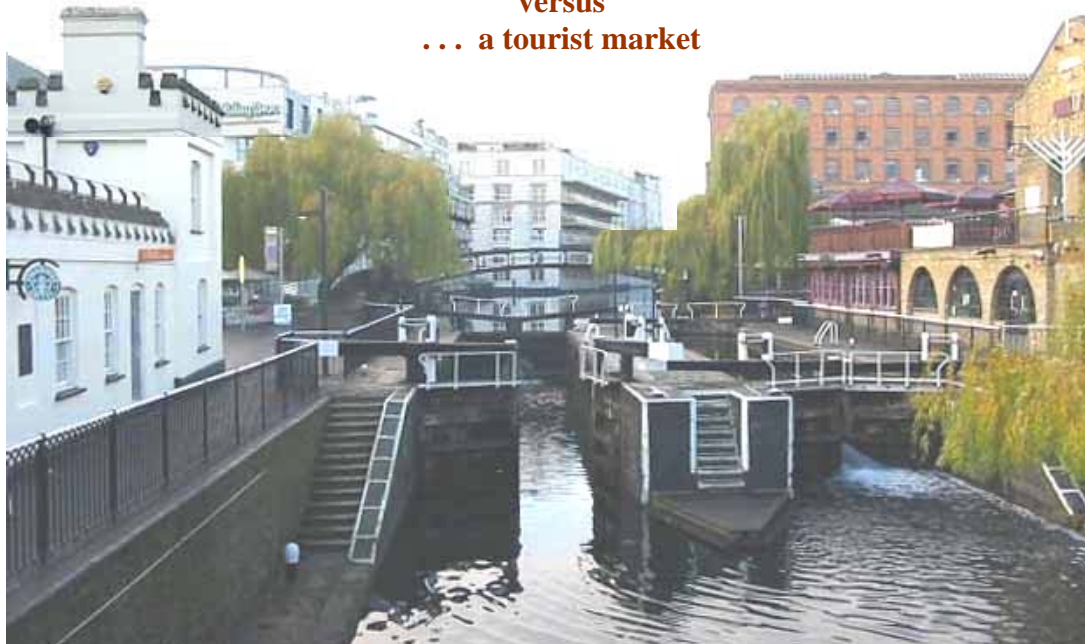


THE REGENTS NETWORK

secretary@regentsnetwork.org

**The historic 200 year old national asset and a long established conservation area
versus
... a tourist market**



A REGENTS CANAL RESPONSE TO THE MARKET REDEVELOPMENT

LB Camden Planning Application Ref: 2015/4774/P OBJECT

INTRODUCTION

It is relevant when considering this application that close attention is given to the Regents Canal with its locks and family of waterway structures quietly sitting there, not shouting, not animated. The importance of the waterway must be considered, as the water itself is given the distinction of being part of London's Blue Ribbon Network as defined in the London Plan, and with the high status as open space with the same importance as the Royal Parks and other London spaces.

Clear guidance

Having focussed on the starting point and identifying the important context, only then can the attention be given to the redevelopment of the market, because any development undertaken must be in conformity with the requirements and sensitivities of the conservation area, and not interfere with or degrade the heritage and special character of the wonderful canal setting at Camden Town. The charm and interest is so valuable, and irreplaceable if damaged in any way.

Working together for the future

However, there is another consideration, as the market area itself that is going to be redeveloped and altered significantly by this application is also located within the same conservation area. This does not mean that changes cannot take place, but any development must be planned with great respect for the conservation and heritage, and to work towards long term aims to enhance and improve the wider setting while moving forwards. The next generations will appreciate that.

Londoners as well as Camden residents are so fortunate to have such a charming and accessible location, and it is valuable to be able to share this wonderful setting with many thousands of visitors from the rest of the world for years to come. Take great care!

CAPTION TO THE ABOVE PHOTO: Heritage Treasure: Seven Grade II Listed canal buildings and assets
The unique pair of locks still in daily use after 195 years; the Lock Keepers Cottage; the Roving Bridge arching over the canal; the huge brick Interchange Warehouse; the towpath bridge over the entrance to a basin beneath the warehouse; the Gilbey's Warehouse by Southampton Bridge, and the High Street Canal Bridge from where the photograph was taken.

1.1 Excessive development

At first sight there seem to be a lot of changes, but on looking into the details more closely of what is envisaged, the extent of the redevelopment looks excessive, and far more than an upgrade. A number of changes and improvements are expected, but this wholesale demolition of the heart of the site and a new and very different building, with much increased floorspace and reconfiguration of West Yard and so on is a development too far.

1.2 The market is already over busy, almost to an unpleasant extent on many days, and to set out to cram more commercial use into a confined space is not welcome in a conservation area and important visitor destination.

1.3 With more people and larger crowds there would be an increase of the overspill into the surrounding areas, and that means the Regents Canal and the locks, unless more open space and standing room is provided within the site itself.

1.4 With fewer stalls and more space, but the same number of visitors, then the income from the visitors may not be reduced. Space for more visitors will then increase the commercial income.

1.5 The last thing that this part of Camden Town needs is yet more market stalls, more food outlets, more jostling crowds.

1.6 Development of the market may be welcome, providing it is not excessive and misdirected.

2.1 Only a tourist destination

The West Yard where the redevelopment is concentrated will be crammed full of food outlets and restaurants. That is not the hoped-for use, as more emphasis should be on crafts and a range of handiwork and fashion, for instance. What we want is for the market “to become once again a hub for creativity” and for the market “to re-engage with Londoners”, to quote from a newspaper interview.

2.2 It is not a market in the true sense. More space and comfort is needed and a creative range of stalls to provide a good service to visitors and a more enjoyable experience.

3.1 Roof line dominates the locks

The reconfiguration and reconstruction of the buildings, entrances and balconies beside the historic locks is not acceptable as the locks are more enclosed, and more sidelined by the use and design of the proposed buildings. The single storey timber construction of the Western range is to be replaced by a inappropriately large building. This will dominate the locks in an unpleasant manner, particularly with the prominent and strangely shaped roof which does not suit at all.

3.2 This new building in particular should be reduced in height and set back from the locks. The walkway beside the locks is constricted and a pinch point at ground level, and as the building is completely new then it has to comply with higher standards than before. The developer should take the trouble to reduce any negative effect of the market and its buildings. There is no reason why we should expect less.

3.3 The higher new building, and its roof, would seriously restrict views of the Grade II Listed Interchange Warehouse.

4.1 Roving Bridge

The inelegant new raised walkway beside the locks and crossing over the West Yard basin will have a detrimental effect on the conservation area characteristics along its length, especially where it crosses the basin. At that point it also damages the setting of the iconic historic Roving Bridge which is a very special feature of the location.

4.2 It seems doubtful that the walkway will successfully improve the pedestrian circulation. If it is proved necessary then it should be set back to cross the basin further north away from the canal, and set back further than the repositioned new building.

5.1 Landscaping and trees

The Arboricultural Report is seriously biased by stating that a fine maple with a Tree Preservation Order on it “provides little amenity” and is not “a significant visual feature” when it is a prominent presence in the dining area beside the basin in West Yard, and one of only three trees on the development site (see **Appendix A**).

5.2 It is just not true, and seems not professional for an “expert” to wrongly and irresponsibly perpetrate an apparent misleading statement, and just because their paymaster wants it cut down.

5.3 More trees would be most welcome for the conservation area and for creating a more pleasant environment for visitors. Also removal of the remaining shrubbery in West Yard should not be permitted, and more opportunities for introducing greenery should be required.

6.1 Commercialism

The encroachment of commercial advertising and promotion of the market with signs, banners, adverts, lighting and speakers beside the locks is not controlled. It has an unpleasant negative effect on the canal and the historic locks. Why is it permitted at all, as the market itself is in the conservation area and excesses of commercial activity should be moderated. (see **Appendix B**).

7.1 Unsustainable drainage

With a new development under a new planning application the building regulations should be brought up to date. This applies to a major consideration for sustainable drainage, and it should not be accepted that all the surface water over the market area is disposed of through the sewers.

7.2 A report in the application states that rain water cannot soak away naturally as the sub ground structure is clay. However this does not negate the possibility for attenuation of the surface water to regulate the flow into the sewers and the alternative use as grey water. It could also be used for watering the shrubberies and greenery that should be introduced into the area. The applicant’s technical report should be scrutinised.

8.1 Dead Dogs Basin

This sadly neglected important canal basin which is part of the Grade II Listed Interchange Warehouse is to be consigned to further humiliation by being lit-up and made-up as a tourist peep show if this market planning application succeeds, with a large glass viewing box and, the last straw, integrated with a restaurant.

8.2 What lack of knowledge and understanding by the market management and their architects. They have one of the most unusual and useful canal docks in the country and do not know what to properly do with it. They did not even bother to find out or ask.

8.3 This Grade II Listed basin (in effect) could be used for the purpose that it was built for, as a water transport dock. With the resurgence of water freight (in early stages) becoming recognised as an opportunity for modal shift from road transport promoted by the EU, our government, authorities and businesses etc, every opportunity to use water freight must be developed.

8.4 One of the greatest benefits of water transport is its environmental advantages towards reducing emissions, and thus improving air quality in London. Tugs and barges use 70% less fuel with 80% lower emissions and air pollution when compared with lorries. So Dead Dogs Basin can provide all those advantages rather than sitting there lifeless and being looked at by tourists. (See **Appendix C**).

9.1 East Vaults could be useful

Part of the undercroft below the Interchange and beside the basin is required for loading and unloading barges that will be using Dead Dogs Basin. The amount of space required for assembling loads and interim storage of goods while in transit has not yet been calculated.

9.2 Other uses for the East Vaults have been suggested in the market application, and all these uses could be fitted in with the basin requirements when the very large area is divided up.

10.1 Waste management

For a while there has been a lot of work carried out on the resurgence of water freight on London's canals. A project is being developed by the Commercial Boat Operators Association, University College London and freight specialists through the Mayor's London Waterways Commission.

10.2 One of the important operations will be the transport of waste and recyclates by canal. This will be useful to the markets in Camden which have to develop a waste management scheme which will require their waste to be transported away "by means other than road". This is where Dead Dogs Basin will be essential for the markets to comply with the emerging legislation.

10.3 There will also be opportunities to transport goods and other loads, and the attached map shows the range and versatility of the canal network in London. Dead Dogs Basin is site 11. **(See Appendix D).**

11.1 Contrary to legislation

Consent for the non-waterway use of the market development beside the canal would be directly contrary to London Plan BRN Policy 7.24 which states that it is of strategic importance that the land alongside waterways should be used for "water related purposes". It goes on to say that the starting point for development and use of land alongside the Blue Ribbon Network "must be the water" (Para 7.71). There could not be a clearer indication of where a commercial tourist market stands.

11.2 If the market development does not comply directly with this policy, then it must at least ensure that it does not have a negative impact on the Blue Ribbon Network, that is the Regents Canal. It should also take positive steps to assist and enhance the canal and its environs.

12.1 Big responsibility

The Regents Canal is not just a pretty pond beside the market.

It is a key section of the historic Regents Canal nearing its bicentenary; it is a section of the capital's Blue Ribbon Network; it is a very high profile section of a national historic network of the country's inland waterways; it has its place in the history and commercial development of our nation; it is part of a national monument of thousands of miles of canals throughout the country.

12.2 This distinctive testimonial for the Regents Canal should be well recognised and respected. But the important matter is that those local authorities responsible for a section of the canal network running through its borough have a heavy and direct responsibility for a national asset. It is as big a responsibility as that, and it is hoped that LB Camden recognises their responsibility to a section of the Regents Canal and treat the canal with respect and gratitude. This should be evident with the manner in which this market application in a sensitive location is dealt with.

13.1 Bad neighbour?

Looking at all the shortcomings of this market development it may seem like the market is a bad neighbour to the Regents Canal. Their track record has not been very good with their disrespect for the Regents Canal and being in denial of the conservation area.

13.2 It would be gratifying if the opportunities offered by this market development could see some changes, even to the extent of the market management and architects working together with the community and the Regents Canal, and realising the benefits of recognition and respect for the historic Regents Canal and the conservation area.

Agenda Item for the Regents Canal Conservation Area Committee, August 2015

MARKET VERSUS NATURE AND CONSERVATION

WEST YARD MARKET

No room for trees in the conservation area as the over-developed market expands?

Right: A mature maple tree that apparently has no place in a market in the Regents Canal Conservation Area even though it has a Tree Preservation Order. This agreeable tree under which visitors enjoy their food in a dining area is to be cut down.

No replacement is to be provided.

The development at that location will also displace a dining area for the multitude of food outlets, and which seems to have been recently reduced in size to make way for even more food stalls.



The remaining scrap of greenery in West Yard (*left*) is to be removed “to get more stalls in” we are told.

Only the tree will remain, but how long it will survive is not known.

This natural area provides a small haven from the dense cluster of food stalls, and provides a certain amount of protection for the true ‘market’ traders of leather craftsman, jewellery designer and bookshops.

There is a single defiant shrub beside the locks, but strangely it is a hostile *Pyrocantha* which is often used in protective hedging because of its sharp and vicious spikes, which no doubt many visitors have discovered. It is not marked on the most recent ground floor drawing.

There have been no signs of any proposals to introduce plants and vegetation to the large open spaces in the market, which is a lost opportunity in the West Yard where every available space is over-filled with food stalls.



Before . . .



and after market developers move in.



There are no plans to replace this well established canalside tree, which enhances the Regents Canal, and belongs to the character and setting of the historic canal. This canal tree has been destroyed for the benefit of a ‘market’ and in spite of its value and importance to the canal in a conservation area.

There seem to be no substantial proposals to improve and increase the environmental and natural assets of the area by the market developers. There may be some concessions in an attempt to minimise the negative impact of this area, but no intentions at all to make a positive contribution to an important and significant environmental location.

WEST YARD’S DINING AREA



The West Yard is over-filled with a variety of food stalls, but is not provided with sufficient dining facilities for visitors to enjoy their take-away meals, and they wander off to find other eating spots, such as the Regents Canal towpath.

Any planning proposal must ensure that sufficient amenity is provided within their own site for the proposed use of the site. It is not acceptable that the amenity is provided elsewhere by others. This issue is badly managed by the market administration.

In the draft proposals for West Yard, the dining area in the north-east area is reduced by the proposed new building, and the small dining area at the canal entrance is removed.

MISUSE OF THE REGENTS CANAL

The Market Management in the past have denied that they do not provide enough amenity and dining space within their own premises. During their recent planning process for Hawley Market they would not agree to increase the amenity space within their market to fully accommodate the needs and comfort of their visitors, including dining areas.



The markets draw in thousands of visitors to Camden Town, especially during summer weekends, but the crowds are not drawn on to the Regents Canal towpath (*Left: a summer weekend*). The towpath is well used as a pedestrian and cycle route, and visitors enjoy a leisurely stroll along the canal and the locks in spite of the current building works.



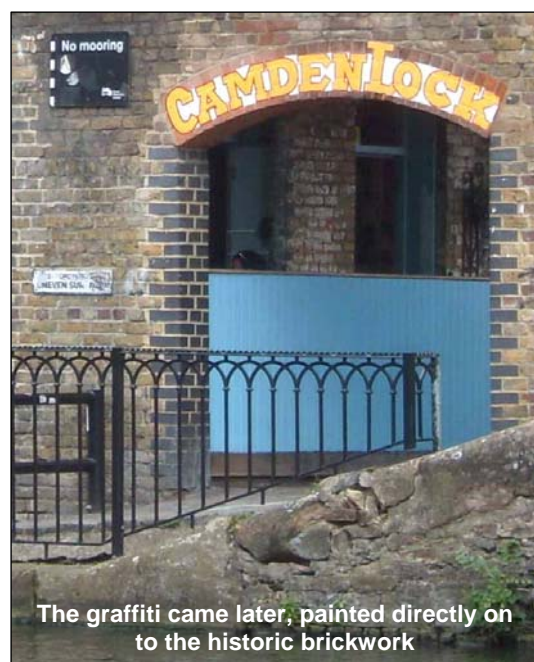
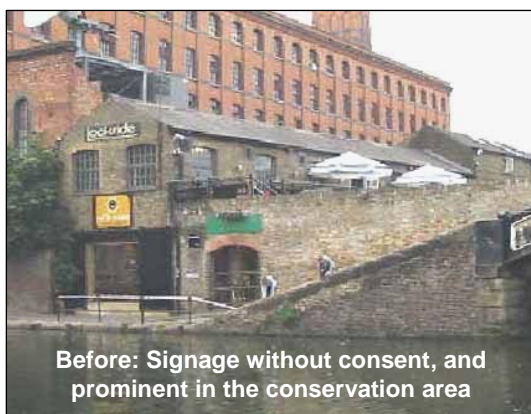
The invasion of the locks and the Regents Canal towpath over the last few years in Camden Town has been generated solely by visitors to the market who then overflowed through the market and on to the normally quiet haven of the Regents Canal.

Note: There was limited encroachment of crowds from the market (that did not have planning consent) until the market managers demolished the canalside fencing without planning consent.

Any redevelopment of the markets in Camden Town must ensure that the relatively quiet and calm character of the Regents Canal is not completely ruined by hoards of visitors who cannot find recreational facilities and comfort within the market. Access from the market to the Regents Canal should be available, but anyone visiting the canal should be able to expect to enjoy the charming canal environment rather than it being an extension of the market.

MISUSED NAME

The name painted on to the brickwork entrance a little while ago without consent, should be objected to. It is an unsuitable title for the disagreeably named Camden Lock Market. We have the Grade II Listed historic locks only yards away and the title misrepresents the historic designation of the Hampstead Road Locks. No respect.





A variety of banners and flags are regularly displayed around the historic locks, all without planning consent or conservation area consent, and all very obtrusive in the canal conservation area.

This large display of the 'Camden Lock' title right above the Hampstead Road Locks is unforgivable. The improper title painted on the brickwork over the arches should also be removed.

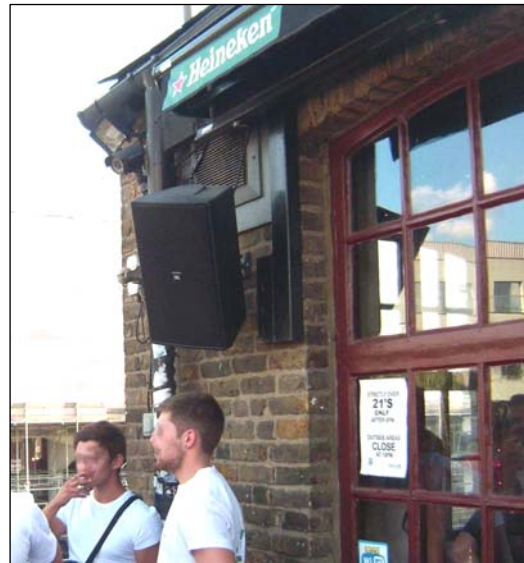
It is very sad that the market management have such little regard for the heritage setting which they so blatantly attempt to overshadow, and it is a worry that no one or any authority seems interested in doing anything about it. It surely cannot be that they consider that a market is more important than a 200 year old unique historic canal setting.

The 'Lock 17' and other internally lit signs are not permitted in the conservation areas.

NO LICENCE

Broadcast music anywhere requires a licence, and is especially unsuitable in a conservation area. The 'Lockside Bar' has a row of large speakers along the gallery with continual and loud music which is not authorised under the current entertainments licence.

The terms of the entertainment license for West Yard do not permit loud volume music. Loud and thumping music can regularly be heard from afar coming from the 'Lock 17' area and Wetherspoons for instance, and the volume seems to rise during the evenings especially at weekends.



THE BEST VIEW IN CAMDEN TOWN

Without doubt the best view in Camden Town is from the High Street bridge looking across the historic locks framed by the unique roving bridge. But do the thousands of visitors that pour over the road bridge know and appreciate what it is that they are looking at (and standing on). There is no sign that identifies the 200 year old Regents Canal, let alone that it is a conservation area, nor that the conservation area is there for good reason.

COMMERCIALISM DOMINATES

The shops, coffee chains, bars, hairdressers, food outlets and markets do all they can to promote their commercial outlets. They can promote as much as they like but not with a negative impact on the canal's conservation area, dismissing its heritage and character and degrading the listed historic buildings. Even though the visitors are drawn to Camden Town by the 'market' they could have an enhanced and worthwhile experience, and take away good canal memories and selfies, rather than a tray of noodles and a T shirt.

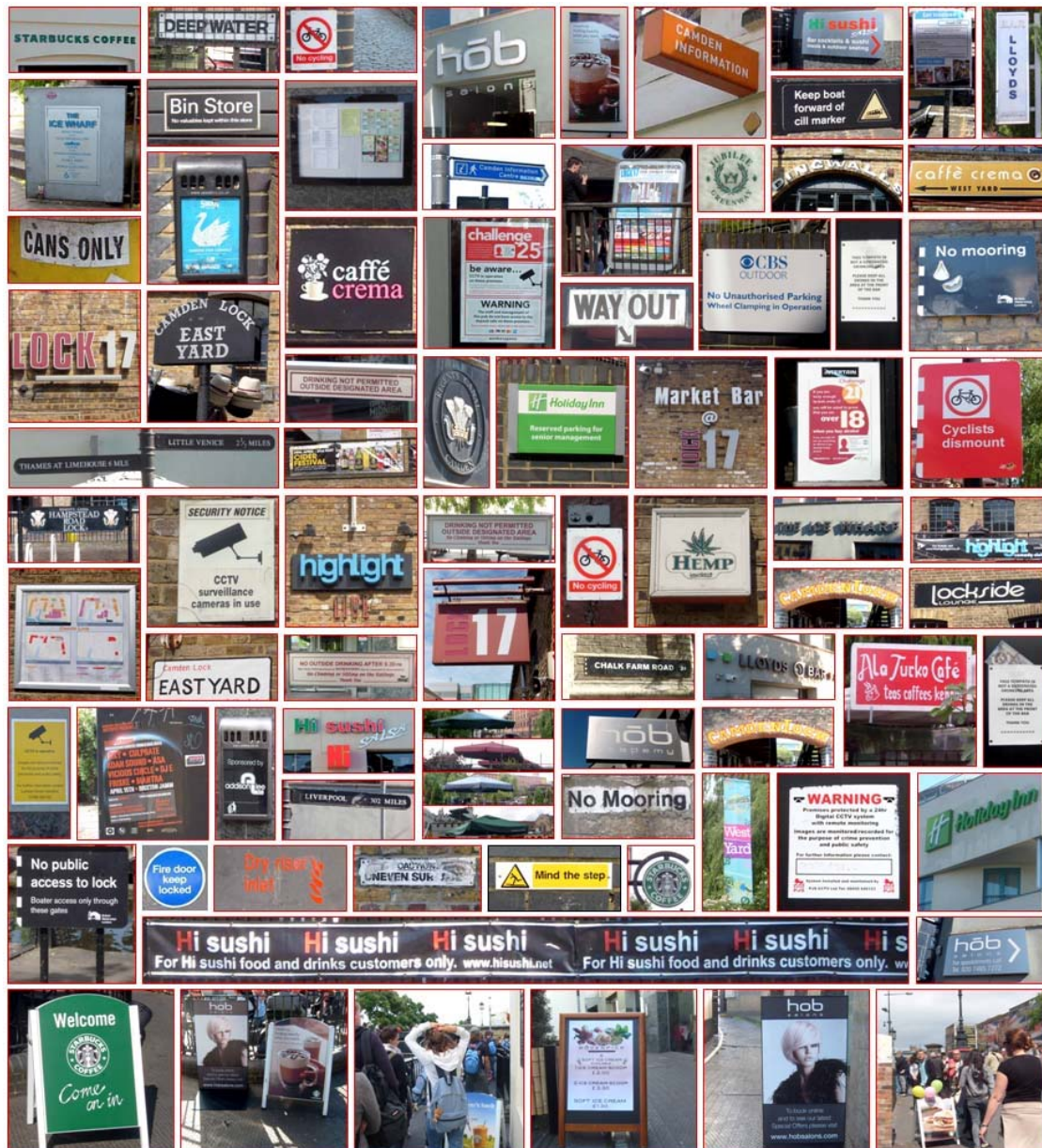
A CAMDEN TOWN HERITAGE TREASURE NEGLECTED

One of the best views in Camden Town is at risk.

Signs, adverts and clutter around Hampstead Road Locks on the Regents Canal at Camden Town spoil a beautiful and historic setting. The commercialism and mayhem of the High Street and markets is eroding away the charm and character of the calm and pleasurable canal corridor, and we watch it happen. It is just as if heritage and conservation areas never existed.



Above: The scene features one of Camden Town's key heritage locations and includes the Regents Canal, the canal's conservation area, as well as no fewer than seven Grade II Listed structures - and a fine view. Below: It also includes all this clutter.



THE INTERCHANGE WAREHOUSE

Regents Canal,
Camden Town NW1

Basin built 1840s
Warehouse over the basin
built c1905

Purchased by BWB 2005
for £21.5m as an investment
with rental income £1.84m pa

Upper storeys occupied by a tv
company on 999 year lease

Basin 225ft x 44ft connected to
over 10,000 sq ft basement area

CAMDEN GAZETTE
30th June 2005

‘Secret’ basin is ‘vital’ for canals’ rebirth

LONDON Assembly member Jenny Jones has thrown her weight behind proposals to use a “secret” Camden canal basin to revolutionise transport.

The Government wants to use canals as a major freight route to take the pressure off clogged-up roads.

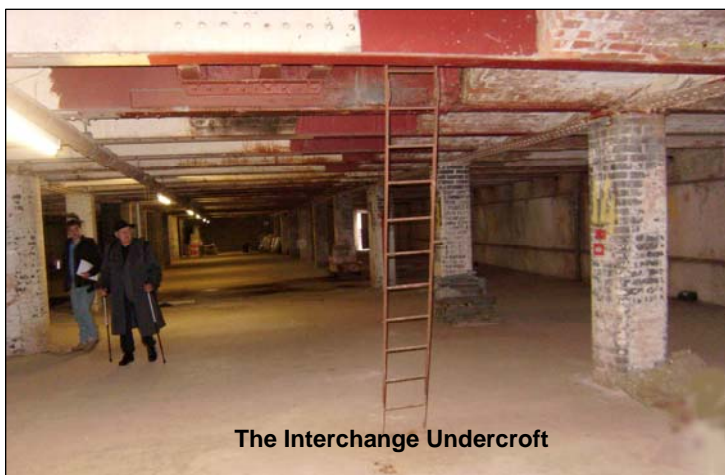
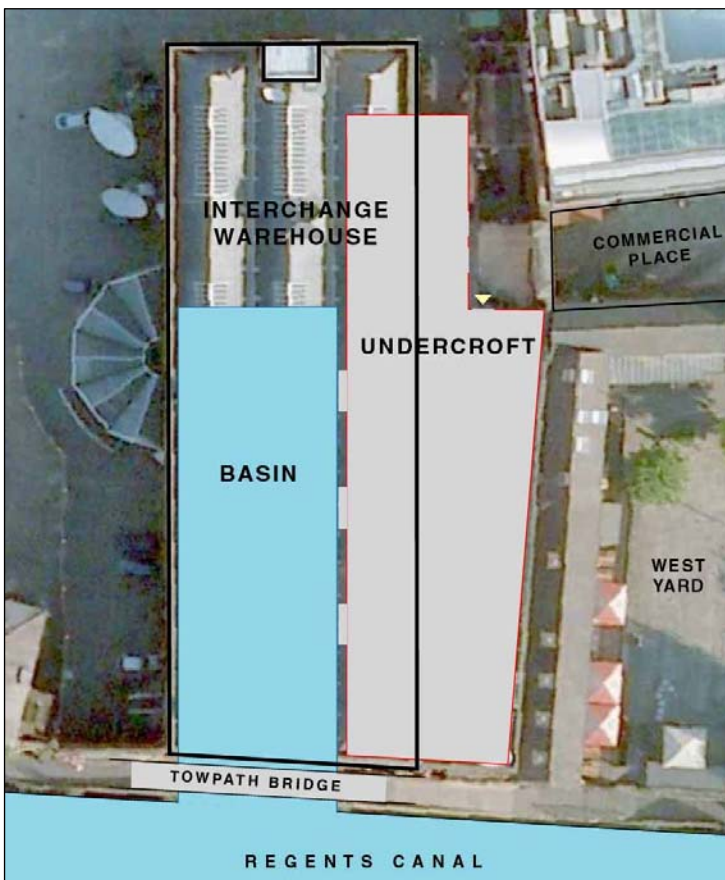
Campaigners, backed by Transport for London, say the canal basin under the Interchange Building, in Oval Road, Camden Town, is an ideal spot to unload freight being transported from one side of London to the other, but fear it could be snapped up by Camden Market owners who are currently expanding the site to the old horse tunnels behind the Interchange Building.

Ms Jones said the role of the building is “vital” to the rebirth of canal transport.

She said: “The Interchange Building is really important because too few wharves like that have been retained. We are insisting the Mayor of London sets up a body to keep an eye on inappropriate development. Canals have been ignored for too long.”

Camden lock manager Keir Emms said: “The upstairs is rented out to a TV company and turning it back would be impossible.”

He added: “We have no plans [regarding the Interchange Building] at the moment.”



The Interchange Undercroft



ENTRANCE under The Interchange building which again could be used to unload freight

‘Dead dog basin’ could hold key to canal revolution

A “SECRET” Camden canal basin has been earmarked by transport chiefs to play a crucial role in revolutionising transport.

Government bosses are considering pumping millions of pounds into canals so they can be used once more as a major freight route, just like they were when they were first built in the 19th century.

The aim is to un-clog the roads by transferring freight from lorries to barges. Just one barge can carry 100 tonnes which is equivalent to eight lorries.

Work has already begun on building wharves for barges carrying waste in West London.

Now Transport for London (TfL) has pinpointed a hidden canal basin on the Regents Canal near Camden Lock to play a key part in transporting freight from one side of London to the other.

The 10,500 square feet area of water, known as “dead dog basin”, lies underneath The Interchange Building next to the canal in Oval Road.

Del Brenner, a spokesman for the Regents Network conservation group, said: “People think canals are slow but very often they are

by SARAH HARVEY

quicker than transporting freight by road through all the congestion.

“A barge could get here from West London in four hours. The only thing is, there is nowhere in Camden to unload it because all the old wharves have been built on – except The Interchange Building.

“It’s a very good place for unloading freight and nobody would even be able to hear it. We could take tens of thousands of tonnes out of there without disturbing anyone.

“The canals are 200 years old but in perfect working order.”

British Waterways, which manages 2,000 miles of canals has drawn up plans for carrying millions of tonnes on the network, bought the building for £21.5M last year.

But unlike TfL, it is considering generating money by leasing the basin for leisure purposes – which would scupper the Camden freight plans.

Mr Brenner said: “Camden Market is thought to be interested in purchasing the lease and we could lose the basin to under-

ground retail, just like we did with the horse tunnels.”

A British Waterways spokesman said: “The Interchange Building is a very important listed structure. We would very much like to find a new use for it when the lease comes up for renewal in five or six years – but would like to carry out assessment first.

“Freight is one of the options we would look at but we



REGENTS Network conservation group spokesman Del Brenner, pictured outside The Interchange, says thousands of tonnes of freight could be unloaded from the building without causing any disruption.

<http://www.camdenchronicle.co.uk/content/camden/chronicle/news/story.aspx?brand=CAMConline&category=news&tBrand=northlondon24&tCategory=newscamc&itemid=WeED15%20Jun%202005%2011%3A44%3A02%3A417>

HAM & HIGH

The Hampstead & Highgate Express
Friday 18th November 2005

Freight could be carried on canal

Barges capable of carrying thousands of tonnes

Andrew Brightwell

A CAMPAIGN to get freight off the streets and onto the canal is steaming ahead thanks to a new survey.

Consultants Peter Brett Associates found some journeys could be made 50 per cent cheaper by using lock-free sections of Regent's Canal instead of roads.

The study, commissioned by Transport for London, looked at the 42km stretch from Hampstead Road Lock in Camden to Slough and found that 640,000 tonnes of goods a year could be taken off the roads and onto barges.

Philip Wright was one of the report's authors. He said: "We looked at a range of business cases to see what opportunities to use the canal there might be.

"We found that for the canal to be economic the origin of the supplier of a product and its destination need to be close to the canal. So if the stuff you are moving is of sufficient quantity and going to the right place there is no reason why not.

"At the moment we are looking at an unused asset that is unlikely to be in people's minds. With this survey we are trying to make people aware that they could use this service in the future."

Mr Wright said having to go through two locks would make a journey uneconomic, thus ruling out the building sites of King's Cross as a possible destination.

There are four locks between Camden Town and the £2billion regeneration scheme which is

Domestic and commercial waste might be transported

The report identifies nine places in Camden where access could be gained to the canal including Camden Lock Market, The Ice Works and London Zoo.

Among other things, Transport for London is looking into using the canal for transporting domestic and commercial waste.

Stephen Steele from the road unit at TfL said: "While there are plenty of places to drop off waste there are not yet the facilities to process it.

"There is one site planned in Willesden for demolition waste, but at the moment the opportunities are limited.

"We are also looking at household waste collection routes dropping off their loads onto the canal and them being taken elsewhere.

"If you could do that you could save 400,000 lorry miles a year.

going on around the new Channel Tunnel Rail Link.

But Del Brenner from the pressure group Regent's Canal Network believes King's Cross could still take advantage of waterborne transport.

He said: "There are plenty of opportunities to use canals, and locks, if used properly, only take three minutes to pass.

"We've worked out that a supermarket in King's Cross could be serviced in just four hours from somewhere in Park Royal.

"It might take a lorry two hours to make the journey but a barge can carry five lorry loads - so if you think of it as that many journeys it makes great sense."

Sian Berry, spokeswoman for Camden Green Party, said: "The report considers two-and-a-half kilometres round the canal, so that is a massive area, including King's Cross.

"We think the King's Cross development should use the canals to transport waste, even if it does cost a little more than transporting the material by road, because it will have so much less impact on the environment."

An Argent spokeswoman said: "We are aware and encouraged by discussions to use waterways for extended uses in London and we will work on proposals as plans [for King's Cross] progress."

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<http://www.hamhighbroadway.co.uk/content/camden/broadway/news/story.aspx?brand=NorthLondon24&category=Newsbroadway&tBrand=northlondon24&tCategory=newsbroadway&itemid=WeED17%20Nov%202005%2017%3A02%3A37%3A627>

THE FREIGHT OPPORTUNITY FOR CAMDEN'S INTERCHANGE WHARF ON THE REGENTS CANAL

The extensive network of canal access points (wharves) that Camden Town is connected to
to
[See Location 11 on the Regents Canal]

