

2.0 Route Options Introduced

2.1 Route Options

Five routes, based on outline information provided by the Steering Group, are shown in Figure 2 (page 7) and are identified as follows:

Route 1

Crossing the Barnfields Canal Aqueduct then west towards Ladderedge Country Park, including creation of a mooring basin with space for up to 15 boats, electricity, water point and sanitary station.

Route 2

Crossing the Barnfields Canal Aqueduct then east towards the disused railway line (now a concessionary footpath route with access to Leek town centre) including the creation of a mooring basin with space for up to 15 boats, electricity, water point and sanitary station.

Route 3

Developing the line of the existing canal feeder towards Ladderedge Country Park to create a mooring basin near the A53, with space for up to 15 boats, electricity, water point and sanitary station. The basin layout to allow for further extension of the canal westward to connect with the Macclesfield Canal.

Route 4

Re-instating the original line of the canal towards Leek town centre and creating a basin with moorings provision. The line of the former canal ran north from Barnfields Canal Aqueduct towards the town and terminated in a basin near to what is now Morrisons supermarket.

Routes 1, 2 & 4 require enlargement of the southern approaches to the aqueduct to allow boats to turn to cross the River Churnet.

Route 5 explores the possibility of not extending the canal but simply re-commissioning the aqueduct and enlarging the southern approaches to create a winding hole.

2.2 Route 1

Requires:

- Widening of the Canal south of Barnfields Canal Aqueduct to allow boats to make the turn.
- Reinstatement of the aqueduct.
- Construction of a new canal channel on the north side of the river to an area of land for the basin next to the service road leading to the Ladderedge Country Park car park.

Other Key Features:

- Connects to existing visitor car park/access.
- Connects to existing footpath in Ladderedge Country Park leading to bus routes on A53 into Leek town centre
- Impacts on Hughes Concrete

2.3 Route 2

Requires:

- Widening of the canal south of Barnfields Canal Aqueduct to allow boats to make the turn.
- Reinstatement of the aqueduct.
- Construction of a new canal channel along the northern bank of the River Churnet towards the disused railway line (now a concessionary footpath route with access to Leek town centre).

Other Key Features:

- Connects to existing footpaths and road links to Leek centre
- Potential for connection directly to the Churnet Valley Railway station proposal and the proposed Cornhill regeneration area.
- Impacts on Hughes Concrete and Bestwick scrapyards.

A variant to route 2 has also been considered. Route 2a involves construction of a new aqueduct across the River Churnet taking a direct line from the Canal to the east of the existing terminus.

Advantages and reasons for variant:

- No need for repair to existing aqueduct or canal winding hole
- More direct route reduces land-take issues
- Creation of a landmark structure to mark the gateway to Leek

2.4 Route 3

Requires:

- Creation of a new channel roughly following the existing line of the canal feeder and construction of a new basin near the A53.
- Access to adjacent landowner's property via existing access road.

Other Key Features:

- Single agricultural landowner affected
- Facility for further extension of the canal in the future
- Adjacent to A53 and bus routes into Leek

2.5 Route 4

Requires:

- Widening of the Canal south of Barnfields Canal Aqueduct to allow boats to make the turn.
- Reinstatement of the aqueduct.
- Construction of new channel / re-instatement of the old canal through Barnfields Industrial Estate to the site of the historic canal basin

Other Key Features:

- Numerous existing uses particularly at Barnfields Industrial Estate
- Creates basin as close to Leek town centre as possible

2.6 Route 5

Requires:

- Widening of the Canal south of Barnfields Canal Aqueduct to allow boats to turn.
- Upgrading the limited vehicle access along the corridor between Hughes Concrete yard and Bestwick scrap yard to allow access to potential moorings and visitor facilities.

Other Key Features:

- Provides potential to develop Routes 1, 2, 3 or 4 at a later date.
- Impacts on Hughes Concrete and Bestwick scrapyards.

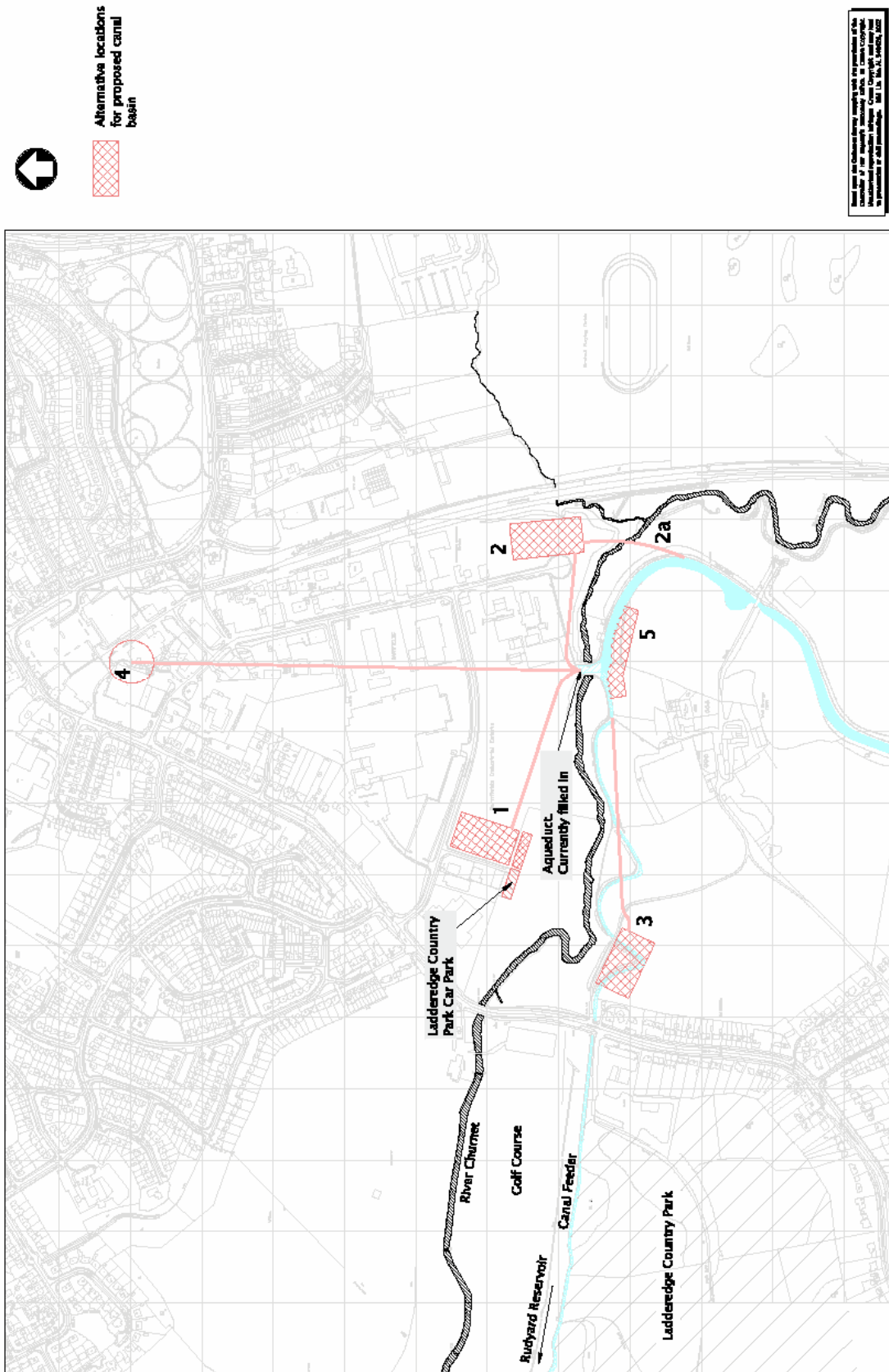


Figure 2 – Route Options Plan