



# ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES



# 13.



## ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Drawing on the preceding evaluation and analysis, this section summarises the key issues and opportunities that may affect the site as a whole, its component character areas and/or individual features.

Where issues and opportunities have been raised in preceding sections these are generally only referenced once to avoid repetition. However, issues and opportunities are often relevant between each section and are therefore included in each section.



## Planning Policy Context

### Issues

1a	Keeping up with changing policies, white papers, and policy documents to ensure the Management Plan stays up to date
1b	Conserving the natural environment with a large footfall
1c	The Scheduled Monument designation controls works undertaken on site, to ensure protection of Kenilworth Abbey
1d	Management of waste at source when cross-contamination is very high
1e	Cycling prohibited within Abbey Fields and goes against many active travel and climate change policies
1f	Ambiguity over the location of Centenary Way and whether it passes through Abbey Fields
1g	Tree and Woodland Strategy is out of date and may not be Climate Change ready
1h	Play Area Strategy is out of date and may not be relevant
1i	Erosion of banks by dogs and people is causing water quality issues downstream

### Opportunities

1j	To do detailed analysis on ways of adapting the Fields to make it Climate Change ready
1k	To educate public on nature within the Fields
1l	To involve more community groups and active participation within the Fields
1m	To use technology to improve understanding and better interpret the history of the Fields
1n	To create wetland areas, rain gardens and potential SuDS features subject to HE approval within the Fields to manage quality and flow of rainwater.
1o	To consider the 10 principles of Sport England Active Design Guide and the 7 principles of the Green Space Strategy alongside the Green Flag award status.
1p	To improve accessibility and legibility to achieve greater active connection with the community, as well as improve health & fitness and reduce air pollution. Work with the KTC's Wayfinding Strategy
1q	To include the Fields within the wider District's Local Nature Recovery Strategy
1r	Create conservation covenants between the Church diocese, vicar & church wardens and WDC to safeguard land for future generations
1s	To look at opportunities to reduce and manage waste
1t	To consider potential cycle routes through and/or around Abbey Fields
1u	To involve schools in using Abbey Fields as an educational tool
1v	To provide a series of actions and costings that can be included in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan for investment of Planning Obligations and CIL
1w	To forge better relations with voluntary groups within the Fields and look at opportunities for future use of buildings within the Fields
1x	To develop a good relationship with HE & forging connections with English Heritage at Kenilworth Castle
1y	To improve the tennis provision
1z	To make Abbey Fields a Tourist Destination

## Management and Maintenance Arrangements

### Issues

2a	Roles and responsibilities for Abbey Fields are not clearly defined or visible within the Fields
2b	Large number of statutory and non-statutory stakeholder groups may slow or impede the management and maintenance decisions for the Fields
2c	No permanent presence of Ranger Service within Abbey Fields

### Opportunities

2d	To create a clearly defined structure for points of contact for public and stakeholder reference
2e	To forge improved relations with WDC and stakeholders for a positive and cohesive approach to the management and maintenance of Abbey Fields
2f	To use the feedback from the Management Plan to define the role for WDC Officer roles in Abbey Fields
2g	To provide support to stakeholders and St Nicholas Church on their voluntary contributions

## Trees in Abbey Fields

### Issues

3a	Veteran trees reaching the end of their life with limited opportunity for successional planting of new trees
3b	Conservation Area status restricts works to trees
3c	Scheduled Monument status restricts tree planting to a like for like basis or under permission granted by Historic England
3d	Contact for tree related issues on the WDC website is not easy to follow
3e	Ash die back, chalara and any further tree diseases that may require significant action

### Opportunities

3f	Survey Abbey Fields under the Tree and Woodland Strategy to prioritise replacement planting of declining tree population
3g	To develop the FOAF leaflet on the different trees within Abbey Fields into a self-guided tour of the number, type and age of trees of Abbey Fields for public appreciation and those designed features.
3h	Continue use of standing dead wood from trees to improve biodiversity habitats within Abbey Fields away from formal avenues
3i	Opportunity to manage the Spinney to the east of the lake to improve views across the lake.
3j	Opportunity to survey veteran trees to enhance longevity and ecological value and create individual management plans for each tree.

## Ecology

### Issues

<b>Semi-natural broadleaved woodland</b>	
4a	Issue of encroachment of bramble within field layers lessening opportunity for floral diversity
4b	Overcrowding of the watercourse from self-set trees
4c	Safety issues with dead wood and tree stability at entry points to the brook caused by dogs and pedestrians
4d	Bank erosion beneath mature/veteran Oaks on Finham Brook leading to possible reduce life expectancy and health/safety risk
4e	Tree canopy cover on Luzley Brook causing shading of watercourse and embankments lessening diversity
<b>Mature adult, veteran and trees of local significance</b>	
4f	Security and longevity of tree canopy and root systems from overcrowding species and ground compaction, soil erosion and pollutant stress
4g	Safety issues with dead wood and tree stability
4h	Tree diseases spread by human and animal interaction
4i	Inappropriate maintenance of trees leading to fungal attack from stress, rot or limb failure/splitting
4j	Ivy on mature and veteran trees
<b>Acid Grassland</b>	
4k	Recreation pressure
4l	Inappropriate management leading to no diversity in vegetation and colonisation of unwanted species
4m	Possible colonisation and abundance of scrub/trees including inappropriate planting of memorial trees leading to shading and nutrient enrichment
<b>Neutral grassland</b>	
4n	As above for acid grassland
4o	Inappropriate introductions of perennial plug plants
4p	Inappropriate management causing stress on overwintering species
<b>Lake &amp; reed swamp</b>	
4q	Water quality low due to high numbers of fish, overfeeding of waterfowl and run off
4r	Conflict of site users with dogs introducing non-native and invasive seed stock
4s	Silting up resulting in succession and reduction in open water
<b>Plantation Woodland</b>	
4t	Waste dumped over boundary fences from adjoining houses
4u	Trees fighting for light causing spindly trees
4v	Dead shrubs within plantation

<b>Scrub &amp; Ruderals</b>	
4w	Seen as unsightly with lack of public understanding
<b>Running water</b>	
4x	Invasive species Himalayan balsam and fungal contamination of trees spreading downstream, being exacerbated by large volumes of leaf litter
4y	Sporadic flow leads to waterlogging, flooding and eddy's causing erosion reducing water quality downstream
<b>Scattered trees</b>	
4z	Exposure to elements and recreational pressure
4aa	Lack of replanting causing long-term loss of a parkland landscape
4bb	Removal of limbs for H&S detrimental to long term health of the tree
4cc	Biodiversity fragmentation due to lack of connectivity between trees throughout the site
<b>Hedgerows &amp; walls</b>	
4dd	Hedges become overgrown and lose diversity and results in fragmentation

## Opportunities

<b>Semi-natural broadleaved woodland</b>	
4ee	To open canopies to create glades Water quality low due to high numbers of fish, overfeeding of waterfowl and run off
4ff	Potential for standing deadwood where it does not conflict with health and safety
<b>Mature adult, veteran and trees of local significance</b>	
4gg	To create individual management objectives for veteran trees within the Fields for proactive management
<b>Acid &amp; Neutral grassland</b>	
4hh	Opportunity to alter management practices to improve biodiversity
4ii	Opportunity for introduction of educational signage
<b>Lake &amp; reed swamp</b>	
4jj	Opportunity to create enhancements for Kingfisher although this may be unlikely due to water turbulence
<b>Plantation Woodland</b>	
4kk	Opportunity to create woodland glades, thin the woodland, and plant understorey for wildlife benefit
<b>Running water</b>	
4ll	Opportunity to restrict access to the Brook and reduce erosion
4mm	Opportunity to create enhancements for Kingfisher
<b>Scattered trees</b>	
4nn	Opportunity to lay existing hedges and introduce new hedges



## Hydrology

### Issues

5a	Mature tree roots in Luzley Brook interrupt flow of water, potentially risking water movement
5b	Severe erosion to Finham Brook embankments between Castle Road and Leisure Centre caused by dog and pedestrian access/egress resulting in path subsidence
5c	Grey water entering Finham Brook from the north
5d	Water main and sewer that run through Abbey Fields and under the Lake
5e	Air valves associated with Sewer or mains water pipe are not easily visible or managed. They are not identified on any WDC drawings.
5f	Undercutting of the Lake margins near to the Leisure Centre caused by wave washing.
5g	Sleeper edged beach to the north of the Lake is showing signs of degradation.
5h	Lake is shallow and silted and has potential to dry in hot weather.
5i	Historic England approved drainage of Hillside location has not been completed
5j	Water holding issue at the base of secondary entrance from Borrowell Lane in South Brook
5k	Primary entrance on Castle Road, South Brook collects water, with major avoidance erosion. It also floods during flood events and this area holds water.
5l	Erosion and puddling at bridge entrance points
5m	Water collects near to Leisure centre public toilets
5n	Existing rain garden is at capacity during heavy rainfall events and overflows into the play area
5o	Informal path between the play area and Finham Brook becomes wet and boggy
5p	Wet, muddy and boggy ground to Bridge Street underpass
5q	Drainage of car park and main drive overflow and water collects at the entrance driveway causing soft spots and ruts to the entrance to the Fields and along Main Drive

### Opportunities

5r	Create 2 access points for pedestrians and dogs along Finham Brook and fence the remainder of the brook between Castle Road and the Leisure Centre
5s	Request of accurate service records for Abbey Fields that can identify location of Air Valves and service lines through the Fields.
5t	Opportunity to replace the beach to the north of the Lake with a gentle slope into the Lake
5u	Opportunity to improve the duck feeding station whilst dealing with the undercutting issue.
5v	Possibility of using rainwater from the Proposed Leisure Centre to feed into the Lake
5w	Opportunity to drain footpaths into meadow areas
5x	Opportunity to complete the drainage of Hillside and connect the small water bodies with Finham Brook, allowing movement of water in a natural way.
5y	Opportunity to create a wetland area to the south east of Hillside
5z	Opportunity to broaden margins of Finham Brook to the base of Hillside
5aa	Potential SuDS taking water from Bridge Street into the lower aspect of Hillside

5bb	Monitor hedgerow ditches along Hillside north west to consider provision of pipe network under paths for natural drainage
5cc	Move water from the base of the entrance from Borrowell Lane via swales towards Luzley Brook, with potential for series of ponds created. Alternatively installation of French Drains
5dd	Reconnection of drainage ditches on South Brook to assist with drainage of area if required
5ee	Drainage of Castle Road entrance in South Brook considering swales or alternatives where required.
5ff	Make permanent paths to the base of bridges to reduce puddling and avoidance erosion, as well as improvements to drainage
5gg	Opportunity to recamber footpath at Leisure Centre during development works to remove ponding near to the Public Toilets, alternatively install aco-drain into existing drainage network or the Lake.
5hh	Connect the rain garden into Finham Brook with a series of swales and boardwalk crossings
5ii	Consider additional rain gardens along the line of the play area to take rainwater runoff from higher ground. Potential consideration as part of the Leisure Centre development
5jj	Potential drainage channels from informal path between play area and Finham Brook
5kk	Creation of occasional passing places along Main Drive and to the entrance encouraging rain water flow into the soft landscape with a strip of long grass to slow the flow

## Visitor Accessibility

### Issues

6a	Vehicles at the car park entrance and along Main Drive conflict with each other and pedestrians
6b	Chains and posts to the car park restrict permeability of the Fields
6c	Finger posts throughout the area are easily missed and have little relevant information to Abbey Fields
6d	Welcome signs from most primary and secondary entrances are non-existent, cluttered or not relevant to requirements
6e	Access of many primary entrances are narrow, restricted to equal access (i.e. noncompliance with Equality Act 2010) and in need of design improvements
6f	Access of some secondary entrances are overgrown, restricted or have erosion issues
6g	Centenary Way not identified within Abbey Fields
6h	Substantial erosion at Castle Road entrance with roots visible, trip hazards, wet areas and avoidance creep
6i	Major issue of pedestrian access between Kenilworth Castle (major tourist attraction) and Abbey Fields on Castle Road, and Abbey Hill and Abbey Fields, with no formal pedestrian crossing points on Abbey Hill. Significant hazard and threat to pedestrian life.
6j	Lack of historic context to Holmes Avenue
6k	Access to Main Drive from pedestrians is often restricted by commercial bins
6l	'No cycling' paint on all entrances detracts from the user experience
6m	Erosion to footpaths and desire lines around the Gatehouse and desire lines to the front of The Barn museum, as well as from Castle Road through South Brook zone
6n	Paths generally narrow and restrict access
6o	Mature trees around Abbey ruins create dense shade and leaf litter making the user experience less welcoming
6p	Erosion to base of benches as they are well used
6q	Brambles encroach onto seating



6r	Poor condition of localised areas of tarmac
6s	Erosion and safety of The Mound considered a concern with regards to undercutting of mature trees
6t	Access to historic signage is poor as it is set within grass, under trees and generally away from footpaths
6u	Erosion hot spots revealing buried archaeology
6v	Popular play areas result in potential conflict of pedestrians with vehicles accessing the Leisure Centre
6w	Play area well used and in need of replacement and repair of equipment
6x	No wheelchair accessible picnic tables

### Opportunities

6y	To improve visitor experience and safety when entering Abbey Fields
6z	To widen primary entrances and create a more welcoming experience, removing conflict with driveways and vehicles, improving signage and legibility, reducing erosion issues and removing barriers
6aa	To create a wheelchair accessible route around the Lake, connecting past the Barn Museum, formalising desire lines and allowing Abbey Fields to be accessible for all.
6bb	Opportunity to redesign parking, vehicle access and safety of play areas during Leisure Centre redevelopment
6cc	Improve the tennis courts and multi sports court as part of the Leisure Centre redevelopment
6dd	Increase opportunities for youth activity within the Fields
6ee	To work with Kenilworth Town Council Wayfinding Strategy to ensure Abbey Fields is clearly signposted and finger posts are visible
6ff	To undertake a traffic management review to consider pedestrian permeability and accessibility into Abbey Fields.

### Visual Survey and Analysis

#### Issues

7a	Clutter at car park entrance detracts from quality of entrance
7b	Car park signage mismatched and detracts from Abbey Fields signage
7c	Signage is generally poorly located, requiring updating, dirty, differing in styles, generally missing or in abundance and too cluttered
7d	No welcome signage to greet vehicles passing by at key points
7e	Fly posters mainly within car park and Play & Leisure zone
7f	No consistency in furniture particularly bins, bollards and fencing
7g	St Nicholas Church signage distinct but does not reference Abbey
7h	Abbey ruins signs are often difficult to read and inaccessible.
7i	Clutter of signage at main entrances leads to confusion
7j	Bus shelters intrinsic to Abbey Fields are showing signs of degradation and disrepair

## Issues

7k	Undertake a lighting review of existing lighting and potential for new lighting looking at sustainability and ecological constraints
7l	Replace, refurbish and repair site furniture in line with Design Guide
7m	Create a consistency of design styles for each character zone to avoid mismatch and ad hoc placement of benches
7n	Refresh all signage and renew historic signage making it more accessible and visible
7o	Improve the trim trail experience around Abbey Fields
7p	Repurpose the play pavilion and refurbish it for its future use
7q	Improve interpretation of other features such as wildlife, meadows, recent history etc

## Built Structures

### Issues

8a	Scheduled Monument, Listed Building and Conservation Area status make the undertaking of works within Abbey Fields time consuming
8b	Many of the built structures have ongoing issues and risk with limited funding

### Opportunities

8c	Prepare a detailed procedure for the reporting of faults and persons of contact within WDC
8d	Prepare a detailed procedure for the repair and upkeep of structures in WDC Ownership
8e	Formation of an Abbey Fields Partnership Board

## Land Use

### Issues

9a	Volunteer opportunities poorly advertised and access to information was unclear
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### Opportunities

9b	To introduce more biodiversity through additional hedgerows and meadows
9c	More interpretation and education on the wildlife enhancement of Abbey Fields
9d	To consider youths and older generations in sports provision and expansion of trim trail or outdoor gym
9e	Improve visibility of volunteering opportunities within Abbey Fields

## Public Consultation

### Issues

10a	No cycle friendly routes through Abbey Fields
10b	Potential parking issue at peak times
10c	Tennis courts, toilets, café, parking and signage identified as requiring improvements
10d	Access to the café and toilets, as well as some paths around the Fields is a concern
10e	Safety concerns when accessing the Leisure Centre in particular during the evenings

### Opportunities

10f	Consider further consultation with all key stakeholders in relation to cycle provision within or around Abbey Fields
10g	Create a more sustainable Abbey Fields
10h	Involve schools in Abbey Fields to learn about its wildlife and management

## Heritage Stakeholder Consultation

### Issues

11a	Lack of point of contact within WDC to report faults
11b	Limited electricity supply to the Barn Museum limiting opening times and no electricity to the Gatehouse and pavilion
11c	Volunteers for opening of the Barn Museum limited
11d	WDC asset management surveys and planned services has reduced due to staffing capacity

### Opportunities

11e	Digital interpretation of historic ruins
11f	Update the Conservation Plan (2005) to include a Character Area based assessment and update on research and evaluation undertaken since 2005
11g	Increase biodiversity in less sensitive heritage locations
11h	Regular conditions surveys of ruins
11i	Build on links with Kenilworth Castle