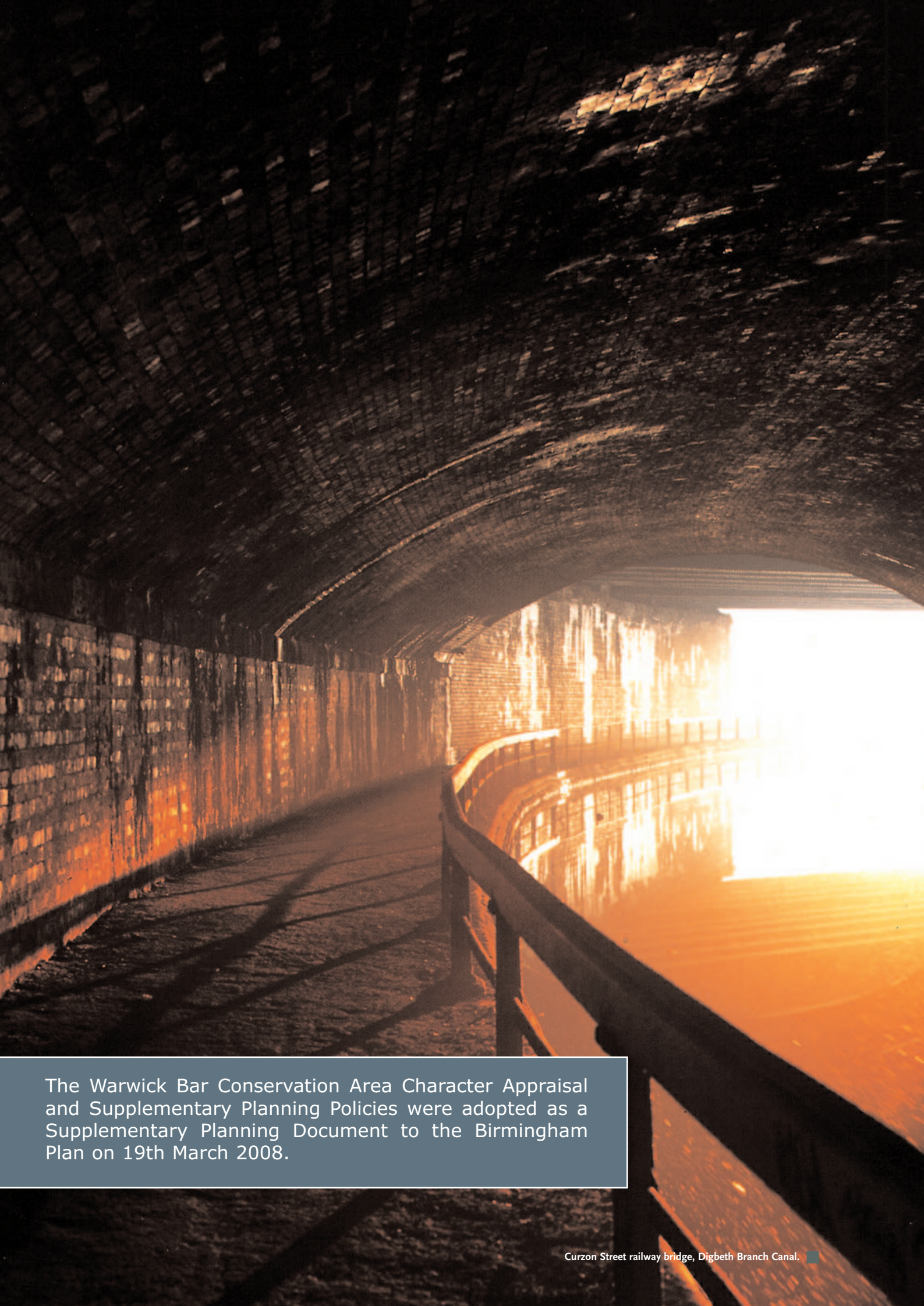


Warwick Bar Conservation Area

Character Appraisal and Supplementary Planning Policies





The Warwick Bar Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Supplementary Planning Policies were adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document to the Birmingham Plan on 19th March 2008.

Contents

Part A Warwick Bar Conservation Area Character Appraisal	Page
	3
Introduction	5
1 Designation, Location and Boundaries	6
2 Geology and Topography	7
3 Archaeology	8
4 Development History	10
5 Townscape Character	15
6 Localities	22
7 Significance	25
8 Economy	26
9 Loss, Attrition and Intrusion	28
Part B Warwick Bar Conservation Area Supplementary Planning Policies	31
Introduction - The Need for Policy Guidance	33
1 Protecting the Existing Historic Environment	34
2 New Development in the Historic Environment	36
3 The Public Realm	39
4 Opportunity Sites for New Development	39
Appendices	41
Associated Reading	43
Listed Buildings	44



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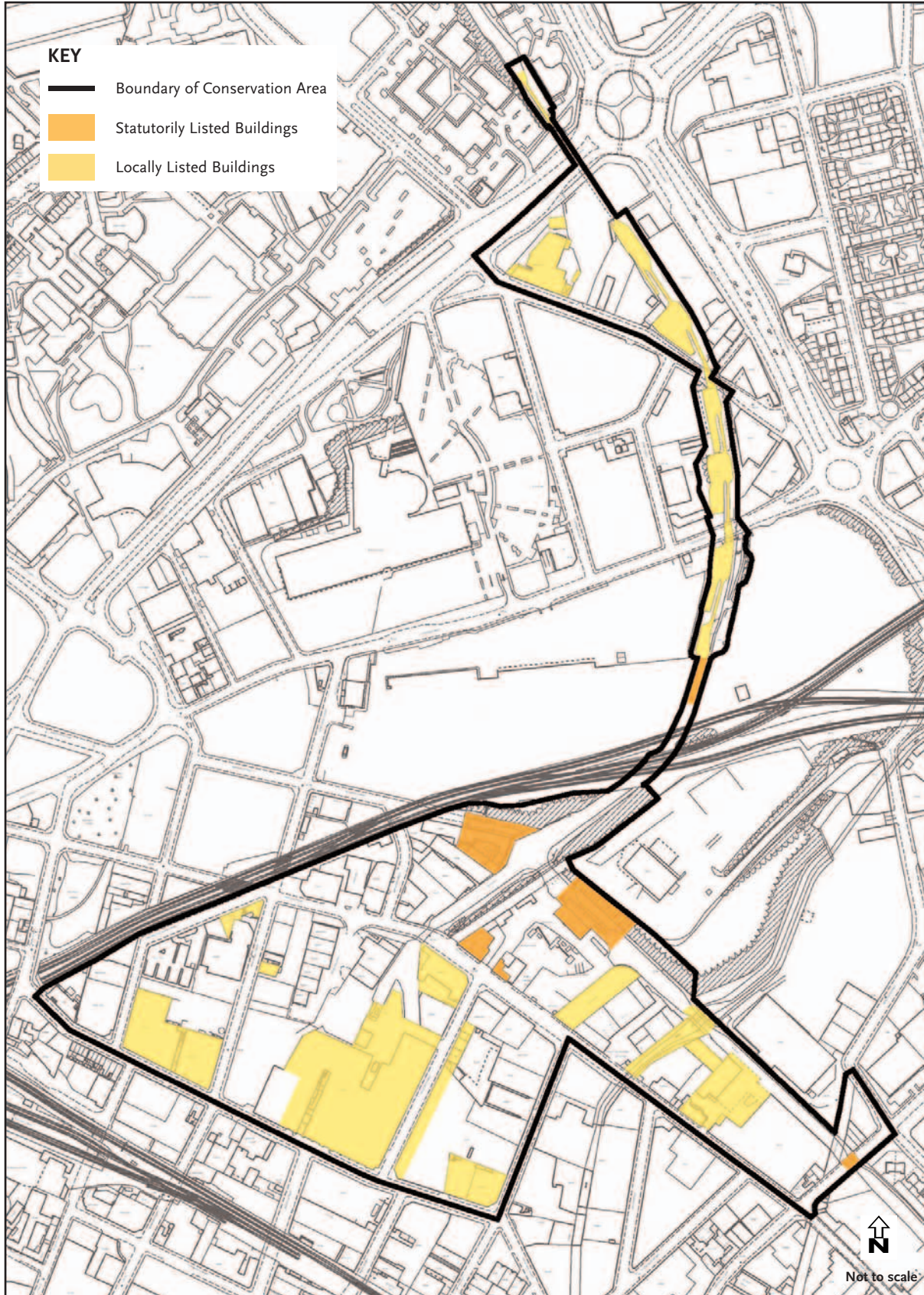
Part A

Warwick Bar
Conservation Area

Character Appraisal



Map 1 Warwick Bar Conservation Area Statutorily and Locally Listed Buildings



Int

Introduction

The 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act defines a conservation area as ‘....an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.’ The Act places a duty on local authorities to designate conservation areas where appropriate and from time to time to review the extent of conservation area designation within their districts. It also requires them to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these areas.

Designation allows the local authority general control over demolition and minor development and the preservation of trees. In addition to these powers the authority has a duty to pay special attention in the exercise of its planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of its designated areas.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: *Planning and the Historic Environment* (1994) stresses the value of a clear and comprehensive appraisal of the special character which justifies the designation of a conservation area as a sound basis for development control decisions within the area and the formulation of proposals for its preservation and enhancement. As a matter of policy therefore Birmingham City Council has undertaken to produce character appraisals for all the conservation areas within its district (*The Birmingham Plan 2005*, para.3.27).

The Warwick Bar Conservation Area Character Appraisal has been prepared in accordance with the national guidance contained in PPG15: *Planning and the Historic Environment* (1994). It follows advice set out in *Guidance on conservation area appraisals* (2005) and in *Guidance on the management of conservation areas* (2005) produced by English Heritage and the Planning Advisory Service.

The appraisal aims to:

- ▶ Identify the special interest of Warwick Bar Conservation Area and provide a definition of its character.
- ▶ Provide a sound basis for the development control process within the conservation area and the formulation of policies and proposals for its preservation and enhancement.

The character appraisal will be kept up to date through periodic review and modification. A dated photographic record of the conservation area taken during the process of appraisal will help in monitoring any change in condition and/or appearance and aid enforcement action. This will be regularly updated.

Part A

1

Designation, Location and Boundaries

Warwick Bar Conservation Area was designated on June 25th 1987 and extended on May 31st 2000. The conservation area covers 16.19 hectares (40 acres) to the east of Birmingham city centre and is contained within Nechells Ward in Ladywood Constituency. In the north of the conservation area the western boundary runs from Ashted Top Lock beyond Jennens Road along the Digbeth Branch Canal. Across Jennens Road it takes in the east side of Belmont Row as far as Pitt Street. It continues along the canal then follows the east side of New Street railway viaduct as far as Bordesley Street in the south of the conservation area. Here the

boundary turns west to include the north side of Bordesley Street as far as Barn Street. It then turns north along Barn Street and east along Fazeley Street as far as Great Barr Street. It cuts across Great Barr Street to Montague Street to take in the railway viaduct then runs along the embankment of the Warwick and Birmingham (Grand Union) Canal as far as the junction with the Digbeth Branch Canal. The boundary then continues north along the Digbeth Branch Canal to Ashted Top Lock (Map 1).

Warwick Bar Conservation Area lies in the valley of the River Rea on the eastern side of Birmingham city centre. The river flows in an approximately north-north-easterly direction. The city centre itself is perched on a ridge of freely drained Bromsgrove Sandstone (Keuper Sandstone) running from the south-west to the north-east. The ridge falls away to the east where the meandering and probably braided (broken into several channels) course of the Rea exploited more easily eroded Mercian Mudstone (Keuper Marl). At the junction of the two geologies a series of springs and wells historically provided a supply of water for the local populace. Sporadic glacial drift (material deposited by retreating ice sheets and melt water) overlies the soft clay of the Rea valley and has created a higher and more complex topography. The higher land in the north of the conservation area around Ashted Top Lock and Belmont Row can be attributed to drift.

The topography of the conservation area as seen today is also shaped by man's intervention. Its natural form has been altered by urban development and most significantly by the impressive engineering projects of the later eighteenth and nineteenth centuries associated with the excavation of the canal system and the arrival of the railways. Views across the area gained from the Bullring shopping centre, immediately to the north of St Martin's Church, give only a faint impression of the earlier topography - the once boggy low lying valley of the Rea, crossed by minor tributaries, rising on the east towards Camp Hill and the higher reaches of Bordesley.

Part A

3

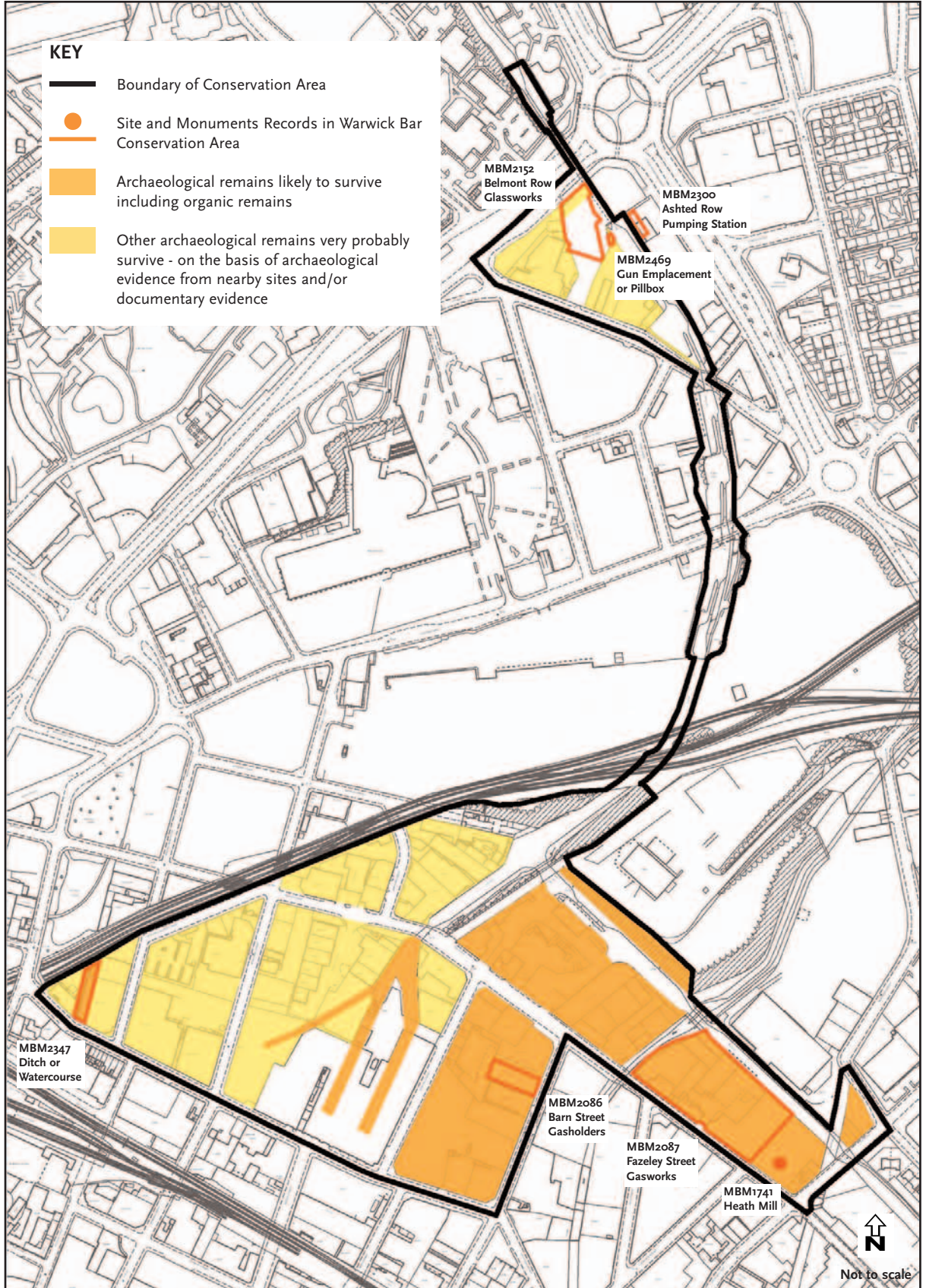
Archaeology

Although most of the conservation area was undeveloped prior to the eighteenth century, the site of a mediaeval water corn mill (Heath Mill) lies on its eastern side. There is potential for deposits of the earlier phases of the mill and its water management features to survive due to the raising of land levels on the floodplain of the Rea. Other industrial activities in the mediaeval period, such as tanning, were confined to areas farther south around Digbeth and Deritend High Street.

The construction of the Digbeth Branch Canal (1790) and the Warwick and Birmingham Canal (1799) triggered development within the present conservation area, including houses and industrial works laid out on a grid of new streets. By the mid nineteenth century high density housing was interspersed with industrial works and infrastructure on the street blocks. In addition to the surviving above ground remains of industrial development, there is potential for remains of such structures to survive below ground across much of the conservation area, particularly on the site of the Fazeley Street gasworks and the Barn Street gasholders. There is also potential for canal related structures, such as infilled basins, to survive below current ground level. One wall of the Ashted pumping station is visible on the boundary of the conservation area and excavations have shown that the other walls and internal details survive. Parts of the Belmont Row Glassworks have also been shown to survive below ground.

Deposits will have been disturbed by modern construction works, but are likely to survive in islands on the street frontages and in areas used as yards and car parks behind. Such islands are intact areas of stratigraphy, comprising the remainder of originally more extensive deposits which have been partially destroyed by modern intrusions, forming discrete areas of archaeological interest (Map 2).

Map 2 Warwick Bar Conservation Area Archaeology



Part A

4

Development History


The rapid growth in the population of Birmingham which began during the late seventeenth century and continued throughout most of the eighteenth was linked to the development and increasing localisation of the metalware trades, both in the town itself and in the surrounding area, particularly the coalfields of the South Staffordshire plateau. Metalworking had begun to play an increasingly significant part in the local economy of this region during the sixteenth century and by 1600 it was already well known for the production of a wide range of metal goods, including locks, nails and edge tools. In mid-seventeenth century Birmingham ironmongers were beginning to appear among the town's elite and the metal trades had replaced older industries such as tanning and textiles in economic importance. By the beginning of the eighteenth century the smiths and cutlers had themselves been surpassed in economic significance by the 'new' trades, guns, brassware and the manufacture of 'toys', small easily transportable items of relatively high value such as buttons and buckles. Industrial growth was linked to the town's ancient, and now expanding, role as a regional market centre.

New building following the increase in population which resulted from this expansion of commercial and industrial activity was confined at first to the higher ground within the 'old' town. The demand for housing was such however that development soon spread to the north and north-west running along the hillsides above the valley of the River Rea. By 1750 it had covered the ridge above the town and the whole of the area between Moor Street and Park Street, two roads with their origins in the mediaeval period, had been built over. Two new churches had been built to supplement the accommodation offered by the old parish church of

St Martin's. St Philip's (now Birmingham Cathedral) on Colmore Row, consecrated in 1715, and St Bartholomew's (now demolished) opened in 1749 on land at the north end of Park Street, which had until now defined the eastern limit of the town.

Map evidence from the mid-eighteenth century shows the district now contained within the Warwick Bar Conservation Area as yet undeveloped. Meadows and closes are crossed by the River Rea and by another smaller watercourse, which together mark the boundary between the ancient parishes of Birmingham and of Aston. The land in Birmingham had once formed part of a manorial deer park, the Little Park, but had long since been divided into fields and let out to agricultural tenants. Heath Mill, the mediaeval corn mill which belonged to Birmingham manor, lies to the east, straddling the Rea on the parish boundary, its floodrace running through the meadows to rejoin the main course of the river in Aston. A substantial house with gardens stands on the north-east side of Park Street above its junction with a field road (Bordesley Street) leading through the Little Park to the mill. North of the parish boundary in Aston an ancient lane (Belmont Row) runs south from the Coleshill Road at Lower Gorsty Green (Prospect Row, AB Row, Jennens Road) down to the township of Bordesley to join the Coventry Road.

The surviving desmesne lands of Birmingham manor passed to Sir Thomas Gooch, a Suffolk landowner, in 1764 and were released for building in 1766. They included the fields in the former Little Park. Urban development here began in 1783 when the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal Company (merged with the Company of the Proprietors of



the Birmingham Canal Navigations or BCN in 1784) obtained an Act to allow the construction of a canal which would join the Birmingham Canal to the Coventry Canal. This included a collateral cut or branch towards 'the lower part of the town of Birmingham', which would lead out of the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal as it passed through Aston and terminate in a wharf to be built on land leased from Sir Thomas Gooch in the former Little Park. The canal company purchased property on Park Street and Digbeth and by 1784 had cut (upper) Fazeley Street and Oxford Street to allow access from different parts of the town to the projected canal and wharves. The two new streets prompted the development of the Gooch estate and Bartholomew Street, Bordesley Street, Canal (New Canal) Street, Andover and Banbury Streets were laid out for building. In Aston the attorney John Brooke began to develop the hamlet of Ashted on the Holte Estate in 1788. He laid out a grid of streets which included Prospect Row, Great Brooke Street, Lawley Street and, on the east side of the old road to Bordesley, Belmont Row.


The Digbeth Branch Canal was completed in 1790. It descended the slope of the Rea valley through the Ashted Flight of six locks, with a tunnel (Ashted Tunnel) under Prospect Row and Great Brooke Street (Jennens Road), to terminate in a wharf on Bordesley Street. The BCN leased land from John Brooke to provide a canal reservoir by Belmont Row. The steep drop in levels caused considerable concern about loss of water and in 1812 a beam engine was installed to pump water from Ashted locks back up to the main pound on the Fazeley canal.

The construction of the Warwick and Birmingham Canal was allowed under an Act obtained by the Warwick and Birmingham Canal Company in 1793. In Birmingham the canal was to run through the former Little Park behind Heath Mill, crossing the mill floodrace (River Rea) via an aqueduct, and terminate in the Digbeth Branch Canal. The earlier course of the Rea (Back Brooke) was channeled beneath the canal embankment by Heath Mill. The company leased an extra piece of land from Sir Thomas Gooch to provide a turning place at the junction. In return for access to their system the BCN demanded a toll of 3d per ton for goods inwards and 6d per ton outwards, to be paid at the stop lock or bar (Warwick Bar). A bridge was built over the canal just above the junction to give access to the towpaths and to the Gooch property cut off by the waterway. The canal was officially opened in 1799.

Until the arrival of canal transport the lack of any navigable waterway in Birmingham made the carriage of heavy goods slow and expensive. The opening of the Birmingham Canal in 1769, linking the town to the Black Country, was followed by a dramatic fall in the price of coal and other heavy raw materials. Despite the physical difficulties of the local terrain, its commercial success encouraged the establishment of other companies. The Birmingham and Fazeley Canal allowed easier and cheaper transport of goods, both to and from the north, Manchester and Liverpool, and the south, Oxford and London. The Warwick and Birmingham Canal provided a more direct route to London, particularly after the Grand Junction Canal was opened in 1805.

Industrial and commercial uses were attracted to the canal sides. By the end of the eighteenth century, for example, two steam mills had been established on Fazeley Street, both in use for rolling metal, and a large timber yard occupied the corner of Bordesley and New Canal Street. In 1812 Pickford, the canal carriers, established a complex of warehouses beside a basin (Old Wharf) on the Warwick and Birmingham Canal Company wharf (Warwick Wharf), and in 1813 the Gun Barrel Proof House was built on Banbury Street. On Belmont Row timber, corn and coal were delivered to the wharves and by 1812 the Belmont Glassworks, on Great Brooke Street, with a wharf by Ashted Tunnel, was in production. Away from the canal the new streets on the Gooch estate were gradually developed. Housing, much of it constructed as back to back courts, was interspersed with smaller commercial and industrial premises.

In 1788 Cotton and Engine Streets (both now demolished) were laid out towards Bordesley Street Wharf from Fazeley and Canal (New Canal) Streets respectively. By 1824 Fazeley Street (part Lower Fazeley Street) had been extended from the bridge over the Digbeth Canal as far as the Rea and a road (Pickford Lane, Pickford Street) had been cut from Bordesley Street through an area of town gardens towards Pickfords' premises on the Warwick and Birmingham Canal. Barn Street was laid out in 1826. In Aston Great Barr Street was laid out from Heath Mill Lane (Mill Lane) to Lawley Street after 1817 and built up by 1824.



Bordesley Street Wharf was the main canal terminus for the lower part of Birmingham. A second long basin was dug to the west between 1819 and 1824 and in the 1830's gardens on the east side were developed as coal wharves with an entrance on the corner of Pickford and (Lower) Fazeley Streets. A third canal arm was cut through these wharves in the 1840's. On Warwick Wharf a second L-shaped basin was dug about 1840. Pickford's decided to give up canal carrying altogether in 1847 and go over to the railways. Their carrying business was taken over by the Grand Junction Canal Company which rented the wharf and premises from the Warwick and Birmingham in 1848. In 1876, following heavy losses, the company decided to give up carrying and in 1879 their trade passed to Fellows, Morton and Company (later Fellows, Morton and Clayton).

A railway system linking Birmingham with London and Liverpool had been planned as early as 1824, but it was not until the 1830's, following the success of the line between Liverpool and Manchester, that any progress was made. The Grand Junction Railway, running from the Manchester and Liverpool line at Newton-le-Willows, reached the town in 1837, the London and Birmingham Railway, from a terminus at Euston, in 1838. The two railway companies had agreed to approach Birmingham from the east, through the Rea valley where access was easiest, and to terminate in a shared station on Curzon Street. The project involved the construction of a substantial bridge (Curzon Street railway bridge) across the Digbeth Branch Canal. In 1846, together with the Manchester and Birmingham, the companies merged to form the London and North Western Railway Company (LNWR).


The Birmingham and Oxford Railway Company (B&O) was incorporated in 1846. The line approached Birmingham from the east and a junction with the LNWR was planned near Curzon Street. The company was taken over by the Great Western Railway (GWR) in 1848 and work was started on a viaduct (GWR Viaduct - unfinished) from Bordesley Station to the proposed junction. The LNWR refused to surrender land and so work was completed only as far as the GWR boundary on Montague Street, crossing the Warwick and Birmingham Canal at Great Barr Street.

The capacity of Curzon Street Station was soon outgrown and in 1845, the LNWR acquired a new site, more conveniently situated in the centre of the town. New Street Station was opened in 1854. The new line required the construction of a second bridge over the Digbeth Branch Canal, to the south of Curzon Street railway bridge. The viaduct ran across the eighteenth century streets on the Gooch estate and through Park Street burial ground, forcing the realignment of Andover Street and the creation of New Bartholomew Street and cutting off a portion of the burial ground on Bordesley Street (now the site of Polish Millennium House). New lines were taken into Curzon Street for the Midlands Railway to begin a temporary use of the station in 1851; these were carried on a southern extension of Curzon Street railway bridge.

From 1791, in addition to corn milling, Heath Mill began to produce metal goods, necessitating a greater supply of water. A new millpond was dug on the south side of what is now Fazeley Street between the flood race and the old mill pool on the original course of the river. The mill was fully converted to steam power by about 1841 and the pond was no longer needed, allowing a further extension of (Lower) Fazeley Street as far as the junction with Heath Mill Lane. The scheme was proposed by the Corporation in 1851 and included a bridge over the Rea and the widening of the canal bridge on Great Barr Street.

Banbury Street railway wharf to the north of the Warwick and Birmingham Canal was laid out about 1880. At the same time the LNWR built a new bridge over the canal below Warwick Bar to allow vehicle access from Fazeley Street. Another railway bridge, completed in 1893, was built over the canal, by Proof House Junction, as part of an improvement to New Street Station.

By the middle of the nineteenth century the River Rea, always prone to flood, had become seriously polluted. A scheme for improvement was first put forward in 1888. In 1890 it was decided to improve the river along its course through the city, a distance of approximately four miles, to prevent flooding and the accumulation of toxic sediment. The works, completed in 1893, were considerable and included deepening the river channel, constructing a brick channel/culvert and rebuilding bridges.



By the end of the nineteenth century large industrial and commercial concerns were well established along the canalsides in the area. On the north side of Fazeley Street, for example, lay Walker's wire, tube and rolling mills (on the former site of Heath Mill), the head office and depot of Fellows, Morton and Clayton, Haines' ice manufactory (both on the site occupied by the Birmingham Gas Light and Coke Company from 1837 to 1875) and the Minerva Works, agricultural tool manufacturers. Warwick Wharf was occupied by number of concerns, including Fellows, Morton and Clayton and Hoskins and Sewell, bedstead makers, who shipped their goods from the Old Wharf or Bedstead Arm. Across the road, by the Bordesley Street wharves, were Fazeley Street rolling mills and, fronting New Canal Street, the buildings of the Hide and Skin Market. In 1924 Sumner's, the grocers, took over the former timber yard on Bordesley Street to establish the Typhoo tea packing works and warehouses.

During the twentieth century canal transport declined, challenged by the railways and the road and, particularly after the Second World War, the loss of its most important cargo - coal. Reflecting the national trend, there was a steady loss of canal related industry in the Warwick Bar area. Wharves and other canalside sites were given over to businesses which were not dependent on the waterways and canal arms and basins were wholly or partly filled in to make space for buildings and yards. Around Bordesley Street Wharf the Fairbanks Company established their weighing machine works on part of the old coal wharves in 1919/20, the Benacre Drive industrial estate was built on the site of Fazeley Street Rolling Mills in 1973 and in 1979 the Typhoo Tea Company abandoned their premises to move to the Wirral. Fellows, Morton and Clayton went into liquidation in 1947 and their warehouses were converted to other uses. New Warwick Wharf (122 Fazeley Street), built by the company in 1935, is now occupied by a steel stockholder. The Minerva Works was rebuilt as a furniture works in 1959 and converted to industrial units in 1978.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century housing and its related infrastructure began to be replaced by industrial premises, most, but not all, associated with the metal trades. These included the Belmont Works, built on Belmont Row in 1899, the Solar Works, which spread from New Bartholomew Street onto Bordesley and New Canal

Streets from 1894 to 1927, and in the post-war period, the factories built by Gravity Ladders, on Pickford Street in 1959, and by Woolf and Blumenthal on Bordesley Street in c.1946 and 1953. Industrial decline since the 1970's has led to changing uses in the area and many of these buildings have been left void or underoccupied.

In the north of the present conservation area the Digbeth Branch Canal has lost most of its historic urban context to post-war road building and comprehensive redevelopment. Prospect Row, Great Brooke Street and the upper part of Belmont Row were demolished for Jennens Road, constructed to connect the Inner and Middle Ring Roads between Masshouse Circus and Ashted Circus. Around Ashted Top Lock late eighteenth and early nineteenth century streets gave way to Aston Science Park, developed in the 1980's.

Warwick Bar Conservation Area was designated in June 1987 in recognition of the considerable group value, as well as individual heritage merit, of the surviving canalside buildings and structures included within its boundaries. The conservation area was extended in 2000 to include the whole of the former Bordesley Wharf and the surrounding street plan.

From the time of the first designation the City Council and British Waterways have undertaken a series of projects to enhance the canals in the conservation area. Under the Birmingham Canals Improvement Programme, funded by central government and the city council through the Inner City Partnership Programme, repairs to the canal walls were carried out, towpaths were resurfaced and new signage, furniture and landscaping were introduced. In 1997 British Waterways, the City Council and Groundwork Birmingham (an environmental trust) established the Digbeth Canal Regeneration Project, funded by the EU (European Regional Development Fund), central government (the Millennium Fund) and the City Council. Work included further improvements to the towpath, the decontamination of Typhoo Basin, new access and signage and a programme of environmental education. The Warwick Bar Townscape Heritage Initiative (1999-2004), a grant scheme administered by the Heritage Lottery Fund in partnership with British Waterways, the City Council and Advantage West Midlands (the Regional Development Agency), funded further works in the area. These included repairs to the



stop lock at Warwick Bar and to the former canal company offices at 122 Fazeley Street, landscaping and environmental education. In 2005 the Changing Places Programme, run by the Millennium Commission, gave a grant for new lighting in Curzon Street and Ashted Tunnels.

The conservation area is included in the Eastside Regeneration Area. Based on the three concepts of learning, heritage and technology, the Eastside Development Framework (2001) seeks to encourage city centre expansion, regeneration and the creation of a new quarter. The heritage value of Warwick Bar Conservation Area is seen as an important element in the drive to achieve sustainable economic regeneration.

Buildings

The built character of the conservation area is defined through a range of warehouse complexes and purpose built works or manufactories dating from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. The Gun Barrel Proof House (built 1813 with later additions), set slightly apart on Banbury Street, is the sole example of an early nineteenth century works and remains in its original use. There are very few surviving domestic properties. Only one of these, the three storey dwelling house at 34 Belmont Row, is still occupied as a residence, the remainder, largely canal company and gasworks housing on Fazeley Street, having been converted to office or industrial use. Three properties built as public houses survive. The Forge (established 1860, rebuilt 1908) on Fazeley Street is still in use as a public house. The former Hope and Anchor (established c1845, rebuilt 1906) set on the corner of New Bartholomew Street and New Canal Street, was converted for warehouse use but is now void, while the former Royal Oak (established c1845), on the corner of Fazeley and Andover Streets, provides studio accommodation. Polish Millennium House (1966), the Polish centre, on Bordesley Street is related to St Michael's Roman Catholic Church on Moor Street Queensway and built on the former site of St. Michael's School.

Canalside warehousing

The canalside warehouses on Fazeley and Bordesley Streets impart a clear identity to the conservation area. Designed to meet the needs of canal transport, with direct access to the water, they illustrate the development of this type of warehousing from the middle of the nineteenth century up to the 1950's.

106-110 Fazeley Street (1850), built for the Grand Junction Canal Company, lies just to the west of Warwick Bar. A three storey warehouse is set behind the two storey street frontage range, which originally contained company offices. A slightly later two storey warehouse now fills the space between them. The so-called Banana Warehouse (1850) was once part of the same extensive complex. The modest single storey structure retains its canopy which sweeps over the (filled in) basin at Warwick Bar. 180-182 Fazeley Street (1884), now known as the Bond, was constructed for the canal carriers Fellows, Morton and Clayton (FMC) as their head office and main depot. A substantial four storey warehouse stands on the canal, a truncated basin on its eastern side and an open yard separating it from the two storey office range on the street frontage.

New Warwick Wharf, 122 Fazeley Street (1935), designed for FMC as an addition to their earlier complex, is a notable example of inter-war canalside warehousing. A single building, slightly lower in height than the Bond, extends from the side of the canal to the street frontage line. The sweeping corner treatment on the canal is particularly distinctive, reflecting the need for large barges to pass into the basin which once defined the west elevation.

The former premises of the Typhoo Tea Company on Bordesley Street and Pickford Street provide another fine example of early twentieth century warehousing. The three storey central block (1931/1937-8), containing offices, packing rooms and warehousing, stands on Bordesley Street. A three storey warehouse was constructed to the west in 1947. To the east of the central block a larger four storey warehouse of 1949-50 extends

along the Pickford Street frontage. The rear of the plant addresses the Digbeth Branch Canal where it ends in Typhoo (Digbeth) Basin.

Works

The works or manufactories typical of the area are purpose built and range in date from the mid nineteenth century to the 1960's. Most have a two to three storey principal range on the street frontage, containing offices, workshops and storage, with subsidiary ranges of workshops or sheds to the rear, and sometimes to the side. In the postwar period large clear span sheds behind the street frontage range commonly provided space for heavy engineering and assembly. Some twentieth century works are simply composed of one or a series of conjoined sheds set gable end onto the street. This building type is exemplified by the depot constructed for Venn and McPherson, transport contractors, (1930, now occupied by Cambridge Car and Commercials Ltd) on Andover Street and the premises built for the export merchants V & R Blakemore (1945, now occupied by the Westpoint printing company) on Pickford Street, both of which present twin brick gables to the street.

Only two good examples of nineteenth century manufactories survive. 16-17 New Bartholomew Street (1867/8, 1898), now Premier Plating Jigs, was built for the production of paper boxes and shades. It has a three storey street frontage range containing offices and workshops with a narrow contemporary workshop range and a later workshop to the rear, all fitted into a shallow, awkwardly shaped site. The Belmont Works (1899) was built as a cycle factory. The imposing three storey principal range on Belmont Row contains offices, workshops and warehousing. A series of north-light sheds is set behind in the yard.

The former Fairbanks Company works (1919/20) on Fazeley Street and Pickford Street provides a characteristic example of a small inter-war factory. Built to produce weighing machines it has a single storey workshop range on Pickford Street and a series of conjoined sheds running along Fazeley Street. The canted corner at the road junction follows the line of the earlier gateway into Bordesley Wharf. The former Solar Works (1913/1919/1927) on New Bartholomew Street, Bordesley Street and New Canal Street, now in two separate occupations, reflect the twentieth century increase in plot size. The works was established on New Bartholomew Street in the late nineteenth century for the production of brass goods and went

on to manufacture electricity meters. In the early twentieth century the premises spread, first onto New Canal Street behind and then onto Bordesley Street. Three distinct phases survive on the street frontages, the three storey principal range on New Bartholomew Street (rebuilt 1919), the three storey/two storey workshop ranges on New Bartholomew Street and Bordesley Street (1913) and a three storey workshop range (1927) on Bordesley Street and New Canal Street.

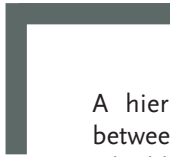
Canal and Railway Structures

Canal and railway structures run through and across the area. They include Ashted Locks and Curzon Street railway bridge, both on the Digbeth Branch Canal, and the aqueduct over the River Rea on the Grand Union (Warwick and Birmingham) Canal among other impressive examples of late eighteenth and nineteenth century transport engineering. These structures add to the hard industrial appearance created by the traditional building types and make a vital contribution to local distinctiveness and sense of place.

Architectural Character

The architectural character of the conservation area is defined by the works and warehouses built from the mid-nineteenth century up to the 1960's. Nineteenth century works and warehouse complexes are carefully composed with robust elevations. Decoration is used sparingly and stylistic references are largely Classical, although the architectural exuberance characteristic of late nineteenth century Birmingham is reflected in the livelier Freestyle of the Belmont Works (1899).

Twentieth century works and warehouses are simply detailed with regular fenestration. Flat roofs with shallow parapets are common. The influence of the Arts and Crafts Movement can be seen in the design of the former Solar Works (1913/1919) on New Bartholomew Street and Bordesley Street. During the inter-war period and up to the 1960's Art Deco influences are evident. The style contributes to the effectively detailed elevations of the former Typhoo warehouse on Bordesley Street (1931/1937), and, in a more restrained form, for example, to the two works built for Perfecta Motors (1955/1959/60) and Gravity Ladders (1959) (both later Trevelyan Ltd) on Pickford and Bordesley Streets and to the clothing factory built for Woolf and Blumenthal (1946/1953) at 70 Bordesley Street.



A hierarchy of elevational treatment is found between the principal and subsidiary ranges within a building plot. Architectural display is reserved for the principal building and, to a lesser degree, workshop and warehouse ranges or sheds with a street frontage. Subsidiary buildings, workshops, warehouses and sheds, at the rear of the plot and/or fronting onto the canals or canal basins, have strictly functional elevations with little or no decorative detailing. Whether fronting the street or set at the rear of a building plot, workshops are characterised by regularly spaced, closely set multi-light windows.

Architectural quality in the area is traditionally high, with a number of notable local practices represented. These include, among others, Arthur McKewan (Solar Works, New Bartholomew Street and Bordesley Street), James and Lister Lea (Fairbanks Company works, Fazeley Street and Pickford Street, Hope and Anchor public house, New Canal Street), Harry W. Weedon and Partners (Typhoo packing rooms and warehouse, Bordesley Street) and Holland W. Hobbiss & M.A.H. Hobbiss (Perfecta Motors, Gravity Ladders, Pickford Street and Bordesley Street).

Building Materials

High quality brickwork in tones of red, blue and buff characterises and unifies the traditional building stock. Banded brickwork, commonly red and blue, is a distinctive and consistent feature of the area. Timber and cast iron windows gave way to steel from the turn of the twentieth century. Pitched roofs are traditionally covered in slate. Nineteenth century buildings are enriched by brick, stone and terracotta detailing. In the twentieth century faience, clay tile, reconstituted stone and concrete were additionally employed as decoration.

Canal and railway structures, bridges and walling are generally constructed in blue and/or red engineering brick with stone or brick copings.

Height and Scale

Industrial development from the mid-nineteenth century up to and including the postwar period defines the characteristic height and scale of the conservation area. Building heights are low, generally between two and three storeys. The Bond on Fazeley Street (average height to eaves level 12.5m.) and the post-war extension to the Typhoo warehouse complex on Bordesley and Pickford Streets (average height 21m), both at four storeys, provide the only exceptions.

There is a general increase in building scale and mass from the mid-nineteenth century up to the Second World War. The former canal company offices and warehouses on Fazeley Street and the works at 16 New Bartholomew Street contrasting in this respect, for example, with the more substantial forms of the Bond warehouse on Fazeley Street, the Belmont Works on Belmont Row and the offices and workshops of the former Solar Works on New Bartholomew, Bordesley and New Canal Streets. The mid-twentieth century warehousing built for Typhoo on Bordesley Street is the largest building complex in the area in terms of scale and mass. Post-war works and industrial complexes are much smaller in scale.

The height and scale of buildings on the street frontage are generally broken down through architectural treatment with an effective, though sparing, use of detail. Architectural emphasis can be either vertical or horizontal, pitched roofs, gables and pilasters stressing the former, flat roofs with parapets, banding and regularly spaced, close set windows the latter.

Street Pattern and Streetscape

The street pattern in the conservation area largely derives from planned development within a single Birmingham landownership, laid out between the late eighteenth and the mid-nineteenth century. The eighteenth century plan in the west of the area was altered to accommodate the railway, disrupting the street grid. The street pattern nonetheless remains relatively regular and creates a coherent and very legible urban framework. Two principal routes, Fazeley and Bordesley Streets, run roughly north-west south-east, a third main route, New Canal Street, runs north-south. They are linked by a series of secondary streets to form roughly rectangular blocks. Belmont Row, to the north in Aston, lies apart from this street network and is only partly included in the conservation area. In terms of local street pattern it relates to what remains of the simple urban early nineteenth century plan to its south-west, just beyond the area boundary.

The streetscape is wholly derived from the area's nineteenth and twentieth century development as a warehouse and industrial quarter. Street blocks are compact and composed of building plots which vary in shape and size. Canted street corners, required for road improvement in the post-war period, are characteristic of the area. The urban grain is relatively loose, a result of both twentieth century industrial redevelopment and the survival

of larger canalside complexes of buildings and wharves. The four storey Bond warehouse and the three storey warehouse to the rear of 106-110 Fazeley Street are set behind two storey street frontage ranges of domestic scale. These are exceptions to the usual plot hierarchy in which rear buildings are subordinate. New Warwick Wharf, the former FMC warehouse at 122 Fazeley Street, which runs as a single building from the street frontage to the canalside, is also uncharacteristic of the area. The building line is set at back of pavement creating a clearly defined street frontage and a strong sense of enclosure. On Fazeley Street post-war development follows an improvement line and there are uncharacteristic setbacks, some of them filled with car parking, others grassed over. High brick walls with gated entrances traditionally divide wharves and open yards from the street, maintaining both the continuous built frontage and the firm boundary between public and private space.

Buildings face the street and are highly legible, with function expressed through form. Traditional signage is simple, painted boards or brickwork for example, and non-illuminated. The canted street corners required in post-war development are generally addressed by principal entrances or large windows. Simple rooflines, restrained design and a restricted palette of high quality building materials combine overall to compose a harmonious industrial townscape.

The canals cannot be seen from the street except where they are crossed by bridges or, on Belmont Row, visible over a brick canal boundary wall. Canalside frontages are secondary and private with no public access. Buildings and disused wharves line the canal edge and surround the basins, many now filled in. The south side of the Grand Union (Warwick and Birmingham) Canal is more closely built over than the canalside on Belmont Row above Belmont Row canal pound. Here uncovered wharves gave directly onto the canal and the buildings which once stood above them have long been replaced by open yards. Loss of traffic and the conversion of warehouses and wharves to uses unrelated to the canal and requiring only a street frontage have removed activity from the waterside, such that bustle and noise have given way to tranquillity. Canal towpaths provide quiet and secluded pedestrian routes through the area. Adjacent premises follow the towpath edge but are focused on the street, turning away from the canal

Views


The topography of the Rea Valley provides fine views through and across the conservation area (Map 3). Of these the view east down Bordesley Street and then up and towards Camp Hill beyond and the wide view to the south and west gained from Belmont Row are particularly significant. Long views out of the conservation area both from the streets and the canal towpaths, particularly towards Curzon Street Station and city centre landmark buildings such as the Rotunda on New Street and the Central Methodist Hall on Corporation Street, are of key importance to its wider setting. On the conservation area boundary the view west along the Grand Union (Warwick and Birmingham) Canal from the road bridge on Great Barr Street and through the arch of the unfinished railway viaduct is especially atmospheric.

Narrow views along the streets in the area are terminated by buildings or closed by railway viaducts and create a sense of enclosure. Fazeley Street has a greater feeling of space than most, engendered by a combination of its width and the domestic scale of many of the buildings on the street frontage. There is a good view south from Belmont Row of Ashted Locks on the Digbeth Branch Canal while the bridge over the canal on Fazeley Street allows vistas both north and south. Views northward along the canal from here are closed by the blue brick structure of the New Street railway viaduct. Those to the south across Typhoo Basin are terminated by the impressive Typhoo warehouses. Views along the canals from the towpaths are generally enclosed by buildings, fences, walls and embankments and constrained by bridges and viaducts. The sequence of views from bridge to bridge along the Digbeth Branch Canal is important in this context. The view south-east from the canal junction at Warwick Bar which takes in the canalside from the 'Banana' warehouse to the Bond is the most significant in the conservation area for character and interest.

There are good views into the area from both the New Street and Bordesley railway viaducts.

Landmarks

The railway viaducts which confine and enclose the area to the north-west and south-east are significant landmark features which dominate the local townscape. The effect is amplified by the Bordesley viaduct which closes views to the south beyond the conservation area boundary.



The Belmont Works on Belmont Row forms an important landmark in the north of the area, its water tower providing a focal point along the canal. The Typhoo warehouse is a significant presence in the south. The tall water tower lends a focus to views across Typhoo Basin and from New Canal Street. On the Grand Union (Warwick and Birmingham) Canal the two former FMC warehouses, the Bond and 122 Fazeley Street, are key landmark buildings. Both also stand out in views northward from Bordesley viaduct, marking the conservation area from a distance and adding interest to the approach to Moor Street Station and the city centre.

Canal and canal related structures provide a number of distinctive local landmarks. These include Ashted Locks, Belmont Row canal pound and Curzon Street railway bridge in the north of the area and the stop lock at Warwick Bar, the junction of the two canals, and Typhoo Basin in the south of the area.

The River Rea and its bricklined channel combine to form another local landmark, seen both north and south from the aqueduct on the Grand Union (Warwick and Birmingham) Canal.

Open Space

There is no formal public open space in the conservation area. The canal towpaths however provide important space for public recreation. They are popular with walkers, joggers and cyclists and are sometimes used for fishing.

The waterway makes an important contribution to local biodiversity. Clean water and tranquil surroundings attract waterfowl and other wildlife into the heart of the city. Plantings of birch, alder and willow, reeds and bulrushes form an added attraction while providing a peaceful green background to the canalside.

Paving and Street Furniture

Street surfaces vary throughout the area. The materials, colours and textures provide an appropriately neutral and subordinate background to the buildings. Most of the footways are covered in asphalt or paved with concrete slabs. Kerbstones are granite, although some have been replaced in concrete, mostly on New Bartholomew Street and Belmont Row. There are a few in sandstone on Bordesley Street. Granite gutters survive on Pickford and Bordesley Streets. A good number of traditional cobbled crossovers remain and examples of these can be found on every street.

Bus stops on Fazeley Street and New Canal Street are defined with block paving and textured concrete slabs. Carriageways are covered with asphalt.

Pickford Street retains its cobbled carriageway and brick pavements. These are important survivals and should be restored and carefully maintained.

The canal towpaths were mostly resurfaced in the 1980's and 1990's. Most have been laid in red brick and some, more recently, in gravel to replicate the original black ash surface. The natural stone coping on the canal edge has been repaired and restored.

Apart from a recent proliferation of parking signs at the upper end of Bordesley Street, streets in the area are uncluttered, Street lighting columns are a mixture of simple, functional, standard designs, entirely appropriate for an industrial area. Cast iron street name signs have given way to plainer aluminium plates. A stone bollard survives on the corner of Bordesley and New Bartholomew Streets.

Traffic and Pedestrian Movement

Traffic flow through and within the area is heaviest along Fazeley and New Canal Streets and lightest on Pickford and New Bartholomew Streets. Bus routes run along both Fazeley and New Canal Streets. There is considerable traffic movement around the retail warehouses on Bordesley Street, related both to delivery and parking. Pedestrian movement is relatively light with most once again concentrated around the retail warehouses and associated carparks.

There is on-street parking throughout the area. Barn Street, Pickford Street and the lower end of Bordesley Street are well used for parking by students from South Birmingham College on Deritend High Street.

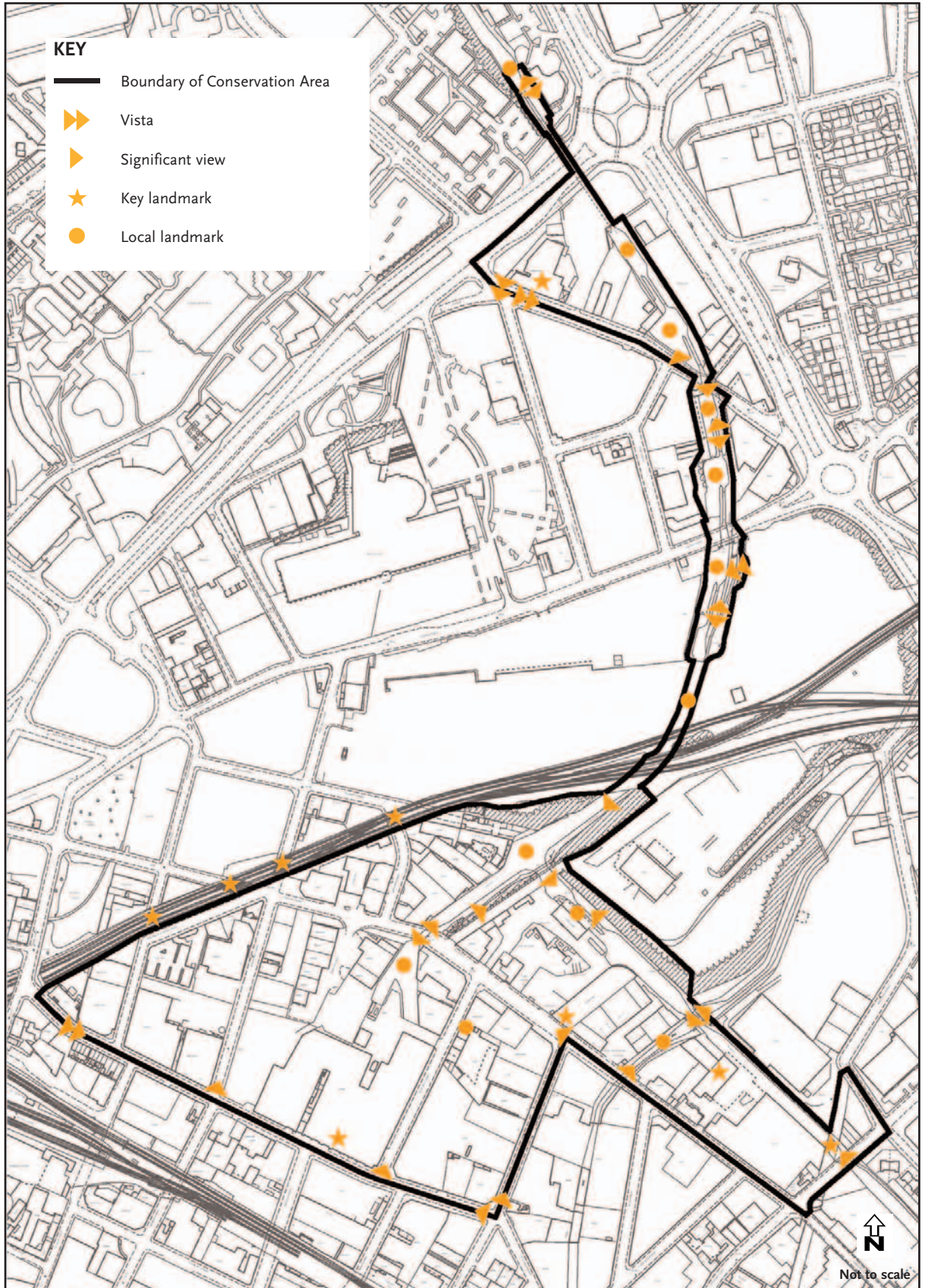


Conservation Area Setting

Warwick Bar Conservation Area lies within the inner city. On its southern boundary Digbeth/ Deritend Conservation Area is similar in character and the two areas flow naturally one into the other. The townscape immediately beyond its northern boundaries as far as Jennens Road was shaped in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by the growth of the town and the coming of the railways. The continuation of Banbury and New Canal Streets beyond the conservation area boundary and the surviving street pattern around Belmont Row (Belmont Row beyond the conservation area boundary, AB Row, Cardigan Street, Gopsal Street, Penn Street and Pitt Street) provide historic context for the designated area and are vital to its setting. The land below Curzon Street, once covered by railway wharves and sidings, allows good views west from the canal which connect the area to the city centre. Beyond Jennens Road the conservation area reaches up to Ashted Top Lock and is confined to the canal and towpath. Here the buildings which traditionally clustered around the canal have been cleared and Aston Science Park provides an uncharacteristic setting.

Much of the wider setting of the area has been redeveloped in association with the construction of the Inner and Middle Ring Roads and the growth of Aston University. This process continues through the regeneration of Eastside, with Millennium Point on Curzon Street and the proposed city park.

Map 3 Warwick Bar Conservation Area Vistas, Views and Landmarks



Part A

6

Localities

There are three principal localities or character areas in the conservation area (Map 4).

The Canal Corridor - includes the Digbeth Branch Canal from Ashted Top Lock down to Curzon Street railway bridge and Belmont Row.

Warwick Bar and Wharf - includes the Grand Union (Warwick and Birmingham) Canal from Great Barr Street to Fazeley Street canal bridge, development on the north side of Fazeley Street, the junction of the two canals, Curzon Street/New Street railway bridge and the Proof House.

Workshop and Warehouse District - bounded by Bordesley Street on the south, the railway viaduct on the north-west, Fazeley Street to the north and Barn Street on the east - includes Typhoo Basin.

The Canal Corridor

The conservation area here is confined to the canal and towpath and to part of Belmont Row. The narrow designation was intended to include the historically significant Ashted Locks within the area, with what remained around them of any canal related or other appropriate development.

As it descends from Ashted Top Lock at the extreme northern boundary of the conservation area towards the junction with the Warwick and Birmingham in the south the canal is divided into a series of discrete spaces by a series of bridges and tunnels, closing views up and down its length. These divisions together with the locks, passing bays and basins strung along the waterway lend sequential interest and variety to the canalside scene.

The Belmont Works (1899, currently void and fire damaged) on Belmont Row provides a good example of a late nineteenth century manufactory. It stands above Belmont Row canal pound beside the now vacant yards which replaced earlier street frontage development and canal wharves. The building forms the major landmark within the locality; its water tower providing an important focal point especially prominent in views north-west from the canal. On the south side of Belmont Row a solitary mid nineteenth century narrow fronted house sits aside the bridge and serves as a focus in views north and south along the canal

Curzon Street railway bridge provides a local landmark of considerable historical significance and closes views down the canal from the road bridge on Curzon Street. There is an impressive vista south and west from Belmont Row and an important long view south-west from the canal above Curzon Street railway bridge over the former Curzon Street Station and towards the city centre.

Above Jennens Road the canal has lost its historic context. A landscaped business park has replaced earlier canal related development and is alien in character. This impression is reinforced by the planting which covers the west flank of the canal cutting. Below Ashted Circus on Lawley Street Middleway the rear walls of a series of early twentieth century works form the boundary of the conservation area. These provide characteristic definition of the towpath edge and are an important contextual reference. Below Curzon Street large areas of land once covered with railway wharves, sheds and sidings lie beyond the conservation area boundary to both the west and east.

Warwick Bar and Wharf

Warwick Bar lies at the heart of the conservation area at the junction of the Digbeth Branch and the Grand Union (Warwick and Birmingham) Canals. The Digbeth Branch Canal is enclosed here by the New Street railway bridge to the north and the road bridge on Fazeley Street to the south and its flanks are defined by high boundary walling. Subsidiary buildings attached to the Gun Barrel Proof House sit on the western side while the towpath lies on the east. On the south-west side of the railway bridge the main line runs high above the canal and the skyline is crossed by girders and power lines. The turning place by the Proof House, peaceful and secluded, provides a significant focal point at the junction of the two canals. A footbridge carries the towpath over the water.

The Grand Union (Warwick and Birmingham) Canal runs straight, the views along its length closed by the road bridge and unfinished railway viaduct on Great Barr Street to the south-west and the disused vehicle bridge (which once led from Fazeley Street to Banbury Street railway wharves) to the north-east. An aqueduct carries it over the brick channel which confines the River Rea. Warehouses and manufactories line the south side of the canal. The view of these buildings from Warwick Bar is the most important in the conservation area. A more or less open area of land, originally occupied by railway and canal wharves lies beyond the towpath on the north side of the canal and the embankment which defines the conservation boundary.

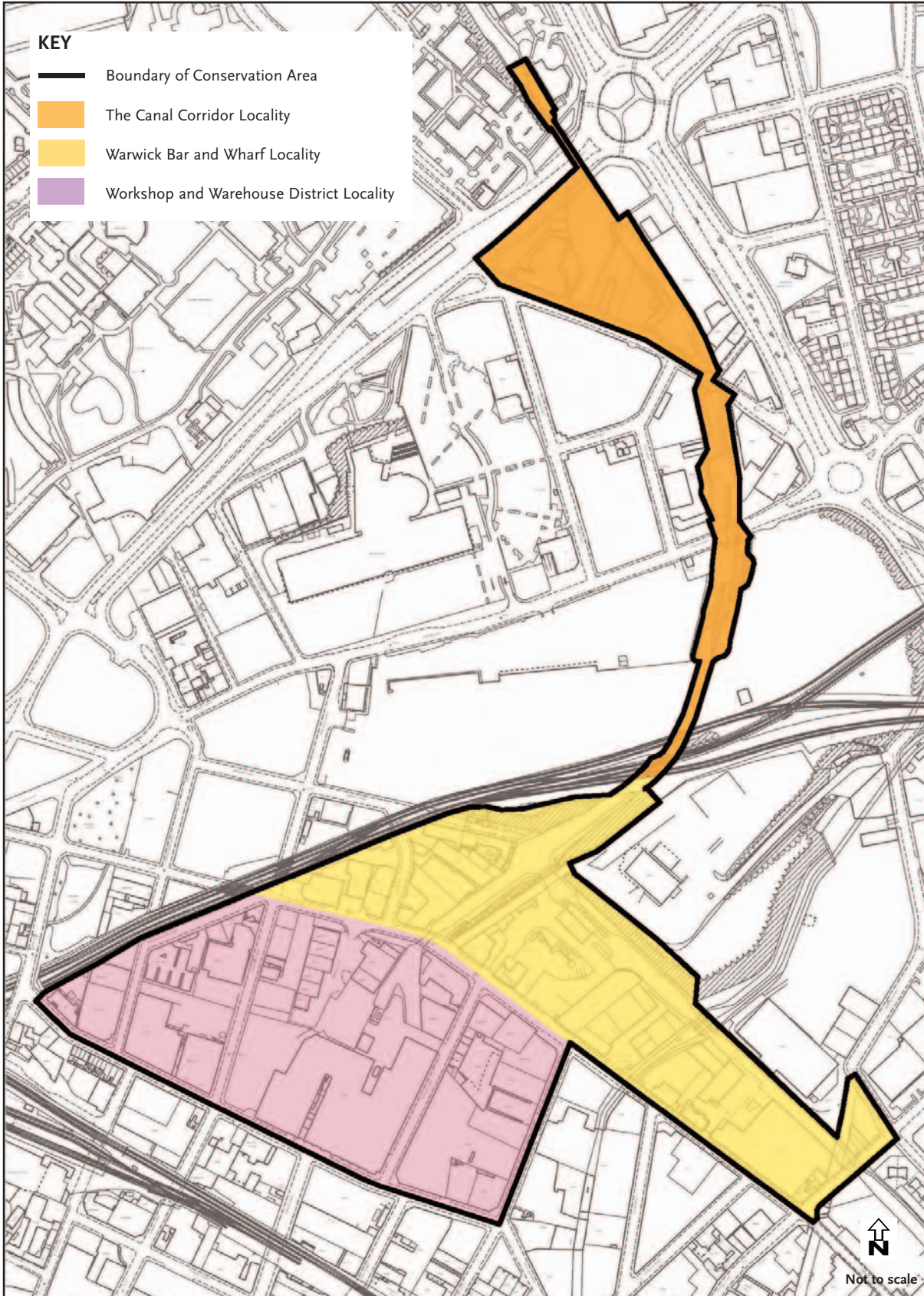
The Gun Barrel Proof House (1813) is the oldest building complex in the conservation area and lies between Banbury Street and the Digbeth Branch Canal. The nineteenth century entrance range has an important presence east of the railway viaduct on Banbury Street. The warehouse complexes on Fazeley Street do much to define the character of the conservation area. The two FMC warehouses in particular, the Bond and New Warwick Wharf, 122 Fazeley Street, are significant local landmarks seen from both Fazeley Street and along the Grand Union (Warwick and Birmingham) Canal. Frontage development along Fazeley Street has a distinctive mid-nineteenth century character and domestic scale.

Workshop and Warehouse District.

The workshop and warehouse district contains the eighteenth and nineteenth century street grid surrounding the former Bordesley Street Wharf, now Typhoo Basin and the former Typhoo warehouse complex. It includes most of the works or manufactories which characterise the conservation area, largely concentrated on Bordesley Street, New Bartholomew Street and Pickford Street.

The north side of Bordesley Street retains an almost continuous street frontage composed of twentieth century buildings. The view along the street is dominated by the Typhoo complex, its larger scale contrasting with the modest height of the postwar factories here and on Pickford Street. The eastern edge of the conservation area along Barn Street is lined with small mid-twentieth century works. There is an important view northwards towards the former FMC warehouse at 122 Fazeley Street. The post-war improvement lines imposed on Fazeley Street detract from the sense of enclosure and fragment the townscape. 28 Pickford Street (1964) is a local landmark while the rear of the Typhoo warehouse provides a fine view across Typhoo Basin. The built frontage on New Canal Street is poorly defined with large gap sites used as car parks. On New Bartholomew Street the north-west boundary of the conservation area is marked by the railway viaduct into New Street. The former Hope and Anchor public house on the important corner site between New Bartholomew Street and New Canal Street makes a significant contribution to the local townscape.

Map 4 Warwick Bar Conservation Area Localities





Significance



Warwick Bar Conservation Area contains the most complete remaining canalside quarter in Birmingham. Its significance derives from a concentration of surviving canal structures, including basins, locks and wharves, together with a wide range of historic canal related warehousing and works. These include the two Fellows, Morton and Clayton warehouses and the former gasworks on the Grand Union (Warwick and Birmingham) Canal and the Typhoo warehouse complex and the Gun Barrel Proof House on the Digbeth Branch Canal. The area reflects the importance of the canal system in the growth and development of Birmingham's trade and industry from the late eighteenth to the mid-twentieth century and the city's history as a focus of the waterways.

Part A

8

Economy

Canal cargoes declined significantly during the first half of the twentieth century as water transport was superseded by rail and increasingly by road. The canal infrastructure around Warwick Bar was functionally redundant by the 1960's and canal related warehousing obsolete. Established industries, largely associated with the metal trades, have also been leaving the area, driven by a general decline in manufacturing and a need for more accessible premises.

Land Use and Values

Uses within the conservation area are still dominated by industry. There is a slow but growing trend towards office use, with the conversion of buildings such as the Bond on Fazeley Street, 28 Pickford Street and, more recently, the former Warwick and Birmingham Canal Company premises at 122 Fazeley Street. The successful discount retail warehouse, Latif's, on Bordesley Street exploits the close proximity of its premises to the city centre and the space available for car parking in the immediate vicinity.

There is a lack of demand for existing floor space in the area. A number of buildings are void or underoccupied and adventitious temporary uses exploit short leases and vacant sites. This situation is attributable to two main factors.

1. Low rental values make conversion and refurbishment, particularly of the older and more specialised premises, to meet modern production and office standards uneconomic. This is compounded by a shortage of space for delivery and parking. The area is unable to compete with industrial locations more suited to modern production, farther from the city centre and close to the main arterial routes with good access for

delivery and space for car parking. The congested inner city location and absence of large modern single storey warehouses and service yards also make the area unattractive to the growing distribution sector.

2. Short term leases, up to a maximum of five years, reflect the hope value associated with the regeneration of Eastside, protecting future development opportunities for landowners, but preclude any immediate investment. The preference for short term lets discourages manufacturing industry, where long leases are necessary to justify considerable set-up costs. Vacant industrial floor area is attractive to retail warehouse operators who have greater flexibility associated with significantly lower relocation costs.

New uses in the area, following regeneration initiatives, will attract higher property returns than established industry. As land values increase industrial use will decline as property owners seek to maximise profit through development opportunities. Ownership in the area is fragmented but includes the Gooch Estate, British Waterways and I Latif among the larger property owners. There are some long leasehold interests with no incentive to engage in the development process. This will have an inevitable effect on the dynamics of the local property market.



Vacant Sites

There are a significant number of vacant sites within the conservation area, where lack of development is largely attributable to 'land banking' in the expectation of rising land values. The greatest concentration is on New Canal Street, where they are in temporary use as car parks. Land on Jennens Road to the north of Belmont Row provides an important opportunity site.

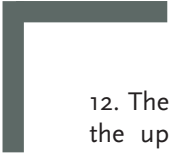
Future Uses

Current and future uses should be seen against a background of citywide decline in manufacturing industry. The Eastside Development Framework (2001) seeks to regenerate the area around and including Warwick Bar through the promotion of a mix of uses, including residential, live-work, office and studio accommodation, a process anticipated in 1988 with the sensitive conversion of the Bond warehouse complex on Fazeley Street to office and studio space. A mixed use community is now planned for Warwick Wharf to the west and a residential conversion proposed for the Typhoo complex on Bordesley Street. In attracting and sustaining such new uses the distinctive character of the conservation area provides a valuable asset which must be carefully maintained.

9

Loss, Attrition and Intrusion

1. A significant number of buildings in the conservation area are vacant or underused and/or suffer from lack of maintenance. This detracts from the quality and interest both of the buildings themselves and of the local street scene and degrades the character of the area as a whole.
2. Late twentieth century development lacks the quality of design which characterises the traditional building stock and erodes the identity and distinctiveness of the conservation area. Poor and/or alien materials, such as steel cladding, render and UPVC, add to loss of character and can be intrusive.
3. Inappropriate alterations and additions to existing buildings have had an adverse effect on their character, reducing their positive contribution to the interest and integrity of the conservation area.
4. Some buildings, particularly on New Canal Street and Benacre Drive, are cluttered with signage, intruding on the local street scene and detracting from the visual quality of the conservation area as a whole.
5. The Belmont Works on Belmont Row has recently (2007) been damaged by fire. This compromises its quality and significance as a landmark in the area.
6. Uncharacteristic setbacks from the traditional back of pavement building line, particularly on Fazeley Street, break up the street frontage and compromise enclosure, diluting the quality of the townscape
7. The Benacre Drive industrial estate (1973), set behind the improvement line, relates particularly badly to Fazeley Street, creating a large gap in the street frontage and exposing private space to public view. The blue and red steel clad sheds are visually intrusive and detract significantly from the setting of the Typhoo warehouses and Typhoo Basin and from the character of the conservation area as a whole.
8. There are number of gap sites in the conservation area, particularly on New Canal Street where they are used for car parking. These break up the urban grain, destroying the continuity of street frontages, exposing the backs of buildings and reducing enclosure. The exposed corner site on Bordesley and New Canal Streets is especially intrusive and detracts from the setting of the Typhoo warehouses.
9. Steel palisade and chain link fencing lack the quality and sense of permanence of the brick walls and boarded or metal gates traditionally used as boundary treatments. The fencing allows views from the street into and through building plots, eroding the clear division between public and private space which characterises the conservation area.
10. The cluster of advertisement hoardings round the junction of Fazeley and New Canal Streets intrude on the streetscape and compound a general loss of character and interest.
11. Some of the street surfaces in the area are in poor condition and in need of repair.



12. The proliferation of traffic and parking signs at the upper end of Bordesley Street clutters the pavement, disrupts the street scene and blocks views.

13. On street parking on Pickford Street, Barn Street and the lower end of Bordesley Street dominates the street scene and detracts from the quiet industrial character of the conservation area.

14. Derelict land and unsympathetic fencing on the west of the Digbeth Branch Canal detract from the character of the conservation area and fragment its setting.

15. Ground cover planting along the Digbeth Branch Canal erodes the traditionally informal green character of the waterway. The introduction of ornamental landscaping is also historically inappropriate and detracts from the special interest of the conservation area.

16. Graffiti and litter along the canals, in particular the Digbeth Branch Canal, is intrusive. It degrades the local environment and detracts from the quality of the conservation area.



Part B

Warwick Bar
Conservation Area

Supplementary Planning Policies





Introduction - The Need for Policy Guidance

Int

Warwick Bar Conservation Area has a special architectural and historic character of local and regional significance. The canalside quarter, with its surviving industrial heritage, makes a unique contribution to the quality and interest of Birmingham's wider city centre and offers important opportunities for regeneration.

The purpose of the supplementary planning policies set out in this document is to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of Warwick Bar Conservation Area as defined in the Warwick Bar Conservation Area Character Appraisal. In order to maintain and reinforce this special character the policies are intended to guide and manage the significant level of change anticipated for the area through the promotion of good new design which responds sensitively to historic context. New development will be encouraged to complement the established character of the area while clearly reflecting its own time and function.

The Warwick Bar Conservation Area Supplementary Planning Policies have been prepared in accordance with the national guidance contained in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: *Planning and the Historic Environment* (1994) and in *Guidance on conservation area appraisals* (2005) and *Guidance on the management of conservation areas* (2005) produced by English Heritage and the Planning Advisory Service.

The policies should be read in conjunction with the local and national guidance contained in the *Birmingham Plan 2005, Regeneration through Conservation Birmingham Conservation Strategy 1999* (1999, reviewed 2004) and PPG 15: *Planning and the Historic Environment* (1994).

In forming their proposals applicants for planning permission must have regard to the information contained in the Warwick Bar Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

Part B

1

Protecting the Existing Historic Environment

1.1 Additions and Alterations

There will be a presumption against additions and alterations to buildings which adversely affect their character and appearance or that of the conservation area.

Developers should ensure that additions or alterations to existing buildings have a positive effect on their character and that of the conservation area. The Council will ensure that all additions and alterations are sympathetic to the existing building in scale, proportion, materials and detailing.

Where significant alterations or additions are proposed the Council will require the design and access statement to be submitted in detail. It should include an analysis of the contribution made by the existing building to the character of the immediate streetscape and the wider conservation area and of the preservation or enhancement of that character by the proposed alterations or additions.

1.2 Conservation Area Consent

There will be a presumption in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area. This will include buildings of contextual or group value.

Where the demolition of a building which makes little or no contribution to the character of the conservation area is proposed the Council will expect the developer to justify demolition in terms of the character of the conservation area and submit detailed plans for redevelopment. These should preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area (see 2.1 below). In the absence

of satisfactory proposals consent for demolition will not be granted.

The demolition of any canal boundary walls, *canal* retaining walls or bridge walls and parapets will not be allowed.

1.3 Recording

Where consent is granted for significant demolition the Council will expect an accurate archive record to be made prior to the commencement of any works. This will include photographs and/or where appropriate, measured survey drawings and will be provided at the expense of the applicant.

1.4 Change of Use

The Council will not permit changes of use to buildings where the new use would adversely affect their character and appearance or that of the conservation area.



1.5 Signage

Signage must be designed to suit the proportions, design and materials of the host building and the immediate streetscape. Overscaled, unsympathetic and visually intrusive signage will not be allowed.

1.6 Repair and Maintenance

The Council will use its statutory powers to secure the preservation of threatened buildings in the conservation area. In the case of a statutorily listed building these powers include Urgent Works and Repairs Notices and, as a last resort, compulsory acquisition. The Council also has the power to secure the preservation of unlisted buildings where it is important for maintaining the character or appearance of the conservation area.

The Council will provide guidance on the repair and maintenance of traditional buildings in the conservation area.

1.7 New Uses for Vacant Buildings

The Council will actively encourage beneficial and creative new uses for vacant buildings, where these respect the character of the building and the conservation area.

Where buildings are unoccupied and await a long term use, appropriate temporary uses will be encouraged. Such uses should not require significant internal or external alterations, particularly where these would reduce the flexibility of the building in the future.

2.1 The Design of New Development

The Council will expect all new development to achieve a satisfactory relationship with its surroundings, demonstrating a regard for the character of the immediate street scene and the wider conservation area. Permission for new development will only be granted where it preserves and enhances the character of the conservation area as a whole.

Existing buildings which are unsympathetic to the character of the conservation area will not be regarded as a valid precedents for further uncharacteristic development.

The Council will require the design and access statement for all significant new development to be submitted in detail. It should include an analysis of the contribution which will be made by the proposed new building to the character of the immediate streetscape and the wider conservation area as defined in the conservation area appraisal.

2.2 Key Design Principles

(a) New development must follow the building line at back of pavement and maintain a continuous street frontage. Dominant elements or features which project beyond the building line will not be permitted. Where improvement lines have been imposed on Fazeley Street new development must follow the revised street frontage line. On the canal sides buildings must stand on the canal edge or stand on the back of towpath.

(b) The plan form and architectural treatment of new development should complement the historic and architectural character of the conservation area. In particular, principal elevations must always front the street. Canalside development should

conform to the elevational hierarchy characteristic of the conservation area and present a secondary frontage to the water.

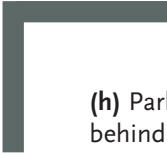
(c) New development will be required to reflect the building heights which characterise the conservation area. This will limit new buildings to a maximum of three domestic or four industrial/commercial storeys.

(d) The roof forms and rooflines of new buildings must complement the roof forms and rooflines of the adjoining and/or surrounding buildings. Space for plant should be treated as integral to the design of any new building and must be included in all design statements. It should normally be provided at basement level. Where rooftop plant/service equipment is unavoidable it must be designed and sited to minimise any adverse visual impact.

(e) Window openings in new buildings should be regularly spaced. Windows should be set within reveals of sufficient depth to add definition and interest to the façade.

(f) Local identity should be reinforced through the use of materials traditionally employed in the area, principally brick and slate. All building materials should be of high quality.

(g) Restrained architectural detail of high quality and which contributes to scale, proportion and legibility will be encouraged. Indiscriminate, fussy and arbitrary use of applied features or detail will be resisted.



(h) Parking or servicing areas should be concealed behind built frontages of appropriate scale. Car park or service entrances should be carefully designed to mitigate any adverse visual impact on the local street scene. Car park ventilation grilles on any street frontage will be resisted. Parking areas should also be screened from the canal.

(i) The creation of private landscaped spaces beside the canal will be resisted.

(j) The creation of any direct open access from the public realm, i.e. the street, to the canalside will not be allowed. This does not preclude new access points of characteristic form, for example gated entrances.

(k) New buildings must preserve views and vistas characteristic of the conservation area and respect the setting of key historic landmarks. The creation of new landmarks will be discouraged.

(l) New buildings should be accessible to all users, including people with disabilities. Where specialised access is required it must be treated as integral to the design and should be included in any design and access statement.

2.3 Vacant Sites

The redevelopment of vacant or gap sites within the conservation area is a priority. The Council will encourage early discussion of development proposals and provide guidance for significant sites.

2.4 Development in the Conservation Area Setting

New development in the setting of the conservation area must respect and preserve characteristic views within, from and into the area. The Council will not permit new buildings or additions to existing buildings beyond the conservation area boundary to intrude on or block key views or important sightlines.

3.1 Groundscape

The existing groundscape within the conservation area provides an appropriate setting for its buildings and structures. Some street surfaces are in need of sympathetic repair and granite kerbstones should be restored where they have been recently replaced in concrete. Where historic surfaces such as brick paving, granite kerbstones and granite setts survive, as, for example, on Pickford Street, great care should be taken to ensure that these are retained and accurately repaired.

If new paving schemes are proposed the design and materials should provide a simple, neutral and subordinate foreground which relates well to the surrounding buildings. Traditional blue brick footway paving is attractive, durable and sustainable and should be used throughout the conservation area. Drainage channels and vehicle crossovers should be marked with stone setts and kerbstones should be granite. Work should always be carried out to the highest standards.

3.2 Street Furniture

New street furniture, including street lighting columns, should be simple and functional, reflecting the industrial character of the conservation area. Care should be taken to avoid spurious 'heritage'. Any additions must be justified and restricted to essential items. New features within the public realm should be carefully sited to avoid intrusion on views, vistas and the settings of buildings.

3.3 Clutter

A co-ordinated effort should be made to avoid street clutter through good design and careful siting. Where possible signs and equipment should be fixed to lighting columns, buildings or other existing structures. Larger items such as telephone kiosks and pay and display machines should be sited at the back of footway.

3.4 Planting

The hard urban character of the conservation area presents little opportunity for tree planting or soft landscaping. Street trees are not a traditional feature of the area and would not be considered an appropriate addition to the public realm. New planting along the canalside should be kept to a minimum and restricted to appropriate native species.

3.5 Developers' Contributions

Where appropriate developers will be expected to contribute to the improvement of the public realm.

Opportunity Sites for New Development

Several key sites within the conservation area are available for redevelopment. Some of these have already been identified in other council documents including *Digbeth Millennium Quarter: Planning and Urban Design for the Future* (1996), the *Eastside Development Framework* (2001) and the *City Centre Canal Corridor Development Framework* (2002)

4.1 Land to the north of Belmont Row and the Belmont Works

This site forms part of a larger development area which extends beyond the conservation area boundary. It includes the land fronting Jennens Road, the corner of Ashted Circus and Lawley Street Middleway. The area includes the archaeologically sensitive sites of the Ashted Engine House and the Belmont glassworks. The site is suitable for mixed use development. Careful consideration must be given to the scale of buildings along the canal frontage and it is essential that development on the corner of Ashted Circus does not overwhelm the Belmont Works as the dominant structure in the north of the conservation area.

4.2 Warwick Wharf

This site is particularly sensitive and the highest standards of design will be required in all new development. A mix of uses will be promoted which will involve the careful conversion of statutorily and locally listed buildings. The setting of statutorily listed buildings, including the Gun Barrel Proof House on the Digbeth Branch Canal, must be preserved and enhanced

4.3 Typhoo Basin

The sensitive conversion of the Typhoo warehouse complex to residential, commercial or educational uses will be encouraged, The detailed design and layout should exploit the canal basin.

4.4 New Canal Street

The eastern side of New Canal Street has suffered the loss of almost all its historic street frontage development. New mixed use development could incorporate community facilities including a neighbourhood retail centre. New buildings should address the street corners with Fazeley and Bordesley Streets effectively. Surviving buildings should be incorporated within any new development.



1899

OFFICES

Appendices

Warwick Bar
Conservation Area





Appendix: Associated Reading

App

Legislation and Guidance Notes

- ▶ Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990
- ▶ Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979
- ▶ National Heritage Act 1983
- ▶ Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG15) *Planning and the Historic Environment* 1994
- ▶ Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG16) *Archaeology and Planning* 1990
- ▶ *Guidance on conservation area appraisals* English Heritage 2005
- ▶ *Guidance on the management of conservation areas* English Heritage 2005
- ▶ *Sustainability and the Historic Environment* English Heritage 1996
- ▶ *Streets for All West Midlands* English Heritage 2005

Local Planning Policy and Guidance

- ▶ *The Birmingham Plan* 2005
- ▶ *Regeneration through Conservation Birmingham Conservation Strategy* 1999
- ▶ *Conservation Areas & Listed Buildings A guide for owners and occupiers* 2003
- ▶ *Archaeology Strategy* 2004
- ▶ *Digbeth Millennium Quarter: Planning and Urban Design for the future* 1996

- ▶ *Eastside Development Framework* 2001

- ▶ *City Centre Canal Corridor Development Framework* 2002

- ▶ *BUDS City Centre Design Strategy* 1990

- ▶ *Places for All* 2001

- ▶ *High Places* 2003

Background Reading

- ▶ Bunce J et al *History of the Corporation of Birmingham vols 1-6. 1878-1957*

- ▶ Christiansen Rex *A Regional History of the Railways of Great Britain vol.7 The West Midlands* 3rd ed. 1991

- ▶ Cullen G *Townscape* 1961

- ▶ Faulkner Alan H. *The Grand Junction Canal* 1972

- ▶ Foster Andy *Pevsner Architectural Guides: Birmingham* 2005

- ▶ Hadfield Charles *The Canals of the West Midlands The Canals of the British Isles vol.5* 3rd ed. 1985

Archival Material

- ▶ Material held in Birmingham Central Library.

Additional Material

- ▶ Material held in Planning Management, Directorate of Development and Culture, Birmingham City Council.

Appendix: Listed Buildings



Statutorily Listed Buildings

STREET	NUMBER and/or NAME	GRADE	CROSS REFERENCE
Banbury Street	Gun Barrel Proof House	II	
Curzon Street	1838 section of railway bridge into Curzon Street Station over Digbeth Branch Canal	II	
Fazeley Street	Nos. 106, 108, 110	II	
Fazeley Street	Canalside warehouse with stop lock and dock Warwick Bar Warwick and Birmingham Canal	II	
Fazeley Street	No. 122 former canal company offices	II	
Great Barr Street	Road bridge over Warwick and Birmingham Canal	II	

Locally Listed Buildings

STREET	NUMBER and/or NAME	GRADE	CROSS REFERENCE
Belmont Row	Former Belmont Works	A	
Belmont Row	No. 34	B	
Bordesley Street/New Bartholomew Street	Former Solar Works	B	
Bordesley Street	Former Typhoo Tea Company Works and Warehouses	C	
Bordesley Street/Pickford Street	Former Perfecta Motors and Gravity Ladders works	B	
Bordesley Street	No. 70 Former Woolf and Blumenthal clothing factory	B	

STREET	NUMBER and/or NAME	GRADE CROSS REFERENCE
Fazeley Street	Nos. 180 and 182	B
Fazeley Street	Warehouse r/o 180 and 182	A
Fazeley Street	Former gas retort house r/o 176	B
Fazeley Street	River Rea channel	C
Fazeley Street	122 former FMC warehouse	C
Fazeley Street/Pickford Street	Former Fairbanks Works	B
Jennens Road, Belmont Row, Curzon Street	Ashted Locks Digbeth Branch Canal	B
Jennens Road	Ashted Tunnel Digbeth Branch Canal	B
Lawley Street Middleway	Site of Ashted Pumping Station	C
New Batholomew Street	No. 16	B
New Canal Street	Nos. 17 and 18 Former Dogs' Home	B
New Canal Street	No. 101	C
Pickford Street	No. 28 Former SGB Scaffolding	B

Contact and Further Information

Contact

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Further Information

For further copies and guidance about conservation and listed buildings visit our website:

www.birmingham.gov.uk/conservation

Most Birmingham City Council publications can be made available in alternative formats or languages.

If you have difficulty reading this document please call us on (0121) 303 1115 to ask if a full or summary version can be made available in large print.

If you have hearing difficulties please call us via Tynetalk 18001 0121 303 3030.

Or e-mail us at:
planning.conservation@birmingham.gov.uk



Warwick Bar
Conservation Area

Character Appraisal
and
Supplementary Planning Policies

March 2008