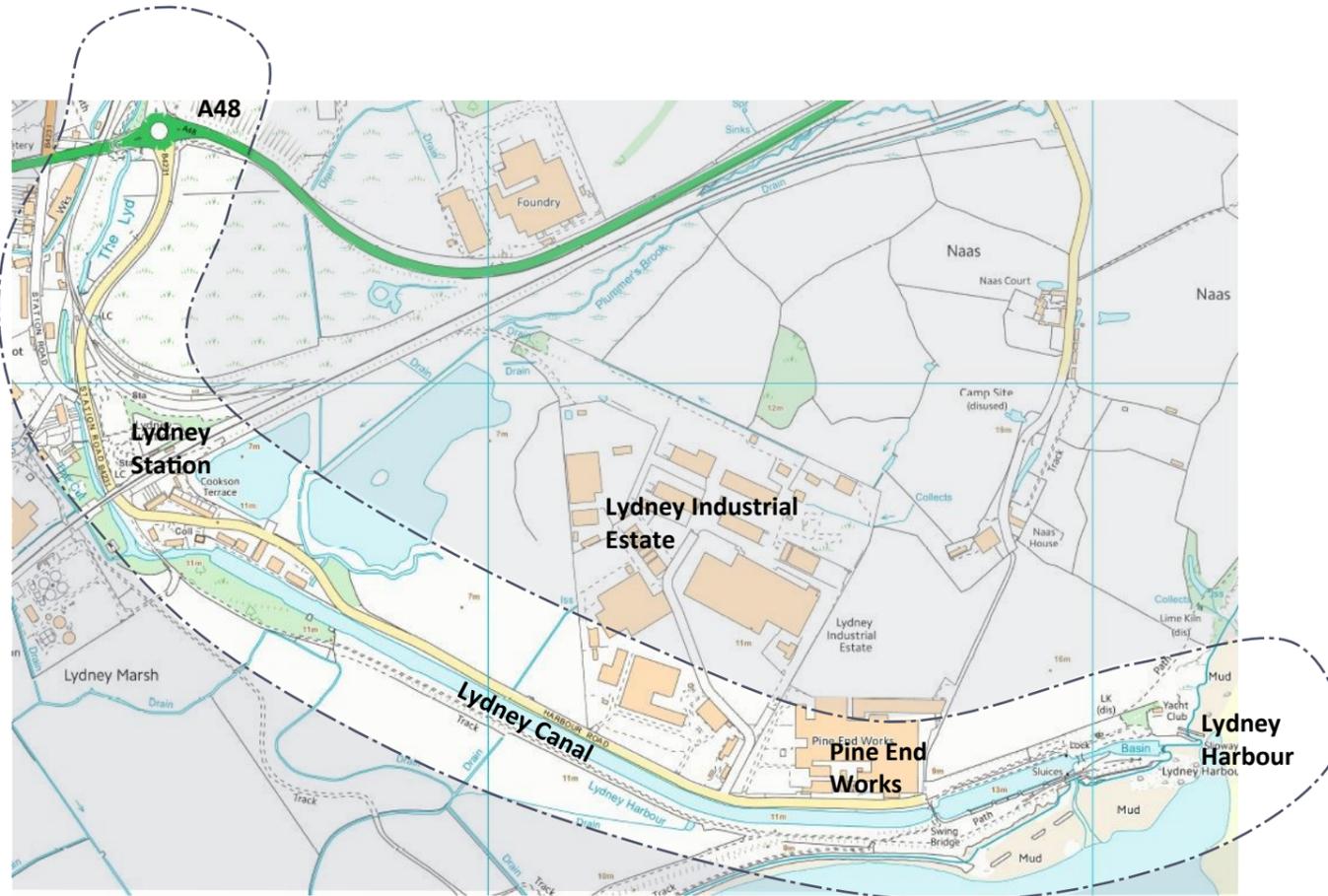


Destination Lydney Harbour Project

Landscape and Environmental Strategy



Introduction and Context

The Destination Lydney Harbour Project is an integral part of Lydney Coastal Community Team's (CCT) vision of developing Lydney over the next 10 years into a thriving, prosperous, safe, integrated and attractive town. A key element of the CCT Economic Plan is to deliver the Lydney Docks and Harbour Access Improvement Project. The aim is to make use of under utilised land and redevelop/adapt redundant buildings to form an area between the Harbour and town centre containing recreation, employment and housing together with links to the town centre.



1 St Mary's Church, Lydney

There are wide ranging opportunities and constraints relating to this unique corridor area between Lydney Town Centre and the Severn Estuary. To ensure the CCTs vision is realised it is essential that an overall landscape and environmental strategy is evolved. The strategy will provide a framework to allow individual projects to be prioritised and implemented in an appropriate and considered way.



2 Pine End Works factory and Lydney Canal

The landscape of the strategy corridor has been shaped and defined by its industrial past. The natural features of the River Lyd, Lydney Pill and the proximity to the Forest of Dean and Severn Estuary determined an industrial fate. Natural landscape gave way to man made canal, railway sidings and highway routes. The demise of the industry has left a complex landscape, a mix of colonising scrub, woodland and wetland habitat interspersed throughout the old industrial features of canal, drainage channels and railway cuttings.



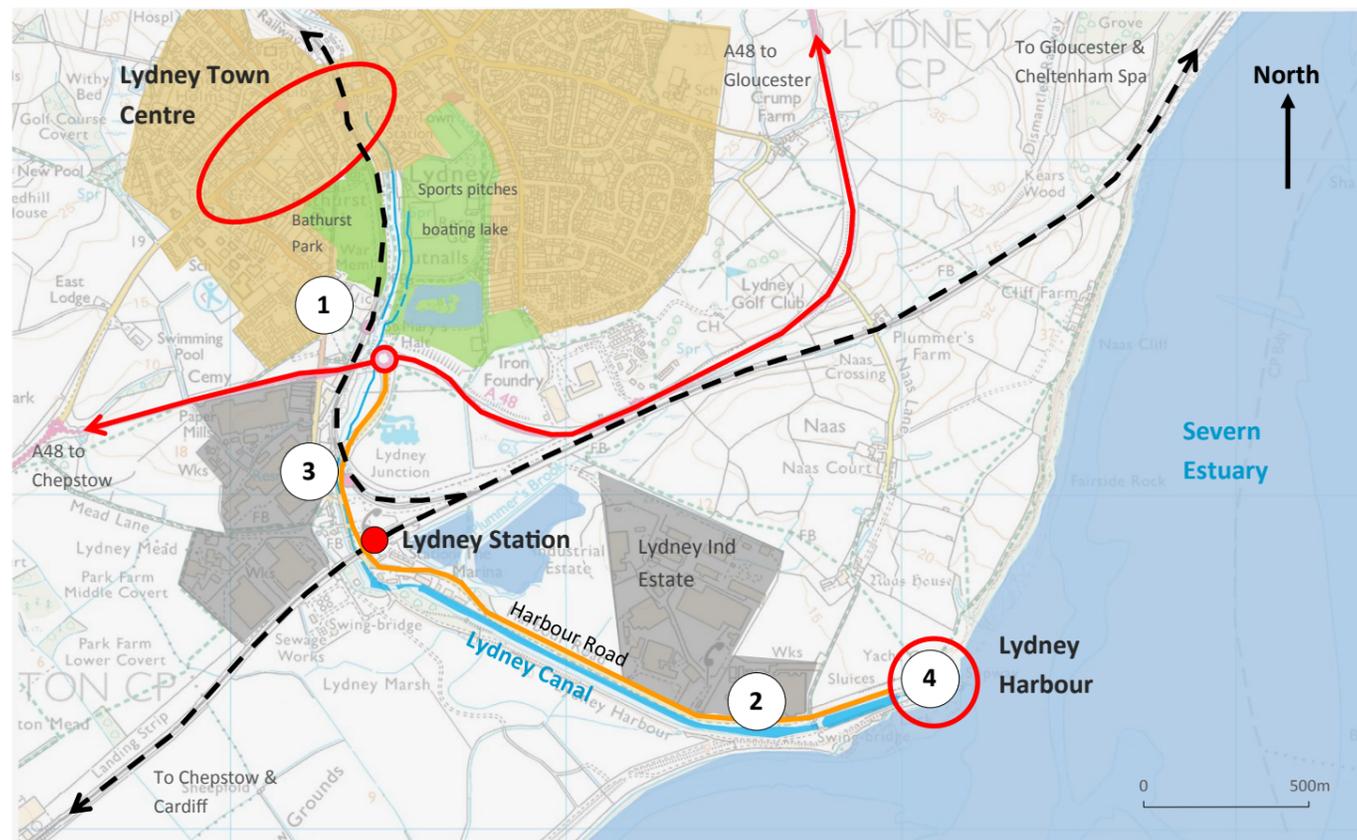
3 Dean Forest Railway (DFR) sheds

The landscape and environmental strategy reviews the assets of the site corridor, analyses the opportunities and constraints and considers an indicative landscape design approach for each identified area. A series of landscape treatments are identified for road and canal side, harbour entrances, forms of enclosure and individual enhancement projects such as the DFR engine shed scaffolding wrapping.

Strategy Objectives

- Address Destination Lydney Harbour Project aim of attracting increased visitor numbers through improvements to the public realm, access and dredging the canal to enable increased boat use.
- Consider a landscape approach that is aesthetically appropriate, visually cohesive and sustainable.
- Recognise and protect the landscape, biodiversity and heritage sensitivities of Lydney Harbour and its approaches.
- Evolution of a strategy framework that is both implementable and environmentally relevant.

Site Context Plan



4 Lydney Harbour and the Severn Estuary

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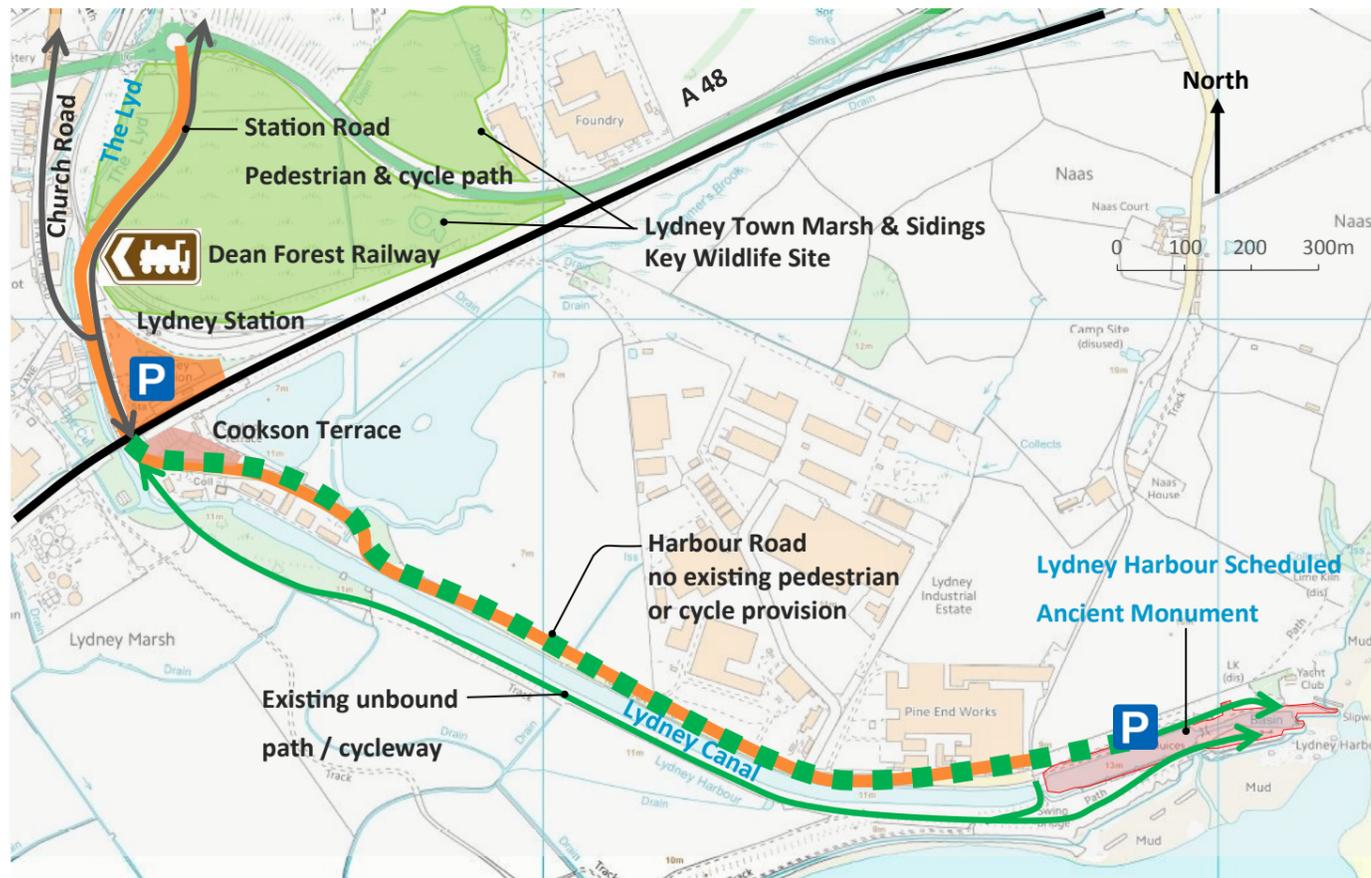
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Site Assets

Identified by Lydney Neighbourhood Development Plan 2014-2024 as a much used and valued recreation area by Lydney residents, Lydney Harbour represents a unique destination for the general public. As well as accommodating Lydney Yacht Club, boat moorings within the Inner Harbour, and opportunities for anglers, the canal side spaces, trackways and interlinked areas that remain from old industrial and harbour uses combine to form an interesting landscape. This environment will influence the strategy design approach.

Harbour Road is busy during week days as commercial traffic and workers access the industrial areas. The harbour area is easily accessed by car with a small carpark located alongside the Inner Harbour. Apart from the yacht club, public access is accommodated within the harbour environs and extensive views can be gained across the Severn Estuary at the far eastern extent of the harbour and from above the canal.



Access & Linkages

The arterial spine of the site is formed by the B4231 Station Road that leads to Harbour Road. The only road access to Lydney Harbour is via a roundabout from the A48 to the north of the site. This road also provides access to the Dean Forest Railway, Lydney Station, Marina Industrial Estate, Cookson Terrace housing, Bendall Metal Recycling, Lydney Industrial Estate and the now disused Pine End Works. There is a joint pedestrian and cycle path alongside the B4231 Station Road section and an alternative path to Lydney on a quieter route along Church Road west of the Lyd. There is no provision for pedestrians alongside Harbour Road, walkers and cyclists use the existing unbound track south of the canal to the harbour.



Lydney Canal

Heritage

The harbour and its environs are a Scheduled Ancient Monument which recognises the importance of the harbour and the trading activity which has taken place along the Severn Estuary since Roman times. Construction of a dock and the supporting tram way and Lydney canal took place during the 1800s to maximise the efficiency of transporting the coal and iron mined in the Forest of Dean. The area is also home to the Dean Forest Railway which is expanding its use along part of the old Severn and Wye railway, from Lydney to Parkend and beyond. A number of other listed buildings can be found along this route including Cookson Terrace built in 1858 for the railway employees.



Cookson Terrace, Harbour Road

Biodiversity

Lydney Harbour is located on the banks of the Severn Estuary that is designated as a wetland of international importance (Ramsar Site). The estuary is also recognised as site of nature conservation value at national and international level, being designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and a Special Protection Area (SPA) for birds under the EU Birds Directive.

Immediately adjacent to the north-east part of the project area is the Lydney Town Marsh & Sidings Key Wildlife Site (KWS), with a range of wetlands and ruderal (wasteland) habitats along the railway sidings.

The project area has historical records of valuable wildlife species including Otters, bats and rare birds both along the canal and the adjacent estuary edge.

The area to the south and west of Lydney Harbour and Harbour Road is a Strategic Nature Area (SNA) called Aylburton. This SNA is also a priority area for biodiversity enhancement particularly for coastal habitats, wet meadows and grazing marsh.

Landscape

The strategy site lies within the Aylburton Newgrounds landscape character area. The Drained Riverine Farmland and Grazed Salt Marsh landscape is an extremely flat and simple landscape, underlain by extensive deposits of silty estuarine alluvium and clay. The construction of the canal, harbour and the railway sidings altered the landscape that would have at one time comprised tidal flats and an inlet known as Lydney Pill. The alteration in the landform and the construction of a canal that has now no longer an industrial use has allowed a variance in microclimate and growing conditions. Scrub and woodland vegetation comprising hawthorn, elder, ash, oak and willow has now colonized the estuary foreshore and canal sides. Individual mature oak have established along the high ground to the north of the harbour. The modern day industrial estates, derelict industrial buildings, commercial concerns and railway infrastructure interspersed with large areas of disused former industrial land creates a degraded landscape.



Severn Estuary at Lydney Harbour

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Biodiversity

Habitats

The project area comprises an extensive corridor of diverse, locally unique habitat networks which are directly connected throughout the site and into the wider surrounding landscape. From the dramatically dynamic Severn Estuary, the ever changing tidal shoreline and highly managed harbour, to an extensive undisturbed canal and river corridor, bordered by semi natural scrub and trees with standing deadwood and secluded reedbeds.

These features are connected via water outlets and ditches, coastal floodplain grazing marsh and ruderal habitats along the railways, into the surrounding landscape which is a mosaic of agricultural land, lakes and the edge of Lydney town. Man-made features such as buildings and bridges offer opportunities for potential bat roosting and bird nesting, as well as biodiversity corridors along waterways and railways for movement of a range of animal species and homes for unusual plant communities, as well as challenging the movement and survival of species; there are key opportunities to protect and enhance the ecological value of the site and wider area.



The bankside habitat on the south-west side of the canal is particularly dense and continuous with occasional glimpses through to the canal from the existing path. This offers connectivity and a movement corridor for a range of wildlife; these function will be retained and can be enhanced through links into the wider landscape.

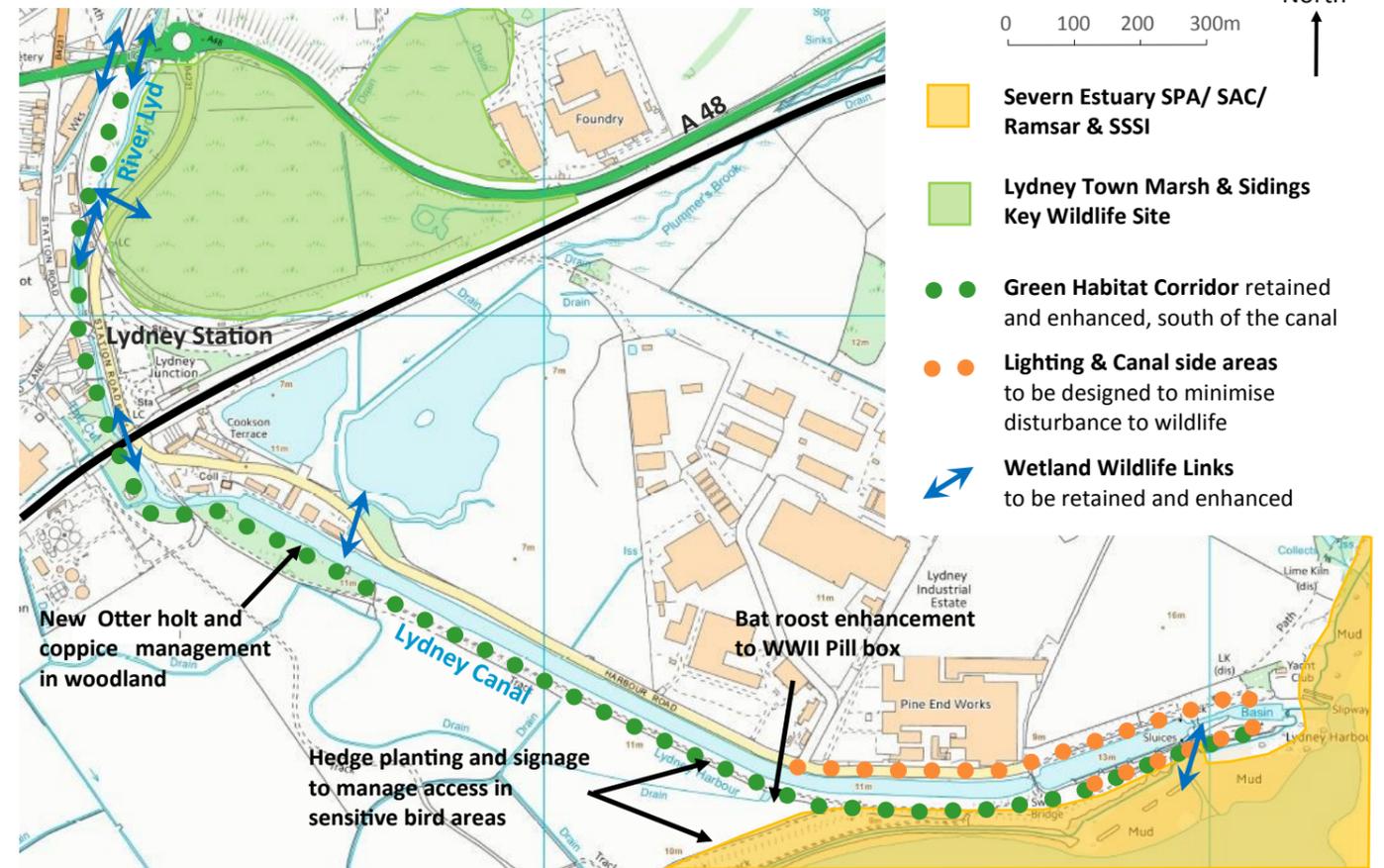
Species

Whilst further survey of the area will be necessary to support the scheme, there are existing records of wildlife including Otter, Water Vole, Polecat, Pipistrelle and Daubenton's bat. Kingfisher, Skylark, Meadow Pipit, Short-eared Owl, Reed Bunting, Whimbrel, Lapwing, Curlew, Green Sandpiper, Golden Plover, Reed Bunting and a range of other conservation concern bird species are also recorded in the area. Close to the site, other known bat species include the rare Lesser and Greater Horseshoe species. There are also local populations of Lapwing, Redshank, Tree Sparrow and Turtle Dove, the Severn Estuary being an important bird area.



Reedbed grows right up to the roadside in places, this bankside or 'riparian' habitat will be retained and enhanced in strategic locations.

The canal is likely to offer good habitat to amphibians, possibly including Great Crested Newt, foraging and shelter opportunities to Otter and possibly Water Vole. Protecting the habitats of these species through the project will be key, as well as retaining corridors of movement for bats and potentially Dormice and reptiles using the scrub along the canal and railway route. There will be opportunities to enhance movement of Otters and fish through the area, including species for which the River Severn is recognised and to create sheltered habitats for nesting birds and roosting bats. It will also be important to work with the Forest of Dean District Council's Lydney Severn Recreational Study to manage hedgerows and scrub as well as access and interpretation at and close to the wading bird habitats at the estuary edge.



There are areas where the path is more exposed that can benefit from appropriate 'gapping up' planting to increase hedgerow connectivity and protection for birds feeding at the estuary edge.



The scheme aims to introduce bat roosting opportunities at the World War II Pill box.

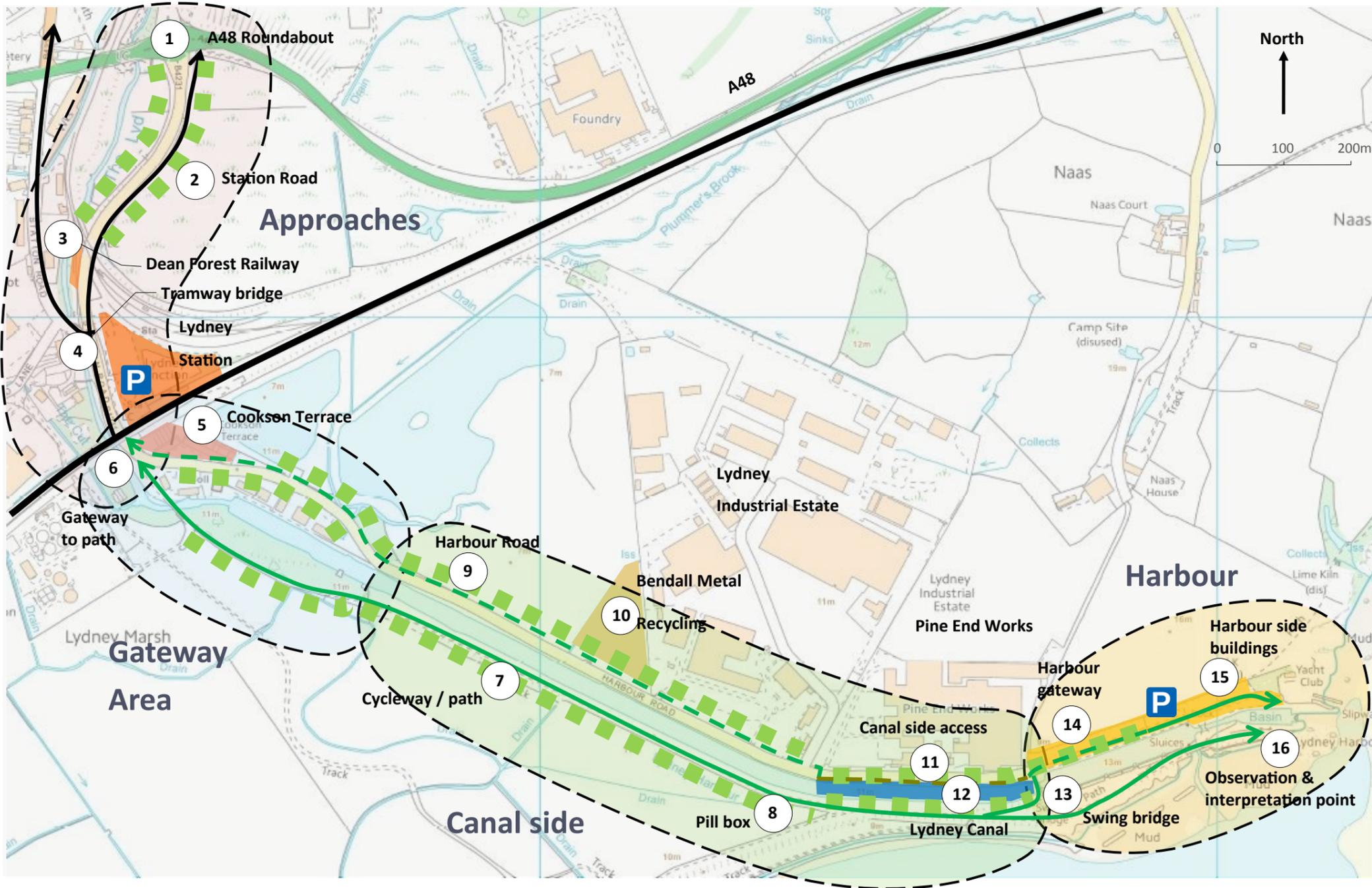
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Project Areas

Approaches, Gateway Area, Canal side, and Harbour



Key

- landscape planting & boundary improvements
 - Existing paths resurfaced / upgraded
 - - - Proposed new pedestrian path
 - - - Creation of canal side path
- 1 Landmark public art & signage improvements
 - 2 Motif planting and new signage
 - 3 Boundary improvements and building wraps
 - 4 Bridge restoration & access improvements
 - 5 Parking, boundary & pavement improvements
 - 6 Proposed feature walling / railings & signage
 - 7 Path resurfacing, access & interpretation
 - 8 Combined bat roost & viewing platform
 - 9 Carriageway improvements & new footpath
 - 10 Bespoke screen fencing / hoarding
 - 11 Pedestrian access to be created alongside canal
 - 12 Canal dredged, new moorings & fishing points
 - 13 Swing bridge restoration (current in progress)
 - 14 Additional parking, surfacing, signage & lighting
 - 15 Improved visitor facilities and interpretation
 - 16 Observation & interpretation point

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Proposals

Strategy Areas; Approaches, Gateway and Canal Side

Planting Motif

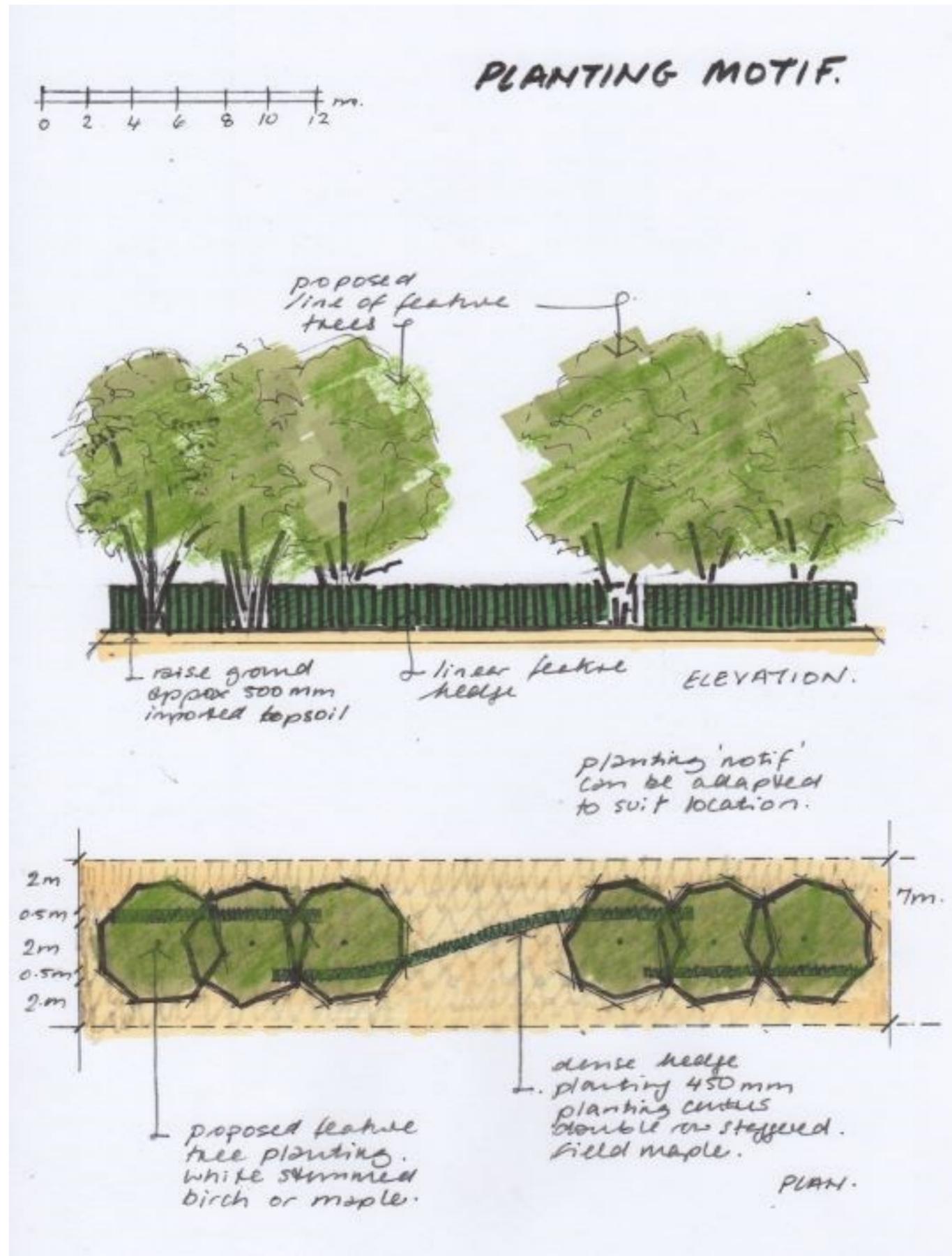
A simple planting scheme is proposed along the strategy corridor with feature trees such as multi stemmed white-stemmed birch or a maple with a distinct form under planted with a single species hedge such as the native field maple. The planting scheme can be adapted to suit space restrictions. It is envisaged that the planting motif could be implemented strategically the full length of the strategy corridor alongside the B4231 Station Road and along the frontages of Marina Industrial Estate, Bendall Ltd.'s land, Lydney Industrial Estate and Pine End Works. Where required the planting motif can be used in conjunction with security and perimeter fencing. Elements of the motif can be planted separately, for example the feature trees could be used at the enhanced harbour entrance area.



Multi stemmed birch



Native hedge planting



Native Field Maple summer and autumn contrast



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