



Heritage Statement

Marian Place,
Bethnal Green

March 2020

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Montagu Evans has been instructed by St William Homes LLP to provide consultancy services and prepare this Heritage Statement in accompany an application for planning permission to redevelop the former gasholder station at Marian Place, Bethnal Green, in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

The Site

The Site comprises a former gasholder station on the south side of the Regent's Canal at Bethnal Green. It is bound to the north-west by residential development at Darwen Place, and by development along Pritchard's Road, Emma Street and The Oval to the west, south and east respectively.

The Site is occupied by four gasholders; No. 2 (north west), No. 5 (north east), 1 (south east), and No. 4 (south west).

- Gasholder no. 1 is spiral guided, and was rebuilt in 1925;
- Gasholder no. 2 is frame guided, and was built in 1866;
- Gasholder no. 4 is spiral guided and was rebuilt in 1937; and
- Gasholder no. 5 is frame guided, and was built in 1899.

All four gasholders have been decommissioned and purged of gas since 2012.

The two northern gasholders (Nos. 2 and 5) lie within the Regent's Canal Conservation Area (LBTH) (the CA), and make a positive contribution to its historic industrial character and appearance. Both gasholders are subject to a Certificate of Immunity from Listing which expires in December 2020.

The site forms part of the wider Site Allocation (ref. 1.3) in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031 (Marian Place Gasworks and The Oval) (2020), for new homes and employment space, alongside a 1ha area of consolidated open space. The site allocation expects development proposals to retain, reuse and enhance gasholders no.2 and no.5, respond positively to the character of the Regent's Canal Conservation Area and deliver a series of design principles and considerations such as improving biodiversity and ecology, providing an active frontage to the canal and maximise the provision of family homes.



Figure 0.1 Aerial photograph showing the location of the former gasholder site at Marian Place facing south.

In addition to the site allocation, the site is covered by the following policy designations:

- City Fringe Opportunity Area
- Local Employment Location
- Green Grid Buffer Zone
- Water Spaces

Background to the Application

The planning application seeks full planning permission for 565 mixed tenure homes and 4,182sqm (GIA) of commercial uses, and for demolition within a conservation area.

The development will be accommodated in five cylindrical-shaped buildings ranging between 6 and 13 storeys with commercial floorspace located at ground floor and basement level and residential dwellings above across all five buildings. Two of the buildings will be located within the existing gasholder guide-frames which will be retained and restored.

The proposals have been the product of careful consideration through an iterative design process over 14 months, through which the architectural and consultant team have sought to mitigate any potential harmful impacts, and enhance the Site through design of the highest quality. Extensive consultation has been undertaken with the Council, Historic England and the Greater London Authority.



Figure 0.2 Sketch of the Application Site identifying the proposed new building layout and names.

Summary Assessment

The decision maker will be aware of the balanced and proportionate approach to conservation that is reflected in the statutory provisions set out in 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Act and the NPPF. Paragraph 193 of the NPPF also establishes, and reasserts the provisions of the 1990 Act, that any harm to an asset should be accorded great weight. The Palmer judgement similarly emphasises that a benefit is also a matter of great weight and that the overall judgement on a harmful impact to a listed building is taken on the basis of the development as a whole. The corollary is that benefits to a conservation area are also of great weight.

This thrust of policy is reflected in Policy DM27 of the Council's Development Managing Development Document (2013).

We have identified some limited harm to the significance of Gasholder Nos. 2 and 5 on the basis that the bell and tanks will be removed, which form part of the structure. Generally, these parts are not considered to contribute to the significance of gasholders. In such cases where a development includes harm to a non-designated heritage asset, paragraph 197 requires a balanced judgement. We consider that the loss of the tank and internal apparatus would be outweighed by a combination of factors (and benefits) weighing in its favour.

Having comprehensively reviewed the scheme, we consider there are significant conservation benefits that will have a direct and beneficial effect on the significance of the building:



Figure 0.3 Aerial photograph showing the proposals in the context of the surrounding area.

Overall, we consider the development will have a demonstrably beneficial effect on designated and non-designated heritage assets, delivering the following public benefits which are weighty and should be considered in favour of the development:

- Removal of intrusive gas infrastructure (such as telemetry and redundant modern pipework) lying within the Regent's Canal CA and its immediate setting (both within the Application Site). Removal of such negative features in a CA should be weighed in favour of the development.
- Opening the site to public access for the first time in 180 years, including a new canal-side public space. This will improve the ability for visitors to appreciate the significance of the Regent's Canal CA.
- The retention and refurbishment of Gasholder Nos. 2 and 5 will secure their long-term use and conservation in a manner that is viable and consistent with their conservation. In turn, the significance of the CA will be enhanced through the improvement to the appearance of the gasholder frames.
- The setting and significance of the Regent's Canal CA will be enhanced by a high quality landscaping scheme that will demonstrably improve the way that the CA appears and functions.
- The provision of an outstanding and innovative design of the new buildings that will lie within the existing gasholder frames and other new buildings. The calibre of architecture is of the highest standard by RSHP, and we anticipate will help raise the standard of design more generally in the area. The addition of the development will demonstrably enhance the way that this part of the Regent's Canal CA appears and functions.
- Introduction of a new view of the frame of Gasholder No. 5 by creating a central cut through within the internal new building. While building itself would be an addition within the frame, that void was formerly occupied by the rise and fall of gasholder lifts. The new central view would be dramatic and add to the public experience of the gasholder and, in turn, the Regent's Canal CA and in the setting of nearby heritage assets.

While each benefit on its own could be considered to be relatively minor, the cumulative benefit to the buildings is substantial. The works described above will lead to a demonstrable enhancement to the significance of the Regent's Canal CA (LBTH); Gasholder Nos. 2 and 5 (as non-designated heritage assets); the setting and significance of the Regent's Canal CA (LB Hackney); the setting and significance of the Hackney Road CA; in addition to minor enhancements to a number of other heritage assets.

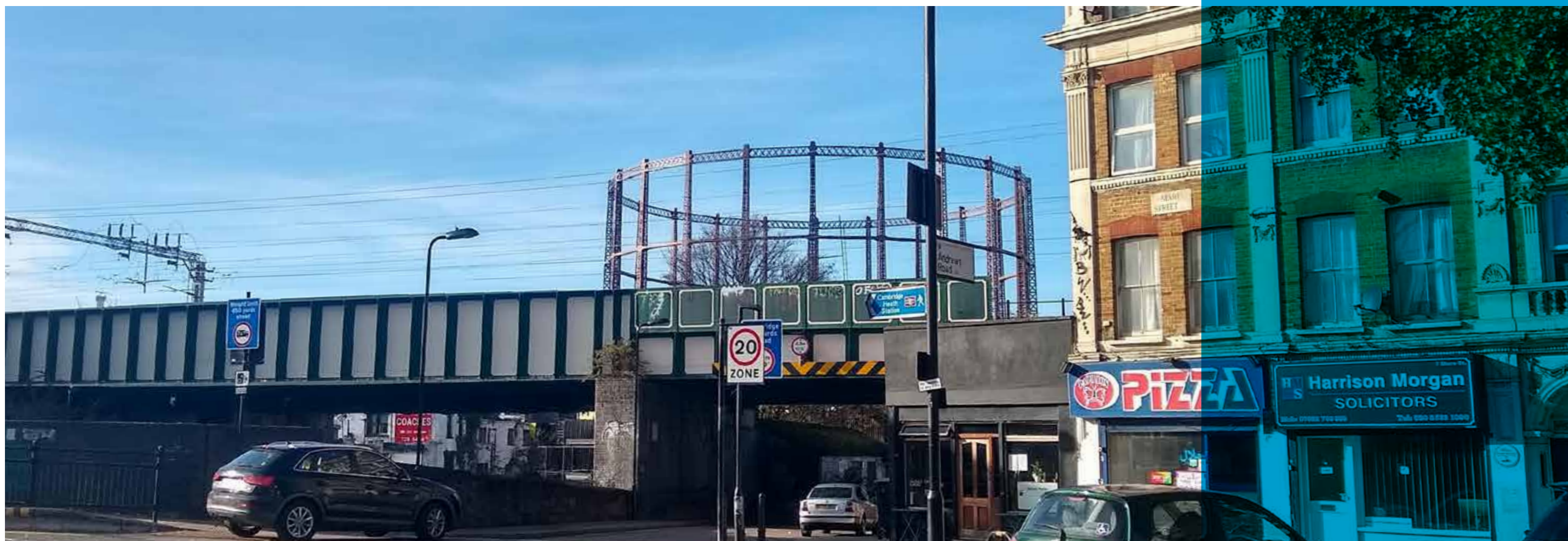
We conclude that the development would meet the policy requirements set out in paragraphs 189 to 193, 197 and 200 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 of the London Plan (2016).

The scheme would ensure that the locally distinctive character and context of the area would be enhanced, while at the same time finding a beneficial reuse of the two above ground gasholders and so comply with Policy SP10 of the Council's Core Strategy (2010).

Similarly, the development would enhance the significance of the Regent's Canal CA, and the setting of nearby heritage assets, in a manner that is appropriate in terms of design, scale and form, while delivering outstanding architecture by one of the world's leading architectural practices. We consider, therefore, that the development would comply with Policy DM27 of the Council's Management Development Document and the Site Allocation.

On that basis, the decision maker would be able to discharge his/her legal duties as set out in **Sections 66 (1) and 72 (1)** of the 1990 Act.

// MARIAN PLACE, BETHNAL GREEN



Introduction

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Montagu Evans LLP has been instructed by St William Homes LLP (henceforth referred to as the 'Applicant') to provide consultancy services and prepare this Heritage Statement in relation to proposals for the redevelopment of the site at Marian Place, Bethnal Green (the "Application Site"), in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets (the "Council" or "LBTH").

1.2 The Description of Development is:

"Demolition of existing buildings, decontamination/remediation of the site and retention (including dismantling, refurbishment and reinstatement) of the two existing gasholder frames to facilitate redevelopment for a mixed-use development comprising 5 buildings ranging between 6-13 storeys (up to 63m AOD) to contain 565 residential dwellings and 4,182sqm (GIA) non-residential floorspace in flexible A1-A4, B1 and D Use Classes (maximum provision of up to 180sqm A1/A2, up to 1,300sqm A3/A4, up to 2,485sqm of B1(a) and up to 635sqm of D1/D2 use class floorspace), together with access, car and cycle parking, associated landscaping and public realm, public open space and works to the existing canal wall, Pressure Reduction Station and existing gasholders."

1.3 Our instruction has entailed heritage advice, including design review and collaboration with the design team over a period of 14 months. The instruction is being discharged by qualified specialist professionals (MRTPI and IHBC).

1.4 **Figure 1.1** provides site location plan and **Figure 1.2** provides an aerial photograph of the Application Site facing south.

Summary of the Site

1.5 The Site comprises a former gasholder station on the south side of the Regent's Canal at Bethnal Green. It is bound to the north-west by residential development at Darwen Place, and by development along Pritchard's Road, Emma Street and The Oval to the west, south and east respectively.

1.6 The Site is occupied by four gasholders; No. 2 (north west), No. 5 (north east), 1 (south east), and No. 4 (south west).

- Gasholder no. 1 is spiral guided, and was rebuilt in 1925;
- Gasholder no. 2 is frame guided, and was built in 1866;
- Gasholder no. 4 is spiral guided and was rebuilt in 1937; and
- Gasholder no. 5 is frame guided, and was built in 1899.

1.7 All four have been decommissioned and purged of gas. Some ancillary buildings remain on the Site, including a Valve house and Gas Pumping Plant Building, which are similarly redundant.

1.8 The two northern gasholders (Nos. 2 and 5) lie within the Regent's Canal Conservation Area (LBTH) (the CA), and are acknowledged to make a positive contribution to its historic industrial character and appearance.

1.9 There are no listed buildings at the Site or in its immediate vicinity. A number lie within the local area, including grade II listed historic townhouses along Hackney Road, and Sir Denys Lansdun's post-war flats at Keeling House, which are listed at grade II*.

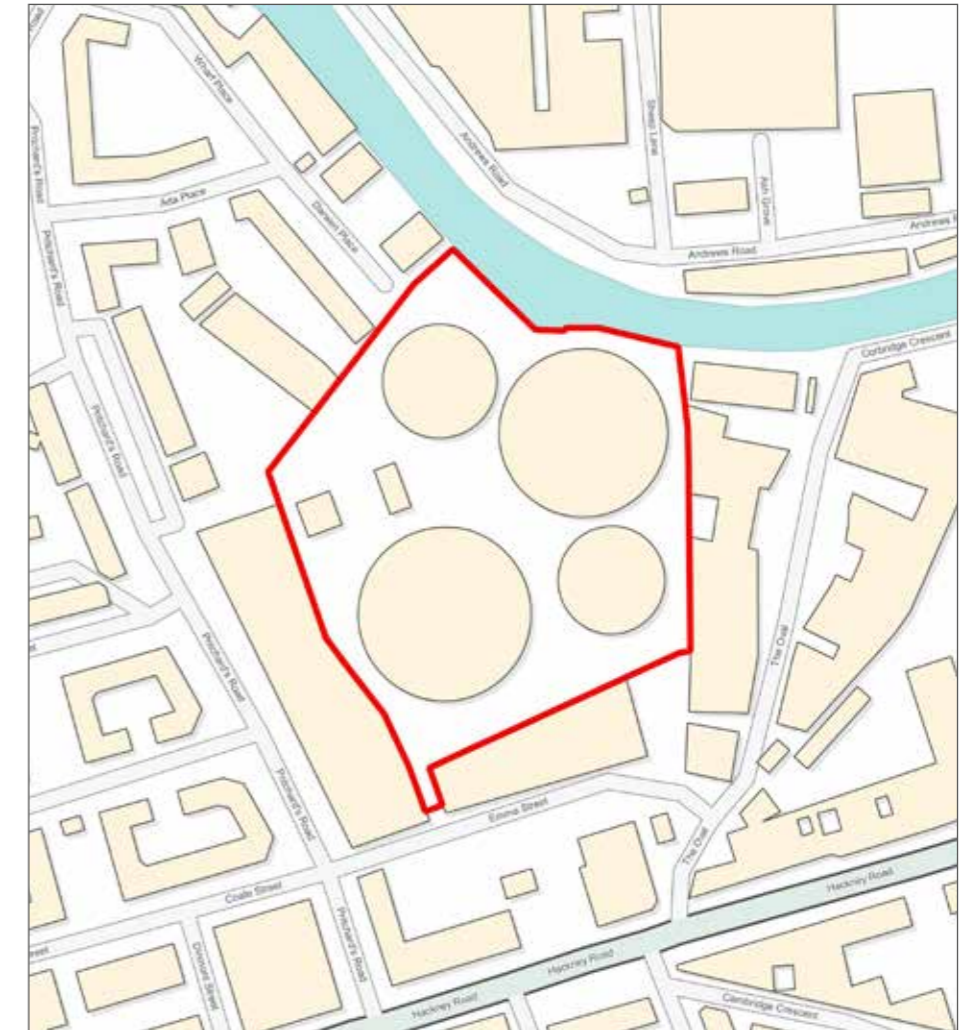


Figure 1.1 Site Location Plan

Background to the Proposals

- 1.10 As we have described, the Site comprises four gasholders that are redundant. The Site has been in this condition since 2012, and so over that time has become known locally as a sterile underutilised site, a status recognised in the Local Plan through a Site Allocation identifying the objective of redevelopment. That aim has been carried through to the new Local Plan allocation which has recently been examined in public.
- 1.11 St William have developed proposals with Rogers Stirk Harbour and Partners (henceforth 'RSHP') to provide the best outcome for the site, balancing the recognised need to preserve and interpret the significance of the historic and architectural value of the two Victorian gasholders.
- 1.12 The gasholders are the subject of a Certificate of Immunity from Listing (COIL) issued in 2015.
- 1.13 Given their prominence in local views, and their contribution to the Regent's Canal Conservation Area, gasholders 2 and 5 are considered in this report as non-designated heritage assets.
- 1.14 The Site is included within the City Fringe Opportunity Area as identified by the GLA, and is the subject of an allocation for housing and mixed use development in the Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031 (2020).
- 1.15 The principal heritage consideration is whether the redevelopment of the Site would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Regent's Canal Conservation Area, the setting of nearby listed buildings, and the significance of the two gasholders that lie within the CA.

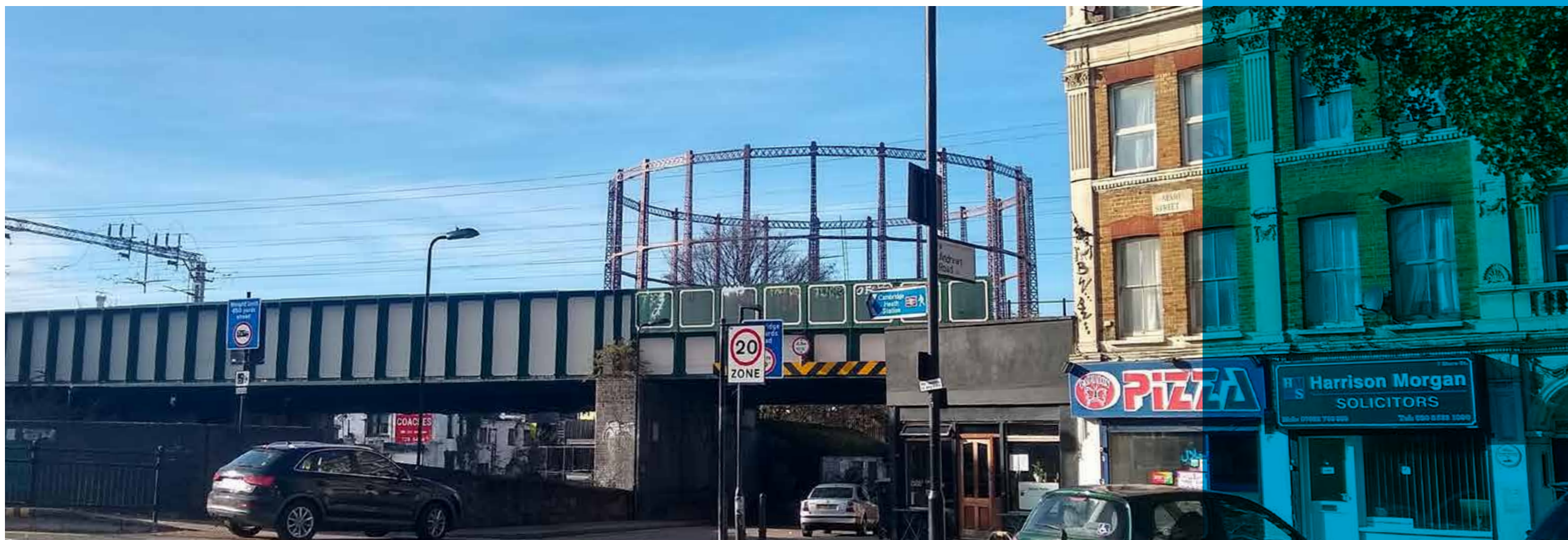


Figure 1.2 Aerial View. Source: Google Earth (base map)

Purpose of the Report

- 1.16 According to paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) (2019), applicants for development proposals which have an effect upon the historic environment are required to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting, to enable an understanding of the impact of the proposals. This report fulfils that requirement by presenting an historic and architectural overview of the Development Site and its environs, as well as an assessment of its significance.
- 1.17 The appraisal is proportionate to the scale of the proposals, and thus focusses upon the gasholders at the Site, and the two Regent’s Canal Conservation Areas (LBTH and LBH), as these are the assets which will experience the greatest degree of change as a result of the proposed redevelopment.
- 1.18 This Heritage Statement should be read in parallel to Chapter E of the Environmental Statement submitted as part of this application.
- 1.19 Our report is structured as follows:
- A discussion of the legislative and planning policy framework as it relates to the Site is provided at **Section 2.0**;
 - **Section 3.0** provides a discussion of the historical background and a description of the Development Site;
 - **Section 4.0** is an assessment of the heritage assets at the Site and within its setting;
 - A summary of the proposals forms **Section 5.0**.
 - **Section 6.0** provides an assessment of the proposals; and
 - **Section 7.0** sets out our conclusions and an assessment against the legislative framework and planning policy.

// MARIAN PLACE, BETHNAL GREEN



Legislation and Planning Policy

2.0 LEGISLATION AND PLANNING POLICY

2.1 The following section sets out the planning policy context for the development site and for the context of the assessment process.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990

2.2 The Proposed Development Site does not comprise any designated heritage receptors, but may form part of the setting of a number of designated heritage receptors in the wider area.

2.3 Additionally, Gasholder Nos. 2 and 5 are considered in this assessment as non-designated heritage assets.

2.4 With respect to this application, the applicable statutory provisions are:

■ **Section 66(1):**

“In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features or special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”

■ **Section 72(1):**

“With respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any [functions under or by virtue of] any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.”

2.5 In preparing our analysis we are mindful of the considerable weight attached to the preservation or enhancement of the setting of heritage assets, which was clarified by the Court of Appeal judgment in *Barnwell Manor Wind Energy vs. East Northamptonshire et al* [2014]. The Court held that *“to make an assessment of the indirect impact of development or change upon an asset it is first necessary to make a judgment about the contribution made by its setting”*. In turn, the decision ruled there

is a “strong presumption” against granting planning permission for development which would cause harm to heritage assets precisely because the desirability of preserving the special interest is of “considerable importance and weight”.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019)

2.6 Chapter 12 of the NPPF outlines the Government’s policy regarding design. It emphasises that *“good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people”*.

2.7 Paragraph 127 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- “a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”

2.8 Paragraph 130 advises that:

“Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents. Conversely, where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development.”

2.9 Paragraph 131 promotes sustainable development and appropriate design:

“In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.”

2.10 Chapter 16 of the NPPF sets out the Government’s policies relating to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. In determining planning applications, Paragraph 189 specifies that:

“local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.”

2.11 Paragraph 193 states that:

“When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.”

2.12 Paragraphs 194 and 195 provide a definition and the approach to substantial harm. These state:

“194. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;*
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.*

195. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

 - a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
 - b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
 - c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
 - d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.”*

2.13 Paragraph 196 has regard to less than substantial harm. It states that:

“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”

2.14 Paragraph 197 states that:

“The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgment will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.”

2.15 Paragraph 200 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

2.16 The assessment will also take into consideration relevant planning guidance and any material considerations, including:

- National Planning Practice Guidance (online);
- Historic England, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (2015);
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017);
- Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (2018);
- Hackney Road Conservation Area Appraisal (2009);
- Regent’s Canal Conservation Area Appraisal (LBH) (2007);
- Regent’s Canal Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Guidelines (LBTH) (2009); and
- Hackney Road Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Guidelines (LBTH) (2009).

Regional Planning Policy

2.17 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 stipulates that where in making any determination under the Planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, and the determination must be made in accordance with that plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The following documents form the statutory development plan.

Adopted London Plan (2016)

- 2.18 Policy 7.4 (Local Character) states that *“in areas of poor or ill-defined character, development should built on the positive elements that can contribute to establishing an enhanced character for the future function of the area.”*
- 2.19 Part B requires that development provides a high-quality design response that makes a positive contribution to the character of an area, reflecting its positive elements and being informed by the historic environment.
- 2.20 Policy 7.6 (Architecture) states that *“Architecture should make a positive contribution to a coherent public realm, streetscape and wider cityscape. It should incorporate the highest quality materials and design appropriate to its context.”*
- 2.21 Policy 7.8 (Heritage Assets and Archaeology) outlines criteria for the preservation of the significance of London’s heritage assets. Part D states that *“Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance by being sympathetic to their form, scale materials and architectural detail.”*

Draft New London Plan (July 2019)

- 2.22 A consultation version of the New London Plan was examined in public in July 2019. The Mayor of London published an 'Intend to Publish' version of the London Plan in December 2020. Due to the advanced stage in the examination process, the draft London Plan can be afforded significant weight.
- 2.23 Heritage policies are contained in Chapter 7, called 'Heritage and Culture'. Part C of Policy HC1 'Heritage Conservation and Growth' states that development proposals affecting heritage assets and their settings "should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings."
- Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031: Managing Growth and Sharing the Benefits (2019)**
- 2.24 On the 15 January 2020, LBTH adopted its new Local Plan; Local Plan 2031: Managing Growth and Sharing Benefits. This replaces the Core Strategy (2010) and Managing Development Document (2013).
- 2.25 With regard to Marian Place Gas Works and The Oval, which includes the development site, the Inspector's Report on the (then) emerging Local Plan stated:
"138. The site is located within the City Fringe Sub area. It is identified within the Plan as being suitable for a range of land uses including housing, employment and community and social uses. The design principles place a proportionate emphasis on the existing designated and non-designated heritage assets on and adjacent to the site including the gasholders, Regent's Canal Conservation Area and the Hackney Road Conservation Area. Given the importance of these assets, this is a justified and appropriate approach. [...]"
- 2.26 The Proposed Development Site lies within a character area identified as City Fringe within the Local Plan, defined by "the City of London's financial district to the west, the London Borough of Hackney to the north, the River Thames to the south and the borough's inner-city communities to the east" (para 2.1). The character area comprises the London Plan's City Fringe Opportunity Area which falls within the borough.

- 2.27 Within this area, the development site is the subject of an allocation for housing and mixed use development. The allocation outlines a number of design principles, which have been refined through the Schedule of Minor Modifications subsequent to consultation in November 2017. With regard to heritage considerations, these require development to:
*"Respond positively to the existing character, scale, height, massing and fine urban grain of the surrounding built environment, and specifically integrate heritage assets on site and in the surrounding areas;
 Retain, re-use and enhance the existing heritage assets, including gasholders no.2 and no.5, Victorian buildings adjacent to the Regents Canal, and Georgian cottages, including the associated setted streets and railings;
 Respond positively to the special character of the Regents Canal Conservation Area and its setting, scale, height, massing and fine urban grain of the surrounding built environment, and specifically integrate heritage assets on site."*
- 2.28 Policy S.DH3: Heritage and the Historic Environment states:
*"1. Proposals must preserve or where appropriate enhance the borough's historic designated and non-designated assets in a manner appropriate to their significance as key and distinctive elements of the borough's 24 places.
 2. Proposals to alter, extend or change the use of an historic asset or proposals that would affect the setting of a heritage asset will only be permitted where:
 a. they safeguard the significance of the heritage assets, including its setting, character, fabric or identity;
 b. they are appropriate in terms of design, height, scale, form, detailing and materials in their local context;
 c. they enhance or better reveal the significance of assets or their settings;
 d. they preserve strategic and locally important views, as defined in Policy D.DH4.
 3. Applications affecting the significance of a heritage asset will be required to provide sufficient information to demonstrate how the proposal would contribute to the asset's conservation. Any harm to the significance of a heritage asset must be justified having regard to the public benefits of the proposal; whether it*

has been demonstrated that all reasonable efforts have been made to sustain the existing use, find new uses, or mitigate the extent of the harm to the significance of the asset; and whether the works proposed are the minimum required to secure the long term use of the asset.

5. Alterations, extensions or changes of use, or development in the vicinity of listed buildings will be expected to have no adverse impact on those elements which contribute to their special architectural or historic interest, including their settings.

6. Significant weight will be given to the protection and enhancement of the borough's conservation areas, including their setting. Development within a conservation area will be expected to preserve or, where appropriate, enhance those elements which contribute to their special character or appearance [...] Planning applications should explore opportunities from new development within conservation areas and their setting to enhance or better reveal their significance."

- 2.29 Policy D.DH4 (Shaping and managing views) states:

*"1. Development is required to positively contribute to views and skylines that are components of the character of the 24 places in Tower Hamlets. Intrusive elements in the foreground, middle ground and backdrop of such views will be resisted. Development will be required to demonstrate how it:
 Complies with the requirements of the London View Management Framework and World Heritage Site Management Plans (Tower of London and Maritime Greenwich);
 Positively contributes to the skyline of strategic importance, forming from the silhouettes of tall building clusters around Canary Wharf (as defined in the Policies Map);
 Preserves or enhances the prominence of the borough-designated landmarks and the skyline of strategic importance the borough designated views;
 Preserves or enhances local views identified in conservation area appraisals and management guidelines;
 Preserves or enhances visual connection of the public realm with water spaces; and
 Enhances townscape and other local views which are important to the identity and character of the place."*

SUMMARY

The principal heritage consideration salient to our assessment is whether the proposals would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Regent's Canal Conservation Area, thus meeting the statutory duty at Section 72 of the 1990 Act.

The Site is the subject of an allocation (Marian Place Gas Works and The Oval) which sets out key design principles for the redevelopment, including an expectation that proposals will *"retain, reuse and enhance the existing heritage assets, including gasholders no. 2 and no. 5"*.

Paragraph 200 of the NPPF encourages the enhancement of conservation areas and the settings of heritage assets through development which will enhance or better reveal their significance.

The Proposed Development would be required to meet the requirements set out at DM24 of the Managing Development Document (2013), SP10 of the Core Strategy 2025 and Policies S.DH3 and D.DH4 of the Local Plan 2031.

// MARIAN PLACE, BETHNAL GREEN



Historic Development

3.0 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

3.1 This section provides a description of the historic development of the Site and that of the surrounding area. Our analysis begins in the 18th century, as prior to this, the structures at the Site and those in its immediate environment had not yet been constructed.

3.2 This section and **Section 4.0** have been informed by archival research and secondary sources, including:

- National Grid Archives, Warrington;
- London Metropolitan Archives;
- 'Industries: Introduction' in *A History of the County of Middlesex: Volume 2, General: Ashford, East Bedfont With Hatton, Feltham, Hampton With Hampton Wick, Hanworth, Laleham, Littleton*. Ed. William Page (London, 1911). Pp. 121-132. Accessed via British History Online [<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/middx/vol2/pp121-132>];
- Pevsner Architectural Guides: *The Buildings of England: London 5: East*; O'Brien, Cherry & Pevsner (2005);
- English Heritage: *London Gasholders Survey: The Development of the Gasholder in London in the later 19th century* (2000);
- English Heritage: *Gas Industry Step 3 Report for Monuments Protection Programme* (2002); and
- *Archaeology South East: Bethnal Green Gasholders, London, Historic Buildings Record (Historic England Level 2)* (2016).

Development of the Regent's Canal

3.3 The Regent's Canal was constructed in the early 19th century to facilitate the transportation of goods between the Midlands and the River Thames, by providing a link from the Grand Union Canal at Paddington to the river at Limehouse.

3.4 The canal was opened in two sections, the first between Paddington and Camden in 1816, and the second between Camden and Limehouse, including the stretch adjacent to the Development Site, in 1820. The canal was first used mainly for the distribution of coal, which was loaded at Regent's Canal Dock, with coal barges supplying local coal merchants and gas works, including the Shoreditch Gas Works.

3.5 As traffic on the canal increased, so too did the number of industrial premises lining its banks and basins. Gas plants were amongst the first occupiers of canalside sites to take advantage of cheap transportation to bring in the vast amounts of coal needed.

3.6 Towards the Shoreditch end, other industrial processes took advantage of the area's infrastructure and easy availability of water. To the west, the range of industrial uses was more mixed, and came to dominate the canal environment over time.

The Gas Works

3.7 The Imperial Gas Light and Coke Company was incorporated by Act of Parliament in 1821, opening its first gasworks beside the Regent's Canal in 1823 at Shoreditch. In addition, the company opened works at Fulham and Bromley-by-Bow, and at St Pancras, also adjacent to the Regent's Canal, in 1824.

3.8 Greenwood's Map of 1827, however, does not show the Shoreditch Gasworks, the area of the site is shown as a large pond to the east of Cambridge Street (**Figure 3.1**). A large fishpond is illustrated in the area later occupied by the Marian Place Gasholder site (**Figure 3.2**).

3.9 The only architectural drawings to survive at London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) are of one of the Retort Houses (**Figures 3.3 and 3.4**) from the Metropolitan Board of Works collection, which are undated, but catalogued as c.1850. As annotated by E G Stewart (a gas engineer who retired as a Group Engineer with responsibility for six gasworks after forty-four years' service), **Figure 3.2** shows the same type of retort house as shortly to be executed at Fulham. This was designed by Samuel Clegg, who in 1813 had built a gas plant which lit the works of Ackermann the printer and publisher. He became Consulting Engineer to the Company. **Figure 3.4** shows his multiple retort setting.

3.10 The retort house was clearly an early and substantial structure connected with one of the pioneering engineers. But the site rapidly became hemmed in and additional storage capacity needed to be provided.

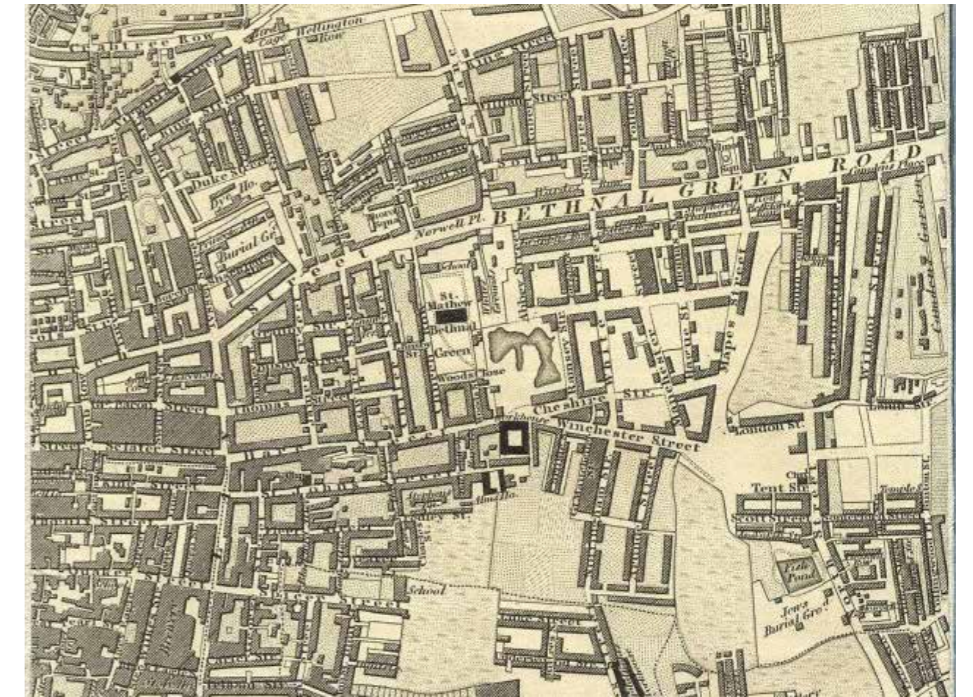


Figure 3.1 Greenwood's Map of 1827

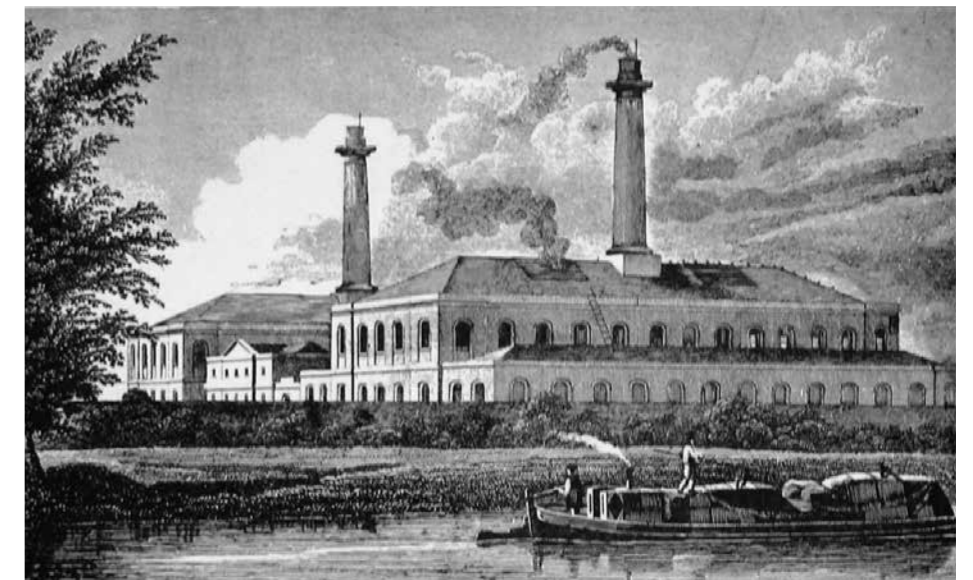


Figure 3.2 Shoreditch Gasworks

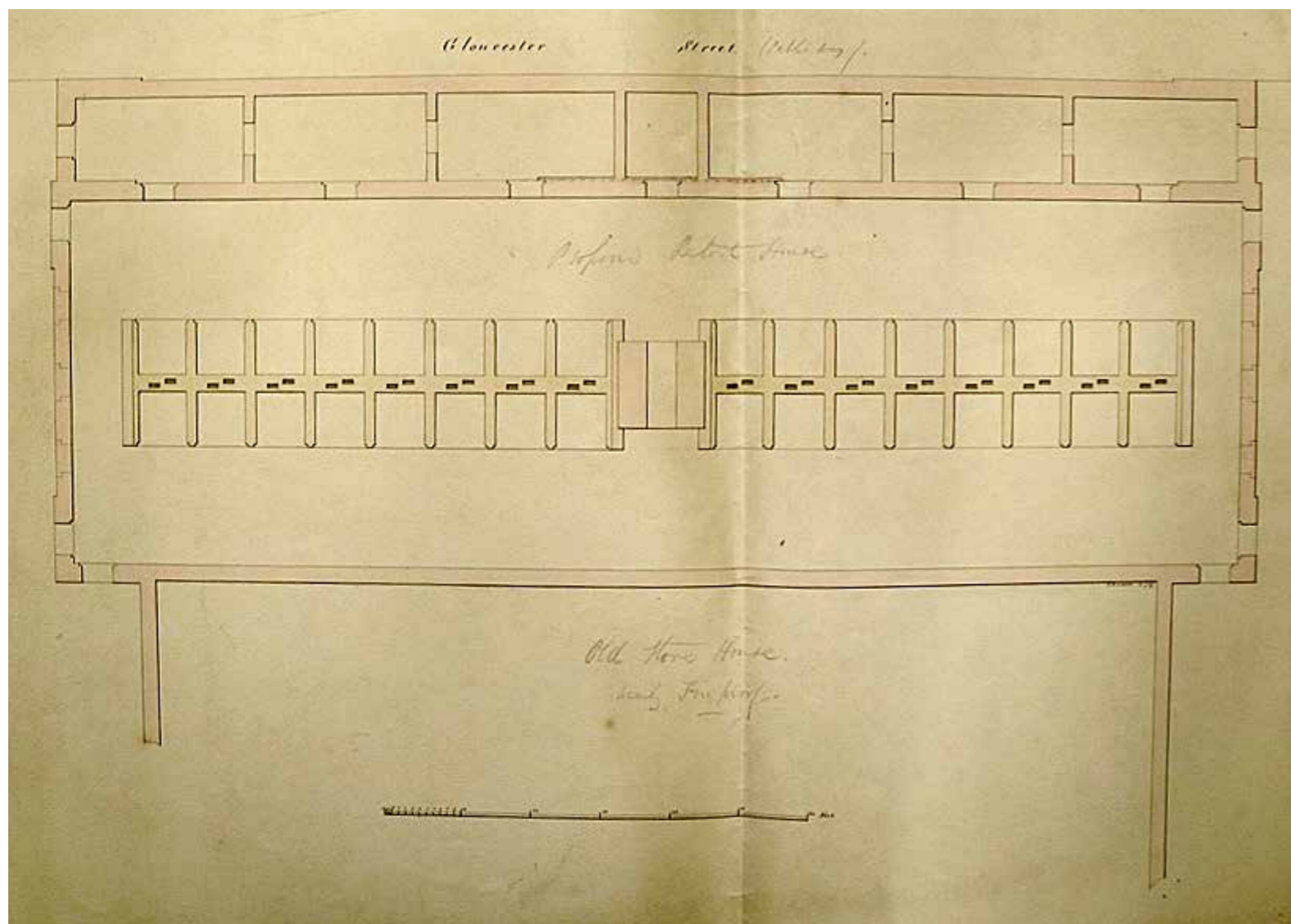


Figure 3.3 Shoreditch Retort House (LMA MBO/ Plans 339), probably 1850

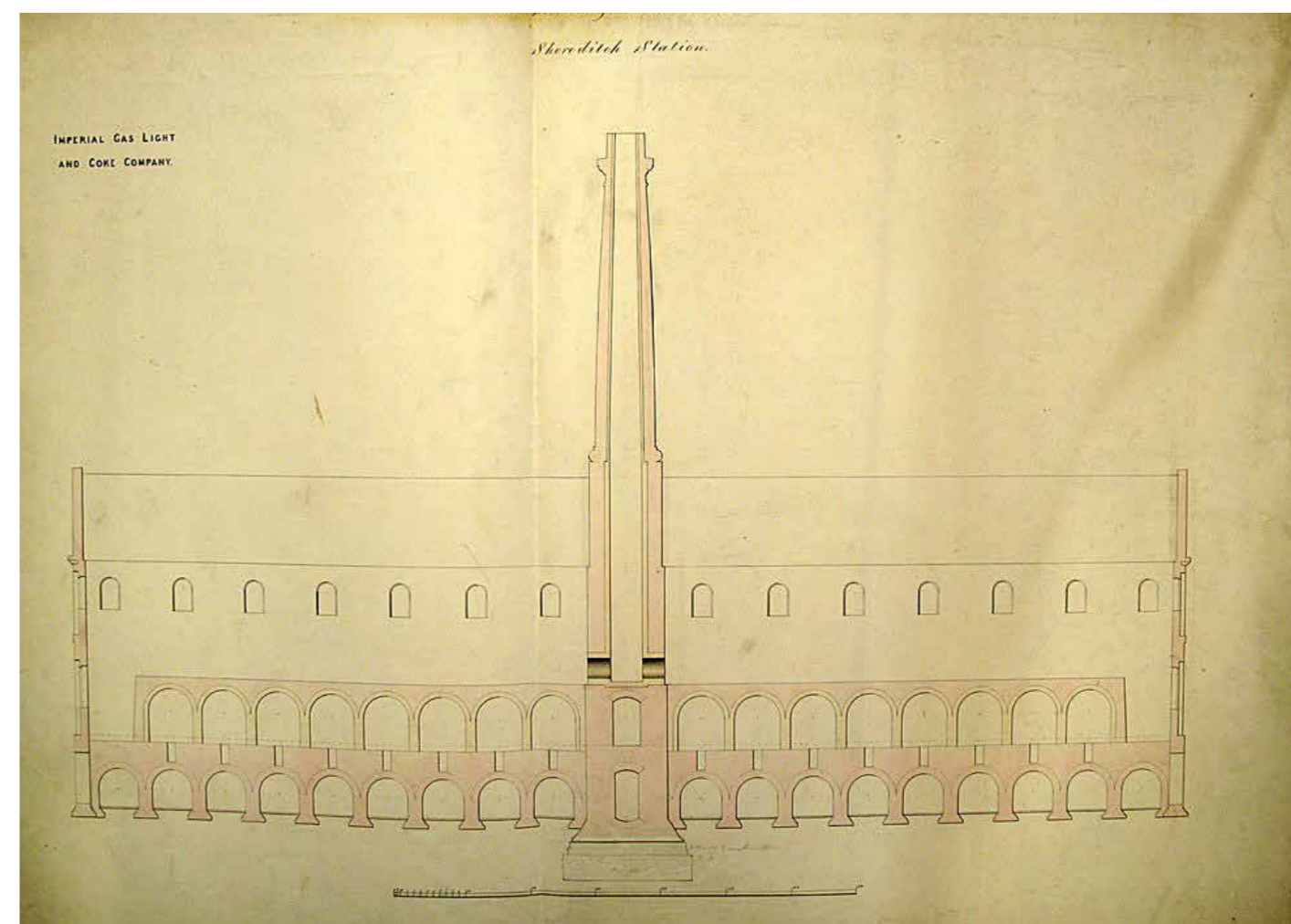


Figure 3.4 Shoreditch Retort House (LMA MBO/ Plans 339), probably 1850

Development of the Bethnal Green Gasholder Station

- 3.11 The new site at Bethnal Green (now known as Marian Place Gasholder Station, “the Site”), was built on land acquired from the Regents Canal Company for £5,750 in 1853. The Bethnal Green Parish Map, 1848 indicates that prior to the construction of the Marian Place holder station, the area was the location of a large pond with an offshoot or dock from the canal located to the north (see **Figure 3.5**). The English Heritage report (2000) notes that the site was previously occupied by an irregular fish pond and suggest this is why the site was sometimes known as “Bunker’s Pond” in the company minute books.
- 3.12 The report suggests that the dock at the Satellite station was used to offload coal destined for the main gasworks; however, the 1848 Parish Map indicates the dock existed before the land was purchased by the Imperial Gas and Light Co. The English Heritage Report also notes that the dock – Lime Wharf – was used by the tenant operating the lime kiln.
- 3.13 The first gasholder at Marian Place was constructed in 1853 (Gasholder No. 1) located in the southeast corner of the site. This was a large holder at the time – 127 feet (38.9m) diameter. It comprised a giant single order holder about 49 feet (15m) supporting a single tier of girders, with 16 elongated Tuscan columns.
- 3.14 Gasholder 1 was followed in 1856 by Number 4 Holder, with two lifts of 40 feet each. The guide frame was over 80 feet high (24m) and had two tiers of girders. The 24 columns were articulated in two superimposed orders, Doric and Corinthian. Historic England reports that it was the world’s largest holder in 1865 with a nominal capacity of 2,450,000 cubic feet (English Heritage (2000), p. 81). An illustration of the gasholders in the Illustrated London News, 27 November 1858 is reproduced at **Figure 3.6**.
- 3.15 Stanford’s Map of 1862 illustrates both the Shoreditch Gasworks and the Satellite holder station (Marian Place), both annotated as “Imperial Gas Works” (**Figure 3.7**). Two gasholders are depicted as having been at the Marian Place Site, corresponding with the locations of Gasholders 1 and 4. The northern part of the site was empty of buildings with a large dock projecting into the site from the Regent’s Canal.
- 3.16 Further to the west, the main gasworks site contained two large holders and six smaller holders and numerous buildings around the site boundary, indicating the gas production site. Haggerston Basin formed the western boundary to Shoreditch Gasworks and allowed barges to offload coal supplies for use in gas production. The Satellite holder station was merely a storage facility, gas was not produced at the site.

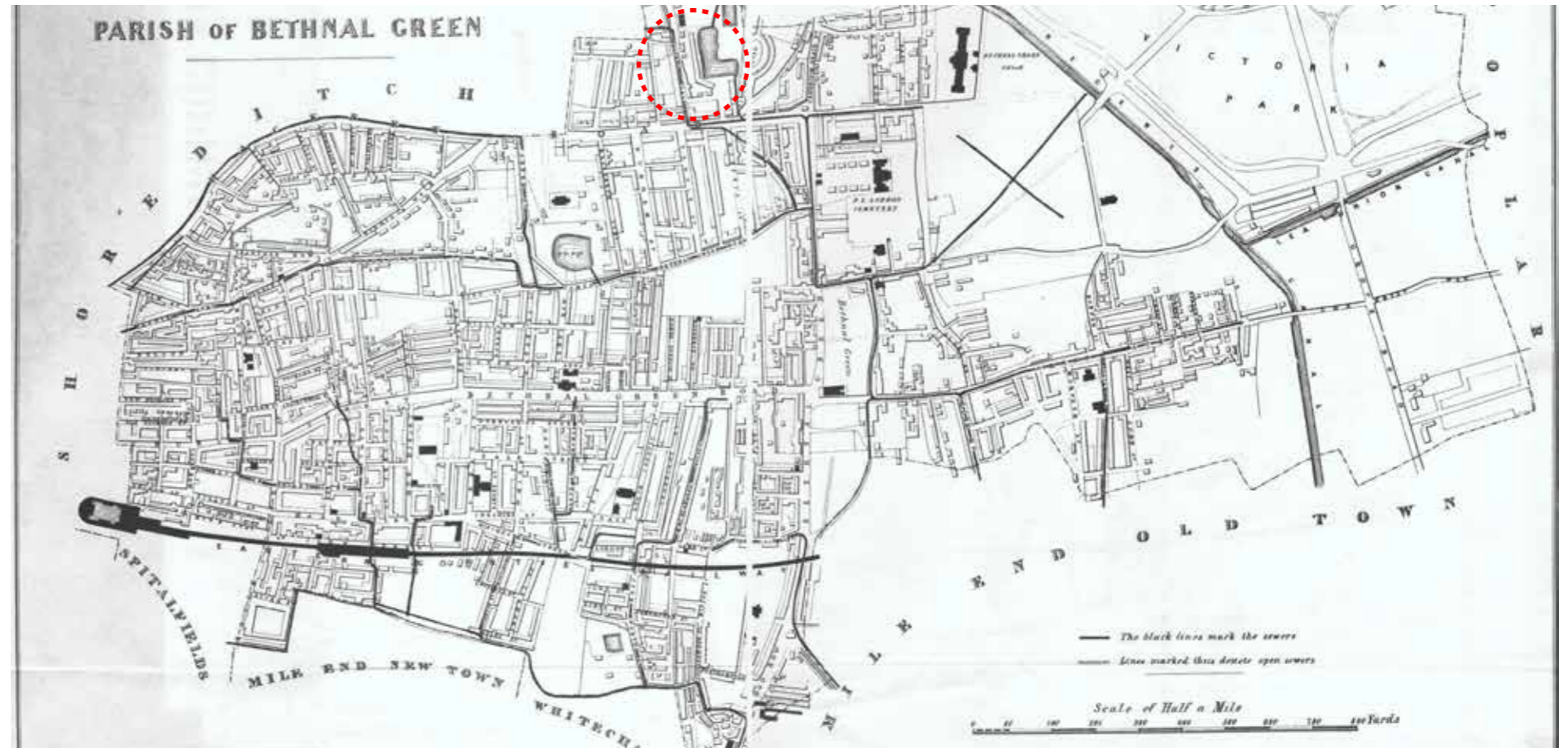


Figure 3.5 Bethnal Green Parish Map, 1848



Figure 3.6 Gasholder No. 4 from the Illustrated London News, 27th November 1858

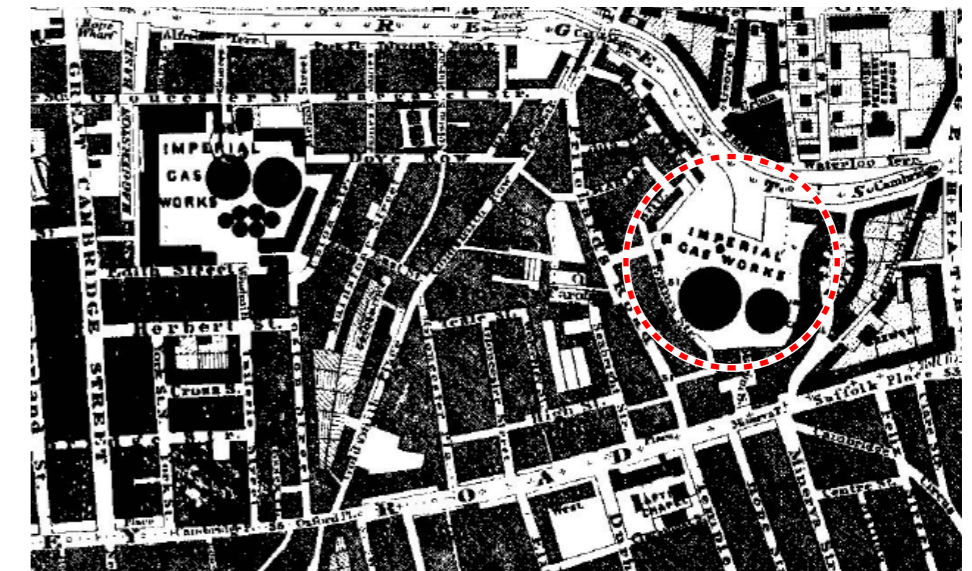


Figure 3.7 Stanford’s Map, 1862

- 3.17 The OS map of 1876-7 illustrates three gasholders on the site at Marian Place (Figure 3.8). Marian Place, Emma Street and The Oval are all annotated as is Lime Wharf. An access road ran through the gasholder site from Marian Place to Lime Wharf. The site was surrounded to east, west and south by streets of terraced housing. Three small buildings were indicated on the site, one close to the entrance from Marian Place and two along the boundary with Emma Street. The building closest to Marian Place may have been the superintendent's cottage referred to in English Heritage's Report (2000 p. 83).
- 3.18 Gasholder No. 2 was the third holder to be constructed at the Marian Place site, following a resolution in December 1864. It was built with a tank and dry well by Thomas Docwra, and accommodates 920,000 cubic feet of gas within a tank 2/3 the diameter of that of No. 4.
- 3.19 The COIL Advice Report produced by English Heritage in 2015 notes that:
"By the time Bethnal Green No. 2 was built, the hollow cast-iron column supported, double order, double tier holder... was well on the way to becoming the most common form of frame-guided holder."
- 3.20 The gasholder was built between 1865 and 1866, with a telescopic design.

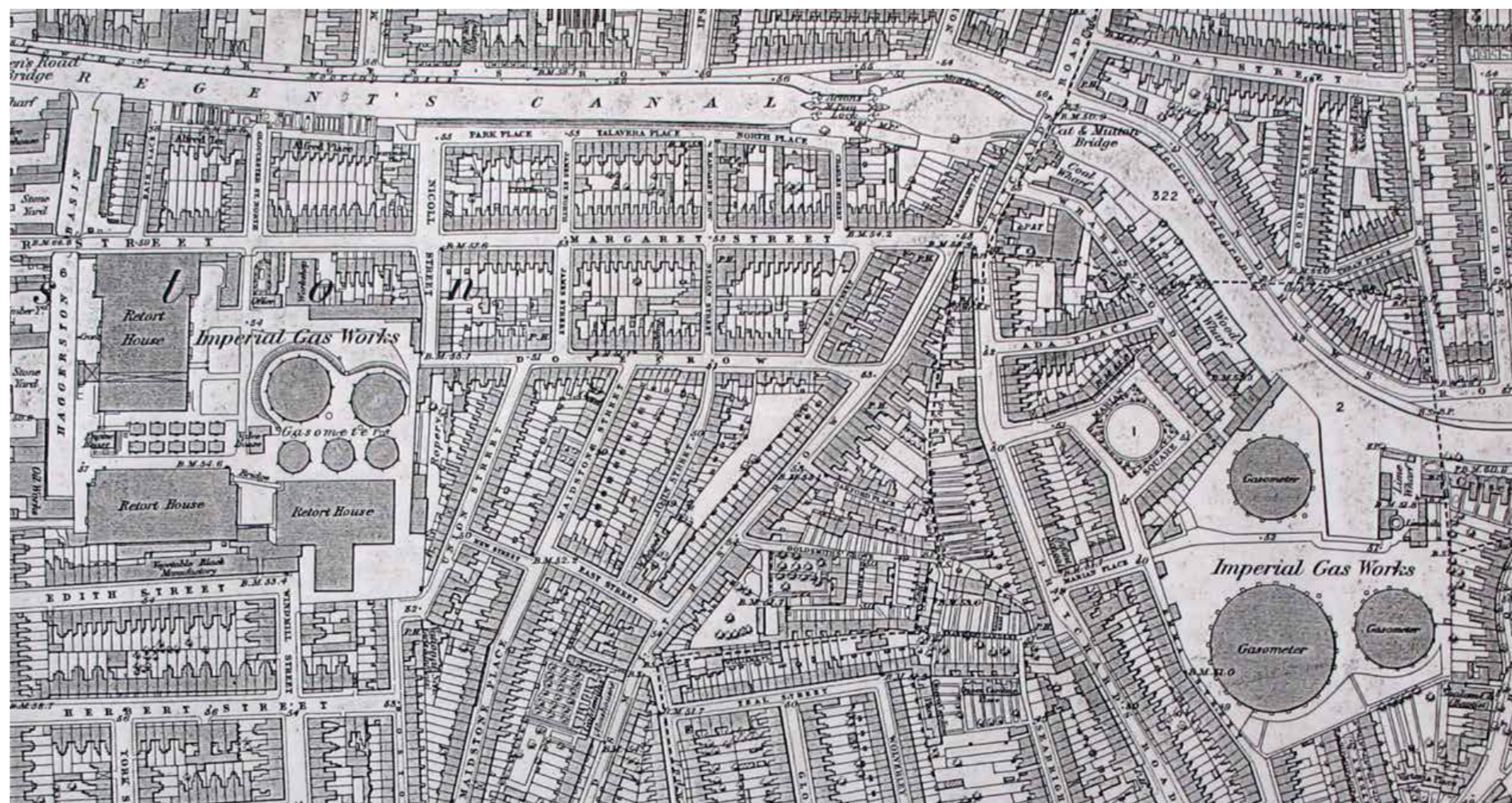


Figure 3.8 1876-1877 OS Map

- 3.21 Gasholder No. 5 was completed in 1889 and located in the northeast corner of the site, and was the largest holder built at that date by the Gas Light and Coke Company, and was one of a series designed by their engineer, George Trewby. In order to construct the holder, the tenant of Lime Wharf had to be bought out and the canal lay-by infilled. The holder's tank was constructed of concrete, 200 feet (61.0m) in diameter and 50.5 feet (15.4m) deep. The contract was awarded to Messrs Lucas, Aird and Ellis in January 1888 and completed by April 1889. The works included underpinning the adjacent tanks of gasholders No. 1 and No. 2.
- 3.22 The Imperial Gas Co. was merged in 1887 into the Gas Light & Coke Co., which in 1905-6 supplied all of Bethnal Green, except for a small western part which was supplied by the Commercial Co (Victoria County History).
- 3.23 The OS map of 1896 only shows the outline of the Marian Place gasholder site and not the individual gasholders (Figure 3.9). This illustration is the same on the 1916 OS map which indicates that the area was beginning to change (Figure 3.10). West of the Marian Place gasholder station, terraced housing around Marian Square had been removed. To the north-west, a large "stone yard" is illustrated.

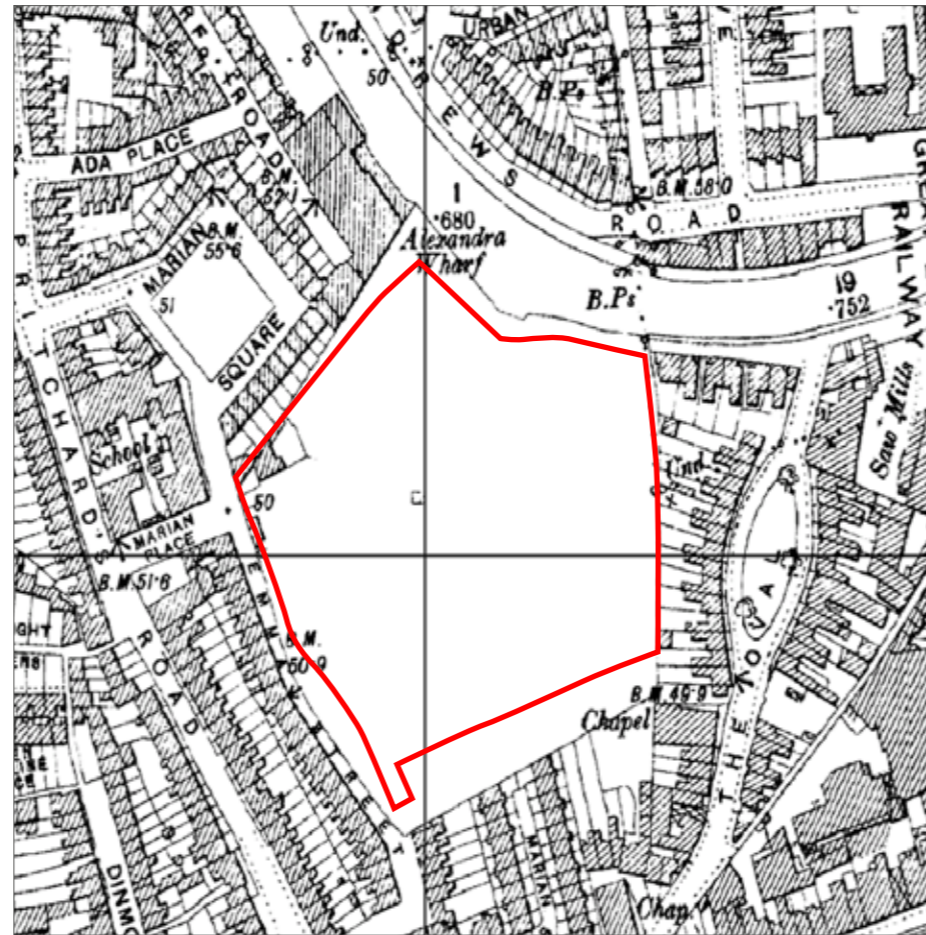


Figure 3.9 1896 OS

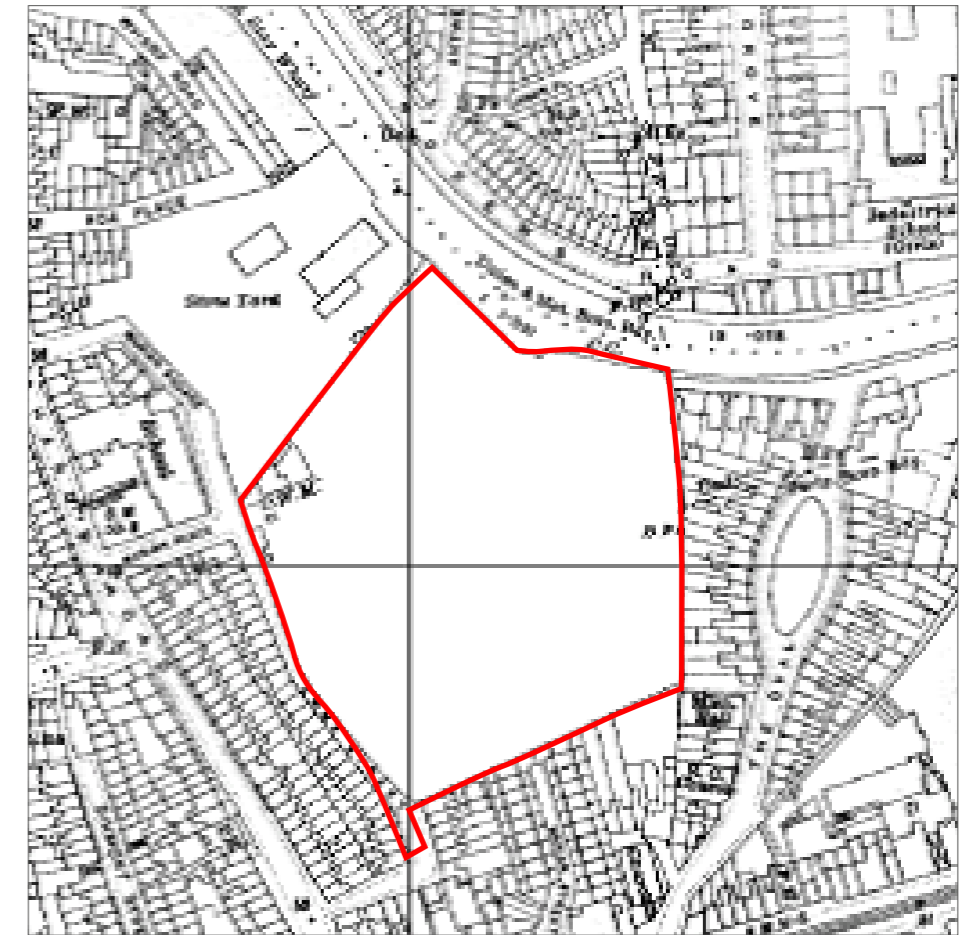


Figure 3.10 1916 OS

- 3.24 In 1925 No. 1 holder was converted to a four-lift spiral-guided holder of 1.1 million cubic feet, and No. 4 holder converted to a three-lift spiral-guided holder of 3.4 million cubic feet in 1931 (English Heritage (2000) p. 83).
- 3.25 The site in 1938 is shown in **Figure 3.11**. The document cited above notes that most structures on the site were demolished around 1937. Only three significant buildings are shown apart from the gasholders, and the only one labelled is a valve house.

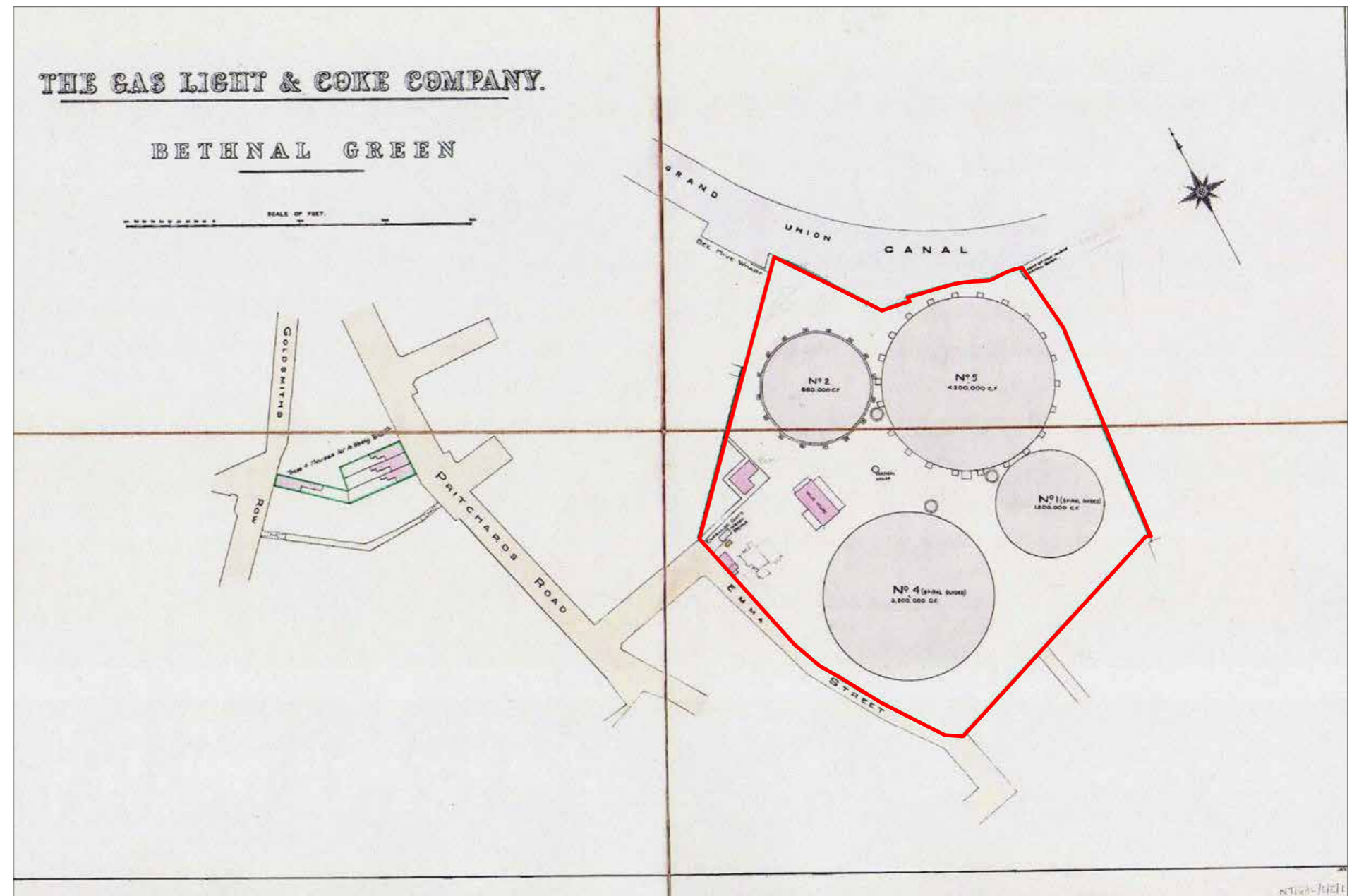


Figure 3.11 The Marian Place site in 1938 (NGA/NTGAL/E/E/1)

3.26 Production stopped at Shoreditch in 1944 following a V1 strike (see **Figure 3.12**), and in 1949 the entire works were demolished to create a public open space – Haggerston Park. The Bethnal Green site was therefore de-contextualised at a stroke. Other gasholder stations were built elsewhere to serve relatively distant gasworks.

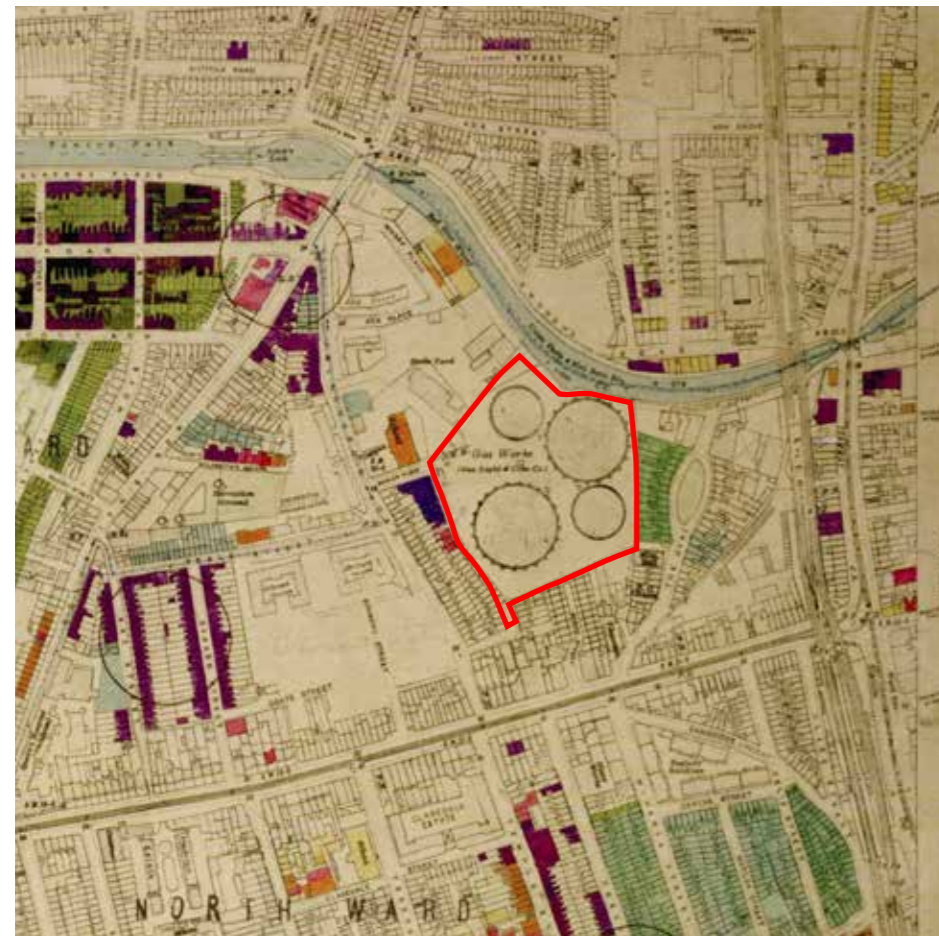


Figure 3.12 LCC Second World War Bomb Damage Map

Post-War Redevelopments

- 3.27 The OS maps of 1950-51 and 1961-71 show how the area surrounding the Marian Place site changed following WWII (**Figures 3.13 and 3.14**). The streets of terraced housing were swept away and replaced with large residential estates. Large commercial buildings now surround the gasholder site to the west, south and east. Not only was the gasworks decontextualized by the destruction and demolition of the Shoreditch gasworks, but the 19th century street layout and character was also swept away by the post-WWII redevelopment of the area.
- 3.28 From the mid-1950s, the Councils built increasingly tall buildings, encouraged by government grants and the preference for a jagged skyline over the monotony of Victorian terraces and lower buildings.

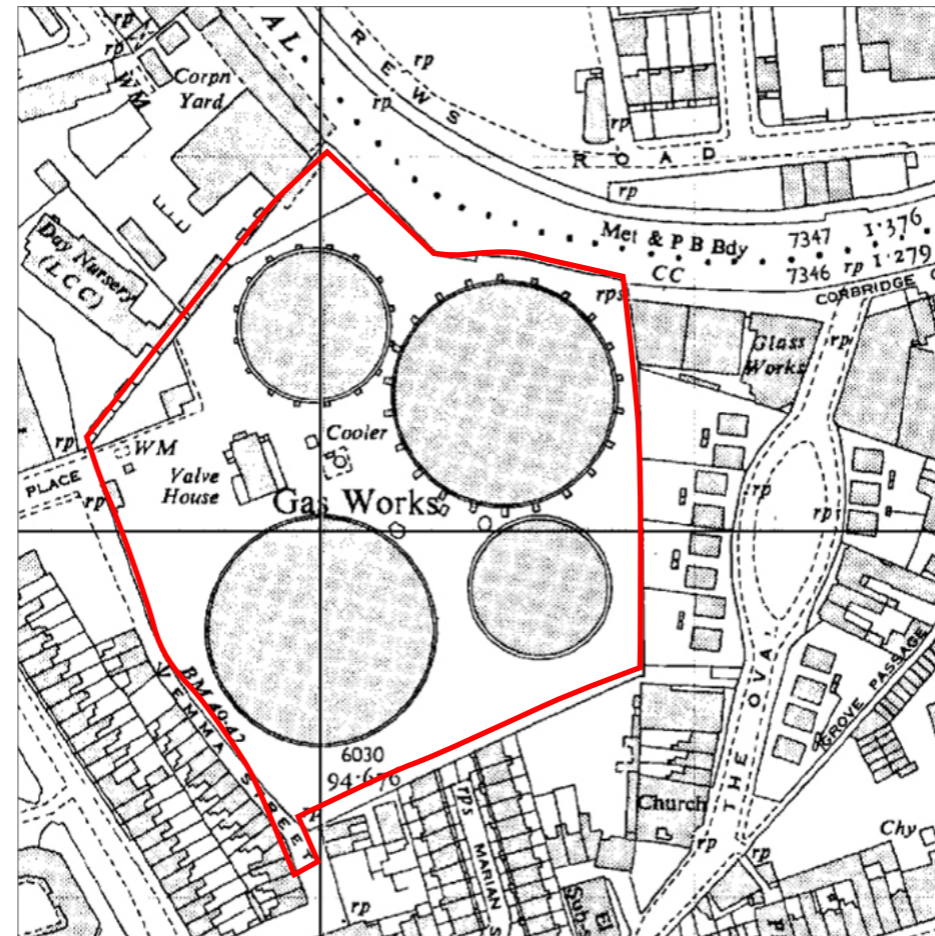


Figure 3.13 1950-1951 OS Map

3.29 To the south of the Site, Sir Denys Lasdun and his partners designed a cluster block scheme for the Claredale Estate in 1957. Keeling House (grade II*) was constructed with 16 storeys, accommodating 56 stacked maisonettes separated by bands of concrete, and 8 bed-sitting rooms on the fifth floor. These opened in 1960, in a clearance area which stretched from the pre-war Claredale House to Old Bethnal Green Road, where Peachey Edwards House contained 20 flats for old people.

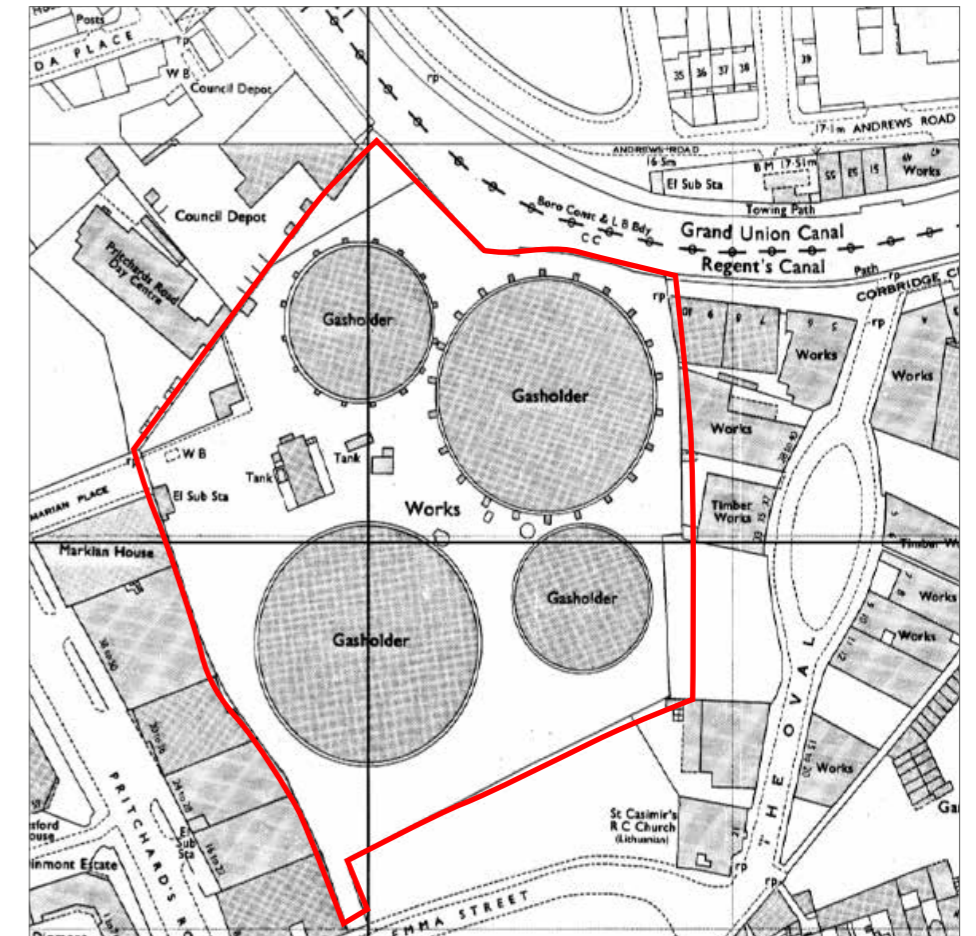


Figure 3.14 1961-1971 OS Map

3.30 A 1972 plan in the National Gas Archives identifies one of the buildings on the Site as a Foreman's house, and shows a new addition, a gas pumping plant, presumably built since the supply was converted to natural gas (Figure 3.15). Figure 3.16 shows the site in 2010, essentially the same.

3.31 The context surrounding the Marian Place gasholder station continues to change. The former warehouse buildings along the canal are now converted to residential use. Little of the 19th-century context remains except for the canal structure, although the use of the canal is now for pleasure and tourism rather than the movement of industrial materials.

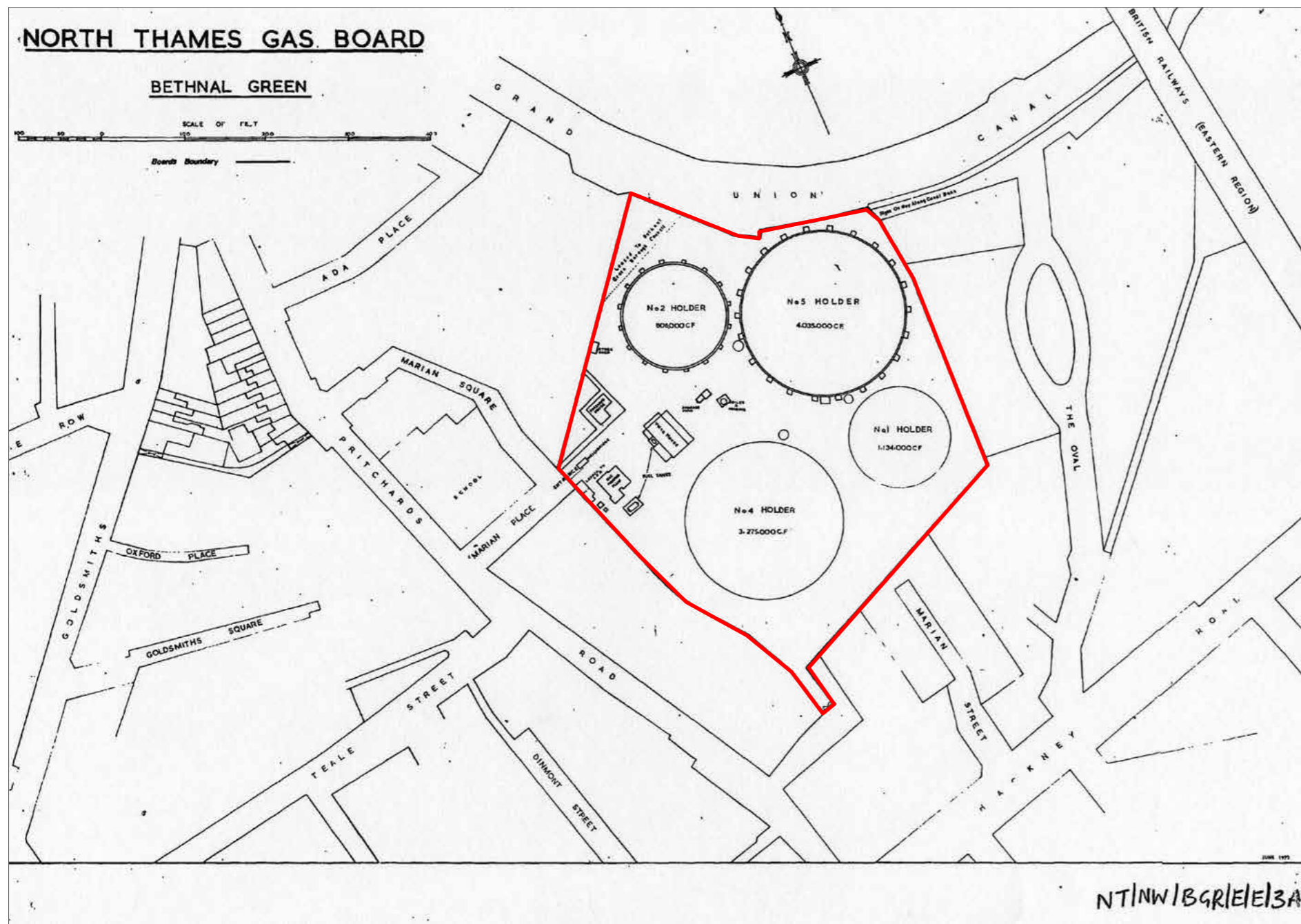


Figure 3.15 The Marian Place site in 1972 (NGA NT/NW/BGR/E/E/3A)

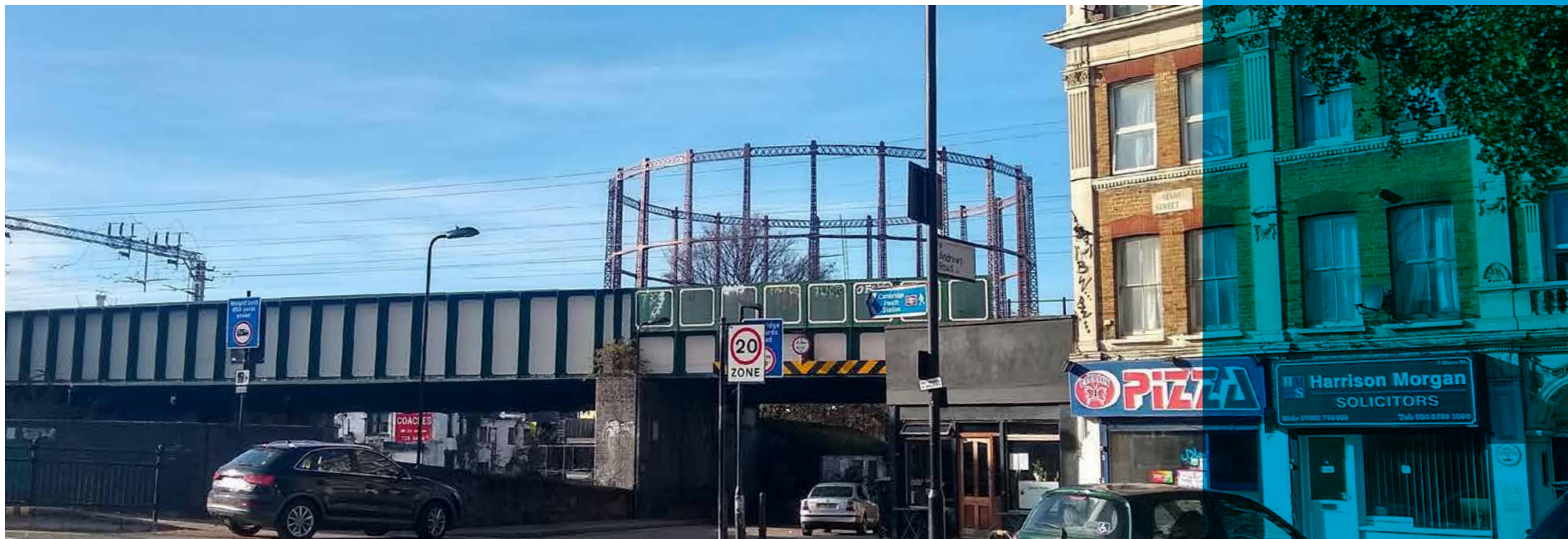
Summary

- 3.32 To summarise key dates in the development of the site:
- 1821: The Imperial Gas Light and Coke Company was established.
 - 1823: Shoreditch and St Pancras Gasworks was built.
 - 1853: Marian Place was established as a satellite storage station, and Gasholder 1 was constructed.
 - 1856: Gasholder nos. 2 and 4 were constructed.
 - 1889: Gasholder no. 5 was constructed.
 - 1925: Gasholder no 1 was converted to a spiral guided.
 - 1931: Gasholder no. 4 was converted to a spiral guided holder.
 - 1944: Production of gas at Shoreditch stopped after a V1 strike.
 - 1949: Shoreditch works demolished and land used to create Haggerston Park.



Figure 3.16 An aerial photograph of the Marian Place site in 2010

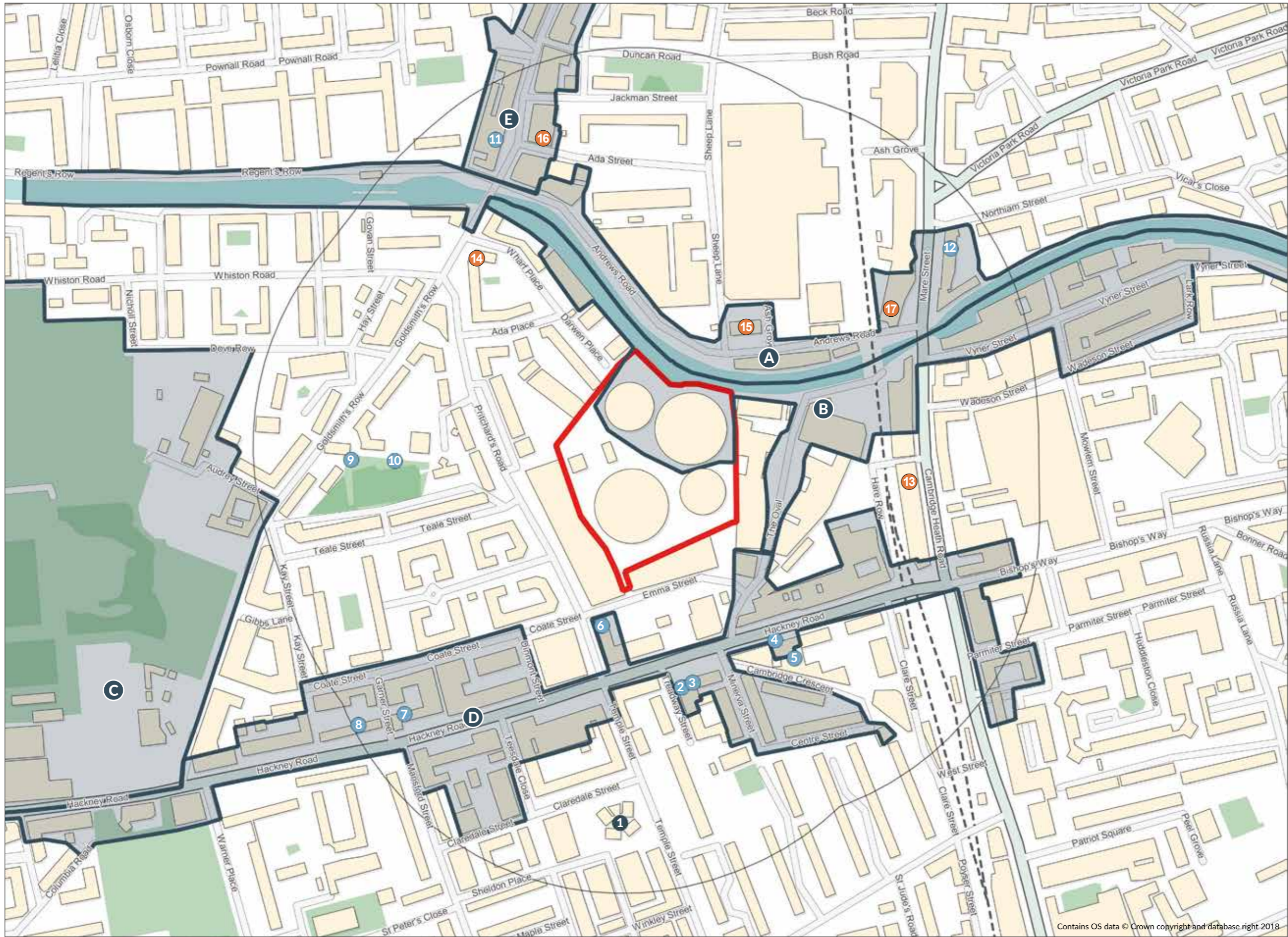
// MARIAN PLACE, BETHNAL GREEN



Assessment of Heritage Assets' Significance

4.0 ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE ASSETS' SIGNIFICANCE

- 4.1 Paragraph 189 of the NPPF requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets likely to be affected by development proposals. It is stated that the level of detail should be proportionate to an asset's importance, and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal.
- 4.2 The Application Site comprises two gasholders within the Regent's Canal Conservation Area, which are the subject of a Certificate of Immunity from Listing (COIL) granted in 2015. There are also a number of other listed buildings and Conservation Areas within the setting of the Site, the setting of which may change as a result of the proposals.
- 4.3 Accordingly, we provide a description and assessment of these assets below, as well as an assessment of the contribution made by the Site to that significance and/ or the appreciation thereof.
- Heritage Assets at the Site**
- 4.4 Below, we consider the heritage significance of the four gasholders at the Site, and their contribution to the Regent's Canal Conservation Area, which covers the two northernmost gasholders (Nos. 2 and 5).
- 4.5 All four gasholders were first appraised as part of a comprehensive review of the gas industry carried out for English Heritage's Monuments Protection Programme (MPP) in 2000. In response to an application to list gasholder No. 1 in 2013, English Heritage advised that the holder be rejected with a steer not to list- though no decision was formally made as the gasholder was not under threat.
- 4.6 Subsequent to this, an application for a Certificate of Immunity from Listing was submitted in 2014, for which the gasholders were assessed against the criteria provided in Historic England's Utilities and Communications Selection Guides and Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings (2010).
- 4.7 Through their assessment, English Heritage found that the gasholders at the site were not of sufficient interest to warrant inclusion on the statutory list. The report stated:
- "A number of factors serve to reduce the importance of the site. Firstly, Marian Place was developed as a satellite gasholder station to the company's gasworks at Shoreditch. The demolition of this site following its closure in 1953 removed the functional context of the satellite holders at Bethnal Green. Secondly, since there was no gas production on the site, being used solely for storage, its interest in the history of the gas industry is of a lesser order than those sites where coal gas was actually produced. Thirdly, the group value of the individual holders is significantly reduced by the conversion of two of the four holders to spiral-guided holders in the 1920s and 30s. This included the two earliest holders on the site, No. 1 and No. 4."*
- 4.8 Further, the report stated that having been converted to spiral-guided holders in the early 20th century, Gasholders No.1 and 4:
- "have no special interest, not being early enough to be innovative since spiral-guided holders were developed from the 1890s."*
- 4.9 Accordingly, a COIL was granted in December 2015.
- 4.10 Below, we consider gasholder Nos. 2 and 5. Nos. 1 and 4 are not discussed, as these are not considered to possess any heritage value, and are not within a Conservation Area.
- Gasholder No. 2**
- 4.11 Gasholder No. 2 is column guided and located in the northwest corner of the Site. It forms the earliest surviving above-ground structure at the Site.
- 4.12 The gasholder has two lifts within a guide frame of 16 cast iron columns in two orders, and two tiers of composite girders. It is 133 feet (40.6m) wide, and had a capacity of approximately 900,000 cubic feet. Its original height was about 73 feet (22m) but this is now reduced as the corniced caps to the columns have been removed.
- 4.13 Where the lower girders are attached, the gasholder has Doric decoration with triglyphs and metopes. There are two levels of caged ladders providing access to the gasholder, one for each tier of the guide frame. These are mounted to the south east, and are open to allow access to any level of extension of the bell.
- 4.14 English Heritage's 2015 COIL report states that-
- "by the time Bethnal Green No. 2 was built, the hollow cast-iron column supported, double order, double tier holder... was well on the way to becoming the most common form of frame-guided holder."*
- 4.15 The lower order of columns has Doric capitals topped by a junction section decorated with triglyphs and guttae. The upper order had Corinthian capitals but the attached acanthus leaf decoration has been removed leaving a simple flared capital with an egg and dart moulding above. Originally the columns were topped by blocks with cyma moulding but these have been removed leaving the inner guide rail projecting proud of the top of the column.
- 4.16 The frame possesses some intrinsic heritage interest as a gasholder of telescopic design with no more than one tier of girders in the guide frame. However, The 2015 COIL Advice Report by English Heritage notes-
- "Its claims to innovation are eroded by the fact that it was not the first gasholder with a telescopic design to be built... as a particular type, therefore, although an early example, it is not rare, and representatives of this type have already been designated. Furthermore, the demolition of the two earliest holders on the site has reduced its contextual value."*



HERITAGE ASSET PLAN

- Application Site
- Conservation Areas
- A. Regents Canal CA (Hackney Council)
- B. Regents Canal CA (Tower Hamlets Council)
- C. Hackney Road CA (Hackney Council)
- D. Hackney Road CA (Tower Hamlets Council)
- E. Broadway Market CA (Hackney Council)

Listed Buildings

- Grade II***
- 1. Keeling House
- Grade II**
- 2. 444 Hackney Road
- 3. 446-450 Hackney Road
- 4. Railed Wall and Gate
- 5. 456 Hackney Road
- 6. 2 Pritchards Road
- 7. 375-385 Hackney Road
- 8. 367-373 Hackney Road
- 9. Post at narrowing of Road
- 10. 2 Posts at end of Roadway
- 11. F Cooke's Eel, Pie and Mash Shop
- 12. 12-20 Mare Street

Non-Designated Heritage Receptors

- 13. 505, The Hare, Cambridge Heath Road (LBTH)
- 14. 11-12, Perseverance, Pritchards Road (LBTH)
- 15. 35-38 Andrews Road (LBH)
- 16. 1 Ada Street Workshops, E8 (LBH)
- 17. 5-11 Victoria Buildings, 11 Mare Street (LBH)
- 18. Gasholder No. 2
- 19. Gasholder No. 5



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Location:
Marian Place, Bethnam Green

Date:
October 2019

Scale:
1:3200 @ A3

Heritage Asset Plan

▲ North

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4.17 The gasholder possesses some historical interest as part of the development of the gas infrastructure in this part of London. It has lost some of its detailing, but still possesses some aesthetic and architectural merit as an attractive former industrial structure, with a recognisable form which contributes to the industrial character of the locality.

4.18 In terms of scale, the frame is lower than the adjacent No. 5, and is thus a less prominent feature. The gasholder does contribute to views along the canal within the Regents Canal Conservation Areas in both Tower Hamlets and Hackney, within a contained radius due to its scale. Within the wider townscape, the existing development in the environs of the Site largely occludes views of the gasholder.

4.19 In our judgement the gasholder is of some local historic, architectural and aesthetic interest. It also possesses some group value as part of the supplementary storage network for the Shoreditch Gasworks, though the works has since been demolished and this context lost.

4.20 As evidenced by the issuing of a COIL, this interest is not sufficient to warrant statutory designation,

Gasholder No. 5

4.21 Gasholder No. 5 was the last frame-guided gasholder to be constructed at the Site, and was completed in 1889. The gasholder was the fifth in a series designed by George Careless Trewby.

4.22 *English Heritage's report in 2000 described how:*

"The guide-frame details are virtually identical to the larger and slightly later Kensal Green No. 6, as described in 7.5. However, there are no diagonal bracing rods, so that the standards are not able to be quite as slender in relation to their overall height.

[...] The major technical distinction is the absence of diagonal bracing, which emphasises here the differences of principle from the rival work of George Livesey (see Section 10). All the shear forces from the wind loads are taken by the diagonal bars of the lattice work generating bending movements in the standards and girders."

4.23 The gasholder has a lattice guide frame of wrought iron with 22 standards and four tiers of girders, and was the first to use such a design for a large scale. Its guide frame corresponds to a 'Type 35' as defined in the English Heritage typology, and was constructed by S Cutler and Sons Ltd. The majority of the frame is constructed using riveted wrought iron components.

4.24 The lower three tiers of girders have an I-section lattice form, with St Andrew's Crosses between angle-irons. Four levels of caged ladders provide access to the gasholder, and are mounted to the south.

4.25 The gasholder is 200 feet (61m) in diameter and the frame is approximately 146 feet (44.5m) high. It has three lifts and nominal capacity of 4.2 million cubic feet. The tank is of reinforced concrete, constructed by the firm of Messrs Lucas, Aird and Ellis, and has a diameter of 200 feet (61.0m) and is 50 feet 6 in deep (15.4m). In building the tank, it was necessary to underpin the neighbouring gasholders (Nos. 1 and 2).

4.26 As with the other gasholders on Site, the destruction and removal of the Shoreditch gasworks has removed the wider context though it retains a relationship with Gasholder No. 2, and the wider Site (now disused).

4.27 The structure possesses some historic interest as part of the local industrial infrastructure of the late 19th century, though it is not a particularly early or notable example of its type, as recognised in the COIL decision.

4.28 Although it is accepted that Gasholder No. 5 was carefully designed and has a degree of aesthetic quality deriving from the proportions of the St Andrew's-Cross panels of the tapering standards, this does not in itself constitute particular interest. As the COIL Notification Report stated: "it merely raises it slightly above other surviving examples of this intentionally utilitarian development in gasholder design."

4.29 The guide frame conforms to a common 'type', which does not bestow particular architectural significance, but is of some aesthetic interest as an identifiable remnant of the area's industrial heritage.

4.30 The frame appears in a number of views from the Conservation Areas covering the Regent's Canal, as well as in the background of views towards the historic buildings at The Oval. It makes a positive contribution to the industrial character of the area.

Regent's Canal Conservation Area (LBTH)

4.31 The Development Site is partially located within the Regent's Canal Conservation Area, which was designated in October 2008 and is the subject of an Appraisal published by the Council in 2009. The designation covers the length of the canal from the borough boundary in the north, to the Limehouse basin in the south, as well as some pockets of historic townscape which are closely associated with and back on to the canal, including Vyner Street and The Oval (**Figure 4.1**).

4.32 The area has a post-industrial character, derived from the historic function of the canal and the associated development of mixed industrial buildings along its banks, which are also included within the designated area. Whilst the previous industrial processing has largely given way to recreational uses, the essential character of the area remains, focussed on the arrangement of the linear waterway flanked by the remaining elements of 19th and 20th century built form.

4.33 The Regent's Canal was the first industrial transport network constructed to serve wide areas of the country. It is of considerable historic interest though its association with John Nash, and as a remarkable early 19th century engineering and infrastructure undertaking. There is some survival of 19th and 20th century industrial buildings and warehouses, though these are interspersed with modern development.



Figure 4.1 View of The Oval

4.34 The character and appearance of the Conservation Area were considered as part of a recent planning inquiry into the redevelopment of the nearby Empress Coachworks Site (APP/E5900/W/17/3189374).

The Inspector described the CA thus:

"10. The Regent's Canal Conservation Area is a long linear conservation area which extends from Limehouse Basin in the south to the borough boundary in the north and beyond and into the adjoining London Borough of Hackney. The boundaries are drawn tightly around the Canal and features associated with it including bridges, locks, lock cottages, warehouse and industrial features such as the Bethnal Green gasometers. It also includes some pockets of historic townscape, such as the Oval, which are closely associated with and back onto the Canal. It is the association between all these elements which inform the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as a whole and its significance as a designated heritage asset."

4.35 The designation protects the special character of the banks of the Regent's Canal and specific features such as locks, bridges, wharves, moorings and the towpath, as well as the gasholders. The appraisal identifies the interrelationship between these features as part of the canal's special interest.

4.36 The Conservation Area Appraisal does not include a plan identifying buildings/ structures which provide a positive/neutral/negative contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area; however there are a number of references to buildings that contribute positively. These include the gasholders at the Site, of which No. 5 in particular is a prominent feature in some views along the length of the canal, and in the background of views towards the historic development at The Oval (**Figure 4.2**).

4.37 The Bethnal Green gasholders are described on page 9 of the CA Appraisal as:

"a remnant of the earliest days of the Canal when gas companies were keen to locate next to canals in order to make use of the cheap transportation of the large amounts of coal they required to operate. These are substantial structures which make a significant impression as you walk along the canal."

4.38 Views within and into the Conservation Area of Gasholder No. 2 are limited by its scale, setting and context, and there are very limited views of the smaller holder from outside of the Marian Place site. It is seen in views from the canal but the larger Gasholder No. 5 dominate views (**Figure 4.2**). Page 12 of the Appraisal notes that:

"The views within the Conservation Area are of the canal and towpath fringed by green stretching into the distance. In some instances these views also include structures associated with the canal including locks, lock cottages and bridges and industrial buildings [...] In the northern section of the canal the views are more industrial with the huge gasholders at Bethnal Green and the two plate girder railway bridges dominating an industrial skyline. Walking south, the views of Canary Wharf rising in the distance are astounding."

4.39 The space of The Oval has an inward-focussed character, centred on the open space surrounded by curved lines of development. Despite its designation as a London Square, The Oval is now only discernible by its shape which is redolent of the Regency terraces that were built during the time. The terraces have since been demolished and the only area that conveys the historic form is relatively recently re-laid floor surfaces, which have improved the appearance of this part of the CA.

Contribution the gasholders make to the setting and significance of the CA

4.40 Together with the road and rail bridges, and canal, the gasholders reflect the industrial past associated with the local area. They contribute to the industrial legacy, and act as a gritty but recognisable reference in local views.

4.41 Gasholder No. 5 can be seen above the building line, and through the passageway to the rear of Containerville, and positively contributes to the character of the area.

4.42 There are some views of the gasholders along the length of the canal, though these are limited by the orientation of the linear route, and the limited footpath on the canal's south side. Nevertheless, where these occur, they make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area, and the understanding of its industrial character.

4.43 In our judgement the gasholders make a positive contribution to the overall industrial character of the Conservation Area, and are a notable feature in views along the canal, though these have changed over time as the gasholders have fallen out of use, and become static features, rather than rising and falling. Gasholder No. 2 is not widely visible due to its position and scale.

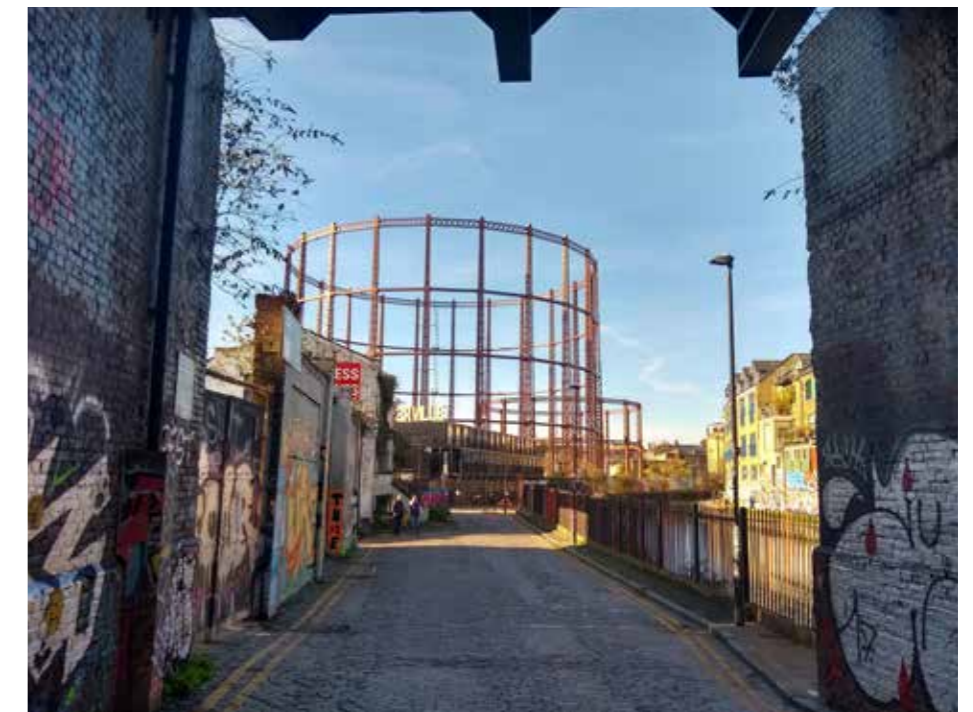


Figure 4.2 View of the gasholders from Cambridge Passage, taking in the Empress Coachworks (subject to a consent for redevelopment)

Heritage Assets in the study area

Regent's Canal Conservation Area (Hackney)

- 4.44 Across the borough boundary, the northern bank of the canal and a section further east are within the Hackney Regent's Canal Conservation Area, which was first designated as a Conservation Area in 2007. This Conservation area covers approximately 4km of the canal, and is described in an Appraisal of the same year. It was later extended in 2011, and further description of the area was provided in the 2011 Extension Cabinet Report.
- 4.45 As with the corresponding Regent's Canal Conservation Area in Tower Hamlets, the area primarily derives its special interest from its historic development as an important transport route flanked by industrial development. Contribution made by the Site to setting and significance
- 4.46 The Appraisal notes the prominence of the gasholders in the LBTH part of the canal, which are described as a "reminder of an industry that used to be prevalent throughout the Hackney section of the canal". As with the Tower Hamlets bank, the holders make a contribution to the industrial character and heritage of the north bank, and no. 5 in particular is a prominent feature in some views (Figures 4.3-4.5).



Figure 4.3 View from canal towpath towards the gasholders

4.47 As one moves further from the Application Site, the gasholders move in and out of view as the canal turns and interposing development comes into the view. Beyond Mare Street/Cambridge Heath Road, the bridge appears in views towards the holders, providing some screening whilst also contributing to the industrial character of the area.

4.48 As a feature within its setting, the gasholders make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, as part of the industrial heritage of the locality.

Hackney Road Conservation Area (LBTH)

4.49 The Hackney Road Conservation Area comprises a linear route along Hackney Road spanning from Shoreditch Church in the west towards Cambridge Heath Road. As with the two Regents Canal Conservation Areas, Hackney Road is focussed on a linear transport route flanked by associated development.

4.50 Hackney Road historically connected Essex with Smithfield Market in the City, which shaped the wide expanse of the street, and development comprises a range of commercial, retail and light industrial uses.

4.51 Built form includes early 19th century terraces and 20th century buildings, interspersed with post-war redevelopment, such as the 1957 Dorset Estate by Berthold Lubetkin.

4.52 The road is a busy east-west arterial route, described in the Appraisal as giving an impression "of faded grandeur, with elements of disrepair, neglect and vacant buildings such as the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for Sick Children".

Contribution made by the Site to setting and significance

4.53 The Application Site does not make any particular contribution to the special interest of the Conservation Area, which is derived from its long use as a transport route to the City.

4.54 There are some views of the taller gasholders, seen through townscape gaps, but these are not a prominent part of the experience within the area. The focus is on the east-west route, and the gasholders' appearance in views is incidental, and does not meaningfully contribute to the area's character and appearance.



Figure 4.4 View from close to Mare Street bridge



Figure 4.5 View from beyond Mare Street Bridge towards the gasholders

Hackney Road Conservation Area (LBH)

- 4.55 A small portion of the Hackney Road Conservation Area within the London Borough of Hackney falls within the study area, and was designated in 2008. The Conservation Area is in the south of the Borough, adjacent to the boundary with Tower Hamlets.
- 4.56 The designation covers buildings fronting the northern side of Hackney Road, and extends back to Whitson Road and Dove Row in the east, covering the open spaces of Hackney City Farm and Haggerston Park, which was formerly the site of the Shoreditch Gasworks with which Marian Place was associated.
- 4.57 This association is no longer legible and the basin of the Regent's Canal here has been infilled, though some brick remnants of the works have been incorporated into the layout of the park.

Contribution made by the Site to setting and significance

- 4.58 Gasholder No. 5 at Marian Place can be seen in views from within the Haggerston Park, and contributes to the setting as part of the range of industrial features which form part of the heritage of the locality. The former association between the land at the park and the gasholders can be understood, though the connection is no longer obvious to the casual observer. The contribution made by the Site to the setting and significance Conservation Area is correspondingly limited.

Broadway Market Conservation Area

- 4.59 Broadway Market Conservation Area was designated in 1995, and reviewed in 2005/2006. It lies to the north of the Site, and has a broadly north-east to south-west arrangement following the line of the Market Porter's Route, traditionally used for the transportation of produce from the fields in Hackney to markets in the City.
- 4.60 Built form in the Conservation Area includes 19th century terraces, many of which have shop fronts at ground floor level.
- 4.61 There is no particular historic or visual relationship between the Site and the Conservation Area, and the gasholders make no particular contribution to its setting, and by extension, character and appearance.

Contribution made by the Site to setting and significance

- 4.62 Gasholder No. 5 is partially visible from the southernmost part of the Conservation Area as Broadway Market meets Pritchard's Road and the junction with Andrews Road. From that location, the Gasholder No. 5 is visible and forms a prominent feature in the local area. From this location the viewer can appreciate the industrial history of the area, signified by the gasholder (and the Site more generally).
- 4.63 In forming a judgement as to the contribution to the setting and significance of the CA, one should be mindful that Gasholder No. 5 is visible from a limited part of the CA at its southern end. When considered as a whole, the contribution to the significance is correspondingly limited.

Listed Buildings

- 4.64 Below, we provide an assessment of the listed buildings within the study area. Where these share elements of their setting, or are experienced within the same context, these elements have been considered together.
- Keeling House (grade II*)*
- 4.65 Keeling House was added to the statutory list in 1993, and comprises a residential 'cluster' block, built to designs by Sir Denys Lasdun between 1957 and 1959. It is of reinforced concrete, partly site-cast and partly faced in Portland stone aggregate pre-cast panels. Its surface is now painted (**Figure 4.6**).
- 4.66 The building has sixteen storeys, comprising 56 two-storey maisonette flats, and eight studio flats. Its plan comprises subsidiary towers, linked to a core containing stairs, lifts and activity areas.
- 4.67 Keeling House possesses historic and architectural interest as an important example of post-war housing, which embodies Lasdun's ideas on urban renewal and housing.

Contribution made by the Site to setting and significance

- 4.68 Keeling House is situated at the south west of the junction between Temple Street and Claredale Street, within an area characterised by post-war redevelopment. It forms a landmark by virtue of its scale and unusual form, and sits within an area of residential character.
- 4.69 Owing to interposing development and the arrangement of streets, there is limited intervisibility between Keeling House and the gasholders at Marian Place. Where there may be some partially screened views of the gasholders from the environs of the building, these are incidental, and do not contribute to its setting and therefore special interest.

Post at narrowing of Road (grade II)

- 4.70 This post was added to the statutory list in 1975, and comprises an early-to-mid-19th century cast iron gun post, inscribed 'S.L.S Vestry'. The post possesses historic and architectural (design) value as part of the early street furniture in the locality.

2 posts at end of roadway (grade II)

- 4.71 These posts were added to the statutory list in 1975, and comprise a pair of early-to-mid-19th century gun posts. They possess historic and architectural interest as part of the early street furniture in the locality.

Contribution made by the Site to setting and significance

- 4.72 The posts have a heavily altered, contained setting within the enclave of residential development between Goldsmiths Row, Teale Street and Pritchard's Road. Between the blocks of residential development are a number of access routes and open spaces which make a positive contribution to the setting of the posts.
- 4.73 There is no historic or functional relationship between these assets and the Site. As a consequence we consider that the Application Site does not contribute to the setting and significance of these assets.

**Listed Buildings within the Hackney Road Conservation Area (LBTH):
444 Hackney Road, 446-450 Hackney Road, Railed Wall and Gate, 456
Hackney Road, 2 Pritchards Road, 375-385 Hackney Road, 363-373
Hackney Road**

4.74 These listed buildings are situated within the Hackney Road Conservation Area, which is focussed on the linear east-west route to the south of the Site.

444 Hackney Road (grade II)

4.75 444 Hackney Road was added to the statutory list in 1973, and comprises an early 19th century stock brick house, set forward of the remainder of the terrace at 446-450 Hackney Road (Figure 4.7). The building possesses historic and architectural interest as part of the early development in the area, and as a good example of a house of this period.



Figure 4.6 444 Hackney Road

446-450 Hackney Road (grade II)

4.76 This terrace of early 19th century houses was added to the statutory list in 1973. The buildings are stock brick, with two storeys and basements (Figure 4.8). The buildings possess historic and architectural interest as a good example of an early 19th century terrace which provides evidence of the early development in the locality.

Railed wall and gate (grade II)

4.77 The railed wall and gate dates to the 19th century, and marks a boundary along Hackney Road. It was added to the statutory list in 1973. The wall possesses historic and architectural (design) interest as a 19th century boundary treatment.



Figure 4.7 446-450 Hackney Road

456 Hackney Road (grade II)

4.78 456 Hackney Road was added to the statutory list in 1973. It is a two storey, early 19th century house built in stock brick. The house possesses historic and architectural interest as part of an early phase of development in the locality.

2 Pritchard's Road (grade II)

4.79 2 Pritchard's Road was added to the statutory list in 1998, and comprises a two storey terraced house built circa 1820, with a rendered and whitewashed plinth to the front elevation (Figure 4.9). The building possesses historic and architectural interest as a good example of an 1820s terraced house in the locality.



Figure 4.8 2 Pritchards Road

375-385 Hackney Road (grade II)

- 4.80 375-385 Hackney Road were added to the statutory list in 1973, and comprise an early 19th century stock brick terrace of townhouses, arranged in pairs (**Figure 4.10**).
- 4.81 The terrace possesses historic and architectural interest as an attractive range of terraces which forms part of the early 19th century development in the locality.



Figure 4.9 Corner of 375 Hackney Road

363-373 Hackney Road (grade II)

- 4.82 363-373 Hackney Road were added to the statutory list in 1973, and comprise a range of stock brick townhouses, built circa 1820, and arranged in pairs (**Figure 4.11**).
- 4.83 The buildings possess historic and architectural interest as a range of 19th century buildings which contribute to our understanding of the historic streetscape.

Contribution made by the Site to setting and significance

- 4.84 The buildings are arranged along the linear route of Hackney Road, which contains a mix of modern development and historic residential buildings. The linear axis of the street limits views towards the gasholder site, though roads to the north and townscape gaps allow incidental views at intervals.
- 4.85 The scale of interposing development on the north wide of Hackney Road and in the environs of the Oval, and at the junction of Pritchards Road and Emma Street, screens views towards the gasholders, and defines the separation between the commercial and residential streets to the south and the industrial character of the canal way. We conclude that the Application Site does not contribute to the setting and significance of these assets.



Figure 4.10 369-371 Hackney Road, which form part of the terrace of pairs at 363-373

*Listed Buildings within the Hackney Road Conservation Area (LBH):
12-20 Mare Street*

- 4.86 These buildings are situated to the west of the Site, within the Hackney Road Conservation Area in the London Borough of Hackney.

12-20 Mare Street (grade II)

- 4.87 12-20 Mare Street were added to the statutory list in 1975, and comprise a row of late 18th-early 19th century houses of three storeys with two windows each (**Figure 4.12**). The buildings are stock brick with stucco detailing to the front elevations, and some have 19th century shop fronts.
- 4.88 The buildings possess historic and architectural interest as part of the 18th-19th century street scene in the local area, and contribute to the legibility of its development.

Contribution made by the Site to setting and significance

- 4.89 The setting of the buildings is defined by the linear route of Mare Street, which is flanked by residential and commercial development of a comparable scale. Views towards the Site are screened by development on the west side of the road, and by the road and rail bridge over the canal.
- 4.90 There are some views towards the upper parts of Gasholder no. 5, but these are incidental, and do not meaningfully contribute to the setting of the listed terrace, or the appreciation of its historic or architectural interest. Overall, we conclude that the Application Site does not contribute to the setting and significance of the listed buildings.



Figure 4.11 12-20 Mare Street

Listed Buildings within the Broadway Market Conservation Area: F Cooke's Eel, Pie and Mash Shop

4.91 These heritage assets are situated within the Broadway Market Conservation Area, to the north of the Site, from which they are separated by the canal. They are focussed on the high street frontage, which has a strong linear emphasis and a character distinct from the area to the south.

F Cooke's Eel, Pie and Mash Shop (grade II)

4.92 This building was added to the statutory list in 2018, and comprises an eel, pie and mash shop which opened in 1900, and was refitted in the 1930s, from which it retains much of its interior. It comprises part of a mid-19th century terrace, and has residential accommodation above.

4.93 The list entry notes that the building is of historic and architectural interest, and is a "well-preserved example of a type of establishment, and a type of cuisine, that formed a staple of early-C20th working class life, and remains a distinctive, albeit increasingly rare, presence on the high streets of the capital today."

Contribution made by the Site to setting and significance

4.94 There is no visual or historical relationship between the Application Site and this listed building. We conclude that the Application Site does not contribute to the setting and significance of this asset.

Registered Parks and Gardens

Victoria Park (grade II*)

4.95 Whilst not within the study area, there is the potential for some views towards the gasholders from within Victoria Park, and in consequence, we include an appraisal of its significance and the contribution made to its setting by the Site.

4.96 The park was designated in 1987, and comprises a public open space designed by James Pennethorne in the mid-19th century. It was later altered following significant damage sustained during the Second World War, and includes a range of amenity facilities including a boating lake, tennis courts, cricket nets and a changing pavilion, as well as tree lined lawns and open ground.

4.97 The park possesses historic and architectural (design) interest as a good example of a 19th century public park, with a range of later amenity facilities.

Contribution made by the Site to setting and significance

4.98 The park has a mixed setting, defined by the range of surrounding development in Hackney, and is bounded by the Regent's Canal to the south.

4.99 The visibility of Gasholder No.5 reduces to the east and is glimpsed at the canal-side by Victoria Park (townscape view A4 – an unverified test view). Otherwise, within the park Gasholder No. 5 is not generally visible and glimpsed as a long distance.

4.100 Overall, the Application Site makes a very limited contribution to the setting and significance of Victoria Park, namely as one component of a wide setting that includes elements reflecting the industrial history of the local area such as the canal.

Locally Listed Buildings

505 The Hare, Cambridge Heath Road

4.101 The Hare comprises a corner building, which has been in use as a public house since 1800, with a later projecting ground floor. The ground floor has beige faience cladding, with brick to the original, upper parts. A mansard is set back from the parapet.

4.102 The building possesses historic and architectural interest as an historic public house.

Contribution made by the Site to setting and significance

4.103 The setting of the asset comprises the linear route of Cambridge Heath Road, which has a busy, commercial character and heavy traffic.

4.104 Adjacent to the north is Hare Row, along which are some views of the upper parts of Gasholder No. 5. These, views, whilst incidental, contribute to the overall character of the setting of and therefore significance of the asset.

112 Perseverance, Pritchards Road

4.105 This building comprises The Perseverance Public House. It is of two storeys, with a set-back pitched roof and a green tiled floor riser. The building has a brown brick upper, and crittal style windows at first floor below a stone sill band.

4.106 The building possesses some historic and architectural interest for its reflection of the historic character of the area, dating from the same period as the adjacent estate.

Contribution made by the Site to setting and significance

4.107 The adjacent estate appears to be contemporaneous with the public house, and thus contributes to the appreciation of its heritage value.

4.108 The gasholders at the Site can be seen in views along Wharf Place, to the north of the Public House, and contribute to the distinctive character of the locality.

35-38 Andrews Road

4.109 35-38 Andrews Road comprises a terrace of two storey Victorian houses with basements, in stock brick. They have low pitched roofs, recessed door cases and stucco at lower ground floor level.

4.110 The terrace possesses some historic and architectural interest as part of the Victorian development in the locality.

Contribution made by the Site to setting and significance

4.111 The receptor is experienced within a mixed context along Andrews Road, with residential buildings to the north and former industrial buildings in the environs of the canal.

4.112 The gasholders at the Site are a prominent feature in views south, and contribute to the post- industrial character of the local area.

1 Ada Street Workshops, E8

4.113 This receptor comprises a post-war industrial building, designed by Yorke, Rosenberg and Mardall architects to meet the needs of small-scale light industries in the East End.

4.114 The building is eight storeys in height, with flint-lime brick cladding and brown timber window frames.

4.115 The building possesses some local historic and architectural interest for the function it fulfilled in the development of local industry.

Contribution made by the Site to setting and significance

4.116 The receptor has a contained setting, experienced along the narrow linear route of Ada Street, from which it is set back at an angle. New development on the south side of the street has partially screened the building from the west.

4.117 The Site does not have a historical or visual relationship with the asset and therefore does not contribute to the setting or significance of the asset.

5-11 Victoria Buildings, 11 Mare Street

4.118 5-11 Victoria Buildings comprises a five storey Victorian commercial building of nine bays, built in yellow stock brick with stucco dressings. The building has modern shop fronts at ground floor level, and sash windows from first to third floor level, with arch headed windows at fourth floor and a recessed top storey.

4.119 The building possesses some historic and architectural interest as a local example of a purpose-built Victorian office building.

Contribution made by the Site to setting and significance

4.120 This building is situated to the north of the junction between Mare Street and Andrews Road. The surrounding context is mixed, with a railway bridge adjacent, lower-scale residential buildings to the north and east, and former industrial buildings in the environs of the canal.

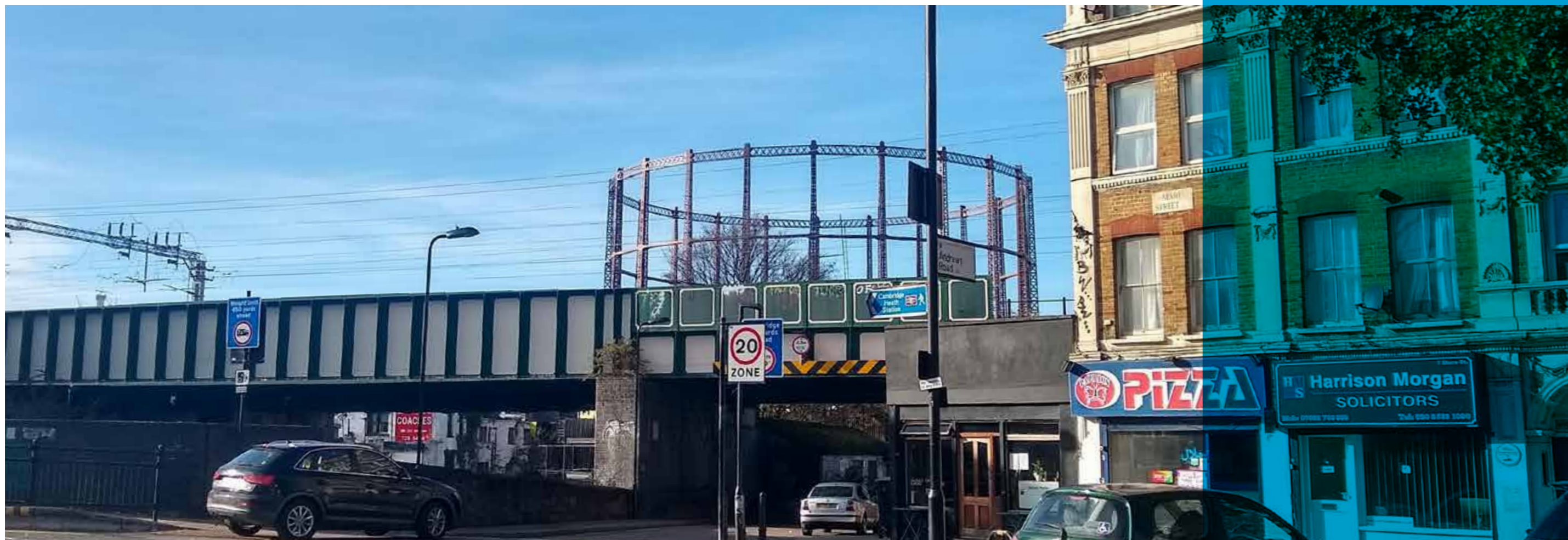
4.121 The open space of the junction breaks up the tight urban form to create an opportunity to view Gasholder no. 5. The gasholder is glimpsed in the context of the railway bridge which lies in front, and over the road. The viewer is therefore aware of the gasholder site and the historic industrial past in this area. On that basis, the site makes a limited contribution to the setting and significance of the asset.

Summary

- 4.122 The Application Site comprises a former gasholder station that lies adjacent to the Regent's Canal, and retaining four gasholders two of which have frames that are identifiable in local views.
- 4.123 The site does not include any listed buildings, but does partially lie within the Regent's Canal CA (LBTH), the boundary of which includes the two gasholders with above ground frames which make a positive contribution to the CA.
- 4.124 The table below provides a summary of the built heritage baseline section. Part of the Site lies within the Regent's Canal Conservation Area (LBTH), and at present makes a mixed contribution to its character and appearance.

Map Ref	Name	Grade	Heritage Value	Distance from Site (approx. at nearest extent)
Listed Buildings				
1	Keeling House	II*	High	205m
9	Post at narrowing of road	II	Medium	170m
10	2 posts at end of roadway	II	Medium	128m
2	444 Hackney Road	II	Medium	105m
3	446-450 Hackney Road	II	Medium	105m
4	Railed wall and gate	II	Medium	105m
5	456 Hackney Road	II	Medium	105m
6	2 Pritchards Road	II	Medium	33m
7	375-385 Hackney Road	II	Medium	210m
8	367-373 Hackney Road	II	Medium	250m
11	12-20 Mare Street	II	Medium	220m
12	F Cooke's Eel, Pie and Mash Shop	II	Medium	215m
Conservation Areas				
A	Regent's Canal Conservation Area (LBH)	N/A	Medium	10m
B	Regent's Canal Conservation Area (LBTH)	N/A	Medium	N/A
C	Hackney Road Conservation Area (LBTH)	N/A	Medium	20m
D	Hackney Road Conservation Area (LBH)	N/A	Medium	270m
E	Broadway Market Conservation Area (LBH)	N/A	Medium	190m
Non-Designated Heritage Assets				
-	Gasholder No. 2	N/A	Low	N/A
-	Gasholder No. 5	N/A	Low	N/A
-	505, The Hare, Cambridge Heath Road	N/A	Low	140m
-	11-12 Perseverance, Pritchards Road	N/A	Low	137m
-	35-38 Andrews Road	N/A	Low	45m
-	1 Ada Street Workshops, E8	N/A	Low	158m
-	5-11 Victoria Buildings	N/A	Low	150m
-	11 Mare Street	N/A	Low	150m

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Description of The Proposals

5.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSALS

5.1 This section of the report describes the development proposals and the process of pre-application consultation which has led to the final application submission.

5.2 The constraints of the Site have been subject to a detailed assessment throughout the design development process. This process has benefitted from detailed discussion with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, Greater London Authority, and Historic England. The design amendments raised over the course of that process have reflected in the final proposals for submission.

5.3 The proposals drawn up by architects RSHP are based on an understanding of the significance of the heritage assets (designated and non-designated) at and in the vicinity of the Site.

5.4 The Site forms part of the Site Allocation (reference 1.3) in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031 (2020). The allocation requires proposals to respond positively to the Regent's Canal Conservation Area, and preserve those elements of the allocated area which make a positive contribution to its character and appearance including Gasholder Nos. 2 and 5.

The Proposals

5.5 The Design and Access Statement prepared by RSHP Architects sets out a detailed discussion of the design rationale and architectural approach behind the final proposals. We provide a summary here to provide context for our assessment set out in **Section 6.0**.

Regeneration of the Site

5.6 The proposals will comprehensively redevelop a redundant, relict former utilities Site, and bring it into a new residential-led mixed use, with associated public open space.

5.7 This will provide 565 mixed-tenure homes, and up to 4,182sqm of commercial uses.

5.8 The Site currently contains four redundant gasholders which were purged of gas in 2012. Two of these (Nos. 2 and 5) are situated within the Regent's Canal Conservation Area, to which they make a positive contribution, as well as to the setting of nearby heritage assets.

5.9 The other two gasholders (Nos. 1 and 3) are not within a conservation area, and do not possess any heritage value. These will be demolished to facilitate the redevelopment of the Site.

Form of the Development

5.10 The new development will take the form of five radial and faceted buildings arranged around a central open space at the core of the Site.

5.11 In developing the proposals, RSHP has been mindful of the historic function and character of the gasholders during their use. These would have been dynamic structures; rising and falling in response to the gas usage of the neighbourhood.

5.12 The principle of infill structures within the frames of the gasholders is thus suitable, and indeed reflective of their historic appearance and use.

5.13 The new buildings range from 6-13 storeys in height, with ground floor commercial space and residential accommodation above. The height of the development has been determined by the envelope of the lifts and crown; the differing heights of the buildings are reflective of the rising and falling of the gasholders and their dynamic character.

5.14 The project team has been mindful of the need to preserve the primacy of Gasholder no. 5 in views toward and within the CA. To achieve this, the height of the development will be set beneath the crown, which will be seen against the sky. Building A, within gasholder 5, will be the focal point of the development, occupying the largest footprint and appearing in views along the canal.

5.15 The arrangement is appropriate for a number of reasons:

- the form echoes that of the gasholders, thus responding to the unique character and heritage of the Site;
- the circular elevations facilitate light penetration and views through the Site to create an attractive environment which prevents overlooking; the active frontages of the buildings provide natural surveillance across the Site as a whole; and
- the overall effect is attractive and appropriate to the Site and its locality.

5.16 The canal frontage will be opened, and activated, with new uses providing the opportunity for visitors or residents to appreciate lateral views along the canal within the Conservation Area.

5.17 The surrounding context of the Site is mixed, with residential, commercial, light-industrial and commercial uses. The character of the CA is derived from this assembly of uses, representative of the development of the area. The retention of the gasholders, and their integration into a new development is thus appropriate.

Appearance and Materials

5.18 The form and composition of the buildings has been consciously developed to have a simple, refined appearance. The framed structures respond to the historic arrangement of the Site, and their two storey lifts echo the rising and falling of the gasholder bells.

5.19 The balconies have been designed with cantilevered steel supports, reminiscent of the Victorian frames, and create depth in the round external elevations of the buildings. Colour has deliberately been used where the frame will be seen against the building, to distinguish the two and allow the attractive latticework of Gasholder No. 5 to be appreciated.

5.20 The materials of the new buildings have been developed mindful of their relationship with the gasholder frames, and the colour palette has been the subject of particular consideration.

5.21 This approach has been informed by the prevailing colour context in the locality (**Figure 5.1**). The contrast in tone between the frame and the vertical lines of the new buildings will ensure that the gasholder frames remain distinct from the buildings within. This approach will allow the latticework on Gasholder No. 5 and decorative girders on No. 2 to retain their ability to be appreciated.

5.22 The columns and standards would be emphasised through the contrast with the coloured panels. The arrangement of the fenestration within the buildings has also been planned to avoid interaction or obstruction of views out by the frame of the gasholders, as part of the high quality design of the proposals.

5.23 The distance between the gasholder frames and the buildings within will both create a sense of openness, and enable the appreciation of the depth of the gasholder structures (**Figure 5.2**).



Figure 5.1 Colour palette in the locality



Figure 5.2 Space between and within gasholders

5.24 Building A has been consciously designed to maintain the primacy of the gasholder frame in views towards and within the Site; and the scale of the Proposed Development has been deliberately kept beneath the crown, which will remain silhouetted against the sky (**Figure 5.3**).

5.25 A central, sunken courtyard has been designed for Building A, which will allow views laterally through the cylindrical space within the gasholder, contributing to a sense of openness and light.

5.26 The boundary to the canal would be activated, and public access to this area provided for the first time. Views along the canal in both directions would be improved, and this part of the CA appreciated by a greater number of people (**Figure 5.3**).

Boundaries and landscaping

5.27 A full description of the landscape proposals is provided in the Landscape DAS by Gillespies.

5.28 The Site at present is enclosed by hoardings, and divorced from the surrounding townscape. The creation of new uses will activate the Site, and enable public access for the first time.

5.29 The focus of the open space will be a large central lawn, around which the buildings form a radial arrangement (**Figure 5.4**).

5.30 The boundary treatments will be improved with a comprehensive landscaping scheme and green screens, which will create an attractive outlook from within the Site.

5.31 A new children's play area will be provided, surrounded by hedges, at the south of the Site close to the access from Emma Street.

Pressure Reduction Station

5.32 The new Pressure Reduction Station (PRS) will be retained on Site, and situated within a purpose-built compound enclosure which will respond to the language and form of the built forms. The landscaping in this part of the Site has been designed to reflect the cylindrical form of the mixed-use blocks, with a tightly planted tree grove to the north and east in a circular arrangement.



Figure 5.3 Landscape Masterplan



Figure 5.4 Silhouette in views from the north

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Assessment: Heritage

6.0 ASSESSMENT: HERITAGE

- 6.1 This section of the Heritage Statement assesses the effect of the Proposed Development on built heritage assets in light of the relevant statutory provisions and national and local planning policy.
- 6.2 The Design and Access Statement by RSHP provides a nuanced discussion of the design rationale and should be read alongside this assessment.
- 6.3 The design team has given due importance and weight to the special interest of heritage assets, which is demonstrated within this Heritage Statement, and within Chapter E of the ES.
- 6.4 The Proposed Development includes works to the existing gasholders which is considered to be necessary and measured to achieve the wider regeneration benefits of the scheme as a whole. This judgement is based on the comprehensive information that is set out within the application submission and taking into account the relevant material considerations.
- 6.5 This assessment is distinct from any other discipline, though there is a degree of interaction with the Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA). The TVIA also refers to built heritage assets which are included within this assessment, and are referred to where relevant.
- 6.6 Overall, the main heritage considerations are whether the development will:
- preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Regent's Canal CA (LBTH);
 - preserve the setting and significance of nearby designated and non-designated heritage assets including the Hackney Road CA (LBTH) and Regent's Canal CA (LBH); and
 - preserve the significance of Gasholder Nos. 2 and 5 which are non-designated heritage assets and contribute to the significance of the Regent's Canal CA (LBTH).
- Principle of Development**
- 6.7 The overarching aim of the proposals is to optimise the use of a Site which is presently vacant, unattractive, and separated from the local townscape by development along the south, west and eastern boundaries. Also important was the desirability of retaining the two historic gasholders (nos. 2 and 5) which lie within and make a positive contribution to the Regent's Canal Conservation Area.
- 6.8 The Application Site forms the majority of a Site Allocation (Marian Place Gasworks and The Oval) in the Local Plan for a mixed use development including housing, a local park and employment uses. The Site allocation allows for the regeneration of the Site. The Site is also located in the City Fringe Opportunity Area as identified in London Plan Policy 2.13. These allocations inherently involve clearance of the majority of the internal part of the Site, and taking advantage to create a new development that is largely enclosed to the south, east and west.
- 6.9 We have identified in **Section 4.0** that Gasholder Nos. 2 and 5 contribute positively to the character and appearance of the Regent's Canal CA. Owing to their value, they are identified as non-designated heritage assets.
- 6.10 Policy DM27 of the Council's MDD states that application for the alteration, change of use or development within a heritage asset will only be approved where (a) it does not result in an adverse impact on the character, fabric or identity of the heritage asset; (b) it is appropriate in terms of design, scale, form, detailing and materials in its local context; and (c) it enhances or better reveals the significance of the asset or its setting.
- 6.11 In this case, the gasholders no longer serve a specific function. Their use was principally to store gas for use during the peak times by customers of the gas company. The bells of the gasholders have been in their resting state since 2012 when they were decommissioned. There is, therefore, no reasonable prospect of re-use as part of their original function because gas is now stored in high pressure pipes below the ground.
- 6.12 It is material that gasholders fall into the category of buildings and structures that present genuine challenges for reuse. Indeed, even in cases where the aesthetic value of a gasholder has merited some form of physical preservation (and this cannot be said to be the case for spiral guided gasholders), significant changes are required that are far more sweeping than usually contemplated for more traditional historic buildings of different ages and types.
- 6.13 These are factors to consider in the context of Policy DM27 because they illustrate the practical dilemma in conforming to international protocols on decontamination when considering preservation of this particular type of historic engineering structure.
- 6.14 Policy also turns to paragraph 191 of the NPPF which states that a heritage asset should be put to a viable use consistent with its conservation. That use may not be the original use, but one that maintains or enhances the ability to appreciate its inherent significance.
- 6.15 In this case, the Applicant is seeking to retain both the gasholders within the CA, and provide residential accommodation within the frames. In doing so, the gasholder frames will be retained, repaired and put to a new use.
- 6.16 More widely, that part of the development will sit within the context of the regeneration of the wider site which will involve making it publicly accessible for the first time in 180 years.
- 6.17 Accepting these propositions we see no reason why the principle of development would not be acceptable given the existing site allocation, and the nature of the proposals. What matters are the particular effects when considered as part of the Proposed Development as a whole.
- 6.18 Below we assess the impact of the proposals on the heritage assets identified in **Section 4.0**.

Conservation Areas

Regent's Canal Conservation Area (LBTH)

- 6.19 Principally, it is the post-industrial appearance, adjacency to the Regent's Canal (which is also bound up in the industrial history of the area), and defensive enclosed character that gives the Site its industrial and utilitarian character. In this current condition, this part of the CA is inaccessible, contaminated with the main external manifestations of the historic use being the two historic gasholders (**Figure 6.1**).
- 6.20 The project team have worked closely to respond to those salient characteristics. The development takes the form of a six cylindrical buildings, two of which will lie within the existing gasholders, three as new built forms, and one that will house the relocated Pressure Reduction Station. The development will be publicly accessible for the first time in 180 years with areas designed to encourage people to visit and engage with site and its history.

Retention of Gasholder Nos. 2 and 5

- 6.21 An important aspect of the development will be the retention of the frames of Gasholder Nos. 2 and 5. The draft methodology for retaining the gasholders is considered further below in the assessment of the proposals on these assets.
- 6.22 The gasholders form the main standing elements that reflect the industrial gas legacy associated with the site (**Figure 6.2**). Retaining the gasholders will maintain a cultural richness to the development that helps to amplify the historic sense of place.
- 6.23 As part of the retention, a roller carriage and guide rails of Gasholder Nos. 2 and 5 will be retained. This will ensure that the ability to appreciate how the gasholders functioned will remain tangible and easily understood, particularly when viewed from the public space on the canal side.



Figure 6.1 Photograph of the existing condition of the Application Site's northern boundary adjacent to the Regent's Canal



Figure 6.2 CGI showing the retention of the existing gasholder frames with new buildings inside, taking from the Regent's Canal.

Design of Buildings A and E within Gasholder Nos. 2 and 5

- 6.24 Within the gasholders will be a buildings containing predominantly residential accommodation, with a range of active retail and commercial uses in the lower floors. The quality of the accommodation and layout of the new buildings within the gasholders will have a beneficial effect on the way that the CA appears.
- 6.25 In the case of Block E, which would lie within Gasholder No. 2, the building has an expressed structure in homage to the two tiers of the gasholder frame (**Figure 6.3**). The bays form repetitions of recessed balconies and screened elevations that include colourful vertical bands. This simple form allows each bay of the new building to correspond with the rhythm of the historic frame creating uninterrupted views out. In comparison to other gasholder retention schemes (such as King's Cross) this approach is successful because it improves the outlook from the units and the way that people will interact and understand the historic frames from the ground.
- 6.26 The elevations of the new building will be well-proportioned and complement the historic gasholder frame, allowing the refurbished appearance (which will be an improvement in comparison to the existing condition) to be easily appreciated. This, in turn, will improve the appearance of the CA.
- 6.27 Building A will be split into two crescent-shaped buildings with a break through the centre. There will only be one full height opening on the northern side. The southern side will accommodate a single storey infill to connect the two crescents. This layout will allow viewers the opportunity to read the long radius of the gasholder frame, and that depth will allow visitors to appreciate the size and scale of this historic structure.
- 6.28 Similar to Building E, the elevation has been articulated to directly relate to the rhythm of each bay of the historic gasholder frame (**Figure 6.4**). The repetition of recessed balconies corresponds with the definite rhythm of the frame, again allow uninterrupted views out from the building. A vertical band will separate each unit, and run up the building, and in front of each gasholder standard (the vertical upright). In doing so, the standards will be emphasised by standing out against the colourful backdrop. This arrangement will ensure that the ability to appreciate the structural form of the historic gasholder frame will be maintained.



Figure 6.3 Illustration of the elevational treatment of Building E showing how the rhythm of the bays interrelate to that of the gasholder frame.

- 6.29 In the design of both Buildings A and E, the internal buildings will finish in height below the upper tier of the gasholder frame (referred to here as the "crown"). The treatment of the upper floors of those buildings, particularly in Building A where the roof will have a serrated edge, will be neutral in terms of colour and general articulation. This arrangement will ensure that the frames will remain easily appreciated in silhouette within local townscape views.
- 6.30 At ground floor level Buildings A and F will be set back from the circumference of the gasholder frame. This will create an arcades at the base of each gasholder which will provide an opportunity to move around and through the structures allowing visitors to appreciate the gasholder frames, as well as interact with the vibrant uses at this level.



Figure 6.4 Illustration showing the general layout of the elevation treatment of Building E.

Design of Buildings B, C and D

- 6.31 In plan, the new buildings will appear like a string of beads that give structure to the outer part of the site, which will provide a buffer to the development beyond the site boundary, and the crescent-shaped public space that will lie at the heart of the site.
- 6.32 These cylindrical forms recognise the industrial legacy of the former gas station, echoing the gasholder shapes and form of building E. (**Figure 6.5**).
- 6.33 The aesthetic of the expressed frames of the new buildings reflect the structural appearance of wind ties, often found on historic gasholders. Moreover, the general articulation will be similar to Buildings A and E, giving the development a coherence as a family of buildings grounded in the historical use of the site.

6.34 The Conservation Area has no particular consistency of materials or palette of colours. It is very diverse including, for example, the brightly coloured and celebratory panels at Containerville. A palette of colours drawn from the local area will be reflected in all three of the new buildings, across the architecture. Additionally, metalwork will be predominant throughout, in panels, reflecting the prevailing materials found within the Site as it is found today. The combination of these two parts of the development will help bed the development into the existing context, while also echoing the historic uses and legacy associated with the gas infrastructure.

Scale and Mass

6.35 Buildings B, C and D will gradually rise up from the south to the canal side as follows:

- Building A: 13 storeys (ground +12)
- Building B: 9 storeys (ground +8)
- Building C: 13 storeys (ground +12)
- Building D: 11 storeys (ground +10)
- Building E: 6 storeys (ground +5)

6.36 This gradual scale has been designed to reflect the height of the existing gasholders in their “inflated” condition (**Figure 6.6**). This arrangement has two benefits.

6.37 First, they would not be a new addition to the skyline; this was as a common sight after the gasholder were filled with gas until they were commissioned in 2012.

6.38 Secondly, this family of new buildings will form the backdrop of Gasholder No. 5. The arrangement will reaffirm the Site’s contribution to local townscape views, particularly from the Regent’s Canal.



Figure 6.5 CGI view illustrating the appearance of Buildings B, C and D and how it relates sensitively to the prevailing structural characteristics of historic gasholder frames and the architectural language of the new buildings within.



Figure 6.6 Sketch illustration showing how the scale of the development gradually steps up to the height of Gasholder No. 5, and so retaining the primacy of that structure in local views.

Landscaping

- 6.39 The development will deliver an over provision of approximately 75% of public space relative to the requirement set out in the Site Allocation. This will be delivered principally through the central lawn, which will facilitate views through and across the Site, contributing to a welcoming, open character which would wholly beneficial in comparison to the existing condition of the Site.
- 6.40 In tandem, the canal edge will be animated and opened to the public for the first time, creating a new space designed to encourage people to dwell and enjoy the views across the water in a manner that has not been possible before.
- 6.41 The landscaping will be populated with areas of tree planting to evoke the recolonisation of the site. Together with the central lawn, the landscaping will dramatically improve the appearance of this part of the CA and its immediate setting.

Interpretation

- 6.42 In addition to the retention of parts of the gasholder frame apparatus (e.g. the roller carriage and guide rails), interpretation boards will be located within the site at key points (yet to be confirmed) to give the opportunity for visitors to understand the history of the site. Paragraph 38 of GPA3 identifies that “improving public access to, or interpretation of, the assets including its setting” is an enhancement and public benefit.

Use

- 6.43 Having regard to the CA, it is necessary to consider the contribution that viable, active and successful uses make to the character and appearance of the area. In reaching a decision in this case, weight must be afforded to this consideration and the proper conclusion is that the scheme would enhance the character and appearance of the area through refurbishment of the gasholders, and demonstrable enhancements to the way that the Application Site, which straddles the boundary of the CA, will appear and function.



Figure 6.7 Diagram showing the layout of the circular buildings surrounding the central lawn, with shared public space along the boundaries, and in particular, adjacent to the canal.

Overall

6.44 The Proposed Development will lead to a substantial enhancement to the character and appearance of the CA. We identify the following benefits that should be weighed in favour of the proposals:

- Removal of intrusive gas infrastructure (such as telemetry) lying within the CA and its immediate setting (both within the Application Site). Removal of such negative features in a CA should be weighed in favour of the development.
- Opening the site to public access for the first time in 180 years, including a new canal-side public space. This will improve the ability for visitors to appreciate the significance of the CA.
- The retention and refurbishment of Gasholder Nos. 2 and 5 will secure their long-term use and conservation in a manner that is viable and consistent with their conservation. In turn, the significance of the CA will be enhanced through the improvement to the appearance of the gasholder frames.
- The setting and significance of the CA will be enhanced by a high quality landscaping scheme that will demonstrably improve the way that the CA appears and functions.
- The provision of an outstanding and innovative design of the new buildings that will lie within the existing gasholder frames and other new buildings. The calibre of architecture is of the highest standard by RSHP, and we anticipate will help raise the standard of design more generally in the area. The addition of the development will demonstrably enhance the way that this part of the CA appears and functions.
- Introduction of a new view of the frame of Gasholder No. 5 by creating a central cut through within the internal new building. While building itself would be an addition within the frame, that void was formerly occupied by the rise and fall of gasholder lifts. The new central view would be dramatic and add to the public experience of the gasholder and, in turn, the CA.
- Provision of interpretation boards which will describe the history and heritage value of the site, and so improve the ability for people to appreciate the significance of this part of the CA.

6.45 On this basis we consider that the development would comply with the NPPF, development plan policies, and guidance. On that basis the decision maker would be able to discharge their legal duty under section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) 1990.

Regent's Canal Conservation Area (LBH)

- 6.46 The Proposed Development will introduce new, high quality buildings within the gasholder frames, giving them a new vibrancy in views and activating this part of the CA's setting.
- 6.47 The retained gasholder frames will continue to make a positive contribution to the setting and heritage value of the Conservation Area, and will be seen in views along the canal.
- 6.48 The parapet of the tallest part of the Proposals, within the frame of Gasholder no. 5, will remain below the crown and thus preserve its primacy in views along the canal. This is illustrated in views included in the LVIA (see views 3, 12, 8d and 8e). Seen in conjunction with Containerville, the Proposed Development will contribute to a vibrant, modern setting to the CA, which responds to its industrial character and heritage.
- 6.49 The building within Gasholder No.2 would also be set below the crown, though due to its lower scale, this building is not visible from as wide an area.
- 6.50 The Proposed Development would enhance the setting and significance of the Conservation Area.
- Hackney Road CA (LBH)**
- 6.51 A small area of the Hackney Road CA in the London Borough of Hackney falls within the study area, and comprises the former site of the Shoreditch Gasworks, which is now entirely divorced from the Site. There are some views from within the park towards Gasholder No.5, which contribute to the understanding of the development of the locality.

6.52 This visual relationship, whilst peripheral to the experience of the CA, would be preserved by the Proposed Development (see view 5 of the LVIA). The new built form would ensure that the contribution made to the industrial character of the Site in views would be maintained, and the high quality form of the new buildings would be an attractive addition to the setting of the CA.

6.53 The change to setting would be minimal, and peripheral to the experience of the conservation area as a whole.

6.54 Therefore, it is considered that the Proposed Development would have no effect on the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Hackney Road CA (LBTH)

- 6.55 The character of the Hackney Road Conservation Area is derived primarily from its long use as an east-west arterial route through this part of London. It is understood separately from the former industrial context closer to the canal frontages, and built form has a more residential and commercial focus.
- 6.56 The intrinsic character of the CA would not change as a result of the Proposed Development. It would remain legible as an historic arterial route, flanked by a range of built form reflective of its piecemeal development.
- 6.57 The change at the Site would be experienced in views north toward the Site through townscape gaps. The Proposals would be understood separately from the CA, and their cylindrical form and complementary colouring would integrate into the existing context whilst maintaining the primacy of the gasholders.
- 6.58 The overall change to the setting of the CA would be minimal, and would have no effect on its heritage value or appreciation. Whilst the change would be perceptible in some views from the receptor, the intrinsic character of the Hackney Road CA would not change.

Broadway Market CA (LBH)

- 6.59 The Broadway Market CA lies to the north of the Site, oriented north-south along the Market Porter's Route, used historically to transport goods between Hackney fields and City markets.
- 6.60 Gasholder No. 5 appears in incidental views south from the CA, as illustrated at Viewpoint 9 of the LVIA. This is understood as part of the former industrial context in the environs of the canal to the south, and at present makes no particular contribution to the character, appearance or appreciation of the conservation area.
- 6.61 The high quality new buildings would be an attractive addition to views south, and would integrate into the colour palette of the surrounding buildings.
- 6.62 Whilst the Proposed Development would be visible from southern part of the area, its intrinsic character would not change. The development would preserve the significance of the asset.

Listed Buildings**Keeling House (grade II*)**

- 6.63 The Application Site does not presently contribute to the setting and significance or appreciation of Keeling House, which is situated within an area of mixed, predominantly post-war development at the junction of Temple Street and Claredale Street.
- 6.64 The Proposed Development will be occluded by interposing development at ground level, and in views down Temple Street.
- 6.65 There are likely to be private views of the Proposed Development from the residential units in the upper storeys of Keeling House. The Development will appear as a very high quality addition to the local area with a height and scale that reflects the "inflated" form of the existing gasholder.
- 6.66 Overall, there would be no effect on the setting and significance of the listed building.

444 Hackney Road (grade II), 446-450 Hackney Road (grade II), Railed Wall and Gate (grade II), 456 Hackney Road (grade II)

- 6.67 This group of listed buildings is situated on the south side of Hackney Road, and experienced in the context of the linear route along Hackney Road.
- 6.68 The Proposed Development would not be seen in views oriented south, in which the front elevation of the buildings can be best appreciated. The nearest townscape view is View 5 of the Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Volume II of the ES). The TVIA states:
The top of Building C would be visible above the roofline of the 19th century houses. It would remain below the height of the pediments of Nos.383-385 Hackney Road. In views from further west only the very top of Building C would be glimpsed between the pediments of the listed houses with less impact on the skyline; in views to the west of Nos.383- 385 Hackney Road, it would not be visible. The circular form of Building C would echo the pre-existing visibility of the gasholder tanks prior to decommissioning and would relate to the surviving circular gasholder tanks on the Site that are visible in views from other locations in the vicinity contributing to the distinctive local character of the area.
- 6.69 Although there is no visual relationship between these listed buildings and the Site, viewers may be aware of the development owing to the glimpsed views to the north along Hackney Road as suggested by View 5. That awareness would not impact on the ability to appreciate the setting and significance of these listed buildings. Indeed, the development may act as a catalyst for regeneration which would, in time, improve the setting of the assets.
- 2 Pritchards Road (grade II)**
- 6.70 2 Pritchards Road is a two storey terraced house which forms part of the range of mixed development in the Hackney Road Conservation Area. It is presently experienced within a mixed context which includes ranges of former industrial buildings interspersed with purpose-built residential buildings.

- 6.71 Townscape View 4 illustrates the proposed condition. The TVIA states:

The top of Building C would be visible above the roofline of the 19th century houses. It would remain below the height of the pediments of Nos.383-385 Hackney Road. In views from further west only the very top of Building C would be glimpsed between the pediments of the listed houses with less impact on the skyline; in views to the west of Nos.383- 385 Hackney Road, it would not be visible. The circular form of Building C would echo the pre-existing visibility of the gasholder tanks prior to decommissioning and would relate to the surviving circular gasholder tanks on the Site that are visible in views from other locations in the vicinity contributing to the distinctive local character of the area.

- 6.72 Overall, the setting of the building would be changed such that two new buildings of outstanding design quality would be seen rising about the roofline of this and adjacent properties. Given that the existing gasholders were formerly part of the historic context, rising and falling throughout the day, we consider that the setting and significance of the asset would be preserved.

375-385 Hackney Road (grade II), 367-373 Hackney Road (grade II)

- 6.73 These buildings are situated on the north side of the east-west route of Hackney Road, and form part of its varied context of residential development.
- 6.74 The visual impact of the proposals is illustrated in townscape View 3. The TVIA states:
The top of Building C would be visible above the roofline of the 19th century houses. It would remain below the height of the pediments of Nos.383-385 Hackney Road. In views from further west only the very top of Building C would be glimpsed between the pediments of the listed houses with less impact on the skyline; in views to the west of Nos.383- 385 Hackney Road, it would not be visible. The circular form of Building C would echo the pre-existing visibility of the gasholder tanks prior to decommissioning and would relate to the surviving circular gasholder tanks on the Site that are visible in views from other locations in the vicinity contributing to the distinctive local character of the area.

- 6.75 When considering the impact on the heritage value of the listed building, one is mindful that View 3 is representative of the greatest impact of the proposals. The visibility is short-lived as the viewer moves to the northern side of Hackney Road, and as one travels in an easterly and westerly direction.
- 6.76 The setting of the listed buildings is defined by the relationship with Hackney Road, with the viewer's experience generally focussed on the linear route in either direction.
- 6.77 Thus, Building C would appear as a peripheral addition to the setting and experience of the listed buildings.
- 6.78 Any impact would also be considered in the context of the historic setting where gasholder were visible from this location when they rose over the course of an evening.
- 6.79 Overall, there would be change to the setting of the listed buildings. However, that change would take the form of an outstanding example of architecture marking the regeneration of an Allocated Site. In our judgement the development would preserve the significance of these assets.

Post at narrowing of road (grade II), 2 posts at end of roadway (grade II)

- 6.80 The Site does not presently contribute to the heritage value or appreciation of these buildings. The Proposed Development would not change the setting or significance of these receptors.

Locally Listed Buildings

505, The Hare, Cambridge Heath Road

- 6.81 The gasholders are a prominent element in the setting of the receptor, and form part of its post-industrial, mixed setting. There is no particular historic or other association between the Site and the receptor, save that of proximity.
- 6.82 The retention of the gasholders would preserve their contribution to its setting, and the new development would be an attractive addition to the streetscape, which responds to and respects the existing character of the Site.
- 6.83 Whilst a noticeable change in the setting of the asset, the Proposed Development would have no effect on its heritage value.

11-12 Perseverance, Pritchards Road

- 6.84 There are some incidental views of the Site in the setting of the receptor, and the Proposed Development would be a perceptible change, however, this would be understood in the context of the post-industrial context in the environs of the canal. The new built form at the Site would be a high quality, attractive addition which responds to and respects the existing character of the Site.
- 6.85 Townscape View 20 includes the public house to the right hand side. The TVIA states:
The massing has been designed to complement the scale of the existing gasholder frames, allowing them to remain legible within the townscape. To the right, Building D, to the south of the retained gasholders and outside the conservation area, would have a complementary circular form. The scale of the tallest building, Building A, would remain lower than the top of Gasholder No.5 allowing the lattice work beam at the top the frame to remain visible and preserving the landmark quality of the gasholder. The circular forms of the Proposed Development would create an attractive stepping skyline - as the raised gas tanks would have done historically - that would relate well to the former use of the Site.

- 6.86 We consider that the setting and significance of the public house would be preserved.

35-38 Andrews Road

- 6.87 The gasholders form a prominent element in the setting of the receptor, and contribute to the post-industrial, mixed setting in which it is experienced.
- 6.88 The Proposed Development would be a noticeable change. The gasholders would be retained, thus preserving their contribution to its setting of these assets, and the new development would be understood as part of the changing context in the environs of the canal. The high quality of the new built form would be an attractive addition to the streetscape, which responds to and respects the existing character of the Site.
- 6.89 We consider that the setting and significance of the asset would be preserved.

1 Ada Street Workshops

- 6.90 The Site at present does not make any particular contribution to the heritage value or appreciation of the receptor, with which it does not share any historic or other association.
- 6.91 There is the potential for some incidental views of the Proposed Development in the wider setting of the receptor, however, these would be understood as part of the wider setting to the south, and would not affect the intrinsic heritage value of the receptor, or the appreciation thereof.

5-11 Victoria Buildings, 11 Mare Street

- 6.92 The Proposed Development would be visible in some views towards the receptors from the east.
- 6.93 The retention of the gasholders would preserve the contribution made by the frames to the mixed, post-industrial character of the receptors' setting.
- 6.94 Whilst this would be a perceptible change in the wider setting of the receptors, it would not affect their intrinsic heritage value or the appreciation thereof.

Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Gasholder Nos. 2 and 5

- 6.95 Gasholder Nos. 2 and 5 are not locally listed, however they are considered to be non-designated heritage assets.
- 6.96 Gasholder No. 5 is the taller and more prominent of the two to be retained. It was built to designs by George Trewby and completed in 1889.
- 6.97 Gasholder No. 2 is the earlier of the two, completed by Westwood and Wright's of Dudley in December 1866.
- 6.98 Both gasholders are presently redundant structures with no function or use. They were separated from the network and purged of gas in 2012.
- 6.99 The benefits of retaining the gasholders, including the aesthetic merits of the proposed infill buildings, are discussed under the Regent's Canal CA above. The same benefits would apply to Gasholder Nos. 2 and 5 as non-designated heritage assets (**Figure 6.8**).

Repair and Refurbishment

- 6.100 The gasholders will be subject to repair and refurbishment in order to ensure that they are suitable for their new use. These include repairs that are necessary first to ensure the gasholder's long-term survival, and aesthetic repairs which will improve its appearance:
- primary structural
 - serviceability
 - safety
- 6.101 It should be noted that this repair and refurbishment strategy will be subject to refinement prior to any works taking place to the gasholders. This is due to the cast iron and steel construction of Gasholder Nos. 2 and 5 respectively. Indeed, the Applicant anticipates that the details for refurbishment will be secured through a planning condition.

Removal of the Bell and Tank

- 6.102 The Proposed Development includes the removal of the gasholder bell (including internal apparatus) and tank.
- 6.103 The tank of Gasholder No. 2 is of brick, laid in hydraulic lime mortar with bands of several courses set in Portland cement mortar for additional strength. It is 133ft (40.6m) in diameter and 36ft (11m) deep.
- 6.104 In contrast the tank of Gasholder No. 5 is of mass concrete, 200ft (61m) in diameter and 50ft 6 inches (15.4m) deep.



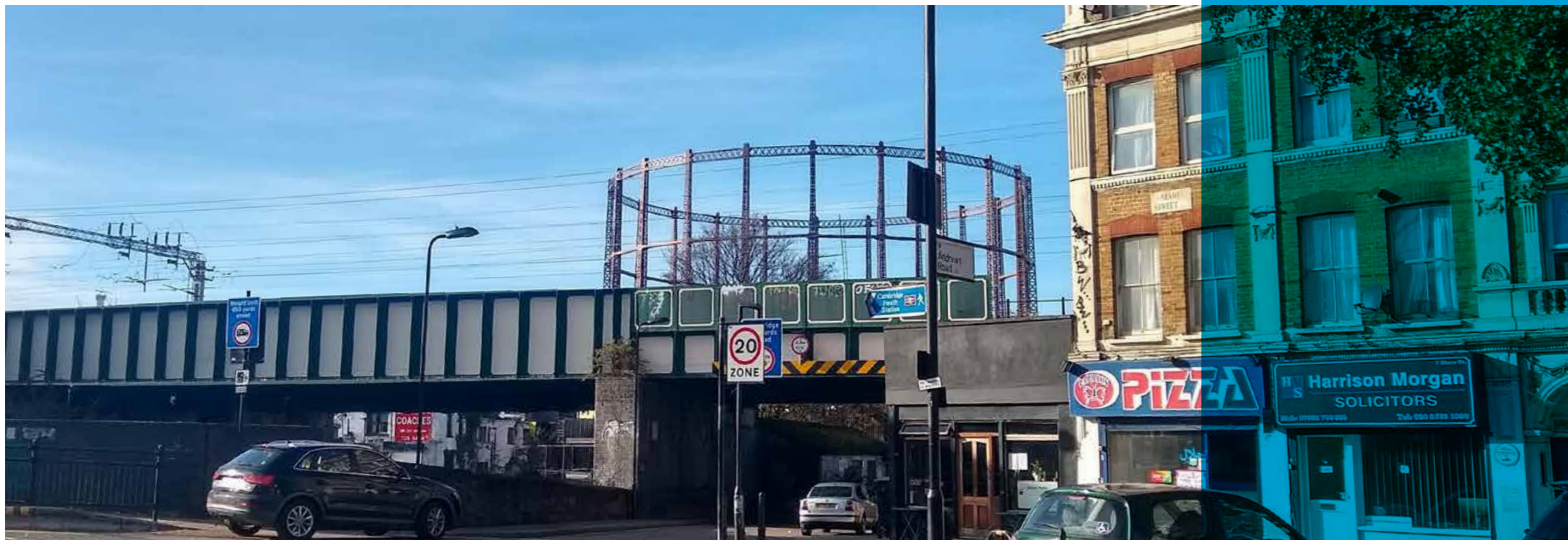
Figure 6.8 CGI showing the retained gasholder frames and how they will provide a historic link to the proposed re-activation of the canal side.

- 6.105 These parts of the gasholder were not considered to contribute to the interest of the structures when Historic England assessed them for listing in 2015. These parts are not generally accessible, lying in their resting state, and cannot therefore be appreciated for their engineering design. Indeed, they are currently filled with water and the crowns have been cut with holes as part of the decommissioning process.
- 6.106 While these aspect have some historic interest for their association with the historic gasholder frames, and as inherent parts of the working gasholder, they do not contribute to the value that is more readily associated (and appreciated) with the above-ground frames.
- 6.107 This is the reason why we consider that the tank and crowns do not contribute to the significance of the Regent's Canal CA. They have very limited external expression, and in comparison the frames make a markedly and demonstrably greater contribution.
- 6.108 In previous planning applications involving the retention or salvage of parts of gasholders, the tanks have not been considered to contribute to the significance of the frames. This was borne out in the King's Cross development (LB Camden Planning Reference: 2004/2315/L), Stepney, and the former Imperial Gasworks at Fulham.
- 6.109 When considering the impact of the loss of bell and tanks, one must balance the harm to the non-designated heritage assets caused by the loss of the fabric (which is of materially lesser weight than harm to a designated asset) against the benefits of securing the long-term viable use of the gasholder frames, and the demonstrable enhancements to their setting.

Overall

- 6.110 The gasholders would be given a new use which meets the requirements of the site allocation, preserves their contribution to the CA, and enables the public appreciation of their form from within the Site for the first time.
- 6.111 On that basis we conclude that the significance of these assets would be enhanced through the refurbishment and creative reuse of the frames.

// MARIAN PLACE, BETHNAL GREEN



Conclusion and Policy Compliance

7.0 CONCLUSION AND POLICY COMPLIANCE

- 7.1 This Heritage Statement has provided an assessment of the Proposed Development on built heritage assets.
- 7.2 Our approach to assessing the proposals' acceptability has been informed by the relevant statutory provisions, planning policy and best practice, including Historic England guidance on the assessment of significance, and setting.
- 7.3 The proposals for Marian Place have been the product of careful consideration through an iterative design process over 14 months, through which the architectural and consultant team have sought to mitigate any potential harmful impacts, and enhance the Site through design of the highest quality.
- 7.4 The heritage assets identified in this Heritage Statement and the accompanying Chapter E of the ES will generally not experience significant effects, owing to interposing development and the setting of the Site, which is highly urbanised and mixed in character.
- 7.5 The decision maker will be aware of the balanced and proportionate approach to conservation that is reflected in the statutory provisions set out in 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Act and the NPPF. Paragraph 193 of the NPPF also establishes, and reasserts the provisions of the 1990 Act, that any harm to an asset should be accorded great weight. The Palmer judgement similarly emphasises that a benefit is also a matter of great weight and that the overall judgement on a harmful impact to a listed building is taken on the basis of the development as a whole. The corollary is that benefits to a conservation area are also of great weight.
- 7.6 We have identified some limited harm to the significance of Gasholder Nos. 2 and 5 on the basis that the bell and tanks will be removed, which form part of the structure. Generally, these parts are not considered to contribute to the significance of gasholders. In such cases where a development includes harm to a non-designated heritage asset, paragraph 197 requires a balanced judgement. We consider that the loss of the tank and internal apparatus would be outweighed by a combination of factors (and benefits) weighing in its favour.
- 7.7 The change in the character of the land at the Site, from a relict former industrial landscape to a high-quality residential-led development, will enhance contribution made by the Site to the Regent's Canal Conservation Area (LBTH) and other adjacent heritage assets.
- 7.8 Overall, we consider the development will have a demonstrably beneficial effect, delivering the following public benefits which are weighty and should be considered in favour of the development:
- Removal of intrusive gas infrastructure (such as telemetry) lying within the Regent's Canal CA and its immediate setting (both within the Application Site). Removal of such negative features in a CA should be weighed in favour of the development.
 - Opening the site to public access for the first time in 180 years, including a new canal-side public space. This will improve the ability for visitors to appreciate the significance of the Regent's Canal CA.
 - The retention and refurbishment of Gasholder Nos. 2 and 5 will secure their long-term use and conservation in a manner that is viable and consistent with their conservation. In turn, the significance of the CA will be enhanced through the improvement to the appearance of the gasholder frames.
 - The setting and significance of the Regent's Canal CA will be enhanced by a high quality landscaping scheme that will demonstrably improve the way that the CA appears and functions.
 - The provision of an outstanding and innovative design of the new buildings that will lie within the existing gasholder frames and other new buildings. The calibre of architecture is of the highest standard by RSHP, and we anticipate will help raise the standard of design more generally in the area. The addition of the development will demonstrably enhance the way that this part of the Regent's Canal CA appears and functions.
 - Introduction of a new view of the frame of Gasholder No. 5 by creating a central cut through within the internal new building. While building itself would be an addition within the frame, that void was formerly occupied by the rise and fall of gasholder lifts. The new central view would be dramatic and add to the public experience of the gasholder and, in turn, the Regent's Canal CA and in the setting of nearby heritage assets.
- 7.9 We conclude that the development would meet the policy requirements set out in paragraphs 189 to 193, 197 and 200 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 of the London Plan (2016). The scheme would ensure that the locally distinctive character and context of the area would be enhanced, while at the same time finding a beneficial reuse of the two above ground gasholders and so comply with Policy SP10 of the Council's Core Strategy (2010). Similarly, the development would enhance the significance of the Regent's Canal CA, and the setting of nearby heritage assets, in a manner that is appropriate in term of design, scale and form, while delivering outstanding architecture by one of the world's leading architectural practices. We consider, therefore, that the development would comply with Policy DM27 of the Council's Management Development Document, in addition to the Site Allocation.
- 7.10 On that basis, the decision maker would be able to discharge his/her legal duties as set out in Sections 66 (1) and 72 (1) of the 1990 Act.

// MARIAN PLACE, BETHNAL GREEN



APPENDIX 1: History of The Gasholder

History of the Gasholder

- 1.1 Gas-lighting was introduced on a commercial basis in the early part of the nineteenth century. Originally, gas was manufactured from coal. Demand was mostly concentrated on winter evenings, so it was desirable to be able to store all of the gas produced each day to maximise the evening supply. The gasholders met this need for storage and peak dispersal. This was represented in the gradual rise and fall of the gasholder tanks, which responded to the use throughout the day as the gas was used by customers.
- 1.2 Demand for gas increased exponentially over the course of the nineteenth century, and therefore the dimensions and technology of gasholders increased to keep pace, leading to a period of innovation within the industry.
- 1.3 Antoine Lavoisier (1743-1794) invented the first gasholder in 1782, which was used to store gas and transmit it at a constant pressure. It was comprised of an inverted metal vessel (the bell), rising and falling in a tank of water. It could hold a volume of c. 3 cubic meters.
- 1.4 The first commercial gasholders were developed on these principles c. 1816, with water-sealed tanks and a movable bell, in which the gas was stored. By the early nineteenth century, the shape had moved from the initial rectangular holders to cylinders.

Single Lift Gasholders and Guide Frames

- 1.5 The first gasholders using underground tanks were of single-lift construction. The movement of the tank up and down was aided by wheels running along guided tracks on the supporting columns. Guide frames were added, first by John Malam, to resist lateral forces.

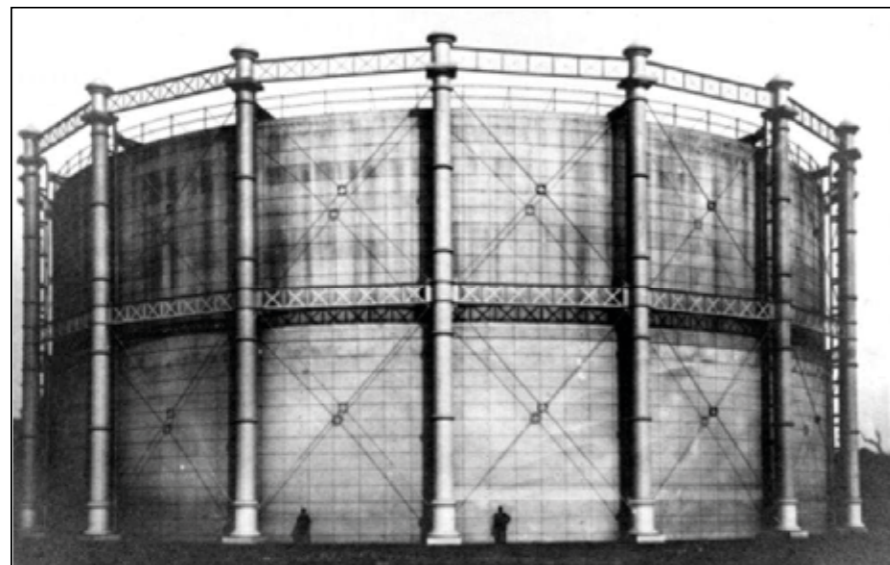


Figure 1.1: Column Guided holder with braces.

- 1.6 Guide frames were originally cast iron, with wrought iron used from 1876 (Figure 1.1). The design of the guide frame was dependent on the degree of the lateral forces, which was affected by the dimensions of the gasholder and the number of lifts. Diagonal bracing provided additional strength. The design of gasholders therefore varied significantly across the country, and often had decorative features such as emblems at joins in the braces.

Telescopic Lifts

- 1.7 The first telescopic lift was designed by Tait and constructed in Leeds in 1826. The lifts consist of an inner bell which could fold down one into the other as the gas pressure fell and rose, assisted by guide rails. This was a useful innovation that increased the capacity of gasholders.

Spiral Guided Gasholders

- 1.8 The spiral-guided gasholder was patented in 1887 by W. Gadd and W.F. Mason, and the first was built in Northwich, Cheshire, England in 1890 (demolished). The spiral-guided gasholder dispensed with the guide frame and used telescopic lifts guided by the one below, which rotated as they rose. The lateral forces were resisted by angled rails fixed to the outside (Figure 1.2).
- 1.9 In general, spiral guided gasholders tend to have very little visual interest, resting below the ground surface with only the helical guide runners visible. They had highly functional designs without a guide frame, which had previously offered the opportunity of architectural elaboration and ornamentation. They were the dominant type in the mid-twentieth century.



Figure 1.2: Photograph of a spiral guided gasholder with an above ground built in 1930.

Waterless Gasholders

- 1.10 Waterless or dry-sealed gasholders were developed in the twentieth century to store natural gas. These have a fixed, cylindrical structure (known as a 'shell' or 'container'), constructed from steel plates and vertical stanchions, with a polygon base. The foundation is of concrete and raised slightly above ground level and there is a ventilator in the conical roof. Inside the container there is a floating piston which uses oil or tar as a sealant to prevent gas entering the area above, which can be accessed.
- 1.11 Three types of waterless gasholders were constructed in Britain, which were designed in Germany and the USA, including the M.A.N holder, as used at Battersea and Southall, London (Figure 1.3). The M.A.N. holder was developed in Germany in 1915-1916 and the first was constructed in the UK in 1926-7. The volume of the waterless gasholders was generally much larger: up to 7.5 million cubic feet. They have a permanent profile so can be very prominent in the skyline, as at Battersea, London (since demolished).



Figure 1.3: Photograph of the Battersea MAN Holder, 2013 © Ben Murphy.

- 1.12 High pressure holders were developed from the 1930s. It is a sphere or horizontal cylinder, constructed from strong steel, with dished ends. It holds gas at high pressure, which is released into distribution pipes through governors which reduce the pressure.
- 1.13 Gas production from coal ceased in 1976. Modern underground pipes have allowed for high pressure storage and distribution, so low pressure gasholders are no longer required.

Component Buildings of Gasworks

- 1.14 Gasholders were only one element of a gasworks, though obviously the most prominent and virtually the only component to find a continuing use after the replacement of coal gas by natural gas. As a starting point, the plan of an ideal gasworks drawn for the ninth edition of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1879) is shown in Figure 1.4. It was drawn by James Hislop, the manager of the Ayr gasworks and an innovative designer of gasworks equipment.

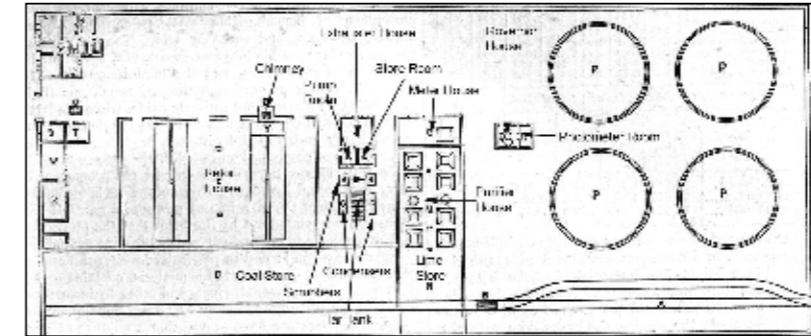


Figure 1.4: Ideal plan of a gasworks by James Hislop, 1879.

- 1.15 The production and distribution of coal gas was created through a series of processes which took place in certain buildings.

Retort Houses

- 1.16 First, coal was placed in Retort houses (Figure 1.5), in special containers then heated by coke fires. This process breaks down the coal to give a residue of coke and 'yield coal gas', heavily laden with various impurities. Initially the retorts were made of iron, but these expanded and contracted, breaking up the brickworks in which they were set, and were replaced by others made of clay or brick.
- 1.17 During the process, the gas was collected in ascension pipes and thence into a hydraulic main, and then into condensers. Tar and ammoniacal liquor collected in the base of the hydraulic main and condensers. The liquor was drawn off into a separator and the tar usually collected in an underground tank.
- 1.18 The next major impurity was hydrogen sulphide. In the early nineteenth century the ammonia and hydrogen sulphide were removed together by passing the gas through limewater. This method not only removed the ammonia in such a way as to make its processing into a marketable commodity impossible, but the resulting saturated liquid, known as 'blue billy', was so noxious a pollutant, even by mid-nineteenth century standards, its use was discontinued. In its place came a lime purifier which used slaked lime.

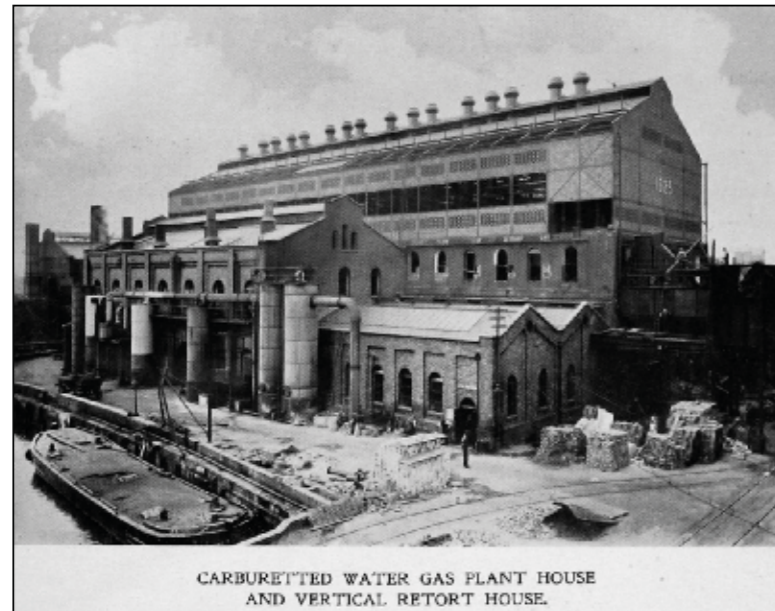


Figure 1.5: Photograph of one of the retort houses at Fulham, London 1925.

Station Meter

- 1.19 The next important building was the station meter. King's *Treatise on Coal Gas* (vol.2, 1879) describes the meter as follows:

'The importance of the station meter in gas works, and more particularly in small establishments, where the utmost care and economy are necessary in order to earn a dividend, is hardly susceptible of exaggeration; for, by this instrument, all the gas made is measured and recorded hourly and daily...The essential part of the equipment is a drum partially filled with water in which four measuring chambers are rotated by the passage of the gas, and gearing communicates this to indicator dials.'

Station Governor

- 1.20 After issue from the gasholder to its mains, the pressure needed to be controlled. This was done by the station governor (**Figure 1.6**), another device normally kept in a separate building. The role of the station governor was to ensure that gas delivered from the gasworks was at a uniform pressure at all times, and free from fluctuations. The governor was located between the gasholder and the district gas main where it controlled the pressure from the former into the latter for supply purposes.
- 1.21 The station governor would consist of a small tinned iron bell floating freely in a cast iron tank containing water (**Figure 1.6[a]**).

(b)



Figure 1.6: (a) Station Governor from King's *Treatise on Gas* (1879); (b) An example of a governor house.

Gasworks vs Gas Stations

- 1.22 Not all gasholder sites were active gasworks (where the coal gas was produced).
- 1.23 During the late-nineteenth century, some new sites were developed simply to store gas and these were known as gasholder 'stations'.
- 1.24 Generally, the stations were built to provide further capacity within the local network for storage, or to provide a new supply to a burgeoning area. They did not, therefore, include much of the gas production apparatus found at gasworks such as the retort houses.
- 1.25 Towards the end of the twentieth century, as gas production declined, gasworks were often reduced in scale eventually leading to the end of production. At that stage, the sites became gas stations.
- 1.26 Paisley functioned as a gasworks with many of the component parts described above. However, the scale and scope of the gasworks reduced dramatically at the end of the twentieth century.

// MARIAN PLACE, BETHNAL GREEN



APPENDIX 2: Marian Place Gas Holder Station Bethnal Green
English Heritage Coil Advice Report (2015)

Case Name: Marian Place Gasholder Station, Bethnal Green

Case Number: 1421565

Background

English Heritage has been asked to consider the four gasholders (Nos. 1, 2, 4 and 5) at Marian Place Gasholder Station, Bethnal Green for the issue of a Certificate of Immunity from Listing (COI). English Heritage has previously assessed Gasholder No. 2 and a decision not to list was issued by DCMS on 15 June 2005. In 2013 an application was made to list the 'Gas works behind the Oval'. This was rejected, on the grounds that there was no current threat, with a steer that, were a threat to materialise, designation would be unlikely. This advice seems to have applied in error only to consideration of the rebuilt Gasholder No.1 rather than to the site as a whole.

Asset(s) under Assessment

Facts about the asset(s) can be found in the Annex(es) to this report.

Annex	List Entry Number	Name	Heritage Category	EH Recommendation
1	N/A	Marian Place Gasholder Station, Bethnal Green	Listing	Do not add to List

Visits

Date	Visit Type
14 August 2014	Full inspection

Context

The site was included in a comprehensive review of the gas industry by English Heritage's Monuments Protection Programme between 1997 and 2002. The reports produced (Steps 1-3) set out the characteristics and development of the industry and identified a number of sites and buildings which merited assessment for statutory designation as significant examples of the industries' principal periods of development. However, the project had to be put on hold and no consultation was carried out on the shortlist of sites and buildings (Step 3, 2002), nor were the recommendations endorsed by English Heritage.

Gasholders Nos. 2 and 5 are within the Regent's Canal Conservation Area. The gasholders have been de-commissioned and the site has been identified by Tower Hamlets as an allocated development site in the Management Development Document (April 2013).

Assessment

CONSULTATION

The owners and their consultants, the local planning authority, the Greater London Historic Environment Record and various interested parties were all consulted. Responses were received from LB Tower Hamlets, East End Preservation Society and Oval Space but they made no substantive comments.

Malcolm Tucker (interested party) made the following substantive points (a number of other textual changes of a technical nature were also suggested and these have been incorporated in a revised description without further comment):

1. It was queried whether the statement in the Background Section that in 2013 an application was made to list the 'Gas works behind the Oval' might not refer to the gas holders at the Kennington Oval, LB Lambeth. EH response – we can confirm that the application referred to (Application 1413942) was for the Marian Place site, Bethnal Green.

2. It was noted that the statement in the Background Section that the gasholders are due for decommissioning in the near future is incorrect as they have in fact already been decommissioned. EH response – This is accepted and has been amended in the Advice Report.

3. It is noted that the location is described as a 'Gasworks' but should more correctly be termed a 'Gasholder Station' as there was no production capacity on the site. EH response – Accepted and has been amended in the Advice Report.

4. It is noted that No. 2 gasholder is now the oldest gasholder of telescopic design (i.e. having more than a single lift) still standing, and the oldest with more than one tier of girders in the guide frame. EH response – This is accepted and is discussed below.

5. It is noted that no mention was made of the dry wells, an important element whereby the gas mains were fed into each holder. EH response – While no doubt having an important operational function, the dry wells are not claimed to be innovative and do not add significantly to the architectural appreciation of the structures. They have, therefore, not been included in the assessment.

DISCUSSION

All buildings considered for listing are assessed according to the statutory criteria set out in the Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings (March 2010). Of particular relevance for structures such as gasholders with a relatively standardised form, the Principles note that listing is largely a comparative exercise and needs to be selective where a substantial number of buildings of a similar type and quality survive. In such cases, the Secretary of State's policy is to list only the most representative or most significant examples of the type.

Further guidance is provided by the English Heritage Utilities and Communications Selection Guide which deals with buildings associated with gas supply; while it is clear that it is not common practice to list multiple gas holders of late date and standardised design, key considerations in their selection for listing are technical innovation, structural interest, earliness of date, aesthetic architectural treatment and group value with other gas related structures. It further notes that designation is concentrated on above-ground structures. Below-ground infrastructure, although important to the overall understanding, will generally not be designated.

From the advent of water-sealed gasholders in the early C19, designers sought to combine ever greater capacity with the need for careful pressure regulation, ease of construction, economy of materials, physical strength and, in certain cases, structural and aesthetic refinement. The heavy guide frames of the mid-century with their sturdy cast-iron columns, often employing Classical orders, were gradually supplemented by lighter, more sophisticated framing systems that used wrought-iron lattice standards and diagonal bracing rods. The latter, pioneered in the early 1860s, were adopted in the 1880s in a series of large holders built by George Livesey for the South Metropolitan Gas Company, where the post-and-beam principles of previous gasholder design gave way to a more three-dimensional approach in which the entire guide frame acted as a rigid cylindrical shell. The two gasholders at Bethnal Green which survive in their original state illustrate both these principal types.

The Imperial Gas Light and Coke Company, founded in 1821, was one of the earliest gas companies supplying coal gas to London and the Gasholder Station at Marian Place, Bethnal Green, although not established until some thirty years later, derives historic interest from this association. However, a number of factors serve to reduce the importance of the site. Firstly, Marian Place was developed as a satellite gasholder station to the company's gasworks at Shoreditch. The demolition of this site following its closure in 1953 removed the functional context of the satellite holders at Bethnal Green. Secondly, since there was no gas production on the site, being used solely for storage, its interest in the history of the gas industry is of a lesser order than those sites where coal gas was actually produced. Thirdly, the group value of the individual holders is significantly reduced by the conversion of two of the four holders to spiral-guided holders in the 1920s and '30s. This included the two earliest holders on the site, No. 1 and No. 4. As spiral-guided holders, they have no special interest, not being early enough to be innovative since spiral-guided holders were developed from the 1890s. Only the tanks survive from the original structures, which, as below-ground structures, do not qualify for designation. Consideration for designation is, therefore, limited to the two remaining gasholders, Nos. 2 and 5. The other elements of the site, including the surviving parts of the

Victorian boundary wall, inter-war valve house, and 1970s pumping plant, are too fragmentary (in the case of the wall), or without special architectural or historical interest, to meet the criteria for listing in their own right.

As noted in the Consultation Section above, Bethnal Green No. 2, built in 1865-6, is the oldest surviving example in the country of a gasholder of telescopic design and with more than one tier of girders in the guide frame. It is, after those already designated at Fulham, LB Hammersmith and Fulham (Holder No. 2, c.1830 - Listed Grade II), and Lavenham, Suffolk (1862 - Scheduled), the third oldest surviving guide frame in England. This clearly gives it a degree of historical interest in terms of gasholder development. However, its claims to innovation are eroded by the fact that it was not the first gasholder with a telescopic design to be built (the now demolished Bethnal Green No. 1 of 1853, for example, had a double lift) or having two tiers of girders (such as the demolished Bethnal Green No. 4 of 1856). By the time Bethnal Green No. 2 was built, the hollow cast-iron column supported, double order, double tier holder (identified as Type 14 in Malcolm Tucker's typology of 2000) was well on the way to becoming the most common form of frame-guided holder. As such, it is also the most common type to be already designated. The six examples at Bromley-by-Bow (plus a modified three-tier example), listed at Grade II, date from between 1872 and 1882 and were identified by Malcolm Tucker in 2001 as being better survivals than the example at Bethnal Green. There are also four later examples at St Pancras, LB Camden (1880-83, Grade II), which have been dismantled but are currently undergoing re-erection. Amongst other un-designated surviving examples of this type are Old Kent Road No.10 (1867) and Kennington Nos. 4 and 5 (1874 and 1876). As a particular type, therefore, although an early example, it is not rare, and representatives of this type have already been designated. Furthermore, the demolition of the two earliest holders on the site has reduced its contextual value.

Gasholder No. 5 of 1888-9, designed by George Trewby, is a relatively early example of the monolithic cylindrical-shell frame, built in wrought-iron or steel and originally developed by George Livesey for the South Metropolitan Gas Company. These generally came to supersede the earlier guide frames supported by cast-iron columns from the early 1880s. It is categorised as a Type 35 in Malcolm Tucker's typology, identified by its box-section standards and its use of horizontally-laid web girders. Claims to innovation, particularly important in assessing the more utilitarian cylindrical-shell guide frames, are, however, hard to substantiate in this case. They come down to relatively minor technical innovations such as the use of the horizontally, rather than vertically, laid girders and lack of diagonal cross-bracing in the structural panels which differentiated it from the designs of George Livesey. Although currently no cylindrical-shell frames are designated their survival is not rare. In London, an early example of a George Livesey designed frame survives in Old Kent Road's No. 13 (1879-81), a later example of George Trewby's holders for the Gas Light and Coke Company survives in Kensal Green (No. 6 - 1892), and examples of the striking 'geodesic' Cutler's patent design survive at Hornsey and at Sunderland and Rochdale (all currently the subject of designation assessments). By 1888 a number of such cylindrical-shell frame holders had been constructed. Although it is accepted that the surviving example at Bethnal Green was carefully designed and has a degree of aesthetic quality deriving from the careful proportions of the St Andrew's-Cross panels of the tapering standards, this does not in itself constitute special architectural interest; it merely raises it slightly above other surviving examples of this intentionally utilitarian development in gasholder design. As in the case of East Greenwich gasholder No. 1 of 1886-8, rejected for listing in 2009, Gasholder No.5 marks a stage in gas holder development rather than representing a dramatic technological innovation.

Finally, it is noted that the international protocols concerning decontamination require the partial demolition of the guide frame, the breaching or removal of the bell and the clearance of the tank, and the removal of contaminated ground around and below the tank. Whilst these are not in themselves factors to consider in the assessment process, they illustrate the practical dilemma in conforming to international protocols on decontamination when considering preservation of this particular type of historic engineering structure.

Overall, the Marian Place gasholders lack the necessary rarity of type, degree of technological innovation, or the context of a readable group of structures which illustrate the industrial process of the manufacture of coal gas, to merit special interest in relation to this prominent but ubiquitous building type. However, Gasholders No. 2 and No. 5 have clear local interest as a tangible reminder of the provision of Victorian coal gas supply in the capital, recognised in their inclusion in the Regent's Canal Conservation Area.

CONCLUSION

After examining all the records and other relevant information and having carefully considered the architectural and historic interest of this case, the criteria for listing are not fulfilled. A Certificate of Immunity for the gasholder station at Marian Place, Bethnal Green, should be issued.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION DECISION

A Certificate of Immunity should be issued for the gasholder station at Marian Place, Bethnal Green, including four gasholders originally built for the Imperial Gas Light and Coke Company between 1853 and 1889, two of which were subsequently altered. This is for the following principal reasons:

- * Rarity: Although a relatively early example, Gasholder No. 2 is of a type that is already well represented on the National Heritage List for England;
- * Technological innovation: Gas holder No.2, although the oldest surviving example of its type, was by the date of its construction in 1865-6 no longer technologically innovative. Gas Holder No. 5, built in 1888-9 with a lattice guide-frame was also, apart from its large capacity, not innovative by the time of its construction and earlier examples of the form survive;
- * Group value: the significance and visual integrity of the site as a whole has been eroded by the conversion of Gasholders No. 1 and No. 4, the two oldest holders, to spiral-guided holders of no special interest in the early C20;
- * Industry specific context: the site lacks the context, being a purely storage depot, which would have shown the range of structures which made up a major later-C19 gasworks and thereby to have helped demonstrate the technical processes involved in coal gas manufacture and storage.

Countersigning comments:

Agreed. With many variations of these essentially utilitarian structures, assessment for listing must be highly selective; on balance, the gasholders at Marian Place are not of sufficient interest to warrant listing. P Metz
16 Jan 2015

Second Countersigning comments:

Agreed also. Gasholders are not an uncommon building type and selection for designation must be highly discriminating, ensuring that only the very best examples in terms of technological milestones or clear architectural interest are listed. The gasholders at Marian Place do not fall into this category, although are of clear local interest, and therefore a Certificate of Immunity from Listing should be granted.
V. Fiorato, 21st January 2014

Annex 1

Factual Details

Name: Marian Place Gasholder Station, Bethnal Green

Location: Marian Place Gasholder Station, Bethnal Green, London, E2 9AX

County	District	District Type	Parish
Greater London Authority	Tower Hamlets	London Borough	Non Civil Parish

History

The gasholder site at Marian Place was developed by the Imperial Gas Light and Coke Company which was incorporated by an Act of Parliament in 1821. In 1823 it opened two gasworks along the Regent's Canal at Shoreditch and St Pancras. Over time these were supplemented by further works at Fulham and Bromley-by-Bow. In 1876 the company was merged with the oldest of the gas producers, the "Chartered" Gas Light and Coke Company. The combined Gas Light and Coke Company was the largest gas company in the world until nationalisation in 1949.

In 1853 the Imperial Gas Light and Coke Company acquired land in Bethnal Green from the Regent's Canal Company, 600 yards east of the Shoreditch gasworks, for the development of a satellite gasholder site. The first gasholder (later known as Gasholder No. 1) was erected the same year at the south-east corner of the site. Designed by the Shoreditch gas works engineer, Joseph Clark and with ironwork supplied by Westwood and Wright of Dudley, it had a capacity of 630,000 cubic feet. In 1856 a second holder was erected by the same team to the west of Gasholder No.1. Later known as Gasholder No.4, this had a capacity of 2 million cubic feet and was the largest gasholder so far constructed. The third holder, later known as No. 2, was added between 1865 and 1866 at the north-west corner of the site. This was to have had a capacity of 1 million cubic feet but was reduced in size to 920,000 cubic feet due to a dispute with one of the company's tenants on the edge of the site. It was again designed and built by the same team. Both Gasholders No 1 and No. 4 were rebuilt as spiral-guided holders, in 1925 and 1931 respectively.

Following the merger, the holders were renumbered in ascending order of capacity rather than date. Gasholder No. 3 was on the Shoreditch site, replacing the earlier holders there in 1876-9. It was demolished following the closure of the site in 1953. The final holder (No. 5) was added between 1888 and 1889 at the north-east of the site. This was then the largest built by the Gas Light and Coke Company with a capacity of 4.2 million cubic feet and was designed by the company engineer, George Trewby. The ironwork was by Samuel Cutler and Sons of Millwall.

Details

The site is located on the south side of the Regent's Canal and consists of the following four gasholders and ancillary structures:

GASHOLDER NO. 1: the first holder built on the site, built in 1853, this was converted in 1925 to a 4-lift spiral-guided holder with a 1.1 million cubic feet capacity by Samuel Cutler and Sons. The original cast-iron guide frame was removed and only the brick-lined tank (28ft deep [8.5m] and with a diameter of 127ft [38.9m]) survives from the original holder.

GASHOLDER NO. 2: built in 1865-6, this is a two-lift holder with a guide-frame some 72ft (27m) in height. It has 16 hollow cast-iron columns, each of two superimposed classical orders with un-fluted shafts, connected by two tiers of composite girders. The columns have a gentle entasis. The lower order of columns has Doric capitals topped by a junction section decorated with triglyphs and guttae. The upper order had Corinthian capitals but the attached acanthus leaf decoration has been removed leaving a simple flared capital with an egg and dart moulding above. Originally the columns were topped by blocks with cyma moulding but these have been removed leaving the inner guide rail projecting proud of the top of the column. The base of the columns has a double torus set on a tall square plinth with moulded panels. Some of the plinths retain their circular inspection plates on the outer face, bearing the date '1866'. Wrought-iron guide rails of T-section are fixed to the columns by cast-iron chairs.

The two rows of connecting girders have a central panel of filigree cast-iron with wrought-iron angle-section flanges bolted on all round on both faces for strength. The filigree patterns are different. Those of the upper girders have intersecting concentric circles while the lower has a largely rectangular fret pattern.

The tank is of brick, laid in hydraulic lime mortar with bands of several courses set in Portland cement mortar for additional strength. It is 133ft (40.6m) in diameter and 36ft (11m) deep.

The bell is of two lifts, of a design characteristic of its period, with closely riveted iron plates supported by vertical stays opposite each column (internal on the upper lift and external on the lower) and radial trusses supporting the crown. Double flanged guide wheels bear against the guide rails, the upper ones mounted on carriages with wrought-iron plate webs and lattice crossbracing.

GASHOLDER NO. 4: built in 1856, the second holder on the site and the largest gasholder then built, it was converted to a 3-lift spiral-guided holder of 3.4 million cubic feet in 1931. Again the guide frame, similar in design to the later No. 2 holder, was removed leaving only the brick tank, 204ft (62.2m) in diameter and 41.5ft (12.65m) deep.

GASHOLDER NO. 5: built in 1888-9, this is the fifth of a series of lattice-framed holders designed by George Trewby from 1885-6. It has a lattice guide frame, probably of mild-steel, with 22 standards and four tiers of connecting girders, standing 146ft (44.5m) high. The gently tapering standards are rectangular in plan, forming a lattice box section, with substantial angle-iron verticals braced by angle-iron horizontals and flat St-Andrew's-cross bracing. The standards have moulded cast-iron bases with iron-plate sides filled with concrete. The tops of the standards are formed as boxes of riveted plate, rising slightly above the top girder and flush with its sides. Wings of K-shape integrate the standard with the pattern of bracing in the top girder. The attached guide rails are of H-section rolled steel.

The lower three tiers of connecting girders are placed with their webs in the horizontal plane. Their chords are built up from flat plates and double angle irons and the web bracing is of flat bars in double-Warren configuration (i.e. of St Andrew's crosses without transverse struts). Tapered gusset plates connect to the standards so as to form a continuous, streamlined horizontal band at each level. The top girder has a square, lattice-box section, with angle-iron chords and double-Warren webs of flat bars.

There are no diagonal bracing rods to the main panels unlike at the larger, slightly later and nearly identical Kensal Green No. 6 holder.

The tank is of mass concrete, 200ft (61m) in diameter and 50ft 6 inches (15.4m) deep.

The bell is of three lifts with a steeper crown than earlier practice. The sides have been re-sheeted.

All the holders are no longer in use and are fully retracted.

ANCILLARY STRUCTURES

The inter-war valve house is a single-storey building, rectangular in plan of four bays. It is built of brown brick laid in Flemish bond with a flat felted roof, large multi-pane metal Crittall windows, and a large double door in the north elevation. The 1970s gas pumping plant is also single-storey, brick built with a flat roof and windowless. It is entered by large diameter pipework. Neither building was inspected internally. The site has two surviving sections of a stock-brick boundary wall, presumably dating from the 1850s, on the north-west and east of the site.

Selected Sources

Other

Malcolm Tucker, The development of the gasholder in London in the 19th century, 2000, Monument Protection Programme Step Report on the Gas Industry

Map

National Grid Reference: TQ3461783406



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