

HOLLIDAY WHARF TO WARWICK BAR

# City Centre Canal Corridor

DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



APRIL 2002

## Foreword

Birmingham is a city full of surprises - not least of which is its extensive network of canals.

Over the last few years Birmingham has become a city transformed. Areas such as Brindleyplace and the International Convention Centre, Gas Street Basin and Aston Science Park have enhanced Birmingham's reputation as a modern and successful city - and Birmingham's canal network has provided a particular catalyst for success.

It is now time to capitalise on the triumph of these developments by realising the potential of the entire City Centre canal network, particularly as it passes through the historic Gun Quarter and into Eastside.

The unrealised potential of the City Centre canal network is amazing and it is vital that the momentum of Birmingham's internationally acclaimed canalside renaissance does not stop at Brindleyplace.



The City Council will play its part in making the vision of a revitalised and regenerated canal network a reality - but we require your help. Continued success requires co-operation and partnership working if we are to transform areas of the city with pacesetting high quality developments and attract new activities.

**Councillor Sir Albert Bore**  
Leader  
Birmingham City Council

British Waterways in partnership with Birmingham City Council have led the way in using the City's canals to bring jobs, new investment and a huge change in image for Birmingham. The success of Brindleyplace has shown us the way in which the canal network can act as a catalyst for regeneration, the key pedestrian link between the many attractions Birmingham now has to offer and as a unique tourist attraction in its own right.

In partnership we have developed what we see to be an exciting and vibrant vision for the future of the Canal Corridor linking the City Centre to the East of Birmingham. There are a huge range of opportunities along this route and its position within the Eastside Regeneration Area provides a real impetus to ensure these happen.

The Eastside area is the birthplace of Birmingham and the coming of the canals created the manufacturing prosperity and growth in the 18th and 19th Centuries upon which Birmingham was founded. We have a tremendous opportunity ahead of us to recreate this period of prosperity but in the new Millennium we will be reflecting the changes in living and working patterns that has made Birmingham unique.



As British Waterways we have much to be proud of in Birmingham; to move forward it is imperative that we match and exceed the high standards we have already set ourselves. We will build on the successful partnership we have with the City Council and we look forward to working with them and our private sector neighbours and partners in delivering these ambitious aims.

**John Lancaster**  
British Waterways Regional Director  
Midlands and South West Region

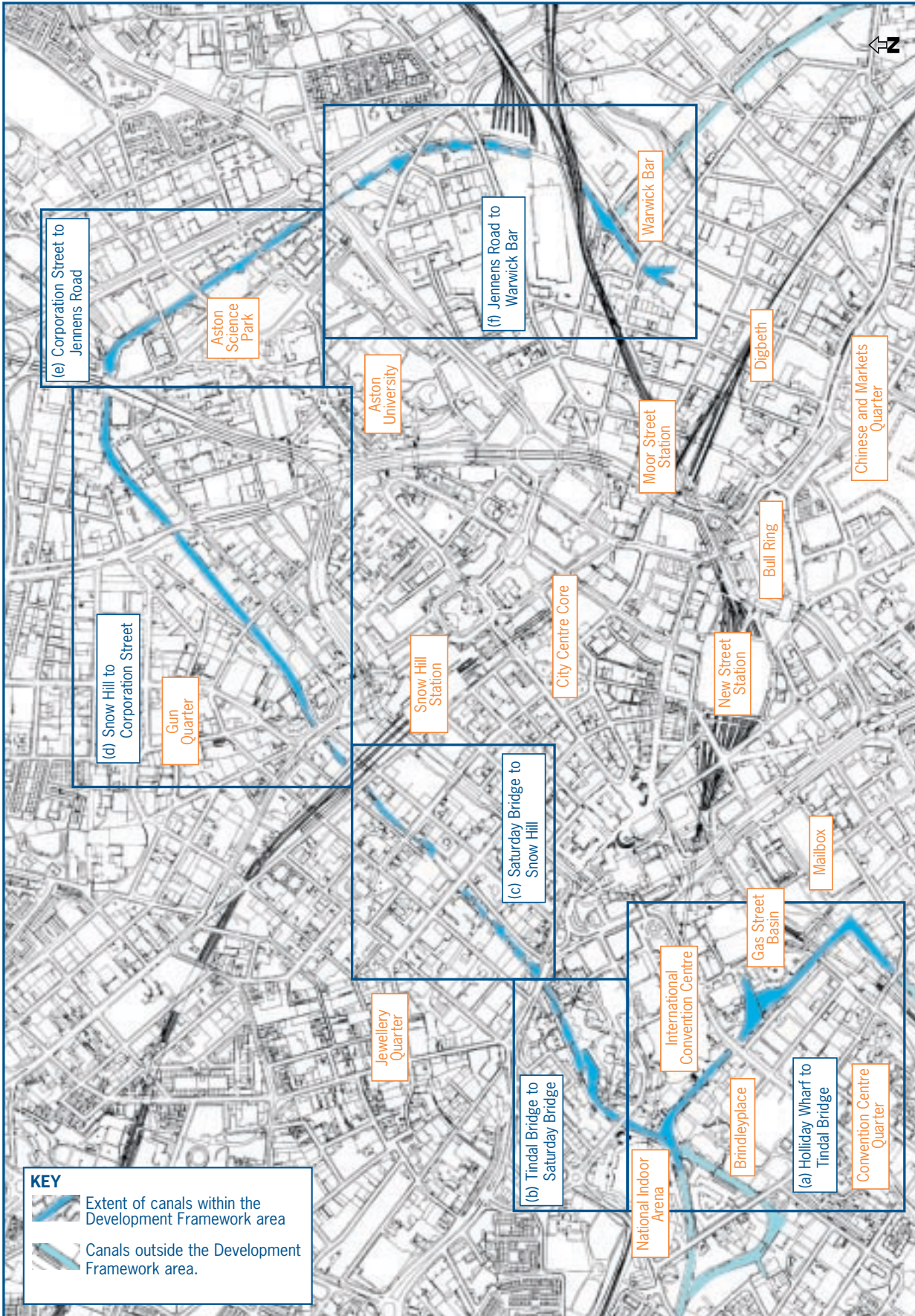
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**City Centre Canal Corridor**  
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Gas Street Basin







## 1 Introduction

Birmingham City Centre has changed for the better over the last few years. New investment and development has been attracted in a way that has improved the quality of the City's environment and this in turn has attracted further investment and development.

This has been reflected in the expansion of commercial activity into areas beyond the traditional City Centre 'core'; in the quality of new developments, the creation of new urban squares and the improvement of others. There has also been a welcome, growing, enthusiasm for 'City Living' - which brings with it the potential to create sustainable communities living and working in the heart of Birmingham.

This change has not happened by chance. It has been achieved by establishing a shared vision of how Birmingham should be developed - a vision with clear principles and objectives:

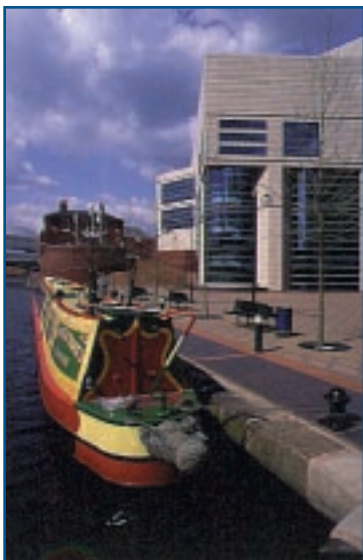
- ◆ an expanding City Centre, with vibrant activities throughout all of the areas within the Ring Road;
- ◆ a mixture of uses in all areas - both within and between buildings;
- ◆ breaking the 'concrete collar' of roads and subways and replacing them with attractive streets and squares;
- ◆ moving towards a 24 hour city with cultural and leisure activities which support the commercial role of the City Centre and reinforce the trend for city living;
- ◆ promoting city living - providing new housing in the City Centre;
- ◆ recognising the importance of the canal network; and
- ◆ a high quality environment with reduced dependency on the private car.

The City Centre canal network has provided a particular focus for new development and a catalyst for urban regeneration. The regeneration of Gas Street Basin and Brindleyplace have shown how development can make positive use of its canal side setting. The Aston Cross and Aston Science Park developments on the eastern edge of the City Centre are further examples of how good quality development can make use of its waterside environment. The quality of these recent developments, and efforts to build on the tourist and regeneration potential of the canal network, resulted in Birmingham winning the prestigious Top Honour Award for Best Regenerated Waterfront in 1995.

Despite these successes much remains to be done if we are to realise the full potential of the Canal network elsewhere within the City Centre. This Development Framework has been prepared to help realise this opportunity by building on the canal's historic importance and using it as a focus to help generate positive development.



Holliday Wharf to the  
National Indoor Arena



International Convention  
Centre

The Framework deals with the City Centre canal corridor from Granville Street to Warwick Bar in Digbeth. This area is shown on Plan 1. The Framework provides detailed planning and urban design guidance for this corridor in a way that:

- ◆ builds upon, and reinforces, successful canal side developments in the City Centre;
- ◆ helps to realise the development potential of land along the canal corridor by identifying specific development opportunities;
- ◆ implements key strategies and, in particular, develops linkages between the canal and adjoining quarters;
- ◆ ensures potential development is considered holistically including opportunities for waterside and waterspace development;
- ◆ identifies opportunities for canal related improvements such as towpath enhancement, new pedestrian access points, habitat and landscape improvements and additional interpretation facilities/ signage; and
- ◆ provides comprehensive guidelines for high quality well designed sustainable development adjacent to canal-side sites.

This framework forms part of the City Council's vision for the network of canals in the City, which will be developed further in the proposed Birmingham Canals Action Plan. The Action Plan, which will form supplementary planning guidance, will set targets for the canal network to 2007.

Following public consultation this framework has been adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Birmingham Unitary Development Plan. It will be used:

- ◆ for determining planning applications;
- ◆ for bidding for resources;
- ◆ as a basis for detailed planning guidance; and
- ◆ to guide management of the canal network.



'The Malthouse', Brindleyplace

## 2 Context

### REGENERATION AND THE CANAL NETWORK

Birmingham lies at the heart of the national canal network, which played an important part in the City's industrial development. The first canal in Birmingham from Wednesbury (in the Black Country) to a Wharf near Summer Row (now Cambrian Basin) was completed in 1769. This was extended to Bridge Street in 1772. The Birmingham and Fazeley canal, which provides the focus for the majority of this Development Framework, was completed in 1789 providing a link to the Coventry Canal and the waterways to the east of Birmingham. The link from Aston Junction to Warwick Bar is formed by the Digbeth Branch Canal. This was completed in 1799.



The Waters' Edge - 1970's



The Waters' Edge - 1996

The canal network remains a testament to Birmingham's early industrial growth and is today a major resource enjoyed by visitors and residents alike. Until recently much of the canal network lay hidden and forgotten but the programme of environmental improvements carried out over the last two decades, and new canal-side development, have brought about recognition of its value. The City Centre Canal Corridor runs through two Conservation Areas. The Jewellery Quarter Conservation Area is a place of unique character based upon the Quarter's long history of jewellery and small metalware production carried out in a concentration of converted houses, workshops and manufactories. The Warwick Bar Conservation Area is focused upon the Digbeth Branch Canal and incorporates an historic collection of bridges, locks, warehouses, canal offices and other buildings. Today canals are important to the City for a number of reasons:

- ◆ for their development potential and focus for waterside development;
- ◆ their regeneration potential;
- ◆ leisure, tourism and recreational role;
- ◆ their nature conservation value;
- ◆ their built conservation and heritage value;
- ◆ their educational value; and
- ◆ their transport value.

The changes at Gas Street Basin and Brindleyplace have opened-up access to the canal and introduced active uses which create a safe and welcoming environment. In many respects they are exemplars of how urban areas can be transformed. This, however, is a position which is not repeated elsewhere, particularly along those sections of canal which run through the Gun Quarter and Warwick Bar/Digbeth. Here, a poor mix of land uses, and the design and layout of adjoining buildings, creates an environment which discourages the full potential use of the network. This is exacerbated by the absence of any activity outside working hours, poor lighting and limited access to the canal towpath. A key objective of

this Framework is to identify the means to remedy this position, particularly in conjunction with new development.

This Framework, therefore, seeks to improve the canal environment by encouraging:

- ◆ a high quality mix of uses incorporating features and materials appropriate to the historic canalside context;
- ◆ a safe and well designed environment; particularly one which provides active uses at ground floor/canal towpath level and potentially opens onto the canal;
- ◆ development that preserves, enhances and interprets the historic character of the canal and adjoining buildings; the enhancement of the environment through conservation;
- ◆ improved pedestrian and cycle access to the canal towpath for all sections of the community, including those with disabilities;
- ◆ the free flow of pedestrians through and around development, onto the canal towpath and towards the wider network of squares, spaces and pedestrian streets;
- ◆ the enhancement of the environment through landscaping, including habitat creation and public art at suitable locations;
- ◆ long term moorings, including residential and visitor moorings, hotel and restaurant boats, trip boats, water taxis and buses, where appropriate;
- ◆ excavation of infilled canals and creation of further bodies of water; opening up former canal basins and arms and the creation of new water space; and
- ◆ improvements to the canal itself including, where possible, measures to conserve and enhance local biodiversity and water conservation measures associated with new development.

## PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

The land use policy context for the preparation of this Development Framework is provided by a number of planning policy documents. These are listed in the Appendix (page 34).

## DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

Principles relating to development and the creation of active waterfronts should be based on sound urban design principles. They should help to ensure development is of a high quality and secure environmental improvements and regeneration alongside the canal network. These sound development principles should also be extended to the waterbody itself.



Active frontages



Canal-side housing





Towpath enhancement

Development should follow the canalside design and development principles in 'Canalside Development in Birmingham - Design Guidelines' (1997) and guidance within the Jewellery Quarter Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan (2002).

In general the following should apply:

- ◆ Conserving the canalside character - development should protect and enhance historic or well appreciated landscapes, landforms and features;
- ◆ Active frontages - these should include, where appropriate, the provision of new visitor facilities including additions to the established sequence of interpretation panels and signs;
- ◆ Access - where possible this should be designed to cater for all users, including those with mobility and sensory impairments and pushchair users;
- ◆ Lighting - this should be of a high quality and robust. Every effort should be made to use it creatively and enhance the historic character of the canal;
- ◆ Boundary treatment - attractive active frontages should front the canal allowing views in and out of the site from towpath level and incorporating access at appropriate locations;
- ◆ Materials - these should work successfully in the canalside context reflecting, where appropriate, the traditional fabric of the canal environment. However, modern design solutions will not be discouraged;
- ◆ Planting schemes - these should be simple with low maintenance and use native species. The use of drought tolerant plants is encouraged;
- ◆ Public art - the canalside setting should be the focus of public art within canalside development. However, it must not interfere with the working of the canal or towpath;
- ◆ Signage and interpretation - this should be provided to encourage movement along the canal corridor and to help visitors and boaters to orientate themselves; and
- ◆ Sustainability - sustainable developments incorporating innovative fuel technologies and materials as well as minimising energy consumption will be particularly encouraged. Water conservation and water minimisation techniques should also be adopted to conserve the water supply to help sustain the water based environment.



Gas Street Footbridge

## THE VISION

There is a clear relationship between economic activity and environmental quality. The planning strategy for the whole of the City Centre is to encourage activity, investment and development and, in so doing, affect environmental improvements which in turn attract still further activity. This approach is by its very nature a sustainable one - recognising the need to balance regeneration with conservation and environmental quality.

The aim of this framework is to promote the process of urban regeneration, not least by building upon the distinctive qualities and characteristics of the City Centre through which the extensive network of canals pass. It provides the context for promoting high quality exciting innovative mixed use development and recognises the added value of water as a leisure and recreation space.

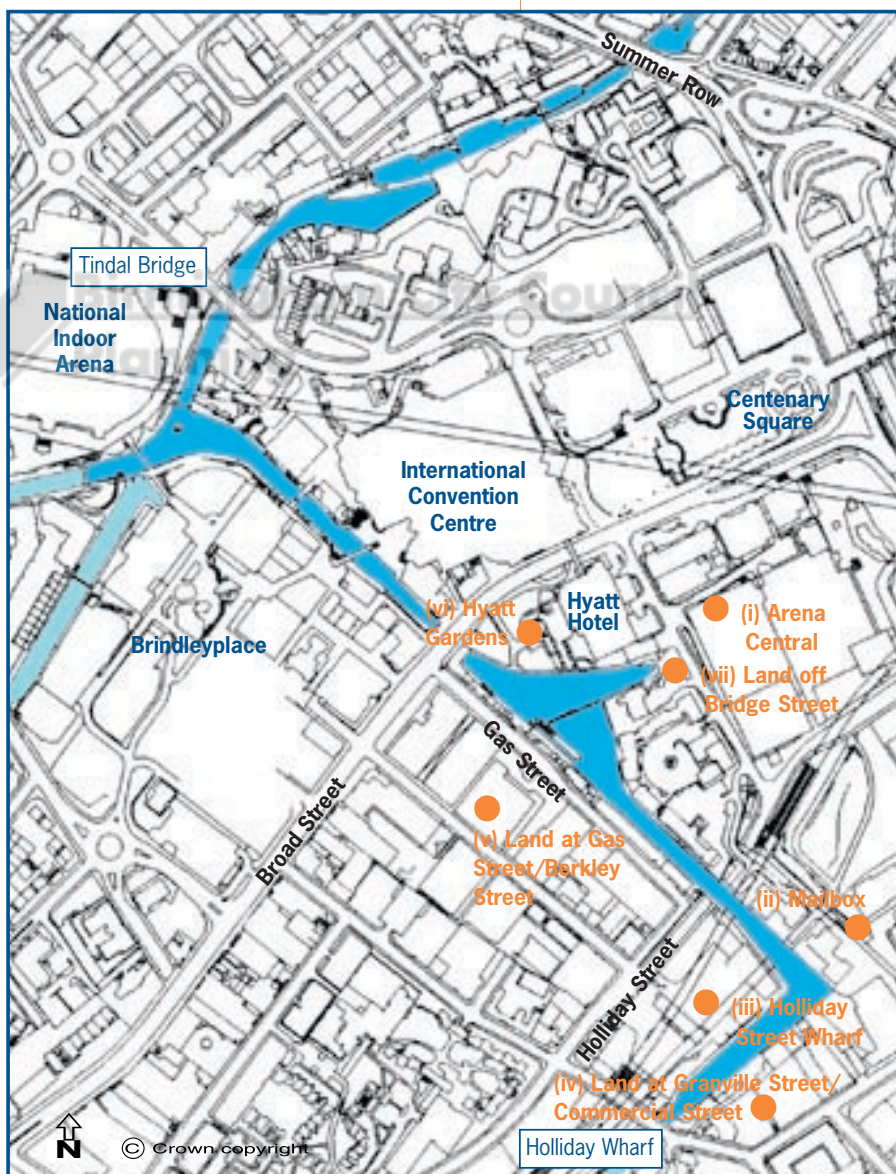
As a focus of new development, canals provide the opportunity for bustling, active waterfronts. However, by their very nature the canals also provide time for quiet contemplation and reflection. Birmingham's City Centre canal corridor offers unique opportunities for regeneration and what follows identifies specific opportunities for both exciting development and significant environmental improvements.



UB40's recording studios, Fazeley Street.

### 3 Detailed Planning and Design Guidance for the Sub-Areas

The proceeding sections have set out the objectives and context for the preparation of the Framework. The following sections provide more detailed planning and urban design guidance. For ease of presentation the study area has been broken down into distinct sub areas and the framework provides a general description of each sub area, a summary of key issues, followed by the identification of development opportunities, and the potential to introduce canal and other environmental improvements. Plan 1 on page 2 illustrates how the sub-areas have been defined.



(a) HOLLIDAY WHARF - TINDAL BRIDGE

#### (a) HOLLIDAY WHARF - TINDAL BRIDGE

The Convention Centre Quarter Planning and Urban Design Framework identified a vision for this area, building on its unique character and special role within the wider City Centre. Improving environmental quality was identified as a prime objective to be achieved through a balanced, lively mix of uses and styles which drew on the potential of the area's canals, heritage and visitor attractions.

As a result, this area has witnessed dramatic change. It has attracted new offices, residential and employment uses and has become a major entertainment and leisure centre of national and international proportions. The opening of the International Convention Centre, the National Indoor Arena, Brindleyplace and new bars, restaurants and night-clubs along Broad Street has culminated in a mixture of high quality uses active during day and night time. All have capitalised on their close proximity to the canals.

Opportunities still remain to realise the full potential of this area by capitalising on the redevelopment opportunities that remain. There is great potential to further develop a network of pedestrian

routes with additional signage and interpretation facilities to guide the public along the canal network from key nodes and vantage points, and from new development opportunities.



Principles underpinning future development in this area include:

- ◆ promoting further pedestrian access to the canal network, including access suitable for use by persons with disabilities;
- ◆ continuing to encourage a wide range of good visitor attractions;
- ◆ introducing additional mixed use schemes with a residential element;
- ◆ protecting and enhancing buildings of architectural/historical importance; and
- ◆ continuing to improve the quality of the environment in a sustainable way with street/canal enhancements, information/interpretation facilities and the creation of new focal spaces/squares.

The key development opportunities which exist in this part of the Framework area include:

#### **(i) Arena Central**

This high quality development fronting Broad Street and the Suffolk Street Queensway will provide a mixed use complex worthy of enhancing Birmingham's reputation as 'Europe's Meeting Place'. It will provide a combination of hotel, leisure, commercial and housing uses grouped around a central atrium, complementing and expanding this quarter's role as a focus for business and cultural tourism. The proposed development will have impressive landmark qualities with one of the UK's tallest buildings, creating a very strong site identity.

#### **(ii) Mailbox**

As one of the largest mixed use schemes in Europe this development, based around the Worcester & Birmingham Canal and Queensway, provides an additional focus to the Convention Quarter, canal network and commercial core. Opened in December 2000 it accommodates high quality offices, designer retail outlets, canalside restaurants and bars/cafes, leisure and hotels with luxury apartments above providing views of the canal network and the City's skyline.

Attractive and lively frontages have been created to the street and canal, and a new canal bridge creates a new pedestrian route between the Convention Centre Quarter and the City Core. This will help extend City Centre activities into the surrounding area capitalising on the site's close proximity to growing office, retail and leisure uses along Broad Street. A new public square has been created at the Queensway end of the Mailbox building. This square connects to an open-air street through the building's structure, again encouraging pedestrian flow and links between the City Centre and canal. The development reinstates an historic canal basin providing an exemplar of what can be achieved in terms of canalside development.



Arena Central

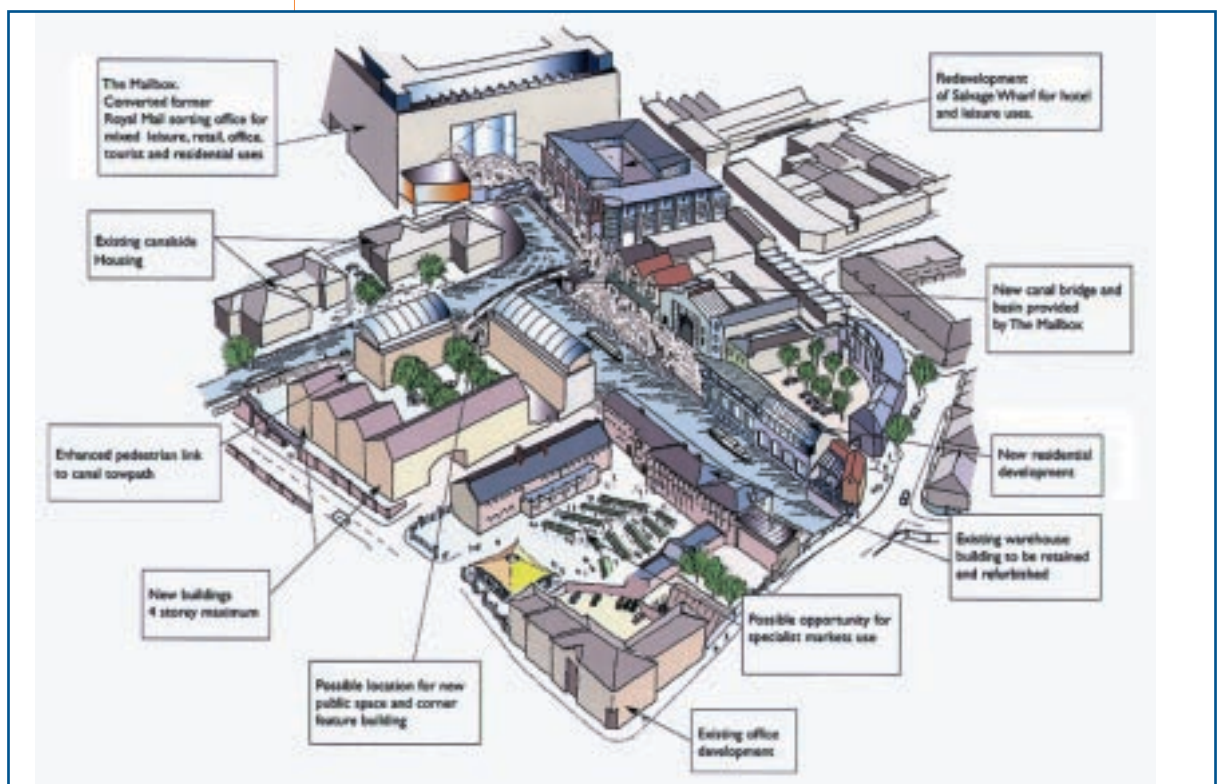


Mailbox

### (iii) Holliday Street Wharf

This is a large prime development site situated at Salvage Turn, at the bend of the Worcester & Birmingham Canal, bounded by Holliday Street and Granville Street. Much of its area is currently used for surface car parking, providing an unattractive link to the canal network. A three storey late Victorian warehouse on the site fronts the canal.

A development brief for the site has been prepared and Plan 2 shows how the site could be redeveloped. This encourages a mix of uses reflecting the canalside vernacular. Development should also improve the setting of the grade II listed aqueduct on Holliday Street. The range of potential uses include residential, tourism, leisure, hotels, offices and specialist retail together with the development of a new Registry Office. An opportunity exists for an attractive corner feature at the canal turn, possibly a public square, to link to the bridge constructed as part of the Mailbox redevelopment.



Plan 2 - Holliday Street Wharf - design principles

This site is in a key position in relation to a planned pedestrian route between the City Core and the Convention Quarter. Arriving at Holliday Street from Navigation Street and the Mailbox redevelopment, the route links to Gas Street Basin and Broad Street via the canal towpath. It then links back to the City Core via Centenary Square and Paradise Forum. It is important that access to this route and the canal continues to be provided from Granville Street and Holliday Street, with appropriate signage and interpretation facilities along Navigation Street, and Broad Street at the junctions of Granville Street, Gas Street and/or Bridge Street.

This development should open up views along Berkley Street towards Broad Street. Access should be provided from Holliday Street and improvements to the Holliday Street/Berkley Street junction should be provided as part of the redevelopment, including new pedestrian facilities.

#### **(iv) Land at Granville Street/Commercial Street**

A modern continuous block of four storey apartments has been constructed along the frontage of the canal and Granville Street/Commercial Street. Using modern building materials in keeping with the canalside character, this development will help to kick-start development on the adjacent Holliday Street Wharf site.

#### **(v) Land at Gas Street/Berkley Street**

Part of this site has been redeveloped for luxury flats (known as 'Friday Bridge'), providing further evidence of the area's potential for city living. The remainder of the site includes the Grade II\* Listed Gas Retort House which has been refurbished by the developers of 'Friday Bridge'. The Gas Retort House and adjacent buildings are suitable for a mix of uses including food and drink, retail, office and residential.

#### **(vi) Hyatt Gardens**

A new frontage development to Broad Street on land between the Hyatt Hotel and the 'Walkabout' Bar (Regency Wharf) has recently been constructed. Development:

- ◆ provides a 3 storey building on Broad Street, with active uses, eg. restaurant at ground floor level;
- ◆ retains the existing canal basin and pedestrian access to the canal towpath; and
- ◆ retains elements of the locally listed former 'Glassworks' building and boundary walls and chimney.

#### **(vii) Land off Bridge Street**

This is a key access point onto the canal towpath at Gas Street Basin. This area would benefit from an environmental improvement scheme to include interpretation material and improvements to the viewing area over the canal basin.

#### **Improvements to the Canal**

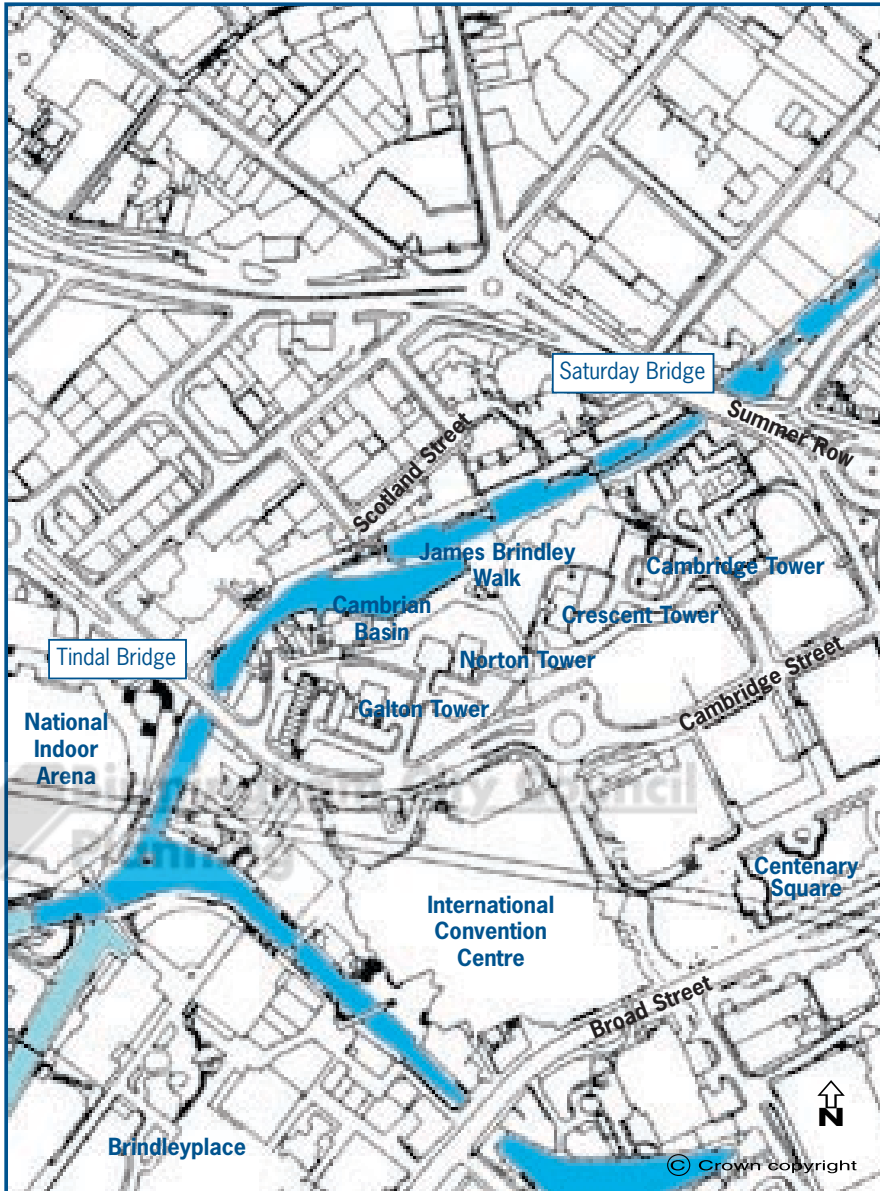
Opportunities include:

- ◆ new interpretation boards and signage e.g. at Granville Street access/ Salvage Turn and Hyatt Gardens; and
- ◆ towpath improvements through resurfacing where appropriate, widening and better access.



Working boats in Gas Street Basin  
at the turn of the century





## (b) TINDAL BRIDGE - SATURDAY BRIDGE

This area lies between the National Indoor Arena/International Convention Centre and Summer Row. Its close proximity to the redevelopments taking place in and around Brindleyplace in recent years has resulted in high quality improvements both in terms of towpath surfacing and the building of new offices and housing fronting the canal. Land to the west of this stretch of the Birmingham & Fazeley Canal is characterised by commercial, office and residential uses. James Brindley Walk runs the length of this area, on the off-side of the canal, providing a pedestrian route along Cambrian Basin and Saturday Bridge. There are, however, only limited views of the canal and the landscaping is in need of refurbishment. A feasibility study is to be undertaken to examine the James Brindley Walk and Cambrian Wharf area. This will explore:

- ◆ possible development opportunities including the potential for a public events area proposed by British Waterways;
- ◆ environmental enhancements to both James Brindley Walk and Kingston Row; and
- ◆ improved access to the canal.

## (b) TINDAL BRIDGE - SATURDAY BRIDGE



Looking towards the National Indoor Arena from James Brindley Walk

A design brief will then be prepared for the future of the area.

New development in this area has, in part, been designed to reflect the canal vernacular. A pedestrian link to the canal from Scotland Street has been provided alongside recently completed housing development, although pedestrian access could be improved by additional signage.

There is, however, a need to improve pedestrian access and signage from the wider area. The canal is somewhat hidden at various key vantage points, restricting its potential use. An opportunity exists to create a new pedestrian route between Cambridge Street and the canal. This could be developed as part of a package of measures to improve access to the canal to include additional fingerposts/signs clearly directing pedestrians and cyclists from:

- ◆ King Edwards Road/Kingston Row;
- ◆ Brindley Drive; and
- ◆ Cambridge Street.

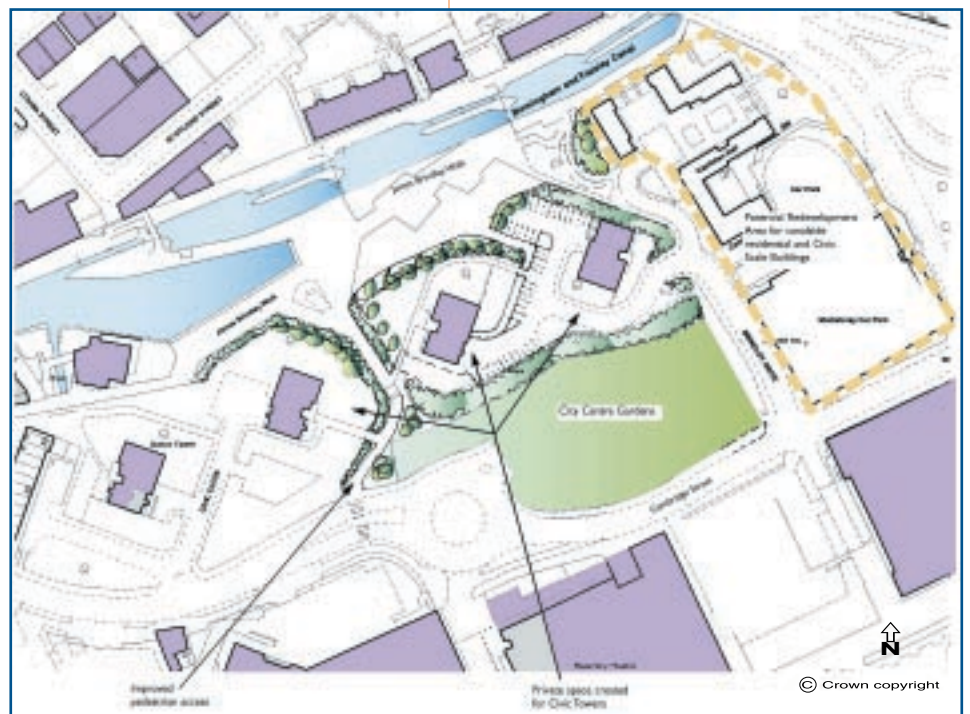
Interpretation boards and additional seating should also be provided between the National Indoor Arena/Old Turn Junction/Farmer's Bridge Locks to bring to the public's attention the importance of Birmingham's canal network historically and, in the present day, in terms of redevelopment potential alongside the water's edge. The National Cycle Network enters the City Centre Canal Corridor at Tindal Bridge (it also forms part of the Lapworth Loop). This should be highlighted using appropriate signage and interpretation boards.

Four High Rise housing blocks namely Galton Tower, Norton Tower, Crescent Tower and Cambridge Tower are clearly visible from James Brindley Walk. Plan 3 illustrates how public access could be improved and private space enhanced.

A recent planning permission for residential moorings around Cambrian Basin provides an exciting opportunity to make greater use of the Basin and the attractive environment it creates.

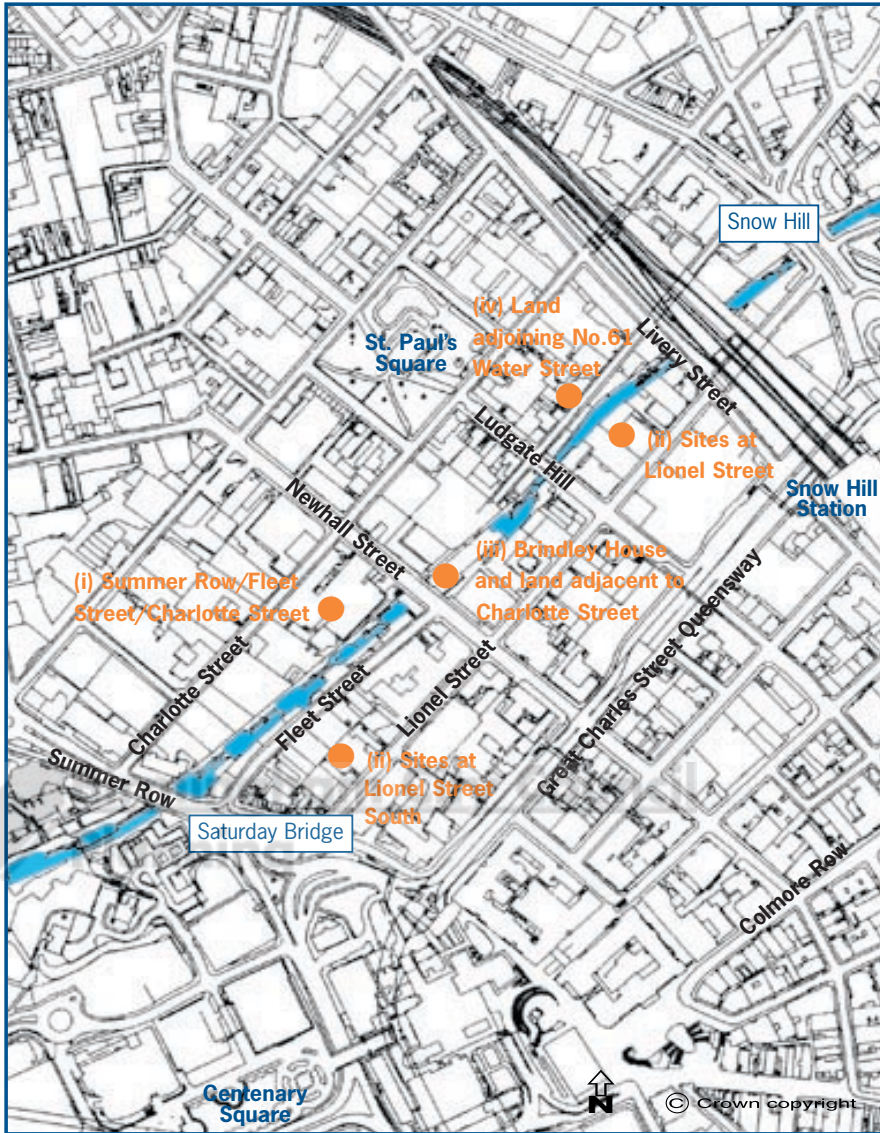


Cambrian Wharf Basin



Plan 3 - "Civic Close"





### (c) SATURDAY BRIDGE - SNOW HILL

This area lies between Summer Row and Snow Hill Railway Station. The Birmingham & Fazeley Canal runs alongside Fleet Street crossing beneath Newhall Street, Ludgate Hill and Livery Street, although pedestrian access is limited. This sub-area is in a prominent location at the boundary of the City Centre Core and the Jewellery Quarter and lies within the Jewellery Quarter Conservation Area.

There are a number of key development sites alongside this stretch of the canal which should be opened up, both to provide an appropriate frontage to the canal and link into the wider network of streets and spaces. They have the potential to deliver new development, and a mix of uses, of a similar standard to Brindleyplace. The Jewellery Quarter Urban Village Framework Plan provides a vision of a successful and thriving business and residential community set within a high quality environment of offices, bars, restaurants and facilities linked to the area's long history of the jewellery industry. This sets an important context for redevelopment in this sub area.

### (c) SATURDAY BRIDGE - SNOW HILL



Looking towards Brindley House

Development proposals within the Jewellery Quarter Conservation Area should preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area. A Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan has been adopted for the Jewellery Quarter which identifies the special interest of the area and provides a definition of its character. It provides a management plan for the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area including appropriate standards for new development and for alterations to existing buildings, including specific design guidance. The Jewellery Quarter contains a unique concentration of buildings of architectural and historic significance, many of which are statutorily listed. Following a recent survey by English Heritage, more listings are proposed.

The British Telecom tower and St Paul's Square are important landmarks, creating important reference points for the visitor.

A recent housing scheme between Charlotte Street and Fleet Street demonstrates the potential to attract new investment into this area.



There are opportunities for a greater mix of uses in this sub area, with the potential for a key canalside terrace between Summer Row and Newhall Street (see Plan 4). It is essential that new canalside development contributes positively to the canal environment.

#### (i) Summer Row/Fleet Street/Newhall Street/Charlotte Street.

This street block contains the premises of the former Birmingham Museum of Science and Industry and a number of underutilised sites and premises. It provides an exciting opportunity to deliver further mixed use development (including offices, housing and restaurant/cafes/bars), taking advantage of its canalside setting, in a way that implements the proposals of the Jewellery Quarter Urban Village Framework. A development brief has been adopted to provide planning and design guidance for the former Museum of Science and Industry. Plan 4 sets out a number of principles to guide future developments and investment within this area:

- ◆ the development of a landmark building at the corner of Fleet Street and Summer Row;
- ◆ redefining the canal and street frontage with building heights up to 8 storeys at the corner of Fleet Street and Newhall Street. This should include lively ground floor uses, particularly along Newhall Street and the canal;
- ◆ providing a new footbridge over the canal between Fleet Street and Charlotte Street which links to the canal towpath as part of the Fleet Street development; and
- ◆ enhancements to the canal.
  - The potential to re-open the Whitmore Arm of the canal to provide a focus for development.
  - Improving and creating towpath access from Charlotte Street, Newhall Street, Canning Walk and Summer Row and Fleet Street.

#### (ii) Sites at Lionel Street (North and South)

There are a number of conversion opportunities on sites fronting Lionel Street and the canal. As there are several listed buildings in this area and the sites are situated within the Conservation Area, development must be carried out in accordance with guidance in the Appraisal and Management Plan. Warehouses along this stretch of the canal are generally under-used or vacant and the area is in need of some



Plan 4 - Land at Summer Row/Fleet Street/Newhall Street/Charlotte Street - design principles



Sites at Lionel Street





#### (iv) Land adjoining No 61 Water Street

A development opportunity exists on land fronting the canal between 61 and 64 Water Street. Removal of the existing boundary wall would create a new access point on the canal towpath, providing the opportunity for active canalside development and new interpretation facilities.

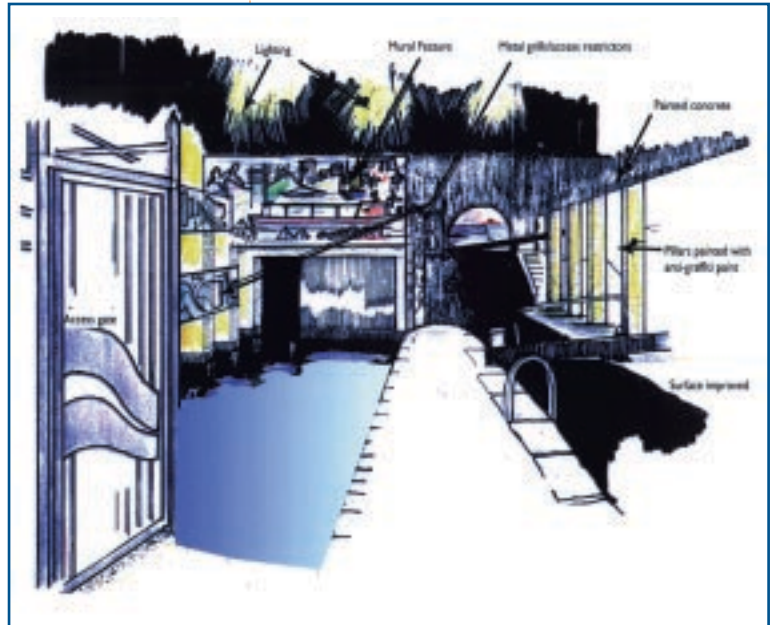
A key objective of future City Council policy is to improve pedestrian movement across Great Charles Street between the City Centre Core and the Jewellery Quarter/St Paul's Square. This is of particular importance given the planned development of the City's new coach station on land at Queensway/Ludgate Hill. Surface pedestrian crossings have been reintroduced at Newhall Street and are proposed at St. Chads. The linking of the existing road tunnels from St. Chads to Paradise Circus is proposed in the long term which will enable the reintroduction of surface pedestrian crossings at Ludgate Hill. In the interim consideration is being given to an improved pedestrian bridge link.

#### Improvements to the canal

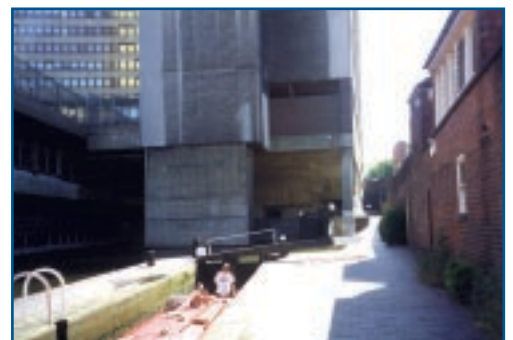
An opportunity exists to open up access to and views of stretches of the canal as appropriate, particularly where it flows beneath bridges and the Brindley House undercroft, by using creative lighting and other innovative techniques. Environmental enhancements, including new landscaping and the incorporation of public art is to be encouraged at appropriate locations.

The following improvements could be achieved at relatively little cost:

- ◆ new interpretation features, signage and new lighting;
- ◆ towpath enhancement works; and
- ◆ improved signage directing pedestrians and cyclists to the canal network at key locations. Cyclists may need to be redirected to Lionel Street due to the uneven original towpath surface.



Plan 7 - Brindley House undercroft - short term environmental improvements required.



Brindley House undercroft



View from under Livery Street bridge





#### (d) SNOW HILL TO CORPORATION STREET (Gun Quarter)

Most of this area is within the Gun Quarter. The majority of the Gun Quarter is in industrial uses and there is little evidence of redevelopment to provide modern industrial premises or conversion to different uses. A consequence of this is that the traditional street pattern (with the exception of land next to St Chads Queensway) and several buildings of individual or group merit remain.

Overall, the Gun Quarter retains its fine urban grain with many small workshops presenting an important opportunity, should existing operations cease, to introduce new uses which respect this historic street pattern and enhance the environmental quality of the area.

There are a number of significant conversion and redevelopment opportunities for mixed use activities in close proximity to the canal at:

- ◆ Old Snow Hill to the north of St. Chads Cathedral;
- ◆ Lancaster Circus on the west side of Lancaster Street; and
- ◆ North of Lancaster Circus between Newtown Row and Corporation Street.

#### (d) SNOW HILL - CORPORATION STREET



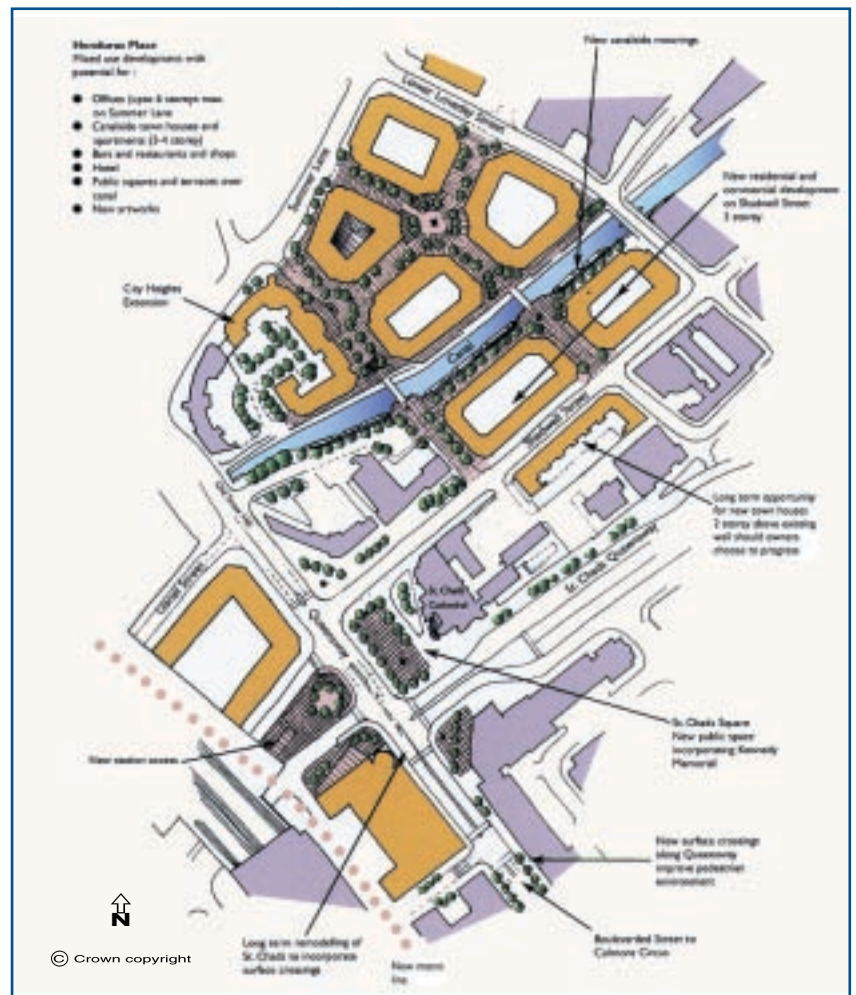
Old Snow Hill

#### (i) St Chads Circus/Old Snow Hill

Old Snow Hill and Snow Hill Queensway link the City Centre core with the Jewellery and Gun Quarters and Newtown. This area has seen recent investment and development including new housing development at William Booth Lane and Old Snow Hill/Summer Lane. The area should function as a major gateway into the City Centre Core but much conversion and redevelopment needs to be done if this potential is to be realised. At present space is dominated by St. Chads Circus, high volumes of traffic, associated signage and traffic signals, vacant land and a poorly defined street frontage. The canal is hidden and the Grade II\* listed St. Chads Cathedral is denied the setting it deserves. Pedestrian movement is difficult with a mix of subways and surface level pelican crossings.

Plan 8 shows how this space could be remodelled to fulfil its potential as a major City Centre 'gateway'. The opportunity exists to build upon recent housing investment to deliver significant mixed use development. This could be achieved by:

- ◆ remodelling St Chads roundabout;
- ◆ creating a new public space in front of St. Chads Cathedral;
- ◆ re-establishing a traditional street frontage along Snow Hill Queensway;
- ◆ securing the development of vacant land and under-utilised buildings:
  - land next to Snow Hill Station on Snow Hill Queensway. A development brief sets out guidance on how this site should be developed. A mixed use scheme will be encouraged here with suitable uses including offices, housing, leisure, small scale retailing and a hotel.
  - land at St Chad's Circus/Lionel Street. Land 'released' by the removal of St. Chad's roundabout could provide the opportunity for a larger new mixed use development here. The uses suggested above would be equally appropriate in this location;
- ◆ redevelopment opportunities. Two opportunities present themselves should existing operations cease:
  - a large mixed use 'Brindleyplace' type development on the site of the historic Honduras Wharf (Midlands Electricity Board Depot site between Summer Lane and Lower Loveday Street and the canal).
  - residential and commercial development opportunities, including the potential for live/work units in warehousing fronting Shadwell Street and the canal;
- ◆ the canal: although potentially attractive, this section of the canal is at present dull and in need of lighting and improved towpath access. The design of adjoining buildings, which largely turn their backs on the canal, and the lack of any uses which generate activity outside working hours undermine the enormous development opportunities available. In the short term a series of environmental improvement schemes could be carried out. These include the creation of a circular walk through 'off-side' walkway construction upon the development of sites between Snow Hill bridge and Corporation



Plan 8 - Midlands Electricity Board Depot and warehousing fronting Shadwell Street - design principles



Looking towards Snow Hill from Barker Bridge

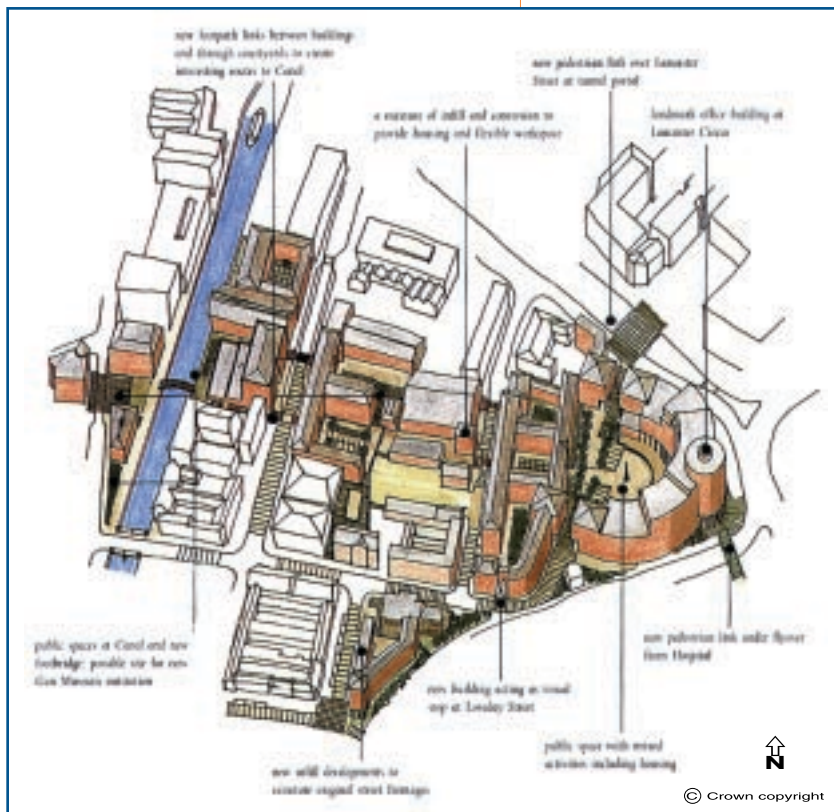


Street. Opportunities for habitat creation alongside the canal, including the introduction of aquatic plants, should be explored;

- ◆ Snow Hill bridge - the creation of a viewing area with new interpretation facilities is proposed; and
- ◆ lighting along towpath.

## (ii) Gun Quarter 'historic' Core

The remnants of Birmingham's historic gun making trade are to be found in a few premises in the area defined by the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal, Loveday Street, Queensway and Lancaster Street (A34). The focus of future policy here will need to differ from the (relatively) large scale remodelling and redevelopment proposed at Snow Hill. This dictates an approach based on supporting the existing industrial uses in the short term but encouraging a mixture of refurbishment, conversion, careful infilling and selective redevelopment where opportunities arise. The emphasis should be on incremental change so that, over time, a richer mix of uses is established. This could include new housing, a hotel, offices, flexible workshops and low key leisure uses eg. pubs, restaurants. The exception to this general policy approach can be found at sites around Lancaster Circus.



Plan 9 - Sites west of Lancaster Street - possible design solutions

## Sites around Lancaster Circus

Lancaster Circus is a key strategic location at the junction of the Ring Road and the Aston Expressway. The existence of site extensive car parks and vacant and under utilised land/property provides the opportunity to achieve a major concentration of commercial/office uses which could mirror that found at Five Ways, Edgbaston. A major development opportunity exists to create a new generator of life and activity alongside the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal.

Plans 9 and 10 show how these sites could be developed for an extensive mix of uses, including commercial/office space and residential;

- a landmark development of 6-8 storeys at Lancaster Circus;
- new frontage 'address' buildings to A34 Newtown Row/Lancaster Street and Corporation Street;
- development of between 3-4 storeys stepping up to 6 storeys at Lancaster Circus towards the City Centre;

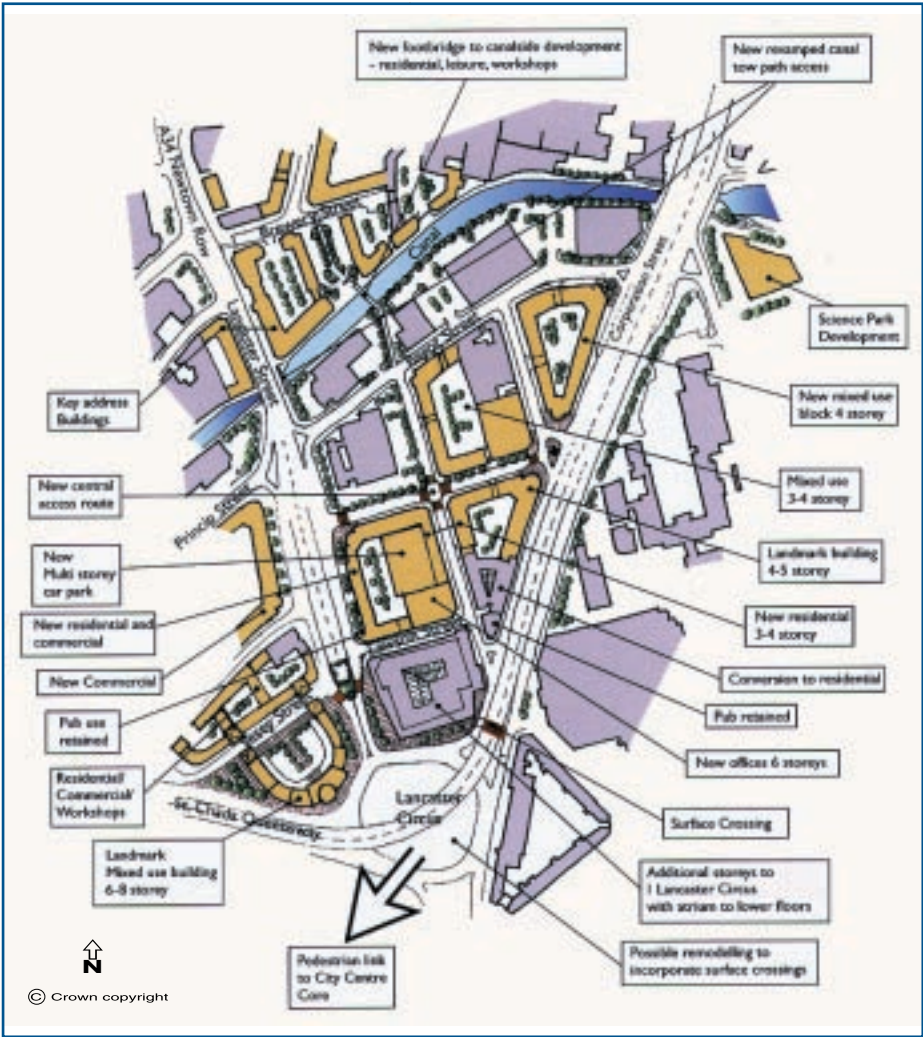


- the potential for improved access through the site between Lawson Street and Bagot Street, towards the City Centre at Lancaster Circus and between Bagot Street and Brewery Street via a new canal bridge; and
- improvements to the canal including: new ramped canal towpath access points at Newtown Row and Corporation Street, general towpath enhancement works and the remodelling of road bridges and removal of hoardings to open up views of the canal.

### Premises fronting Cliveland Street/ Stanniforth Street/Moland Street/ Princip Street

These sites allow for a number of conversion and/or redevelopment of premises fronting Cliveland Street, Stanniforth Street, Moland Street and Princip Street should existing operations cease. Any future proposals should seek to retain the pattern of 2-4 storey development with a strong building line established at back of pavement. Any infill development should follow the existing building line. The City Council will particularly encourage new housing, small scale workshops, studios or offices. Supporting facilities such as pub or restaurants would also be acceptable making use of the canalside setting:

- ♦ improving pedestrian movement: the design of St. Chads Queensway presents a formidable barrier which cuts across the historic street pattern. This has effectively severed the Gun Quarter from the City Centre core and Aston University campus. The environment created is particularly unwelcoming and acts as a major constraint to achieving a greater mix of uses in this part of the Gun Quarter. Reversing this position, in line with the changes made to the Queensway elsewhere in the City Centre, will be a major challenge for future policy; and
- ♦ the canal: the canal environment suffers from the same problems as those discussed in the previous section. The introduction of more active uses, additional lighting and repairs to the towpath would help to address these concerns. The reinstatement of the original parapet at Barker Bridge and improved access to the canal towpath at Cliveland Street, Newtown Row (A34) and Corporation Street (A38) would also be of benefit. The opportunity exists to provide additional long term mooring points along the canal as well as improved landscaping.

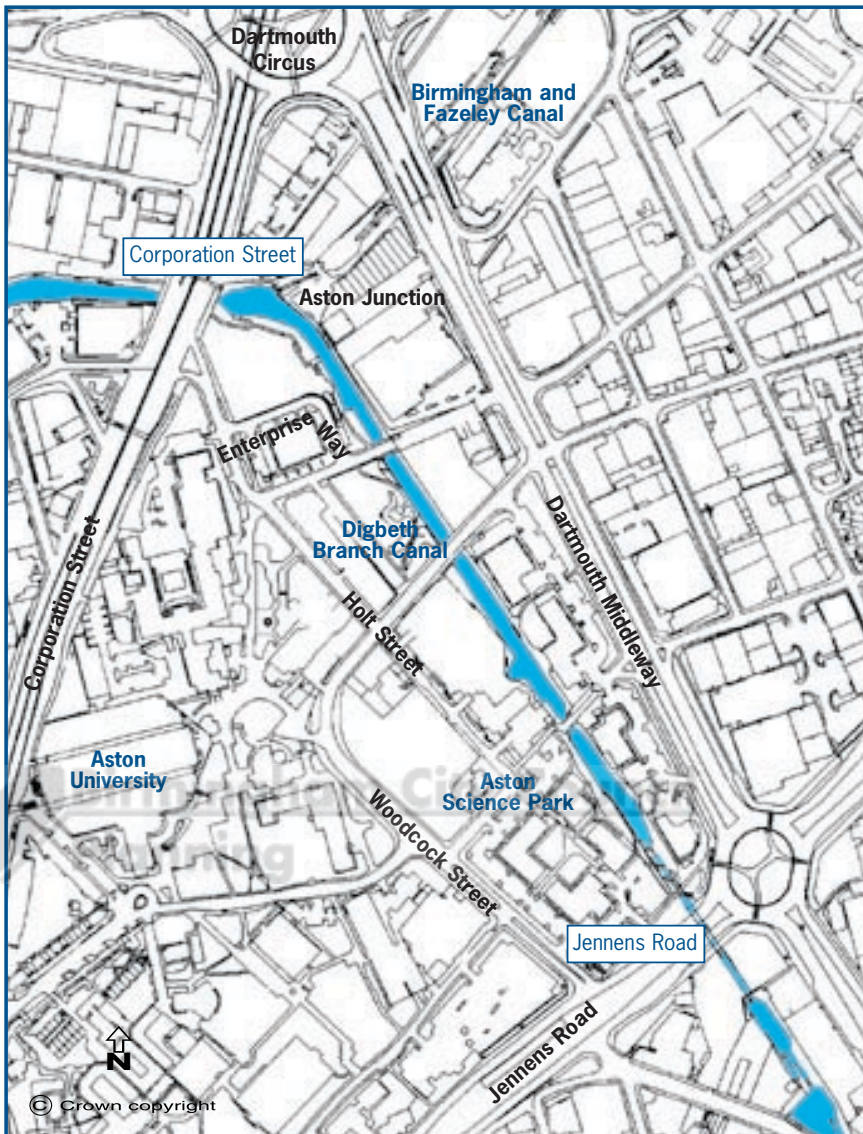


Plan 10 - Sites north of Lancaster Circus between Newtown Row and Corporation Street - possible development opportunities



Looking towards Newtown Row from Barker Bridge





(e) A38 CORPORATION STREET - TO JENNENS ROAD



Aston Science Park

### (e) A38 CORPORATION STREET TO JENNENS ROAD

At this point the canal passes through the Aston Triangle area which incorporates the Aston University campus and the Aston Science Park. The University represents one of the largest concentrations of young people in the City Centre with a resident campus population of over 2000 people and over 5,000 students undertaking studies here.

Aston Science Park provides quality business space for high-tech and research and development companies in a landscape setting. The canal has been used as a focus for the development of the Business Park with the consequential benefit that it is highly visible and accessible, from both within the Science Park and the Ring Road.

An important strand of future policy will be to facilitate the future expansion of the Science Park via the remodelling of Jennens Road and to promote lively uses which provide much needed weekend and evening activity. Opportunities include:

- ◆ land at Holt Street; and
- ◆ land bounded by Corporation Street/Enterprise Way/canal. Any development proposals should retain a canalside pedestrian route.

In the longer term, land fronting Dartmouth Circus may have potential for redevelopment, which could include the possibility of Science Park related uses should existing operations cease.

Another key strand of future policy will be to continue to maintain the high quality of the canal environment. The canal experience would be improved by additional interpretation facilities. Options include:

- Aston Junction: this marks the junction of Birmingham and Fazeley Canal and the Digbeth Branch Canal (opened in 1799);
- Ashted Lock;
- Creation of a corridor walk through new towpath construction/ additional towpath access points; and
- Improvements, including towpath access and lighting, to Corporation Street bridge.



## (f) JENNENS ROAD TO WARWICK BAR

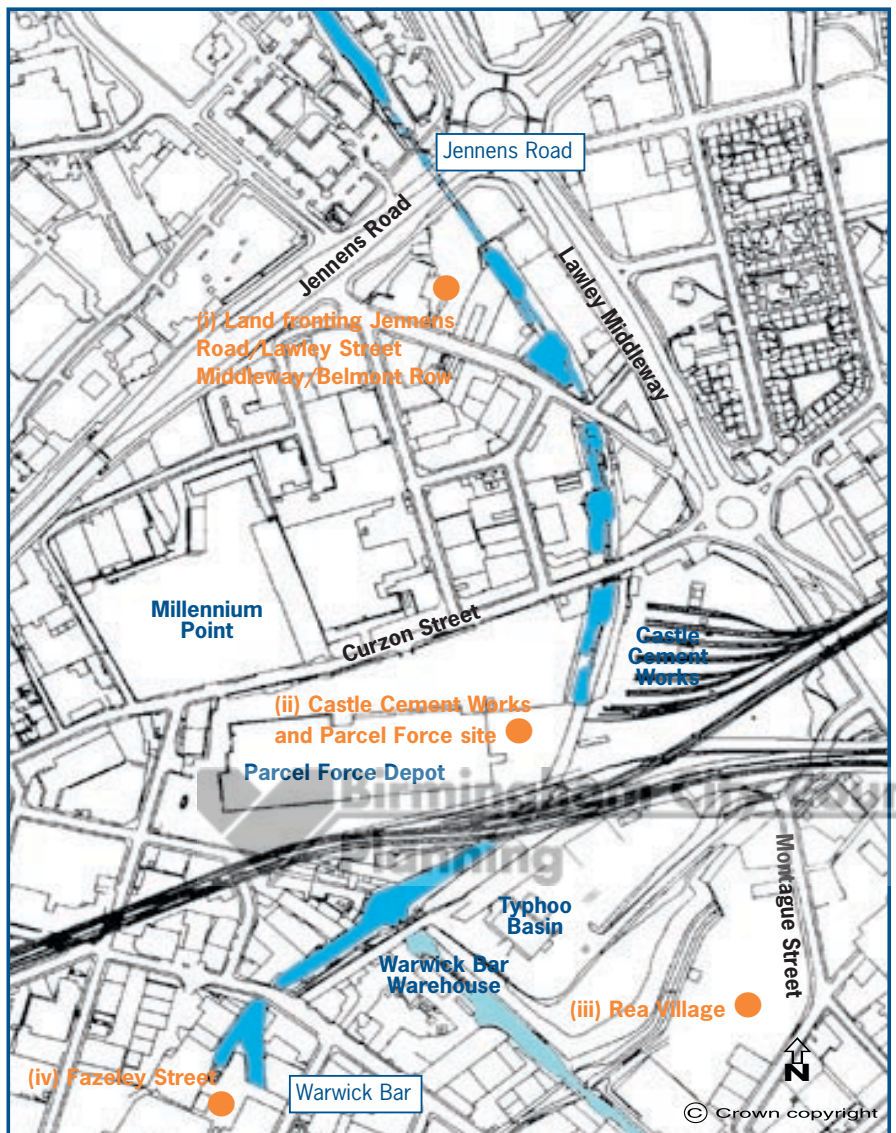
From Aston Science Park the canal passes through a section of bridges, locks and basins flanked, in part, by an architecturally interesting collection of warehouses, offices and other buildings. The entire stretch of canal between Ashted Top Lock and Typhoo Basin falls within the Warwick Bar Conservation Area.

This part of the study area has major potential for change through sensitive conversion of existing buildings, the development of vacant land and underutilised buildings, taking advantage of the canalside location and (in some areas) proximity to the Ring Road. The opportunities exist to develop strong linkages between the canal network and new development being promoted through the City Council's Eastside Regeneration Initiative based upon the three guiding principles of learning, heritage and technology. Eastside is also the location for a new City Centre Park which will complement the major visitor attraction of Millennium Point. One of the key proposals being developed by the Initiative is the establishment of a 'Learning Village', maximising the benefits of Millennium Point and linking through to Aston University and Aston Science Park. There are a number of major redevelopment opportunities which offer the opportunity to achieve this vision:

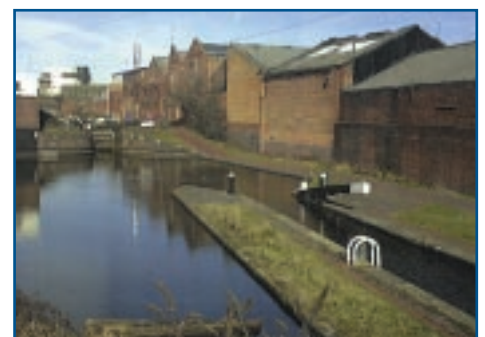
### (i) Land fronting Jennens Road/Lawley Street Middleway/ Belmont Row

The area is important historically and it includes three archaeological sites; two former glassworks and the housing of a canal pumping engine. The Co-Op Works is a locally listed Victorian three storey building at the top of Belmont Row and was originally built as a cycle works.

The area is suitable for mixed use development, possibly extending the Science Park and related activities across a downgraded and remodelled Jennens Road and along the canal. Smaller scale development is appropriate around the canal. Development opportunities making positive use of Belmont Row Basin are encouraged. Some of the incompatible uses should be relocated from the area, in particular the two

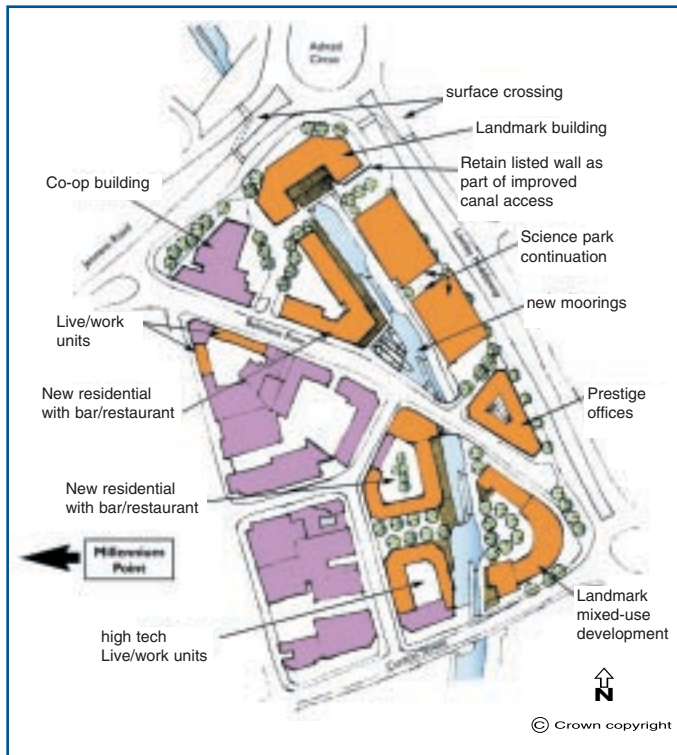


(f) JENNENS ROAD - WARWICK BAR



Ashted Flight from Belmont Row





Plan 11 - Land fronting Jennens Road/  
Lawley Middleway/Belmont Row  
- design principles.

waste transfer stations on Belmont Row backing onto the canal. The City Council will use its compulsory purchase powers where appropriate.

The vacant site on the corner of Ashted Circus should be developed as a mixed use landmark development. Plan 11 shows the Planning and Urban Design principles encouraged in this location.

## (ii) Castle Cement Works and the Parcel Force Depot

The site is split into two by the Digbeth Branch Canal. The listed Curzon Street viaduct on the site formerly carried the railway over the canal into Curzon Street Station and this can be used to walk between the Parcel Force depot and the cement works. The viaduct presents the opportunity to open up views of the canal and lock flight.

The canal at this point comprises Ashted bottom lock and is below the level of the site. It has the potential to provide an attractive setting for new development. Small scale mixed use development should be clustered around the canal. The opportunity to open up the site and front the canal should be explored to provide an attractive setting for new development.

The wider site provides the opportunity for the development of a learning village in a campus style development. This could form part of a canal village centre with local retail, bars and facilities such as a medical practice. A 'green' boulevard should be created through the site linking the proposed Civic Square around Millennium Point, the new City Centre Park, Curzon Street Station (Listed Grade I) to the canal, following the line of the former railway tracks. This presents the opportunity to create a further pedestrian link through the elevated railway viaduct to the canalside adjacent to the Gun Barrel Proof House. Given the proximity of the railway there may be scope for restoration of a rail head to serve the site. A strip of land is protected alongside the railway to enable the possible increase in track capacity serving Birmingham City Centre.

The site presents the opportunity for high quality contemporary expression. The Castle Cement part of the site warrants a landmark building helping to create a gateway into Curzon Street from the Ring Road.

Although an element of small scale specialist retailing serving local needs may be appropriate, particularly around the canal, large scale food retailing will not be permitted. The site presents a special opportunity for the regeneration of Eastside which cannot be foregone.

Curzon Street itself will act as the major route to Millennium Point from the Ring Road and the motorway network. Its environment will be improved through pedestrian priority measures, environmental improvements and planting.

This part of the Framework also provides further opportunities to achieve relatively largescale mixed use development at:

### **(iii) Rea Village**

This area lies between the Ring Road and the Grand Union and Digbeth Branch Canals and is also crossed by the River Rea. A rail viaduct carrying mainline services into Birmingham New Street abuts the site.

Much of the area is underutilised with low intensity, often bad neighbour uses which could be accommodated in a more appropriate location elsewhere in the City. Much of the area is busy and congested. Great Barr Street forms a busy through route from High Street, Deritend, to the Ring Road.

Land on Montague Street is currently split between a depot used by the City Council's Environmental Services Department and a Waste Transfer Station. The site presents a major residential development opportunity focussed on the canals and the River Rea. The residential use of the site, as an attractive urban village development, would dramatically revitalise the area. A village centre should be created with small scale retail and community facilities to meet local needs. The River Rea should be a positive feature of the development with improvements to the water quality, landscape and wildlife value. Attractive waterside frontages should also be created to the canals, most of which form part of the Warwick Bar Conservation Area. Improved access to the canals should be part of the development of the urban village including improvements to the towpath and lighting of the Curzon Street tunnel. There is a rise in levels on the site from the depot up to the waste transfer station which is likely to be as a result of previous activities on the site. Land reclamation measures are therefore likely to be required with development, subject to site investigations and the identification of replacement waste transfer sites.

### **(iv) Fazeley Street**

The area as a whole is largely industrial and the historic grid iron street pattern survives. The Warwick Bar Conservation Area focuses on the junction of the Digbeth Branch and Grand Union Canals and abuts the Digbeth, Deritend and Bordesley High Streets Conservation Area to the south. The area is therefore important both historically and archaeologically.

The area is busy and congested with on-street car parking and servicing problems for existing industry. There are several important employers in the area; however, there are also a number of vacant sites and environmentally sensitive uses (eg. car repairs, small scrapyards, cement batching) which provide opportunities for the introduction of new uses and activity as well as environmental improvements.



Indicative layout - Rea Village



Warwick Bar

There are a number of attractive buildings in the area, however some of these are empty or under-utilised and ripe for sensitive conversion to new uses. A rich mix of uses has already begun to evolve in the surrounding area: for example the Custard Factory on Gibb Street (conversion of disused factory to studios, art galleries, cafes, dance/performance spaces and shops) and the Bond on Fazeley Street (conversion of a canalside warehouse to design and media spaces and a restaurant) as well as its sister development, The Arch, on Heath Mill Lane. Similar conversions of redundant or underutilised properties will be encouraged in the area and there are particular opportunities for residential and tourist related development.

The ability to move easily and safely through the area is important. The environment of the area should be improved and consideration given to the introduction of controlled parking zones. Digbeth/High Street, Deritend/High Street, Bordesley, will be enhanced to become an attractive gateway to the area. Streetscape improvements will be required.

It will also be important to create linkages between the important attractions of the area, in particular links from the Custard Factory to the Warwick Bar Conservation Area and Typhoo Basin and then on up to the proposed City Centre Park and Millennium Point and on to the City Centre Core. The canal should act as a catalyst to help achieve these linkages.



Typhoo Basin

### **Typhoo Basin**

Typhoo Basin is focussed upon the Bordesley Canal Wharf where the Digbeth Branch Canal used to extend through to Bordesley Street. Only two truncated spurs of this once larger collection of canal basins survive to provide an attractive setting for two large factory buildings, which front onto Bordesley Street. Both are locally listed and within the Warwick Bar Conservation Area. There is the opportunity to extend the canal basins to create additional water space and to establish residential and visitor moorings in the area.

The S. Rose building is the former Typhoo Tea Factory building constructed in 1929. The premises are currently used for a clothing warehouse business and there is an adjacent surface car park for employees and customers. The buildings adjoining the canal basin are of significant scale and quality and their conversion for a range of uses is to be encouraged.

Typhoo Basin presents an excellent opportunity for an attractive residential, commercial or educational conversion taking advantage of the canal basin. There is also the opportunity for the introduction of live/work units, incorporating studios for people working in the fields of art, media and design.



Suggested conversion - Typhoo Basin  
(Glenn Howells Architects)



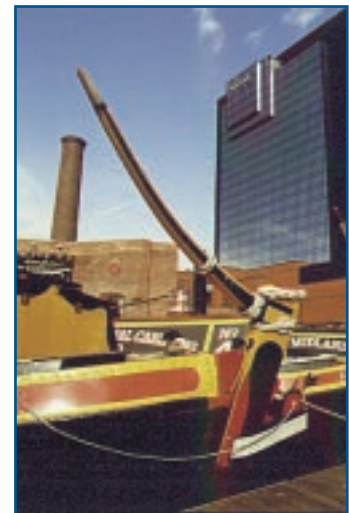
### Warwick Bar

Warwick Bar is where the Grand Union Canal and the Digbeth Branch Canal meet and is the focus of the Warwick Bar Conservation Area. The area to the south of the Grand Union Canal is largely in the ownership of British Waterways and forms an attractive collection of buildings, many of which are statutorily or locally listed. Sensitive conversion similar to the Bond warehouse, ensuring that the distinctive canalside character is retained will be encouraged. A more diverse mix of uses will be promoted including residential, office, leisure, educational, arts/media and studios and the former canal basins re-opened as appropriate. Access to and links into the wider network of canal towpaths will be promoted as will the establishment of resident and visitor moorings. A particular opportunity exists for sensitive conversion of the Warwick Bar Warehouse (Banana Warehouse) site to commercial, leisure and tourism uses. A number of canal and environmental improvements are being undertaken in the area with funds secured through the Warwick Bar Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme.

Uses in the area, in particular the scrapyard which runs parallel to the Digbeth Branch Canal blocking off access to the towpath, will need to be relocated to realise the potential of the area. The opportunity to open up the site and front the canal should be explored to provide an attractive setting for new development.

The historic Gun Barrel Proof House on the opposite bank of the Digbeth Branch Canal forms an attractive complex of red brick buildings around a cobbled yard behind an iron gated entrance. The Proof House was established in 1813 and is a focus along the canal. The potential for museum and tourist related activities should be explored.

The area around the Proof House will be a critical link between the City Centre Park and the canalside quarter. The approaches to this area, particularly the undercroft of the railway viaducts, will need to be improved by environmental enhancements and sensitive floodlighting. A strip of land is protected to provide space to accommodate increased rail infrastructure to increase capacity through Birmingham City Centre.



Gas Street Basin

## 4 Implementation

The City Council recognises that the vision set out in this Development Framework may take a number of years to be realised. We recognise that it can only be achieved through co-operation and partnership with the whole range of people and organisations who have an interest in delivering continued improvements within the City Centre. Of particular importance will be private landlords and British Waterways who will have a key role to play in securing quality development along this corridor.

In some cases it may be necessary to use public funds to help reclaim sites and carry out environmental improvements. The City Council and British Waterways will continue to explore opportunities to secure external funding eg. European Structural Funds, Heritage Lottery Funding, Advantage West Midlands etc. to meet the Framework's objectives. Where appropriate, it may also be necessary to use the City Council's compulsory purchase powers to acquire land for development.

The City Council and British Waterways will also seek to ensure that any future development improves the local environment, and provides its share of necessary infrastructure. In appropriate circumstances, a package of necessary planning obligations will be secured upon the development of sites. This may include:

- ◆ environmental and infrastructure improvements, including works to the canal (for example access, signage, paving, street furniture, landscaping and public art);
- ◆ towpath lighting; and
- ◆ canal management and maintenance measures which are of public benefit.

In addition, any other matters directly related to the proposed development such as:

- ◆ affordable housing in accordance with the City Council's affordable housing policy;
- ◆ traffic management measures; and
- ◆ improved public transport.

It is likely that the larger redevelopment sites identified in the document will be developed in separate phases. Should this happen, individual proposals will need to support the wider development and urban design objectives set out in this Framework. Proposals which do not achieve this will be refused planning permission.



Birmingham's canals are owned and operated by British Waterways. Development involving works to, or over, the canal or access to it may require permission from British Waterways and/or a sum payable to British Waterways. This will enable British Waterways to work positively with developers to facilitate benefits for the canal environment in terms of management and the provision of canal related infrastructure.



## 5 Limitation of Liability

The information contained in this Development Framework is, to the best of the City Council's knowledge, correct at the time of writing. The City Council advises developers that it is their responsibility to check site conditions, availability of services etc, prior to entering into any negotiations.

Any views expressed by the Local Planning Authority are those which represent current policies at the time and may be varied by the Local Planning Authority as a result of the reassessment of appropriate planning policies for the area at any time.

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## 7 Appendix

### PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

The land-use policy context for the preparation of this Development Framework is provided by:

- ◆ Statements of national planning policy, particularly Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG): PPG1 'General Policy and Principles, PPG9 'Nature Conservation', PPG15 'Planning and the Historic Environment', PPG16 'Archaeology and Planning', and Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands (RPG11).
- ◆ The Birmingham Plan - this is the City's Unitary Development Plan, adopted in July 1993. An updated Plan (the Deposit Draft) was approved as a basis for public consultation in 2001.
- ◆ Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) prepared by Birmingham City Council:
  - Eastside Development Framework, adopted June 2001.
  - Digbeth Millennium Quarter Framework, adopted November 1996.
  - Gun Quarter Planning and Urban Design Framework (Draft), approved July 1993.
  - Canalside Development in Birmingham, draft approved March 1997.
  - 'Regeneration through Conservation', Birmingham's Conservation Strategy, March 1999.
  - Convention Centre Quarter Planning and Urban Design Framework, adopted September 1994.
  - Jewellery Quarter Urban Village Framework Plan, adopted November 1999.
  - Jewellery Quarter Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, January 2002.
  - Nature Conservation Strategy for Birmingham, adopted November 1996.
- ◆ British Waterway Board's Design Manuals.

The importance of the canal to Birmingham's early industrial development is reflected in the designation of areas of archaeological importance in the following areas:

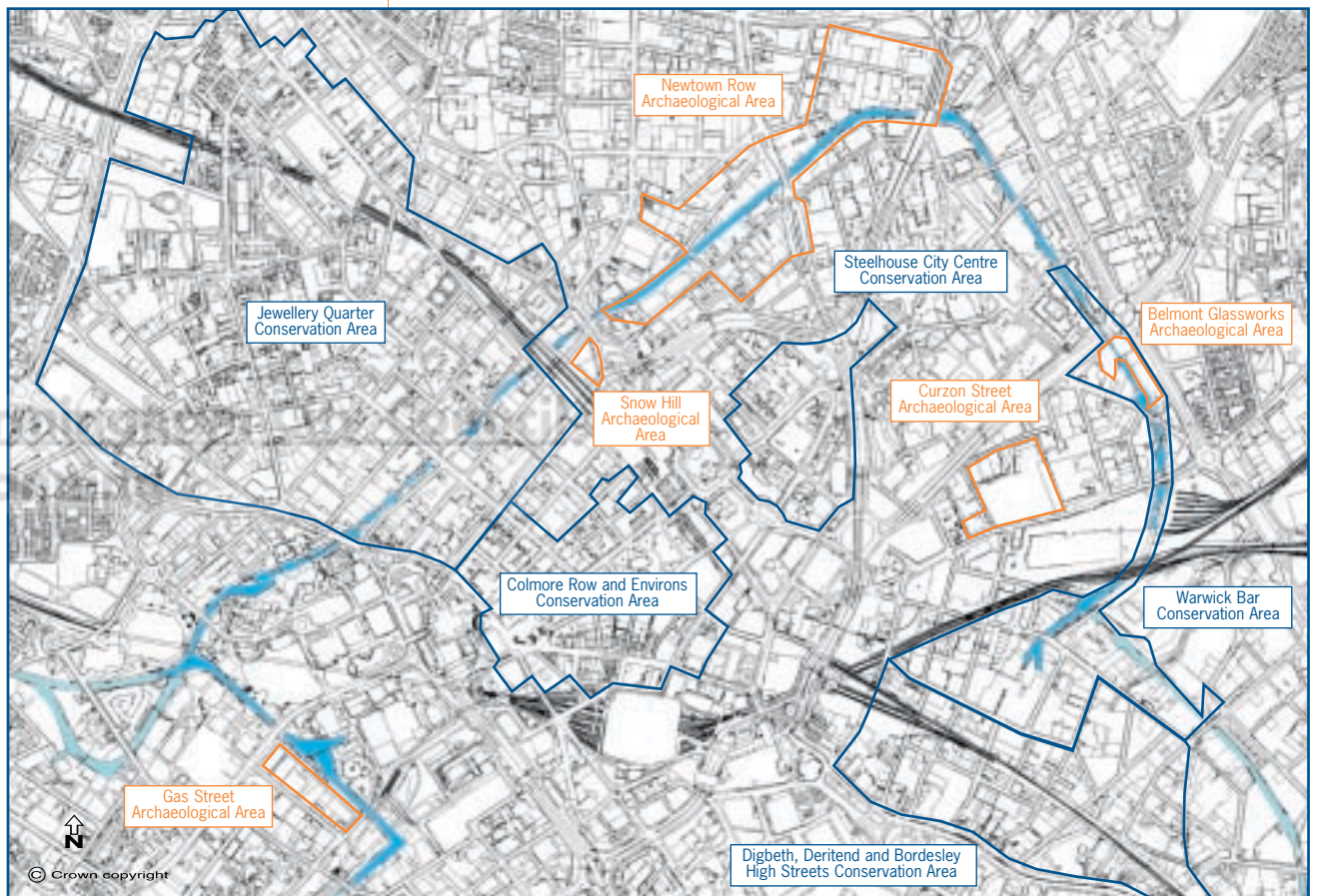
- ◆ Gas Street
- ◆ Snow Hill
- ◆ Newtown Row
- ◆ Belmont Glassworks/Digbeth Branch Canal
- ◆ Curzon Street



Notes



Plan 13 shows those parts of the study area covered by these policies.



Plan 13 - Areas of Archaeological importance and Conservation Areas

HOLLIDAY WHARF TO WARWICK BAR

# City Centre Canal Corridor

DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK