

The railway girder bridge is a distinctive element on this stretch, whilst the abutments left by the former rail line to Rugby tell us something of the past infrastructure that served the town.



FORMER CROSSINGS BY CLAPHAM TERRACE SCHOOL

South of the canal a Malthouse sat between the former railway crossing and Clapham Terrace bridge facing the waterside. To the east of the bridge a pocket of land was subsequently developed as an enclave of two storey terraced housing; Clapham Terrace and Clapham Street and an inlet basin with wharves was introduced which remained until late 20c when St Mary’s Road was extended with a new bridge to serve industrial development on what was allotment land and Sydenham farm further east. St Mary’s bridge is a more modern structure and the leftover space on the southern side is perhaps an opportunity for enhancement.



CLAPHAM TERRACE SOUTH OF CANAL

The proposed canal corridor conservation area should encompass this area and the residential enclave, Clapham Street and its communal green. This area is likely to respond to the uplift in value and it would be possible to explore whether a re-introduction of water space, to compensate for the missing basin, should be part of the change

The pattern of use on the south side has substantially changed. The land between the railway and Sydenham drive was infilled with industrial sheds. This area is currently in a state of change as the industrial sheds give way to new residential. The demand for housing has outstripped that of employment use, and there is a potential for further change in the medium term, bringing with it the need to address the new residents relationship with the waterway as an attractive edge. A creative approach to development here; particularly a better relationship with the canal would be beneficial.

The canal provides a greener, quieter route through town and has the potential to link open spaces on both sides. Eagle Recreation Ground; purchased as a People’s Park by Leamington Corporation in 1900, would benefit from an improved relationship with the canal and there is scope for a waterside link under the railway embankment to land to the East.



There is an intimate canal side garden and barbecue space on the offside at Clapham Street. It sits opposite the playspace on Rushmore Street which includes a seating area facing south overlooking the canal.

The whole southern bank from here through to Sydenham Drive has established tree cover acting as a wildlife corridor, which presumably will be retained in the scheme for residential redevelopment currently underway.



To the north of the canal up to the Radford Road the land is predominantly residential. The Map regression starting with the OS first edition shows development already established around St Mary’s Church.



Looking south to canal over Warneford Hospital site

The cottage hospital and Warneford hospital had been built on the site of the former poor law institution, but this has now been redeveloped as housing. A gateway access from the canal towpath links to a green space. Traditionally this site was well planted and new suitable planting could add to biodiversity along the fine brick boundary to the school.



Listed structures set the tone of the area north of the canal. By the second edition Clapham Terrace school is built and the militia have gone from Clapham Square to Budbrooke. The avenue of trees stretching from Radford Road to the canal is thus curtailed and becomes hidden behind terraced houses on west side of Clapham Terrace



1838 PLAN FOR WILLES BY J G JACKSON

The other avenue; St Mary’s Road, set out on Willes’s land south from his Newbold Comyn house on the north side of the river towards Whitnash church, is populated by larger houses. Rushmore Street, Chesham Street and the first established street; Waterloo Street, have smaller dwellings and therefore a finer grain. This contrasts particularly with Eastnor Grove a series of much larger villa dwellings in substantial plots, whose boundaries reach the canal, but deliberately had no connection with it.



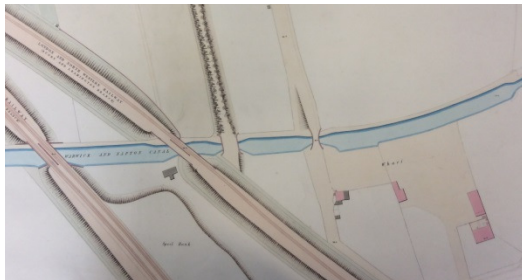
The prevalent roofing materials are slate, with some use of concrete tiles as a cheaper replacement. So far there is a small take-up of PV. The smaller houses are walled in brick, some painted and use of stucco. This is predominantly on the frontage elevations to St Mary's Crescent and St Mary's Road and those fronting the eastern side Chesham Street. Apart from the stoned up towpath surface most of the floorscape is tarmac.



The Experience of moving along the canal corridor is essentially linear, with longer views being to bridge crossings and out between canal side dwellings or the enclosing trees, although generally the focus is on the canal and activity along it. Land either side is flat with the railway embankments and arches therefore quite dominant.



CLAPHAM TERRACE BRIDGE 38



The canal by contrast acted as a linking element which complemented the turnpike route from Warwick and directly served numerous wharfs that have since been lost, as the activity on the water changed

to leisure purposes. The canal in use for moving heavy goods by foundries like Flavels , timber, stone, coal and gasworks traffic would have had a different character to today, but the essential integrity of it as a historic structure remains. It is the uses that continue to evolve, including as a long distance walk and cycle path, as well as a waterway link to London. Evidence of the value to the local community is seen in the local groups who have adopted it and who help maintain its appearance; litter picking, planting and the like.



Use of the canal after dark introduces elements that could change the character. Some low-level lighting preferably of the face of buildings could be introduced to offset feelings of insecurity amongst some users, however care must be taken not to over illuminate as this has a deleterious effect on bats using the corridor as a route. Equally though the sparkle of individual lights dancing on the surface of even relatively still dark canal water can be part of the intrinsic charm as anyone who has been to Venice or Amsterdam will attest. Increasing activity is a key element in safety, so developing the connections and improving accessibility both physically and through greater awareness of the length as part of daily journey to work or school.



Access points to the towpath are limited to Clapham Terrace and Sydenham Drive on the south side. Some streets on the northside were cut off during General Improvement Area works towards the end of the last century and these might be revisited.



There is a lack of active edge apart from Rushmore Terrace in the lee of St Mary's roadbridge.

This length is not secluded, but apart from St Marys and Sydenham Road bridges, traffic noise is mainly from the Chiltern line trains.

