

Riverside

The Riverside area has linked the harbour and Cambuskenneth Abbey with the ancient town of Stirling for almost 900 years. Until the 1940s, ships were a common sight moored along the riverbank at Shore Road and Abbey Road. The docks were active from medieval times, carrying people and goods from Stirling to trading ports from the Nordic countries to the Netherlands. These ships brought timber, oil and wine to Stirling and took salmon and garments from the burgh's cottage industries away with them. This trade was the source of much of John Cowane's wealth, who in the 17th century left the equivalent of £3.2 million pounds to Stirling, which led to the construction of Cowane's Hospital. As the industrial revolution progressed, these ships brought raw materials for the area's mills and transported their tartan and rugs to markets throughout Europe. When the military purchased the Forthside Estate in the late 19th century, Stirling became an ordinance depot and the ships carried gunpowder and supplies to soldiers and sailors around the world. As the ships grew larger, their ability to navigate this far up the Forth was restricted and much of the trade either transferred to the railways or further downriver to ports at Grangemouth and Leith.



Carys Lyons, Riverside Primary School, P5



Train leaving Stirling Station, circa 1850s, courtesy of Stirling Council Archives



Shore Road Railway Crossing, date unknown, © Stirling Smith Art Gallery and Museum



Forthside House, date unknown, courtesy of Stirling Council Archives



F Haldane & Co Cooperage, circa 1960s, courtesy of J. McMillan

The Coming of the Railway

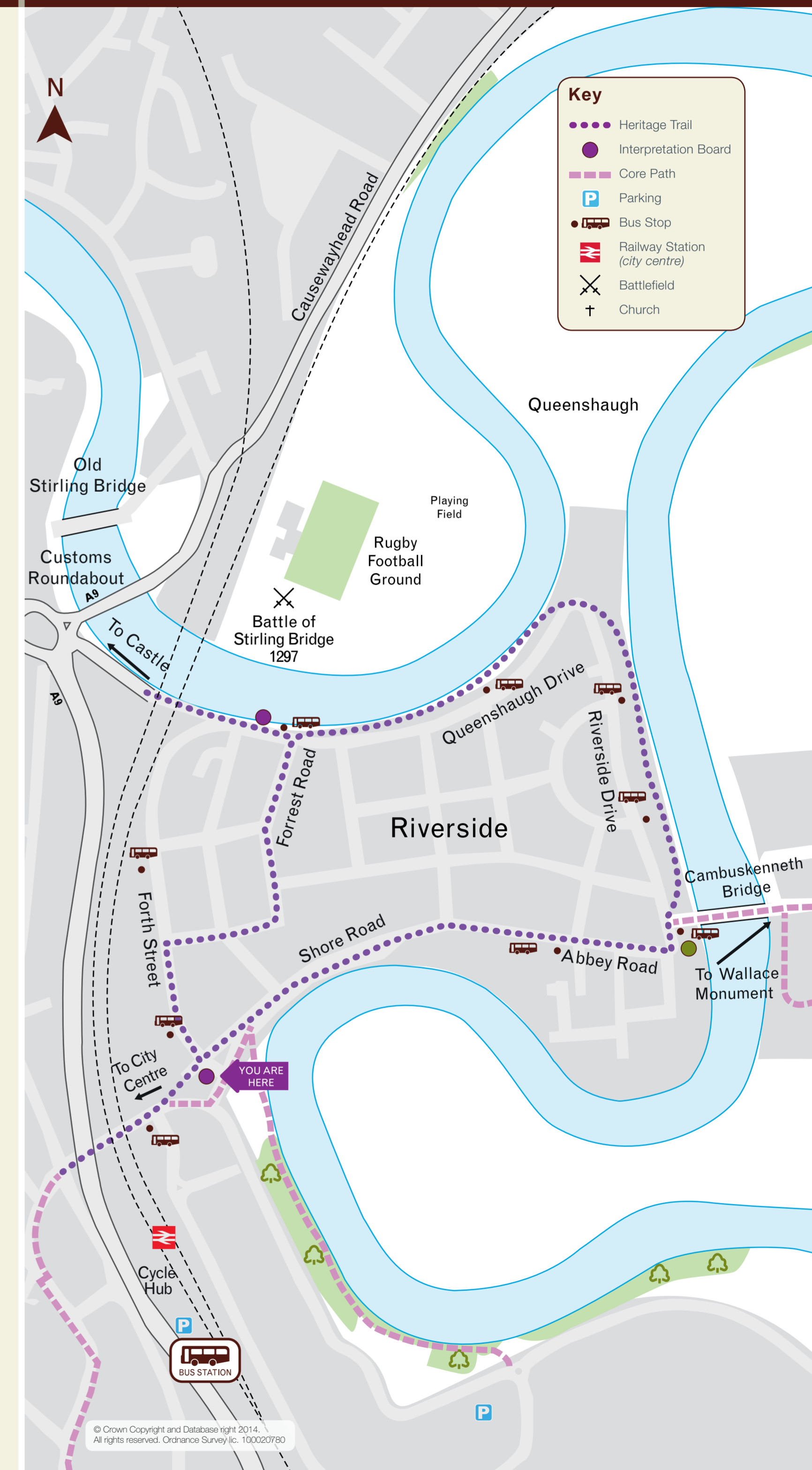
The dominance of the port was challenged in 1845 when an Act of Parliament brought the railway to Stirling. By 1848 the tracks were laid, linking Stirling with Perth to the north and the Glasgow/Edinburgh line to the south. Until the Forth Rail Bridge opened in 1890, Stirling was the only rail crossing point on the River Forth and as such, much of the country's freight and passenger traffic converged here in the town. Until the 1950s, the railway sidings and supporting buildings covered a much larger area of Riverside.

Industry

Being surrounded on three sides by the River Forth and a fourth side by the railway meant Riverside has always been an industrious and entrepreneurial area of Stirling, with a wide and varied selection of businesses to be found here.

In 1802 William Kinross established a carriage works - the 19th century equivalent of a car factory - in Riverside and it became so successful that in 1837 he received a Royal Warrant and began supplying carriages to Queen Victoria.

Until the 1980s, F Haldane & Co had a successful cooperage in Riverside, making barrels for the whisky industry. They would import disassembled sherry casks from Spain and bourbon casks from America, rebuild them and sell them to Scottish distilleries who would refill them. Along with Bannockburn and Cambusbarrow, Riverside was a key textile milling centre. In the 1800s, around 140 people worked in three mills in the community spinning and weaving cloth.



www.stirlingheritagetrails.co.uk

Lovers Walk

Until the mid 1800s, Riverside was a mix of both industrial and agricultural land. However, today agriculture survives only at Queenshaugh. Until ships grew too large, the harbour at Riverside was a key trading port in Central Scotland, with ships regularly sailing here from the Netherlands and the Baltic. It is not surprising then that many industries were established in the area. These industries have been many and varied over the years and increased dramatically with the coming of the railway in 1848.

Many of the goods manufactured here in Riverside were of world class quality. "Kemp & Co" were agricultural machinery manufacturers who opened for business in 1848; their reaping machines were sold as far afield as Syria and Australia and won prize medals at international exhibitions in London, Dublin, Hamburg and Cologne.

In 1861, The Stirling Perambulator Works opened in Abbey Road, manufacturing baby carriages. These prams were exported to Canada, India, South America, South Africa and India. The business, run by William Clark McEwen, also made invalid carriages and barrows for delivery boys and market traders. They also made rickshaws, hand pulled passenger carriages, which they exported to Africa.

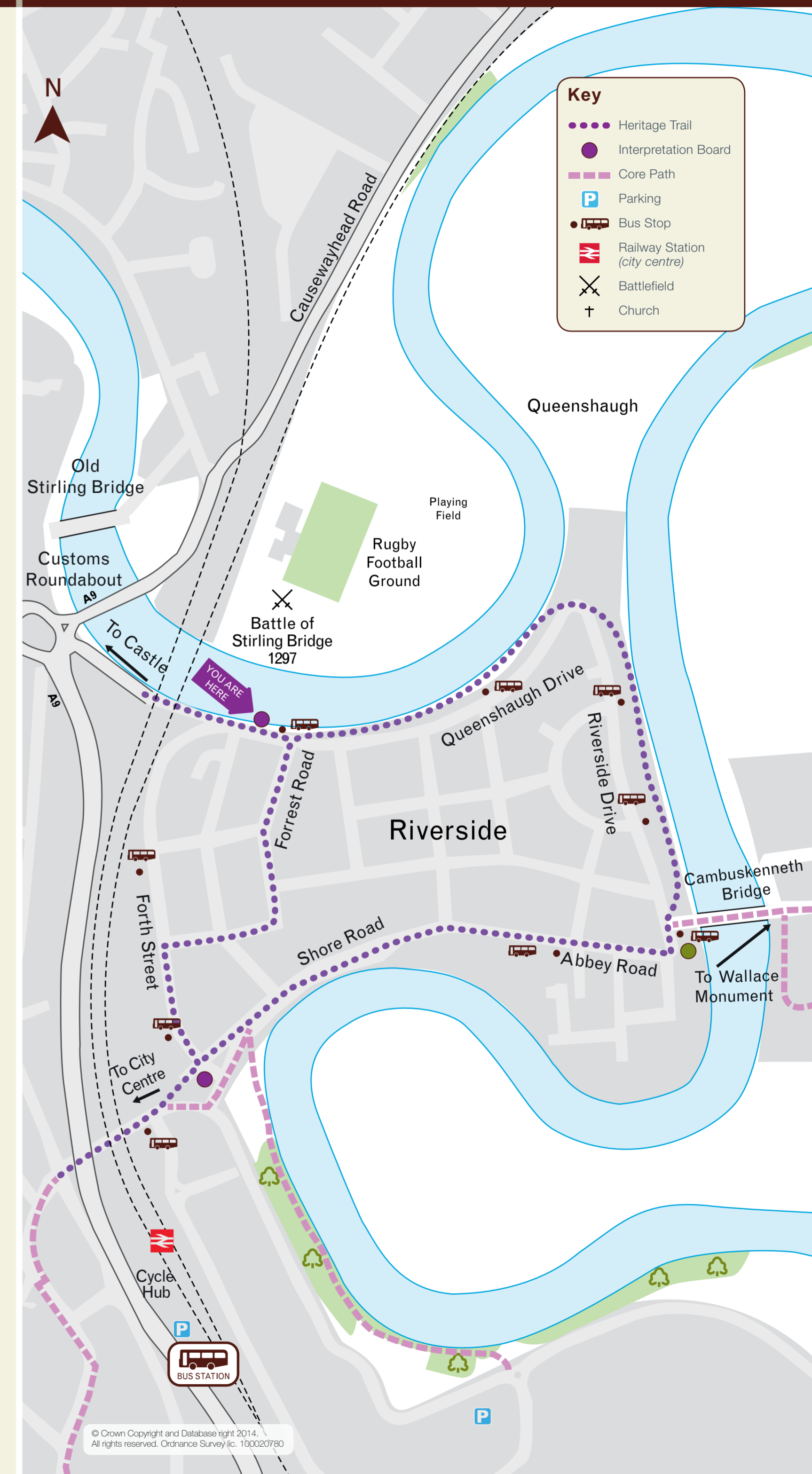
In the 1860s, Riverside boasted an oil refinery. The Forth Bank Oil Company took crude petroleum from the USA, Canada and Burma and refined it into products used for both lubricating machinery and for use in oil based lamps. It also processed shale oil, brought in from West Lothian on canal boats. Other industries included a coach works, bus depot, iron foundry and shipbuilding.



Advert for Stirling Perambulator Works, late 19th century. © Stirling Smith Art Gallery and Museum



Mairiad Hazel Elliott, Breadhead Primary School, P4



Early Council Housing, Shippaugh Place, circa 1920s, courtesy of Stirling Council Archives



Riverside Primary School

Homes For Heroes

Industry requires workers and workers require housing. By the early 20th century, much of the working class accommodation was of very poor quality. This became embarrassing to the government, particularly when soldiers started to return home from World War One. Prime Minister David Lloyd George promised a new programme of "Homes For Heroes" and, in 1919, the Addison Act was passed. Shippaugh Place and its surrounding streets were among the first, if not the first, council houses to be built in Scotland.

Private builders have also always been active in Riverside. At the end of the nineteenth century, local builder James Ronald immortalised his name by building homes on what are now known as "James Street" and "Ronald Street".

Community Facilities

The River has not just been used for commercial purposes; the community have also used it for leisure activities for many years. The Riverside Rowing Club was established in 1853 and still exists today, holding rowing competitions. In 1933, at Riverside Primary School, one of the first swimming pools in Stirling was constructed, helping a generation of children learned to swim.

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