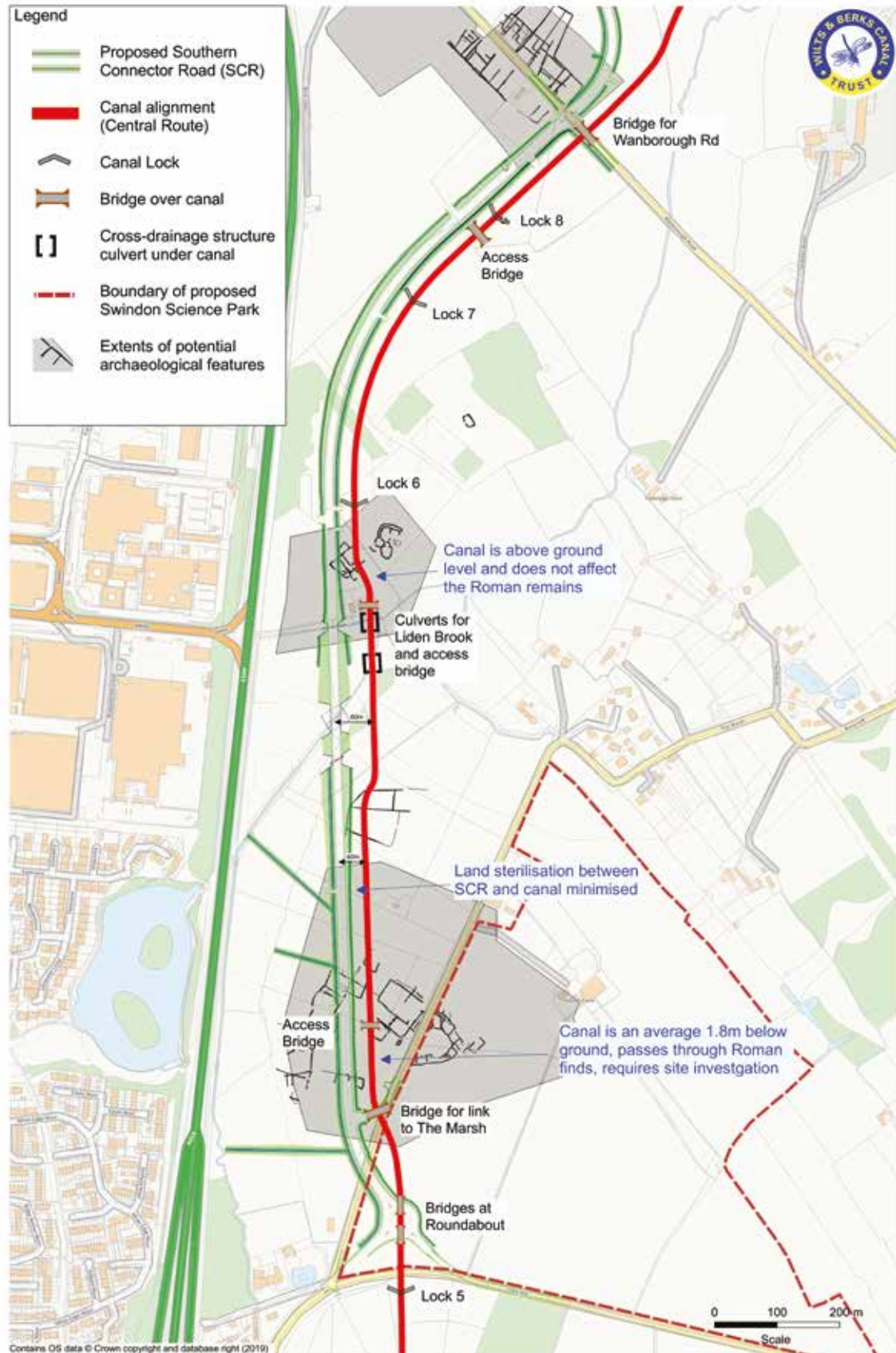




WILTS & BERKS CANAL TRUST

Canal Route at Eastern Swindon

Detailed map of canal Central Route





WILTS & BERKS CANAL TRUST

Canal Route at Eastern Swindon

Developing a new leisure route

Restoring an old length of canal and building new lengths as the trust is doing in Wanborough provide opportunities to enhance the benefits for people and wildlife. Not just a waterway but a footpath and cycleway which will extend the full length of the canal – a 50 mile long route connecting to other waterway routes. Of course, it will also serve for local trips to work or to other places in Swindon.

The waterside edges are adapted wherever possible with appropriate planting and shelter to encourage wildlife. Restoration and building of new canals can be undertaken whilst preserving and enhancing wildlife; bridges can have bat roosts built in, locks can have



crevices for crayfish, banks can be soft to allow water vole burrowing as well as steep in sections to allow kingfisher burrowing. Wide fringes of vegetation not only reduce erosion from boat wash but provide nesting habitat for waterfowl. The canal corridor will help to restore continuity to wildlife populations that have been isolated.

New hedgerows, trees and other sensitive development will mitigate any environmental loss and ensure a net gain. Planting may also be used to shield users from road traffic noise and pollution and also as a screen for properties. The trust has created a biodiversity database along the whole length of canal. This will form the basis on which to monitor and assure progress.

There are footpaths through the area which may be diverted on account of the new road. The canal towpath can be connected into these paths and new footbridges erected where necessary.

The area is known for flood and drainage problems. The canal will cross Liden Brook and several ditches. It will be designed as a stand-alone project but canals need water. The design will be made as much as possible to assist drainage and flood protection by getting water away from the area.





WILTS & BERKS CANAL TRUST

Canal Route at Eastern Swindon

It's time to inspire and excite...

It's time to create an
environment both we, and our
children can be proud of...

It's time to put our
canal at the heart
of everyday life.

Conclusion

The Wilts & Berks Canal Trust is restoring the canal from Melksham through Swindon to Abingdon to provide a valuable asset for communities along the route and to improve the environment. The route through Eastern Swindon is a vital part of the whole project. The trust hopes that this exhibition will help you to understand our objectives and encourage you to support our efforts.

Please let the trust know your views by talking to our representatives and completing the questionnaire. Alternatively, you can contact us by email or post at the addresses given below.

Comments and questions may be sent to the trust at **swindonconsult@wbct.org.uk**

The plans will also be available on the trust website: **www.wbct.org.uk**

Wilts & Berks Canal Trust
Dauntsey Lock Canal Centre, Dauntsey,
Chippippenham, Wiltshire SN15 4HD

