



# the River Restoration Centre

Working to restore and enhance our rivers

## Technical Advice

### River Wylde, Wiltshire Option Assessment Study

#### KEY INFO

**Date:** February 2020

**Client:** Wiltshire Wildlife Trust

**Type:** Appraisal of options

**Themes:** Habitat enhancement



The River Wylde is a chalk stream tributary of the Hampshire Avon. The study area is a 1.6km stretch of the Wylde between the villages of Heytesbury and Knook, Wiltshire. The RRC were appointed by the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust to carry out an appraisal of restoration options to improve hydromorphology and Water Framework Directive Status, enable the river to be passable for fish, enhance river and floodplain habitats and develop more natural flow regimes.

Desk-based investigations identified issues such as invasive non-native species, water abstraction and pollution. A three-day field survey involving River Habitat Surveys and geomorphological assessments determined low habitat diversity, high levels of engineering and little hydromorphological activity. Possible options for providing fish passage and geomorphological enhancement were identified.

A high-level appraisal was carried out on a list of restoration options compiled by the RRC, taking account of criteria such as flood risk, cost, hydromorphology and the Water Framework Directive, and impact on amenity value. The preferred option selected for more detailed appraisal was a combination of bypasses around Heytesbury Mill and Knook Manor weirs, alongside renaturalisation through measures such as bed-raising, channel-narrowing, re-meandering and habitat creation.

