
LEEDS & LIVERPOOL CANAL CORRIDOR STUDY

SEFTON BOROUGH BRIEF

This brief is in response to an invitation by the North West Regional Development Agency and British Waterway's, Leeds & Liverpool Waterway to prepare two related corridor studies for the Leeds & Liverpool canal as it passes through the two counties of East and West Lancashire. Specifically this brief relates to issues to be addressed throughout the Sefton Borough, and has largely been collated in consultation with Neighbourhood Action Groups.

Aims

- To prepare a vision and strategy for the regeneration of the Leeds & Liverpool canal that is shared by the respective clients, potential partners, stakeholders and the local community. Particular emphasis will be placed on sustainable regeneration, development and management coupled with targeted and achievable actions and recommendations.
- To re-define the Leeds & Liverpool canal as destination, enhance it's status as an important recreational attraction and as a focus for re-investment, employment and recreation, with the canal as the district's foremost resource.
- To enhance and improve links with local communities, identifying a cohesive programme of improvements, to increase use and ownership for local leisure, recreation and regeneration.

Local Objectives

- Safe, accessible and feasible moorings and marina developments, to encourage additional community use and ownership.
- Access improvements from urban and rural locations, including exclusion of motorcycles where appropriate.
- Protection, conservation and development of sensitive ecological balance, including community input into long-term maintenance issues.
- Development or identification of appropriate sites to encourage canalside business.
- Identification of 'safe routes' to schools, town centres, recreation and leisure amenities, using, where appropriate the canal towpath, incorporating proposals for lighting, seating and enhancement.
- Expansion of leisure, tourism and recreation amenities surrounding the canal.

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- Enhancement of canal corridor, including opening views and vistas.

Key Objectives

- Create a context for waterside development and regeneration
- Identify the full development potential of the waterspace and land-use along the canal and demonstrate how this can be fully integrated with the wider corridor
- Address relevant aspects of social exclusion
- Re-engage the community with the Leeds & Liverpool canal
- Capitalise on the canal as a linear recreational resource by identifying a co-ordinated range of environmental and recreational improvements
- Identify opportunities to improve access and connections between the canal and the surrounding area
- Identify strategies and schemes for encouraging tourism
- Conserve and enhance the heritage, environment and bio-diversity of the Leeds & Liverpool
- Embrace recommendations arising from public participation days
- Inform Draft Consultation of Structure Plan revisions 2001/02 for East Lancashire
- Identify partnership and external funding opportunities
- Produce design and development guidelines at strategic and site specific levels

Study Area

Bridge 9 (Handcocks Swing Bridge), Wango Lane, to terminus of Leeds and Liverpool Canal.

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Scope of Corridor Study

The proposed corridor study reports will be formatted at three levels:

1. **Summary Document/Executive Summary** as the 'selling' document (may include case study examples)
2. **Action Plan** – Core report containing strategic recommendations and actions with site specific case studies – related to potential funding opportunities
3. **Design and Development guidelines**

Proposed report structures

1. **Summary Document/Executive Summary** – for wider circulation and to act as selling document with the widest target audience pitched between partner organisations, funding agencies and the local community. Essentially follows format of core report.
2. **Action Plan** – the 'core' report will be structured in the following way (specific outputs are set out in greater detail as attached):

– Introduction

Part I – Survey/Data collation

- Leeds & Liverpool canal - the current scene – historical context, demographic trends, regeneration initiatives, land-use & ownership
- Regional/sub-regional planning guidance and regeneration – programmes, directions and initiatives
- Local planning policy context – strategic and local, statutory and non statutory designations
- Resource overview – analysis of the corridor as a resource
 - Canal corridor – landscape, townscape, river environment, rural and urban character - land-use/ownership(sectional identities)
 - Transport, leisure, recreation, access and tourism
 - Heritage & Bio-diversity
 - Management and operational issues

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NB: Staged input to and feedback from any public participation events

Part II – Report Production - Recommendations and proposals

- Emergent themes and strategic vision
 - Strategic actions and target area proposals (Action Plan - tabulated to include partnership and external funding opportunities, economic benefit analysis)
 - Case studies (* may form part of executive summary)
 - Next steps – the future
1. **Development and Design guidelines** (* Could form basis of SPG to Local Plans)
- Strategic development summary to show the 'wider picture' and best practice design and planning framework
 - Waterside design guidance to include:
 - principles for creating successful, active and attractive mixed use waterfront
 - principles for waterside industrial and residential development
 - principles for safe waterside environments (crime prevention and waterside health & safety)
 - boundary and waterside edge treatments
 - waterways - access for all
 - successful design of waterside public open space
 - designing for waterside bio-diversity
 - public art

Timescale

Preparation of the two studies is anticipated in two staggered but overlapping programmes.

- Eastern section - commence October 2001. It is anticipated that the draft report would be available at the end of May 2002
- Western section - commence initial desk top study October 2001, Survey and Analysis in second week of January 2002. It is anticipated that the draft report would be available by the end of June 2002

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Target Audience

The study will be aimed at potential partner organisations, statutory authorities such as the Environment Agency and potential external funding bodies.

Draft Report

A draft report will be agreed by the partners prior to final production.

Public Participation

Studies to include element of public participation largely through established user group forums. Nature and content to be agreed with Waterway along with provisional dates.

NB In line with National Government and BW Corporate Policy access to rural sections may be limited. This may delay the provisional programme for the survey work.

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All reports will be well presented in colour at A3 size, although capable of being reduced to A4, including maps, plans, photographs and sketches as appropriate. One colour copy of the draft report and two copies of the final report will be provided to the funding partners prior to final production of the report. Further copies will be available at their reprographic cost.

Summary Document/Executive Summary

Intended as the 'vision' document aimed at a wider target audience to include the client body, developers, partner organisations, funding agencies and the local community. It will support the 'core' action plan but be more visually appealing. The format will largely follow that of the core report but will comprise: the key issues, summary analysis, emergent themes and strategic vision, main actions, key case studies and next steps.

Action Plan – Core Report

The report will include the following sections:

Introduction

Purpose of Strategy

Study Area – Location plans

Study Approach

Future Use and Status of the Report

Informs complementary investment and external funding strategies including designation of regeneration priority areas:

- Translates into policies and proposals as part of future local plan review process;
- Guides BW's future investment and business strategies
- Suggests delivery mechanisms for implementation

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Part I – Survey/Data Collation

East/West Lancashire – Leeds & Liverpool – The Current Scene

Economic, Social & Demographic Profile of two counties (including Health Improvement Zones & Sport Action Zones)

Recent and Current Development Activity and Improvement

Key Factors Influencing the regeneration of regions

Historical Development of the Waterway

Recent History

- Waterway Classification and Regional Context

Regional and Sub-Regional Planning Guidance, Regeneration Programmes, Directions & Initiatives

Review of Regional Planning Guidance, other regional strategies and action plans such as tourism, culture, sport and health. Existing and new regeneration programmes and initiatives including RDA's strategies and action plans. This section to also include brief overview of relevant National Planning Policy Guidance and DETR publications.

Specific section on proposals for East Lancashire Regional Park

Local Planning Policy Framework

Review of Local Plans, LEAP's, relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance including any development briefs, etc, relevant policy documents and strategies produced by other partner organisations and key statutory bodies.).

Resource Review

Analysis of the corridor as a resource:

Canal corridor – landscape, townscape, river environment, rural and urban character (sectional identities)

- Character
- Land ownership
- Land Use
- Land classification eg derelict sites, agricultural grading, contaminated sites, landfill sites, unstable land

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Transport, leisure, recreation, access and tourism

- Transport Links
- Public access to the waterway
- Cycling
- Access for All
- Linkages to other Leisure Attractions and Recreation Facilities
- Perception of Crime on the Waterway

Heritage & Bio-diversity

- Statutory – Non statutory designations
- Assessment of significance

Waterway management and operational issues

- waterway infrastructure and facilities
 - dredging issues
 - water safety issues including water quality
 - flood defence issues/washland
 - towing path maintenance and vegetation management issues
 - signs and notices
 - water Quality
 - use of Navigation:
 - existing Boating Services and Facilities
- Scoping of key development sites – initial feasibility

Data interpolated following analysis of canal corridor to provide overview to include:

Character Area

Positive Elements

Negative Elements

Quality of Open Space

Recreational Uses

Main Linkages

- Opportunities

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To be presented/summarised in a series of Strategic Overview Plans.

Part II – Report Production – Recommendations and Proposals

Main Themes and Strategic Vision

Likely themes to include:

Waterside Development

Sport & Recreation

Waterspace Activity – freight, leisure & recreation

Access & Linkages

- Environmental Improvements

Strategic Actions and Target Area Proposals (Action Plan)

Brief analysis accompanied by a series of Strategic Overview Plans linked to table comprising strategic waterway wide actions, site specific actions, priority list and thematic delivery mechanisms, partnership funding opportunities. To include:

Schedule of Potential Development and Regeneration Sites (to include social, economic and environmental benefit analysis)

Schedule of Environmental Improvements

- Area wide Improvement Areas
- Boundary Improvements
- Towing Path and Access Improvements to create and improve access to waterway
- Habitat enhancement & creation
- Schedule of water related recreation opportunities

Case Studies

- Several case studies will be prepared to illustrate the scope and potential for development and improvement within the study area. The ideas contained in the case studies could be applied to other sites or issues within the study area
- Next Steps – The Future

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About WCR

The Waterway Conservation and Regeneration Group (WCR) is British Waterway's in-house design, planning and environmental practice¹. WCR are a consultancy that is unique in this country.

The group has recently been re-organised to create a multi-disciplinary consultancy that integrates the professional services of: planning, landscape architecture, architecture, heritage, ecology and water quality. The Group also has direct access within British Waterways to the related professions of engineering, commercial and estate management. This close internal liaison and a common understanding of the issues is of value to the client and is a cost effective way of working. External clients also commission WCR. More frequently this is through partnership with other agencies and bodies.

WCR specialises in all aspects of waterway focussed environmental evaluation, design and planning and has an unrivalled portfolio of corridor studies comparable to the proposed Tees Valley study. These specialist skills and knowledge of inland waterways are implicit to Group's comprehensive service. Studies have been undertaken across Britain's inland waterways in a diverse range of environments and have been fundamental in attracting investment, income and jobs to the waterway corridor.

Unique Approach

WCR has developed its proficiency in delivering corridor studies and linear development plans based on an approach that assesses site specific issues in a strategic and integrated way. (An explanation of the corridor study approach follows) Local data is evaluated in the context of the wider, regional or national picture. British Waterways collates and can readily access this specialist data. This helps to create recommendations and guidance that is locally and nationally relevant.

This helps to inform best practice guidelines in addition to determining the viability of development or the relative merit and priority of schemes particularly in applications for external funding. This methodology is unique to British Waterways.

Nature of the Corridor Study Commission

The brief for the Leeds & Liverpool East and West Lancs corridor studies sets out the broad vision and illustrates the wide range of constraints and opportunities that should be addressed supported by an effective strategy comprising realisable recommendations.

¹ Until March 2001 known as Waterway Environment Services

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Any strategy to regenerate the Leeds & Liverpool canal requires consultants with a proven ability in successfully resolving complex and often conflicting issues within a waterway context. The ability to communicate effectively from an informed position is also vital. WCR has already demonstrated these prerequisites in the preliminary stages of the proposal.

Value for Money

The price of the study represents value for money and reflects the significant geographical extent and wide ranging areas of research that will have to be undertaken to develop a comprehensive strategy for the regeneration of the canal over such a wide area.

The project brief defines the aims and objectives for the commission. A programme of work incorporating key dates and an outline cost breakdown accompanies the brief. Delivery of the study will be carefully co-ordinated and managed by WCR. The rates for WCR's professional services are considered competitive with those elsewhere in the market place.

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The Corridor Study Approach

There is a growing national awareness of the added value and commercial betterment of waterside regeneration. However, in British Waterways' experience, the key to creating attractive, active, safe and sustainable waterfront regeneration, is to maximise the use of under-utilised waterways (including waterbodies) as well as maximising the use of existing brownfield sites, under-utilised land and buildings and promoting waterside development sites as priorities.

Historically, waterways have often formed a barrier between areas. However, over the last ten years, in order to exploit the potential of waterways as 'spaces' and the benefits that can be derived from the waterway environment, British Waterways has adopted the **corridor wide approach**. That is, looking at the waterway not as an edge, a barrier divorcing development on either side of the waterway or as a setting to development but as an important integral and functional space for transport, recreational and commercial uses that needs to be linked to the wider area. The success of this approach is that waterways can successfully form the focus for economic and environmental regeneration initiatives in urban and rural areas, exploiting waterside setting and commercial added value which contributes significantly to the vitality of these areas as well as acting as an important local amenity. Recent comprehensive area regeneration projects have demonstrated how to successfully integrate waterways that were previously divorced from the town.

British Waterways has pioneered the **waterspace strategy concept** aimed at informing developers and their design teams:

of British Waterways' aspirations for the future use of the waterspace;

of the range of uses (eg different types of moorings, trip boats, trade boats, water buses/taxis, waterborne freight, as well as recreational uses such as rowing, canoeing and angling, etc) that any particular waterspace can support and to identify the land based implications of such uses;

to ensure the 'added value' of the waterspace is fully explored - that it is not just a visual backdrop to the surrounding development but becomes a leisure resource and facility in its own right;

to encourage the view that waterside development should be designed to incorporate the towing path and the waterspace itself as integral parts of the scheme so as to ensure life and vitality to the waterspace and surrounding public spaces

to discourage infilling of the waterspace to create land for development eg Isle of Dogs, London Docklands;

- to identify opportunities that can be taken by others or in partnership with British Waterways.

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Furthermore, the majority of buildings and sites within waterway corridors/visual envelopes are not within British Waterways' ownership. British Waterways is aware that it is the action of other landowners within waterway corridors as much as British Waterways that will damage or sustain the quality of the historic waterway fabric and environment. Therefore, British Waterways' approach to strategic planning, sustainable development and management of its waterways is to adopt a corridor wide and partnership approach. These two approaches are an integral part of the corridor study concept developed by British Waterways. The corridor study is a vehicle devised as a means of examining and reconciling the competing waterway and waterside interests of:

tourism, recreation and commercial development

use of waterway for recreation and freight

historic, landscape and nature conservation, biodiversity and water quality

protection of existing and potential wharfage sites

- engineering and management.

These studies involve the assimilation of the varying policies and strategies of many partner organisations and stakeholders.

This methodology is the basis upon which all corridor studies are prepared.

The aim of a corridor study is to develop a strategy that protects the waterway as a resource and its environment from inappropriate development, as well as unlocks the potential and encourages the utilisation of the waterway. This is achieved by providing a vision for the future regeneration, development and management of the waterway corridors that can be:

fed into various investment and external funding strategies including designation of regeneration priority areas;

translated into policies and proposals as part of future development plan preparation or review process;

considered for adoption by the local planning authority as supplementary planning guidance;

- guide future strategies and plans prepared by the partner organisations and guide future management and maintenance regimes, priorities and programmes.

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The contents of corridor studies includes:

identification of development sites and regeneration opportunities including scope for designating the waterway corridor as an 'Action Area' within the development plan;

opportunities for environmental improvements, to develop water-related recreation and amenity use and to promote and accommodate sustainable modes of transport

production of design and development guidelines to foster a coherent approach to development and improvement within the visual envelope of the waterway;

- production of strategic and site specific action plans identifying delivery mechanisms, potential partners and sources of funding.

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Key Outputs

The corridor studies produced to date have generated different outputs including:

Successfully used as key documents to attract SRB and European funding and landfill tax. eg Lincoln's Waterways Corridor Study, London's Waterways – A Strategic Vision, Rugby Corridor Study, Ripon Canal Strategy, Selby Canal Corridor Study, etc

Series of improvement schemes such as towing path improvements, access creation and improvement, boundary improvements, habitat creation and improvements etc being implemented

A number of the design and development guidelines sections incorporated within the corridor studies have been adopted in part or being currently considered for adoption as supplementary planning guidance. Eg Coventry Canal Corridor Study

Influenced the Unitary Development Plan / Local Plan Review Processes and complemented an Area Investment Strategy prepared by English Partnerships and local authority identifying regeneration priority areas along the corridor. Eg Leicester Riverside Strategy.

RTPI West Midlands Branch Commendation for a significant contribution to Town Planning. Eg Rugby Corridor Study

Formed part of the package of tender documentation eg Waterfield Waterfront Design Guide & Waterspace Strategy documents.

Used to guide other initiatives eg greenspace initiative (eg Lincoln's Waterways Corridor Study), cycleways including the work of Sustrans, the preparation of development briefs etc.