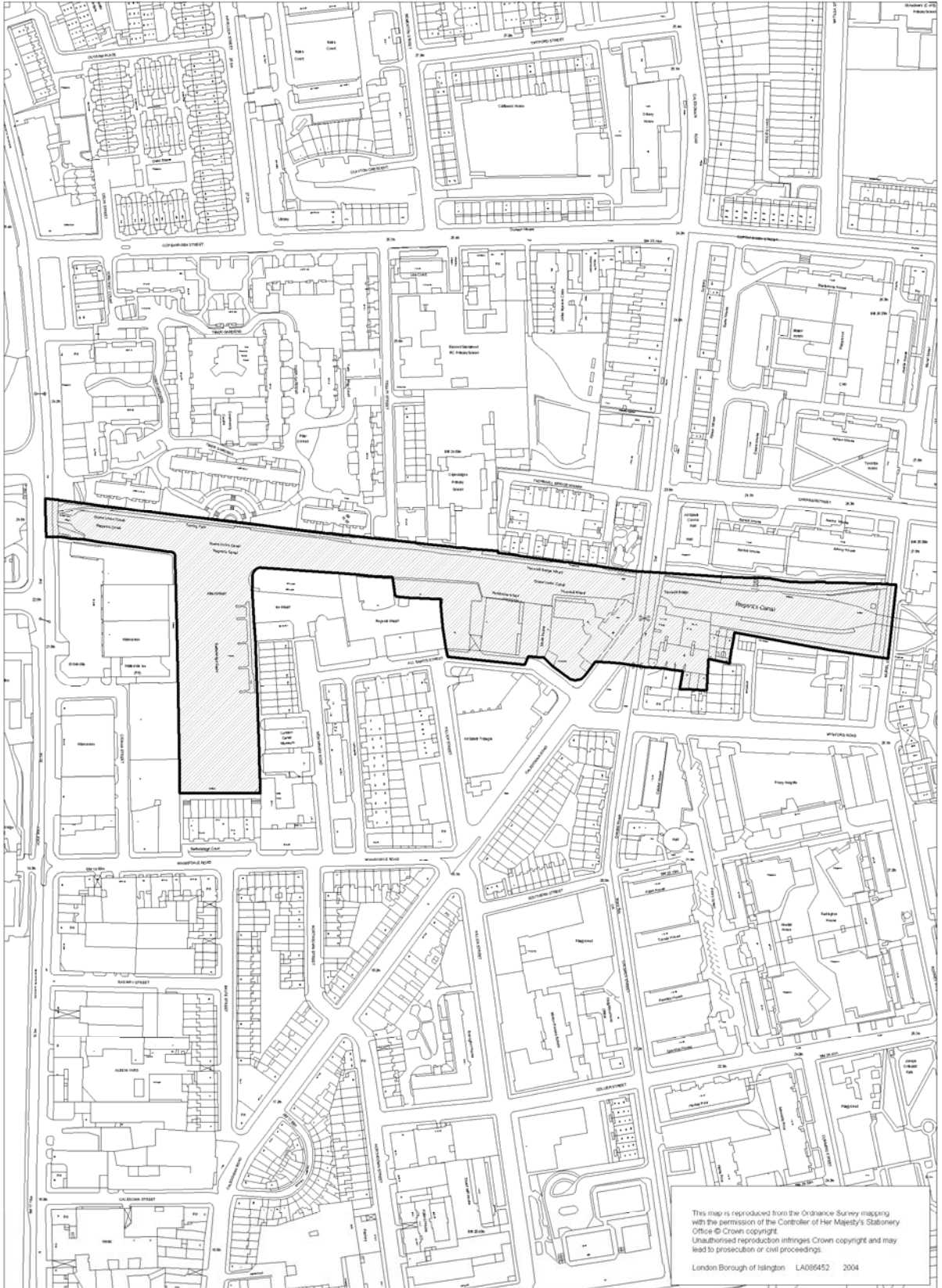


**Regent's Canal West (CA17)  
Conservation Area Design Guidelines**

**January 2002**

# Regent's Canal West (CA17)



Map Scale 1:3250

## CA SEVENTEEN

# REGENT'S CANAL WEST

- 17.1 The Council will operate special policies in the Regent's Canal West Conservation Area in order to preserve and enhance the special character and appearance of the area.**
- 17.2 The Regent's Canal was completed in 1820 and forms part of the first industrial transport network constructed to serve wide areas of the country. It met with immediate success and resulted in the construction of wharves along most of one bank and around Battlebridge Basin (opened in the same year as the canal). The other bank had to accommodate a towpath for the horses to pull the canal boats. The warehouses and industrial buildings reached the water's edge for the most part, facilitating the hoisting of goods and materials directly into or out of the canal boats. It is these characteristics - the wharf buildings rising sheer from the canal's edge and the canal towpath clearly separated from adjoining development - that still mark out the special character of the canal and basin today.
- 17.3 The Council will operate its land use policies so as to enhance the character and vitality of the area. Planning permission will not be granted to change, expand or intensify uses which would harm the character of the conservation area.**
- 17.4 The character of Regent's Canal West Conservation Area is a mixture of commercial and industrial uses. The Council will seek to retain the mixed use character and will not normally permit change of use which would harm this established character.
- 17.5 The Council wishes to retain all statutory and locally listed buildings together with the buildings and structures listed below and will only grant conservation area consent for their removal where there are special circumstances or where the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.**

### **Bridges and Canalside Features:**

<b>Albert Wharf:</b>	<b>Canalside wall</b>
<b>Maiden Lane Bridge:</b>	<b>(York Way over canal)</b>
<b>Muriel Street:</b>	<b>Canal portal</b>

<b>Thornhill Bridge:</b>	<b>(Caledonian Road over canal) Supporting brickwork and dressings</b>
<b>Towpath:</b>	<b>Boundary wall</b>
<b>Near Maiden Lane Bridge:</b>	<b>All surviving canal fixtures including mooring rings and the wartime lock gate fittings</b>

**Other Buildings:**

**All Saints Street: 4 and 6**

**Caledonian Road: 125**

**Crinan Street: Facade of 4-14 (Porters Building)**

**Fife Terrace: 16, 17 and 18**

- 17.6 PPG15 states that the general presumption should be in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of a conservation area. It also states that the assessment of a conservation area should always note those unlisted buildings which make such a contribution. The important structures are protected by statutory listing but the Council considers some of the warehouses and canal boundaries to be critical to the character of the area and their loss would reduce the historic and architectural interest of the area.
- 17.7 **All new buildings must be on a scale appropriate to their location and any adjacent buildings of conservation value. Building heights recently approved (and now largely implemented) should be regarded as a maximum for any future redevelopment in the conservation area. New buildings should present an appropriate frontage to the canal or basin and reflect the character of canal buildings.**
- 17.8 Buildings of greater scale, height or bulk than those existing will be out of keeping with the character of the conservation area. Canal and basin warehouse facades have a particular architectural character which can easily be diminished or spoilt by inappropriate new development.
- 17.9 **The enclosed character of the canal must be retained and any physical opening up (e.g. for parking areas) will be resisted. Where buildings currently reach the water's edge, any redevelopment will also be required to do so.**

- 17.10 The enclosed nature of the canal at its bank contributes to its special character and is a key aspect of the conservation area that needs protection and enhancement.
- 17.11 No further permanent structures will be permitted over, in or under the water of the canal or basin.**
- 17.12 The potential for recreational use of the water area should not be diminished nor the open aspect of the water area reduced. Council policy for the water area of the Basin was agreed in May 1988 and, in summary, is to promote recreational use, ensure maximum public access compatible with security for surrounding buildings, encourage the establishment of a Canal Museum in the vicinity and provide for secure moorings for the London Narrowboat Association. Most of these objectives have been met in terms of recent planning permissions although not all have yet been implemented.
- 17.13 With refurbishment proposals which involve alterations or extensions, the original design and period of the building must be respected, including scale, proportion, architectural style, fenestration and materials.**
- 17.14 The canal warehouse buildings have a distinctive architectural character which is easily destroyed in converting them for modern uses. Considerable care is therefore needed to ensure this is done without serious loss of their original character. Some materials are alien to the area and unlikely to be acceptable.
- 17.15 All plant rooms and lift over-runs, radio and satellite equipment, air conditioning units and other plant should be located so as to be invisible from the canal towpath, basin edges and in long views from the canal bridges.**
- 17.16 Long views are particularly susceptible to being spoilt in canal areas, particularly from the bridges along the towpath or across the Basin. Projecting plant rooms form no part of the original character of canal buildings and can significantly spoil the roof lines of canalside buildings.
- 17.17 The Council is opposed to the erection of large vent pipes on the rear elevation of commercial properties, where this is harmful to amenity. Where possible existing chimney flues should be used. Any new flues should be modest in size and painted a dark colour.**
- 17.18 Large flues and vent pipes can often detract from the visual amenity of the area. The Council will therefore seek to ensure that these are appropriately located and are of a suitable size and design.
- 17.19 Granite setts, granite kerbs or engineering brick edges to the canal should be retained.**

- 17.20 Surface treatments also contribute to the character and appearance of an area. Where replacements are necessary, the Council will insist on the use of the same materials.
- 17.21 It is essential that the continuity of the northern towpath is maintained. Wherever possible, new accesses should be incorporated in new developments by agreement with British Waterways and owners.**
- 17.22 The towpath is an important component in the area's character, and provides an important pedestrian route. New accesses will enable the towpath to be linked more closely to local pedestrian routes and possibly the cycle network.
- 17.23 Wherever possible fencing should be avoided at or near the canal edge but where it is considered necessary for safety purposes, then a low (3-4 feet) iron or mild steel railing of suitable design is appropriate in most circumstances.**
- 17.24 This treatment is in keeping with canalside and towpath furnishings. The London Canal Committee in their 'Guidelines for Canalside Development' has made a substantial contribution to the development of standards of design of canalside structures and landscaped areas. This should be referred to at an early stage of the design and planning process and should be treated as being complementary to these design guidelines.
- 17.25 The full length of the northern towpath boundary wall, from the small public open space by Thornhill Bridge westwards to Maiden Lane Bridge should be properly maintained. This does not preclude occasional openings but they must be modest and appropriately designed.**
- 17.26 The wall is important to provide a sense of enclosure for the canal and towpath. The oldest section, which is opposite Battlebridge Basin, is original and has historical interest and should not be demolished. Detailed guidance on the future maintenance and treatment of the whole length of the northern boundary wall is contained in a brief approved by the Council.
- 17.27 The steep banks, densely planted with trees, either side of the canal east of Caledonian Road should be maintained.**
- 17.28 These borders help to provide a sense of enclosure to the canal.
- 17.29 Any repair works to the tunnel portal, a listed structure, should be done in sympathy with its character. This particularly applies to building materials and repointing of brickwork. The parapet wall should be reinstated.**

- 17.30 The tunnel portal was constructed in 1818 and is attributed to John Nash, the architect and one of the promoters of the canal. It is now a listed building. The brickwork and stonework is old and susceptible to physical and visual damage by inappropriate repair work. Advice can be obtained from the Council.
- 17.31 The Council will not grant permission for roof extensions at 16, 17 and 18 Fife Terrace.**
- 17.32 Many of the buildings flanking the canal are of recent origin, particularly east of Thornhill Bridge. The contribution of this short mid-19th century terrace of three houses is therefore significant. Many of the details have been altered but in terms of bulk and proportions they remain as built and add a pleasant domestic character to this part of the canal.
- 17.33 Moorings along the canal shall be for navigational and temporary purposes other than those moorings already permitted. Planning permission will not be granted by the Council for further moorings for permanent use.**
- 17.34 The Council's main aims are to encourage the use of the canal for navigation and recreation, whilst protecting local amenity and enhancing the character of the area. Planning permission for some permanent residential moorings has been given in the past, but the Council considers that further moorings would be detrimental to these aims.
- 17.35 Mooring rings on the non-towpath side of the canal should be retained and the canal depth maintained to allow such use.**
- 17.36 Safe overnight and emergency moorings should be available for boats on the canal.
- 17.37 The Council will not give advertising consent for new hoardings and will seek to remove those which do not have consent.**
- 17.38 Advertising hoardings give an impression of clutter and lack of interest in an area. They also often obscure the nature and detailing of a building to which they are attached. The Council is opposed to the proliferation of advertising hoardings in the area and will take action against the owners, advertisers and their agents for the removal of unauthorised hoardings.
- 17.39 Internally illuminated signs will not normally be permitted. Other signs should be of appropriate scale and design and conform to the Council's standards.**
- 17.40 Advertisements and signs can often detract from the visual amenity of the area. The Council will therefore seek to ensure that signs, display panels and advertisements are appropriately located and are of a suitable size and design.