

BY POST & SCANNED LETTER BY EMAIL

Our Ref: 1785/20/AE
Your Ref: 2018/3517

The Case Officer
Planning Department
LB Hackney
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY

12 February 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

Sturt's Lock, Eagle Wharf Road – Heritage Review of February 2021 Amendment

Introduction

This letter forms an addendum to the original Heritage Statement by Alan Baxter (October 2017) and the subsequent Addendum Heritage Statement (September 2019) submitted in support of planning application ref: 2018/3517.

The development has undergone a series of design changes since 2019 which are outlined below. To reflect these design changes, the description of development has been altered to:

Redevelopment of existing self-storage site (Use Class B8) to provide a mixed-use scheme comprising blocks of 2-7 storeys and accommodating a self-storage facility (Use Class B8) at lower basement, basement and ground-floor level, office accommodation Use Class E) at basement, ground and first-floor level, 139 residential units (Use Class C3) at second to seventh floor and café (Use Class E) at ground-floor level along with landscaping and other associated works.

Changes to the scheme

In September 2019, Alan Baxter produced an Addendum Heritage Statement which described and reviewed the impact of the changes to the scheme and the improvements that resulted to the character and appearance of the Regent's Canal Conservation Area and the setting of nearly designated heritage assets. These changes were primarily achieved by reducing the height and massing of the original scheme.

Since September 2019, further changes have occurred as follows and it is these changes that have been reviewed and considered with regard to heritage impact:

- Removal of the links to the adjacent site of Holborn Studios (January 2020).
- Removal of the pontoon onto the canal (January 2020)
- Removal of paths along the canalside area (January 2020)

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- Reduction in units to achieve a higher number of family homes (July 2020)
- Increase in green roofs (October 2020).

All of these changes have occurred in consultation with officers at LB Hackney and local stakeholders.

Analysis

The Arlington Square Conservation Area and listed terraces

The introduction of green roofs to the proposed buildings will have negligible to no impact to the character and appearance of the conservation area beyond that already described. No other amendment to the proposal As such, the introduction of these elements would not further increase any impact to this conservation area or to the setting of the terraces that front the square.

The Regent's Canal Conservation Area and locally listed Sturt's Lock

The removal of the pontoon and enhancements to the canalside area are regrettably necessary as the adjacent site preferred to avoid interconnectivity. As this is beyond the applicant's control, this reduction in activity along this conservation area frontage is a minor reduction in the enhancements to the Regent's Canal Conservation Area relative to the original scheme. Nonetheless, the proposed frontage onto the canal will be a high-quality design and will include accessible space and direct interaction with the canalside which will be an enhancement relative to the existing. As before therefore, the development is considered to be an enhancement to the character and appearance of the Regent's Canal Conservation Area and the setting of the locally listed Sturt's Lock.

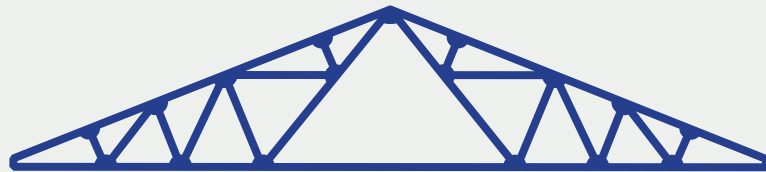
Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed amendments introduced by the amended scheme will have no additional effect on the architectural or historical significance of any of the designated or non-designated heritage assets assessed in detail within the original Heritage Statement or Heritage Statement Addendum.

Yours sincerely



Alice Eggeling
for Alan Baxter Ltd



STURTS

YARD 



ADDENDUM HERITAGE STATEMENT

ALAN BAXTER LTD

ON BEHALF OF ACCESS SELF STORAGE

STURT'S YARD, 48 EAGLE WHARF ROAD, HACKNEY, PLANNING APPLICATION
SEPTEMBER 2019

Sturt's Lock, Eagle Wharf Addendum Heritage Statement Access Storage September 2019

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Executive Summary

This report forms an addendum to the Heritage Statement by Alan Baxter (October 2017) submitted with planning application ref: 2018/3517 and as such, a detailed analysis of the history and significance of the relevant buildings and conservation areas is not repeated here. Please see the original Heritage Statement by Alan Baxter for further information regarding the historic development of Eagle Wharf and its surroundings.

Following extensive consultation with LB Hackney, Studio Egret West have made a series of amendments to the originally submitted scheme. These are set out in full in Studio Egret West's amended scheme drawings and are not reproduced within this report.

It is the conclusion of this report that the improvements to design and massing introduced by the amended scheme represent heritage benefits which will enhance the character and appearance of the Regent's Canal Conservation Area and the setting of adjacent heritage assets, both non-designated and undesignated.

With regard to the setting of the Grade II listed terraces of Arlington Square, the amended scheme represents a substantial improvement relative to the originally submitted scheme. Whilst the proposal will remain visible from Arlington Square and is therefore identified as causing a degree of harm relative to the existing, this harm is at the lower end of less than substantial and is, in our view, outweighed by the significant heritage and public benefits provided by the scheme.

1.0 Assessment of Amendments

1.1 Introduction

Studio Egret West's design changes are extensively set out in separate documents and are not reproduced here. These changes may be summarised as follows however:

- Removal of the majority of the seventh and all of the eighth and ninth floors across the development.
- Omission of the gable end forms.
- Amended distances between blocks at ground floor level.
- Reconfiguration of internal units.

Of particular relevance to heritage considerations are the reduction in height of the proposed blocks and the redesign of the exterior forms of the buildings. The remainder of this document assesses the impact of these changes on the Regent's Canal and Arlington Square Conservation Areas, the setting of nearby non-designated heritage assets and the setting of the Grade II listed terraces of Arlington Square to the north of the site.

1.2 Conservation Areas

1.2.1 Regent's Canal Conservation Area

Relationship with the canal

The Regent's Canal Conservation Area (RCCA) is characterised by a variety of building forms along the canalside, to which the massing of the proposed development continues to respond. As with the original scheme, the amended scheme maintains the reinstatement of the historic yard form of Eagle Wharf to reactivate the waterside relationship of the site with the canal. Whilst the exterior design and internal layout has undergone change, the orientation of the proposed buildings towards the waterway reflects the historic arrangement of the Victorian buildings that occupied the site. This reinstatement will be a significant heritage benefit and a substantial improvement to the closed rear façade of the existing storage building and its visually detracting security fence. As well as intangible benefits such as improving the ambiance and appearance of the canalside area as a public space, the scheme will reintroduce activity along the canalside enhancing the character of the conservation area as a heritage asset.

Vegetation and Character

This element remains unchanged with regard to the submitted scheme. The loss of wild trees and scrub that have thrived alongside Sturt's Lock will be mitigated by a planting scheme that seeks to replicate and allow for informal growth, rather than a purely formal planting scheme. The incorporation of the historic, Victorian, iron structural frame and planting will encourage this sense of the canal as a green space. Whilst this may not be its historic character, it is the character of the conservation area as a twenty-first century space and this character is important to retain and respond to by planting scheme that seeks to replicate and enhance ecological diversity allowing for informal growth.

Relationship with adjacent sites

In 2016 the Council granted permission for a seven-storey, mixed-use development with a landscaped public area by the canal on the site of Nos. 49–50 Eagle Wharf Road. The current proposals for Sturt's Yard acknowledge the interrelationship of the two sites, and seek to improve connection between these two former parts of the original wharf and ironworks. The historic connection between the two sites is purposefully emphasised with direct access built into the canalside space which is designed to link up with that proposed at the Holborn Studios development. The open space is designed to allow any subsequent development to the east of the site to similarly link with the proposed development.

With regard to maintaining the typical massing and form of buildings fronting onto the canal, the amended scheme is a significant improvement when compared with the originally submitted scheme. The amended buildings now reflect the existing hierarchy with the chimney of Holborn Studios, Eagle Wharf maintained as the primary feature dominating the canal environment.

The amended scheme will enhance the RCCA, better integrating the site visually as well as physically with the existing built form along the southern side of the canal and will make a positive contribution to the defined qualities of the conservation area.

Materials, form and massing

This element of the design has undergone the most significant change in order to improve the relationship of the scheme with its context, both immediately adjacent to the site and viewed from a distance. In terms of materiality, the proposals continue to take their design cues from the immediate context of the canal, employing stock-brick: the dominant building material in the area, and echo the Victorian brick structures of the ironworks that formerly occupied the site.

The originally submitted timber and metal panels have been altered to more closely reflect this predominant material finish with, variegated brickwork and architectural ceramics now proposed for the exterior materials.

The typical height of buildings along the canal is between five and eight storeys, with eight- to eleven-storey developments located at strategic points within the near vicinity and wider townscape. The amended scheme has omitted the taller, gabled elements previously submitted and instead presents a predominantly six- to-seven storey massing to the canal with flat roofs more typical of the RCCA.

As amended, the scheme more closely follows typical forms and massing found along the Regent's Canal and represents a significant improvement on the existing situation which provides no interaction with the canal environment, contrary to its historic character. The amended scheme will substantially enhance the character and appearance of the RCCA and improve the experience and feel of the canalside for users and residents alike, introducing natural surveillance and an active frontage to the canalside.

1.2.2 Arlington Square Conservation Area

The originally submitted scheme

The four listed residential terraces that make up Arlington Square form a unified design that significantly contributes to the character and appearance of the Arlington Square Conservation Area. Whilst the conservation area has no specific appraisal, it is this uniformity of built form and completeness as a designed streetscape that is the defining characteristic.

Taking account of the contemporary appearance of the originally submitted scheme and its visual relationship with the listed terrace of Arlington Square to the north of the site, the conclusions of the heritage report submitted with the original scheme were as follows:

By reason of disruption of uniformity to the roofline of the terrace, the scale, massing and form of the proposed scheme will cause harm to the setting of the listed terrace of Nos. 12-21 Arlington Square and will affect the distinctive character of the Arlington Square Conservation Area (Heritage Statement, October 2017).

This has, understandably, been a significant concern for the LB Hackney and has instigated a more heritage-led design for the amended scheme.

Redesign

To overcome these concerns, the amended scheme has reduced the majority of the proposed buildings to six storeys in height: consistent with the canalside context. To maintain design interest and scheme viability, two, seven storey elements have been retained within the site, set back from the canalside to reduce their perceived height from Arlington Square.

This reduction in height has made a fundamental difference from views south from the historically sensitive Arlington Square. Some limited views of the top part of the six and seven storey roof forms will be visible from some locations within the square but these will not have the same degree of visual intrusiveness as the original scheme as a result of their relative similarity in scale and form when viewed as the backdrop to the terrace. The architects have purposefully avoided the addition of plant on the roofs of the seven storey elements maintaining the minimal possible profile at this height. As a result, where views of the new roofs will be seen along the roofline of the southern terrace, these will make a limited impression on the sense of Arlington Square as a unified, design experience, a fundamental change relative to the originally submitted scheme.

The six-storey elements of the scheme that front the canal adjacent to neighbouring Holborn Studios will be seen from Arlington Square within the existing sky gap between the southern western terraces. As before, this element of the scheme is not objected to as detracting from, or harmful to, the form and massing of the primary buildings of Arlington Square.

From the perspective of conservation of the historic environment, the introduction of any visible form above the unbroken linear roof line of the terrace must constitute a degree of harm. Following the scheme redesign however, this harm may now be identified at the lower end of less than substantial harm from the perspective of impacts on views from Arlington Square and the setting of the listed buildings. As previously argued, the terraces were never built to be seen in isolation. Nonetheless any degree of visual change does represent a degree of harm to the square as experienced today. This should be balanced with the substantial benefits of the scheme set out in Section 3.

1.3 Locally Listed Buildings and Buildings of Townscape Merit

1.3.1 Sturt's Lock

As before, the setting of Sturt's lock, a designated Building of Townscape Merit, has informed the proposed landscape design and massing at the edge of the canal; the proposed design facilitates access to the canal and provides an attractive public space to enable people to engage with the lock. The way in which the development faces the canal and centres on the lock will establish it as a focal point of the public space by the canalside. The glazed, ground-floor commercial units and café will be capable of opening fully, allowing maximum engagement with the canal and lock and with the steelwork frame within the courtyard.

Removal of the self-seeded trees and plants adjacent to the lock is accepted to change the immediate setting of this structure but this will be mitigated by sensitive scheme of replanting.

The proposed development will bring about an engagement with the lock that re-emphasises it as a focal point along the canal. The scheme creates through-views between the canal and Eagle Wharf Road which are intended to encourage interaction between the road and the canal side and to highlight the lock's existence, helping to define the unique qualities and sense of place of the canal from Eagle Wharf Road. The scheme also seeks to maintain an appropriate relationship with the canal itself, breaking up the visual massing of the taller elements of the scheme to maintain an appropriate sense of scale for users of the canal towpath on the LB Islington side of the water.

Whilst the scheme will continue to demarcate the development as an important local landmark centred on Sturt's Lock, the amended scheme reduces the visual impact of this visual statement, resulting in a scheme that more closely follows the historic massing and form of the existing Holborn Studios site. The proposed development will not harm the significance of the lock nor its setting, but will increase public access and engagement with it and is judged to be a positive enhancement of the significance of the lock.

1.3.2 Holborn Studios

The Buildings of Townscape Merit which will be retained and incorporated in the approved development at Holborn Studios include the 26m tall industrial chimney and a late nineteenth-century, three-storey warehouse building on the north-west corner of the site, both constructed of brick. The proposed development at No. 48 Eagle Wharf Road will visually communicate with these buildings through the use of variegated red stock-brick.

With the amendments to the scheme and the enhancement of the relationship with Holborn studios, the assessment of impact to this neighbouring site may be amended to one of 'no harm' (as previously identified) to an 'enhancement' of the significance of the neighbouring buildings and their local context within the Regent's Canal Conservation Area.

1.3.3 Nos. 51-71 Cropley Street

The locally listed terrace at Nos. 51-71 Cropley Street is on the west side of that street, the northern end of which will be visually terminated by the proposed development. The part of the proposed development that will be most visible along the street axis will be the westernmost residential block and the lower storey white building. The former has undergone design modifications, altering the elongated gable to one more typical of the form and aesthetic of the wharfside buildings of Eagle Wharf Road. The amended scheme will be an attractive visual punctuation mark that terminates the north-south vista of the street.

1.4 Setting of Listed Buildings

1.4.1 Arlington Square

The nearby Grade II listed buildings of Arlington Square are considered within the assessment of impact on the Arlington Square Conservation Area (Section 1.2.2 above).

2.0 Public Benefits

2.1 Identified public benefits

The amended scheme provides substantial public and heritage benefits which are listed below.

- Removal of the existing building of poor architectural quality and delivery of a high-quality and characterful piece of architecture delivered by a highly-regarded, award-winning architectural practice, which will perform a valuable townscape role in signalling the location of Sturt's Lock through a well-considered scheme which is sensitive to the site's industrial and canalside heritage.
- Enhancement of the Regent's Canal Conservation Area through the use of thoughtful design and high-quality detailing, optimising development on the site with no adverse impact to the adjacent locally listed structures at No. 50 Eagle Wharf Road or Cropley Street.
- Enhancement of the setting of Sturt's Lock, a 'Building of Townscape Merit', situated adjacent to the site, improving both access to, and appreciation of, this heritage asset and long-range views along the Regent's Canal, making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- Improvement of the existing site's relationship to the canal, reinstating its historical orientation facing the canal, and reconnecting the site visually with the towpath, the waterside and the lock, consequently reconnecting the canal with Eagle Wharf Road.
- Retaining existing features at the site, including the reinstatement of pitched roofs and historic break out spaces between the north and south blocks through the re-purposed 1939 Victorian wrought iron trusses to create the new canal side public open space.
- Delivery of a net increase of employment floorspace compared to the existing, comprising a replacement Class B8 self-storage facility and a mix of flexible Class B1 office workspaces, including hot desks, incubator and micro studies which are designed to encourage and meet the modern day working of the more creative industries.
- Delivery of a total of approximately 350 jobs on site resulting in an increase of approximately 346 jobs when compared to the existing 4 jobs on site.
- Provision of high-quality affordable workspace on site, designed to appeal to a multitude of different types of start-up businesses and SMEs.
- Provision of high-quality Build to Rent units in a range of unit sizes which will contribute towards the Council's housing targets and accord with the mixed-use requirements of the site's PEA designation, in being auxiliary to the main employment function at the site.
- Provision of affordable residential units to be delivered on-site at 80% market rent in a range of unit sizes.
- Delivery of new commercial uses, including a café, that will enhance the vitality and viability of the area and contribute to animating the streetscene.
- Significantly improved public realm through the provision of a central landscaped area as public amenity space and a new pedestrian route through it to the canal side.
- Improved landscaping and tree planting which will enhance the appearance of the canal

edge, whilst greatly increasing the species variety and coverage across the site through the creation of a range of new habitats and wildlife zones.

- Indirect positive benefits, including increased local spend of residents, workers and visitors of the site, and enhanced vibrancy for the local area.
- Significant Mayoral and Hackney Community Infrastructure Levy contributions and appropriate Section 106 contributions, providing considerable economic benefits which would assist in the provision of infrastructure and further improvement of the local area.

3.0 Conclusion

Relative to the original scheme, the amended scheme represents a significant improvement to both the character and appearance of the Regent's Canal Conservation Area and the Arlington Square Conservation Area. The six-to-seven storey scheme responds positively to the massing, form and materiality of the historic industrial character of buildings along the canal. The amended scheme will also maintain the primacy of the adjacent chimney at Holborn studios, resulting that this, rather than the scheme, will be the most prominent building along Eagle Wharf's canal frontage.

As with the originally submitted scheme, the amended scheme will provide the substantial public benefits of reinstating the relationship of the site with the Regent's Canal and improving public access to this green space and conservation area.

The most significant benefit relative to the original scheme is the improved relationship with the setting of Arlington Square's listed terraces and the character and appearance of the Arlington Square Conservation Area that the terraces contribute to. Whilst the increased visibility of the site relative to the existing situation must still be identified as harm relative to the existing unbroken parapet line, this is a significantly lesser degree of harm than previous design iterations and one which is, in our view, outweighed by the public and heritage benefits of the scheme.

Alan Baxter

Prepared by Alice Eggeling
Reviewed by Victoria Bellamy
Draft issued August 2019
Final issued September 2019

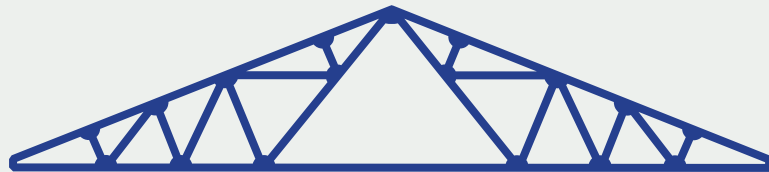
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48 EAGLE WHARF ROAD
HERITAGE STATEMENT

ALAN BAXTER LTD ON BEHALF OF ACCESS SELF STORAGE
STURT'S YARD, 48 EAGLE WHARF ROAD, HACKNEY, PLANNING APPLICATION
SEPTEMBER 2018

48 Eagle Wharf Road Heritage Statement Prepared for Access Self Storage September 2018

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Executive Summary

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Alan Baxter Ltd to accompany a planning application by Studio Egret West to develop the site of No. 48 Eagle Wharf Road in the London Borough of Hackney.

The site, lying between Eagle Wharf Road and the Regent's Canal, was formerly an ironworks and gun factory in the nineteenth century, before being occupied by a marble merchant, a cabinet maker, and most recently a storage facility. Today, the site contains a low rise, metal-framed storage building erected for Access Storage in 2002 with some earlier structures along the eastern boundary amalgamated into a second storage building.

The site is situated within the Regent's Canal Conservation Area (RCCA) and is in close proximity to locally listed buildings and buildings of townscape merit: Sturt's Lock, a nearby terrace on Copley Street and surviving Victorian buildings within No. 49 Eagle Wharf Road. To the north of the canal, in the London Borough of Islington, Arlington Square Conservation Area contains several Grade II listed terraces built in 1850.

The application seeks the demolition of all of the buildings on site and the erection of a mixed-use development of two to nine storeys, incorporating a landscaped courtyard and canal-side public space alongside Sturt's Lock. The design is informed by the various building forms along the canal, including those presently and formerly on the site, and aims to celebrate the historic lock as a visual and social focal point.

The scheme will enhance the setting of the adjacent locally-listed lock and, by the use of thoughtful design and high quality detailing, will enhance the Regent's Canal Conservation Area with no negative impact to the heritage assets in the immediate vicinity. It must be acknowledged, however, that in achieving the best schemes for these heritage assets, the height of the tallest elements of the scheme will be visible from the terraces and communal garden of Arlington Square and detract from its setting by causing some minor disruption to its uniformity.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The brief

This report has been prepared by Alan Baxter Ltd (ABA) for Studio Egret West (SEW). The purpose of the report is to inform and assess SEW's proposals for a mixed-use development on the site of 48 Eagle Wharf Road in Hackney, in accordance with paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which advises local authorities to require 'an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.'

1.2 Methodology and structure of the report

This report sets out an understanding of the site's historical development (2.0) before assessing the significance of the buildings on the site and nearby heritage assets (3.0). This is followed by a section outlining the planning policy context (4.0) and a description of the proposals and their impact on the significance of nearby heritage assets (5.0). The final sections are a conclusion (6.0) and a list of sources consulted (7.0), followed by the Appendices which contain relevant list entries and Historic Environment Record information.

The information in this report is based on desk-based and archive research and site visits that took place between August 2016 and August 2017. This report covers the built environment, excluding below ground archaeology, and should be read in conjunction with the architect's Design and Access Statement and other supporting information submitted in the planning application such as the Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment by Peter Stewart.

It is the nature of existing buildings that details of their construction and development may be hidden or may not be apparent from a visual inspection. The conclusions and any advice contained in this report – particularly relating to the dating and nature of the fabric – are based on our research, and on observations and interpretations of what was visible at the time of our site visits. Further research, investigations or opening up works may reveal new information which may require such conclusions and advice to be revised.

1.3 The site

No. 48 Eagle Wharf Road occupies an approximately 5200m² site between Eagle Wharf Road and the Regent's Canal to the immediate west of Sturt's Lock where the canal widens to create a wharf. Along with the properties to the west at Nos. 49 and 50 Eagle Wharf Road, the site was developed in response to the construction of the Regent's Canal, which was completed in 1820. The three properties once formed part of a single site fronting the canal: the original 'Eagle Wharf'.

Today, the greater part of the No. 48 Eagle Wharf Road site is occupied by a large, single-storey, flat-roofed storage building dating from 2002. This building is accessed from the road only and turns its back on the canal with a blank continuous rear elevation and security fence to the former canal wharf.

The storage building does not cover the entire site with some older structures surviving along the eastern boundary and along the south-eastern corner of the site fronting Eagle Wharf Road. These three structures of different date are linked internally and function as a single building. The largest of these has a single concrete frontage to the road with two hipped roofs running back towards the canal. It was built in 1937 and is of steel and concrete construction with a steel-trussed roof structure. The brick buildings along the eastern boundary are a 1965 structure fronting the road, and to its rear, a gabled building which stands adjacent to the canal which was probably built between 1855 and 1865.

The flank walls of warehouse buildings on the adjacent sites form the boundaries to the site.

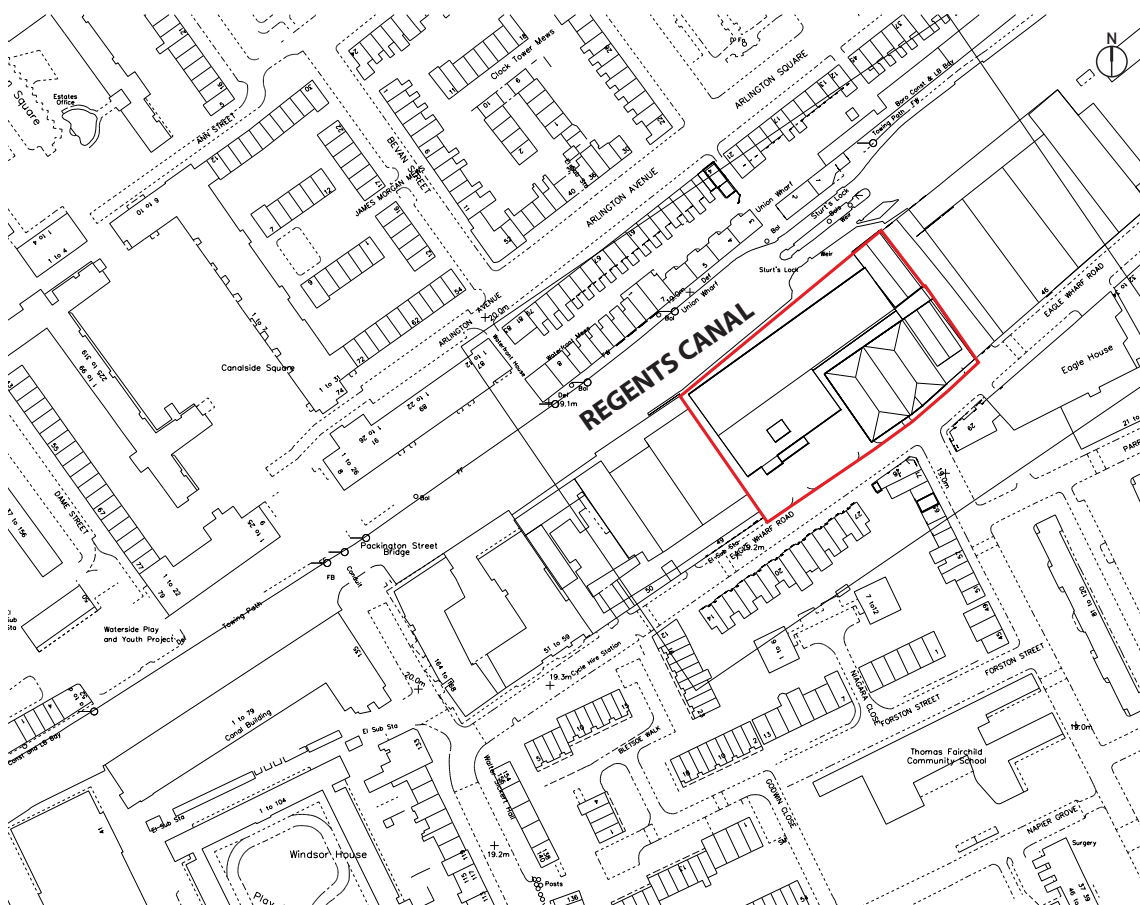


Fig. 1: Site Location

1.4 Designations

The site is located within the London Borough of Hackney (LBH) and forms part of the Regent's Canal Conservation Area.

The site itself is not listed nor otherwise designated as a heritage asset. The adjacent structure of Sturt's Lock and the industrial wharf buildings surviving to the west at No. 50 Eagle Wharf Road are designated as Buildings of Townscape Merit within the LBH Regents Canal Conservation Area Appraisal 2007 (RCCAA). LB Hackney distinguishes between buildings of townscape merit and locally listed buildings but both are considered to be non-designated heritage assets for the purposes of this report.

To the south of Eagle Wharf Road, the Victorian residential terrace of Nos. 51–71 Cropley Street is locally listed.

The site is subject to further non-heritage designations but those which are pertinent to this report are:

- The site lies within a Priority Employment Area and City Fringe Opportunity Area
- The northern edge of the site abuts the Regent's Canal, a Site of Nature Conservation

The canal forms the boundary between the London Boroughs of Hackney to the south of the canal and Islington to the north. The buildings on the north side of the canal are sited within LB Islington's Arlington Square Conservation Area.



Fig. 2: Existing site

2.0 Historic development of the site

2.1 The Regent's Canal Ironworks

The site and surrounding area were in agricultural use until the early nineteenth century. In 1820, the Regent's Canal was constructed to connect the River Thames to the east with the Grand Junction Canal and Camden to the west. The route cut through rural landscape following the boundary of the parishes of Islington and Shoreditch, to the north of the expanding city of London.

Greenwood's map of 1824 (Fig. 3) shows that whilst some development had reached the canal at this point, particularly around the crossing points, the area that would become Eagle Wharf remained undeveloped.

In 1850, however, Henry Grissell and his brother Martin started an iron foundry beside the canal at 'Eagle's Wharf'. The ironworks made civil and structural ironwork such as producing the ironwork for the world's first iron-framed, multi-storey building, the Sheerness Boat Store. The works also produce decorative ironwork for buildings as well known as the British and Natural History Museums, the Houses of Parliament, the Royal Opera House and the Floral Hall at Covent Garden. Stanford's map of 1865 (Fig 5) shows how much 'Grissell's Ironworks' (Fig 4) had expanded into the 'Regent's Canal Iron Works'. The largest factory buildings were located on the present day site of No. 48 Eagle Wharf Road. The small gabled brick building that today survives to the north-east of the site first appears on this 1865 map.

In 1866, following a banking crisis of the same year, Henry Grissell shut down the works and the site was leased to different occupiers. The OS map of 1871 continues to show the site as an ironworks but records of the liquidation of the Regent's Canal Ironworks and the sale of the site in 1871 (Fig 6), show the present day No. 48 Eagle Wharf Road up for sale with a gun factory in occupation as leaseholders.



Fig. 3: 1824 Greenwood map

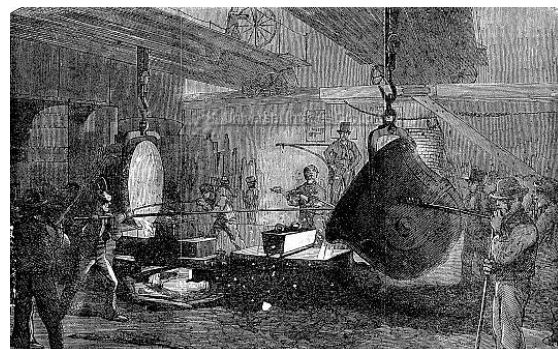


Fig. 4: The Grissell ironworks 1855



Fig. 5: 1865 Stanford's Map of London

After the last appearance of the site as an ironworks on the 1871 OS map, the eastern part of Eagle Wharf begins to also be referred to on maps and in records as the separate entity of Blenheim Wharf, although both names continue to be used to reference the site (During the 1888 trial for treason of Thomas Walsh, witnesses attested that he had fetched a delivery of guns 'from Eagle Wharf').

In 1891, an insurance survey of the site by Charles E. Goad Ltd, shown in Figure 7, shows the buildings that formed the present day No. 48 Eagle Wharf Road continuing in use as a gun factory. This map shows the surviving brick-built building of the 'Machine Shop' in the north-east corner of the site. This is shown as having a simple, pitched, metal roof, gabled to the north and south, consistent with the surviving building.

The brick frontage of the factory continued westwards to the gates of the site, which has been separated off to form individual sites. West of the gates, a house, stables, stores and offices are shown to stand along the boundary with No. 49 Eagle Wharf Road. The neighbouring site was in use as an iron foundry, machine shop and factory which made specialist industrial machinery. The third part of the original Eagle Wharf, to the extreme west (No. 50), was a bedstead factory. All of the uses are consistent with the dissolution of Grissell's original ironworks at Eagle Wharf and probably indicates that some of the factory buildings, foundries and facilities were reused. The canal side is shown as supporting coal and iron storage, crates and loading cranes for the operation and servicing of the factories.

Records of exchanges from the House of Commons from 1893, between the Financial Secretary to the War Office, William Woodall MP and MP for Islington, Thomas Lough, give an indication of the large numbers of men working at the site and their relative wages;

Henry rifles and carbines are being made under contract with the War Office by the Henry Rifled Barrel Company, of Eagle Wharf Road ... Hitherto 193 day and pieceworkers have received their money from the window of the office, while 54 hands under seven contractors take their earnings direct from these contractors.

All government procured guns of the era carry a maker's mark and the existence of Henry Rifled Barrel marks show that arms continue to be manufactured from the site until around 1895. After that year, the Henry Rifle Barrel mark ceases to be used but a new mark belonging to the Blenheim Engineering Company is seen instead, still operating from the site. By 1900 however, the Blenheim Engineering Company had moved to Woolwich, probably due to the concentration of armed forces and the nearby Royal Arsenal, and manufacture from Eagle Wharf ceased although guns made at the site continued in active service until World War I.

No. 48 Eagle Wharf Road continues to be known as the Blenheim Works in later maps.

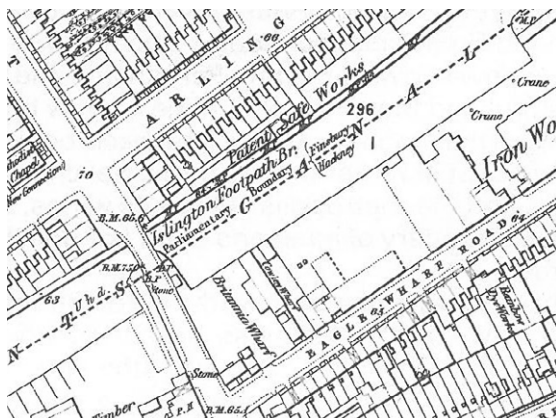


Fig. 6: OS Map, 1871



Fig. 7: Goad Plan showing No. 48 Eagle Wharf Road, 1891

The Henry Rifled Barrel and Small Arms Company

The Henry Rifled Barrel and Small Arms Company manufactured guns, supplying the British Empire with Martini-Henry rifles and other small arms.

Victorian gun manufacture generally named the gun for the lock mechanism and barrel type (e.g.: Martini-Henry rifles used the Martini lock mechanism combined with Scotsman Alexander Henry's innovative polygonal barrel). These were made in great numbers at Enfield, Birmingham, Tower Hamlets and at Eagle Wharf, to supply the British Army.

The last two sites, operated by the London Small Arms Company and the Henry Rifled Barrel and Small Arms Company respectively, benefitted from the large number of skilled gunsmiths in London who found themselves out of work in 1866 when the London Armoury Company was shut down. In the preceding five years, this earlier company had concentrated exclusively on supplying a single customer: the US Confederacy, and, like the Confederacy itself, the company did not survive long beyond the end of the US Civil War.

Some of the unemployed gunsmiths went on to found the London Small Arms Company. Others went to Alexander Henry's newly opened factory within the recently vacated ironworks at Eagle Wharf.



Fig. 8: Henry Rifled Barrel Co Rifle from Eagle Wharf

2.2 The twentieth century – marble, cabinets, packaging and storage

The OS map of 1914 shows the Blenheim Works with a different layout to the Victorian gun factory. Buildings are retained around the eastern, western and southern perimeter of the site but those in the centre have been cleared away. Tracks have been added between the wharf and travelling cranes are shown accessing the large buildings along the site frontage. The London Gazette records several mentions of a firm called Walton, Goody and Cripps Ltd, operating out of the site in this period until at least 1933. The firm were marble merchants and manufacturers of statuary and the use of travelling cranes from the canal wharf to the yard and warehouses is consistent with that use.

Hand-written notes from 1921 on an older map show how the former gun factory had been converted to the marble warehouses, explaining that some of the buildings were destroyed by fire whilst the larger buildings were purposely cleared to make space for the marble cutting yard. The map and contemporary records show No. 48 Eagle Wharf Road sub-divided at this point with the brick buildings along the eastern boundary of the site operated by a different company (of cabinet and wooden bedstead manufacturers). This includes the pitched-roofed, brick building that survives today and a building along the eastern boundary fronting the road that no longer survives.

Records deposited with the London County Council show that much of what remained within the larger part of the site was demolished in 1937, except for the house and adjacent stores that stood along the boundary with No. 49 Eagle Wharf Road. A large concrete warehouse was constructed in place of the demolished buildings directly along the site frontage with the Eagle Wharf Road. This building was divided into five bays with the easternmost pair, adjacent to the eastern boundary, given two storeys.

The Second World War left its mark on the site with a direct bomb strike, which was the likely cause of the loss of the remaining Victorian dwelling and adjacent stores along the western boundary which no longer appear on maps after the second world war.

The 1954 OS map shows a large warehouse covering most of the site. The surviving buildings show signs of having abutted now demolished extensions. The small brick building standing along the forward part of the eastern boundary of the site had been demolished by 1954 leaving a yard fronting Eagle Wharf Road. By this point, the pitched-roofed, brick building in the north-east corner by the canal was the sole surviving structure from the Victorian period, and much altered, possibly as a result of the combined effects of bomb-damage and the frequent demolition and rebuilding of adjacent buildings.

By 1965, the yard on the eastern boundary had been infilled with the rectangular building, which survives fronting Eagle Wharf Road, and the wider site was in use as a paper warehouse and later a packing case factory. Three of the five bays of the large inter-war warehouse were demolished to make way for the storage building built in 2002.

The other surviving building on the site is therefore formed from the two, two-storey bays that were built in 1937, linked internally to the predominantly flat roofed, c. 1965 brick built structure and the Victorian pitched roofed building.

3.0 Assessment of Significance

3.1 Significance criteria

Assessing significance is the means by which the cultural importance of a place and its component parts is identified and compared, both absolutely and relatively. The purpose of this is not merely academic, it is essential to effective conservation and management because the identification of elements of high and lower significance, based on a thorough understanding of a site, enables owners and designers to develop proposals that safeguard, respect and where possible enhance the character and cultural values of the site. The assessment identifies areas where no change, or only minimal changes should be considered, as well as those where more intrusive changes might be acceptable and could enrich understanding and appreciation of significance.

Statutory designation is the legal mechanism by which significant historic places are identified in order to protect them. However, it is necessary to go beyond these in order to arrive at a more detailed and broader understanding of significance that considers more than matters archaeological and architectural-historical. This is achieved here by applying the criteria set out in Historic England's *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (2008), a document that has helped to bring a much-needed clarity to the use of the term 'significance.'

Conservation Principles describes four different value groups that contribute to the significance of a place:

Evidential value: derives from the potential of a place to yield primary evidence about the past. It can be natural or man-made and applies particularly to archaeological deposits, but also to other situations where there is no relevant written record;

Historical value: derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. A place may illustrate some aspect of the past, and thus helps to interpret the past, or be associated with an important person, event or movement;

Aesthetic value: this may derive from conscious design, including the work of the artist or craftsman; alternatively it maybe the fortuitous outcome of the way a building or place has evolved; and,

Communal value: regardless of their historical or aesthetic value, many places are valued for their symbolic or social role, often as a source of identity to people and communities. This may encompass a spiritual or commemorative role.

The assessment of significance is usually an amalgam of these different values, and the balance between them will vary from one case to the next. What is important is to demonstrate that all these values have been considered in assessing the significance of the site and the relative significance of its component parts.

3.2 The buildings on site

The Victorian brick building

As the sole surviving Victorian building on the site, the gable ended, brick built building with its wrought iron trussed roof is the last vestige of the site's original use as an ironworks and later gun factory. Additional structures do survive in the adjacent site of No. 50 Eagle Wharf Road, which better reflect the use and appearance of the site as originally developed. The brick structures within No. 50 Eagle Wharf Road have been locally listed to reflect this.

The building includes a patchwork of brickwork resulting from repairs and alterations in different materials and the demolition (or war time destruction) of buildings that have abutted it in the past. Most strikingly, the building has been refaced at some point in the twentieth century with a rough-surfaced, wire cut brick which detract from its character and interest as a Victorian building. Openings have been blocked up unsympathetically with concrete and new openings cut into the elevations. Where the wrought iron roof survives, it is attractive but not of special interest.

As an individual building, the gabled building is of limited architectural merit partly as a result of its relatively humble utilitarian construction but primarily as a result of the significant alterations to it. Evidentially, the value of the building as part of the Victorian use of the site is much reduced by the lack of surviving external materials. Overall, the building is judged to be of **limited significance**.



Fig. 9: Current storage building on site



Fig. 11: Patchwork repairs to the Victorian building



Fig. 12: Textured twentieth-century brickwork to facade of Victorian building



Fig. 10: Victorian building wrought iron roof trusses with modern roofing above

The 1937 concrete warehouse building

Notwithstanding the fact that there has not been a structural survey of the building, the surviving bays of the 1937 concrete, steel-framed warehouse has limited architectural or historical significance.

As an example of a pre-war warehouse it is a relatively ordinary example with no innovative features. The ground-floor windows appear to have been replaced within the last ten years and are poor quality. Like the surviving Victorian building, the warehouse has been altered externally by the removal of the majority of the historic fabric. On the remaining side and rear elevations, openings have been relatively crudely filled in with concrete and brick with little thought for appearance. The surface of the concrete to the western flank of the building is roughly shuttered, perhaps dating to when the larger part of the warehouse was demolished. Internally, the concrete and the unusually deep concrete beams are good ordinary construction of the 1930s. The system of reinforcement is not detectable on visual inspection.

The roof trusses are steel and again, whilst attractive pieces of engineering, are not of historic importance. The building is not considered to have evidential, historical or other merit and is of **limited significance**.



Fig. 13: Link between Victorian building and 1937 building



Fig. 15: Back of 1937 building

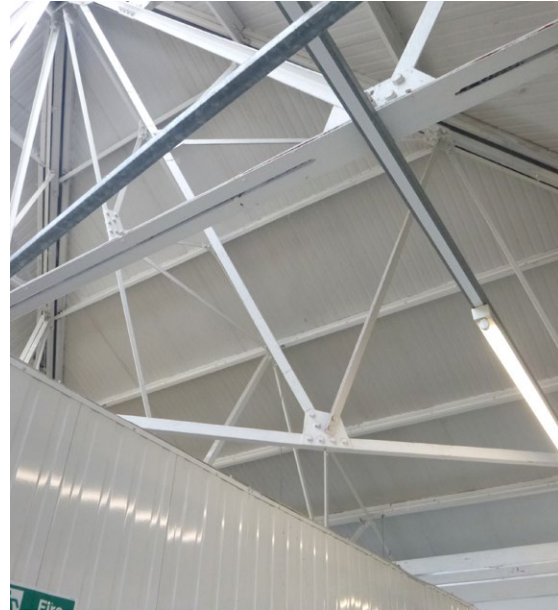


Fig. 14: 1937 building Roof Trusses



Fig. 16: 1937 facade

The 1965 brick building

The flat-roofed infill building with its rooflight and brick façade is not of high quality in terms of materials, design or response to its context. The building is squeezed uncomfortably into the space between the 1937 concrete warehouse and the adjacent site and displays poor quality finishes in construction. Architecturally and historically, this building is of **no significance**.



Fig. 17: Facade of 1965 building



Fig. 18: Poor quality construction of 1965 building

3.3 Conservation Areas

In statutory terms, the significance of conservation areas has already been recognised: they are designated heritage assets as defined in the NPPF. Their heritage value relates to their distinctive and special character or appearance. They are experienced as a sum of contributions from built form, spaces, uses and movement through them with each having a defined quality that its designation seeks to preserve.

Regent's Canal Conservation Area

The Conservation Area Appraisal sets out that the significance of this conservation area is as a result of the cumulative experience of Victorian and later industrial and commercial buildings centred on the canal. The conservation area also benefits from an enclosed green atmosphere by the canal side and is defined by views along the canal that centre on bridges and locks. Later buildings, such as residential developments and restaurants that respond to the attractiveness of the waterside location, also contribute to the pleasant and green character of the area.

Arlington Square Conservation Area

This Conservation Area lies within LB Islington north of the canal. It does not benefit from a specific Conservation Area Appraisal but is characterised by terraces of low-rise, nineteenth-century houses arranged around public squares with associated railings and street furniture, with Arlington Square particularly benefitting from a high degree of survival of original features.

3.4 Listed Buildings

There are no listed buildings in close proximity to the site other than the Grade II listed terraces that form Arlington Square. These Victorian terraces, built in 1850, are of architectural interest not only for their architectural quality but also for their uniformity of appearance. The collective experience of the terraces, shared garden and associated street furniture as an intact, laid out Victorian square is part of their significance. These terraces, as nationally listed buildings, have special architectural interest.

3.5 Locally Listed Buildings and Buildings of Townscape Merit

Locally listed buildings and Buildings of Townscape Merit are buildings that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of a conservation area or the street-scene in general.

Sturt's Lock

Adjacent to Eagle's Wharf is Sturt's Lock, where, originally, there was a pumping station which regulated water levels on the canal. In addition to being of historic significance to the Regent's Canal, the lock acts as a focal point in views along the canal.



Fig. 19: Sturt's Lock

Holborn Studios

The converted warehouses at 49–50 Eagle Wharf Road, which currently house film and photographic studios, were part of Grissell's ironworks in the nineteenth century. LB Hackney has approved plans to demolish most of the buildings on the site, to make way for a mixed-use development of two to seven storeys. The Buildings of Townscape Merit which will be retained and incorporated in the approved development include a 26m tall industrial chimney and a late nineteenth-century, three-storey warehouse building on the north-west corner of the site. These buildings are prominent landmarks of this part of the Canal and contribute to the character and appearance of the Regent's Canal Conservation Area.

51–71 Cropley Street

This two-storey, nineteenth-century terrace is constructed of yellow stock brick with moulded parapets. It has an attractive and characterful appearance and makes a positive contribution to the street-scene.

3.6 Street-scene

The local street-scene of Eagle Wharf Road is characterised by a mixture of residential and commercial buildings, ranging between two and four storeys. Commercial buildings tend to be on the north side of the road, reflecting the position of the canal.

Other than the locally listed terrace, Cropley Street is mainly characterised by twentieth-century residential flats between two and five storeys in height. The predominant building material is brick with grey slate roofs.

4.0 Planning policy and legislative context

4.1 National Policy

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The overarching legislation governing the consideration of applications for planning consent that affect heritage assets is contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation) Areas Act 1990.

Section 72 of the Act requires local planning authorities, in considering whether to grant planning permission with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that conservation area.

4.1.1 National Planning Policy Framework

The revised NPPF was adopted in July 2018. Section 16, entitled Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, contains guidance on heritage assets, which include listed buildings and conservation areas. Paragraphs 189 - 199 are relevant to the present application:

- Paragraph 189 requires an applicant to give a summary of significance of the building or area affected, proportionate to its importance. This heritage statement provides that information at an appropriate level.
- Paragraph 190 advises local authorities to take account of that significance in assessing proposals to avoid or minimise conflict between the proposals and conservation of the asset.
- Paragraphs 192 and 193 emphasise the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of individual assets and wider, local distinctiveness, and the desirability of viable and fitting uses for a building being found or continued.
- Paragraph 196 states: 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 securing its optimum viable use.

Additional guidance to help local authorities implement the NPPF is set out in:

- The Planning Practice Guidance on the government's website which provides practical advice on applying the NPPF to the planning process and guidance on interpreting the language of the NPPF.
- The Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2, entitled 'Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment'. This is the most relevant of the guidance documents by Historic England.
- The Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 entitled 'The Setting of Heritage Assets'.

4.2 Regional Policy

4.2.1 The London Plan

The London Plan is the overall strategic plan for London, setting out an integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of London over the next 20–25 years.

The relevant policies from the London Plan are:

Policy 7.8 Heritage Assets and Archaeology

A London’s heritage assets and historic environment, including listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens and other natural and historic landscapes, conservation areas, World Heritage Sites, registered battlefields, scheduled monuments, archaeological remains and memorials should be identified, so that the desirability of sustaining and enhancing their significance and of utilising their positive role in place shaping can be taken into account.

C Development should identify, value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets, where appropriate.

D Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.

4.3 Local Policy

4.3.1 The Hackney Development Management Local Plan

The Hackney Development Management Local Plan (DMLP) was adopted on 22 July 2015. It contains a range of criteria-based, detailed development management policies for Hackney and is used as the main policy tool to assess and determine planning applications across the borough.

The relevant policies from Hackney’s DMLP are:

Policy DM28 – Managing the Historic Environment

A. Conservation Areas

Development in or adjacent to the Borough’s Conservation Areas shall preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the respective Area. The Council will only grant planning permission to demolish or substantially demolish non-listed buildings in conservation areas where:

- i. the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area;
- ii. there are satisfactory proposals for redevelopment or treatment of the site which must proceed after demolition.

C. Other Heritage Assets

Hackney will seek to ensure the protection and enhancement of other heritage assets including London Squares, Registered Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, and locally listed and designated assets. Development proposals should not be detrimental to the appearance and character of such Assets, and where relevant the wider historic environment.

Paragraph 6.3.1 states that:

Planning permission will only be granted for development in Conservation Areas that preserves or enhances the special character and appearance of the area. The special character or appearance of the area should be identified and responded to in the design of new development.

Paragraph 6.3.3 states that:

In considering applications for demolition, the Council will take account of group value, context and setting of buildings, as well as their quality as individual structures and any contribution to the setting of listed buildings... When a building makes little or no contribution to the character and appearance of a Conservation Area, any replacement building should enhance the Conservation Area to a greater extent than the existing building.

Paragraph 6.5.2 states that:

When putting forward proposals which may affect historic setting, applicants should... identify the contribution made to the historic significance of a heritage asset by its setting, before determining any impacts on that significance arising from development in the setting. Therefore, a proposed development within the setting of a heritage asset should assess, consider and address any impact on the asset's significance in accordance with Historic England's guidance and advice.

Policy DM35 — Landscape and Tree Management

The removal of non-protected trees as part of development schemes will not be supported unless adequate replacement planting is proposed, or the removal is in the interests of good arboricultural practice.

4.4 London Borough of Islington

The boroughs of Islington and Hackney are separated by Regent's Canal. Although the London Borough of Islington is not the local planning authority, it is important to recognise the effects that this development may have on the heritage assets of its neighbouring borough and these must be taken into consideration when considering a planning application.

5.0 The proposals

5.1 Design

The proposed development consists of two mixed-use blocks, providing storage units, workspace, residential accommodation and new public spaces. Both blocks have vertical elements of differing heights; the eastern block with a central section rising to nine storeys and the western block rising to eight. The ground floor and first floor of both blocks are given over to commercial units whilst the second floor and above will be in use as residential flats.

The massing of the development is characterised by two pairs of gable-roofed elements, oriented north-south and facing onto the canal, flanked by six-storey, flat-roofed elements. The western pair of gables has seven and eight storeys whilst the eastern pair has seven and nine storeys.

One of the key design principles is to activate the canal frontage through the provision of public access and the creation of an exciting and dynamic setting for Sturt's lock. This is achieved through the division of the northern, canalside elevation of the development into vertical elements and aggregated rooflines of different heights, giving the impression of multiple connected buildings that engage with the canal side.

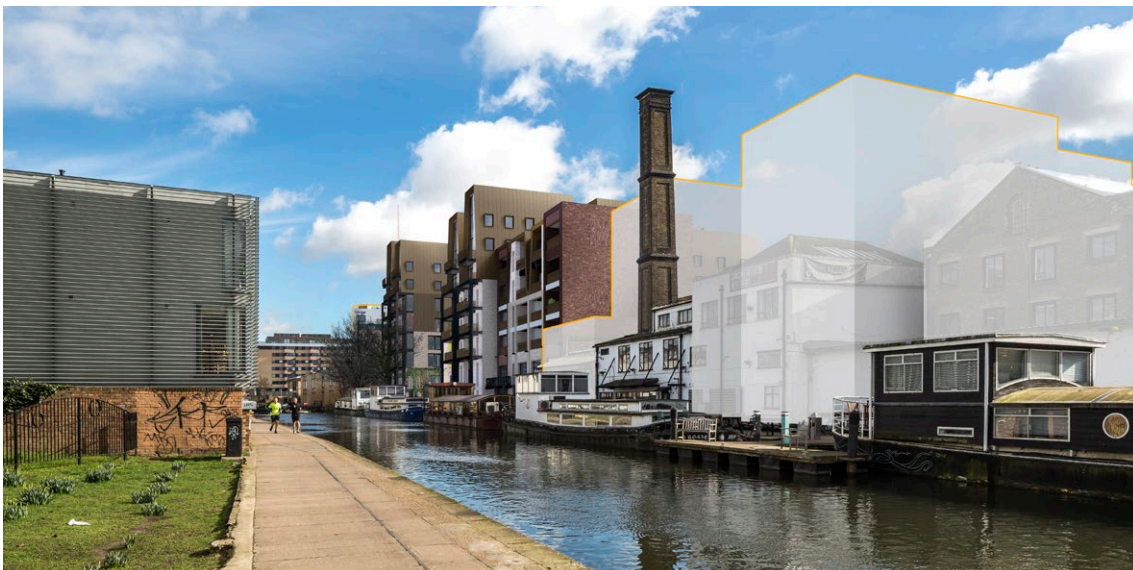


Fig. 20: View from the west showing proposed massing

A range of materials is proposed. Brick is to be buff or pink, with timber cladding, and features of dark coloured materials including graphite black balconies, blackened mild steel space projecting space frames to the facade and graphite black frame heritage-style windows to the ground and first floors of the scheme.

The most striking feature of the scheme is the proposed roof forms of the taller elements which will be exaggerated mansards, clad in copper standing seam cladding. This mansard form encompasses the top three storeys of each taller element, reducing the bulk and massing of the upper storeys as well as producing a distinctive appearance.

The main building material of the south elevation, facing Eagle Wharf Road, is brick, the western block being partly red and partly yellow variegated stock-brick. The eastern block is entirely variegated yellow stock-brick, whilst the central element of this elevation, surmounted by the open-trussed roof structure, is a two-storey building of painted white brick or concrete that recalls the 1930s building currently on site and similar warehouse structures elsewhere along Eagle Wharf Road.

5.1.1 Landscape

The provision of open space and the reconnection of the canal and the road is literally central to the design of the scheme at ground level. Three courtyards are proposed with two to be service yards: the East Yard is for accessible and residential parking; the west yard is for accessible office parking associated with the self-storage facilities, and the Central Yard (or 'Sturt's Yard') fronts the canal and contains planting and seating for the café, beneath the repurposed wrought-iron roof truss structure that has been salvaged from the Victorian brick building on the site.

The scheme includes access through Sturt's Yard from Eagle Wharf Road to the canal. The water front, with views across the canal and to Sturt's lock, is proposed to be a public area with further seating and planting. There are three more courtyards, incorporating trees, water and planting, at upper storey levels, for use by residents. The central of these, fronting Eagle Wharf Road, is surmounted by another repurposed open-trussed steel roof structure, this time taken from the 1930s building that it replaces.

5.2 Assessment of the scheme

5.2.1 No. 48 Eagle Warf Road site

As outlined above, the undesignated buildings on the site of No. 48 Eagle Wharf Road are not of heritage interest. The steel-framed twenty-first century building is of no heritage significance. The other buildings on site are of limited or no heritage interest due to their utilitarian alterations and patchwork repairs. Their removal is acceptable from a heritage perspective.

The reuse of the wrought iron and steel roof trusses from the Victorian brick building and 1930s warehouse is intended to retain a physical connection with the prior uses of the site, preserving a sense of its industrial and commercial past. Using a fragment of the original buildings will contribute to a sense of unique and distinctive place and should be viewed as positive placemaking if not conservation of the built environment in the traditional sense.



Fig. 21: North Elevation

5.2.2 Conservation Areas

Regent's Canal Conservation Area

Relationship with the canal

The RCCA is characterised by a variety of building forms along the canalside, to which the massing of the proposed development purposefully responds. The proposal seeks to reactivate the waterside relationship of the site with the original wharf. The development's orientation towards the waterway reflects the historic arrangement of the Victorian buildings that occupied the site. This is a significant heritage benefit that will be a substantial improvement to the closed rear façade of the existing storage building and its visually detracting security fence. As well as intangible benefits such as improving the ambiance and appearance of the canalside area as a public space, the scheme will reintroduce activity along the canalside enhancing the character of the conservation area as a heritage asset.

Vegetation and Character

The loss of wild trees and scrub that have thrived alongside Sturt's Lock will be mitigated by a planting scheme that seeks to replicate and allow for informal growth, rather than a purely formal planting scheme. The incorporation of historic iron (and steel) structural frames and planting will encourage this sense of the canal as a green space. Whilst this may not be its historic character, it is the character of the conservation area as a twenty-first century space and this character is important to retain and respond to by planting scheme that seeks to replicate and enhance ecological diversity allowing for informal growth.

Relationship with adjacent sites

In 2016 the Council granted permission for a seven-storey, mixed-use development with a landscaped public area by the canal on the site of 49–50 Eagle Wharf Road. The current proposals for Sturt's Yard acknowledge the interrelationship of the two sites, and seek to improve connection between these two former parts of the original wharf and ironworks. The historic connection between the two sites is purposefully emphasised with direct access built into the canalside space which is designed to link up with that proposed at the Holborn Studios development. The open space is designed to allow any subsequent development to the east of the site to similarly link with the proposed development.

Materials, form and massing

The proposed materials echo the conservation area and are appropriate to its character and appearance. The proposals employ stock-brick, the dominant building material in the area, and echo the Victorian brick structures of the ironworks that formerly occupied the site. Additionally, the use of vertical massing in brick responds to buildings on the wider site, namely the 25m tall chimney at Holborn Studios.

The typical height of buildings along the canal is between five and eight storeys, with eight- to eleven-storey developments located at strategic points within the near vicinity and wider townscape. The proposed development seeks to define the lock as a strategic focal point. The lock dominates views of the canal looking westward from the lower level stretch of canal to the east of the site and terminates views of the site looking eastward, particularly from the nearby pedestrian bridge at Shepherdess Walk. As such, it is subtly different to most stretches of the canal, and the creation of taller development at the lock would, with careful design, be an enhancement of the character of the conservation area.

The design quality of the scheme is high, with the striking form and material palette of the buildings of a suitable quality to transform this location into a successful focal point along the canal. The scheme will be visually striking without dominating the adjacent listed structures (or the approved redevelopment at Holborn Studios). The change in land and water levels at the lock allows the site to support a stepped change in form and design from the lower level development to the east. The form of the roofs, which take design cues from the shape of the adjacent chimney and the warehouse buildings that formerly occupied the site, have the additional benefit of breaking up massing at higher storeys and allowing clear views through to Eagle Wharf Road.

The high design quality, form and massing of the development would represent a positive contribution to the local character and distinctiveness of the Regent's Canal Conservation Area.



Fig. 22: Cropley Street view

Arlington Square Conservation Area and Listed Buildings

The four listed terraces of houses that form Arlington Square are considered as a whole with the Arlington Square Conservation Area. Whilst the conservation area has no specific appraisal, it is its uniformity of built form and completeness as a designed streetscape that is the defining characteristic.

The proposed scheme is a twenty-first century development. Whilst it takes design cues from its industrial canal-side location and makes effort to complement rather than dominate surrounding development along the canal, its height, form and massing is unmistakably contemporary. There is consequently a tension between this visible contemporary form and the heritage asset of Arlington Square as a conservation area and as a collection of Grade II listed buildings where the architectural interest is visual uniformity and survival of a relatively complete streetscene. This is less problematic for the terraces that stand to the north, east and west of the square but causes conflict with the southern terrace, Nos. 12 – 21 Arlington Square; the tallest elements of the scheme will appear above the roofline in views.

As might be expected of a terrace development, the houses have a strong horizontal emphasis with the linear cornice and roofline unbroken by any development when looking south from Arlington Square itself. The proposed development would rise above this strong roofline in two locations (see Arlington Square Conservation Area Contextual Analysis in the Design and Access Statement). As a result of the visual contrast between the architecture of the scheme and the terrace and the height of the tallest part of the scheme, the proposed development will be noticeable from mid-range views.

The design team has made efforts to minimise and mitigate the visual impact of taller elements of the scheme as seen from this relatively uniform residential square; removing visual bulk by incorporating mansard roof forms and choosing materials for the roofs that are not brightly coloured or visually prominent with a roof colour informed by the brickwork of the Arlington Square terraces.

Arlington Square does not sit in isolation nor was it designed to be seen in isolation within the landscape; its construction post-dated the industrial canal that it was built in close proximity to and it was residential development in a mixed-use neighbourhood at the time of its construction. There is an argument that the changing context of the city in this part of London forms the setting of residential buildings, where tall buildings form and will continue to form, the distant backdrop of spaces such as Arlington Square. It is concluded, by reason of disruption of uniformity to the roofline of the terrace, that the scale, massing and form of the proposed scheme will cause harm to the setting of the listed terrace of Nos. 12-21 Arlington Square and will affect the distinctive character of the Arlington Square Conservation Area.

The scheme, albeit well-designed and of a high quality appearance, will be visible in mid-range views southward from Arlington Square. The physical fabric of the buildings will not be affected. As such, this report must conclude that the scheme represents less than substantial harm to designated heritage assets (Grade II listed Nos. 12 – 21 Arlington Square and the Arlington Square Conservation Area).

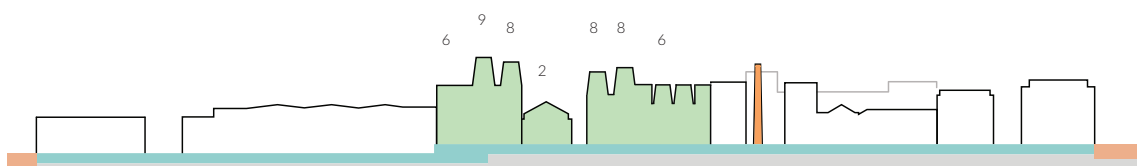


Fig. 23: Proposed section

The scheme proposes planning benefits and, with regard to its immediate environment, and long-range views along the Regent's Canal makes a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. In reaching a determination of the benefits and disadvantages of the scheme, decision makers should make an informed choice recognising that the scheme represents a degree of harm, if less than substantial, to the setting of a Grade II listed building and a conservation area which should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal as set out in paragraph 196 of the NPPF.

5.3 Locally Listed Buildings and Buildings of Townscape Merit

Sturt's Lock

The setting of Sturt's lock, a designated Building of Townscape Merit, has informed the proposed landscape design and massing at the edge of the canal; the proposed design facilitates access to the canal and provides an attractive public space to enable people to engage with the lock. The way in which the development faces the canal and centres on the lock will establish it as a focal point of the public space by the canalside. The glazed, ground-floor commercial units and café will be capable of opening fully, allowing maximum engagement with the canal and lock and with the planted, steelwork frame within the courtyard.

Removal of the self-seeded trees and plants adjacent to the lock is accepted to change the immediate setting of this structure but a this will be mitigated by sensitive scheme of replanting.

The proposed development will bring about an engagement with the lock that re-emphasises it as a focal point along the canal. The scheme creates through-views between the canal and Eagle Wharf Road which are intended to encourage interaction between the road and the canalside and to highlight the lock's existence, helping to define the unique qualities and sense of place of the canal from Eagle Wharf Road. The scheme also seeks to maintain an appropriate relationship with the canal itself, breaking up the visual massing of the taller elements of the scheme to maintain an appropriate sense of scale for users of the canal towpath on the LB Islington side of the water.

In summary, the scheme will demarcate the development as an important local landmark centred on Sturt's Lock, towards which the landscaping and massing is oriented. The proposed development will not harm the significance of the lock nor its setting, but will increase public access and engagement with it and is judged to be a positive enhancement of the significance of the lock.

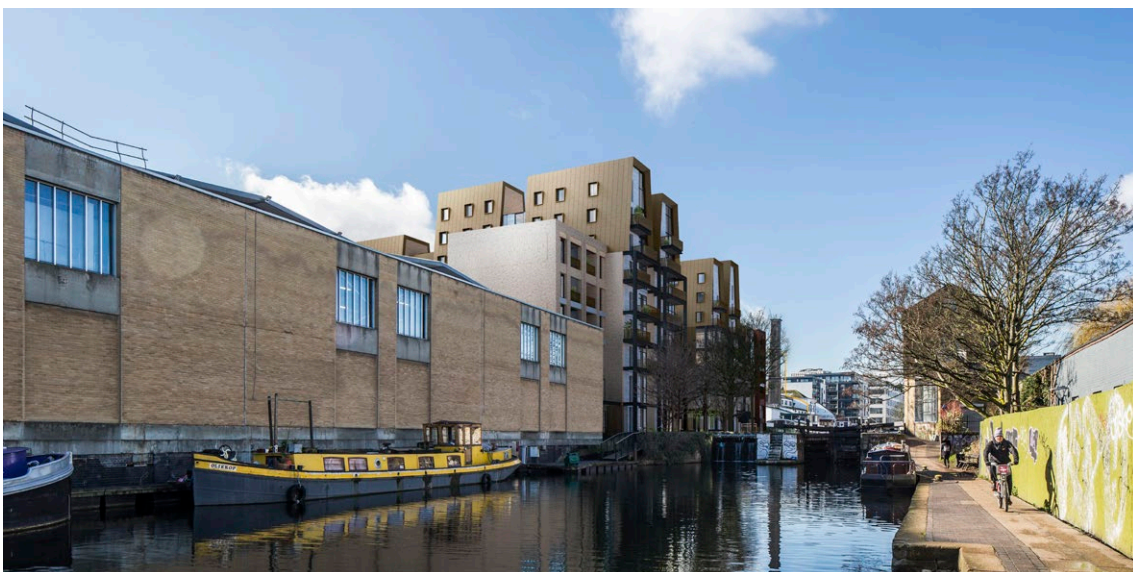


Fig. 24: View from the east

Holborn Studios

The Buildings of Townscape Merit which will be retained and incorporated in the approved development at Holborn Studios include the 26m tall industrial chimney and a late nineteenth-century, three-storey warehouse building on the north-west corner of the site, both constructed of brick. The proposed development at No. 48 Eagle Wharf Road will visually communicate with these buildings through the use of variegated red stock-brick. Additionally, the form of the chimney has informed the form and composition of the vertical gabled elements of the proposed development. The brickwork of the chimney is divided into three distinct parts, which has been translated by the proposals into the division of the central vertical elements into gable, residential units beneath and commercial podiums. The pitch of the gable roofs also echoes the distinctive form and gradient of the slope of the chimney as it diminishes in size toward the top.

Whilst the proposed development will be taller than the chimney, the massing is stepped away from the shared boundary such that the development, the chimney and the lower level locally listed building within No. 50 Eagle Wharf Road will together form a varied townscape. The proposed massing will not significantly visually dominate the chimney in overall views of the canalside. If the neighbouring site is built out as per the approved scheme for redevelopment, this complementary massing will be further improved.

The adjacent chimney is locally listed as a prominent reminder of the site's industrial past and the scheme would not detrimentally impact this identified significance nor harm the historical connection between the surviving industrial structures and their past.

Notwithstanding the fact that a complementary townscape will be achieved, the nine storeys of the proposed development will be visually apparent adjacent to the chimney structure and the visual prominence of the chimney relative to the existing context will be reduced. Weighing these two considerations in balance, the impact of the proposals to this scheme can be deemed to be neutral with regard to significance.

In summary, the proposals will not harm the significance of the Holborn Studios non-designated assets, nor their setting.

51–71 Croyley Street

The locally listed terrace at 51–71 Croyley Street (Fig 22) is on the west side of that street, the northern end of which will be visually terminated by the proposed development. The part of the proposed development that will be most visible along the street axis will be the white two-storey block, recalling the 1930s building that it will replace, crowned by the repurposed steel roof truss structure. This will be an attractive visual punctuation mark that terminates the north-south vista of the street. The taller elements of the proposed development will be visible from this vantage point; however, this will not harm the significance or the setting of the locally listed terrace and the scheme is considered to be neutral with regard to the townscape contribution and heritage significance of this non-designated asset.

6.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, the scheme will enhance the setting of the adjacent locally-listed lock and, by the use of thoughtful design and high quality detailing, will enhance the Regent's Canal Conservation Area providing high density development on site with no negative impact to the adjacent locally listed structures at No. 50 Eagle Wharf Road or Cropley Street. The height and high quality of architecture will emphasise Sturt's Lock as a focal point on the canal, achieving the many benefits of the development whilst remaining sensitive to the site's industrial and canalside heritage. The development will improve the existing site's relationship to the canal, reinstating its historical orientation, facing the canal, and reconnecting the site visually with the towpath, the waterside and the lock, consequently reconnecting the canal with Eagle Wharf Road.

It must be acknowledged, however, that in achieving the best scheme for the heritage assets in the immediate vicinity of the site, the height of the tallest elements of the scheme will be visible from the terraces and communal garden of Arlington Square and detract from its setting by causing some minor disruption to its uniformity. This consideration should inform any decision regarding the redevelopment of the site. This less than substantial harm to a Conservation Area and Grade II listed terrace should be carefully balanced against the planning benefits of the scheme by relevant decision makers.

7.0 Sources

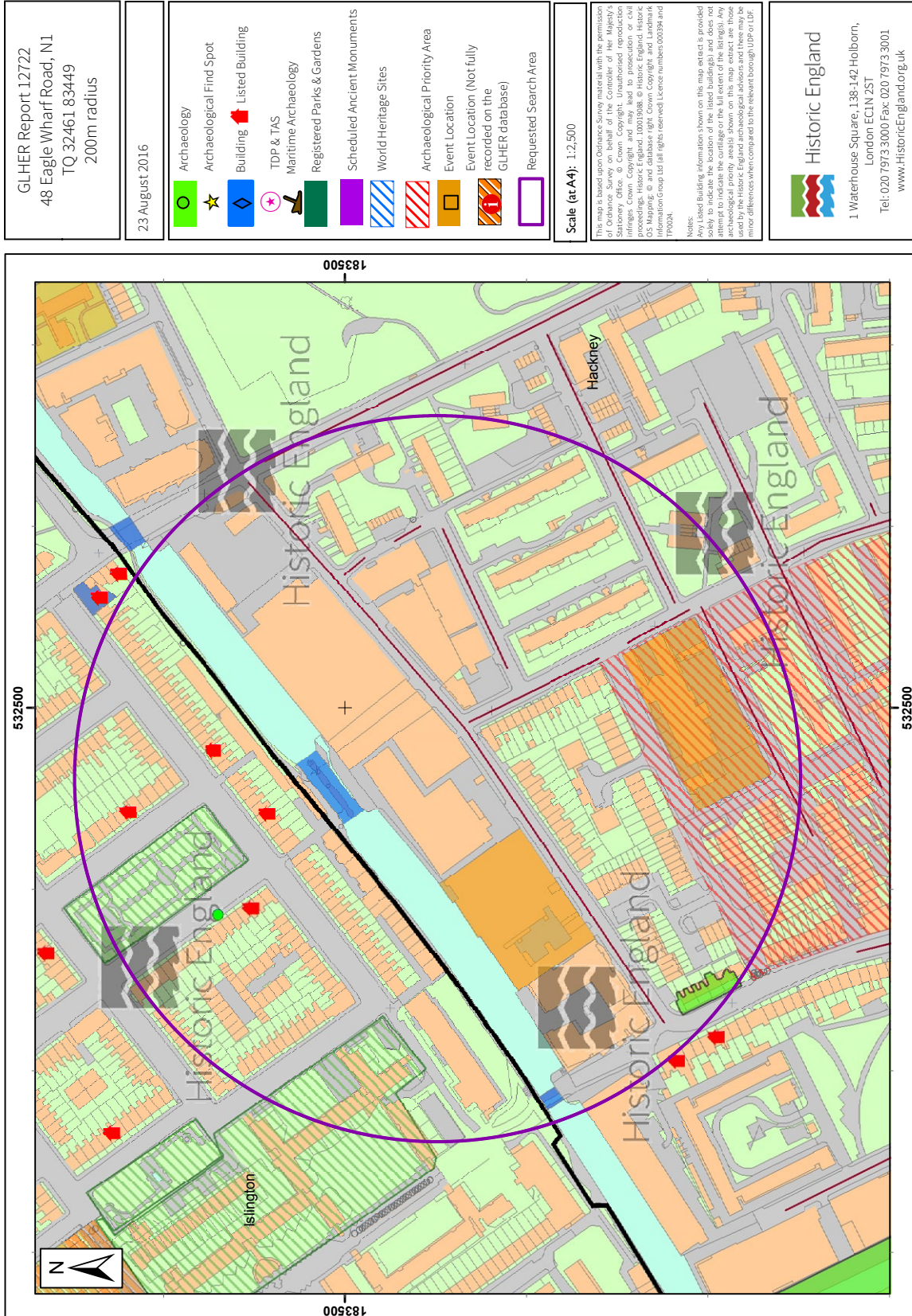
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The London Gazette (4 October 1929)

Appendix A: HER Search



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The Dataset contained in this material was obtained on 23/08/16.

Alan Baxter

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Reviewed by Nicolas Chapple

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