



*Basingstoke
and Deane*

Conservation Area Appraisal

Basingstoke Canal



...making a difference



Eastrop Bridge



View north from Greywell Tunnel

Introduction

The Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area was designated in 1977 by Hampshire County Council in association with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, in recognition of the special architectural and historic interest of the canal.

Having designated the Conservation Area, the Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure that those elements that form its particular character or appearance should be preserved or enhanced, especially when considering planning applications.

It is therefore necessary to define and analyse those qualities or elements that contribute to, or detract from, the special interest of the area and to assess how they combine to justify its designation as a Conservation Area. These factors can include:

- its historic development;
- the contribution of individual or groups of buildings to the streetscape and the spaces that surround them; and
- the relationship of the built environment with the natural landscape.

They can also include the less tangible senses and experiences, such as noise or smells, which play a key part in forming the distinctive character of an area.

The Appraisal takes the form of written text and an Appraisal plan. In both respects every effort has been made to include or analyse those elements key to the special character of the area. Where buildings, structures or features have not been specifically highlighted it does not necessarily follow that they are of no visual or historic value to the Conservation Area. The document is intended to be an overall framework and guide within which decisions can be made on a site-specific basis.

This document was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance by the Borough of Basingstoke and Deane on 17 July 2003 and complements the policies of the Borough Local Plan (review).

It has been subject to consultation with Councillors, the Parish Council and local amenity groups. A full list of consultees, copies of their responses, and details of the Council's consideration of the issues raised during the consultation period are available for inspection, by appointment, at the Civic Offices, during normal office hours.

Location

The Basingstoke Canal originally ran from Basingstoke to the River Wey Navigation at Byfleet in Surrey, and then on to the Thames. The stretch of canal covered by the Conservation Area is located three miles east of Basingstoke, running from the north-eastern border of Mapledurwell, through the northern part of Up Nately, to the entrance of the collapsed Greywell Tunnel.

Historic Development

Canal Origins and Development

The Basingstoke Canal was one of the earliest canals to be built, and was the first designed to satisfy agricultural, rather than industrial, needs. In 1770 the Reading Corporation proposed a plan to build a canal from Reading to Maidenhead, with a link to Basingstoke supported by the people of the town. In 1778 a Parliamentary Act was passed to allow a canal 44 miles long from Basingstoke to the River Wey. It was to pass through Odiham, Frimley and Woking, with a branch to Turgis Green. The Bill received Royal Assent in the same year, authorising the setting up of the Basingstoke Canal Navigation Company.

The outbreak of the War of American Independence caused a delay in raising the required capital required to start building the canal. Work finally started in 1788, along with work on the tunnel at Greywell Hill. The original canal route between Basingstoke and Odiham Castle was designed to follow a single level contour. This removed the need to construct locks to cope with differences in ground level. At Greywell the canal was put into a tunnel, rather than around the base of Greywell Hill as planned. This was because the landowner, Sir James Tylney, objected to the surface route.

By 1792 a large part of the tunnel had been constructed. However, due to a number of delays, the canal was not completed and opened until September 1794. From its junction with the River Wey to its terminal in the centre of Basingstoke (39 miles) nine wharves and 23 bridges were built. There were 29 locks, between Woodham and Aldershot.

The canal remained relatively isolated from development, serving the predominantly agricultural areas, and providing a service to the local communities. Pleasure boating became popular in the late 19th century. In 1883 there were five pleasure boat stations along the length of the canal, including one at nearby Old Basing. Barges, and later steam launches, were also hired out for excursions.



View south-east from Slade's Bridge



View from Brick Kiln Bridge



Entrance to Greywell Tunnel



*View from Greywell Road
along the course of the canal*

The brickworks at Up Nately existed before the canal was built. In 1897, the Hampshire Brick and Tile Company was formed, and an additional arm to the canal was built above Slade's Bridge, to harbour ten barges. The brick company went into liquidation in 1901 but continued to operate until 1908. Trade on the upper reaches of the canal quickly declined, and commercial traffic to Basingstoke ceased in 1901.

The canal was never a commercial success. It changed ownership fourteen times and eight different companies went into liquidation. In 1932 the partial collapse of the Greywell Tunnel effectively reduced the navigable length of the canal and in 1949 commercial traffic ceased. A number of stretches were subsequently sold, filled in and built over.

By the mid-1960s the canal was completely derelict. None of the 29 locks were operable, and the channel was overgrown and silted over. In 1966 the Surrey and Hampshire Canal Society (SHCS) was formed, with the objective of restoring navigation over the whole route. Hampshire and Surrey County Councils were persuaded to buy the respective sections of the old route, and restoration began. On 10 May 1991, HRH The Duke of Kent officially re-opened 32 miles of the canal from Odiham to the Wey Navigation. The five mile length from the western end of Greywell tunnel to Basingstoke (including the Conservation Area) remains unnavigable.

In 1977, the Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area was designated to cover the whole canal and its immediate environs, from the Hampshire County boundary with Surrey in the east, to Mapledurwell in the west. Within the Borough Council's area the western part between Mapledurwell and the Greywell Road has been filled in. The eastern part, extending to the Greywell tunnel, has undergone major restoration to clear the overgrown canal bed and provide a pleasant, attractive recreational area.

An Appraisal of the Conservation Area

The Conservation Area is unusual as it is comprised almost entirely of the canal and its immediate surroundings, including four bridges and one building. By its very nature the area is strongly linear in appearance, with mature vegetation along its entire length. The survival of key features, such as the bridges, tunnel and earthworks, continue to define its essential character. They act as a reminder of this form of transportation in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Key Structures and Other Features of Architectural and Historic Interest

Within the Conservation Area, there are four bridges (constructed in 1790), which are Grade II listed (as being of local or regional special interest).

Little Tunnel Bridge near Mapledurwell, carries Andwell Drove over the canal. It originally formed a tunnel, but is now partially filled in. The short, arched tunnel is constructed of brick, each face having a recessed panel above the arch, and circular panels on each side. The parapet was originally supported by a band of projecting brick, on stepped corbels, but this has now nearly all disappeared. The towpath wall and cutwaters are also constructed of brick. The bridge is only partially visible through unchecked vegetation, and straddles the dry and overgrown bed of the canal.

Brick Kiln Bridge at Up Nately carries Blackstock Lane and is hump-backed over a deep, oval archway. It is constructed of red brick in English Bond with a parapet wall and stone-capped piers. The towpath wall and cutwaters are also constructed of brick. The bridge is tied by four metal circular plates with ties on the two faces.

Slade's Bridge carries Heather Lane and is of standard design for the Basingstoke Canal. It has a single, cambered red brick arch and parapet wall, ending in brick piers with stone caps. The towpath wall and cutwaters are also constructed of brick.

Eastrop Bridge carries a track, known as Heather Row Lane, from Eastrop Farm House to the south of the bridge. This bridge is also constructed to the standard design for the Basingstoke Canal. It has a parapet ending in stone-capped piers, a cambered red brick arch, brick cutwaters and towpath.

Other non-listed features in the Conservation Area include the site of a former swing bridge (now locally known as Penny Bridge), where Greywell Road passes over the canal, the dock at Klondyke, the entrance to the collapsed Greywell Tunnel, and the K6 telephone box (on the south side of Brick Kiln Bridge).



View towards Little Tunnel Bridge



Brick Kiln Bridge



View east from Brick Kiln Bridge



View east along the canal from Greywell Road



View north along the canal from Eastrop Bridge



Pool at the western end of the water-filled canal



View south-west along the canal from Eastrop Bridge

The Importance of Public and Private Spaces, Trees, Hedges and Other Natural or Cultivated Features

The line of the canal creates a series of well-defined spaces in the Conservation Area. These spaces are punctuated by the location of the bridges and Greywell Road, and are split into five areas:

Greywell Tunnel to Eastrop Bridge

This part of the canal was restored in the 1980s and passes through a steep-sided cutting. The towpath runs along the north-east bank, and both sides of the cutting are well vegetated with mature trees. This area of the canal is water filled in the winter, but at other times much of the bed is mud filled. The Eastrop Bridge forms a natural pinch point to end this section, allowing views further west along the canal. It also gives glimpses south to the attractive group of listed buildings along Heather Row Lane.

Eastrop Bridge to Slades Bridge

This part of the canal was also extensively restored in the 1980s. Half the length of this area continues through a steep-sided cutting. It then levels out on the north-east bank to reveal the more gently sloped countryside of large wooded areas to the south of Heather Lane. The south-west bank also gradually levels out to reveal agricultural land through a sparse tree line. This part of the canal is usually water filled all year round, and the towpath continues on the north-east bank. Both sides of the cutting are generally well vegetated with mature trees. Slade's Bridge terminates views along this space, but allows glimpses west to an extensive bed of water reeds.

Slade's Bridge to Brick Kiln Bridge (including the Docks)

This was the last area of the canal to be restored in the 1980s. The water-filled course of the canal negotiates a sharp bend to the south-west (with the dock). This was created for the Brickwork's barges, and continues for a short way to the north-east. The Conservation Area also includes an area of land called the Klondyke, to the south-east of the dock. This is part of the old Up Nately Brickworks site. The canal again runs through a cutting, and the sides become steeper on approaching Brick Kiln Bridge. To the south-east, the boundary of the Conservation Area is formed by the gardens of the building plots off Heather Lane. Both sides of the bank are well vegetated, with many mature trees evident. The towpath continues on the north-western side of the canal.

Brick Kiln Bridge to Greywell Road

This area of the canal was restored at the beginning of the 1990s. The water filled track of the canal bends due east and continues to the site of the swing bridge. Here Greywell Road forms the end of the excavated and restored area of this watercourse. Initially, the north bank of the canal remains well vegetated, but towards Greywell Road it levels out. This allows views over agricultural land towards the motorway to the north - in contrast to the profile and character of the sections to the east. The southern bank of the canal again levels out and is well vegetated. The water opens into a small basin at the filled site of the swing bridge.



Dock alongside the Klondyke

Greywell Road to the Boundary of Mapledurwell Village (including Little Tunnel Bridge)

This section of the canal is filled, and the track is only partially defined as it crosses a field. This, therefore, contrasts with the enclosed character of most of the canal. On the approach to Little Tunnel Bridge, the course of the canal drops into a small, disused chalk pit, allowing access to the brick structure. The bridge is heavily overgrown and obscured, but the tunnel is still complete and navigable. The final section of the canal track is defined by a shallow and heavily wooded cutting. The bed of the canal is grassed, and the line of the towpath has disappeared because of the extensive tree growth.



Slade's Bridge

On either side of the canal, on the boundary of the Conservation Area, are many mature trees of several species, in small copses or more extensive woodland. The canal habitat supports many types of flourishing water wildlife, and the wooded areas provide an undisturbed habitat for woodland plants and animals. This quiet and tranquil habitat helps to form the special character of this Conservation Area. Individual hedgerows have not been included on the Appraisal plan. However, their contribution to the character of the Conservation Area cannot be underestimated, and their significance is implicit in this Appraisal.



View south-west from the Klondyke

The Setting of the Conservation Area

The Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area is located in an undulating chalk and clay arable landscape in north Hampshire. This landscape supports a small percentage of woodland, including small copses or tree belts, low hedgerows, and a few hedgerow trees.

The surrounding landscape is characterised by large regular fields, and large buildings and plots that back onto the canal at Up Nately and Heather Lane. The track of the canal winds through this landscape, often heavily wooded, on both banks. For the most part, the canal can only be observed from its immediate setting.



View east towards Brick Kiln Bridge



View north-east along line of the canal towards Greywell Road

Areas of Archaeological Significance

Every settlement contains within it archaeological evidence of its origins and development, of the economy and industry of the community and of the lives and lifestyles of past inhabitants. It is in the Areas of High Archaeological Potential (AHAP) that it is most likely that such archaeological remains will be encountered. Where a development is proposed, the impact that it might have on these remains is a material consideration within the planning process. This may occasionally result in the need for archaeological recording in the case of some developments.

The Basingstoke Canal is a fine example of an industrial, archaeological monument. It represents an important period of industrial and technological process, particularly in the area of transport. The materials, designs and operation of the canal, and associated structures, typify the engineering design and technology of the period. The canal and its route include, in addition to the archaeology of the canal itself, the industrial archaeology of associated structures. The principal structures include the tunnel, locks and bridges. Their style, design and material reflect the technology and design of the period, and the intended use of the structure.

Conservation Area Planning Controls

The following controls apply within the Conservation Area in addition to normal planning controls:

- Conservation Area Consent is normally required for the demolition of buildings or structures over a certain size within a Conservation Area.
- The Council must be given six weeks notice of any intention to undertake works to, cut down or uproot any trees over a certain size in the Conservation Area.
- Planning applications which, in the opinion of the Borough Council, would affect the special character of the Conservation Area must be advertised and the opportunity given for public comment. This may include proposals outside the Conservation Area which nevertheless affect its setting.

Statutory policies relating to Conservation Areas and listed buildings are set out in the adopted Basingstoke and Deane Borough Local Plan. These policies reflect the statutory duty on the Local Planning Authority to have regard for the preservation of historic buildings or their setting, and to promote the enhancement of areas designated as being of special interest. These policies seek to ensure that particular

attention will be paid to the scale, height, form, materials and detailing of proposals including boundary treatments and other features of note. In order to consider the implications of development and given the detail required, the Borough Council will normally require proposals within the Conservation Area to be submitted in the form of a full, and not outline, application.

The Borough Council's Conservation Officers are available for advice and information on all matters relating to development proposals in a Conservation Area.

Grants

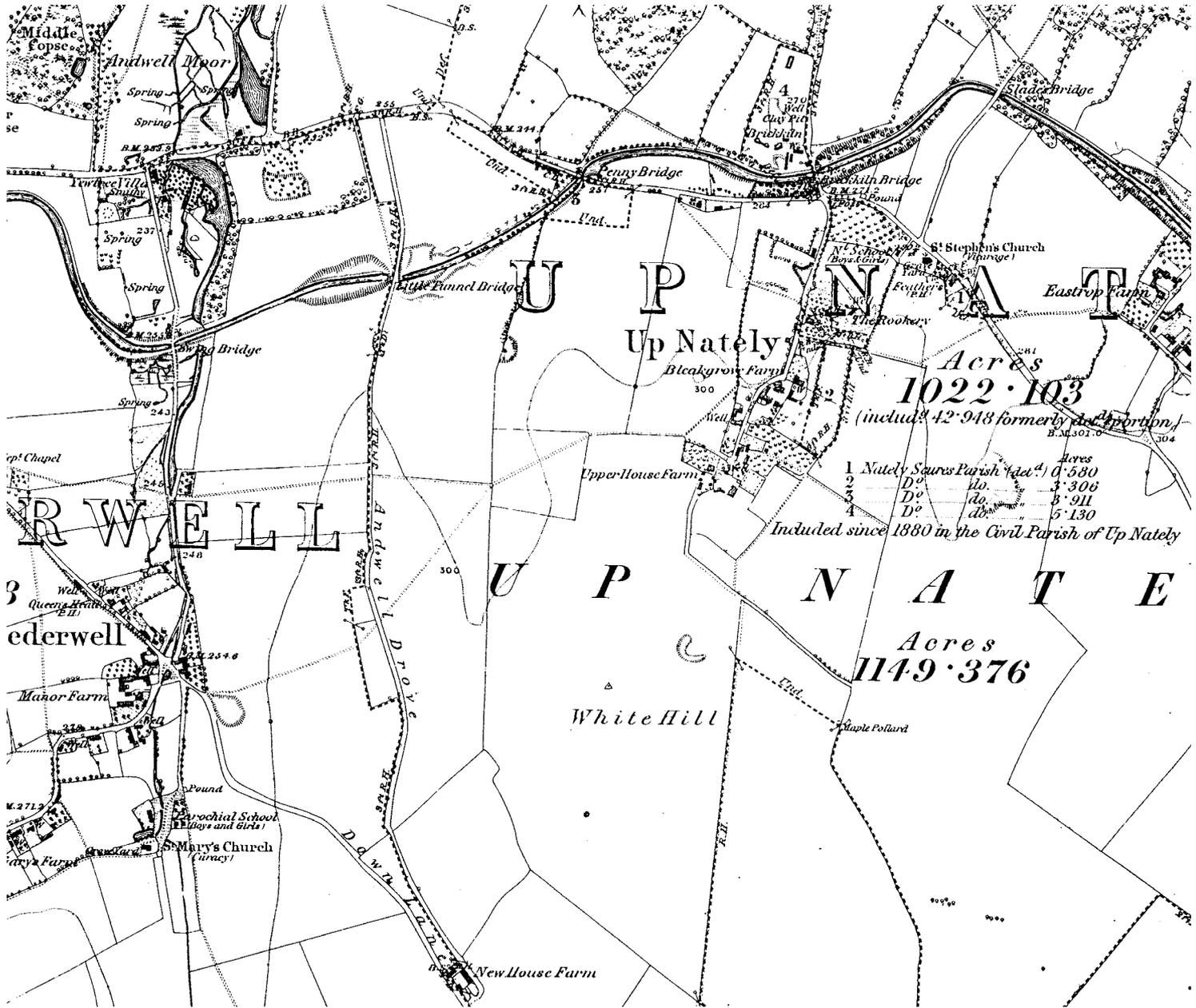
The Borough Council provides grants for various types of work. These include Historic Building Grants, Environment and Regeneration Grants, and Village and Community Hall Grants. Leaflets are available explaining the purpose and criteria for each grant and an approach to the Council is recommended for further information on any grant.



Slade's Bridge



The Klondyke area



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...making a difference

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