

# KING'S CROSS CENTRAL CANAL FUND MASTERPLAN

FINAL REPORT - MAY 2010

REF: 6406



Prepared by:



on behalf of British Waterways London  
and Argent Group plc

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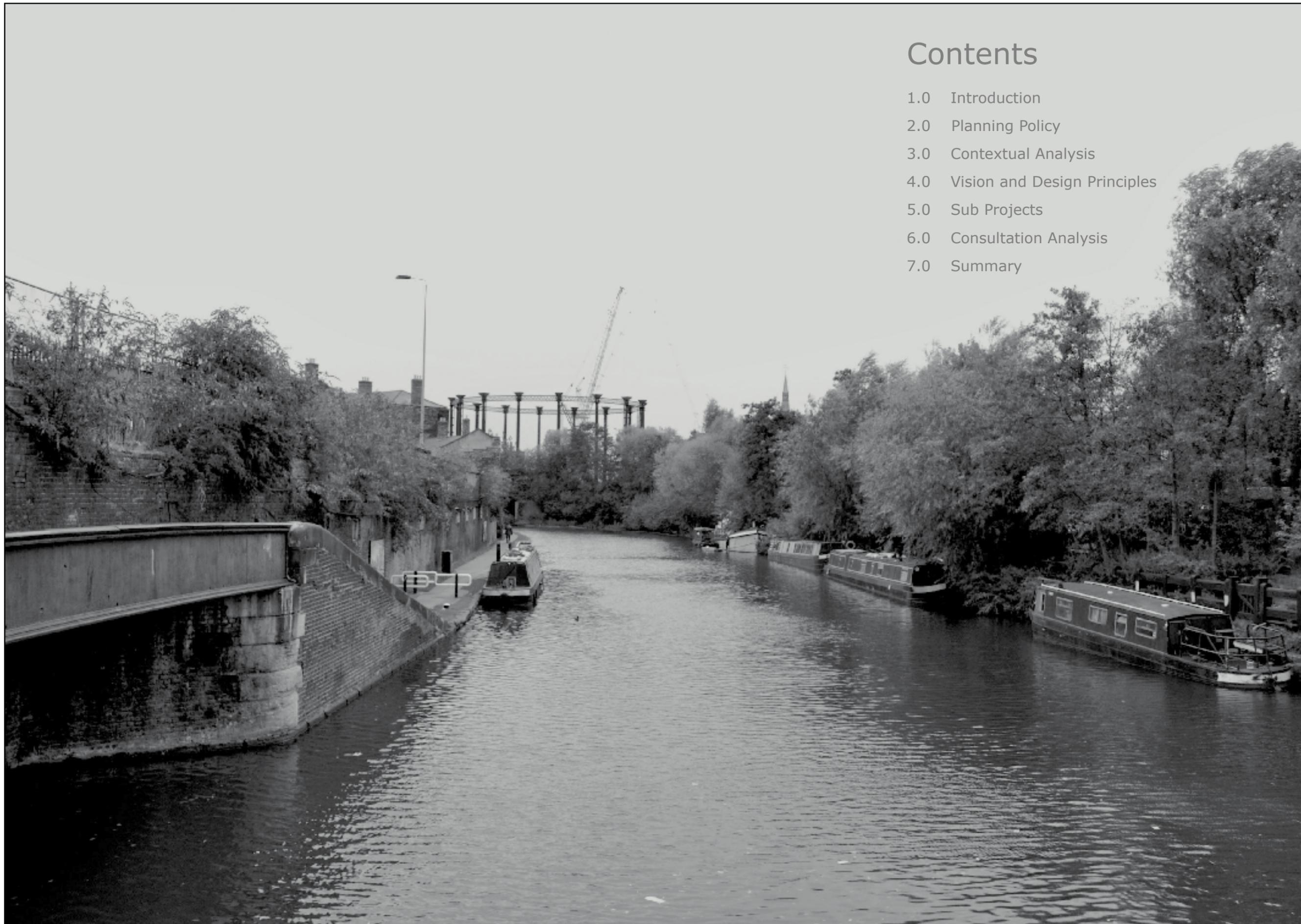
Acknowledgements:

We are grateful to Camden and Islington Councils, as well as local stakeholders, for their help and guidance in shaping the Masterplan and Sub Projects.

**Opposite page:  
Regent's Canal  
looking east  
towards Gas  
Holder No 8**

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# Introduction

1.0



## Introduction

British Waterways London and Argent Group plc appointed Lathams in September 2009 to prepare a masterplan for the 1.8km stretch of the Regent's Canal, either side of the King's Cross Central development zone.

The brief's stated objectives are as follows:

To regenerate, refresh and reawaken interest in the stretch of canal, from the stunning west portal of the Islington Tunnel in the east, to the Constitution Public House (NW1) in the west.

A masterplan is sought for the whole area, together with outline designs for up to 12 sub projects to be taken forward. A fund for the proposed rejuvenation work has been established between British Waterways London and the parties developing King's Cross. The objective of the masterplan is to outline how this fund should be spent over the coming years to deliver the joint vision of the stakeholders.

This project represents a significant opportunity to transform the waterside offer on the Regent's Canal. The coming of the Argent-led development is creating a new and vibrant destination, redefining King's Cross and, with seamless transport connections to mainland Europe, may even shift the centre of gravity of the Capital City.

The ideas contained within the masterplan are based on a sound understanding of the existing context, mindful of the forthcoming King's Cross development proposals. A programme of consultation provided the opportunity to listen to key concerns and test emerging ideas and concepts, with stakeholders and the wider community.

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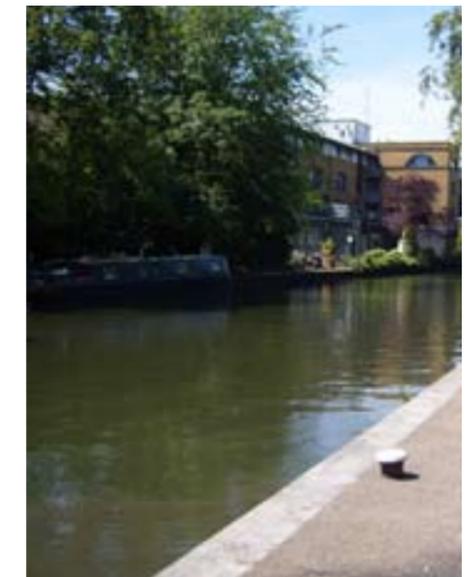
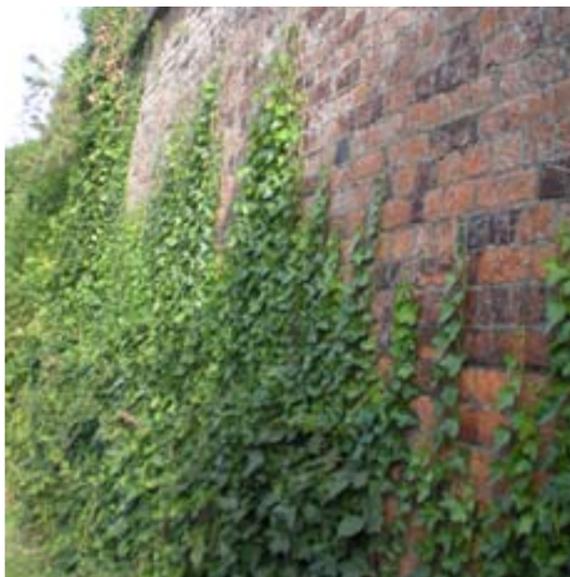
Mixture of towpath materials west of Camley Street (Oblique) Bridge

Natural ivy wall covering along the towpath

View of canal corridor with Constitution Public House in the distance

View west from Islington Tunnel

Opposite Page: Graffiti on walls alongside the canal



## The Challenge

The conservation and enhancement of the Regent's Canal requires a full understanding and sensitivity to the following:

- The value of the waterspace as a linear resource and the challenges that this brings in delivering a strategic vision
- The sensitivities of linear environments to third party development and design influence and the importance of setting a high quality framework for change
- The significance of the local canal character and distinctiveness - this stretch of the Regent's Canal features a number of buildings and structures of interest and is lock-free (with the exception of St Pancras Lock).  
NB) There are a number of areas of 'wide water', including Battlebridge Basin and St Pancras Cruising Club.
- The implications of British Waterways London and Argent Group plc 'targets', eg. "delighting customers", increasing visitor numbers / mooring provision and pressures/challenges that this may bring to decision makers
- Wildlife protection and enhancement opportunities, in conjunction with new development, to promote the 'green corridor' effect

- Meeting the varied functional design criteria for all potential users of waterspace in any given location
- Designing out crime and anti-social behaviour
- Levels manipulation and assessing "access for all" provision; DDA implications
- Ensuring commitment to design quality in a challenging economic climate with limited budgets
- Embracing sustainability as a core commitment of British Waterways and Argent Group plc and the challenges for innovation that this brings to the design process



# Planning Policy

2.0



## Planning Policy

The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) sets out Camden Council's aims and priorities for the use of land within the Borough and provides a framework for planning decisions.

Due to the prominence of the Regent's Canal within the Borough, Section 10 of the UDP is dedicated solely to conserving and enhancing the existing character of the canal and improving its potential for recreation, transportation and wildlife (Policy SRC 1). This is in keeping with the Greater London Authority's 'Blue Ribbon' network which aims to enhance the use and value of the Capital's canals. This ensures that new developments contribute to the character of the waterways and canal-side areas, protecting biodiversity along London's waterways.

Policy RC1 is concerned with maintaining and enhancing the character and vitality of the Regent's Canal. Planning Permission will only be granted after consideration is given to the existing openness or enclosure of the specific part of the canal, and whether new development is sympathetic to the existing canalscape.

The council is actively seeking opportunities to provide soft planting along the towpath or aquatic planting within the canal improving the quality of the towpath, enhancing biodiversity. Opportunities to provide public art, signposting and interpretation material will be looked upon favourably, along with the reopening of canal basins creating scope for new moorings, improved turning facilities for canal boats and areas for new activity.

The council will consider the provision of new public access to the canal by opening up new footpaths and cycle routes, providing direct secure access onto the towpath from surrounding areas.

The local authority wishes to maintain the canal's diversity with its mix of enclosed spaces and wider open spaces and hard industrial townscapes with semi rural sections.

The scale of canal structures such as bridges and locks are small in general. Therefore new development should be in keeping with the existing built landscape and not harm views or the skyline. Specific reference is made to Policy B9B, which is concerned with the protection of views across and from the Regent's Canal.

The local authority wishes to promote the character and vitality of the canal by ensuring developments provide a range of uses throughout the day, evening and year-round. Policy RC2 relates to the use of buildings along the canal. Permission will not be granted if the result would be a loss of traditional uses and/or water-based leisure uses along Regent's Canal unless it improves the character and vitality.

Under policy RC3, *'the Council will grant planning permission for the permanent mooring of boats in locations that do not hinder navigation of the Regent's Canal, and where it considers there will be no harm to the amenity of the surrounding area.'* Further consideration will be given as to whether the mooring is on the non-towpath bank, accessibility to the mooring site and the availability of serving facilities. When considering moorings, due regard is given to the London Canals Committee Guidelines for Canalside Moorings.

The Regent's Canal is designated as a public open space, a metropolitan walk, a green corridor and a Metropolitan Site of Nature Conservation. Policies N2B AND N8C are concerned with the protection and promotion of open space and the canal's biodiversity character.

Policy B7 is also of relevance as the canal is within a Conservation Area. More in depth guidance is provided in the Regent's Canal Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Statement produced by Camden Council in 2008. Again, consideration is required as to whether development preserves or enhances the special character or appearance within the area.

From Maiden Lane Bridge, the Regent's Canal comes under the jurisdiction of Islington Council. A number of their policies are concerned with preserving and enhancing the canal. Policy R5 states that the protection of the Regent's Canal towpath as a link to recreation facilities is of paramount importance. The Council will seek to complete or help to extend these routes whenever possible, to improve access, and develop their recreation, wildlife and nature conservation value.

Under policy R14, the local authority will actively seek to develop the towpath and basins for water and land based recreation whilst exploiting adjoining land and buildings in support of this aim. The council will encourage youth groups and the disabled to use these facilities.

The Regent's Canal West Conservation Area extends from Maiden Lane Bridge to Islington Tunnel. Therefore policy D19 will be applicable - this relates to the preserving and enhancing the special character and appearance of the area.

From left to right;

Constitution Public House next to Gray's Inn Bridge

View looking west beneath Thornhill Bridge

Oblique Bridge (Camley Street) looking west

The Jubilee Waterside Centre

Opposite Page: Viewing platform over towpath between Gray's Inn Bridge and St Pancras Way (Camley Street)





# Contextual Analysis

3.0



## Location

London's Regent's Canal is nine miles long and links Little Venice in Paddington in the west with Limehouse Basin and the River Thames in the east

The Canal passes through Regent's Park and London Zoo. It takes in the bustle of Camden Market and the quieter reaches through north-east London. Along the way are several tunnels (the longest of which is Islington Tunnel), city basins, and a rich variety of built heritage.

The study area represents 1.8km of the overall length of canal. It is located immediately to the north of King's Cross St Pancras.

NB) The plan shows the extent of the study area, illustrating the King's Cross Central zone, which is currently undergoing redevelopment.

On completion, King's Cross Central will be a vibrant, mixed use development, with a strong focus on the Regent's Canal. A new public park is proposed ('Flux Park'), based around the relocated gas holder No 8. The development will unlock longstanding opportunities to reinvigorate the waterfront and create an enhanced identity for the canal in this area.

Whilst King's Cross Central forms a key focal point at the heart of the study area, the focus of this masterplan is on the canalside either side of the central development zone.



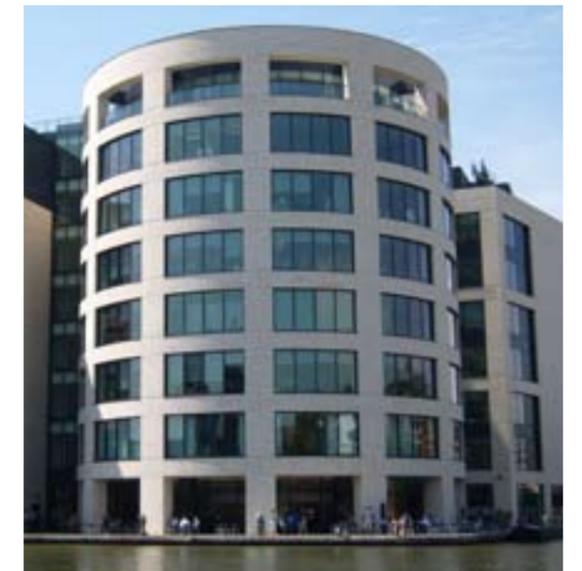
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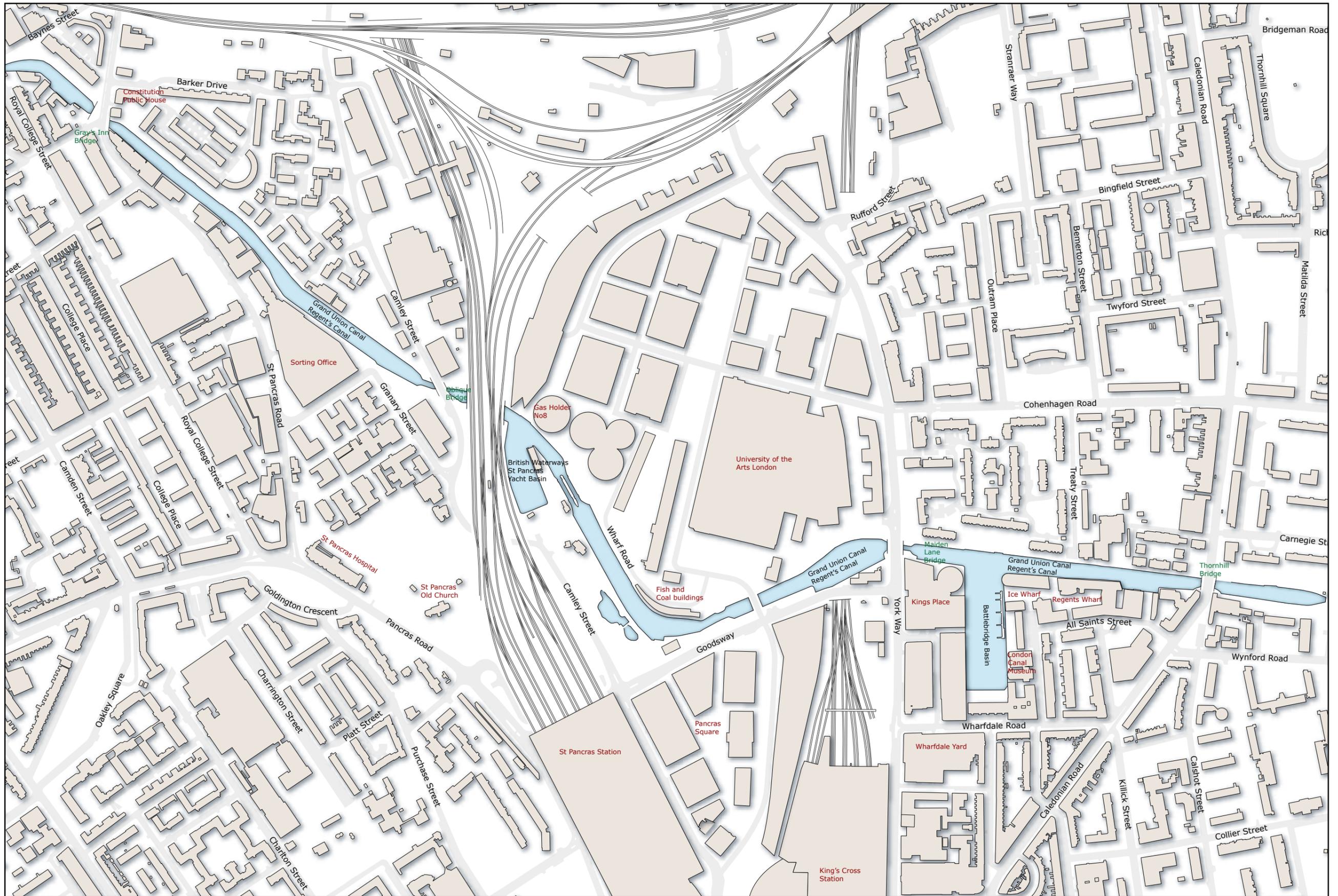
**Study area  
location plan  
with King's Cross  
Central at it's  
heart**

**Below left:  
St Pancras Lock  
and gas holder  
beyond (to be  
relocated)**

**Middle:  
Maiden Lane  
Bridge**

**Right:  
King's Place**





Study area site plan

## Access and Movement

At present there are a limited number of access points within the study area. None of these encourage access for all due to the lack of provision for wheelchair /buggy users. With the exception of the ramped access to the west of Islington Tunnel, they all feature steps of various inclines to suit the local topography.

All existing access points would benefit from improvement. However, because of the constraints in terms of land ownership and narrow width of towpath, the opportunities are limited.

A key characteristic of the canal is the presence of high brick retaining walls, which form a backdrop to the towpath. These often serve to close down the amenity corridor, creating 'pinch points' for walkers and cyclists and making users feel vulnerable in that, once they get onto the towpath, they may not be able to get off again for some considerable distance.

This is a particular issue for the western section of the study area, where there is an access from the Camley Street (Oblique) bridge, but it is not possible to get off the towpath again until the Constitution Public House.

In addition to the physical constraints, not all the access points can be used by the public, eg. there is no access to the canal from St Pancras Cruising Club (members only). There are also gated access points where private residential developments abut the towpath, eg. to the east of York Way/Maiden Lane Bridge.

There are a number of negative aspects concerning the canal environment which need to be addressed. Currently, parts of the canal towpath are seen as a hidden and 'secret' amenity, allowing some anti-social behaviour to occur.

Opening up access and encouraging a variety of uses should foster a stronger sense of 'ownership' and reduce opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour.

The issues to be addressed are as follows:

- Poor connectivity to the surrounding area
- Poor towpath surface (due to presence of pre cast concrete covers to buried services troughs)
- No sense of end destination at Islington Tunnel western portal
- Limited amenity space adjacent to the canal
- Unwelcoming barriers and boundaries, restricting potential use
- Limited accessibility for wheelchair users and baby buggies – access for all issues
- Incoherent and inconsistent signage. Mixed messages from canal signage - no common brand and lack of directional signage
- Crime and anti-social behaviour in the form of vandalism and graffiti (hot spots identified)

NB) Initial dialogue with stakeholders has revealed that there are some very real concerns in respect of crime and anti-social behaviour:

*'At present the canal towpath does seem to mostly belong to disaffected youngsters and problem drinkers, after sunset.'*

John Sheridan, local resident and chair of CNAA

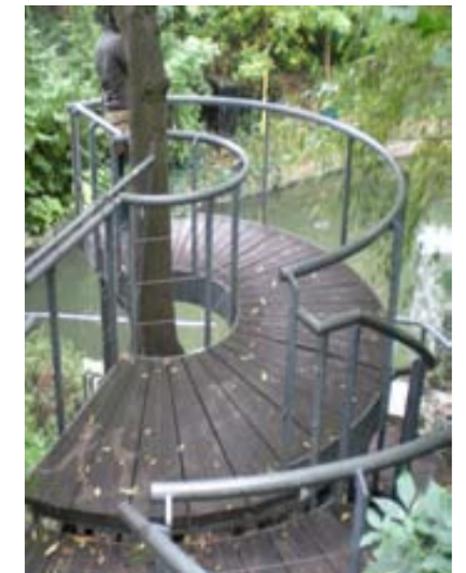
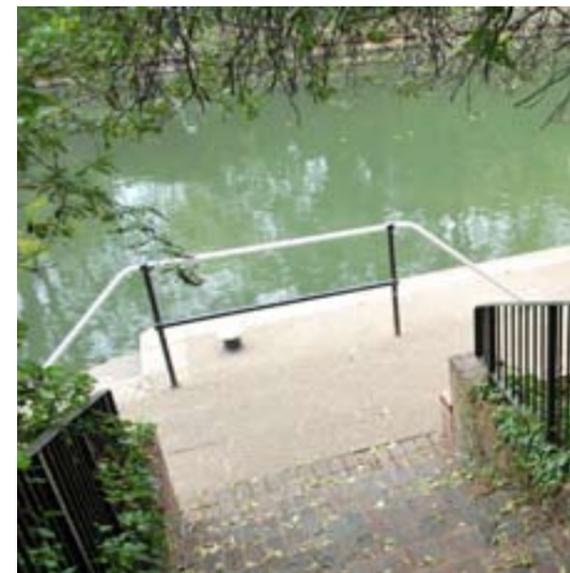
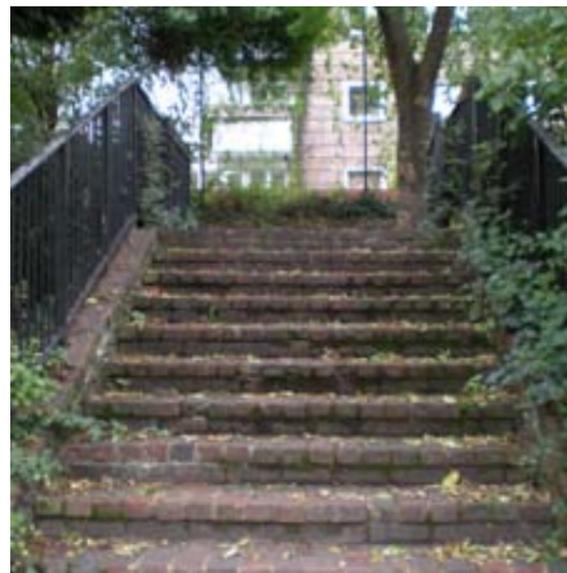
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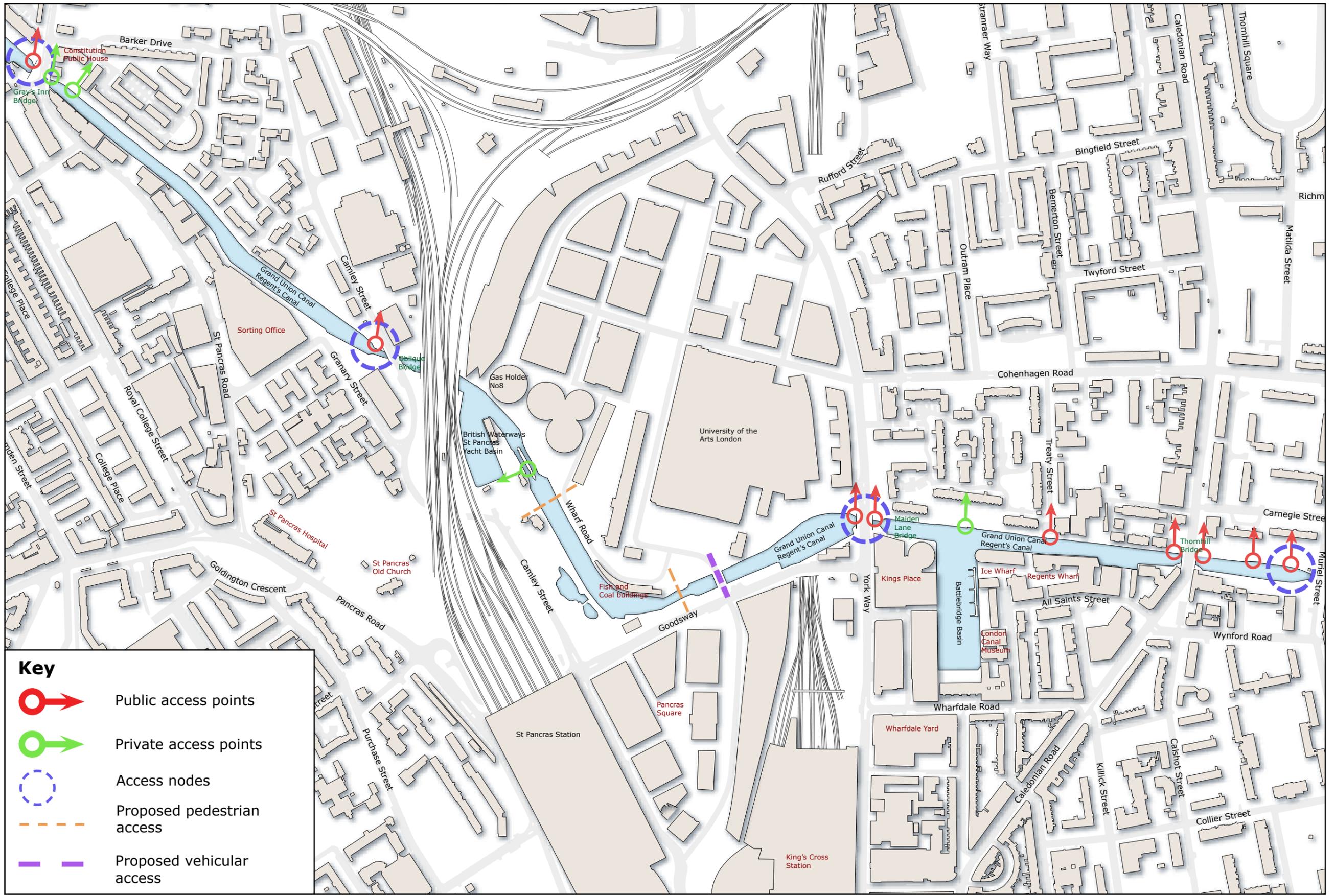
Timber steps between Maiden Lane Bridge and Thornhill Bridge

Steps leading to properties on Carnegie Street

Steps located immediately west of Islington Tunnel

Feature 'Belvedere' adjacent to Tunnel and access leading up to Muriel Street





**Key**

-  Public access points
-  Private access points
-  Access nodes
-  Proposed pedestrian access
-  Proposed vehicular access

Access points located along the Regent's Canal

## Historical Background

(source: London Canal Museum)

The Regents Canal was built to link the Grand Junction Canal's Paddington Arm with the Thames at Limehouse. The famous architect John Nash, a director of the canal company persuaded his close friend, Prince Regent, later King George IV to name the project after him. The Regent's Canal Act was passed in 1812 and the company was formed to build and operate it. Nash appointed his assistant, James Morgan as canal Engineer, with it opening in two stages from Paddington to Camden in 1816, and the rest of the canal in 1820.

The project however, encountered a number of setbacks leading to a prolonged build period. Apart from the shortage of funding, an innovative hydro pneumatic lock invented by William Congreve turned out to be a failure. Built at Hampstead Road Lock, it was later rebuilt to a conventional design.

Secondly, money was embezzled in 1815 by the canal's once promoter, Thomas Homer. The canal cost £772,000 to build, twice as much as the original budget. A water shortage led to the need to dam the River Brent, to create a reservoir in 1835, which was later expanded in 1837 and 1854.

The main centre of trade along this stretch of canal was Regent's Canal Dock. It provided a point for unloading seaborne cargo from abroad including ice destined for the now canal museum at Battlebridge basin, from where it continued its journey on barges. After this, City Road Basin was the second most important centre of trade, handling mainly incoming inland freight.

As railway traffic increased in the 1840s, an attempt was made, unsuccessfully, to adapt the canal into a railway. During the 1920's, talks took place regarding a merger between the Regent's Canal, the Grand Junction Canal and the Warwick Canals. This resulted in the Regent's Canal Company obtaining the assets of the other two companies in 1929, with the company becoming known as the Grand Union Canal Company.

Traffic increased during the latter period of the Second World War (1939- 1945) as an alternative to the overburdened railways. Stop gates were installed near King's Cross to limit possible flooding of the railway tunnel below, in the event of a breach by German bombing. Nationalisation of the canal system occurred in 1948 with it becoming known as the Docks and Inland Waterways Executive as part of the British Transport Commission. 1963 saw the split of the British Transport Commission with the British Waterways Board taking over the running of the canals under the name 'British Waterways' who still oversee the running of the canals today.

The last horse drawn commercial traffic was in 1956 and the late 1960's saw the end of commercial traffic with the canal being predominantly used for leisure both on the water and the towpath. The canal still has regular boat excursions between Camden and Little Venice in the West of London, where the canal meets the Grand Junction near Paddington.

In total, three tunnels exist on the Regent's Canal - the Islington Tunnel (886 metres), the Maida Hill Tunnel (251 metres) and the Eyres tunnel (48 metres). The Maida Hill and Eyres tunnels both opened in 1816 with the Islington Tunnel opening in 1820 on completion of the canal.

The Islington tunnel, engineered by James Morgan forms the eastern most boundary to the study area and the main focal point of the Regent's Canal. Initially, a competition was commissioned for the design of the tunnel in 1812. The response however, was poor and as a result Morgan was ordered to get on and design a tunnel which he duly did. Construction work started in 1814. By March 1815, 250 yards had been built, however, later in the project progress was slowed when unstable earth was found with a vein of stone causing the ingress of water.

The tunnel was built by the process of sinking shafts at intervals to the required depth, and then lowering men and equipment down to dig and, it was hoped, meet. Accurate survey work was essential in order to locate the shafts in the correct place and dig them to the correct depth. That the tunnel is more or less straight indicates that this was done well, although difficulties meant that headings, small pilot bores, had to be constructed between shafts initially to ensure it.

The original budget for the tunnel was hugely under estimated with the final cost of the works coming to £40,000. Final completion occurred in 1818 although it was not opened straight away.

The tunnel was initially operated by 'legging' whereby men would lie on their backs and push against the side walls to walk the vessel through the tunnel (see historic photograph, right). This was later phased out in 1826 when a steam chain tug was introduced, it being one of the earliest uses of steam power on the canal.

More recently, Islington Tunnel was closed in 2000 for extensive repairs.

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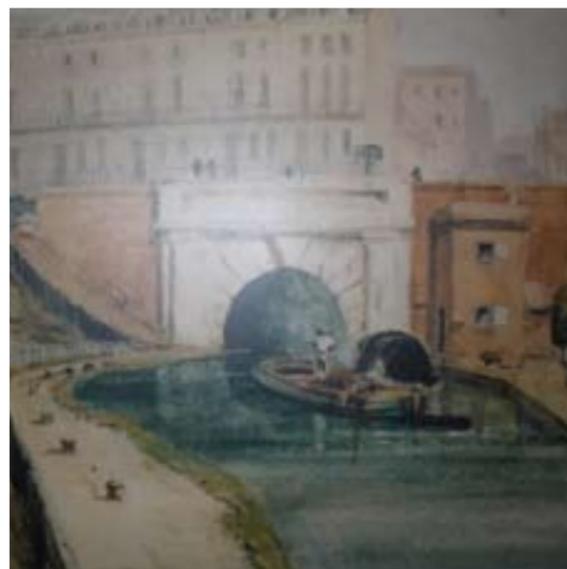
Portrait of Islington Tunnel with Georgian style housing in the background

Canal moorings and former coal drops, St Pancras Basin

Islington Tunnel, engineered by James Morgan, completed in 1818

Archive photograph of Former Pump House and later lock house (St Pancras Lock)

Opposite page; boatmen 'legging'





## Materials

In common with other canal infrastructure in the UK, materials tend to be local, utilitarian and of a hard wearing nature.

Given the conditions and locations these materials were used in they had to be robust - adornment was not a major consideration.

The Regent's Canal features a fairly limited palette of historic materials with modern materials used for later interventions, to either repair or patch the historic elements.

Yellow London stock bricks, laid in English bond feature heavily along the length of the Canal and are used to construct the high boundary walls abutting the towpath. At certain points this sometimes monotonous walling gives way to reveal blocked up archways, doorways and window positions to walls that were once the backs of buildings.

Three other types of brick are used within the study area namely a soft red/orange, Staffordshire Blue for detail and a brown/brindle. Walls constructed of these materials appear to have been constructed later than the yellow stock walling and are laid in a simple stretcher bond.

The Islington Tunnel features both the soft red and yellow stock, with other bridge abutments constructed in brown/brindle brick and dressed sandstone.

The towpath is generally laid with large concrete flags and concrete access covers housing high voltage electricity cables below.

Within areas along the waters edge, a seemingly random Staffordshire blue brick band is introduced terminating either abruptly or at duct covers.

The area around St Pancras Lock is rich in historic elements such as the large granite coping stones to the canal edge and towpath bridge (access to former basin) wall to the areas of granite paving. Unfortunately many of the setts are missing or have become loose with some areas in-filled with either asphalt or concrete.

Features such as mild steel handrails beneath the bridges look tired and in need of refurbishment as do the few remaining cast iron mooring bollards. Generally all ironwork is painted either white or black.

Litter bins and lighting do not feature heavily along the canal's length, but where they can be found, they are either cast iron or black plastic.

Existing lighting (where it appears) is in the form of slim silver painted columns with a directional head fitting.

Three benches are positioned along the canal within the study area, constructed of a cast metal frame with timber slats.



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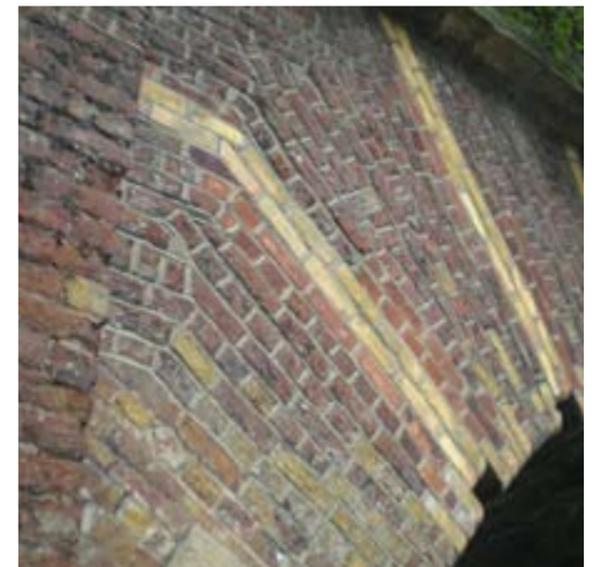
London stock facing bricks

Dressed sandstone quoins to bridge abutment

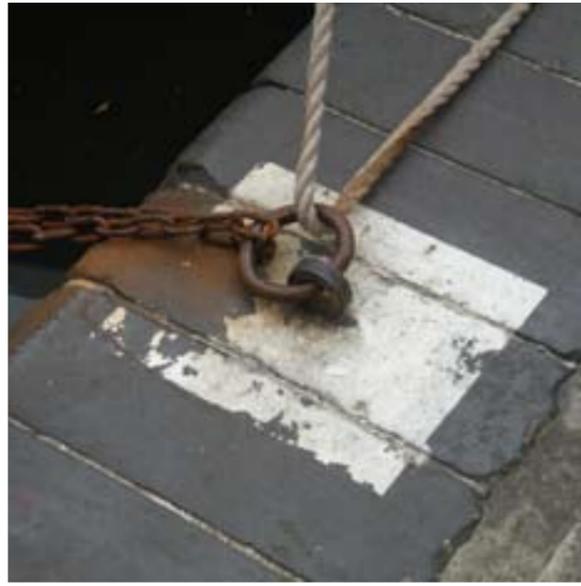
Post war pre-cast concrete to towpath (access covers to ducts)

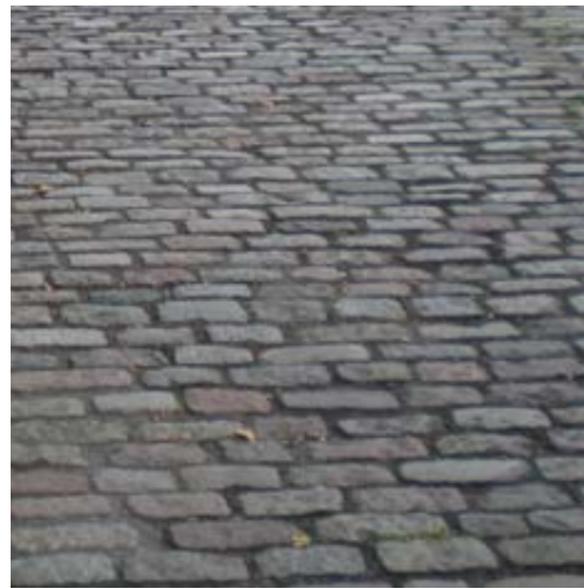
Mix of red facing brickwork and London stock feature banding to bridge arch

Historic rope markings on Maiden Lane bridge abutment stone representing unique patina of age









## Landscape

The Regent's Canal is well used by the local community and boaters, with commuters using the towpath for cycling, jogging and walking to work.

Along some sections of the canal and relating to the basins are surviving 19th and early 20th century warehouses and industrial buildings, many formerly associated with the furniture and building trades, which dominated the canal-side wharves at this time.

There is no longer a great use for freight and despite pleasure craft using the waterway, the industrial nature of the canal and adjacent buildings has diminished somewhat.

Although the Regent's Canal itself has altered little since its completion in 1820, once commercial traffic ceased in the 1960's, the industrial use of the canal practically ended.

The associated timber wharves and warehouses that lined the banks and basins of the canal for almost 180 years are changing in nature. Some are disappearing, being replaced by new housing developments whilst other smaller factories and former industrial buildings close to the canal are being turned into studios, restaurants and live/work units.

The Conservation Area status of the Canal aims to preserve the Canal's character and appearance. It is the area as a whole rather than the specific buildings that is of special interest.

The historic layout of paths and boundaries, paving materials, public and private spaces, trees, street furniture and views, all contribute to the character of the conservation area. The Regent's Canal Conservation Area runs across Southern Hackney from Victoria Park in the east to Islington in the west.

This study area has a more clearly defined industrial character than exists along the remainder of the Canal.

The area from Gray's Inn Bridge to Camley Street (Oblique Bridge) is bounded by high walls, with mainly post war development located behind. A proportion of these walls are historic in nature, constructed with lime mortar, local brick and cut stone.

These walls feature details such as (now blocked up) sprung arch openings hidden behind planting along their length. This former permeability of brick walls is in contrast to the situation today, where the walls now form barriers to movement to/from the canal towpath.

Planting along the canal corridor is generally limited to a small strip of soil located at the base of the walls and small grass margins located intermittently along the length of the towpath. Species found here include Ivy, Buddleia, Blackberry and a mixture of grasses, with no tree planting.

The area between the Oblique Bridge and Maiden Lane Bridge is within the development zone of Argent's Kings Cross Central. This area includes St. Pancras Lock and Camley Street Natural Park, the latter providing a unique green focal point and oasis for wildlife along the Canal.

The area around the lock is the richest in terms of surface materials and landscape with granite setts to areas of the footpath and large stone edgings and copings used to the lock walls. The former basin entrance can also be seen immediately east of the lock on the King's Cross Central development site north of the canal.

A small number of Hawthorn trees are set within this area with shrub planting to the base. Again, there are strips of grass along the length of the Canal at the bases of the walls. The area of existing planting to the west of Maiden Lane Bridge offers a great opportunity for landscape enhancement and biodiversity.

The landscape character of the remaining area from Maiden Lane Bridge to the Islington Tunnel (western portal) is again bounded by high walls but with occasional openings to allow pedestrian access to the North and views into private/communal gardens.

Key areas where greenspace may be improved and enhanced include Tiber gardens, Thornhill Bridge Community Gardens and land to the North of Islington Tunnel. The area adjacent to the western portal is the final destination for pedestrians as the Tunnel is for water borne traffic only.

The landscape in this area is made up of many self set trees and plants with little permeability and low light levels. The area next to the tunnel portal is currently a magnet for vandalism and misuse and there are opportunities to realign and improve the current pedestrian access to allow views from the top of the bridge to the canal corridor. Opportunities also exist to re-plant with more sympathetic native species.

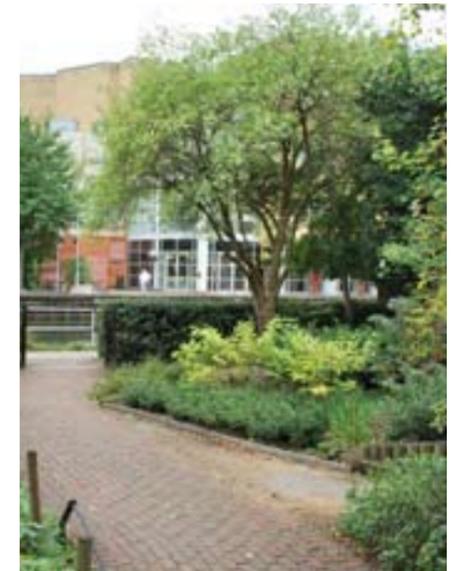
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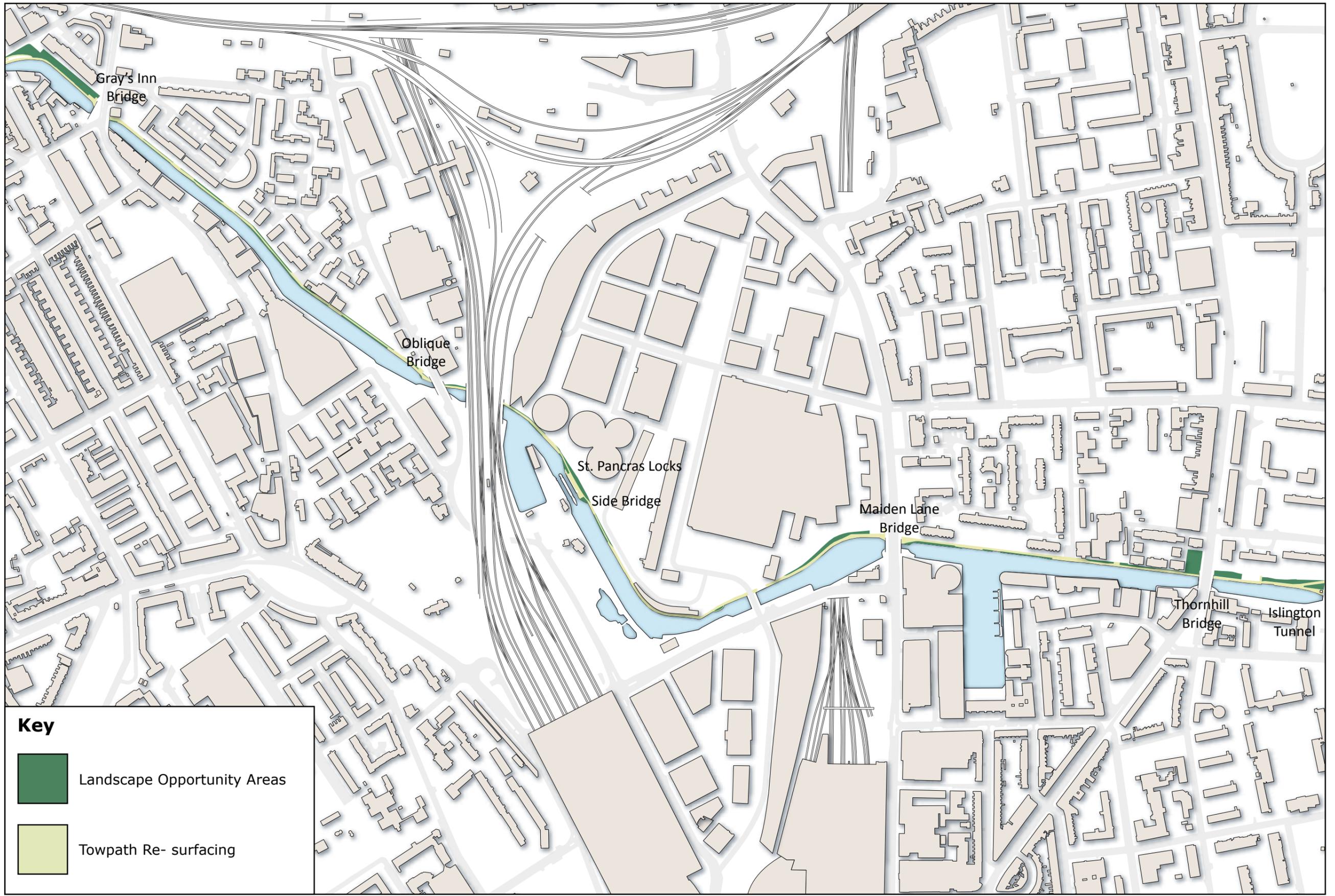
Ivy (*Hedera Helix*) climbing brick wall

Grass Species set within small margin to base of brick retaining wall

Self set Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*) along walls

Thornhill Community Garden next to the canal towpath





Landscape opportunity areas and re- surfacing plan

## Ecological Issues

The canal supports interesting flora and fauna, typical of an industrial canalside setting.

The towpath and banks support grassland, woodland and scrub, together forming an important wildlife corridor.

A recent study by Islington Council found Canadian Pondweed, Fennel-leaved Pondweed, Curled Pondweed and Spineless Hornwort, which are very rare in London.

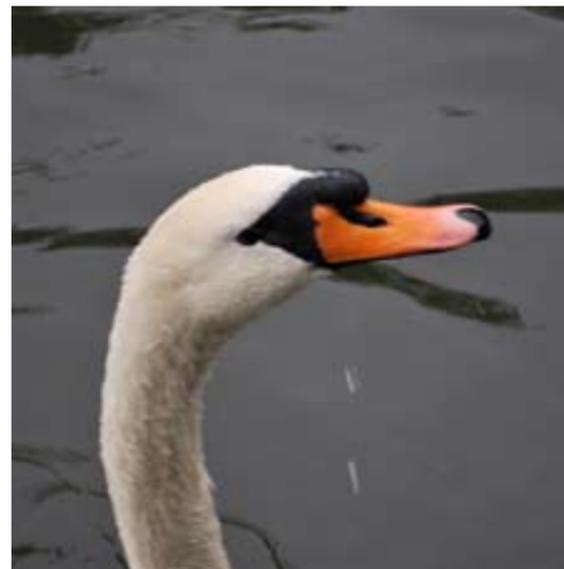
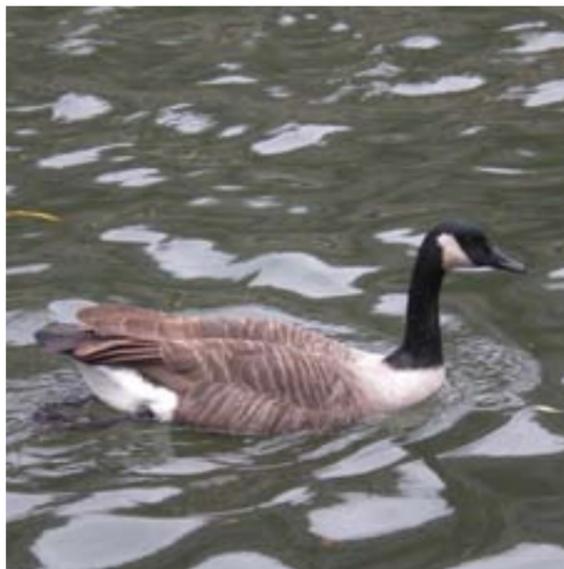
Plants found growing in mortar joints in brickwork include Gypsy-wort, Buddleia, Canadian Fleabane and several uncommon species, including Common Skullcap, Lesser Hairy Willowherb and Hemlock Water Dropwort.

Hart's-tongue, Male Ferns and Wall Rue are also found at tunnel entrances. Small areas of scrub/ woodland banks exist mainly towards the Islington Tunnel area and these banks provide a good habitat for nesting birds.

Local anglers claim that Eel, Pike, Roach, Perch and Dace have all been caught from the canal.

Species such as Coot, Moorhen, Mallard and Tufted Duck breed in the area and Mute Swans, Herons and sea birds are frequently seen.

**The canal corridor provides a unique and valuable habitat in what is otherwise a fairly harsh urban environment - a wide variety of flora and fauna can be found in the study area and more widely on the Regent's Canal**



The area known as Thornhill Bridge Community Gardens has recently been redesigned in consultation with the local community and now includes a toddlers' play area and community garden.

Trees have been thinned to increase light levels and re-planted with native ground cover plants and low growing shrubs to create a woodland garden.



## Listed Buildings

Located along the Regent's Canal are a number of buildings identified as having special architectural or historic interest.

The Islington Tunnel West Portal is a grade II listed structure. The Tunnel uses a red facing brick set in English bond with yellow stock brick and stone dressings laid to form an elliptical opening with a key stone. Within the tunnel itself, the brick barrel vaulted structure has subsequently been lined with render.

There are a number of listed properties along Caledonian Road, although none of these back onto the canal.

Further west along the canal, the Granary building off York Way is identified as a grade II listed building. The warehouse was an important feature of the goods interchange at King's Cross, designed to store 60,000 sacks of grain. It will be retained and re-used as part of the King's Cross Central redevelopment project.

Built by Lewis Cubitt in 1851-52, the Granary building uses a multi coloured stock brick with a double hipped welsh slate roof covered in bitumen. The building spans over 6 storeys with a south facing front which uses a symmetrical facade of 9 bays with projecting hoist bays. Inside the Granary, of interest are the wooden floors carried on cast iron columns and T beams. Every floor has 46 columns arranged in 6 colonnades, each supporting a line of paired cast iron beams running east to west. The roof structure is a wooden design with queen post trusses and a single wrought-iron suspension rod running from the apex to the collar in each truss.

Next to the Granary is the King's Cross eastern coal drop which is also listed grade II. The coal drop was built as a way of distributing coal from the North East and Yorkshire to the London Market. Originally, 4 high level railway tracks discharged coal into storage bins on the mezzanine floor above cart-loading bays. A waggon traverser was incorporated so that empty wagons could be transferred to a wooden viaduct west of the coal drops.

Thought to have been built at the same time and by the same architect as the Granary, the building uses a framework of cast-iron columns and beams. Oblong in shape, it spans over two floors with a mezzanine. Inside, a massive timber frame supports a railway at the upper level and storage hoppers on the mezzanine. The roof is an open composite structure with timber tie-beams, rafters, columns and struts, with a single iron rod from the apex.

Three linked Gas Holders, erected between 1864 and 1867 are to be re-erected next to the coal drop. Cast iron and painted black and red, these gas holders were once used by the Imperial Gas Light and Coke Company.

Next to the three gas holders will be an individual gas holder listed grade II. Built in 1883, it was designed by Engineer, Mr Kirkham and built by CF Clegg. It uses a framework comprising 2 superimposed orders of columns linked by horizontal lattice trusses.

On the south side of the Regent's Canal is the grade II listed St Pancras lock keepers cottage. Originally designed in 1898 as a pumping house by Sir John Wolfe Barry, it was converted into a dwelling in 1926. It is constructed of a yellow stock brick with a slated gable roof and consists of a single storey.

The Steam Locomotive Water Point was designed by the office of Sir George Gilbert Scott. The grade II listed building formerly served Midland Railway steam locomotives departing from St Pancras Station. Originally in place by 1872, it was criticised in the 'Quarterly Review' for the inappropriate use of Gothic architecture for a functional structure.

It was once one of a pair of structures, with the other housing hydraulic lifting gear used to raise beer barrels from the station undercroft. The other has since been demolished.

With the disappearance of steam powered trains in the early 1960s, the Water Point was listed in 1974. The construction of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link required the building to be moved to its current location in November 2001. Partial funding was gained from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the move 700 metres north from its previous location. An ingenious method of moving the building was devised, involving 'slicing' it into three parts, before lifting and moving it by road on a low loader to its final destination, between the canal basin and the railway, at St Pancras Cruising Club.

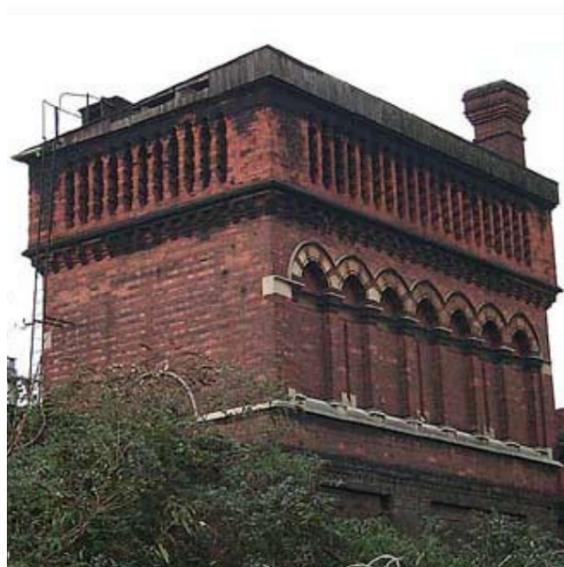
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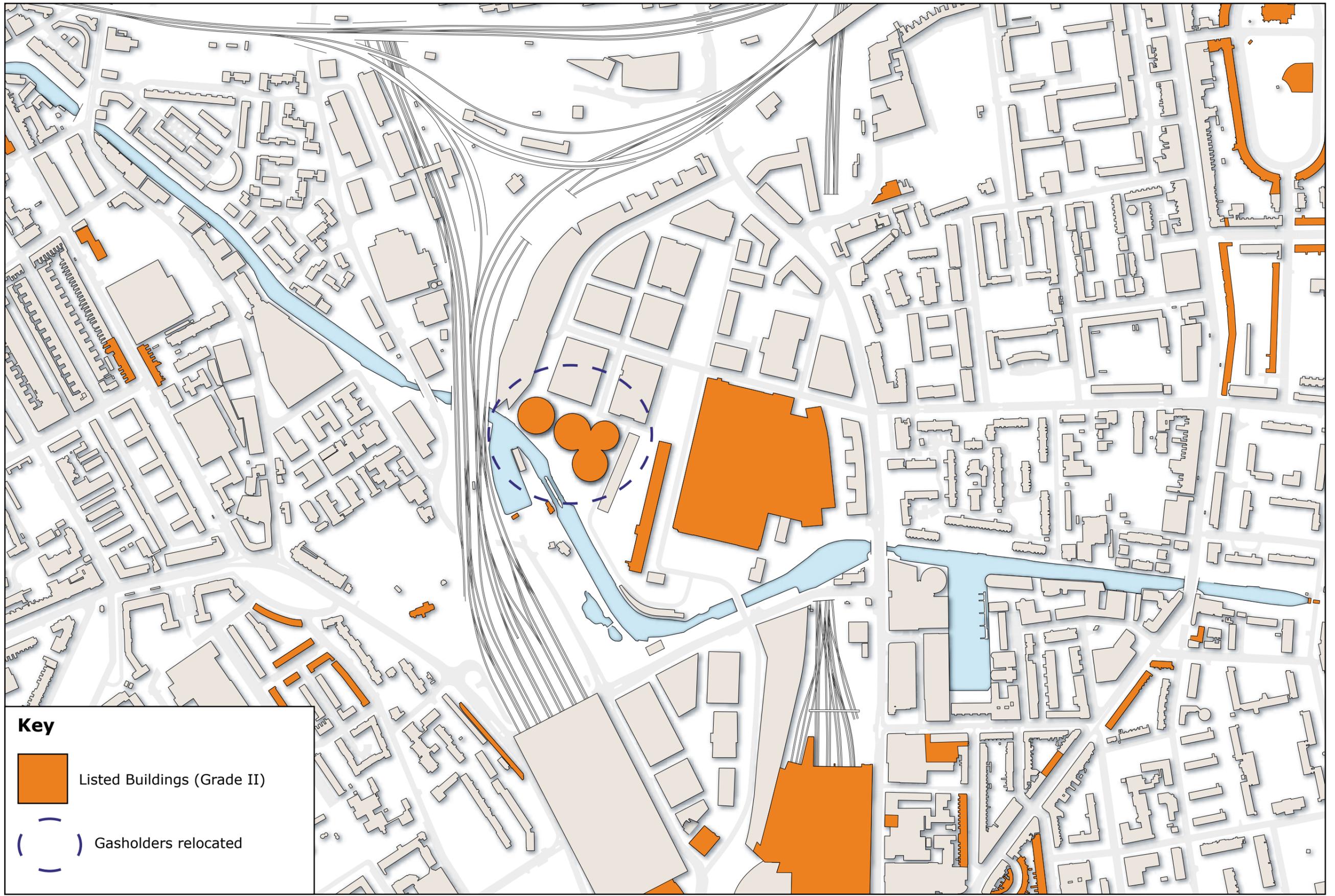
**The steam locomotive water point designed by the offices of George Gilbert Scott. The building was relocated to its current location at St Pancras Basin in 2001.**

**The coal drop building next to the Granary.**

**St Pancras Lock House (former pump house)**

**Gas Holder No 8 within close proximity of the Regent's Canal**





Listed buildings plan

## Conservation Areas

The stretch of the Regent's Canal forming the study area is located mainly within two Conservation Areas covered by the two councils. Four further Conservation Areas exist around the Regent's Canal providing protection for buildings and the surrounding landscape.

The concentration of industrial archaeology along the Camden section of the canal, with its associated railway features is of considerable interest and quality.

It has been identified that the canal plays an important role in the wider townscape of Camden offering tranquil seclusion, the potential for transportation and recreation and for its valuable ecological resources. Therefore the council has intervened with the intention of conserving and enhancing the existing character of the canal with the added aim of boosting its potential for recreation, transportation and wildlife.

The Regent's Canal Conservation Area Appraisal carried out by Camden Council, identifies that the informal relationship between buildings and the canal make a significant contribution to the character of the townscape. Sections within the canal differ drastically in terms of aspect, width, level and orientation and how buildings interact with the landscape.

The stretch spanning between Gray's Inn Bridge and the Oblique Bridge is identified as being the longest towpath without an access point and being fairly isolated. This is accentuated by the continuous run of brick boundary/retaining wall.

Buildings which flank the canal are generally not visible beyond the parapet of the wall with buildings opposite being largely undistinguished and having poor relationships with the canal. However, further east, between Oblique Bridge (Camley Street) and Maiden Lane Bridge, the character is distinctly different.

To the south side of the canal is Camely Street Natural Park, a managed wetland nature reserve, with small lodge buildings. It is heavily vegetated with controlled access providing a haven of peace and tranquility in the city centre. Opposite and to the east of the park, the northern banks house the former Coal and Fish offices which define a sharp bend on the canal.

The Management Strategy for the Regent's Canal Conservation Area identifies guidelines to follow within the area. Original architectural features and detailing which contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area should be retained and kept in good repair, and only be replaced as a last resort.

Retaining walls and bridge parapets to the canal form an important part of the area's character. Bonding patterns, pointing and mortar types should be either retained or repaired so as to match the existing walls.

All trees within the Canal Conservation Area are automatically protected - where present, these enhance the character and appearance of the canal corridor.

The retaining walls to the towpath and plinths to the canal side buildings form part of the essential character of the Conservation Area. The presumption is made that these walls be retained.

Wholly or part filled access routes are identified as having the potential to provide access points again. Openings should however align with openings found at higher level within buildings/walls. The detailing and materials of these openings should show due regard for existing materials and detailing found on the historic canal.

The use of unnecessary street clutter should be avoided whilst seeking to retain and re-use historic paving surfaces. This includes original stone copings to the canal edge and granite paving finishes, where they make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The Regent's Canal West Conservation Area is governed by Islington Council and was set up in 1981. It extends from Maiden Lane Bridge up to the Islington Tunnel, including Battlebridge Basin.

This Conservation Area guidance states that granite setts, kerbs and engineering brick edges to the canal should be retained, together with the northern towpath boundary wall.

Fencing or barriers should be avoided along the canal edge with the densely planted banks east of Caledonian Road left as a visual and ecological amenity. Islington Council state that modern colours which appear brash should be avoided with previously unpainted walls remaining unpainted.

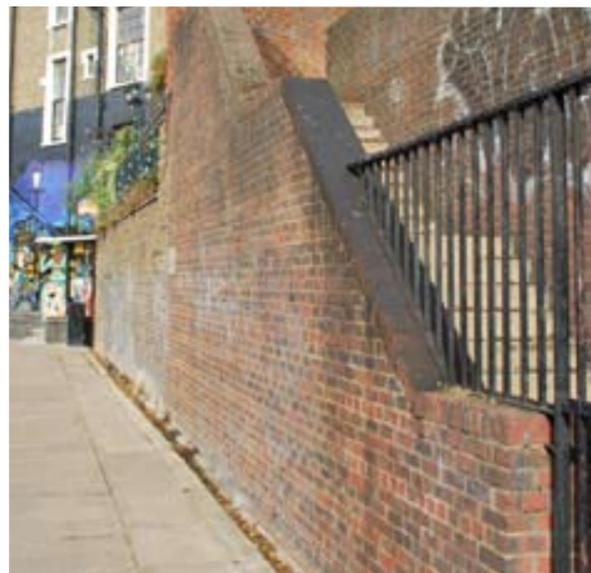
**From left to right:**

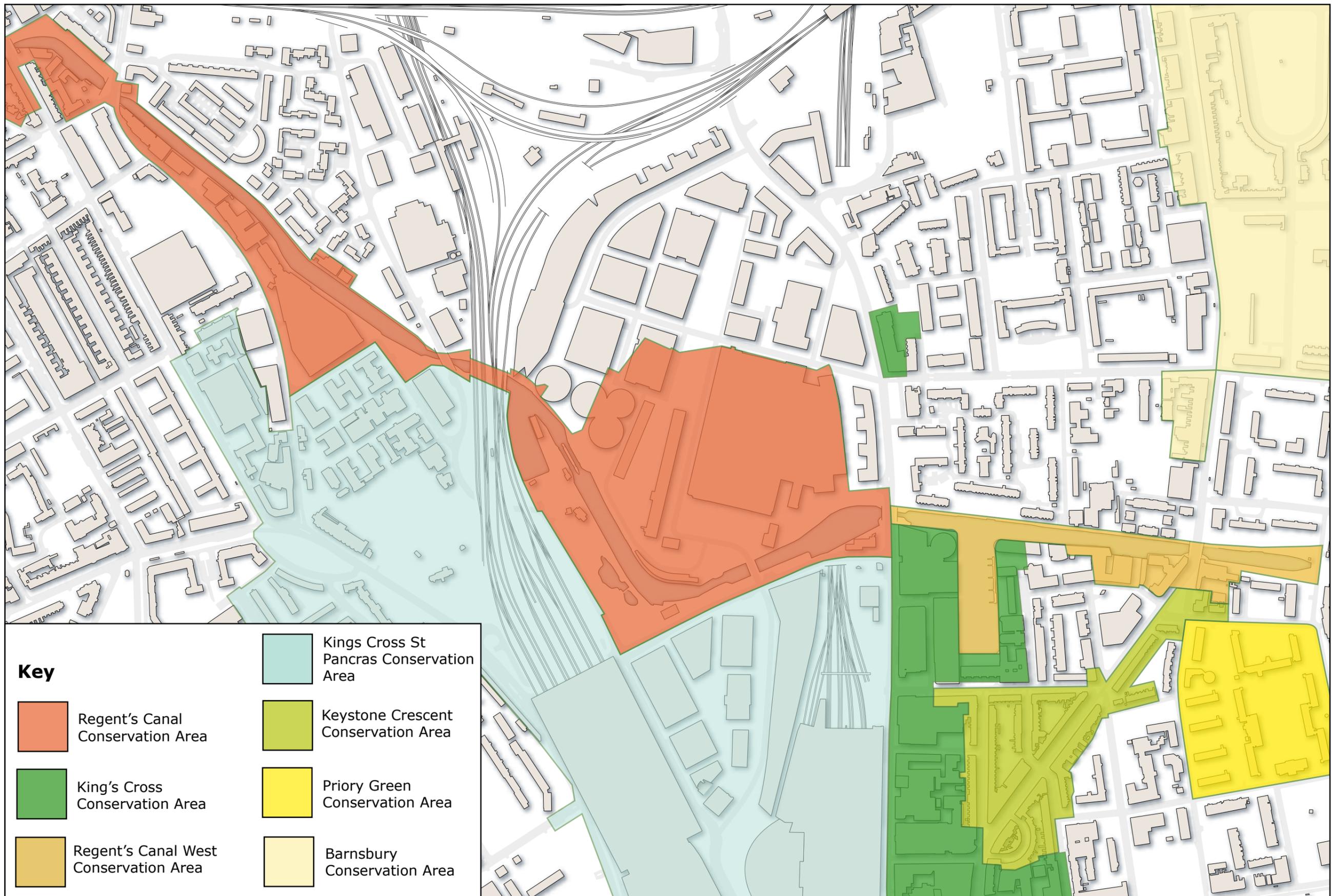
**Extensive towpath walls in local brick**

**Lawfords Wharf is within the Regent's Canal Conservation Area covered by Camden Council**

**Islington Tunnel falls within the Regent's Canal West Conservation Area covered by Islington Council**

**Gray's Inn Bridge is within the Regent's Canal Conservation Area**





Conservation Area Plan



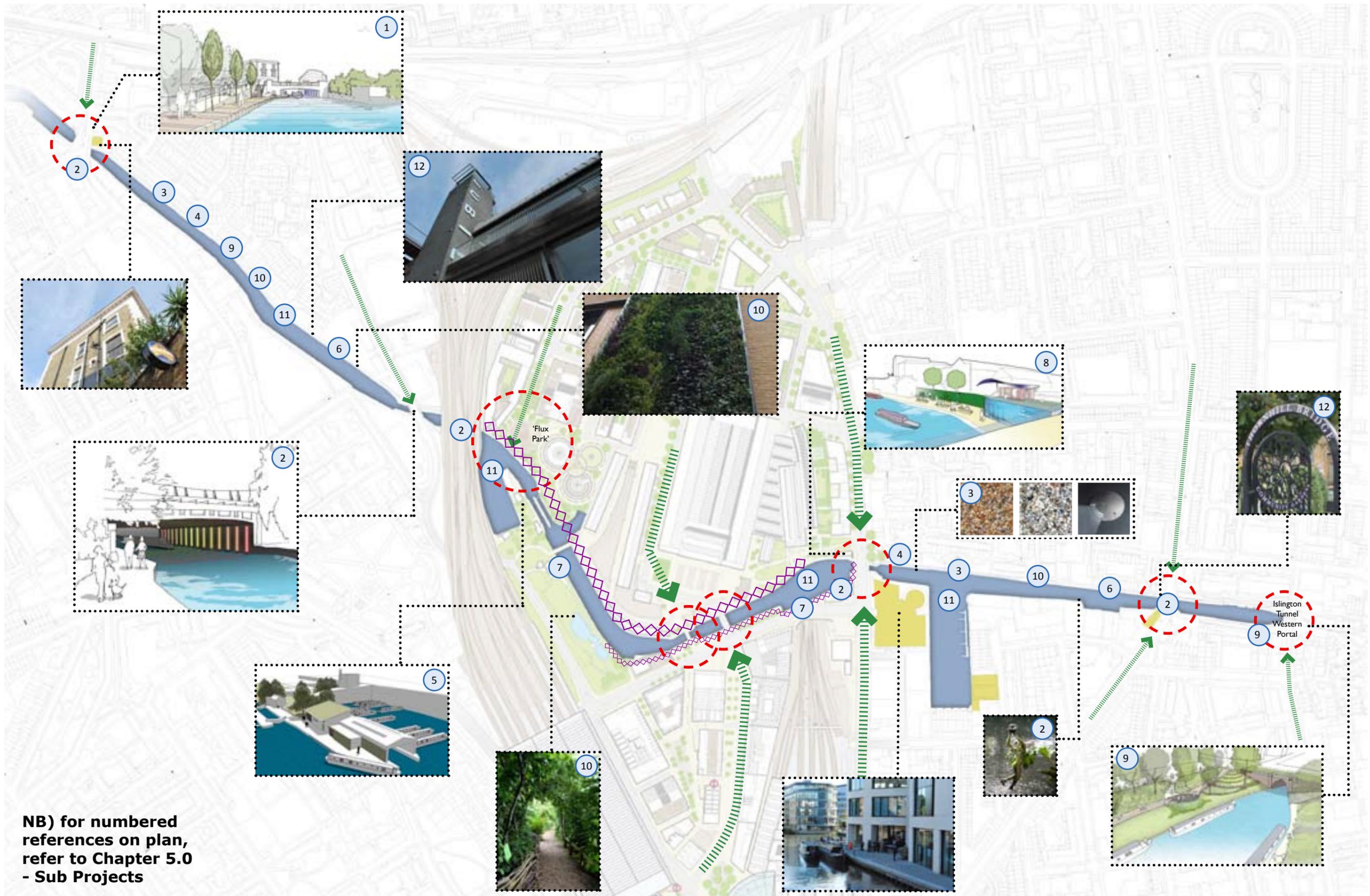
# Vision & Design Principles

4.0

Locations of improved 'Gateways' to the Canal

Merging Waterscape with King's Cross Development

Important Access Routes to Canal



**NB) for numbered references on plan, refer to Chapter 5.0 - Sub Projects**

## Vision

The vision is based upon creating destinations, and celebrating gateways to the water. Central to the success of the project will be an animated waterspace - a place where activities and events can take place year round and throughout the day and evening.

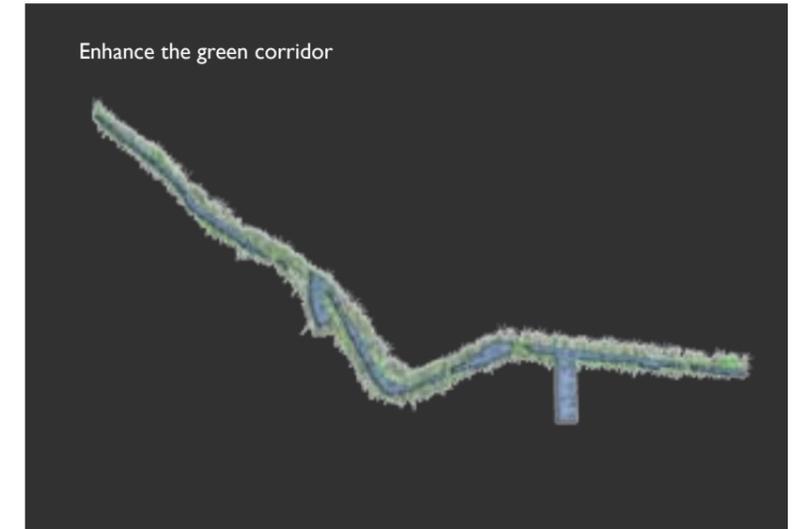
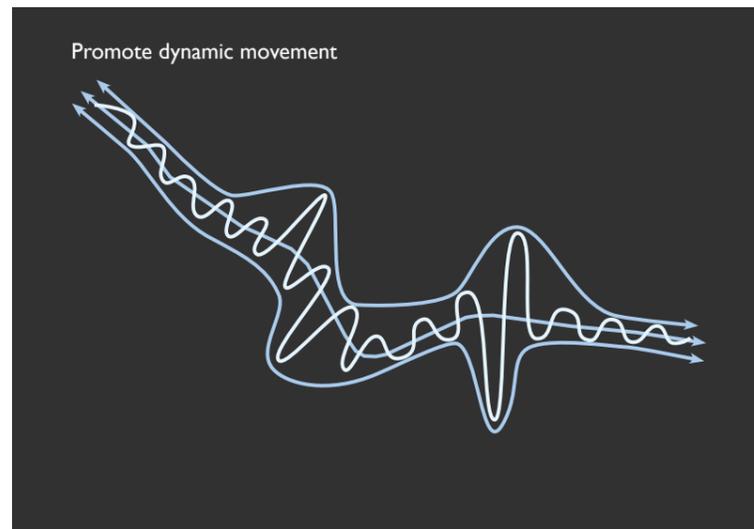
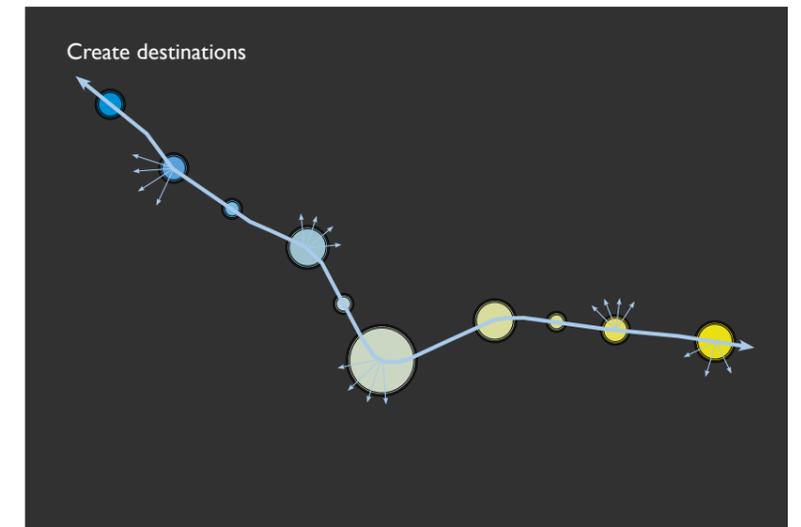
There is scope to consider a wide range of water-based uses and activities including floating cafe/bar restaurants, classrooms/community boats, floating markets, performance space, historic craft, water taxis and trip boats (electric launches), etc.

Whilst the ideas contained within this document include some ambitious concepts, the intention is to provide a mix of practical, robust solutions, such as improved towpath surfacing and widening where appropriate/ desirable, as well as more visionary suggestions which may be introduced over time.

There is considerable potential for arts based installations, using light and colour which, provided they are handled carefully, could enhance the historic significance of the Regent's Canal and the wider Conservation Area.

NB) Three early concept ideas for reinvigorating the canal are illustrated below.

## Objectives:



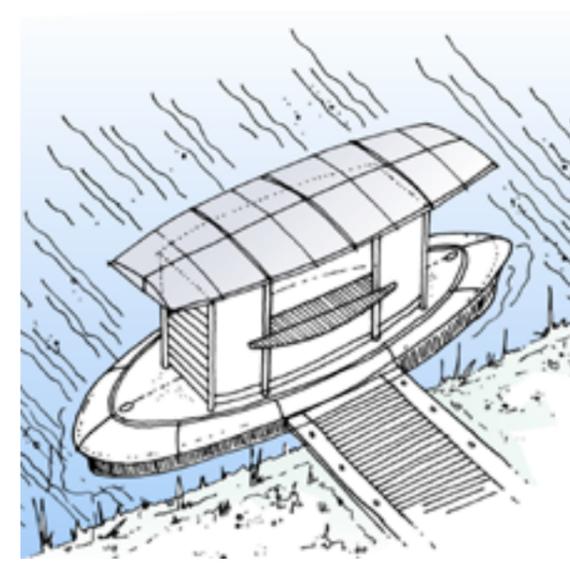
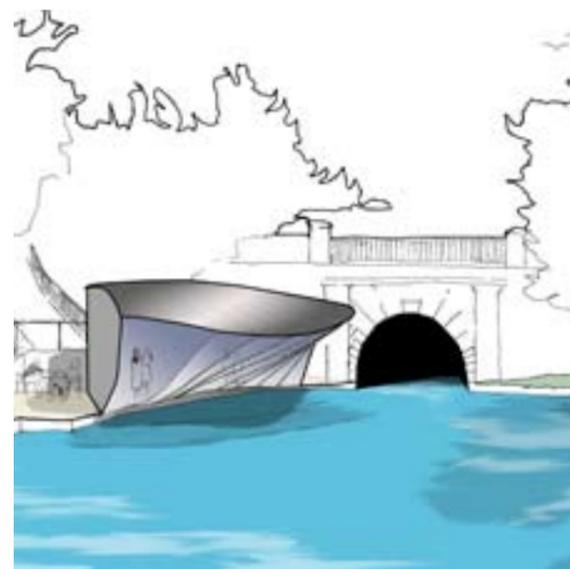
From left to right:

**Potential for temporary floating exhibition pavilion (scope to be towed around)**

**Opportunity for visitor attraction/interpretation facility at western portal Islington Tunnel**

**Floating kiosk - eg. ticketing for Canal Museum**

**Brightly painted narrowboats**



## Design Principles

The draft masterplan seeks to promote 4 key themes in enhancing the canal corridor in terms of Access, Identity, Ecology and Waterspace:

### Access

Balancing the competing needs of all towpath users is imperative to the success and continual use of the canal. Widening where possible and defining spaces along the towpath will dramatically improve the environment which everyone can enjoy.

The towpath is very narrow in places with few opportunities for sitting and enjoying the canalside. There is scope to create better links to existing green spaces, immediately next to the towpath, eg. Thornhill Community Gardens.

Key initiatives include:

- Widening towpaths where possible
- Defining seating areas/meeting places
- Making places with high quality materials
- Improved lighting - enhancing safety and security

Indicative proposals follow to show how the towpath may be resurfaced, dealing with the problematic service duct covers and local constraints.

The key access points have been identified and each of these would benefit from further consideration and development of detailed design proposals, ensuring compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA 2005).

## Identity

Opportunities exist to enhance the identity of the canal at King's Cross, through improved signage, consistent use of materials, furniture and detailing. The proposed materials used to transform the towpaths and adjacent areas of the canal are all to be sustainably sourced. Local stone and resin-bonded crushed glass, in a variety of colours, is proposed to provide a robust but colourful surface to the towpath.

The proposed resurfacing and lighting concepts mentioned will be combined with, where possible, the conservation/restoration of original materials. Stone copings are to be retained, enhancing the character and appearance of the local area.

High quality, robust furniture is envisaged, to provide sculptural accents along the towpath. There is also scope to introduce reclaimed materials from the King's Cross Central development site, including historic cast iron columns, timber and stonework.

Encouraging community involvement with the canal and canal based projects is seen as an opportunity not to be missed. Involving local schools and community groups in activities in, around and on the canal will not only increase canal usage but also provide a long lasting, sustainable link between users and the waterscape.

Educational/Leisure Initiatives could include:

- Watersports
- Exhibitions (Art / Culture)
- Ecology & Sciences

NB) Initiatives like these will help instil a sense of pride in the canal and help maintain and enhance its uses.

## Ecology

Additional trees and shrubs will help to enliven the waterfront and sustain the canal's ecology.

Unique seating and planting designs will help define spaces and provide appropriate refuges along the canal.

The concept of 'greening' the canal corridor includes the potential for vertical planting to create green walls. This will soften the hard urban environment and introduce 'urban cooling' as well as opportunities for enhanced habitat creation.

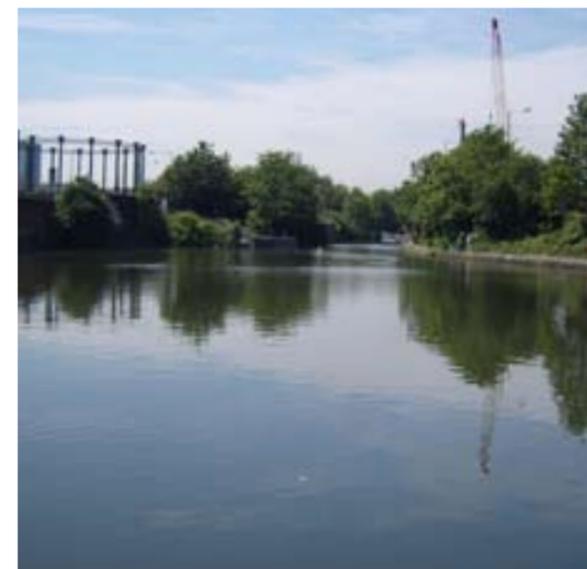
## Waterspace

There is scope to increase moorings provision for visitors to the area, as well as providing permanent moorings for business barges and residential boats. Sustainable forms of transport such as water taxis, electric launches/trip boats and cycling are also to be encouraged.

Where possible, opportunities for enhanced angling facilities, including purpose designed angling pegs, should also be explored.

Innovative lighting designs can help to accentuate the canal's presence and heighten the dynamism of water based activities.

These themes are explored further through the following sub-projects.



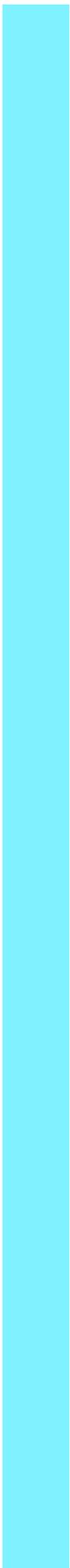
From left to right:

**Office workers eating lunch on the narrow grass margin next to the canal**

**Alfresco dining - waterside rotunda at King's Place**

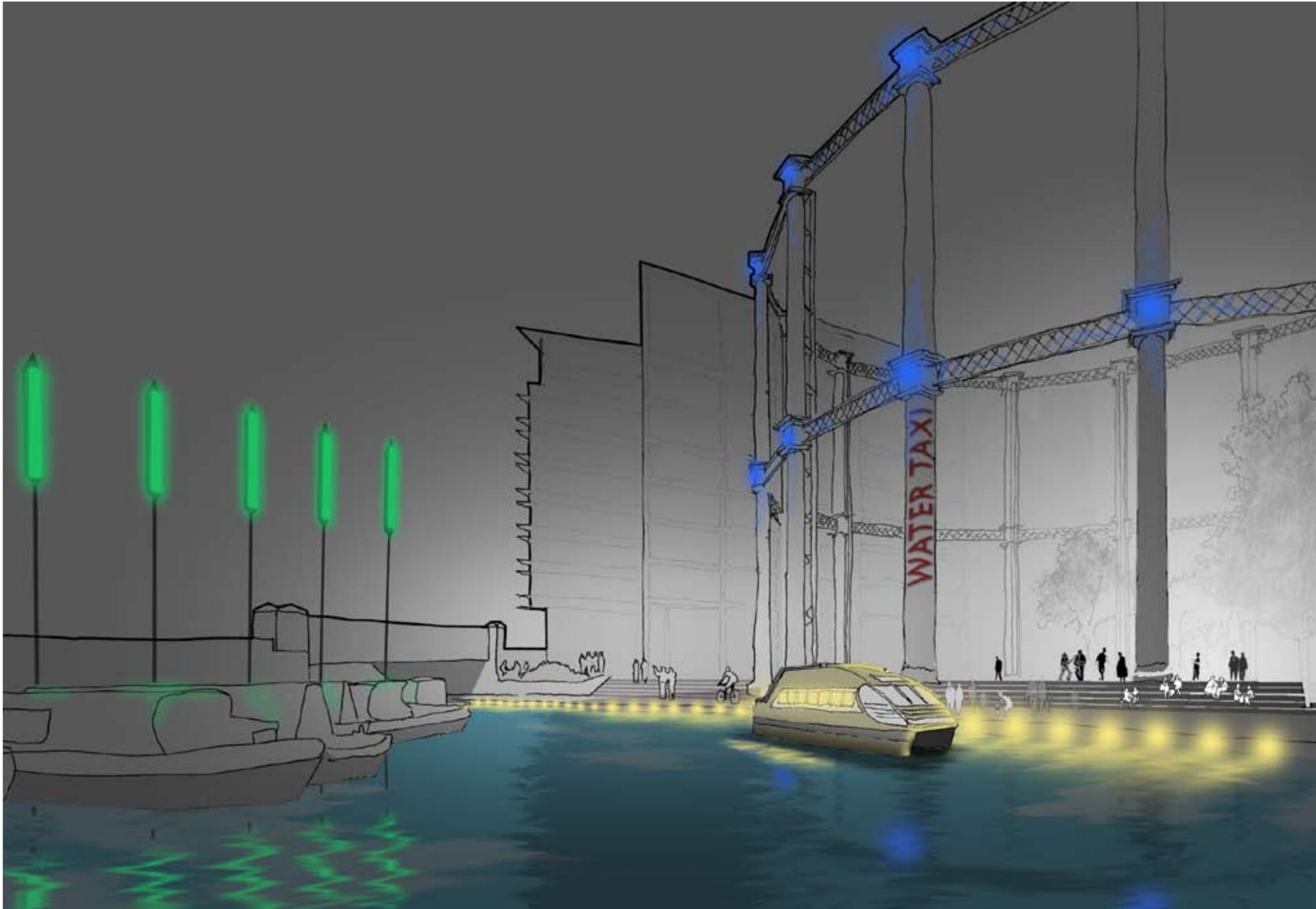
**Solitary Heron**

**Wide waterspace west of Maiden Lane Bridge**



# Sub Projects

5.0



# Consultation Boards - Masterplan & Sub Projects

A list of suggested projects follows. The projects and initiatives described are intended to address identified concerns, targeting crime and anti-social behaviour, as well as reinvigorating the stretch of canal through improved access, lighting, ecology and the arts:

## Design Principles

The emerging masterplan seeks to promote 4 key themes in enhancing the canal corridor:

**Access**

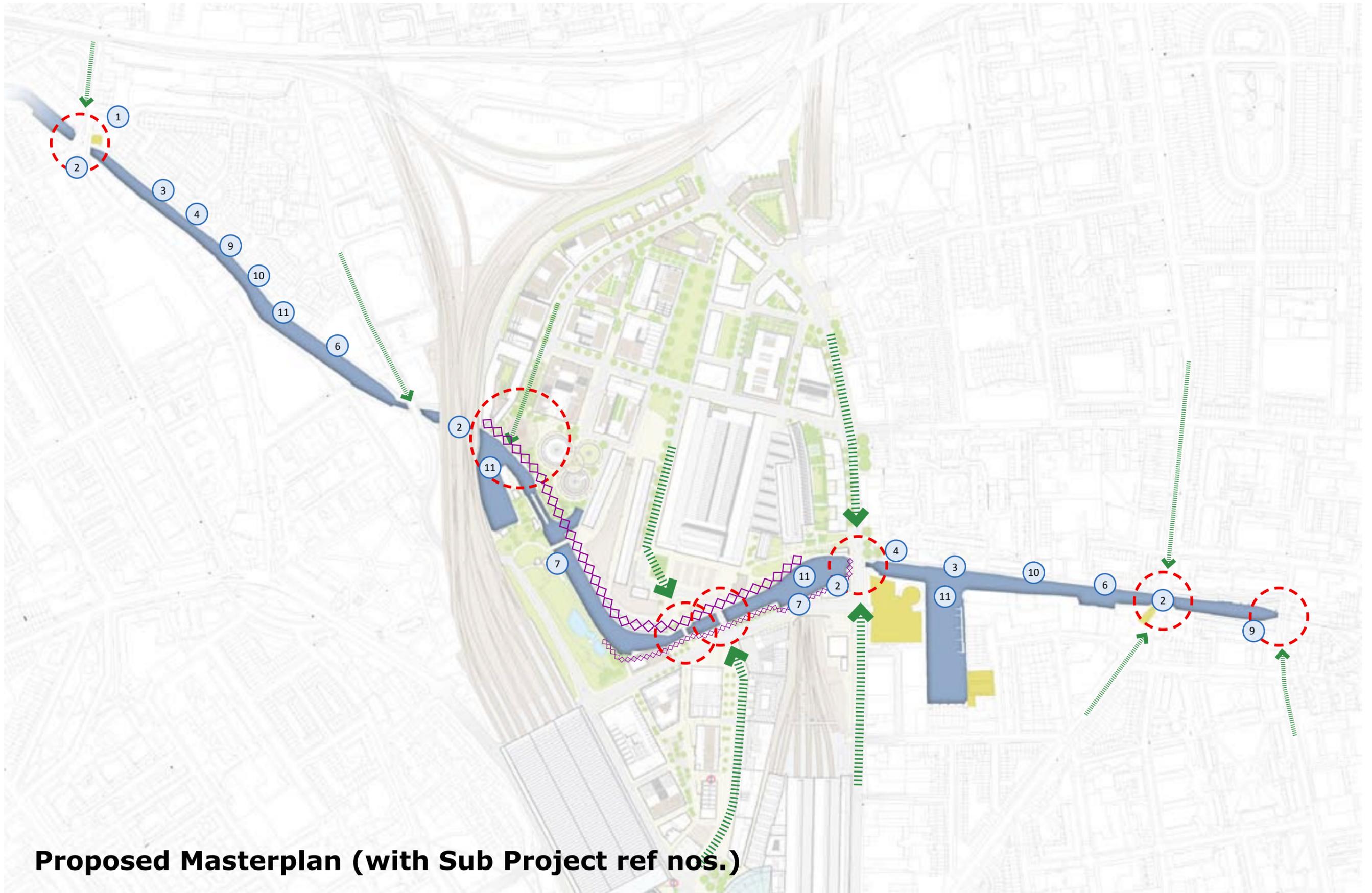
**Identity**

**Ecology**

**Waterspace**

## Sub Projects

- 1 St Pancras Way Access Point
- 2 Art Installations & Bridge Lighting
- 3 Towpath Improvements
- 4 Canal Furniture
- 5 Visiting Boaters' Facilities at St. Pancras Cruising Club and Associated Recycling Facility
- 6 Visitor Moorings (short stay)
- 7 Long Term Moorings
- 8 Maiden Lane Bridge and National Grid Sub Station
- 9 Islington Tunnel Pedestrian 'Gateway'
- 10 Planting & Ecology
- 11 Water Based Activity
- 12 Community Projects



**Proposed Masterplan (with Sub Project ref nos.)**

## Sub Project Information

### Location:

St. Pancras Way Access Point

### Description:

At present, access to the canal from St. Pancras Way is limited to an external stair. Providing a wide ramp and new steps in this location will allow access for all.

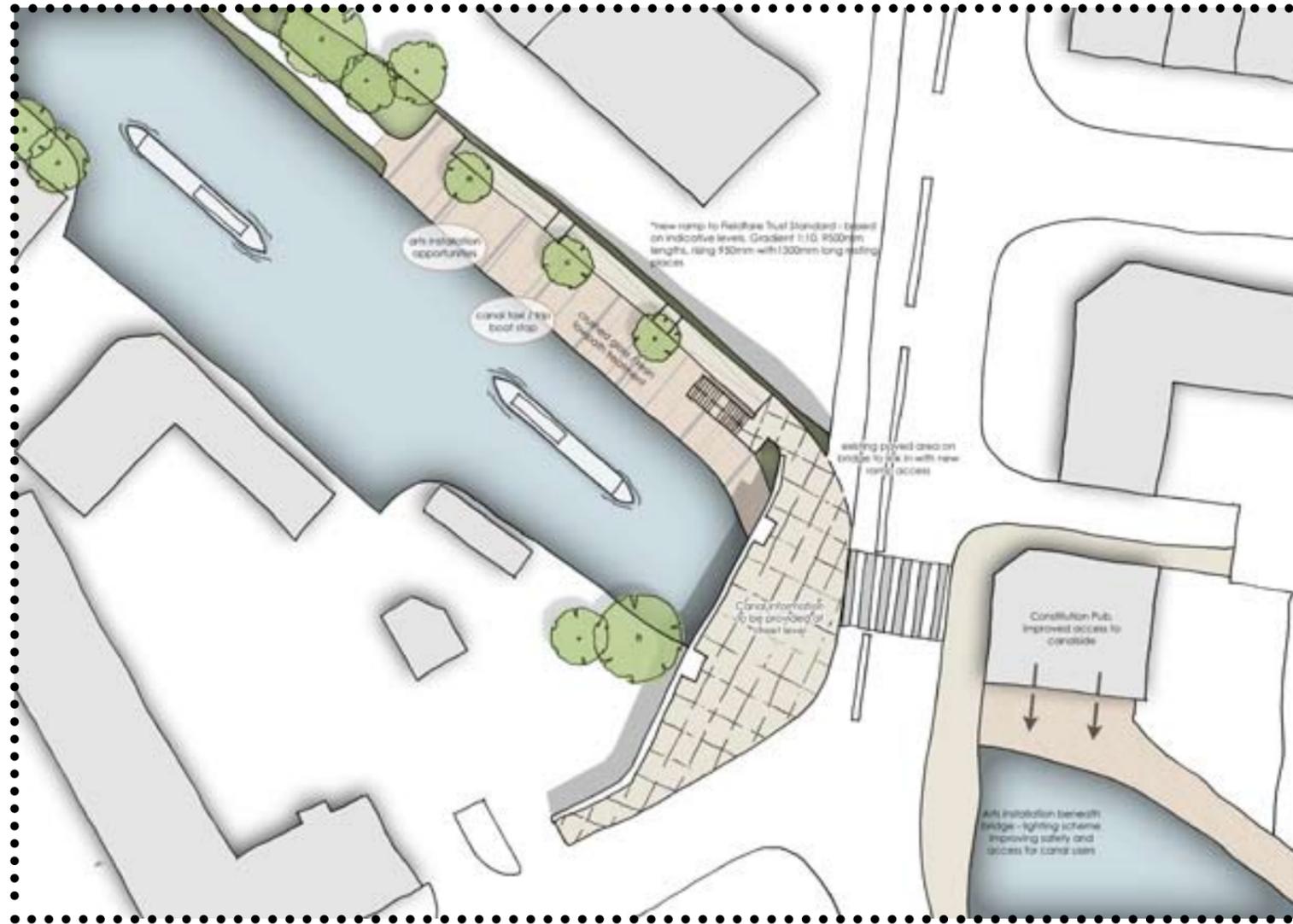
Opportunities exist to create a vantage point on the bridge, with information and potentially art installations.

New lighting is envisaged to improve amenity and enhance safety and security.

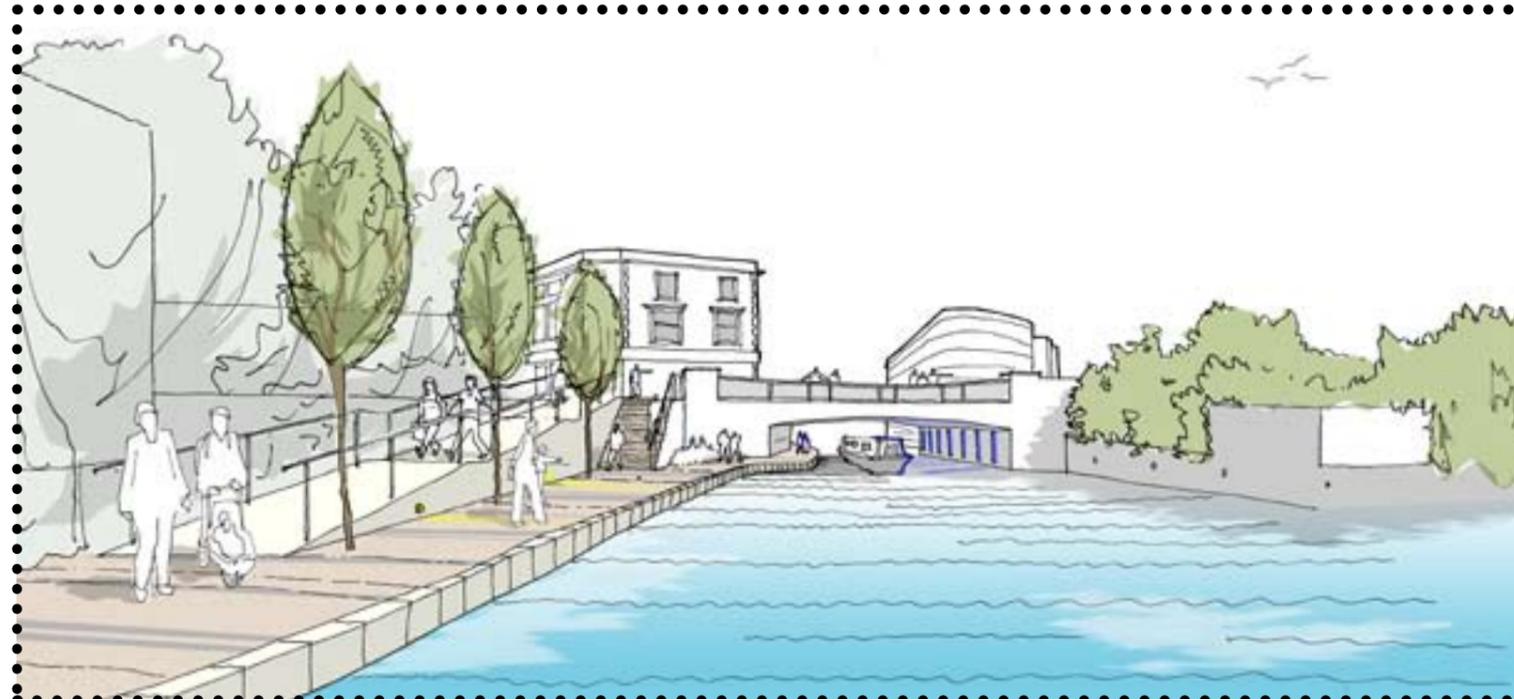
Improved access provision and the creation of a 'Canal Gateway' will heighten the sense of arrival and strengthen the link to the waterside.

Opportunities also exist to improve the frontage to the Constitution PH and its relationship to the canal.

Site Plan 1:250

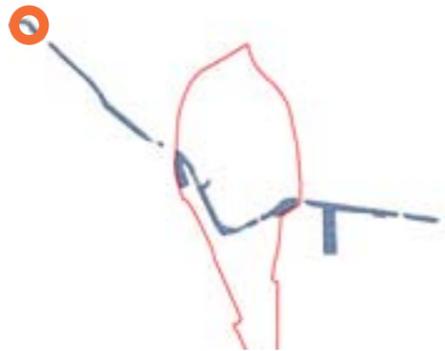


Sketch Illustration



Masterplan Ref

1



## Existing Conditions



## Sub Project Information

### Location:

Gray's Inn Bridge/St Pancras Way NB) Similar schemes to be adopted for underside of Camley Street, Maiden Lane and Thornhill bridges.

### Description:

There is potential to improve access and safety by introducing arts installations and imaginative lighting schemes underneath bridges in the local area. This will help to create a safe and vibrant environment for walkers, cyclists and boaters.

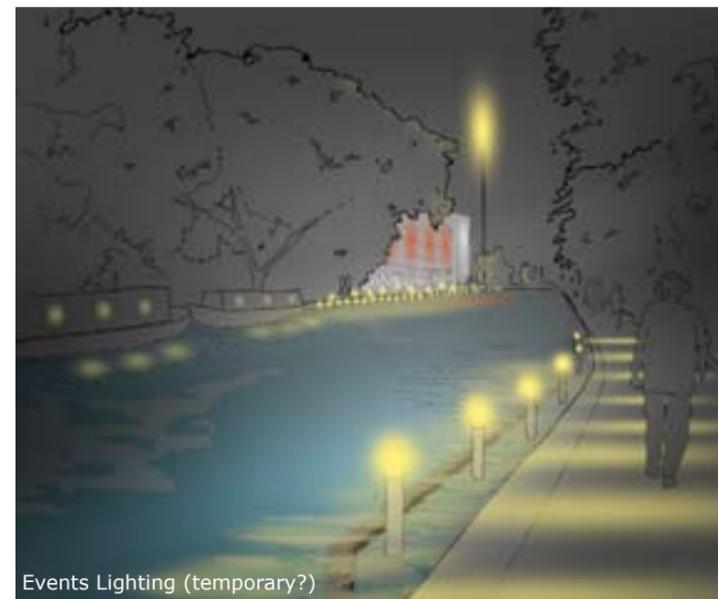
The illumination of the underside of the bridges will create points of interest and heighten the sense of local identity, with seating/information points adjacent providing opportunities for locals and visitors to appreciate and enjoy the unique canal environment.

Innovative lighting solutions will provide scope to create an imaginative interplay between the historic structures and the water, with reflections and movement, adding to the dynamism of the spectacle.

Proposals will be designed in detail so as not to have an adverse impact on historical structures.

It will be important to ensure that lighting installations do not compromise opportunities for local wildlife to flourish.

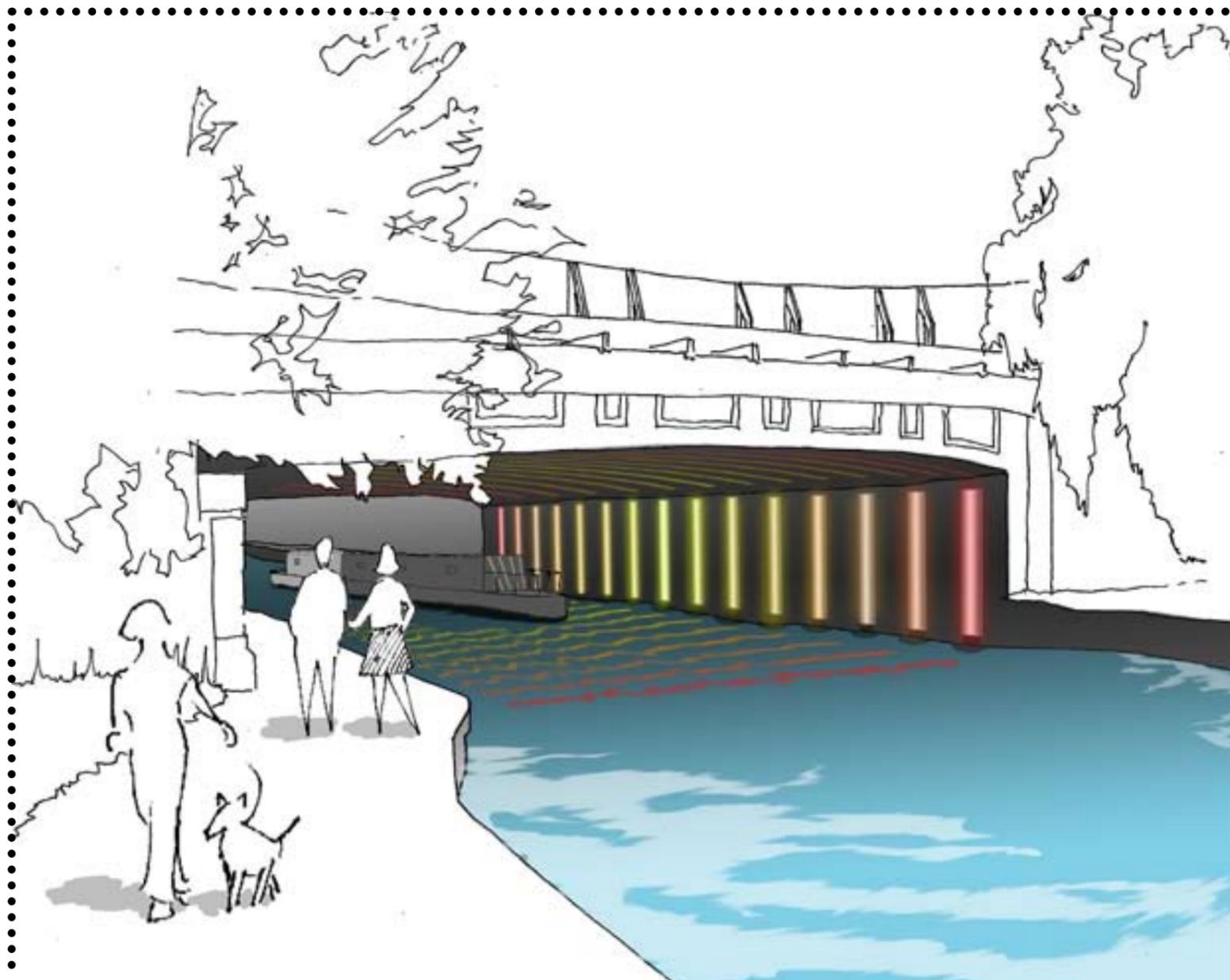
Not only limited to under bridge locations, arts based initiatives could be developed in conjunction with local community groups to promote the canal environment. These could include murals, community garden projects, canal sculptures, etc.



Events Lighting (temporary?)



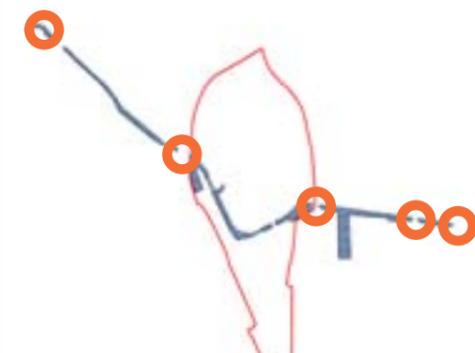
Temporary arts based tunnel lighting?



Masterplan Ref

2

Project Location Map



Existing Conditions



## Sub Project Information

### Location:

Entire study area

### Description:

The objective is to improve the existing towpath experience as much as possible, including increasing width where opportunities allow (whilst retaining green edges).

Stone copings are to be retained where possible, enhancing the character and appearance of the local area. Where these need to be replaced, opportunities exist to cast in recessed mooring rings and low level lighting.

A restrained palette of materials is envisaged, in keeping with the character of the canal environment. The use of reclaimed granite setts is proposed to create a visual and tactile barrier at the water's edge.

The proposals for resurfacing the towpath include local crushed stone/bound gravel, along with small areas of resin bonded crushed glass in key locations, producing a distinctive, durable and robust waterside surface.

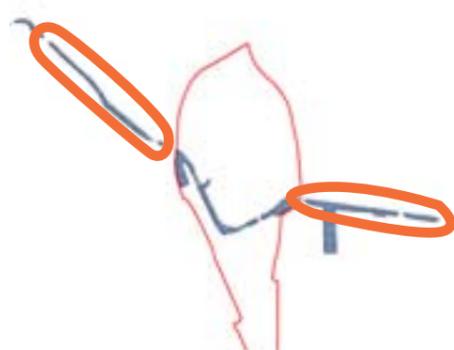
Because of the need for maintenance access to the high voltage electricity cables beneath the towpath, the proposal is to replace the existing covers with new pre-cast units, featuring a high quality resin bound gravel finish and cast-in lifting eyes.

NB) The towpath treatment will be compatible with the waterside treatment at King's Cross Central, ensuring a high quality, consistent surface throughout the local area.

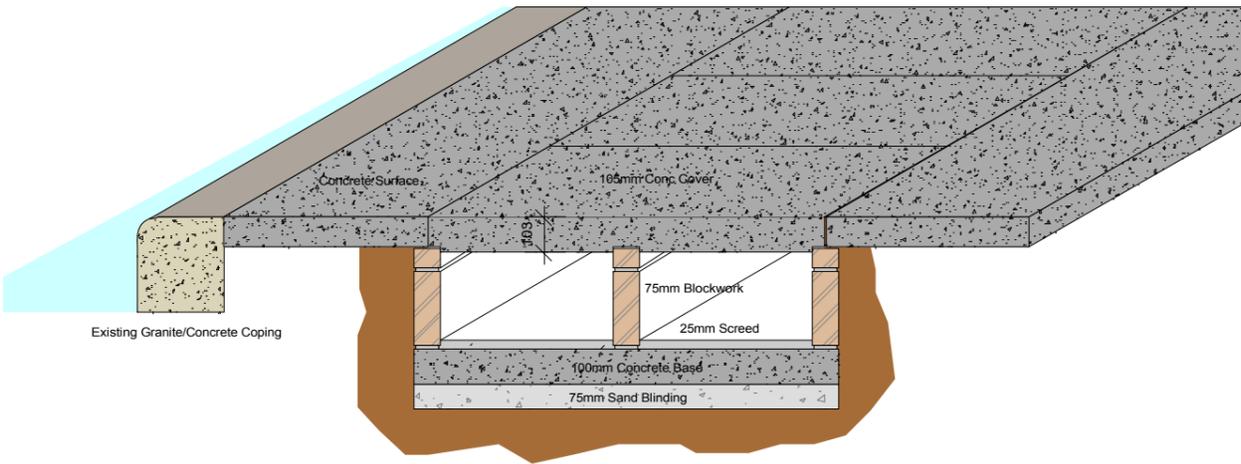
Masterplan Ref

3

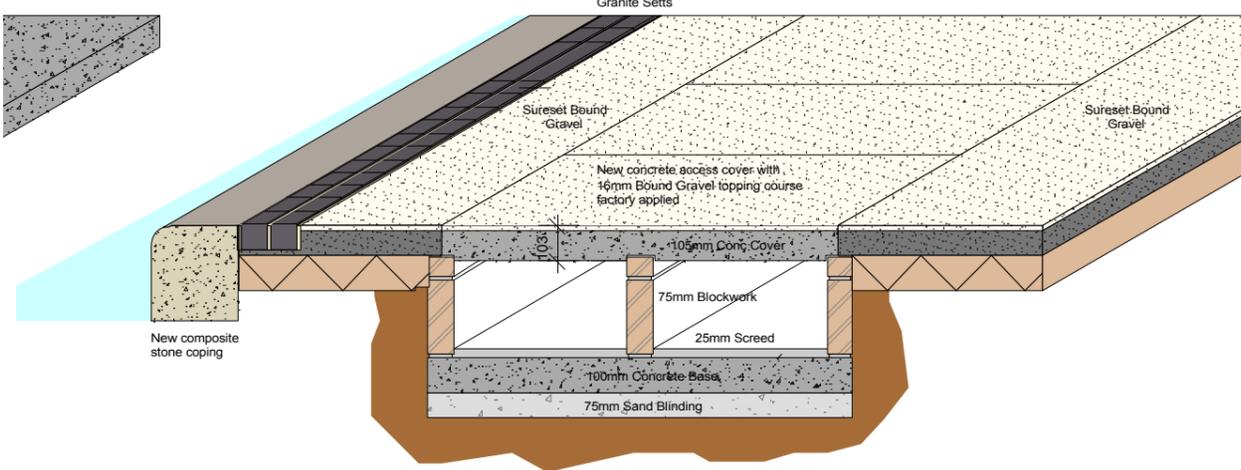
### Project Location Map (Entire study area)



Existing Access Cover Condition



Proposed Access Cover Condition



Bound Gravel



Granite Setts



Crushed Glass



Existing Conditions



## Existing Conditions

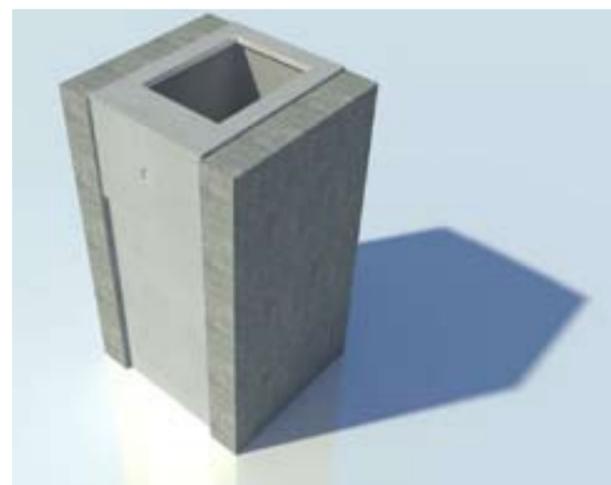
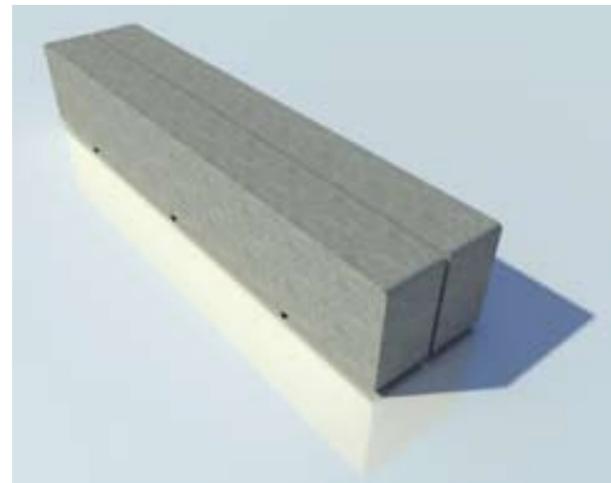


### Legible London

The pilot scheme 'Legible London' aims to provide clear and accessible information including street signs and printed maps to help improve wayfinding in the capital.

The clear and consistent style of the signage enables visitors and indeed residents to navigate their way around areas of London.

The Legible London scheme could provide an effective means of promoting the canal network, not just at King's Cross. A comprehensive signage strategy is envisaged for the Regent's Canal - one which has its own strong waterside identity, yet tying in with Legible London.



## Sub Project Information

### Location:

Selected locations site wide

### Description:

A consistent palette of materials is to be used for furniture along the canal. New seating is envisaged close to access points, where footfall will be greatest.

Simple, robust seating is proposed in composite stone, reflecting the character of the heavy stone canal copings and providing durable seating which will stand the test of time.

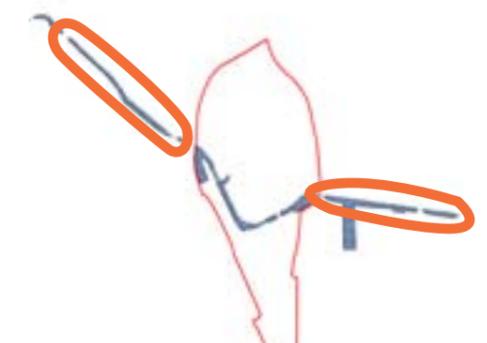
Opportunities also exist for the proposed canalside furniture to form part of a 'trim trail' where space permits, promoting health and fitness on the canal towpath.

General signage improvements are also envisaged along the towpath consistent with the wider wayfinding/branding strategy.

Signage and information boards should be consistent and imaginative. They should be highly graphic with text that is clear and easily legible for all age groups. Signs could be integrated with sculpture and should carry local directional and events information as well as historical information, telling the story of the canal's history and the people that brought it to life.

Strong links are envisaged between canalside interpretation and the London Canal Museum, with potential for towpath ticketing (floating kiosks?) and water taxi links, to create a more meaningful and enjoyable experience for visitors to the area.

Masterplan Ref



## Canalside Furniture

## Sub Project Information

### Location:

Due South-East of railway crossing

### Description:

St Pancras Cruising Club (SPCC) plan to replace their existing life expired building. Although not part of the overall masterplan, concept proposals were developed with SPCC for this important site to further enhance the canal environment. A new green roofed building is proposed with a meeting space, bar and support facilities at ground floor and a large function room, with south facing terrace at first floor level.

Boaters' toilet facilities are shown as an annexe to the existing dry dock, together with a purpose built workshop and stores. This extension is envisaged as a green wall of vertical planting with accommodation behind (naturally lit from above). The green wall will act as a device to conceal the diesel tank and pump out, whilst significantly improving the appearance of the canal frontage.

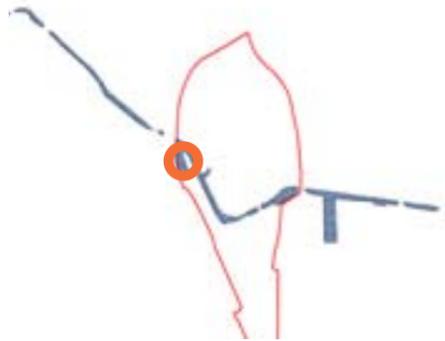
The proposals take into account the boat club's prominence along this stretch of canal, directly opposite the King's Cross Central Development.

Recycling and waste facilities will be subtly placed within the St. Pancras cruising club car park. Designs will also incorporate facilities for a future dedicated litter boat for the King's Cross Central area. In future, there may be scope to re-open the former basin on the eastern side of St Pancras Lock, providing opportunities for recycled waste collection by water, in association with King's Cross Central.

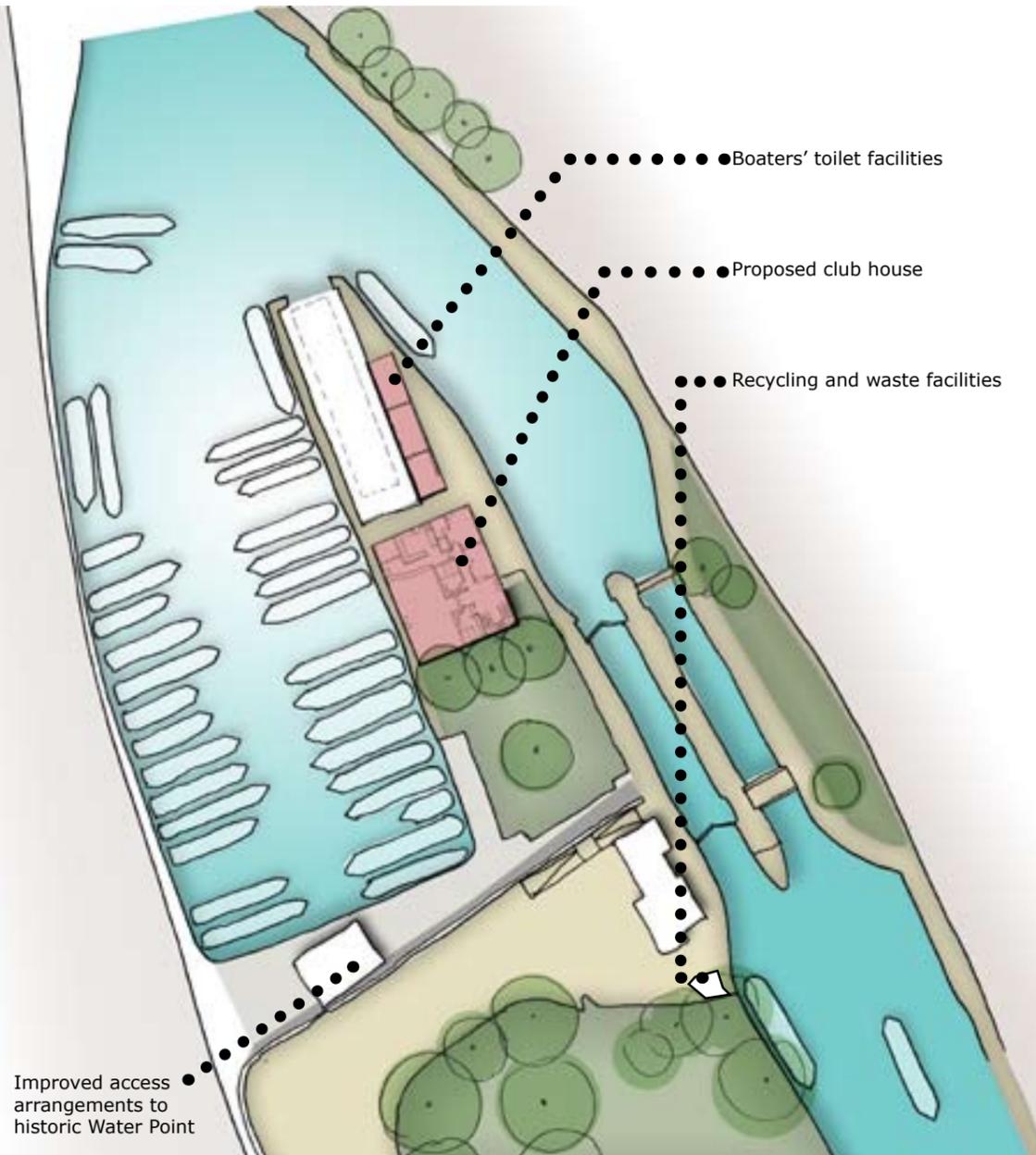
The former (east) lock at St Pancras could, subject to funding, be restored for navigable use. Alternatively, it could be used as an 'exhibition mooring' for an historic boat, linked to the former basin for special events, etc.?

Masterplan Ref

5



Site Plan 1:250



Visualisations



Existing Conditions



## Visitor Facilities at St. Pancras Cruising Club

## Sub Project Information

### Location:

York Way Road crossing

### Description:

Revitalising this important canal side access point and 'gateway' to the Regent's Canal is an important part of the regeneration of the waterway.

Maiden Lane Bridge offers an exciting opportunity to 'collect' and 'distribute' pedestrians along the canal.

Proposals include using the pumping station roof as a signature access point to the canal, offering an elevated garden area and information point.

This would provide interesting views towards the train stations and allow visitors to see what the Regent's Canal has to offer.

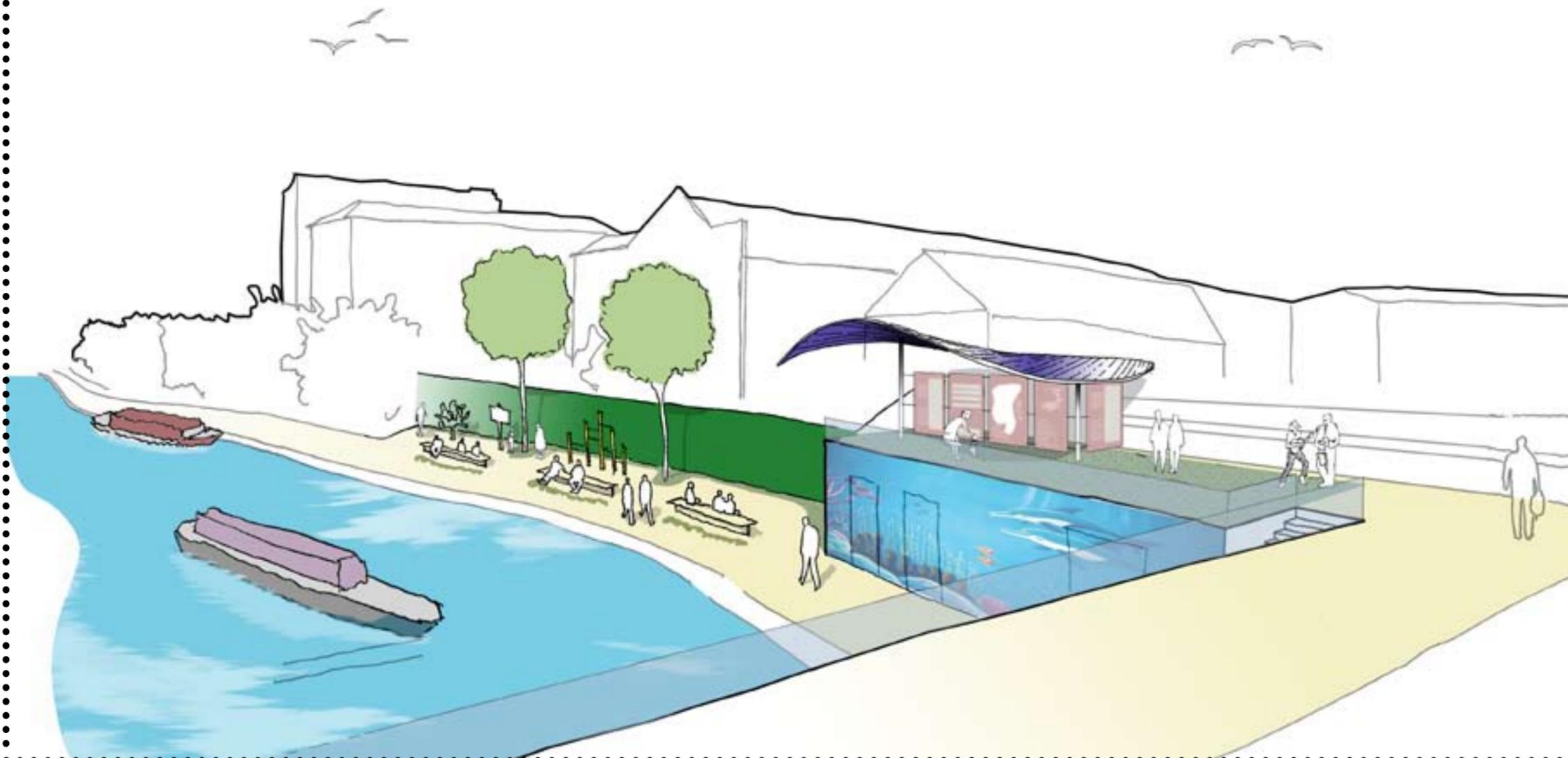
The pumping station roof is an ideal stopping place along the canal that is visible from the towpath as well as the higher level road (York Way).

This could be just one of a number of areas to incorporate art work, instilling a sense of local pride.

The removal of the bridge abutment parapet and replacement with a more permeable barrier, will provide greater inter-visibility between York Way and the Canal.

This scheme also provides opportunities to introduce ramped/level access to the towpath (via the King's Cross Central development) as the existing step/ramped access to the east of the bridge does not allow access for all.

Sketch Illustration of rooftop information point and revitalised towpath

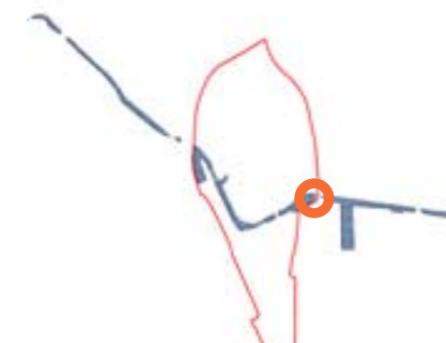


Existing Conditions



Masterplan Ref

8



## Maiden Lane Bridge & Sub Station

## Sub Project Information

### Location:

The West Portal of the Islington Tunnel marks a key 'gateway' from the east to King's Cross waterside.

### Description:

Currently, the area is under-used with steep ramps and stairs offering access to the towpath but nothing more. There is a viewing point next to the tunnel portal, set amongst the trees. However this is largely screened from view and as a result, it acts as a magnet for nuisance behaviour.

The suggestion is that the existing viewing point is removed and a proportion of the self set trees and vegetation are cleared to open up views.

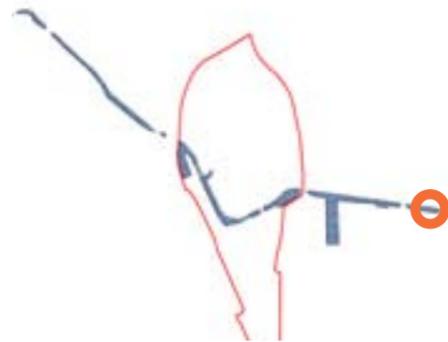
Subject to further consultation with National Grid concerning HV cables under the existing ramp, a new gentle ramp is proposed allowing access for all, with an elevated viewing, seating and information area set into the bank. Because this is planned to form part of the main walking route (with no opportunities for access to the tunnel portal), the hope is that this will remove an existing 'hotspot' for petty crime and anti-social behaviour.

Landscape improvements will enhance the setting and prominence of the tunnel portal.

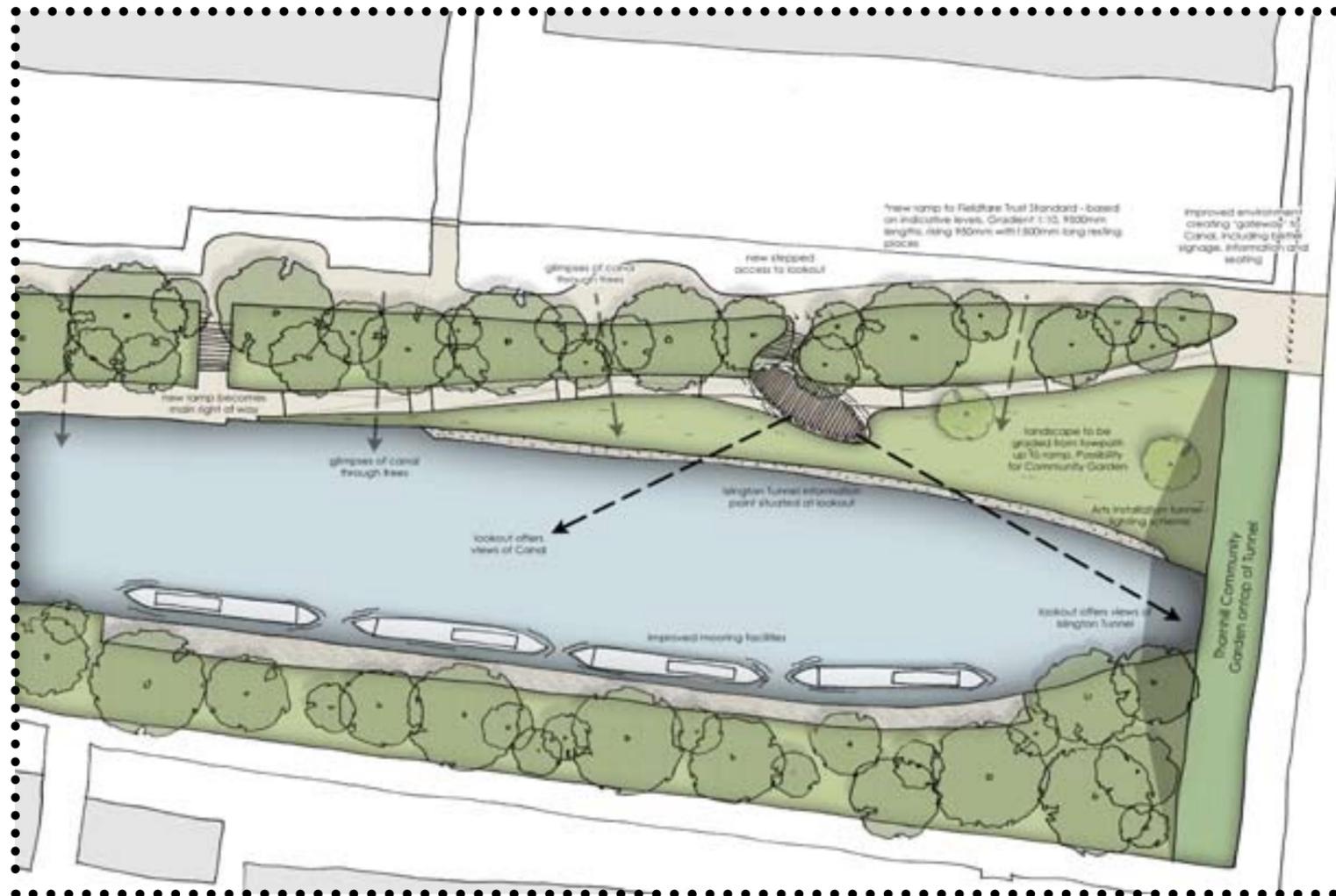
Integrated interpretation could provide valuable information on the chequered history of the tunnel and the surrounding area, with outdoor seating along the main walkway route provided for rest and relaxation.

Masterplan Ref

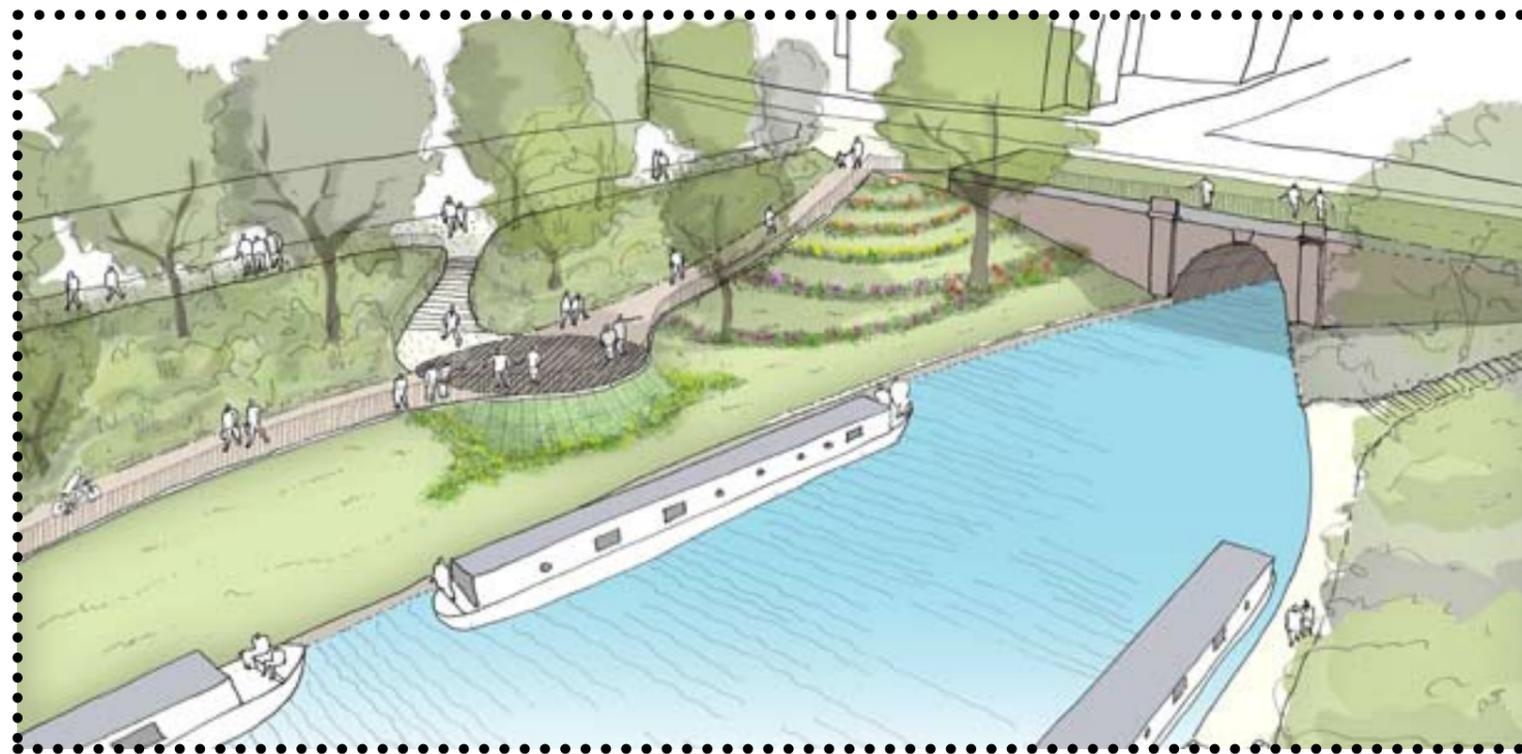
9



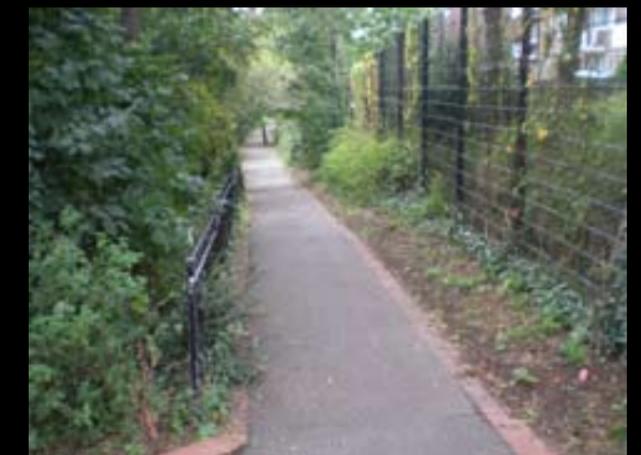
Site Plan 1:250



Sketch Illustration



## Existing Conditions



## Existing Conditions



**King's Cross Community Projects** is a charitable organisation who have already established a similar green wall strategy in the King's Cross area.

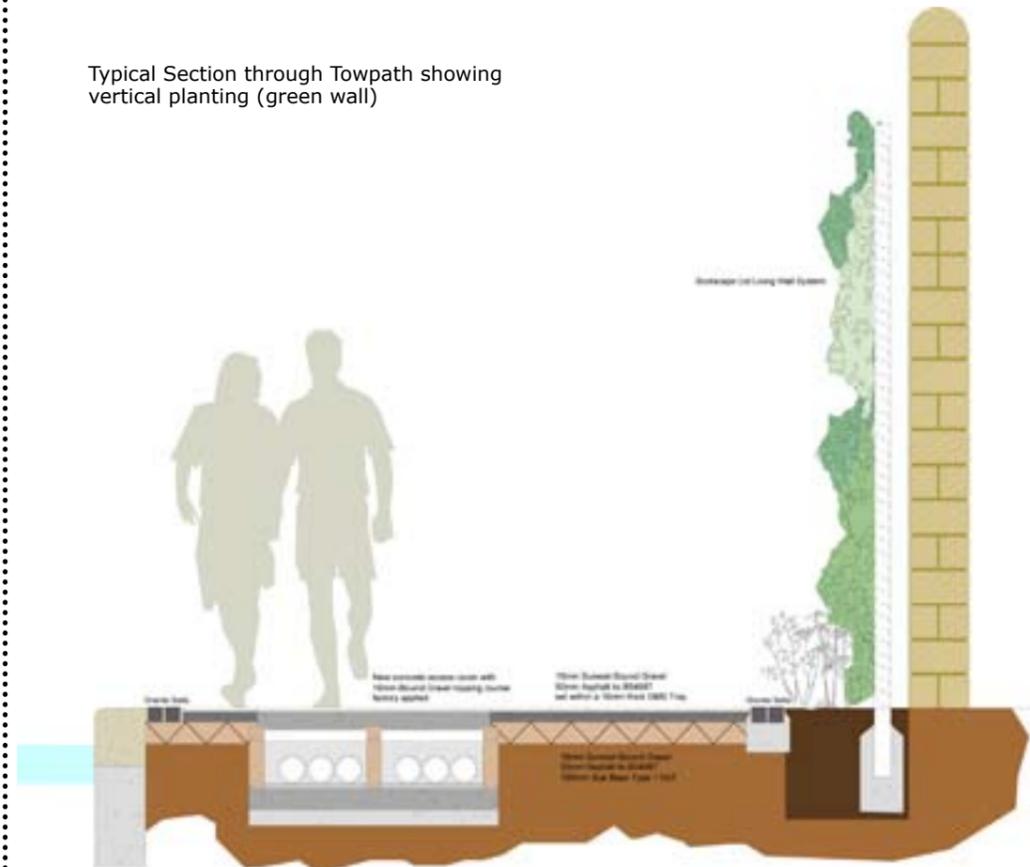
The Wharfdale Road Green Wall project is an excellent example of a community based initiative that will help rejuvenate the area. It is vital that the King's Cross Canal Masterplan taps into the enthusiasm of local community based projects such as these.

In addition, work has been carried out by the Thornhill Community Gardeners to 'clothe' some existing high brick retaining walls at the back of the canal towpath with vegetation.

The King's Cross Canal Masterplan promotes a continuation of this strategy (ensuring a selective approach to conserve and enhance historic walls and former openings). The green wall initiative will provide an effective and attractive means of linking areas of green space and enhancing the canalside as a wildlife corridor.



Typical Section through Towpath showing vertical planting (green wall)



## Sub Project Information

### Location:

Selected locations site wide

### Description:

The greening of existing retaining and boundary walls is proposed, using a variety of planting methods. These include integrated irrigation systems where necessary.

Further discussions will be required with landowners, ensuring all installation and maintenance implications are understood before this proposal can be fully realised.

Central to the King's Cross Canal Masterplan area is the Camley Street Natural Park and the facilities it provides to local residents. The 'wildness' of the park is seen by many local residents as an important and distinctive feature of this stretch of canal.

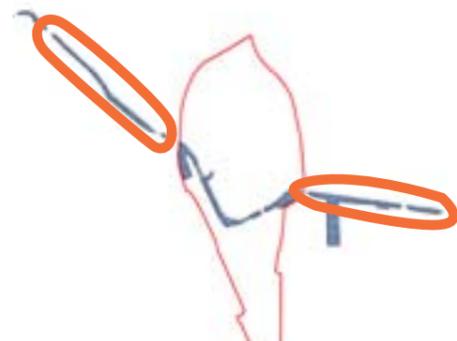
The masterplan seeks to strengthen the Regent's Canal as a link between Camley Street Natural Park and other pockets of green space, eg. Thornhill Bridge Community Gardens. The canal forms a natural conduit for wildlife.

There is also scope to introduce additional floating reed beds on the water to complement those found in and adjacent to Battlebridge Basin.

NB) Detailed habitat creation and enhancement proposals will need to be developed in conjunction with the local wildlife trust.

Masterplan Ref

10



## Planting & Ecology

# Sub Project Information

## Location:

Selected locations site wide

## Description:

A mix of moorings is proposed within the study area, including short term berths for visitors, as well as permanent/long term moorings.

There is also scope to extend/enhance the provision of residential moorings - this will help to ensure there is passive surveillance of the canal corridor, enhancing safety and security.

In the spirit of promoting the Regent's Canal as a destination, other water based uses and activities are planned. These may be of a temporary nature, including floating performance space, art gallery, restaurant/tea rooms, as well as trip boats and water taxis.

There is scope for increased use by canoeists and dragon boats, provided this does not have an adverse impact on existing day to day boat movements.

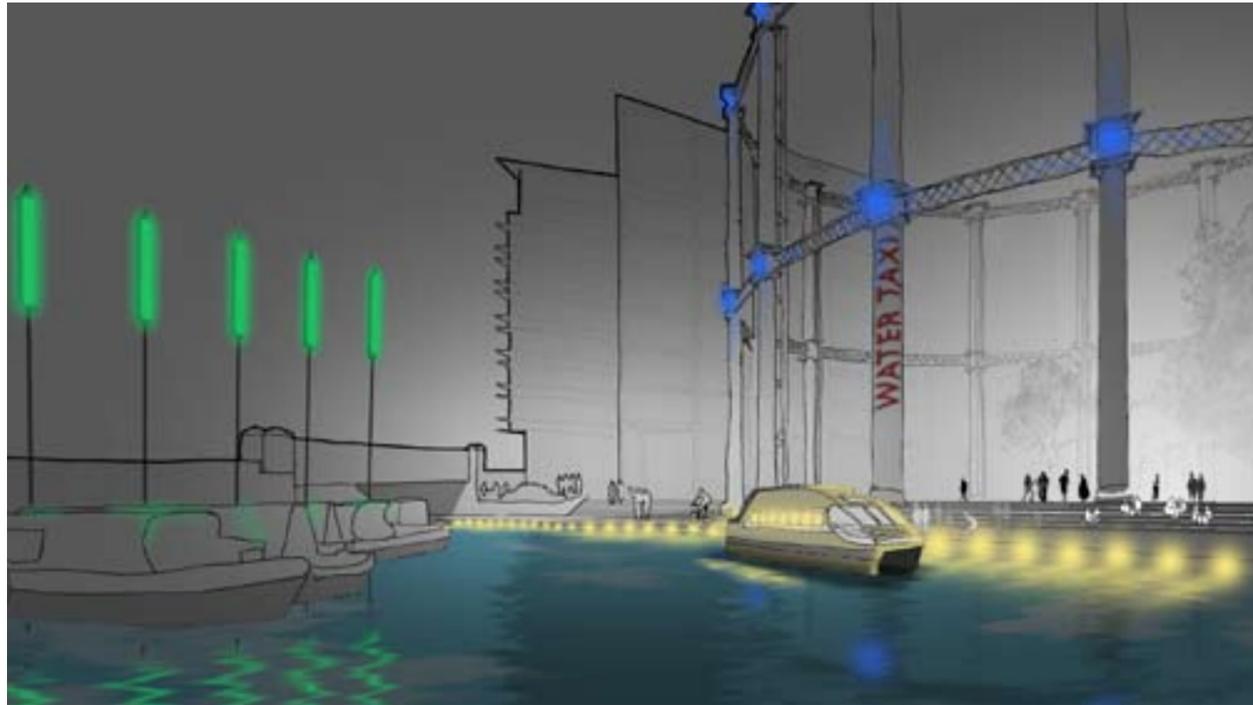
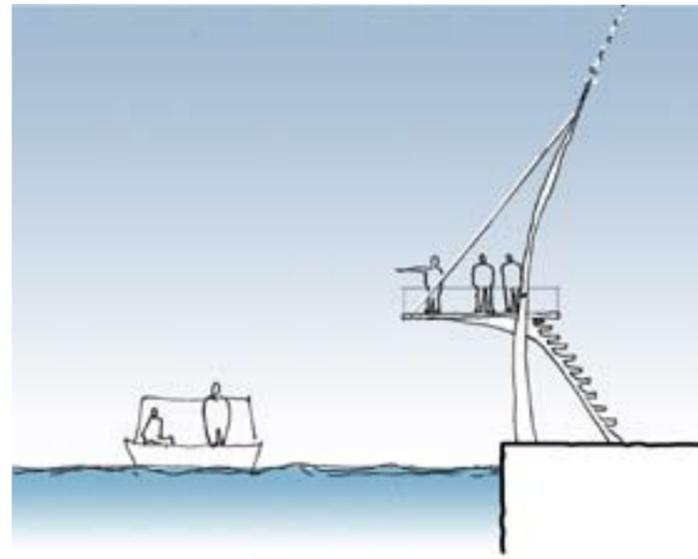
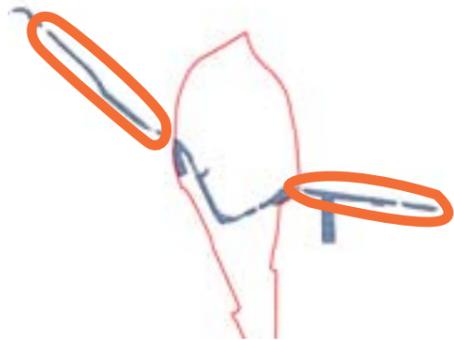
There is also the potential for business barges (eg. King's Cross Central), providing unique opportunities for working afloat. These craft could be similar to the floating studios which are already successfully in use at Paddington Basin.

Moored at King's Place, 'Tarporley' is a 1937 working boat which has been converted and run in London as Camden's community narrowboat for over thirty years. Skippered cruises on Tarporley are available to all groups from charities, clubs and schools to businesses and private parties (up to a maximum of 12 people). 'Tarporley' narrowboat is an integral part of the canal experience and King's Cross 'offer'.

Masterplan Ref

11

Project Location Map



**Location:**

Selected locations site wide

**Description:**

Future projects are sought to integrate local communities with the Canal corridor. Schools should be encouraged to use the canal more for educational purposes. Sports facilities are welcomed. A good example being the Jubilee Watersports Centre and its potential for reinstatement as an important local resource. In partnership with British Waterways, Local Authorities and community groups should be encouraged to take an active role in promoting canal based activities for a wide range of users.

There is potential to open up the existing community gardens to the canal and towpath - this would provide opportunities for local widening of the towpath for the benefit of pedestrians and cyclists. It would also help to integrate the gardens more strongly with their distinctive waterside setting.

The colonisation of land above the Islington Tunnel portal for food growing for the community is also underway. This, combined with the proposals for the land adjacent to the tunnel portal, will help to strengthen the sense of community ownership of the canal.

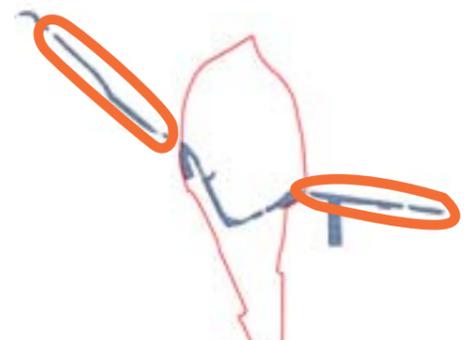
There is scope to build on recent successful arts initiatives, promoting the Regent's as an 'arts canal' developing community driven arts initiatives and capitalising on the presence of King's Place as a significant cultural centre at the water's edge.

Further dialogue will be necessary with local residents and key agencies, in bringing these ideas forward, including the potential for a Community Development/ Land Trust as a vehicle for engaging local people and widening the sense of community ownership.

Masterplan Ref

**12**

Project Location Map



Promoting sporting events & activities along the Canal



Thornhill Community Gardens





# Consultation Analysis

6.0

## Stakeholder Consultation

A stakeholder event was held at the German Gymnasium in King's Cross on 7th December 2009. The objective of this early 'issues and options' event was to secure 'buy-in' from key stakeholders. The event was targeted at senior officers, councillors and partners, as well as waterway user groups, schools and resident representatives. The event was designed to provide opportunities for all those with a stake/interest in the study area to find out more about the issues and opportunities it presents, with an emphasis on 'joining up' a range of aspirations for the area and promoting cross local authority boundary working.

### Promotion and Publicity

2-3 weeks in advance of the planned event, invitations were issued in the form of an eye-catching 'flyer'. The flyer made reference to the emerging Masterplan (with a simple 'vision statement' and contact details for the consultant team) but was carefully designed to encourage stakeholders to turn up to the event to find out more. Attendees were asked to confirm their acceptance by return. Those that could not attend were encouraged to 'sign up' to the project and provide comments/highlight any key issues using a simple pro-forma.

A list of attendees was prepared in advance and name badges (including project brand/logo) were distributed on arrival.

### 'Workshop' Format

All attendees were asked to sign in on arrival. The event was split into two sessions – a slide presentation by the design team to the assembled audience. This was supported by static display material taken from the emerging masterplan, including a draft menu of selected sub projects.

All views expressed at the event (via the informal workshop/Q&A session) were recorded by the consultant team. In addition, a pro-forma for responses was available for attendees to complete on the day.

Following a brief introduction from British Waterways, Lathams delivered a slide presentation including a headline summary of the key issues, eg. crime and anti-social behaviour concerns, physical and planning constraints as well as concept ideas relating to the emerging strategy.

This prompted much discussion and feedback, with key concerns (in no particular order) raised from the floor, including:

- Recognition that without boats the canal has no meaning – need to make provision for them, including moorings
- Need to be careful when considering lighting proposals
- Retain moorings adjacent Camley Street Natural Park as a means of enhancing security through passive surveillance
- Increased access to the canal for children would be beneficial – eg. canoes/kayaks in appropriate locations
- Long term sustainability very important – funding must be adequate
- Focus on local youth – stimulate interest and sense of ownership – scope for graffiti space, encouraging urban art
- Community Development Trust? – community owned assets for local people
- Freight welcome as a means of bringing life back to the canal
- Reinstate former canal basin
- Need to consider local anglers as well as walkers/cyclists/boaters
- Considerable scope for habitat creation, including green walls/roofs and aquatic planting
- 'Green wall' ideas endorsed, though need to ensure that not all brick walls get covered up – balanced approach required
- Concern expressed re: waterside seating and 'place-making' on the basis that this may only serve to attract crime and anti-social behaviour

### Discussion Groups

On conclusion of the presentation, chairs were rearranged to enable a 'workshop' style discussion to take place in 4 discrete groups, tackling the following 4 key themes:

- Access
- Identity
- Ecology
- Waterspace

Again, much debate and discussion followed, with individual groups nominating a spokesperson to provide feedback to the rest of the audience, highlighting key issues and opportunities as follows:

### Access

- Islington Tunnel portal is problematic – known 'hotspot' for nuisance crime and anti-social behaviour. Would benefit from vegetation clearance/opening up views, etc. along with improvements to Muriel Street access
- Towpath resurfacing required – robust, hard wearing materials of appropriate colour and texture
- Access for all – improvements required to key areas (as identified by design team)

### Identity

- Increase ecology (avoid any potential for detrimental impact from Argent development)

'wild habitat' as a key identity of Regents Canal

- Join up pockets of green space
- Community Engagement - key to long term future of Canal and surrounding areas.
- Simple coherent signage akin to the rest of London (Legible London campaign)
- Industrial character of canal very important – need to safeguard this

### Ecology

- Top of tunnel portal identified as an opportunity for food growing/community allotments, with benefit of opening up views along the canal corridor
- Opportunities for aquatic planting (floating reed beds/planters) anchored close to the offside of the canal
- Scope for enhancing existing community gardens (fruit trees, etc.)
- Scope for habitat creation, including bats, kingfishers, etc.

### Waterspace

- Former canal basin should be reopened for freight, waste, etc.
- Lighting in tunnel could be problematic from navigation/ecology point of view
- Bollards should light towpath not water – could be vulnerable to ropes, etc. when boats mooring alongside towpath
- Pontoons/floating attractions – need to ensure these do not impede navigation. Concerns re: where would these go when not in use
- Discussion held in relation to potential for community development trust, as vehicle to attract investment and unite local communities/interest groups

## Public Consultation

A public consultation event was held at the German Gymnasium in King's Cross on 23rd March 2010. The objective of this event was to build on the Stakeholder event held on 7th December 2009 and secure support for the proposals from local communities.

The event was targeted at local residents, as well as community groups, waterway user groups and schools.

### Format

The event comprised an exhibition (static display material), manned by staff from Lathams, British Waterways and Argent. The exhibition included baseline analysis material highlighting issues and constraints, along with the emerging masterplan. The exhibition also included a menu of selected sub projects, as agreed with the Steering Group.

Attendees were invited to view the exhibition and ask questions of staff, before completing a questionnaire/pro-forma on the day. All views expressed at the event were recorded by the consultant team. In addition, a web site link was set up to enable anyone interested to view the proposals on-line and submit comments.

### Feedback

In completing the questionnaire, attendees were asked the following questions:

- Do you agree with the issues highlighted by the masterplan?
- Are there any other important issues?
- Do you support the masterplan vision?
- Which aspects of the masterplan do you strongly support?

This established the level of support for what is proposed. Beyond that, feedback was sought in relation to the 12 identified sub projects.

77 completed questionnaires were returned in all, as well as a comprehensive response from The Regents Network.

# KING'S CROSS CANAL MASTERPLAN



## PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENT

COME ALONG TO FIND OUT MORE AND HAVE YOUR SAY

**DATE: TUESDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> MARCH 2010, 3PM - 8PM**  
**VENUE: GERMAN GYMNASIUM, KING'S CROSS**

The Regent's Canal is a flagship waterway for London, with untapped potential as a tourism and heritage attraction. British Waterways London has commissioned urban/waterside regeneration specialists Lathams, to prepare a masterplan to guide the refurbishment of the 1.8km stretch of canal either side of the King's Cross Central development, from the Constitution Public House to Islington Tunnel.

Building on the feedback from a stakeholder consultation event held in December 2009, you are invited to join the design team to discuss the current masterplan proposals. This plan will dictate how the canal and public realm can be safeguarded and enhanced in the coming years, ensuring it can meet the needs of the local community. British Waterways and Lathams staff will be on hand to answer your questions and explain more about the project.

**WE HOPE YOU CAN JOIN US AND LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ON TUESDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> MARCH.**

## FoRC

FRIENDS OF REGENT'S CANAL NETWORKING EVENT

Alongside the Public Consultation, the Friends of the Regent's Canal are hosting a networking event. The event is aimed at organisations and individuals interested in London's waterways, to get to know one another and to share ideas.

**DATE: TUESDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> MARCH 2010, 5.30PM - 8PM**  
**VENUE: GERMAN GYMNASIUM, KING'S CROSS**

To book a stall at the FoRC event and showcase your work please contact:

Sandra Hoisz, Groundwork

**Tel: 020 7239 1389 E-mail: [sandra.hoisz@groundwork.org.uk](mailto:sandra.hoisz@groundwork.org.uk)**

The event is free of charge, please RSVP by contacting Sandra Hoisz by 15<sup>th</sup> March 2010.



FREE  
ENTRY TO  
A RAFFLE  
WITH GREAT  
PRIZES!



FREE  
REFRESHMENTS  
WILL BE  
AVAILABLE!



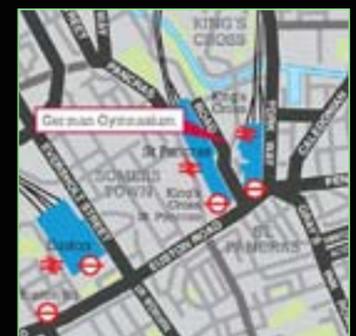
**THIS IS A  
CHANCE TO  
HAVE YOUR SAY  
AND TO HELP  
SHAPE THE  
FUTURE OF THE  
REGENT'S CANAL**

**GERMAN GYMNASIUM  
26 PANCRAS ROAD  
N1C 2TB**

For further information, please visit:  
[www.lathamarchitects.co.uk/kingscross](http://www.lathamarchitects.co.uk/kingscross)

Or contact:  
Ann Cullen  
Lathams  
Tel: 01332 365777

Email: [a.cullen@lathamarchitects.co.uk](mailto:a.cullen@lathamarchitects.co.uk)



Leaflet used to promote the public consultation event

# KING'S CROSS CANAL MASTERPLAN



## Public Consultation Questionnaire

Please complete the questionnaire below.  
Your views on the following will be helpful in developing the masterplan:

1  Do you agree with the issues highlighted by the masterplan? Yes  No

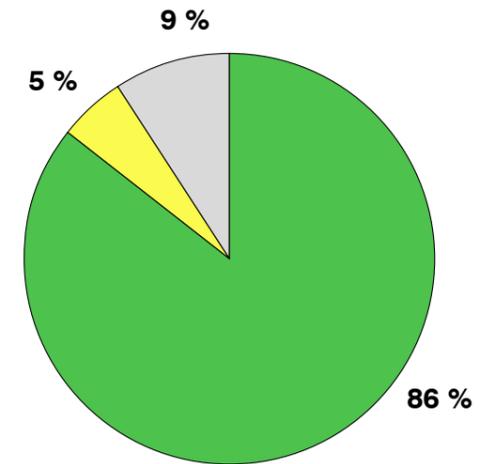
Are there any other important issues?  
.....  
.....  
.....

2  Do you support the masterplan vision? Yes  No

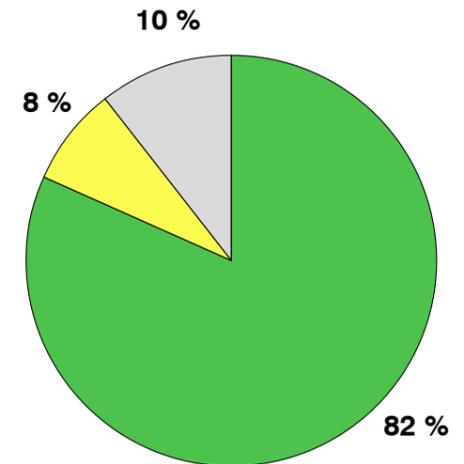
Which aspects of the masterplan do you strongly support?  
.....  
.....

Do you support the Sub Projects?	Yes/No	Comments?
1. St Pancras Way Access Point	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	1.....
2. Art Installations & Bridge Lighting	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	2.....
3. Towpath Improvements	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	3.....
4. Canalside Furniture	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	4.....
5. Visiting Boater's Facility & associated Recycling Facility	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	5.....
6. Visitor Moorings	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	6.....
7. Long Term Moorings	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	7.....
8. Maiden Lane Bridge & National Grid Sub Station	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	8.....
9. Islington Tunnel Gateway	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	9.....
10. Planting & Ecology	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	10.....
11. Water Based Activity	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	11.....
12. Community Projects	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	12.....

Do you agree with the issues highlighted by the masterplan?



Do you support the masterplan vision?



### KEY

- Yes
- Partly
- No
- No Answer

Please provide contact details if you would like to take part in the **prize draw**:

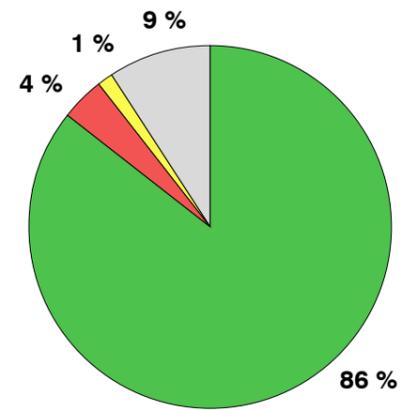
Name.....  
Contact Tel No.....  
Email.....

Please return to:  
Ann Cullen, Lathams, St Michael's, Queen Street,  
Derby, DE1 3SU

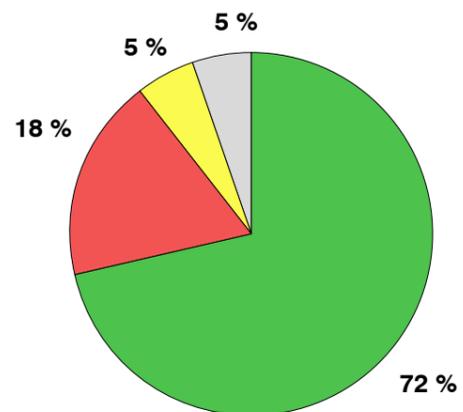
Or email your comments to:  
a.cullen@lathamarchitects.co.uk



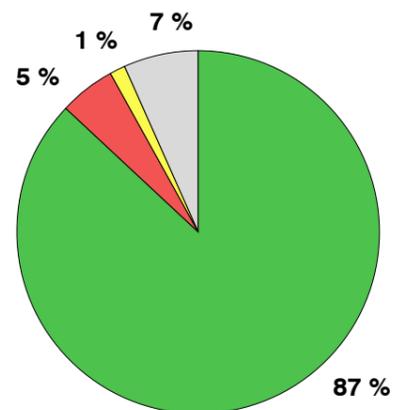
1. Do you agree with the St Pancras Way Access Point Sub Project?



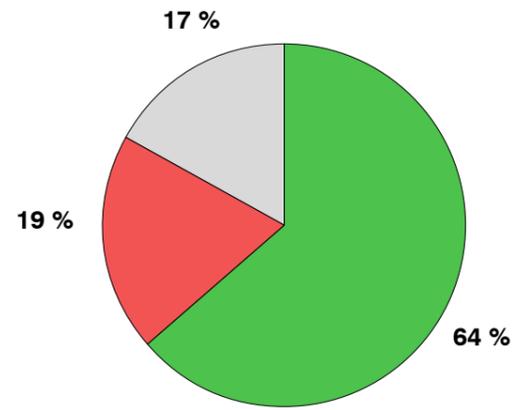
2. Do you agree with the Art Installations & Bridge Lightings Sub Project?



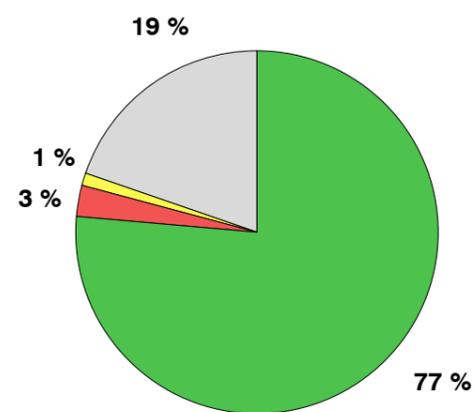
3. Do you agree with the Towpath Improvement Sub Project?



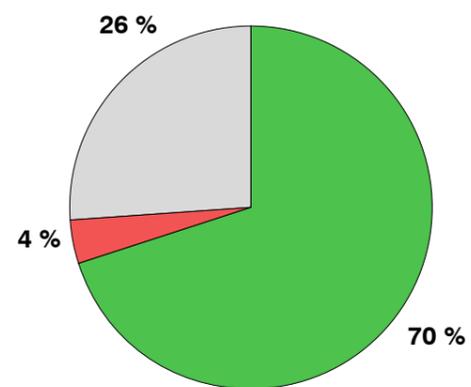
4. Do you agree with the Canalside Furniture Sub Project?



5. Do you agree with the Visiting Boat-er's Facility & associated Recycling Facility Sub Project?



6. Do you agree with the Visitor Moorings Sub Project?

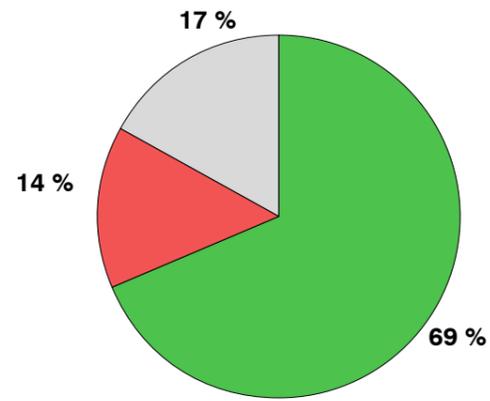


*Selected photographs from the public consultation event*

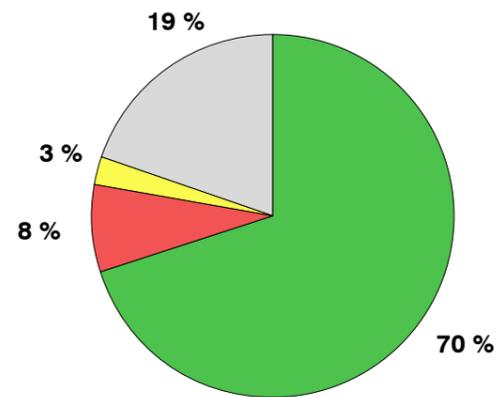
**KEY**

- Yes
- Partly
- No
- No Answer

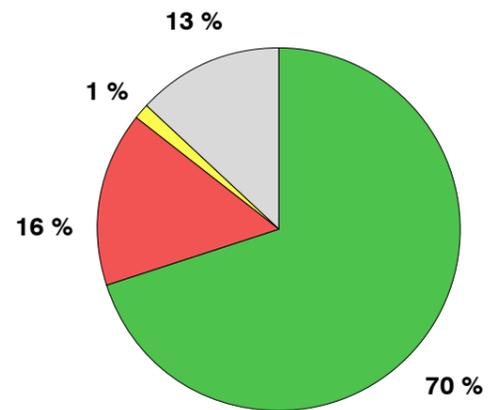
7. Do you agree with the Long Term Moorings Sub Project?



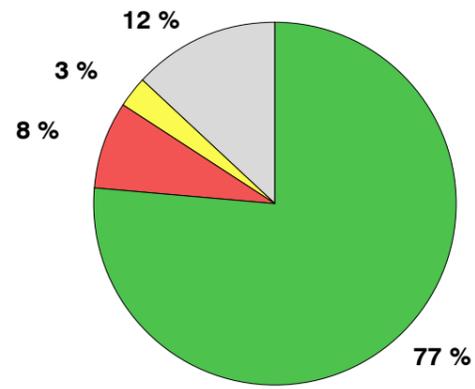
8. Do you agree with the Maiden Lane Bridge & National Grid Sub Station Sub Project?



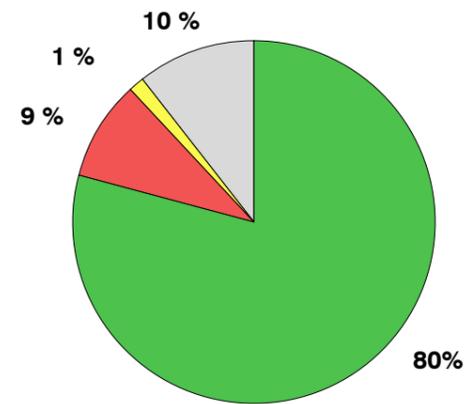
9. Do you agree with the Islington Tunnel Gateway Sub Project?



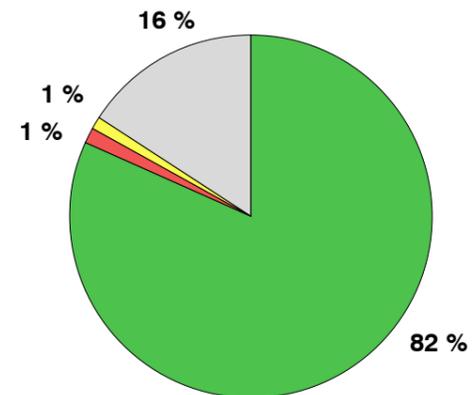
10. Do you agree with the Planting & Ecology Sub Project?



11. Do you agree with the Water Based Activity Sub Project?



12. Do you agree with the Community Projects Sub Project?



Selected photographs from the public consultation event

**KEY**

- Yes
- Partly
- No
- No Answer



# Summary

7.0

## Looking Ahead

The projects identified in this document will bring significant local improvements for the community, stimulating further use and activity on, and along, the Regent's Canal corridor.

Detailed cost estimates will be necessary once design proposals and specifications have been prepared in more detail. It is important to note that the towpath resurfacing proposals will need to be carried out in conjunction with National Grid, as they are minded to replace the existing covers and as such, significant savings should be possible. This will enable the canal fund to go further in the short-medium term.

The intention is that those projects implemented in the short term, such as towpath enhancements and signage/canalside furniture for example, will help to prepare the ground for some of the more ambitious ideas outlined in the Canal Fund Masterplan.

In parallel with the early delivery of projects 'on the ground', there are opportunities to develop some of the themes from the Masterplan. This could include further feasibility work in connection with the potential for arts based installations, mooring opportunities and visitor facilities.

At the same time, there may be merit in progressing with the development of a 'Regent's Canal Design Code'. The Design Code could become a useful tool, highlighting the distinctive characteristics of the canal corridor and providing clear design guidance concerning new development and the treatment of the public realm.

If adopted as supplementary planning guidance, the Design Code will have the necessary 'teeth' to ensure maximum benefit is derived through new development, for the Regent's Canal and surrounding local communities.

## Delivery Implications

The Regent's Canal is protected by Conservation Area status. In bringing forward development proposals, in addition to the detailed design work that is necessary, further consultation and liaison with both Camden and Islington planning departments will be required.

It is recommended that pre-application discussions are held in advance of the submission of planning applications, as this will help to allay potential concerns in advance.

It is assumed that prior to any works being carried out, a comprehensive Risk Assessment will be undertaken to enable projects to be implemented safely. Assessments will need to consider all aspects of the work, including issues such as working in close proximity to water and any public safety implications.

Further consultation with stakeholders and the community will also be desirable. The key principles of the masterplan and sub projects have been tested and refined through a series of Steering Group meetings, stakeholder and community consultation events, but ongoing commitment will be required if the ambitions of the study are to be realised.

## Closing Statement

In summary, the Canal Fund Masterplan seeks to promote a range of deliverable projects, that will:

- Ensure that the "added value" of the Regent's Canal unique waterscape is fully explored – so that it is not just a visual backdrop to the surrounding development but becomes a leisure destination in its own right
- Establish a strong "sense of place" and focus, bringing life and vitality to the canal corridor through King's Cross
- Create a stronger identity and positive 'brand' which stakeholders and the local community can be proud of
- Promote a vibrant, attractive, safe and distinctive amenity for the benefit of all

This study has generated positive feedback and considerable local interest, helping to counter some of the negative images concerning petty crime and anti-social behaviour. There is an opportunity to build on this with the steady flow of good news stories during the coming months and years, linked directly to real projects and action on the ground.



Lathams