



8

The Built  
Environment

## SECTION 8 - THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

### 8.1

A critical appraisal has been undertaken of the built environment within the study site. This includes an assessment of what is present on site and any issues or considerations arising. The information has been used to develop the approach to developing proposals for new construction and looks at the functionality of the buildings in relation to people, access and the effect of new structures in the landscape.

### 8.2 Canal Head

The A590 passes right in front of the Canal Head area and is the main entrance into Ulverston, however there is little evidence of the canal due to the abundance of buildings, which surround this part of the site. The modern buildings of Booth's supermarket, combined with the older and the ad hoc agricultural buildings, turn their back on the canal and enclose the canal basin.

Physical access to the canal is limited to local knowledge and even when a way onto the site has been found, orientation is confused by the low visual quality of the surrounding buildings. Even the semi-industrial buildings of the glass centre have no reference to the town centre and its vernacular architecture.

There is a need to establish a main thoroughfare to the Canal Head area, which can be achieved by improving the roundabout at Booth's supermarket. This will become the main focus for access into the newly developed site and the movement of people and vehicles through the newly opened up space will allow for better orientation and reduce any potential conflict between different user groups.

### 8.3 Canal Corridor

The canal is primarily a feature in the landscape rather than a structure nevertheless; it presents a strong linear link between either basins. The sliding rail bridge, which is potentially a significant historic structure built in the 1870's, is almost complete. Its value however, has been dismissed with the construction of the nearby footbridge and service piping. The sliding bridge offers tremendous potential for restoration and interpretation associated with the engine room (now gone) and pulley tower.

Rame Farm is over-looked by users on the canal towpath, but presents a fairly orderly scene of low-scale agricultural operations.

### 8.4 Canal Foot

The remains of the original lifting bridge are still visible and the Lock Keeper's Cottage (sometimes prone to flooding) nearby presents an ideal opportunity for interpretation of the maritime environment and the associated industries of the area. Whilst the configuration of the rest of the dwellings and the hotel may not be ideal at present for vehicular circulation, the spaces are well set out allowing visitors full opportunity to enjoy wide views out across the bay and also back up the canal.

### 8.5 Mixed Landholdings

The commercial buildings on the Acrastyle site have little visual value, but do occupy a very attractive location with them being set back in a small basin along the canal.

The Travis Perkins buildings are suitable for their function and have good access from North Lonsdale Road. The Schooners Wharf area however, is currently in disarray, but does have several significant stone buildings from an earlier time. These should be retained and converted for future use. The nearby light

industrial site is unkempt and has no relation to the canal either in its range of operations or the development of its structures.

The Waite's site is well located against North Lonsdale Road for business access but the Steel Street area (part of Waite's and Kennedy Street) is generally undeveloped away from the canal side and would be suitable for employment and business opportunities.

The SLDC depot site is a sprawling area, tending to fill whatever space is available. The buildings are of little intrinsic value and again bear no current relationship to the canal-side location. The whole area has been the subject of a number of development briefs and would be eminently suitable for provision of both residential and workshop facilities for local people.

The green space adjoining the canal, the sliding rail bridge and the allotment gardens is valuable public open space. There is an opportunity to improve access via a new bridge whilst the sliding bridge is renovated and pulled back into its retaining structure.

The "Elms" site has fallen into a degree of dereliction, but there is still something of the air of a grander house and grounds remaining from an earlier time. Although there is no significant historic interest in the building, the site has great potential as a self-contained site for redevelopment.