Swindon Branch
Planning & Project Activities – March 2026

Oasis/North Star

A new housing scheme is being developed. The industrial scheme for the northern site and demolition works to the Oasis complex have consent. Monitoring developments.

Development at Croft Road (Vets' Field)

National Highways have finally approved the geotechnical submission on the canal design which allows the developer to go forward with the planning application. Further approval of the canal design will be needed later in the design stages. The developer is working up a new layout plan.

Badbury Park

Since we lodged a formal complaint about breach of planning consent 2½ years ago, the developer has nearly completed raising the land over the canal corridor by up to 2m and built a road at that level right alongside the canal corridor. This makes construction of the canal near impossible and hugely expensive. No further progress on resolution.

M4 crossing

No progress. This major project is now at the heart of the Trust's 5-year business plan for the RWB to Swindon link.

Other Swindon planning applications

The Redlands North Extension scheme, which includes a bridge over the future canal route to link it to Lotmead Village, has been rejected.

The application for a new speedway and go-kart park at Studley Grange is still under consideration at Wiltshire planning. An objection has been made by the Trust.

At Lotmead, the new developer Vistry Group has applied for a discharge of condition for the design of proposed drainage and flood control works adjacent to Liden Brook. The Trust has objected because it clashes with the canal scheme.

At Inlands Farm, an outline application has been made for housing. The stated intention is to avoid conflict with the canal route and I have met with the agent to exchange information and submitted a response.

M4 J16 service station

The project has now been approved.

Cricklade

New housing projects are coming forward but none directly affect the proposed canal route. Two are close to the former route and the trust response is to request preservation and identification of the route in accordance with the policy on Heritage Transport with a footpath along the route.

Planning policies

The Wiltshire Plan has now failed the public examination by government inspectors and the council will produce a new plan under the new rule coming into force next year.

The South and Vale Plan has also entered the examination process. It is stalled because of issues over Oxford City expansion. Discussions being held over whether it will continue in its present form.

The consultation on the draft Swindon Plan 2026-2043 has closed and the responses published. A submission has been made by the trust to clarify protection of the canal. The next stage of consultation is expected late in 2026.

The lack of local plans leaves the door open for developers to submit plans for housing on land which might be refused if a plan was in place.

Royal Wootton Bassett has a draft Neighbourhood Plan for which the consultation stage has closed. It includes more protection for the canal in the town.

Swindon Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan

There is a consultation on updates to the 2022 Plan which closes on 20 February. The Trust response highlighted the attractiveness and benefits of integrating the canal towpath into the plan.

MPP Activity

The MPP is realigning it activities to integrate with and support the new programmes. It is planned that Cases for Support will still be needed for projects not in the 5-year plan.

RJH 23/03/2026