

EAST INDIA DOCK BASIN

Conservation Management Plan



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Conservation Management Plan

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- GAZETTEER
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Executive Summary

This Conservation Management Plan is for the East India Dock Basin; the largest remaining part of the early 19th century East India Docks complex. The site is owned by Lee Valley Regional Park Authority who has identified the need for the site to be enhanced to fulfil its potential as a heritage resource and nature reserve. This Conservation Management Plan is being prepared to support an application for Green Heritage Status and could be used to support a future application for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund for site improvement works.

The East India Dock Basin consists of an open area of water surrounded by historic dock walls and a Grade II listed lock into the River Thames. The site also maintains a salt marsh, reed bed and areas of woodland.

The East India Company was founded in 1600 and came to be a powerful trading company that essentially established British rule in India during the 18th and 19th centuries. The company docked at Blackwall for many years and in 1804-06 a large dedicated dock was built by engineers Rennie and Walker for the company's trade. The East India Company had sole use of the docks until 1833 when they were disbanded and from then on the East India Docks were used for all trades. The dock Basin was gradually extended and new locks built, but the 20th century saw the decline of the London docklands and the East India Docks closed in 1967. The Import and Export Docks were gradually filled in and now house residential and office blocks. The Basin was turned into a nature reserve by the London Docklands Development Corporation and has been in the ownership of Lee Valley Regional Park Authority since 1998.

The site is significant for several reasons. It has particularly high significance for the local community, who value it as a quiet haven away from city life. It is also important as an ecological site with a rare urban reed bed and riverside group of trees that attract a variety

of flora and fauna. The site is important because of its historical associations with the East India Company, links with the development of the London docks and with other historic events. It is significant as the largest surviving portion of the once much larger East India Docks. The ecological and historical aspects of the site are an important source for learning and education.

The condition of the site is generally good but there are strong concerns over the silting of the Basin which is negatively affecting the wildlife attracted to the site and will be expensive to remove. There are a lack of visitor facilities on site which is hampering the use of the site, particularly by schools groups. The presentation and interpretation of the site is average. The Basin is threatened by intrusive development on neighbouring sites.

There are many opportunities to improve the site. Presentation could be revised to make entrances more attractive and to improve way-finding. The interpretation could better tell the story of the Basin and the surrounding East India Docks. Many other organisations are willing to link up with Lee Valley Regional Park Authority to provide combined interpretation, learning opportunities or staging of creative events, such as Trinity Buoy Wharf, the Brick Lane Circle or the Museum of Docklands. There is an opportunity to provide better visitor facilities, including toilet provision, a covered area and a cafe, which would provide enhanced amenities for schools groups, volunteer opportunities and would be a draw for general visits from members of the public.

A set of policies has been prepared to guide future change at the site. General policies advise on statutory requirements, repair and alterations to the site. The policies encourage links with other organisations and improved interpretation and presentation. They promote an improved visitor experience and better schools and volunteer programmes.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Reason for the Report

This Conservation Management Plan (CMP) was commissioned by Lee Valley Regional Park Authority (LVRPA) and was prepared by Purcell Miller Tritton LLP. The report relates to the East India Dock Basin (EIDB), the remaining part of a once much larger dock complex that was run by the East India Dock Company. This CMP, plus an accompanying gazetteer and additional conservation advice and guidance, will provide LVRPA with a full understanding of the site, helping them explore ways in which the heritage values of the site can be acknowledged, shared and enhanced.

The CMP and conservation advice give guidance on necessary repairs and maintenance, give a clear picture of the significance of the site, the threats it faces and any opportunities that can be taken to improve and enhance it.

LVRPA initiated this work for several reasons:

- Their aim is to achieve a Green Flag Award and Green Heritage Status for the EIDB site. A key criteria for this award is the production of a CMP or similar document. The CMP and conservation advice will guide any changes necessary to create a high quality open space, similar to eight other sites within the Lee Valley Regional Park that already hold Green Flag Awards and three which hold Green Heritage Site status.
- The EIDB site is an existing open space that is part of the Lea River Park initiative organised by the London Thames Gateway Development Corporation. The initiative seeks to place new and enhance existing open spaces at the heart of future development of the lower Lea Valley. Phase 1 of the initiative will see substantial investment in the creation of a new

walking and cycling route along the course of the Lea (the Fatwalk') and saw investment in Three Mill Green completed by the Authority in March 2011.

- The CMP has been written to standards which meet criteria for a Round 1 Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) application for potential funding to develop plans to rejuvenate the site in the future.

1.2 Scope of the Study

The main focus of the CMP is the remaining fabric of the Dock Basin. However, it is impossible to separate this asset from its historical context, i.e. the larger dock complex and its connections with the East India Company. The discussion of the site's history therefore also includes an investigation into the wider historical context and "*An overview of the activities of the East India Company in relation [to] its use of the East India Docks.*"¹ The physical context of the site as existing is also explored in order to investigate the potential for enhancing access to the site and its setting.

Four other pieces of work were commissioned as part of this study:

- A Gazetteer which identifies listed structures, ecological/habitat areas and other heritage features on site. It gives a date, description and significance value. A Heritage Conservation Work Programme is included, providing a condition assessment and recommendations for repair, maintenance and conservation of the structures.
- A written guidance note giving recommendations for acknowledging the heritage value of the site. This may explore additional listing, confirm the extent of the listing of existing features, conservation area status, etc.

¹ LVRPA, An invitation for Fee Proposals, p.3



Fig. 1: The East India Dock Basin

- Advice and guidance through written notes, conversations, etc. to explore opportunities for sharing the heritage value of the site.
- Advice and guidance through written notes, conversations, etc. to explore opportunities for enhancing and enjoying the heritage value of the site.

The last three of these are combined into a single document which accompanies this CMP: *'Recommendations for Acknowledging, Sharing, Conserving, Enhancing and Enjoying East India Dock Basin'*.

1.3 Existing Information

Several archives hold records relating to the East India Docks. The principal repository is the former Port of London Authority archives, now held at the Museum of Docklands. The National Archives, British Library and

London Metropolitan Archives are key sources for plans of London, photographs and illustrations of the dock, and other primary sources. General books and websites were also referenced.

The report also references local and national government legislation and guidance, such as *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (2010). The CMP's methodology is based on guidance from the Heritage Lottery Fund's *Conservation Management Planning* (2008), English Heritage's *Conservation Principles* (2008) and James Semple Kerr's *The Conservation Plan* (1996). A full list of sources can be found in the bibliography at appendix A.

Considerable information has also been gathered from site visits carried out by Andrew Clark and Sally Brownlow of Purcell Miller Tritton between July and November of 2011.

1.4 Gaps in Knowledge

Due to the large number of documents available at several different archives, it was not possible to view every item related to the EIDB. The items which were most relevant to this CMP were chosen to be consulted during the visits to the archives and a list of further research is included in appendix A.

The Port of London Authority archive at the Museum of Docklands has an extensive catalogue of drawings and plans which was consulted and several documents ordered for viewing. However, as the collection has moved several times over the years, plans have sometimes been lost or are uncatalogued. Therefore only eight plans were available for viewing when the archives were visited.

1.5 Consultations

Local residents were invited via e-mail to answer a series of questions about their experience of the EIDB and how they would like to see the site improved. The

questions posed and answers received are included as appendix F. Purcell Miller Tritton also met with or spoken to interested parties, such as members of the Trinity Buoy Wharf Trust, the Brick Lane Society and staff at LVRPA. A list of those who have provided assistance in preparing this CMP is given in the next section.

The drafts of the report were reviewed by the client team at LVRPA throughout the preparation of the report. A consultation meeting was held with English Heritage and the Tower Hamlets Conservation Department to discuss the CMP’s findings and potential future enhancements to the site. Local residents and user groups had the opportunity to attend an evening meeting on 7 December 2011 where the CMP was presented to them.

Comments received from these consultations were considered and where appropriate incorporated into the document before a final draft was issued.

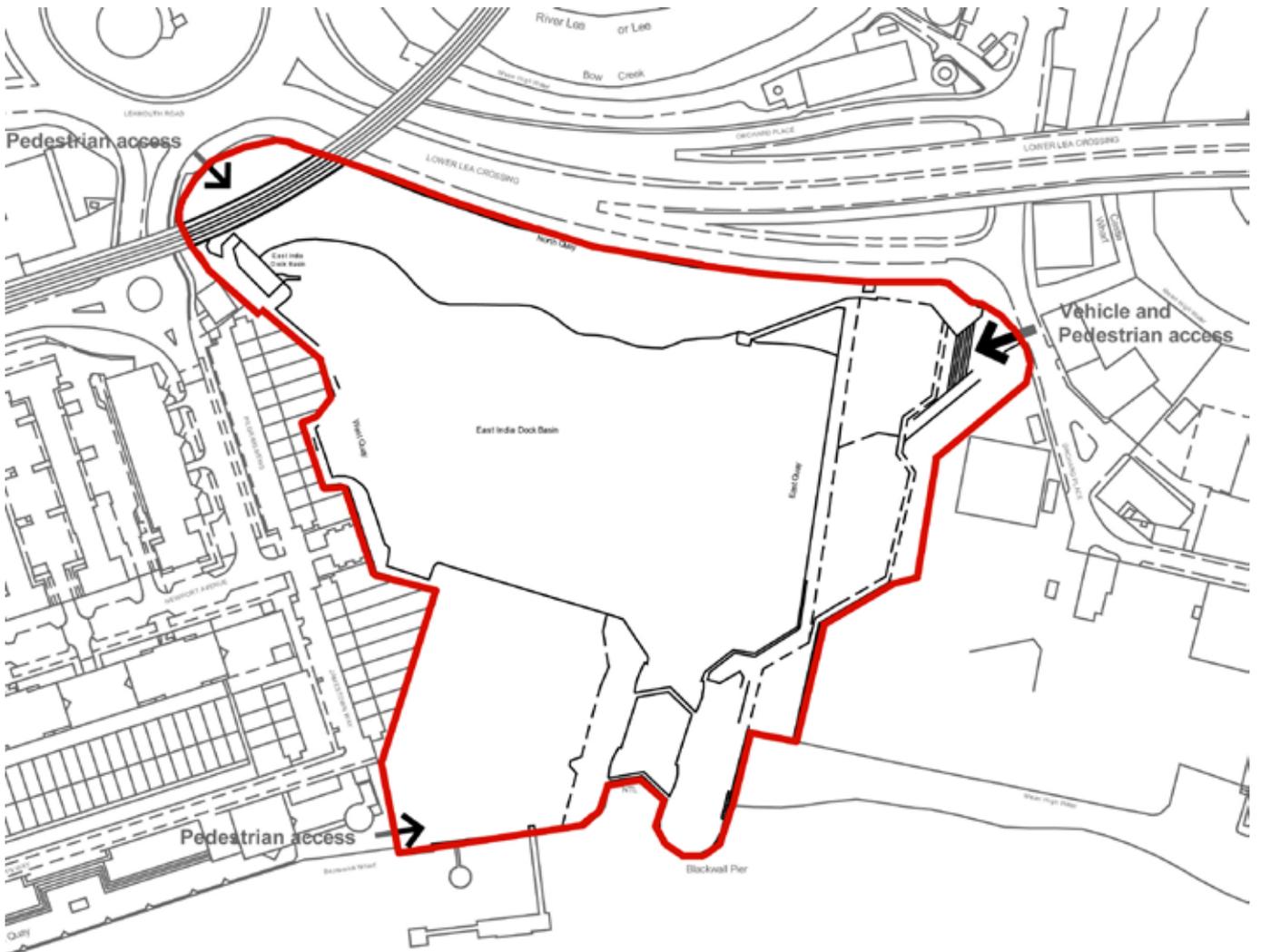


Fig. 2: Site Plan (courtesy of LVRPA)

1.6 Acknowledgements

Several people gave assistance or were consulted in the preparation of this CMP:

LVRPA

- Rob Cairns, Head of Environmental Design
- Andrew Vaughan, Site Ranger for EIDB, Bow Creek and Three Mills
- Alistair Bayford, Special Projects manager, Parklands and Venues
- Ges Hoddinott, Senior Ranger for the southern region of the Lee Valley Regional Park, LVRPA
- Martin Page, Green Space Manager, LVRPA
- David Hutley, Volunteer Co-ordinator
- Cath Patrick, Senior Conservation Officer
- Karen Wheeler, Youth and Schools Manager

Archives and Museums

- Clare Frankland, Port and River Archivist, Museum of Docklands
- Sarah Williams, Archivist, Museum of London
- Staff at Tower Hamlets Local History and Archives Library
- Catherine Stevenson, Schools Officer (maternity cover post for Kirsty Sullivan), Museum of London

Trinity Buoy Wharf

- Eric Reynolds, Urban Space Management
- John Burton, Urban Space Management

Local Authority

- John Archer, Biodiversity Officer, London Borough of Tower Hamlets
- Mark Hutton, Team Manager- Development Design and Conservation, London Borough of Tower Hamlets

English Heritage

- Andrew Hargreaves
- Kim Stabler, Archaeological Advisor

Local Residents

- Sandy Humphrey, Chairman of the Virginia Quays Residents' Association
- Gary James, local resident
- Cliff Prior, local resident
- John Gordon, local resident

1.7 Abbreviations

Several abbreviations of company names are used in this document. These are listed below for reference:

- EIC - East India Company
- EID - East India Docks
- EIDC - East India Dock Company
- EIDB - East India Dock Basin
- LVRPA - Lee Valley Regional Park Authority
- THC - Tower Hamlets Council

2.0 Understanding

2.1 Management Information

2.1.1 Ownership and Management

Lee Valley Regional Park Authority own and manage the whole site, having acquired the site from the London Docklands Development Corporation in 1998. It is looked after by a Ranger, currently Andrew Vaughan, who also cares for the Bow Creek and Three Mills sites. A Senior Ranger oversees the south region of the Lee Valley Park and a Greenspace Manager oversees all the Rangers. The staff duties and areas of responsibility, as given in the EIDB Site Management Plan 2006-2011, are reproduced below:

"Senior Rangers: *As head of an area team, to be responsible for the development and day-to-day on-site operations and staff within the designated area, with a management focus on specific Nature Reserves in accordance with agreed service level specifications and to participate in all activities necessary to promote the safe use and enjoyment of the Park by visitors whilst maintaining the balance between recreational use and nature conservation.*

Ranger: *As part of an area team, to be responsible for the on site operations within the designated area in accordance within agreed service level specifications and to participate in all activities necessary to promote the safe use and enjoyment of the park by visitors whilst maintaining the balance between recreation use and nature conservation."*

The Ranger visits the site almost every day to carry out a visual inspection/site patrol. Local contractors unlock and lock the site in the morning and evening.

An external contractor, currently The Landscape Group, is employed by LVRPA to carry out routine works, which are overseen by the Ranger. These tasks include grass cutting, weed control, hedge maintenance, hard surface maintenance, autumn leaf clearance, site furniture maintenance, cleansing and dog waste removal and horticulture. Larger projects or those that are more environmentally sensitive are carried out by LVRPA staff and a variety of volunteers.

2.1.2 Use

The site has been maintained as an area of nature conservation and a bird reserve since 1996. It also serves as an open space for the use of local residents and other visitors. The site is opened during daylight hours and locked at night for health and safety reasons.

The DLR has a right of way running through the north west corner of the site which would restrict the extent of any future works to this area.

From time to time it is used for other small scale events, such as guided walks by the Site Ranger for local school children or residents or for nature conservation volunteering opportunities. Very occasionally there are larger events, for example use as a venue for stands and the control tower for the Red Bull Air Race when it was staged in London in 2008.

LVRPA has a volunteer programme to involve local people or corporate groups in site maintenance and conservation, carrying out tasks such as repainting metalwork or cutting back the reed bed.

2.2 Statutory Designations

2.2.1 PPS5

In March 2010 the government released *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPS5). The policies within this document give a holistic approach to planning and development, where all significant elements which make up the historic environment are termed 'heritage assets'. These consist of designated assets, such as listed buildings or conservation areas, non-designated assets, such as locally listed buildings, or those features which have not yet been identified. The policies emphasise the need for the significance of a heritage asset and its setting to be assessed in order to fully understand a place and to inform design proposals for change to significant buildings or sites.

2.2.2 Listed Buildings

Listed buildings are protected under policies in PPS5 and the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*. Buildings or structures are listed because of their architectural merit, historic interest, contribution to the local scene and community value. Alterations, extensions or demolitions of listed buildings need to gain listed building consent from the local planning authority before they can proceed.

The 'Blackwall Pier and Entrance Lock to former East India Dock Basin' was listed Grade II in 1983 (marked 1 on the plan on p.13). The list description reads as follows:

"C1803 origin with later enlargement, the entrance lock to Rennie and Walker's East India Dock Basin. Brick faced with ashlar coping to quays, partly timber fended. The lock has now been backed filled up to later C19 iron plated lock gates but beyond them the quay walls have pairs of grooves cut in ashlar blocks probably for earlier set of gates. The quays and pier retain their complement of bollards and capstans."

The extent of the listed structure could include the historic dock walls as 'curtilage' to the lock. Under the Planning Act 1990 "any object or structure fixed to the building" or "any object or structure within the curtilage of the building which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1st July 1948, shall be treated as part of the building."² This means that any other historic features, such as parts of the dock walls, are likely to be included within the curtilage of the listed pier and lock, even though not in their immediate vicinity.

Additions and structures which date from after 1st July 1948 and not 'fixed' to the listed structure will not be counted as listed.

Other listed buildings within the local area, several of which are related to the former EIDB complex, include:

2. Trinity House Buoy Wharf Quay and Orchard Dry Dock, G II (See Fig.3)
3. Trinity House Chain Locker and Lighthouse Block, G II (See Fig.3)
4. Dry Dock at Blackwall Engineering, G II
5. Entrance Gateway, Leamouth Rd, G II (See Fig.47)
6. East India Dock Wall and Gateway, G II (See Fig.44)
7. Plaque on modern dock wall facing west, G II
8. East India Pumping Station, G II (See Fig.45)
9. East India Dock Boundary Wall, G II (See Fig.46)
10. Embankment Wall, Railings and Steps, G II

The numbers correspond to the plan of listed buildings on p.13. Full list descriptions can be found at appendix B.

2.2.3 Local Planning Documents

The London Plan, 2011

This document, published in July 2011, is the spatial development strategy for the capital produced by the Greater London Authority, which sets out "an integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of London over the next 20-25 years"³. There are several policies in the London Plan which are relevant to the EIDB. The most relevant sections of the policies are listed below, while the full text of the policies can be viewed online at <http://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/planning/londonplan>.

- Policy 2.18: Green Infrastructure: The Network of Open and Green Spaces
- Policy 6.10: Walking (The Lea Valley is identified as a Strategic Walking Route in London)
- Policy 7.1: Building London's Neighbourhoods and Communities
- Policy 7.2: An Inclusive Environment
- Policy 7.3: Designing Out Crime
- Policy 7.4: Local Character
- Policy 7.5: Public Realm
- Policy 7.8: Heritage Assets and Archaeology
- Policy 7.18: Protecting Local Open Space and Addressing Local Deficiency
- Policy 7.19: Biodiversity and Access to Nature
- Policy 7.21: Trees and Woodland
- Policy 7.30: London's Canals and Other Rivers and Waterspaces

² Planning Act 1990, Section 2:5:b, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/part/I/chapter/1>, accessed 19/07/11

³ The London Plan, 2011, p.10

Tower Hamlets Local Development Framework and Unitary Development Plan

At the time of writing this CMP, planning policy for Tower Hamlets was in the process of being reviewed and updated. The current planning document is the Unitary Development Plan (UDP), 1998, which is in the process of being replaced by the Local Development Framework (LDF). Certain policies in the UDP have been saved and are still in use, while the Core Strategy of the LDF was adopted in 2010 and is also now in use to guide planning and development in the area. The relevant policies or points from the two documents are listed below and can be viewed in full online at:

- UDP http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgs/451-500/494_current_planning_policy/unitary_development_plan_1998.aspx
- Core Strategy http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgs/851-900/855_planning_consultation/core_strategy.aspx

Unitary Development Plan, 1998

- ST4-9: Strategic Policies: The Environment
- DEV36-DEV41: Historic Buildings and Structures
- DEV45: Archaeology and Ancient Monuments
- DEV46: Riverside, Canalside, Docks and Other Water Areas
- DEV57-DEV62: Nature Conservation and Ecology (under this policy the East India Dock Basin and Brunswick Wharf are designated a Site of Nature Conservation of Borough Importance, Grade 1, while the Lower Lea Valley is a site of Metropolitan Importance)
- DEV63-DEV66: Green Chain and Walkways
- ST37-ST40: Strategic Objectives: Open Space, Leisure and Recreation
- OS1-OS5: Local Open Space
- OS7: The Loss of Open Space
- OS14: Lee Valley Regional Park

The final policy is worth reproducing here: *"The Council will support the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority and its plan for the development of outdoor sport and leisure activities within the context of the council's open space policies"*⁴.

LDF Core Strategy, 2010

- P.27: The East India Dock Basin is identified as a Strategic Green Space.
- P.44: Both Leamouth and Blackwall are earmarked for Very High Growth of housing in the period up to 2025 (i.e. 3501+ units).
- SO12: To create a high-quality, well connected and sustainable natural environment of green and blue spaces that are rich in biodiversity and promote active and healthy lifestyles. The Lea River Park, Fatwalk and Lee Valley Regional Park are identified as key parts of this strategy.

- SO22: Protect, celebrate and improve access to our historical and heritage assets by placing these at the heart of reinventing the hamlets to enhance local distinctiveness, character and townscape views.
- SO25: Deliver successful placemaking in Tower Hamlets to create locally distinctive, well designed, healthy and great places which interconnect with, respond and integrate into the wider London area.
- Visions for Leamouth and Blackwall. Leamouth: Creating a modern waterside place where the River Lea Park meets the River Thames. Blackwall: A mixed use area with a new town centre and the Town Hall as its commercial and civic hearts. The Visions for these two areas are reproduced in appendix C.

Tower Hamlet Council Leaside Area Action Plan 2007

To guide certain aspects of planning while the transition from UDP to LDF takes place Interim Planning Guidance has been drawn up by Tower Hamlets. One of these documents has been prepared for the Leaside Area within the vicinity of the Lower Lea River Valley. The EIDB is included within the Leamouth Peninsula sub-area and is described as *"a 3.79 hectare site of nature conservation from which there are good views to Canary Wharf and across the River Thames to Greenwich"*⁵.

The document provides policies on the Leaside spatial strategy (L1), Connectivity (L3), Water Space (L4) and Open Space (L5). Policies L4.1 and L42.4 specifically mention the EIDB: *"L4.1: The ecological and landscape value of waterways in Leaside and, in particular, East India Dock Basin, will be protected and enhanced wherever possible"*⁶ and *"L42.4: Development should respect East India Basin and protect the ecological value of the basin"*⁷. The pages relevant to the Leamouth Sub-area are reproduced in appendix D.

Tower Hamlets Council Supplementary Planning Guidance: Archaeology and Development

Tower Hamlets has also prepared Supplementary Planning Guidance which deals with specific areas or subjects. The EIDB is within an Archaeology Priority Zone, as designated under the UDP. The Supplementary Planning Guidance for Archaeology and Development advises early consultation with the local planning department to assess whether archaeological investigation or excavation will need to be carried out in advance of a specific development. The document can be viewed online at: http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgs/451-500/494_current_planning_policy/supplementary_planning_advice.aspx.

5 Leaside Area Action Plan, 2007, p.21

6 Ibid., p.42

7 Ibid., p.102

4 UDP, 1998, p.164

2.3 Description

2.3.1 Location and Setting

The EIDB is located in east London in the Leamouth area where the River Lea meets the River Thames. The 9.4 acre site is on the north of the Thames and sits at the top of a prominent northwards bend in the river. The Basin sits in between the Thames and the meandering route of the River Lea. Bow Creek, one of LVRPA's other nature conservation sites is situated within a bend of the Lea on its north side. As the crow flies the two sites are very close but in reality are separated both by the Lea itself and by a large fly-over vehicular bridge, the Lower Lea Crossing, and the raised DLR line.



Fig. 3: Listed Building Plan

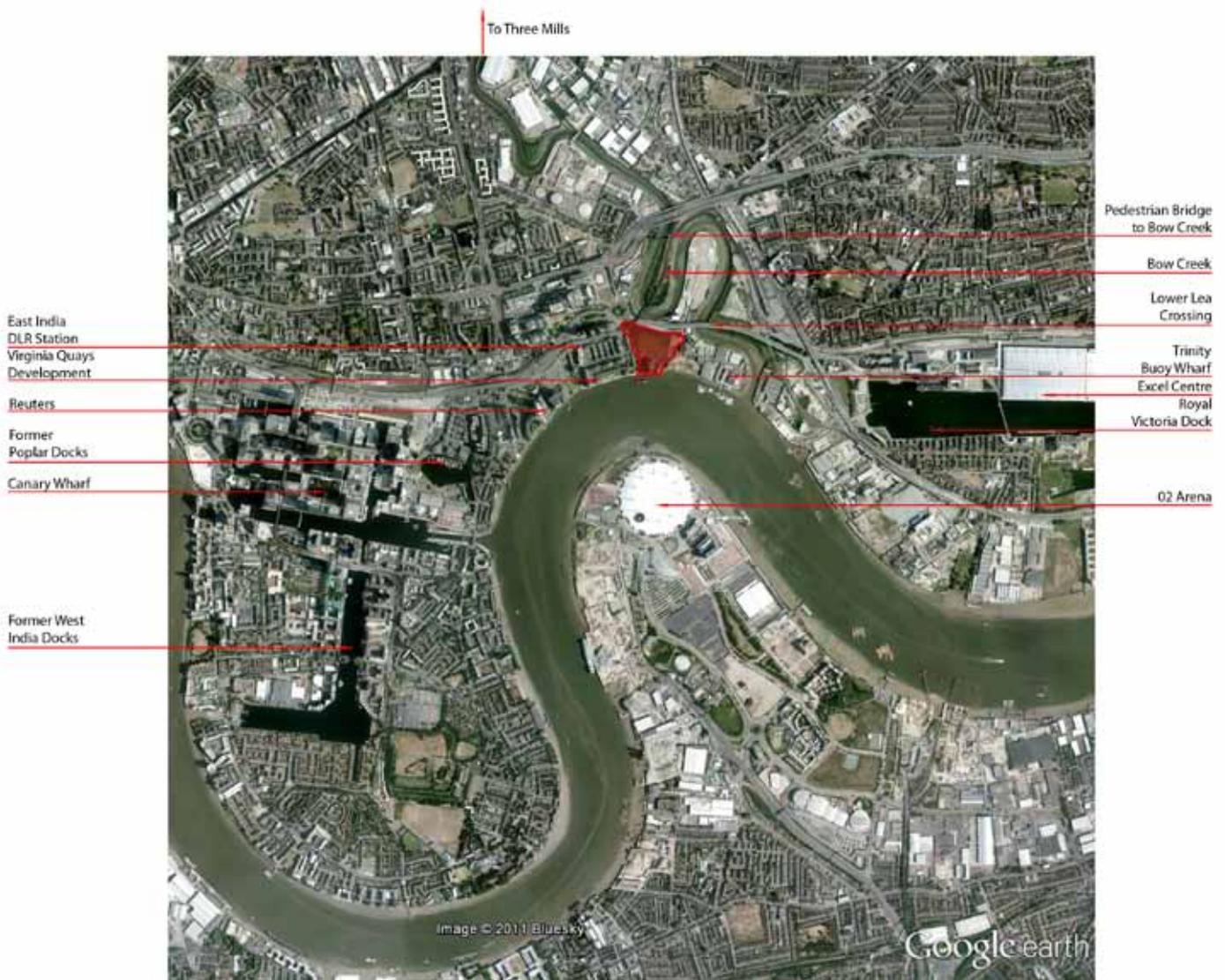


Fig. 3: Image showing the context of the EIDB. Site shown in red © Bluesky 2011

To the east of the site is Orchard Place, where Orchard Wharf and Trinity Buoy Wharf are located. Orchard Wharf is currently vacant and unused (though is subject to a planning application for use as an aggregates wharf), while Trinity Buoy Wharf has been converted into a centre for arts and creative industries. In this area are also several other historic riverside buildings, some vacant but others converted into offices or residential.

To the west of the site are large scale residential developments on the site of the former Export Dock. The East India DLR station is a short walk westwards from the Basin (approximately 160 metres). To the north are a large roundabout and several busy roads. The site of the former Import Dock has been converted into an office complex, though some parts of the original Import Dock walls survive on the west and south sides, along the A12 Blackwall Tunnel Northern Approach and Navel Row, and also in the centre of the A1261 Leamouth Road to the east.



Fig. 3: Buildings at Trinity Buoy Wharf



Fig. 5: Panorama of the north quay



Fig. 6: Panorama looking south west

2.3.2 East India Dock Basin

The EIDB is the only remaining part of a once much larger complex forming the East India Dock. Ships accessed the dock through one of two locks from the Thames into the Basin and then travel either west through locks into the Export Dock or north-west into the Import Dock. Only one of the two locks from the Thames now survives, located in the south-east corner of the Basin. This is now sealed shut, though there are four sluices on the lock gates which allow water to either be kept in the dock or allow quicker water dispersal.

The Basin itself is an irregular wedge shape. The northern boundary is now defined by the Lower Lea Crossing and it is this part of the Basin that has been turned into a salt marsh and reed bed, though some remains of the northern quay do still survive in the undergrowth in the north-west corner of the site. Much of the Basin has silted over and remains above the water level at low tide as mud flats.



Fig. 4: Residential development adjacent to the EIDB





Fig. 7: Salome Gates at the north east entrance



Fig. 9: The Entrance Lock



Fig. 8: Landscaped north-east corner of the site



Fig. 10: Historic mooring posts, capstans and machinery pits to the east of the lock

The principal entrance into the site is in the north-east corner from Orchard Place. A set of large decorative metal gates, designed by Sir Antony Caro, and called the Salome Gates were installed in 1996. The area just inside the gates has been gravelled and a set of long wide steps and a ramp lead up a slope to an area of gravel. The eastern quay runs roughly north to south here. Pathways run beside the Basin and along the boundary edge of the site. They lead down to the lock, which is paved with concrete either side and still retains mooring posts, capstans and machinery pits from the dock's industrial past.

Two walkways lead across the two lock gates to provide a route across. At the north end of the lock is a modern metal gantry, which formerly carried pipelines for Pura Foods, and metal sheet covered paths on the east side of the site cover the void where the pipes also ran. At the north-east corner of the lock is a large beacon which was lit to commemorate the Millennium.



Fig. 11: Woodland adjacent to the River Thames

On the west side of the lock is an area of woodland containing a mixture of high and low level trees and shrubs. Pathways continue around all sides of the woodland, including along the Thames riverside. Along the water's edge are a mooring dolphin and jetty, the latter built by Pura Foods Ltd c1986 and neither owned by LVRPA.



Fig. 12: Section of the former lock to the Import Dock at the north west corner of the site

Along the western side of the Basin the pathway continues along the water's edge. It follows an irregular path which relates to the blocked up lock entrances into the Import and Export Docks. At the north-west corner of the site a section of the quay alongside the former lock into the Import Dock has been retained with a capstan and mooring post. A path leads to a gateway onto the roundabout at the north-west corner of the site.

More detailed descriptions of each of the features of the site can be found in the accompanying gazetteer.

2.3.3 Ecology

The following information about the ecology of the site is summarised or quoted from LVRPA's *Site Management Plan* for the EIDB.

Dock Ecology

There is a serious problem with silting and much of the depth of the Basin has been lost. This reduces the available aquatic habitat for the species present and reduces the quality of the dock. The varying levels of depth in the dock attract both waders to the exposed mud and divers to the deeper parts for food.



Fig. 13: A Common Tern at the EIDB

Group of Trees

The area to the south-west of the site has a group of trees made up of mature sycamores, London planes, elders, hawthorns and suckering plum. A dozen mixed native trees including spindle rowan, ash and hawthorn were planted there in 2001 as replacements to Horse Chestnuts which were removed. The remaining area is a patchwork of meadow and bramble. There is a small amount of Japanese Knot weed, which should be kept under control by spraying.

Mixed Scrub

There is a stretch of dense scrub of mixed native species across the north bank, which form a screen to the road. This is an important area for birds; notable species are Firecrest and Whitethroat.

Salt Marsh

The salt marsh lies on the north shore of the EIDB and is around 5m wide by 190m long. Its vegetation is comprised of halophytic (salt) grassland and dwarf brushwood species which form a buffer between terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. This is the furthest site up the Thames to have salt marsh present. The reed areas at either end of the salt marsh continue to encroach and need to be contained. Scrub and willow from the bank are also encroaching slowly on to the marsh. More notable species are Scurvy Grass, Halberd (Spear)-Leaved Orache, Common Spiked Rush and Sea Aster.

Reed Bed

A reed bed is located on the north-east corner of the Basin. It is dominated by Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*), which forms 75% of the vegetation.

Meadow

An 800 square metre area of meadow on the east side of the Basin was seeded by the London Docklands Development Corporation in the 1980s/90s. It is currently cut in September to maximise seeding. The area is quite small and vulnerable to invasive species and colonization.



Fig. 14: Meadow to the east of the Basin

Pits

Seven machinery pits surrounding the lock are covered by grills. A microclimate has been created in these pits which is ideal for ferns and liverworts.

Birds

The EIDB forms an important part of the Lee Valley migration route. It is one of the last remaining semi natural areas left along the River Thames due to river development and provides a haven for over 44 species of bird. Most notable are Black Redstart (a National BAP (Biodiversity Action Plan) species) and Kingfisher (Lee Valley Park BAP species). Black cap, Reed Warbler, Little Ring Plovers, Golden Eyes, Roseate Terns and

Common Terns annually nest on the rafts, producing between 5-15 chicks a year, and the Peregrine Falcons which reside on the Millennium Dome can be seen from the Pier.

Other Vertebrates

Apart from foxes, rabbits, squirrels and rats, there has been no formal survey for mammals on site apart from an otter survey using sand traps on the north shore in 2004 which found no signs of the animal. Pipistrelle bats have been sighted, which most probably roost on the DLR bridge and old warehouses adjacent to the site. There has not been an official bat survey.

Invertebrates

Due to the combination of herb rich meadows and open water the site attracts an abundant array of insects; eleven species of butterfly and four species of moth have been identified.

The following ecological surveys have been carried out for the site:

- A Botanical Survey of East India Dock Basin, Brian Wurzell, April 2003
- East India Dock Basin and Bow Creek Bird Survey, Ecology Consultancy, November 2008
- Lea River Park Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Protected Species Assessment, Ecology Consultancy, January 2009
- Arboricultural Report, JCA Limited, 2009

2.4 History

This history of the East India Docks is inevitably intertwined with that of the East India Company (EIC). The EIC has had a presence at Blackwall since the early 17th century. Sections 2.4.2 to 2.4.4 therefore explore the history of the Company and the Blackwall area in order to put the dock's history into context and explain the events which led to their establishment. The principal source for this historical description has been the *Survey of London* which can be read online at www.british-history.ac.uk and is strongly recommended for greater detail on the development of the area and the East India Docks.

2.4.1 Timeline

1600	East India Company was established by Royal Charter from Elizabeth I.
1614	East India Company constructed the Blackwall Yard.
1650	The East India Company sold the Blackwall Yard to a private owner.
1789-90	The Brunswick Dock (later the Export Dock of the EID) constructed by John Perry.
1803	A group of ship owners secured an Act for ' <i>the further improvement of the Port of London, by making Docks and other works at Blackwall for the Accommodation of the East India shipping in the said Port</i> ' and for the establishment of the East India Dock Company. The Dock Company was granted a 21 year monopoly which meant that all ships trading to the East Indies and China had to unload and load up their cargoes at the East India Dock.
1803-06	The East India Docks were constructed, designed by Rennie and Walker.
1806	The Docks were officially opened on the 4th August.
1815	The Entrance Basin was enlarged to double its size.
1827	The Dock Company's monopoly expired but a similar agreement was made direct with the East India Company for 6 years.
1832-34	The Dock Company built the Brunswick Wharf for steam vessels.
1833	The East India Company's trading function was ended by the government, depriving the Dock Company of the use of the East India Company's warehouses in the City.
1836-40	The Commercial Railway (later London and Blackwall Railway) was built to link the Docks with the City.
1838	A deal was struck between the East and West India Dock Companies to amalgamate the two and from then both docks were used for all trades.
1876-79	A new lock from the Thames into the Basin was constructed, designed by Augustus Manning.
1877	Warehouses were built on the north and west quays of the newly extended Basin.
1897	A second lock between the Basin and Export Dock was constructed.
1909	The Port of London Authority (PLA) was created and the East India Docks fell under its administrative control.
1912-16	The PLA refurbished the docks, including the rebuilding of the north quay of the Import Dock, the rebuilding of warehouses and the deepening of the lock between the Import Dock and the Basin.
1939-44	During World War II the Import Dock was drained for the construction of Mulberry floating harbours and the Export Dock suffered severe bomb damage and was closed down and sold in 1946.
1949-50	Brunswick Power Station was constructed on the site of the old Export Dock. This also included filling in the original entrance lock from the Thames into the Basin and the two locks into the Export Dock.
1950s/60s	New technologies, particularly container transportation, made the facilities at the East India Docks obsolete.
1967	The PLA closed the East India Docks.
1967 onwards	The Import Dock was gradually filled in.
1971	The PLA sold the Docks to the Central Electricity Board.
1988-89	The Brunswick Power Station was demolished.
1986	London Docklands Development Corporation acquired the site.
1998	LDDC sold the EIDB to LVRPA.

2.4.2 The East India Company; 1600-1858

The East India Company was established in 1600 under Royal Charter from Queen Elizabeth I, originally as the 'Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading with the East Indies'. The company was formed by a group of London merchants who had recognised the potential of the East Indies as a trading position for England and wanted to compete with merchants from other European companies who already had a presence in the region. The Charter gave the company a monopoly, or an exclusive privilege to carry out business, over all trade in countries east of the Cape of Good Hope and west of the Straits of Magellan.



Fig. 15: Crest of the East India Company (supplied by LVRPA)

The Company traded in spices, pepper, tea, cotton, silk and other textiles, opium, saltpetre and coffee, among many other things. It grew in strength throughout the 17th century and its influence was felt across the country. Its imports made existing commodities, such as spices and pepper, more commonly available and brought new ones, such as Indian textiles, muslins, chintz and calico. Raw silk from Persia was used by the French Huguenots weaving in Spitalfields and coffee became wildly popular; the first coffee house opened in London in 1657 and by the early 1700s there were nearly 500⁸. By the late 18th century tea from the East Indies was drunk by rich and poor alike, and by the former in imported Chinese porcelain tea sets.

The Company established trading posts in the region and by the mid 18th century its focus was on India, as other trading companies, in particular the Dutch East India Company established in 1602, were less powerful there. The trading posts of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras evolved into large commercial towns effectively ruled by the Servants of the Company (the EIC's employees deployed to the East Indies).

The EIC's influence in India grew as the ruling Mughal Empire began to collapse in the early 18th century. Several regional states broke away from the Empire and where there were conflicts of power in these new states the British stepped in to help one side to victory, in return for cash rewards and continued trading privileges. The EIC built up its own army of British troops and Indian Sepoys to defend their territories and assist those they chose to support.

In 1756 the EIC troops, led by Sir Robert Clive (known as Clive of India), fought against an uprising which saw the local Nawab (or ruler), Siraj-ud-Daula, capture Calcutta. Siraj was defeated at the Battle of Plassey a year later and Clive installed an elderly General, Mir Jafar, as nominal ruler of Bengal in return for a payment of £234,000. A further rebellion by the subsequent ruler, Mir Kasim, in 1764 was also quashed and the Treaty of Allahabad which ended it gave formal recognition of the EIC's rule of Bengal. The EIC was now in charge of the civil, judicial and revenue administration of Bengal, India's richest province⁹.

The EIC's ambitions in India gradually became more focused on territorial gains than trade. The Directors of the Company back in East India House¹⁰ on Leadenhall Street in London were uneasy about this situation but the distance and slow communication between the two countries made it difficult for them to assert their power over their Servants. The British government also took notice of how powerful the EIC was becoming and established a Regulation Act in 1773 to appoint a Governor-General who was not a member of the EIC to preside over the Company's territories.

By the end of the 18th century public opinion was also beginning to change. Merchants were angry at the Company's continued monopoly of East Indian trade,



Fig. 16: East India House, Leadenhall Street

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Built in 1729 but demolished in 1861. The Lloyds of London building now stands on the site.

while the general public disapproved of the fortunes being made by the Servants of the Company and because the EIC's ruling powers appeared to prioritise commercial interests over humanitarian concerns¹¹. The local Indian population began to feel subjugated and were aware of growing missionary pressure to adopt Christianity. This led to the Indian Sepoy Mutiny of 1857-58 when the Bengal division of the EIC's army rebelled.

During the first half of the 19th century the British government restricted the EIC's powers by taking away their monopoly of Indian trade in 1813 when the Company's Charter came up for renewal. At the next renewal in 1833 their monopoly over the tea trade to Canton in China was also removed, which effectively ended the EIC's commercial and trading powers, leaving it "*nothing more than the bureaucratic shell of the government*"¹². The Sepoy Mutiny was the catalyst which allowed the British government to finally abolish the EIC and take control of all their territories in India, establishing the British Raj which was to last until 1948.

2.4.3 Blackwall and Blackwall Yard; 16th C-1779

Blackwall, the area between the River Lea and Coldharbour north of the River Thames, is named after an artificial bank that was constructed to keep out the river water. The site that would later become the East India Docks was called the East Marsh of Poplar and was originally sparsely populated because of its remote and inaccessible location. The area began to be developed in the 16th century as an anchorage point because there was a sheltered mooring position for ships behind a reef. The site was accessed from Poplar High Street via the Blackwall Causeway and the Blackwall Stairs at the river's edge. The location was a good disembarkation point for travellers wishing to avoid the long route around the Isle of Dogs and a good loading point for ships on the journey out of London.

By 1684 the site was the most expensive anchorage point in London at 15 shillings per week¹³. It was the starting point for significant journeys, such as Frobisher's second voyage in search of the Northwest Passage across the top of the North American continent in 1577 or the departure of the Virginia Settlers in 1606 for America¹⁴.

The EIC originally hired ships from private individuals for their journeys to the east but after the first few voyages they began to purchase or build their own fleet. The East Indiamen, as the ships came to be called, were large; displacing 300 to 600 tons rather than the usual contemporary size for ships of 50 to 200 tons¹⁵.

In 1608 the Company leased a yard in Deptford for the repair or construction of their ships. By 1614 the site was too small and the Company's own shipwright, William Burrell, negotiated the purchase of land at Blackwall from Roger Jones and Mr Mowse for the construction of a dock yard. This consisted of a dry dock surrounded by sheds, stores and dwellings, though the site was not considered secure enough to store imported goods which were taken on to warehouses in the City.

In the early 17th century the Blackwall Yard was the largest employer of men in London, with between 200 and 400 workers. However, after the initial boom years of the EIC there was a slump in trade owing to increased rivalry from other companies, such as the Dutch East India Company, and the yard at Blackwall became too costly to run themselves. They were leased in 1653 and then sold in 1655 to Henry Johnson for £4,350 and at this time were described as "*three docks, two launching slips, two cranes, storehouses*"¹⁶. EIC ships continued to be repaired and built at Blackwall throughout the 18th century, with Johnson becoming a powerful member of the Company through the acquisition of shares in each EIC ship that was built at his yard. Henry's younger son William worked for the EIC in Bengal for several years until 1683.

11 Begum-Ali, in Plassey's Legacy, 2010, p.118

12 Ibid., p.117

13 Survey of London, accessed 04/08/11. Approximately £63 in today's money, see www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

16 GLRO (Greater London Record Office, now the London Metropolitan Archives), M93/1, pp.161-3, cited in Ibid.



Fig. 17: Gasgoine's Map of 1703 (from Tower Hamlets Local Archives)

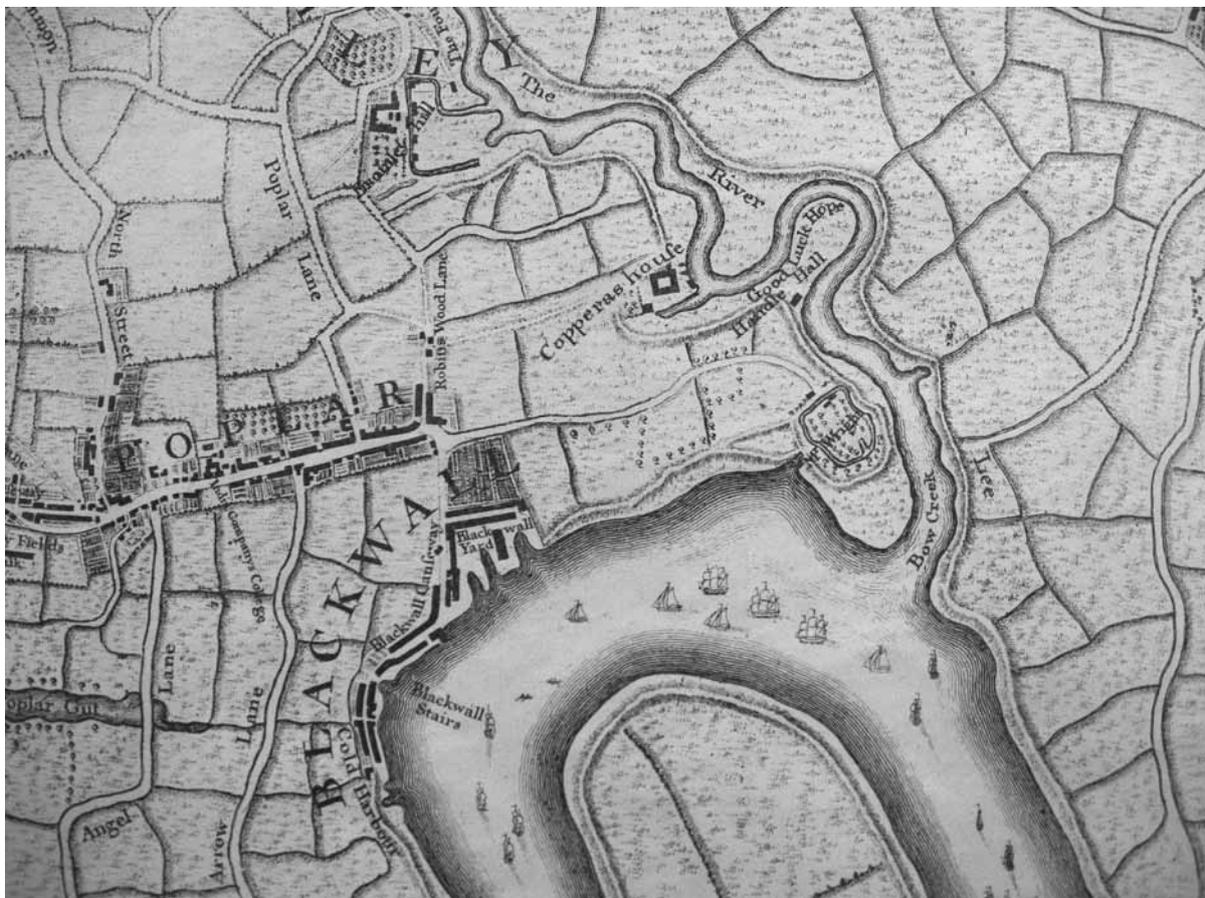


Fig. 18: Rocque's Map of 1741-45 (from Tower Hamlets Local Archives)

The Blackwall docks are shown on Gasgoine's map of 1703 when Henry Johnson's son (also called Henry) was the owner. Three large ships are depicted in a wet dock (built in 1659) which is surrounded by buildings on three sides. The old Blackwall stairs are marked at the south-west corner of the yard, with Blackwall Causeway stretching northwards to the junction with Poplar High Street. To the west of the causeway is a Rope Walk, no doubt supplying the ship builders with rope for the ships. The buildings at the south end of the causeway and along the river front consisted of dwellings and several inns, which were popular places for visiting Londoners to partake in a Whitebait supper whilst watching the new ships launched into the Thames.

The land on the site of the EIDB to the east is depicted as marshland at the end of a road. There are only two other features within this area. On the portion of land between the southern end of the River Lea and the Thames is a house set within an orchard. To the north, on the western banks of the Lea, is a 'Copperas Ground'-copperas referring to an iron sulfate compound which was produced as a fixative for dyeing woollens or in the manufacture of gun powder or ink.

John Rocque's map of 1741-45 shows a similar situation but with the house and orchard marked as belonging to Mr Wright and a new house, 'Handle Hall', built a little further up the Lea. The map shows the extent of the 'Blackwall' banks constructed to protect against high river water levels.

After the younger Henry Johnson died in 1719 the dock yard declined. This has several factors including the remoteness of Henry's daughter who inherited the site, competition from other new docks further up the river and a reduced need for war ships in a time of peace. Few ships were built and this led to the decline in prosperity, not only of the docks but also of Blackwall, whose residents relied on employment at the docks.

2.4.4 Perry's Yard and the Brunswick Dock; 1779-1803

With England's war with Spain in 1739 the demand for naval ships rose again and the yard revived under the ownership of a group of retired East India Company ship captains: Captain John Kirby, Johnathon Collett, Richard Boulton and Edward Pierson Collett. By 1768 Boulton's descendant, Henry Crabb Boulton, owned the dock yard. He was also a life-long employee of the East India Company, serving as Clerk to the Committee and later as a director. The yard was managed at this time by the Perry family of shipbuilders, who in 1779 went on to purchase the yard from the Boulton family for £8,000.

The success of John Perry II's commissions from the Navy and the EIC during the 1780s gave him the opportunity to expand his yard. Between 1789-90 he had a new wet dock, called the Brunswick Dock, constructed on marshland that he owned to the east of the Blackwall Yard. This was designed and built by engineer and surveyor John Powsey. The dock walls were constructed from timber piles and sheeting¹⁷. A crowd of spectators came to see the official opening on 20th November 1790, marked by three East Indiamen sailing into the dock. The dock consisted of two basins, the larger of which could hold 30 of the massive East Indiamen¹⁸.

In William Daniell's view of the dock from 1803 (looking from north-west to south-east) it is seen filled with ships. In the foreground is a tall mast house which contained a revolutionary machine for removing and installing masts in just four hours, rather than two days¹⁹. To the left of the picture is the road leading down to Orchard House (previously seen on the early 18th century maps) which sits in the distance where the River Lea meets the Thames. The low level, marshy nature of the surrounding landscape is also apparent in this depiction.



Fig. 19: William Daniell's 'The Mast House and Brunswick Dock at Blackwall' (from Wikimedia Commons)

¹⁷ Survey of London, accessed 04/08/11

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

As John Perry grew older he gave or sold parts of the yard to his sons, John and Phillip, his son-in-law George Green and a shipbuilder John Wells. The firm Perry, Wells and Green then sold a large part of the dock to the East India Dock Company in 1803, including the Brunswick Dock which was to become the Export Dock of the new East India Docks (see below). The Blackwall Yard continued to run under the ownership of George Green and Henry Wigram (who had been sold the Wells' share of the business in 1814).

The yard continued to repair East Indiamen but also branched out into building steamships and whaling vessels. It is marked as 'Green's Dock', 'Ship Building Yard' or still 'Blackwall Yard' on late 19th century maps. Wigram and Son sold their half of the yard to the Midland Railway Company in 1877 for the construction of a new wet dock (renamed the 'Poplar Dock') and rail depot for the transportation of coal from land onto steamships. That dock was filled in during the mid-20th century. Shipbuilding continued at Green's dry docks under various ownerships up until the 1980s. It is partly now lost under the Reuters building but one of the late 18th century dry docks is preserved to the east.

2.4.5 The Establishment of the East India Dock Company and the Construction of the Docks; 1803-06

Though many East Indiamen were built or repaired at the Blackwall and later Brunswick yards, these docks were not used by the EIC for handling their import and export stock. The East Indiamen were usually lightened by the

unloading of some of their cargo at Long Reach near Gravesend and then taken up to the anchorage point at Blackwall where the rest of the stock was unloaded or loaded to licensed wharfs attended by customs officials. The anchorage at Blackwall was used partly because of its deep and sheltered moorings but also because it was less busy than the river upstream so less vulnerable to attack from pirates. The stock was taken on to the Company's warehouses in the City near Cutler Street and Billiter Street, not far from East India House.

The West India Docks were constructed on the Isle of Dogs between 1800 and 1802 and were highly profitable. Their secure facilities, such as high dock walls, forced pirates further down the river and the East Indiamen became more susceptible. This inspired a group of ship owners of the EIC to consider the idea of establishing a dock dedicated to the use of EIC ships. The group was led by Robert Wigram (of Wigram and Sons of the Blackwall Yard) and John Woolmoore, and was mainly formed of East India merchants, EIC directors, ship owners and ship builders.

In July 1803 they submitted an Act to parliament for "*the further Improvement of the Port of London, by making Docks and other works at Blackwall for the Accommodation of the East India shipping in said Port*"²⁰. The Act established the East India Dock Company (EIDC), run by thirteen directors, four of which had to also be directors of the EIC. The docks would have a monopoly over the ships trading to the East Indies and China, meaning that they were required to unload and load their stocks at the EID. Any cargo unloaded there had to then be stored in a warehouse owned by the EIC²¹.



Fig. 20: Perry's Mast House, shown in a 19th century illustration (supplied by LVRPA)

20 Cited in Ibid.

21 Ibid.

The EIDC commissioned plans for the dock from engineers experienced in dock construction; John Rennie and Ralph Walker. Funding came from private investors from the shipping trades and the site in Blackwall was a logical choice because of the company's historical and continued presence in the area. Perry, Wells and Green were willing to sell the Brunswick wet dock and land that they also owned to the north. Other land was also purchased from Robert Peers, George Wollaston, James and Thomas Mather to consolidate the site. Rennie and Walker proposed that the:

*"Docks formerly belonging to Messers. J. And W. Wells are to be used as follows, namely, that the larger of the two is to be converted into a Dock for Loading Outwards and the other is to be used as an Entrance Basin for the Large new Dock, proposed to be constructed in the Fields north of the Said Docks and for which the Ground is peculiarly suitable, the Surface being on Average about 6 feet under the High Water of an Ordinary Spring Tide. The Outwards Dock to be enlarged. The Earthen Bank now separating the Docks has an opening and the Engineers propose to provide for this opening a floating gate, the Bank to be faced with Brickwork."*²²

This plan to form the Export Dock and Entrance Basin from the old Brunswick Dock was soon revised and further land was acquired to the east to build a separate Basin which linked the Import and Export Docks and allowed transit of ships *"without Interference with the Important Business of loading, or discharging the vessels which will take place in the Brunswick and new docks"*²³. The excavation of the Import Dock and Basin began in September 1803 by contractor Hugh McIntosh. Bricks for the dock walls were made on site by Joseph Trimmer using brickearth excavated from the site itself. Construction continued until September 1807 and cost £322,608²⁴.

A plan of 1804 shows the finished East India Docks (see Fig.21). A large lock connected the River Thames and the 'Entrance Bason', which was a wedge shaped pool of water. On its west side was a further lock that led into the 'Dock for loading Outwards' (Export Dock) and at its north-west corner was a further lock leading into the large 'Dock for unloading Inwards' (Import Dock). One ship is depicted heading into the Entrance Basin lock, while nine others are shown moored in the Thames at the 'Blackwall Moorings'.

Text on the plan gives the following details about the dock:

*"DOCK for unloading INWARDS
Length 1410 Feet
Width 560 Feet
Quantity in Acres 18 1/8"*

*DOCK for loading OUTWARDS
Length 780 Feet
Width 520 Feet
Quantity in Acres 9 1/4"*

ENTRANCE BASON QUANTITY in ACRES 2 3/4"

Surrounding the Entrance Basin to the east and the Export Dock to the West was a wooden fence (marked 'b' on the plan). Around the entire Import Dock was a massive brick wall built as a security measure against thieves wishing to steal the valuable imported goods brought there. There were few buildings within the walls of the docks as goods were not kept there long. They were still transported along the 'Road to London' (marked on the plan) to the Company's existing warehouses.

A few buildings around the Export Dock are shown; a Steam Engine house between the Export Dock and Entrance Basin, an unidentified building to the south-west corner and John Perry's Mast House at the west edge of the pool. This building had been part of the sale to the EIDC but the attached mast shed behind remained part of the Blackwall Yard. That site is marked as 'Dock Yard' with the 'Old Dock', slips and dry docks depicted.

The former road to Orchard House, which ran along the north side of the Brunswick Dock and is shown as a dotted line on the plan, is shown diverted around the north and east sides of the Import Dock.

The Directors of the EIDC are also listed on the plan:

*"JOSEPH COTTON ESQ.R CHAIRMAN
JOHN WOOLMORE ESQ.R DEPUTY CHAIRMAN"*

*John Atkins Esq.r M.P
Henry Bonha, Esq.r
Sir Will.m Curtis Bar.t M.P
Abel Chapman Esq.r
Joseph Huddart Esq.r
Richard Lewin Jun.r Esq.r
John Roberts Esq.r
William Thornton Esq.r
Stephen Willaims Esq.r
Robert Wigram Esq.r M.P.
William Wells Jun.r Esq.r*

John Farran Esq.r Secr.y"

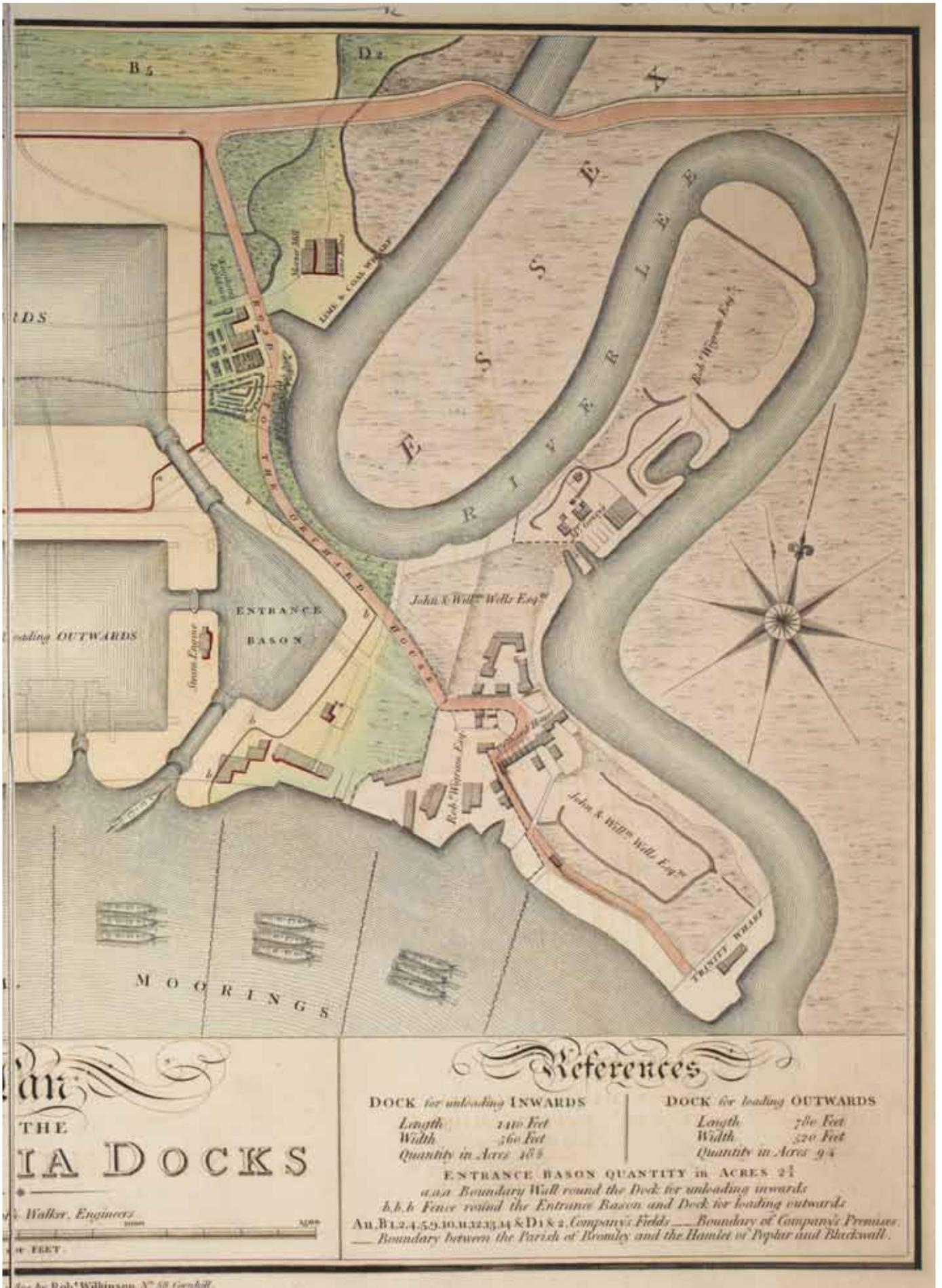
²² Cited in Pudney, 1975, p.50

²³ Survey of London, accessed 05/08/11

²⁴ Ibid.



Fig. 21: Plan of the East India Docks, 1804 (© British Library Board)



The docks were officially opened in a ceremony on 4th August 1806 with several East Indiamen entering the docks, along with the Trinity House²⁵ yacht. An orchestra played and gun salutes were fired. Estimates of the number of people who came to watch the opening range from 10,000 to 20,000²⁶. They included "such an assemblage of British dames in all the pride of beauty, grace, dignity, and dress, as was scarcely ever collected together"²⁷.

2.4.6 The East India Docks; 1806-1862

The process for ships entering the dock is described by Pattison. First the ship was brought up from Long Reach under the care of a Trinity House pilot. "At the dock entrance there was a hulk alongside which the ship could secure while she prepared for docking. Anchors, cables, topmasts, spars, water casks, and any guns and gunpowder still on board were discharged into craft, the crew removed, and the ship, dismantled, was taken in hand by the Transport Gang who hauled her into the dock, and brought her to berth."²⁸

The ships with their bare masts can be seen in William Daniell's 1808 painting of 'A View of the East India Docks'. The image looks from the north towards the south. The massive Import Dock is in the foreground

with wide quays for unloading cargo and only a few sheds along the western quay. The grand entrance to the dock can be seen in the bottom right of the image. This was an impressive 70ft high structure designed by Ralph Walker as a three gate triumphal arch with an attic storey, which contained the EIDC's board room, and a clock and bell turret on top²⁹. An inscription cut in Dundee stone over the gateway read:

*"Under the auspices of our most gracious Sovereign George III, and of the Imperial Parliament, the sanction of His Majesty's Government, and the patronage of the East India Dock Company, these Wet Docks, appropriated to the commerce of India, and ships in that employ, were accomplished in those eventful years MDCCCIV, MDCCCIV, and MDCCCVI. The first stone being laid March IV, MDCCCIV they were opened by the introduction of five ships from 1,200 to 800 tons with valuable cargoes on IV August MDCCCVI. This great undertaking originated in the laudable endeavour of the managing owners of ships in the Company's Service; and the important national objects of increased security to property and revenue, combined with improved accommodation, economy and dispatch, were thus early realised through the liberal subscriptions of the Proprietor and the unremitting attention of the Directors of the East India Company."*³⁰



Fig. 22: William Daniell's 'A View of the East India Docks' (© British Library Board)

25 Trinity House was a body established in 1514 by Royal Charter as the Guild of Holy Trinity to "regulate the pilotage of ships in the King's streams". They are still the General Lighthouse Council for England, Wales, the Channel Islands and Gibraltar and provide expert navigators and Deep Sea Pilots for ships trading in Northern European waters. <http://www.trinityhouse.co.uk/>, accessed 05/08/11

26 Pattison, 1964, p.32 and *Survey of London*, accessed 05/08/11

27 *The Gentleman's Magazine*, August 1806, cited in Pattison, 1964, p.32

28 Pattison, 1964, p.33

29 *Survey of London*, accessed 05/08/11. The gate was replaced with one of a similar design in 1913-14 to allow for the widening of the East India Dock Road. This was later demolished to make way for the Blackwall Tunnel northern approach road.

30 Cited in *Plassey's Legacy*, 2010, p.151. A 1913-14 replacement of this plaque was re-erected beside the Blackwall Tunnel northern approach in 1958.

The EIC's pepper warehouses are visible to the left of the picture. The Export Dock can be seen with Perry's Mast House on the western quay and the Blackwall Yard to the right of this. The Entrance Basin has only one ship moored in it and very few features on the surrounding quay. What is apparent in this picture is the low level of the docks, with sparse buildings and flat marsh land surrounding. The high number of both large and small ships on the Thames is indicative of the busy water highway of the river at the time. A group of ships can be seen moored at the foot of the Blackwall Stairs at the sheltered anchorage.

In the early years the Dock Master was Captain Philip Hughes, who was responsible for docking and undocking the ships. The administration of the dock was carried out by a Superintendent. Other permanent dock staff included the Transport Gang to bring the ships into the dock, gatekeepers and general labourers³¹. Most of the men employed were, however, temporary seasonal staff who worked when the ships would return or depart between September and June. The conditions of the Indian Ocean dictated that ships would not use the docks in the intervening months.

The temporary workers included dock labourers (or Dockers), six Superintendents of Labour (who were retired East India Officers that relied on their pensions for money in the off season) and around 100 occasional men to carry out the physical work of loading and unloading the ships. Hours of work were strictly between ten and three in the winter and ten and four in the summer³².

As part of the construction works for the docks, the EIDC paid for a new road, the East India Dock Road, to link the docks with Commercial Road, which led directly to the City and the EIC's warehouses. In the mid 19th century they also built a new bridge and road across the Lea to connect the site to Essex (now roughly where the footbridge near to the A13 is located).

The EIDC's monopoly over EIC trading vessels ended in 1827 but was renewed for six years under a similar agreement. However, it was in 1833 that the government ended the EIC's own monopoly over East Indian trade, which impacted on the EID as they now could not use the EIC's warehouses in the City. In a merger between the East and West India Dock Companies in 1838 the two were opened up to all trades. The EID thrived because of its larger locks and deeper Entrance Basin, which meant it could accommodate larger ships³³. Throughout the nineteenth century there was an increase in the number of warehouses built around the dock, now needed to store the cargo for import and export.



Fig. 23: The dock entrance gate (seen from the inside of the docks) (Supplied by LVRPA)



Fig. 24: A 19th century illustration of goods being unloaded at the East India Docks (Supplied by LVRPA)

31 Ibid., p. 34

32 *Survey of London*, accessed 05/08/11

33 Ibid.

Stanford's Map of 1862 (Fig.25) shows warehouses along all four quays of the Import Dock and on the north side of the Export Dock. On the south side of the Export Dock is the Brunswick Wharf, built by the EIDC in the 1830s for the docking of steam ships, and also a railway terminus which was built in 1859 to carry stock directly away from the docks. The development of the local area, which was due to the commercial influence of the expanding docks, is also evident in this map. Poplar has changed from a row of houses either side of the High Street to buildings which fill the surrounding area. Orchard House has gone, to be replaced with ship building yards, iron works and Trinity Buoy Wharf, while the spur of land north contains a cooorage³⁴, tar works, iron works and the Thames Plate Glass Works.

2.4.7 The Entrance Basin; 1804-1909

The original excavation of the Entrance Basin was carried out by Hugh McIntosh for £4,128, while the brick and stonework was by Richards and Cawford³⁵. The Basin was not originally as large as it is today; it did not stretch as far north and east as it does now. An Entrance Lock in the south-west corner linked it to the Thames and at 48ft wide was the largest lock in the Port of London when built³⁶. The lock is shown on a contemporary plan (Fig.26). Rennie and Walker's innovative use of a curved base to the lock meant that it could be deeper, allowing larger ships to pass through. This was an adaptation of the 'banana' dock walls first employed by William Jessop in Dublin and Bristol in the 1790s. The lock cost £38,600 to build³⁷. A Communication Lock linked the Basin and the Import Dock. This was also 48ft wide and cost £29,322³⁸. A channel, or 'cut', linked the Basin and Export Dock.

In 1815 it was decided to extend the Entrance Basin as it was deemed too small to cope with the levels of ships passing through. Land was purchased from Peter Pommel for £5,000. William Bough of Limehouse carried out the excavation work and wooden wharves replaced the earthen banks on the eastern side of the Basin. The total cost of construction was £18,191³⁹. Also in 1815 an iron wing bridge was constructed over the cut into the Export Dock, which was designed by Ralph Walker and cast by the Horseley Iron Company of Tipon in Staffordshire and erected by Hunter and English⁴⁰.

A plan by Horwood of 1819 shows the new bridge and the new section of the Basin (Fig.27). At this time a promontory of land projected into the north side of Basin, probably to provide more mooring positions. An Engine House is marked to the west of the Basin, with various numbered sheds to the south. The promontory is still in existence on Stanford's 1862 map.

A major programme of works to the Basin was carried out in 1874-79. The main part of the scheme was a new lock from the Thames into the Basin, to the east of the existing one. This was to allow larger vessels into the dock. The proposed works are shown on a plan (Fig.28 and 29), which includes a note by the Board of Trade approving the works:

*"In service of powers vested in them by "The Thames Causeway Act, 1857", the Board of Trade approve of the Subinterment and Pier Head which the East and West India Dock Company propose to construct off their premises at Blackwall, as shown by the plan and section on this drawing. Board of Trade March 3rd 1875."*⁴¹

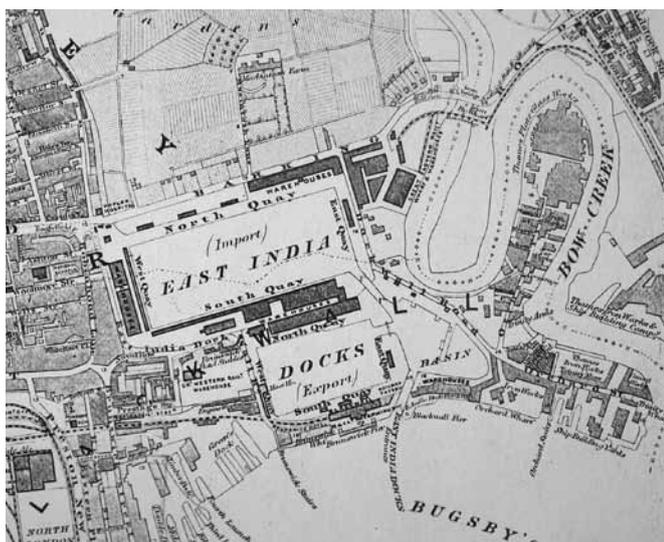


Fig. 25: Stanford's Map 1862 (LMA)

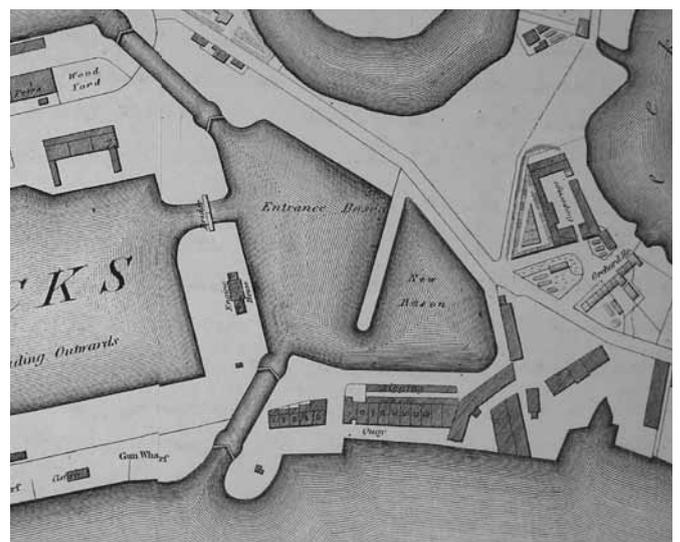


Fig. 27: Horwood's map 1819 (LMA)

34 Site where barrels were made
 35 Survey of London, accessed 08/08/11
 36 Ibid.
 37 Ibid.
 38 Ibid.

39 Ibid.
 40 Ibid.
 41 TNA, BT 356.839

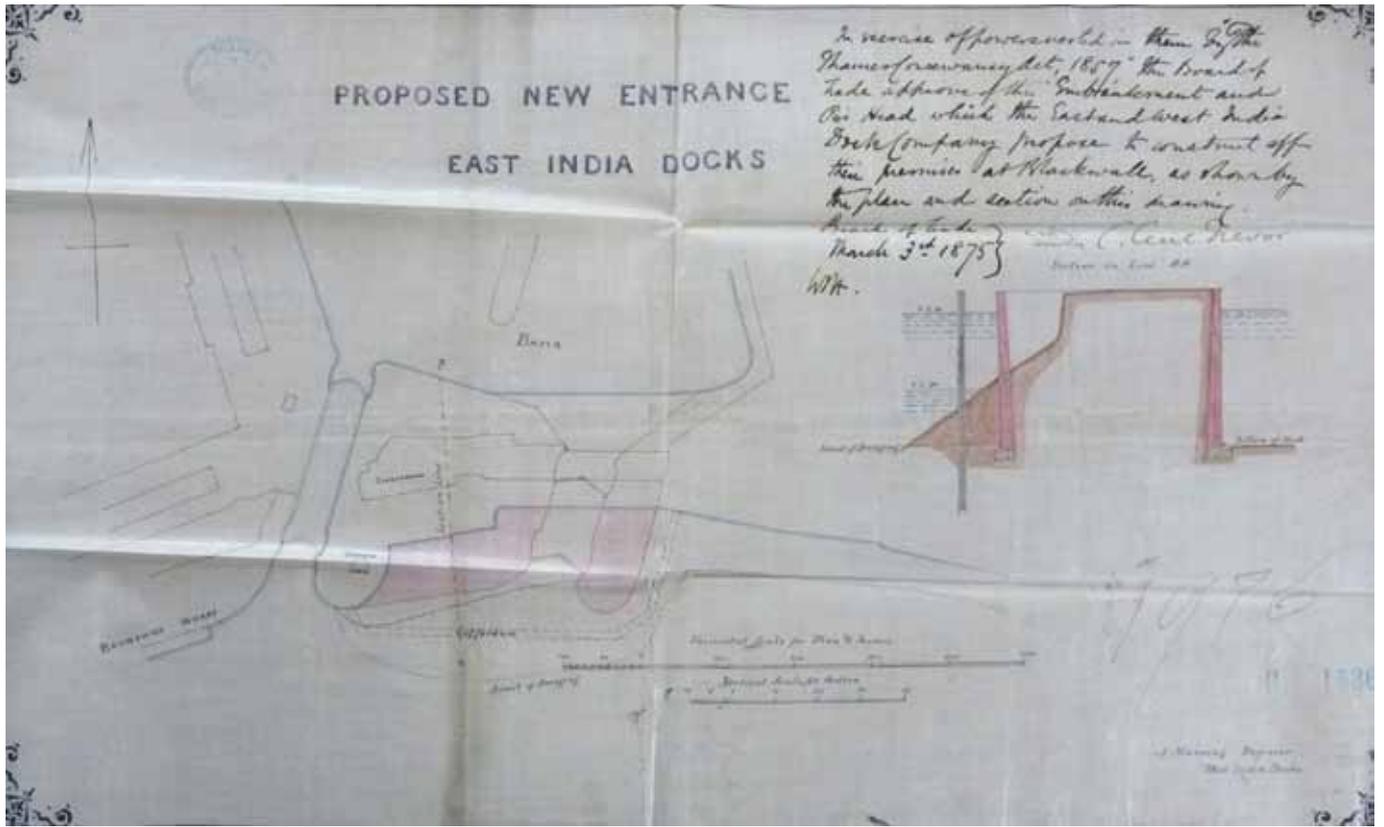


Fig. 28: Plan of Proposed New Entrance to the East India Docks, 1875 (TNA)

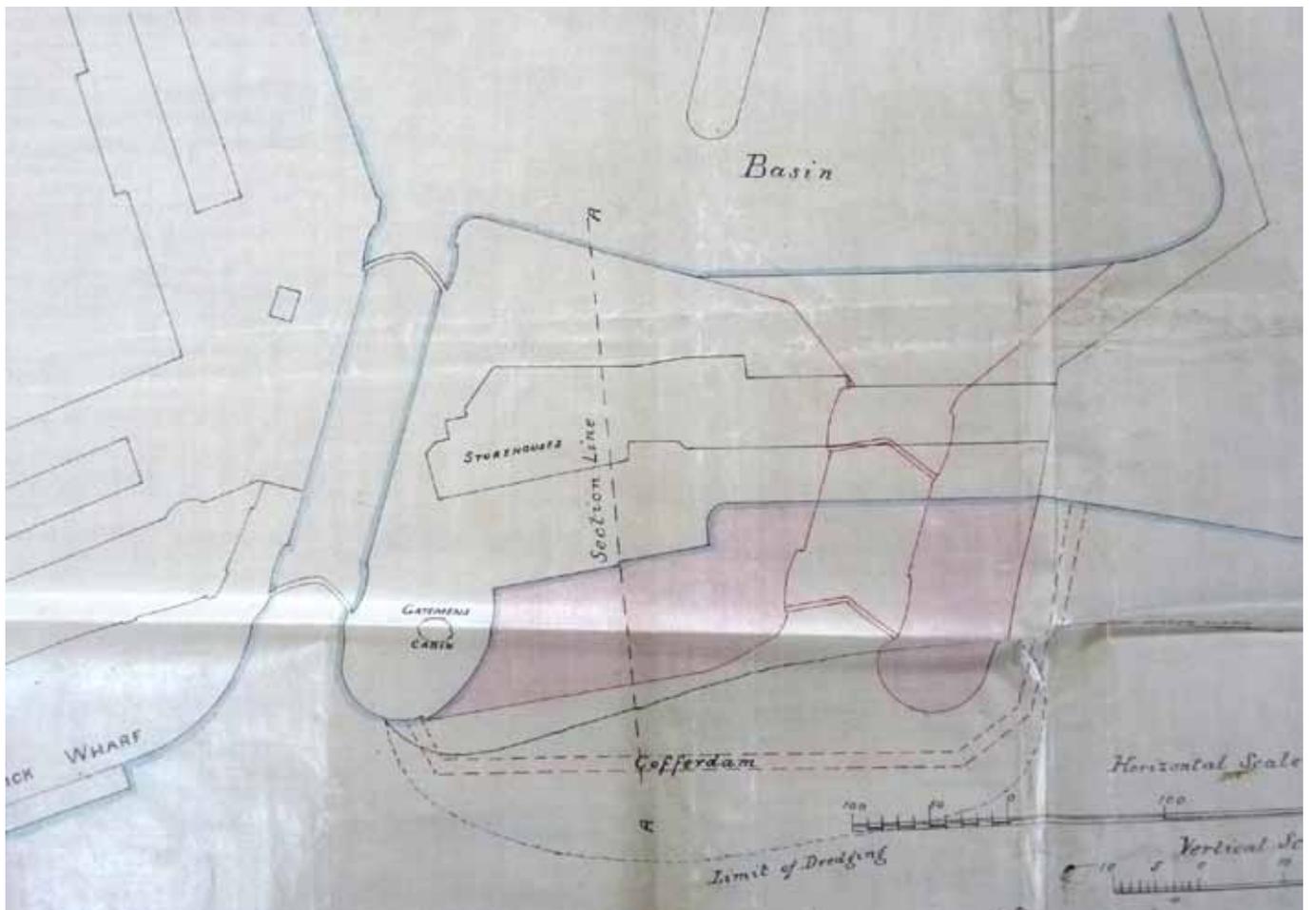


Fig. 29: Plan of Proposed New Entrance to the East India Docks, 1875 - Detail (TNA)

Work at this time also included enlarging and deepening the Basin, and the construction of warehouses on the surrounding land. The work was designed by Augustus Manning, the Superintending Engineer of the East and West India Dock Company for the cost of £204,000⁴².

The works brought the eastern quay to the line it is today and involved the removal of the promontory from the northern side of the Basin. Plans in the Port of London Authority archives at the Museum of Docklands show the warehouses built on the north and east quays⁴³. Those on the northern quay occupied an irregular shaped space between the quay and Orchard Road. The warehouses were a three storey building with a series of north-south pitched roofs.

On the elevation facing Orchard Road regularly spaced windows ran across the length of the building, though those on the ground floor appear to have been blind windows. The building was set back in two places to form two open yards. On the side to the Quay the ground floor appeared as an arcade, either open or with large double doors to each bay, with the first and second floors containing windows. The gables were each decorated with a roundel detail.

On the eastern quay were two separate warehouses, also three storeys and with pitched roofs. These were for export goods on the ground floor and import on the upper floors. They were used by Messrs Donald Curries and Company during the 19th century for their Union Castle Line of Cape mail steamers⁴⁴. The liners are shown in the East India Dock in a photograph of 1902. The position of this photograph is not entirely certain but it could be looking westwards across the Basin to the two entrances into the Export Dock where the liners are moored.

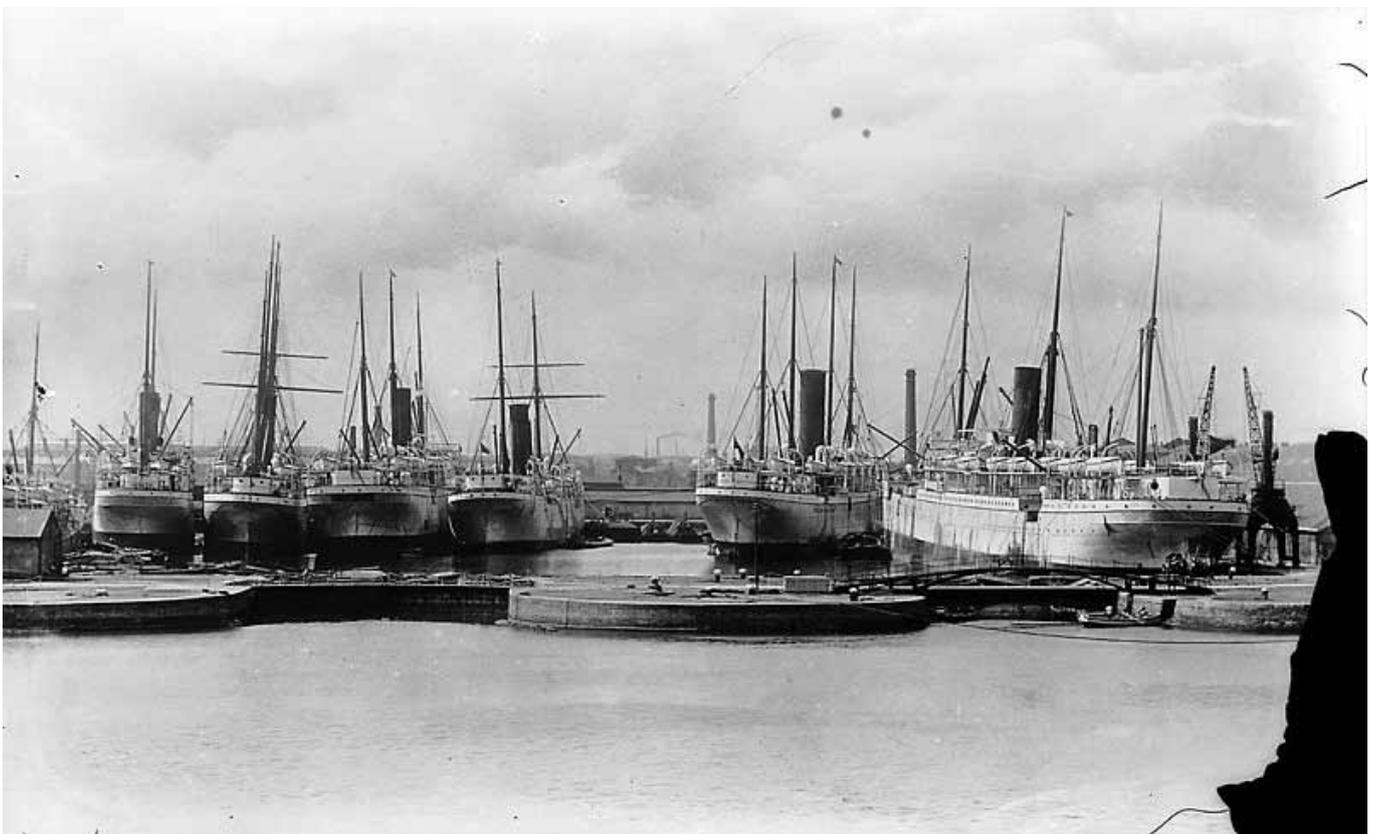


Fig. 30: Photographs of 1902 showing Union Castle Liners in the East India Docks (from Wikimedia Commons)

42 Ibid.

43 Those of north quay not reproduced due to copyright restrictions. Plans are held at PLA archive but reference numbers are not known.

44 Ibid.

The two warehouses were linked with an arcade which supported an overhead crane road on which hydraulic cranes could travel. These could pick up goods from ships and swing them directly into the first or second floor storage spaces. A ground floor plan (Fig.31), dated 1895 and showing an extension to the north of one of the blocks, shows the open spaces within the buildings punctuated by supporting columns. Three cranes are set on the arcaded crane road, marked on the plan as blue boxes with a cross through the middle. Underneath the arcade are rails on which railway carriages could be set to transport goods around the site.

The proposals on the plans show that lifts were added into the buildings. The boundary wall follows an irregular line (which partly lines up with the existing boundary wall today). Built up against it are WCs, urinals, a Hyde Accumulator, offices, stores and a gear store. There were two entrance gates into the site in this section of boundary wall; one to the north-east onto Orchard Road and one facing south-east.

The changes made in the late 19th century can be seen clearly when the 1867 and 1893 OS maps are compared. The Basin has a much more defined shaped to the north and east, with the promontory removed. The new lock to the south-east (which still survives today) has been constructed, as have the warehouses to the north and east. A T-shaped block appears to have been added to the east side of the north warehouse on the eastern quay by 1893. These maps also show details like mooring posts, indicated with small dots, and capstans⁴⁵, indicated with a dot and the letters 'Cn.'

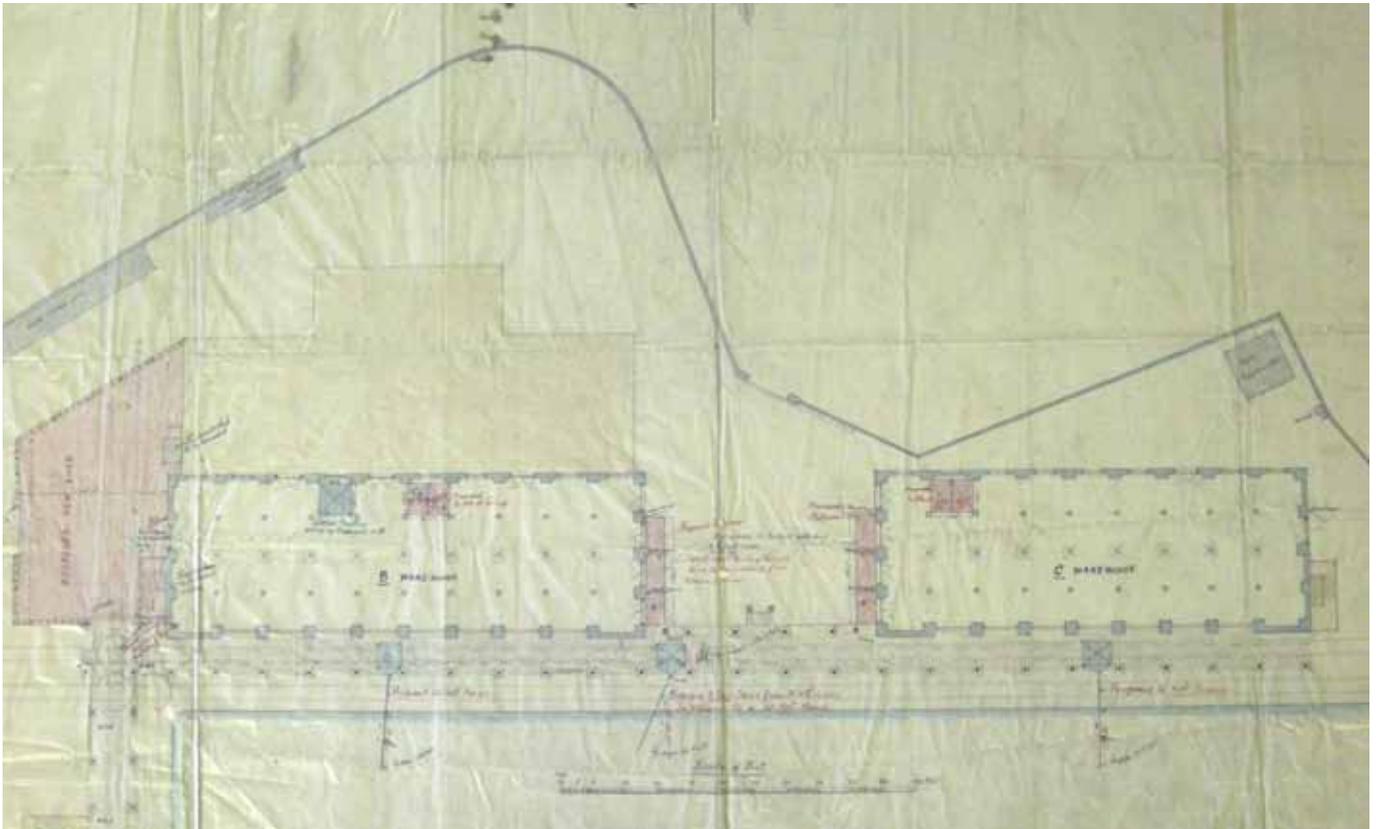


Fig. 31: Plan of the warehouses on the eastern way, 1895 (© Museum of Docklands)

45 A capstan is a machine with a drum that rotates around a vertical spindle, used for hauling in heavy ropes. www.dictionary.com

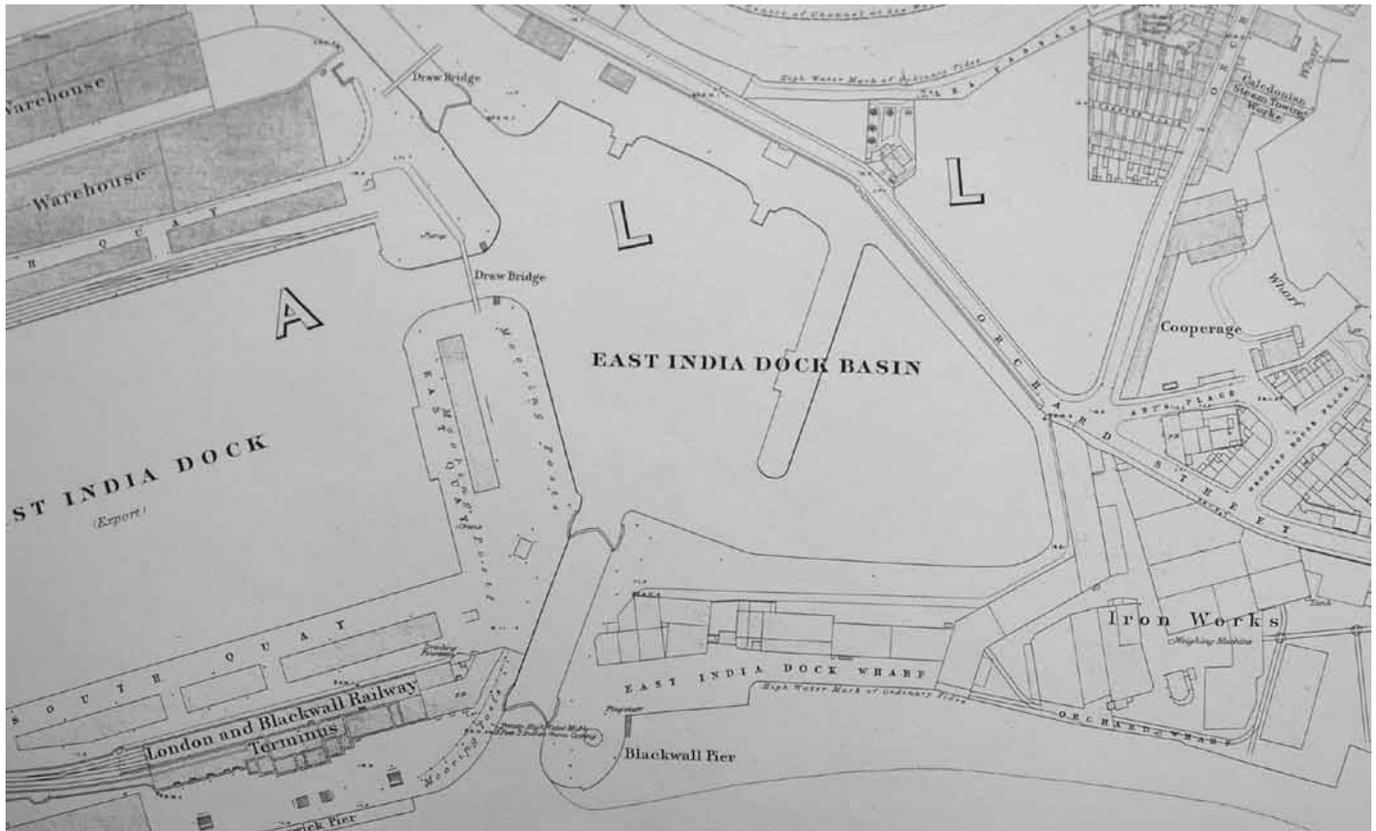


Fig. 32: 1867 OS map (from Tower Hamlets Local Archives)



Fig. 33: 1893 OS map (from Tower Hamlets Local Archives)

One interesting building shown on both plans is a small hexagonal block at the south-east end of the original entrance lock, which was the lock keeper's cabin (demolished 1819-20). One of the capstans marked on the OS maps is seen in the foreground of the image.

The next stage of works to the Entrance Basin came in 1897 with the construction of a new cut into the Export Dock. This was located to the south of the existing cut and included the construction of a 60ft wide new lock. The excavation work was carried out by H.B. and F.A. James, with the lock gates by the Thames Iron Works Company and the gate machinery by Sir W.G. Armstrong Whitworth and Company, with a total cost of £25,525⁴⁶. A plan of 1897 shows the location of the new cut and that it was significantly wider than the existing one. Notes on the plan about bore hole sampling carried out on site show that the excavators had to dig through soil, clay, ballast and London clay to build the new cut.



Fig. 34: The lock keeper's cabin (supplied by LVRPA)

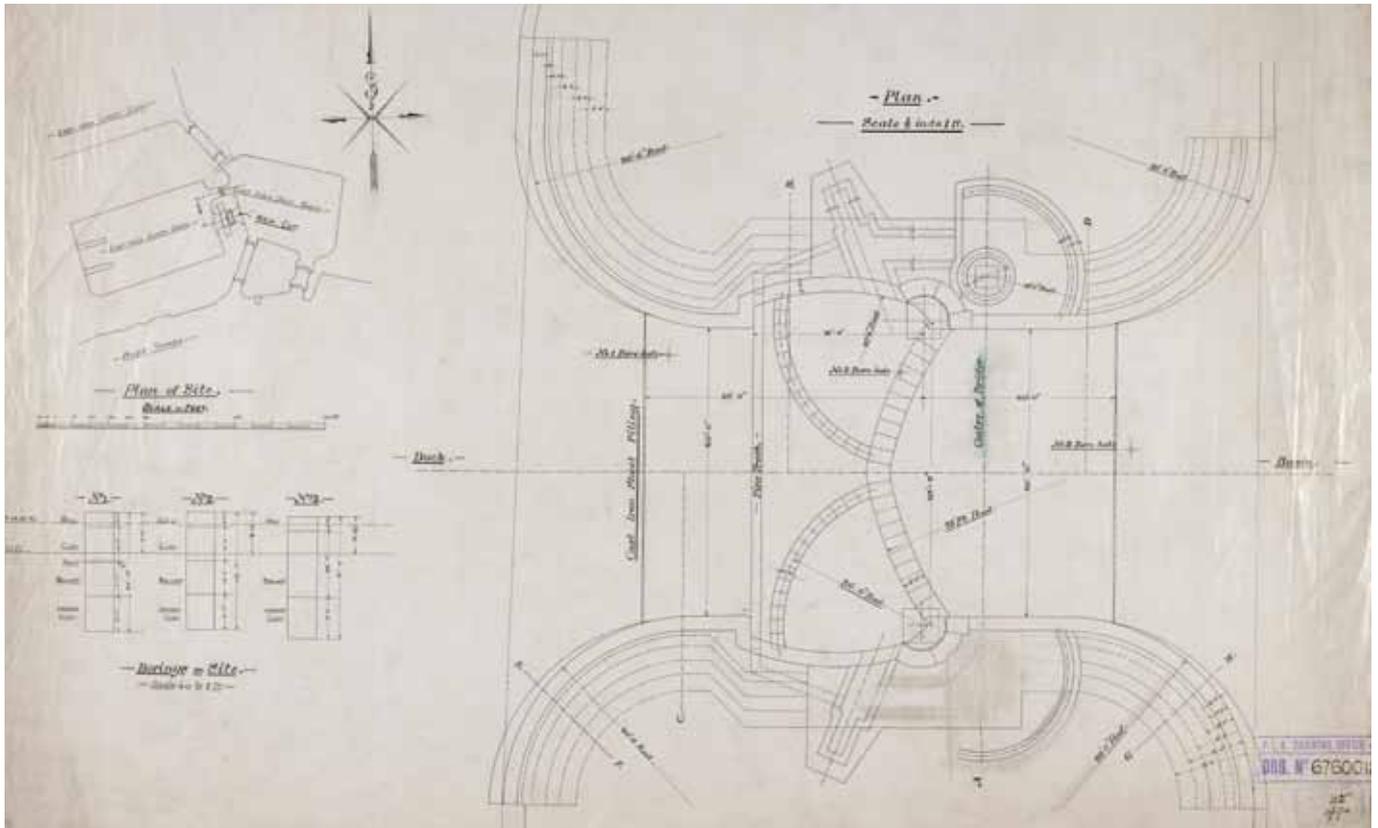


Fig. 35: Plan of the new cut from the Basin to the Export Dock, 1897 (© Museum of Docklands)

2.4.8 The Port of London Authority; 1909-1939

The Port of London Authority (PLA) was established in 1908 by Parliamentary Act to create a unified port authority for London. This was as a reaction to the Port of London suffering from *“high charges, slow ship turnaround, insufficient shipping channel depths and damaging levels of competition between the enclosed docks and riverside wharves”* which threatened *“the Port’s national and international position”*⁴⁷. The East and West India Dock Company therefore came under the control of the PLA.

Between 1912 and 1916 the PLA carried out renovations to the East India Docks, including the reconstruction of the north quay of the Import Dock⁴⁸. A plan (see Figs 37 & 38) shows that there were improvement works to the Communication Lock c.1913-15, which included deepening it to allow larger ships through.

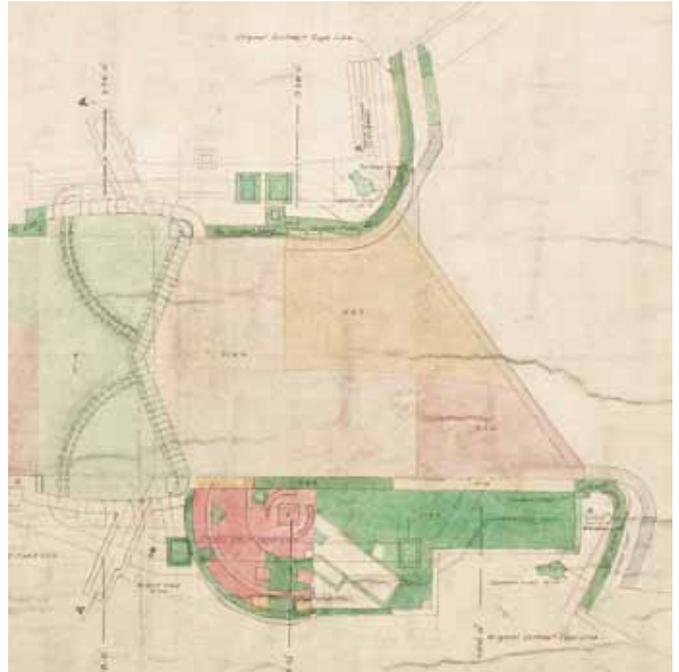


Fig. 37: Detail of Plan of improvement works to the Communication Lock, c1914-15 (© Museum of Docklands)



Fig. 36: Inter-war aerial photograph of the East India Docks (supplied by LVRPA)

47 <http://www.pla.co.uk/centenary>, accessed 10/08/11

48 Survey of London, accessed 10/08/11

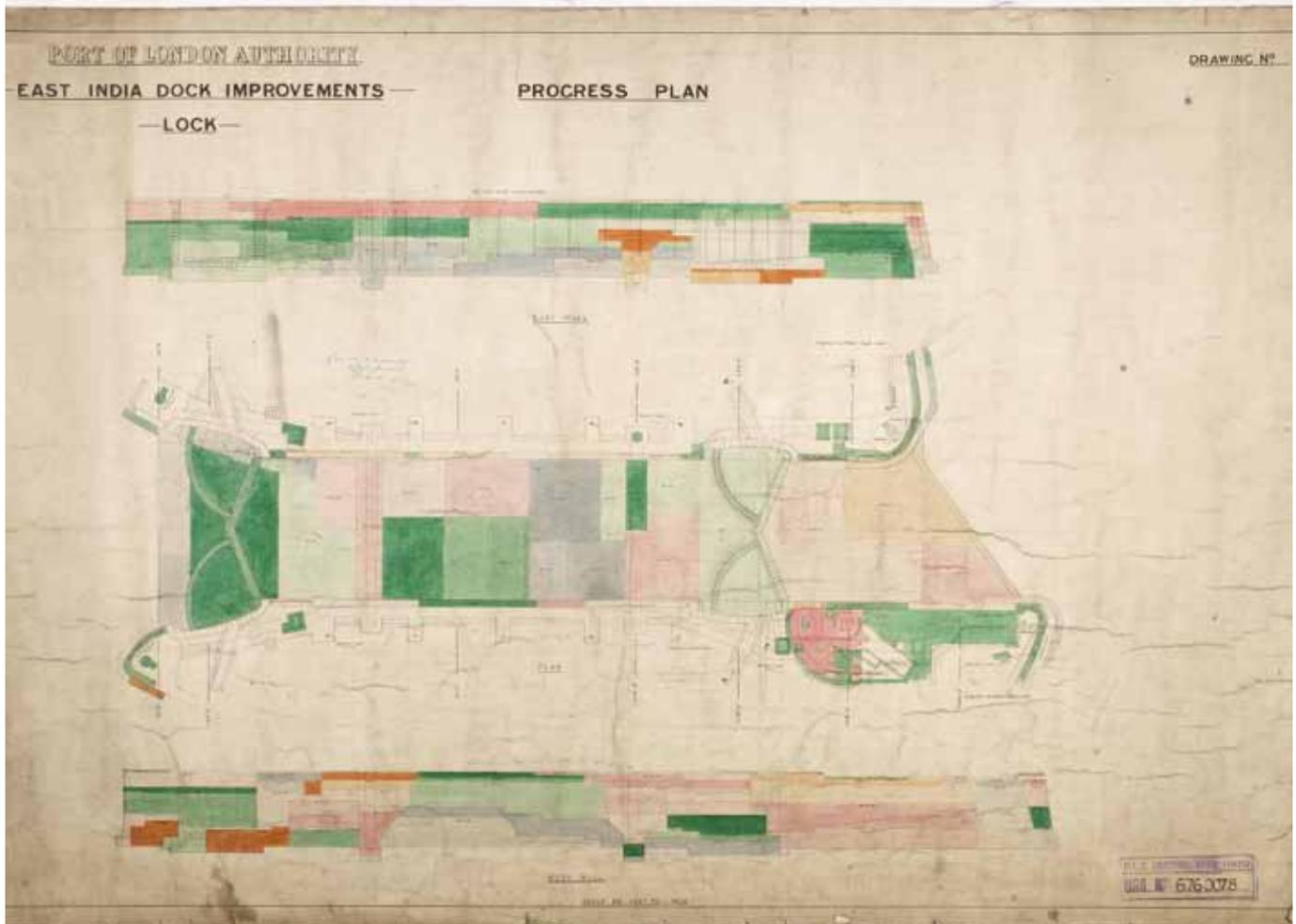


Fig. 38: Plan of improvement works to the Communication Lock, c1914-15 (© Museum of Docklands)

The plan is coloured up in sections marked with dates, which appear to show how refurbishment work progressed. It shows that the south-west corner of the lock entrance was reorganised to the arrangement that survives today; with a sunken area with steps leading up to the southern end and the capstan, bollard and two fairleads that still exist. The plan also depicts the south-eastern corner of the lock entrance, which today is hidden under vegetation growth on the north side of the Basin.

2.4.9 World War II and the Aftermath; 1939-1950

During the Second World War the Import Dock was used for the construction of Mulberry floating harbours. These were built as floating docks and roadways, which were assembled along the Normandy coastline to aid the offloading of cargo and vehicles onto the shore. A photograph of 1944 shows vehicles on a floating roadway at Omaha beach.

The docks suffered badly from bomb damage during the War, being a prime strategic target. A bomb damage map produced after hostilities had ended shows the level of destruction. Black coloured buildings, such as the northern warehouse on the eastern quay of the Basin, were totally destroyed. Purple were damaged beyond repair (the old pepper warehouses on the east side of the Import Dock) and dark red were seriously damaged (the middle shed on the north side of the Import Dock). A huge number of houses north of the docks are also shown to have been seriously damaged or totally destroyed.



Fig. 39a: Aerial image of the site in 1945 (© The GeoInformation Group)

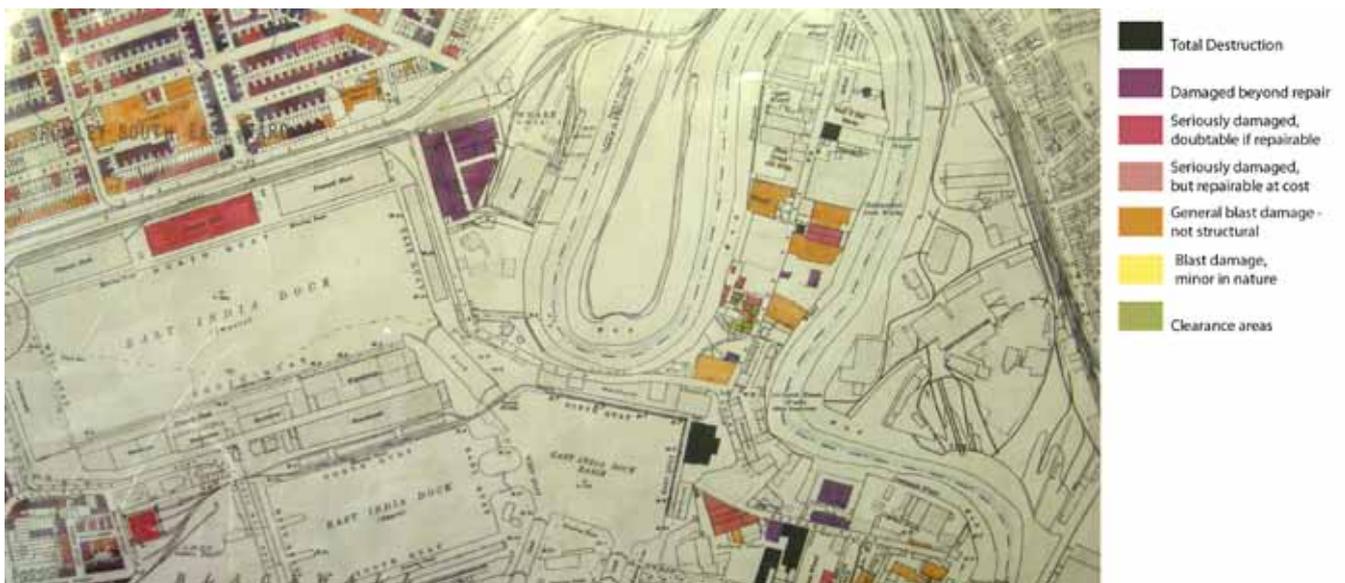


Fig. 40: War Damage Map 1940s (LMA)

What is not shown on the map is that the Export Dock itself was so badly damaged that it was not reopened after hostilities ended. The site was sold by the PLA to the Central Electricity Board in 1946 for the construction of Brunswick Wharf Power Station. It was built between 1947 and 1956, and involved the filling in of the Export Dock, the two passageways between the Export Dock and Entrance Basin, and the western (original) lock from the Thames to the Basin (the latter just seen filled in at the bottom left hand corner of the 1951 OS map).



Fig. 39: A Mulberry floating harbour off Omaha Beach 1944 (from Wikimedia Commons)

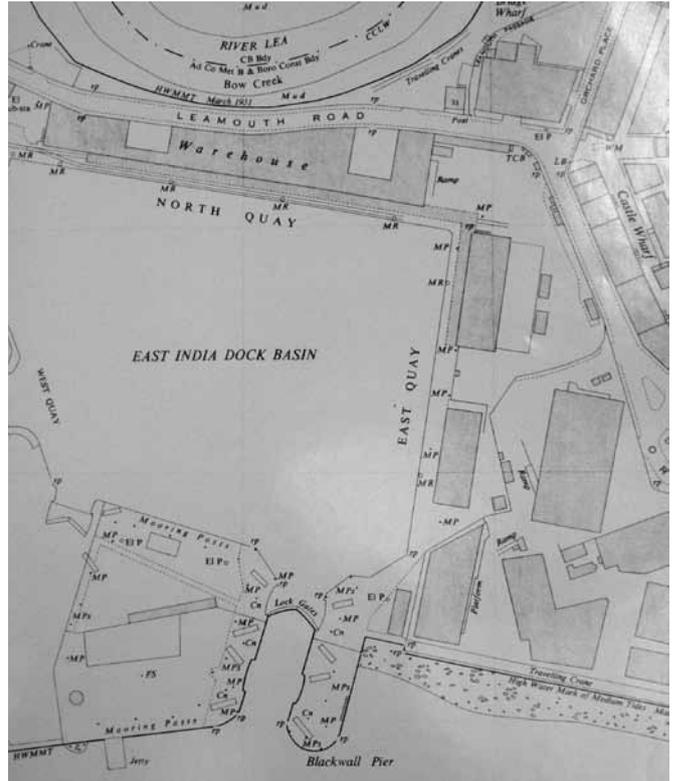


Fig. 41: 1951 OS map (from Tower Hamlets Local Archives)



Fig. 42: Photograph of the entrance lock, 1969 (© City of London, London Metropolitan Archives)



Fig. 43: Photograph of the north and east quays, 1969 (© City of London, London Metropolitan Archives)

2.4.10 The Late 20th Century; 1950 - Present Day

New technologies for shipping were being developed after the War, particularly the introduction of containers, and much of the cargo previously carried by water was now handled by road or rail transport⁴⁹. This led the PLA to close several docks along the Thames including the East India Docks. They had been used since 1944 for short-sea and coastal traffic, including Fred Olsen Lines which dealt in fruit and vegetables from the Canary Islands⁵⁰. The users of the docks moved out by 1967 and the docks closed.

A set of photographs from 1969⁵¹ show how the docks appeared at the time of their closure.

One image shows the remaining entrance lock, filled up with debris. The surrounding land is starting to become derelict, with old metal buoys and tanks to the left. A memorial to the Virginia Settlers (erected in 1928) can be seen on the western side of the lock.

A second image shows the north and east quays. The end of the lock into the Import Dock is in the

foreground on the left. These are the remains that are currently overgrown with vegetation on the north side of the Basin, though the metal features do not appear to survive today. The north quay has a post and chain fence along the edge. Behind this is a pile of rubble where the warehouses have been cleared. A tall brick wall denotes the boundary to Leamouth Road. On the east quay stands a brick warehouse. This was the warehouse which was shown as totally destroyed on the bomb damage map, though perhaps the ground floor walls were salvaged and retained to create this one storey shed. A further, more temporary looking shed on the eastern quay appears just at the right hand side of the picture and an electricity pylon has been constructed on the north-east corner of the site.

The rest of the dock site was sold to the Central Electricity Generating Board in 1971 for over £1 million⁵². The Import Dock was gradually filled in and by the late 1980s a number of large developments had been constructed within the original dock walls, including the Financial Times Print Works and Telephone Europe. A few sections of dock wall now survive along the south and east sides of the old Import Dock, though much rebuilt. A brick pumping station also survives on Naval Row. A further section of dock wall sits along the middle of the Leamouth Road to the east, in the centre of a

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid.

51 Held at LMA, ref: SC/PHL/02/912

52 *Survey of London*, accessed 10/08/11



Fig. 44: The surviving Import Dock wall on Naval Row



Fig. 45: The pumping station on Naval Row



Fig. 46: The Import Dock wall on Leamouth Road



Fig. 47: The gates to the Pepper Warehouses on Leamouth Road

dual carriageway. Opposite this, on the east side of the road, is the gateway to the former pepper warehouses. A large plaque, which was produced in c1913-14 as a replacement to the original inscription on the main dock entrance is now set on the northern approach to the Blackwall Tunnel.

The Brunswick Wharf Power Station was demolished in 1984 and the site left vacant for a number of years, even being marked as a 'Golf Driving Range' on the 1994 OS map. In the late 20th century it was redeveloped as the Virginia Quays residential development, named after the Virginia Settlers who departed from Blackwall in the early 17th century.

In 1986 the remaining parts of the EIDB were taken over by the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC), which was established in 1981 to secure the regeneration of the London Docklands after the progressive closure of the docks along this stretch of the river⁵³. Michael Heseltine, who was one of the original members of the LDDC, wrote that the docklands at the

53 <http://www.lddc-history.org.uk/lddcachievements/index.html>, accessed 10/08/11

time were "immense tracts of dereliction...The rotting docks- long since abandoned for deep-water harbours able to take modern container ships downstream- the crumbling infrastructure that had once supported their thriving industry and vast expanses of polluted land left behind by modern technology and enhanced environmentalism. The place was a tip: 6,000 acres of forgotten wasteland."⁵⁴

In the early 1990s Leamouth Road was replaced with the Lower Lea Crossing, a large road system crossing over the River Lea. This meant the truncating of the northern side of the Basin. The construction of a raised track for the Docklands Light Railway in the early 1990s now also cuts across the north-west corner of the site.

By this time the warehouses on the eastern quay had been demolished and the memorial to the Virginia Settler's had been moved from its original location. It is now located further west along the riverside next to the Virginia Quays development.

54 Heseltine, 2000, *Life in the Jungle*, Hodder and Stoughton, cited in Ibid.

The LDDC turned the EIDB into a bird reserve and restored it in the mid-1990s. This included the completion of pathways around the site and a major programme of restoration to the lock gates, including sealing them shut. A new entrance was formed at the north-east corner of the site, which included the construction of a set of gates by renowned British sculptor Sir Antony Caro in 1996. The northern edge of the Basin was partly filled in during 1997 to encourage bird life to stay and nest. It is not known how much of the northern quay survives as this area is now covered with vegetation. The group of trees and meadow was established around the site.

During the 1990s a pipeline was built through the site, including a gantry bridge over the northern end of the lock to carry the pipes, by Pura Foods, a company manufacturing and supplying edible oils and fats. The pipeline supplied their manufacturing plant north of the Lower Lea Crossing, on the promontory surrounded by a loop of the River Lea. Pura Foods also own the jetty on the Thames river front at the EIDB site. This plant closed in 2006 and the pipeline became redundant.

The site was sold to the LVRPA in 1998 who have retained it as a nature reserve and open space. Some alterations to the site were made in 2006, including a new ramp to the north-west entrance and the removal of a ramp on the river front⁵⁵.

The surrounding area has changed dramatically in recent years. Former industrial sites have gone and have been replaced with residential developments (to the west) and office blocks (on the former site of the Import Dock). Major roads have been built. Some of the former industrial sites remain vacant, such as the Orchard Wharf site adjacent to the EIDB to the east, while others have been renovated for new uses. Trinity Buoy Wharf to the east is a particular example of this. The complex of warehouses was redeveloped from 2008 to provide office spaces, residential accommodation, cafes, artists' studio spaces, performance spaces, exhibition galleries, an elementary school and a branch of the London Art School.

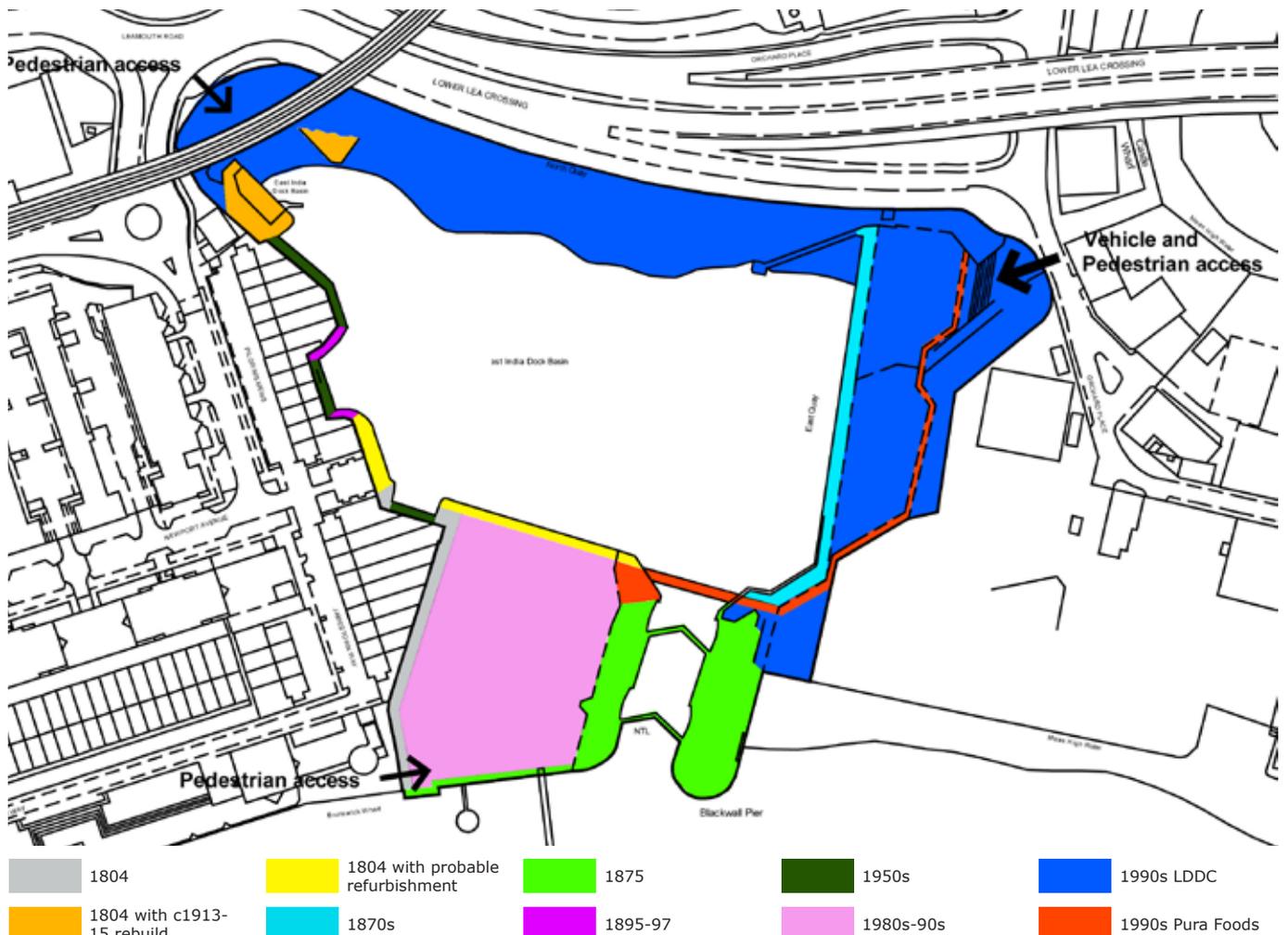


Fig. 48: Historic Development Plan

3.0 Significance

3.1 Significance Values

Significance can be defined as the sum of the cultural values which make a building or site important to society. When a building is listed the following criteria are used to assess its heritage interest: architectural interest, historic interest and group value⁵⁶. These are also categories used when making a full assessment of the significance of a place. However, there are also more intangible qualities that contribute towards making a place significant, such as former uses, local distinctiveness and importance to the local community, which should also be considered. Cultural significance is unique to each place and therefore the criteria by which significance is assessed are also site specific.

The following assessment of significance is based in English Heritage's *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (2008) which recommends making assessments under the following categories:

- **Evidential Value:** the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.
- **Historical Value:** the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.
- **Aesthetic Value:** the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.
- **Communal Value:** the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

As the ecology of the EIDB is a key aspect of the site, this will also be discussed within section 3.3.

Each topic discussed will be given a rating to determine which aspects of the site's significance are crucial to its heritage value and which are of lesser significance.

- **High:** A feature or space which is important at national or international level, such as highly graded listed buildings and landscapes. They will have high cultural value and form an essential piece of the history of the building, while greatly contributing towards its character and appearance. Large scale alteration or removal is likely to be strongly resisted.
- **Medium:** Buildings or sites which are important at regional level or sometimes higher. Spaces or features will have some cultural importance and play an important role in defining the character and appearance of the site. Efforts should be made to retain these features, though a greater degree of flexibility in terms of alteration would be possible than for those items of high significance.
- **Low:** Usually of local value only but possibly of regional significance for group or other value. Items have minor cultural importance and add something to the character or appearance of the buildings or site. A greater degree of alteration or removal would be possible than for items of high or medium significance, though a low value does not necessarily mean a feature is expendable.
- **Neutral:** These spaces or features have little or no cultural value but do not detract from the character or appearance of the building or site. Alteration is likely to be possible.
- **Intrusive:** Features which actually detract from the values of the site and its character and appearance. Efforts should be made to remove these features.

3.2 Summary of Significance

The East India Dock Basin has high significance as the principal remaining part of the historically important East India Docks, which are linked to the history of the development of London docks and the East End in general, as well as the East India Company and their influence in India. The East India Dock Basin is the only former dock in London to have been converted into a nature reserve and as such has high ecological significance. It is important as a habitat for birds, as the furthest site up the Thames to have a salt marsh and as a rare Thames-side woodland. It also has high significance for the local community as a quiet haven

away from busy city life and as a place to observe nature. The site has aesthetic appeal, particularly in its spectacular views across the River Thames.

Other important themes include the wealth of documentary evidence about the site which can teach us about its history, the site's setting at the southern end of the Lea River, associations with the engineers Rennie and Walker and the artist Sir Antony Caro, and historical and present day links with the local Bengali and Bangladeshi community. The site also has great potential as a place for education and volunteering opportunities to further benefit the local community.

Theme	Significance Value
Evidential	
Survival of the Fabric	High
Documentary Evidence	Medium
Archaeology	Unknown but potential for finds of up to High
Historical	
East India Company	High
London Docks	High
Early Historical Events	Medium
Riverside Locality	Low
Recent History	Low to Neutral
Technology	Medium/High
Aesthetic	
The Dock Basin	Medium
Views	High to Low
River Lea Setting	Medium
Intrusive Features	Intrusive
Communal	
Local Residents and Users	High
Bengali/Bangladeshi Community	Medium
Schools and Education	Low
Events	Medium/Low
Ecological	
Ecological	Medium/High, Siltation Intrusive

3.3 Significance Discussion

3.3.1 Evidential Value

Survival of the Fabric

A substantial amount of the historic fabric of the Basin has survived, including the 1875 lock, historic dock walls and parts of other locks to the Thames, Import and Export Docks. These remains help the visitor to get a sense of the layout of the Basin and visualise its appearance as a working dock. Other smaller elements also survive; mooring posts, capstans, the remains of the hydraulic gate operating system in the machinery pits and the lock itself are all physical evidence of the types of techniques and processes that had to be carried out to move ships around the dock.



Fig. 49: Industrial archaeology at the EIDB: workings of the hydraulic lock gates system, as seen through the grilles over the machinery pits

The other remains of the wider dock complex, such as the Import Dock walls and pepper warehouse gates, give a sense of the sheer scale of the place and demonstrate aspects of dock life, such as the very high perimeter walls creating the security necessary to protect valuable cargo unloaded within them. They can also teach us about the wider history of docks in London, which were once a massive industry in this area but have all but disappeared. The EIDB is the largest surviving element of the EID which can give a sense of the historic dock.

The area has, however, changed dramatically over the second half of the 20th century, with the majority of the Import and Export Docks lost under later roads and buildings. None of the warehouses previously located around the dock have survived. It can be difficult to imagine how the site once appeared without the aid of historic maps or photographs.

High Significance

Documentary Evidence

Documentary evidence can significantly help to give a better idea of how the site was presented and the exact location of the structures and pools that are now gone. A study of historic maps can also show how the site has developed over time. They show, for example, the change between the more open dock with few structures in the early years when goods were transported straight out of the docks to the late 19th and early 20th centuries when the focus was turned to export goods and larger

sheds and warehouses were needed. Photographs also show how the EID appeared and the industrial nature of the surrounding area. Documentary evidence, such as written recollections of dock life and minutes of EIDC meetings, can give us more of a picture about the nature of the work and lives of the dockers.

There is much more documentary evidence held in archives which it has not been possible to consult during this study. This could be explored further to better understand the whole of the EID complex.

Medium Significance

Archaeology

Other remains of the former dock structures may remain buried around or near the site and have the potential to give further evidence about the industrial history of the site. For example, there is a wide open space where the warehouses on the eastern quay were once located. There has been some excavation for the creation of the wide steps to the north-east entrance but most of the area of relatively undisturbed. Therefore some remains of the foundations of the building in this location could survive. Parts of the lock to the Import Dock are hidden under ivy on the north-west side of the site. The creation of the reed bed seems to have involved the removal of the north quay but there is a possibility that some remains could survive. Additionally at the west side of the woodland there could be remains of the earlier lock from the Thames which was filled in during the mid-20th century.

Unknown Significance but potential for finds of up to High Significance

3.3.2 Historical Value

East India Company

The East India Docks are intrinsically linked with the history of the EIC, a company which came to hold great influence and power internationally. This association goes much further than the building of the docks as the EIC used the Blackwall anchorage point from the 17th century and constructed the original Blackwall Docks in 1614, once located not far to the west of the EID site. Though they did not continue to own those docks, they continued to have their ships repaired and constructed there. The EIC was of course later linked to the EIDC, which was established by ex-captains of EIC vessels, and the docks were run solely for EIC cargo for thirty years. The development of the Blackwall area was therefore a product of the EIC's involvement and patronage.

The EIDB also has an association with the EIC's presence in India and therefore the beginnings of British colonial rule. The Docks and the trading side of the EIC seems to have been quite separate from the political aspirations of the Servants of the EIC in

India but those aspirations did eventually lead to the collapse of the company which changed the fortunes and business set up of the EIDC.

High Significance

London Docks and the East End

The EIDB is associated with the history of docks in London. There was a boom in dock building in the late 18th and early 19th century, such as the West India Docks built in 1800-1806 and the London Docks from 1799-1815. This was due to the need for extra security for cargo, the increasing overcrowding of the Thames with anchored ships and the benefit of locks enabling trade to be less dependent on tides. A massive industry grew up to form the Port of London, with the King George V Dock the last to open in 1921. The docks handled cargo from the British Empire and the rest of the world. The EID was the first of the docks to close down in the 1960s.



Fig. 50: Converted warehouses at the former West India Docks



Fig. 51: Disused cranes at the former West India Docks

None of the London docks have survived completely intact, with both their original expanse of water and significant numbers of buildings and warehouses. Many do have larger areas of water than the EIDB or retain historic buildings and structures, where the EIDB retains only the lock and some dock walls.

The Royal Docks to the east (the Albert, Victoria and George V) retain most of their combined 300 acres plus areas of water but very few buildings. The surrounding land has been redeveloped for the London City Airport, the Excel Centre, office and residential buildings. The water itself is used as a watersports venue.

The West India Docks was the principal focus of the LDDC's regeneration of the Docklands in the late 20th century. It retains several of its old warehouses, now used as residential accommodation, retail, restaurants and the Museum of Docklands. Much of its water survives but is now dominated by the Canary Wharf development, which has been constructed on or within parts of the old docks. Other features, such as large cranes or the dockmaster's house have also survived.

Smaller docks, such as Limehouse Basin, Poplar or St. Katherine's Docks, have been converted to leisure marinas for private boats. Typically these have residential development with restaurants and retail on the ground floors. The EIDB is the only former London dock to have been converted into a nature reserve and public open space.

The construction of the EID was part of a much wider development of the East End. Here trades not suitable for location within the city walls or in the fashionable West End began to grow up from the 17th century. These included blacksmiths and provisions shops along the main highways out to Essex, weaving in Spitalfields or dirty and noisy industries like brick-making and leather tanning. Shipping and trade were some of the key industries that contributed to the development of the area:



Fig. 52: Limehouse Basin is now a marina surrounded by residential buildings

"The docks transformed the map of London, and they reinforced the historic character of the East End as the place of labour, employing tens of thousands of working men, and stimulating the siting of industries along the riverside...The docks also called into being the mean terraced streets of Bermondsey, Poplar, Millwall, Canning Town, East Ham and Woolwich, where the dockers lived, as well as pubs, the shops and markets and the sports fields where they spent their money and their leisure. For well over a century there docks would be central to the wealth of the nation and to the life of the East End, until they were made obsolete by technological change"⁵⁷.

The evolution of the Blackwall area around the docks can be seen on historic maps, where in 1703 Blackwall Yard is surrounded by open marsh land and fields, with buildings only along Poplar High Street and the riverfront. Over time the housing gradually spreads north and south from Poplar, covering over the arable land with numerous rows of terraces.

High Significance

Early Historical Events

Blackwall, further to the west of the EIDB, was the departure point of settler's travelling to America in 1606. The Virginia Company of London had been founded by royal charter in that same year with the purpose to establish a colony in North America. Men were offered passage, food, protection and land ownership in return for seven year labour to establish the settlements.



Fig. 53: The Virginia Memorial

105 colonists plus crew, led by Captain Christopher Newport, left on three ships from Blackwall on the 19th December and founded the first successful British settlement; Jamestown. This journey was therefore a key event in the early history of America.

The Virginia Settlers are commemorated by a memorial, which was originally a simple plaque erected in 1928 on the site of the former Railway Tavern on Brunswick Wharf that was unveiled by the American Ambassador. This was restored in 1951 and again in 1953 and placed on an arrangement of granite blocks taken from the demolished West India Dock gate and held a statue of a mermaid by Harold Brown. The monument was originally located to the south-west of the EIDB (as seen in the 1969 photographs in section 2.4.10). By 1987 the mermaid statue has been stolen and was later replaced with an Astrolabe when the memorial was moved again to a site further west along the river in 1999.

Blackwall was also the departure point for two of the three trips Sir Martin Frobisher, a renowned mariner, made to discover a safe route across the top of the North American continent via the Northwest Passage and to (unsuccessfully) search for gold in that area. He left Blackwall in 1576 and 1577, while his third trip departed from Plymouth.

Though the EID were not constructed at the time of these journeys the longer shipping history of the area provides some link between the two.

Medium Significance

Riverside Locality

The EIDB is located next to two rivers: the River Lea and the River Thames. The River Lea, located in the Lower Lea Valley and defined as Waltham Abbey at the northern end and the Thames at its southern boundary, was traditionally a key navigation route for industries such as flour and gunpowder mills which grew up on its banks and for transporting coal, malt and other goods down river to London. As such it has links with the industrial dockland heritage of the Lower Lea area. Bow Creek was also connected with the shipping industry, having formerly been used as an iron works, ship building site and a coal wharf.

The riverfront of the Thames was historically lined with a number of industries associated with shipping and trade. As well as the EIDB, the Blackwall Docks were to the west and survived in part until the 20th century, Trinity Buoy Wharf was to the east and other wharfs lined the waterfront. This was part of the larger infrastructure that kept the Thames running as a busy industrial waterway for hundreds of years. The sites along the riverfront are part of a common story and a shared history. Additionally, the Greenwich meridian,

a key navigation point for the shipping industry, runs through the Virginia Keys development, adjacent to the EIDB to the west.

At present these sites are disparate and without links between them. This is a result of redevelopments and dereliction or disuse of buildings over the years. This is particularly felt along the waterfront itself, where there is no linking pathway to connect into the Thames Path. With future links planned around this area, such as the cable car across the Thames, the new bridge across the mouth of the River Lea and improved links to the Excel Centre to the east, these historic sites have the potential to be utilised as assets to drive economic growth and heritage-led regeneration of the local area.

High Significance

Recent History

The ownership of the EIDB by the LDDC in the late 20th century means that the site has associations with the regeneration of the London Docklands (see above). The association with Pura Foods is of no significance. The infrastructure installed is of an industrial nature, which is somewhat appropriate to the former use of the site. The pipeline gantry, however, obscures views of the historic lock and is therefore intrusive. The physical changes to the site in terms of public realm and street furniture are fairly ordinary and uninteresting in nature.

The arrival of the new millennium in 2000 was a significant event in recent history and one which people

around the country personally experienced. The event was commemorated at the EIDB with the lighting of a specially constructed beacon. It was one of 1,400 beacons lit across the country, starting with a beacon in Scotland. The EIDB site also contains a memorial sign 'Marking the Year 2000' which gives quotes from local residents giving pledges which they intend to fulfil in the new millennium such as "I will give time and money to promote dignity for the elderly in hospitals", "I will learn to ride a bike" or even "I will boogie with the unknown enigmas". The site's association with the event therefore has some significance.

The change of use of the site to a nature reserve and public open space has particular significance to the community, who closely associate with the time they have spent there in recent years. See section 3.3.4: Communal Value for further details on this aspect of the site's significance.

Medium Significance

Engineers and Artists

John Rennie and Ralph Walker were the engineers who designed the docks in 1804. John Rennie (1761-1821) built his reputation producing milling machinery. He moved on to canals when he was appointed surveyor to the Kennet and Avon Canal in 1790. His work expanded to include schemes for harbour improvements, fen drainage systems and waterworks, as well as docks. He was engineer for the London Docks between 1800 and 1805, built extensions to the West India Docks



Fig. 54: The Millennium Beacon



Fig. 55: The Millennium memorial sign

between 1809 and 1817, and built a mile-long protective breakwater at Plymouth Sound from 1811-1848⁵⁸. He went on to design many bridges, and it is this aspect of his work which he is most remembered today. He designed Waterloo, Southwark and London Bridges in the capital (none of these survive in situ on the Thames now, though London Bridge was dismantled and re-erected at Lake Havasu City, Arizona in 1968).

Ralph Walker is less well known. He was an engineer with a large practice in London⁵⁹ and is principally associated with the work carried out with Rennie at the West and East India Docks but also carried out canal works, such as to the Thames and Medway Canal.

Little is known about the other named engineer of works at the EID, Augustus Manning. He was the East and West India Dock Company's Superintending Engineer, designing buildings and improvements to the docks during the latter part of the 19th century and was responsible for introducing electric light to the West India Docks in the 1870s⁶⁰.

Sir Antony Caro is also associated with the site as he designed the Salome gates for the north-east entrance in 1996. Caro is a renowned British Sculptor specialising in abstract welded metal structures, either left as raw metal or painted a flat colour. He has exhibited in many famous galleries, including the Tate Britain and the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and has been awarded numerous awards and honorary degrees for his work in sculpture. While the Salome Gates are typical of his work, they do not appear to be one of his better known pieces.

Medium Significance

Technology

There are some features of the remaining or former structures at the EIDB which have some technological significance:

- An early use of curved walls to the first Entrance Lock (filled in/destroyed in mid-20th century), meaning it could be deeper to allow larger ships to pass through. 'Banana' dock walls had first been employed less than 20 years earlier in Bristol and Dublin by William Jessop. The walls of the EID Import Dock had also been constructed with a 'banana' profile, which Walker had already used at the West India Dock in 1800-1802. This form of construction later became widely adopted for the construction of dock walls.

- When it was constructed, the same lock was the largest in the Port of London at 48ft wide.
- The hydraulic lock gate opening mechanisms still survive in the machinery pits beside the 1875 Entrance Lock. Hydraulic power was first installed at the EID in the 1850s to operate hydraulic cranes. The power for these came from the Pumping Station which still survives on Naval Row. The construction of new warehouses and the new lock at the Basin in 1875 required the extension of the Pumping Station in 1877-78 and the construction of a square brick accumulator tower (marked on the 1895 plan at fig. 31 as a 'Hyde Accumulator') to east side of the Basin in 1878. The latter was demolished in the 1970s.
- The Mast House at Perry's (Blackwall) Dockyard, built in the late 18th century and later part of the Export Dock, was a building which contained a revolutionary new crane for removing and installing masts in hours, rather than days. The structure was gone by the time Stanford's 1862 map was produced.
- Some manufacturing companies that produced machinery for the docks have historical associations. For example, the Horsely Iron Company of Tipon who cast an iron wing bridge for the Export Dock cut in 1815 went on to build the first iron ship ever put to sea in 1822⁶¹. The gate machinery for the 1897 new cut to the Export Dock was produced by Sit W.G. Armstrong Whitworth and Company, a major British shipping, armament, locomotive, automobile and aircraft manufacturing company, who were particularly prominent in the early 20th century. The Thames Ironworks Company constructed the gates for this lock. This company was located locally at Bow Creek. There are many other companies listed in the Survey of London who built structures or manufactured machinery for the EID who will have also made a contribution towards British industrial history.

Medium/High Significance

⁵⁸ Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23376?docPos=1>, accessed 01/09/11

⁵⁹ Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/printable/45714>, accessed 01/09/11

⁶⁰ <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=46501&strquery=manning>, accessed 01/09/11

⁶¹ http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Horsley_Coal_and_Iron_Co, accessed 03/01/12

3.3.3 Aesthetic Value

The Dock Basin

The Basin is an attractive open space within a built up and busy area. The reed bed and greenery to the north of the site and the woodland to the south-west contribute greatly to its appearance. The open water is also an appealing feature, though marred at present by the build up of silt, particularly on the eastern side of the Basin. The site is clean and well maintained which is beneficial to its character. Local residents are particularly fond of the site and appreciate its natural beauty, access to open water and calming influence.

The landscaping of the site includes pathways of brick setts, metal benches, bollards and chain fences, and some areas of gravel pathways. These features are adequate but not particularly unique or inspiring. The Salome gates add some interest.

Medium Significance

Views

Views from the site are particularly important. The view across to the O2 arena is spectacular and eye-catching, while the River Thames stretches out to the east and west encapsulating scenes of industrial buildings, the rising hill of Woolwich across the river and taller buildings on the Isle of Dogs to the west.

Views to the west and north-west of the site include adjacent residential flats and taller office buildings further behind. These buildings and the boundary wall to the west are in good condition and do not overshadow the Basin too much, so they do not detract from the setting and are of neutral significance. To the north the vegetation has a screening effect which masks to an extent the impact of the Lower Lea Crossing and the DLR track. The view of the north-east corner of the site has some greenery but some relatively uninspiring buildings behind. Views into the site from the Lower Lea Crossing are limited due to the fence a screen of trees; the site, particularly under the DLR track can seem something of a wasteland to the unknowing passer-by.

High to Low Significance

River Lea Setting

LVRPA own several sites along the course of the River Lea. These include green spaces, country parks, nature reserves, marshland, lakes and waterways. These combine to give a valuable ecological and leisure resource within an urban area. The site closest to the EIDB is Bow Creek, which is now an ecological park. It is a former Iron works, ship building and coal wharf site which has been turned into a nature reserve. In this sense it is similar to the EIDB as it combines an industrial heritage with natural features. These two

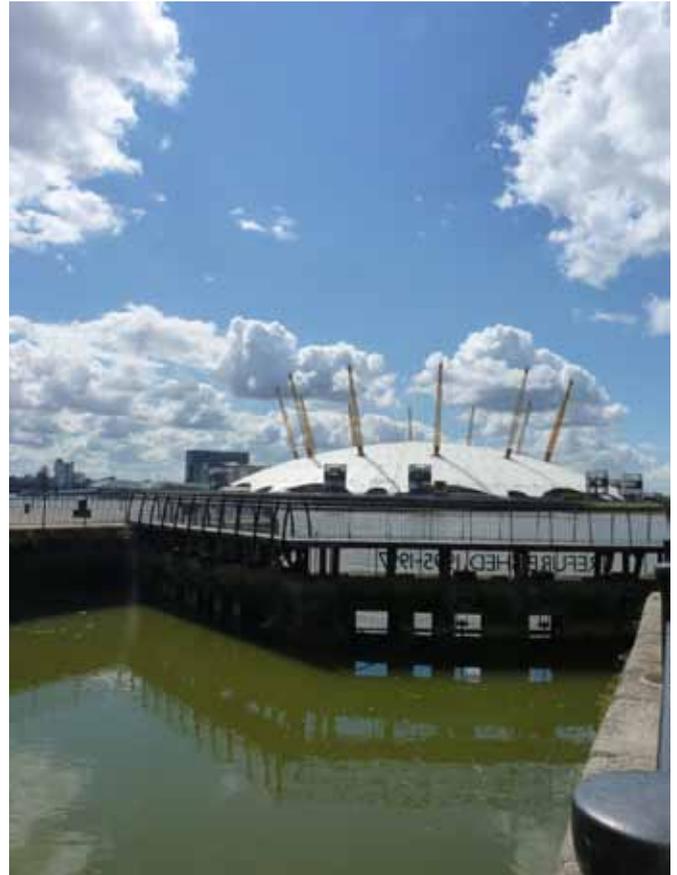


Fig. 56: View of the O2 Arena from the EIDB

sites are otherwise fairly detached from the larger open areas further north, the nearest of which is Three Mills Island two miles away.

Medium Significance

Intrusive Elements

There are several aspects of the surrounding area and on the site itself which detract from its appearance. The busy roads nearby, particularly the Lower Lea Crossing and roundabout, are not appealing and detract from the setting of the EIDB. The vacant site of Orchard Wharf, which includes two derelict warehouses, is also unattractive and prevents any riverside link between the EIDB and Trinity Buoy Wharf.

On the site itself the intrusive elements include:

- The utilitarian entrance to the north-west
- The pipeline gantry over the lock and associated metal walkways
- Some damage to bird hides
- The silting of the Basin

Intrusive Significance

3.3.4 Communal Value

Local Residents and Users

The site is not generally used by international and national visitors but is highly popular with local residents as a rare open and green space within an urban area. It is considered a haven away from the city and is often used by local people for walking, bird watching, exercising or just to 'get away from it all'. Local residents were asked in a questionnaire what they valued about the site (see full responses in appendix F):

- John Gordon: *"The EIDB offers peace, tranquillity and a place to reflect to the visitors who use the site."*
- Gary James: *"EIDB is a quiet and peaceful site where people can escape the madness of the city, it is important that this ambience is maintained."*

The ecological aspects of the site were also of great importance to users:

- John Gordon: *"The dock basin (EIDB) is the last remaining stretch of open water within the London Docklands area that does not have regular boat usage or any moorings. This preserves it for the wildlife which can then be seen in all its variety at close quarters... The evolution of the site since the docks closed has created a rare inner city habitat which now attracts a diverse range of birds and other wildlife."*
- Cliff Prior: *"EIDB is the only tidal bird reserve on the north of the Thames for 20 miles in each direction... The wildlife we get here is remarkable."*
- Gary James: *"East India Dock Basin Nature Reserve is one of the best known and well regarded small nature reserves in the London area."*
- John Archer (who is Biodiversity Officer for THC): *"It is one of the most important sites for biodiversity, and for providing access to nature, in the borough, and therefore key to delivering biodiversity targets and programmes."*

Residents tend to feel that the historical importance of the site is not maximised to its full potential:

- John Gordon: *"This is an historically important site, preserving part of one of the largest docks system as water."*
- Cliff Prior: *"This is a globally significant site, as the origin of the British Empire through being the starting point of the East India Company. Whatever we think of that past for good and ill, this little stretch of water was the starting point for something that ended up covering a quarter of the world's population. It is also just a couple of hundred meters from the origins of the USA, as the Virginia Memorial marks the departure point for the first settlers - we get a lot of American tourists here as a result. It's surprising so little is made of this extraordinary history."*

The site also attracts volunteer groups from corporate businesses, local residents or wider Lee Valley Park users. Various external organisations, such as Thames 21 and the Green Gym, arrange voluntary work on the site. This gives young people and residents the opportunity to get involved with and connect with a special historical site in their area.

High Significance

Bengali and Bangladeshi Community

Bengal was the first part of India to be conquered by Robert Clive in 1756 but trade between Bengal and Britain had been carried out in the years before this, particularly textiles from the region. After the East India Docks were opened Bengalis working on the EIC ships were housed in accommodation around the EID when in England and then went on to work at the docks. It was inevitable that many of them settled here. Bengalis in the UK mainly come from the Syhlet region of modern day Bangladesh⁶² and the largest Bangladeshi community in the UK is now situated in the East End of London, in the area where the East India Company was once situated.

These links between the East India Company, the East End of London and Bengal/Bangladesh are remembered by the Bangladeshi community through organisations like the Brick Lane Circle, which aims to promote research, understanding and connections between the two countries. In 2010 the Brick Lane Circle organised a project to encourage a group of local East End young adults to research the links between the East India Company and this part of London. The EIDB was a key site they visited and wrote about in the book that was subsequently published called 'Plassey's Legacy', which told of the Bangladeshi community's links to the EIC and EIDC.

The writers of the book had *"virtually no idea that there was such an intertwined history between the British East India Company and Bangladesh"*⁶³ referring to the trade to Bangladesh which passed through the EID. Studying the EIC's sites in London, including the EIDB, enabled the young adults to learn about their own personal history, highlighting *"in particular the involvement of Bangladesh and the Bengali community within the Docks and East London...show[ing] them the active past they have played in creating the history of East London through the East India Company and its heritage"*⁶⁴.

Medium Significance

62 http://www.bricklanecircle.org/Plassey_Day.html, accessed 01/09/11

63 Begum, Eklima, 'The Enlightening Journey So Far', in Plassey's Legacy, 2010, p.157

64 Ibid., p.162

Schools and Education

The site is visited occasionally by schools on tours given by the Ranger, though this seems to be on a relatively infrequent basis and is therefore something that could be improved upon. School visits are currently limited by the lack of facilities on site. However, the site is a valuable source of historical information about the history of the London docklands, the EIC and ecology so there is potential for a much improved education programme.

Low Significance

Events

Large events on site are infrequent but some major events have taken place here, such as the lighting of the Millennium beacon and as one of the sites for the Red Bull air race in 2008. Other smaller events include days organised by the LVRPA/RSPB 'Wild Place, Your Space' project, which encourages local communities to interact with nature in their area. For example, a 'Wild Watch at the Dock!' event organised on 5th June 2011 which gave opportunities for bird watching, a chance to learn about the ecology of the site with representatives from the RSPB and East London Birders Forum and a craft tent where visitors could write poetry or engage in craft activities.

Free guided walks are also organised by 'Wild Place, Your Space' and Thames 21, a charity that organises volunteers to help clean up London's waterway. Volunteering opportunities are also organised by LVRPA itself.

Medium/Low Significance

3.3.5 Ecology

Since being converted into a nature reserve in the 1990s the site has become an important natural habitat for flora and fauna. The site contains open water, trees, meadows, scrub and salt marsh. It is believed that the group of trees is the only self-established woodland immediately beside the Thames, between The Hurlingham Club in Hammersmith (approximately 11 to the west) and Tripcock Ness in Thamesmead (approximately six miles to the east)⁶⁵.

LVRPA's summary of the ecology of the EIDB from 2006 highlights the following:

- This is the furthest site up the Thames to have a salt marsh present and is an unusually accessible example of the habitat. It is one of the only remaining examples of salt marsh in the city as much has been lost to development of the riverbank.

- Notable species include Scurvy Grass, Halberd (Spear)-leaved Orache, Common Spiked Rush, Sea Aster, Sea Arrow Grass and Gloucouc Bull Rush.
- The seven machinery pits have created a micro climate and ideal conditions for ferns and liverworts.
- A survey by the London Natural History Society identified, Soft Shield Fern, Warty Cabbage (a relic of shipping days), Salsify (unique to this meadow in the park), and Sea Milkwort.
- East India Dock Basin forms an important part of the Lee Valley migration route and regularly attracts notable vagrant bird species.
- Over 65 species of bird are regularly recorded on the site. Notable species include Black Redstart, Little Ringed Plovers (nationally scarce and listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act), Kingfisher (Lee Valley Park BAP species), Blackcap and Reed Warbler.
- Common Terns nest annually on specially constructed rafts. Previously they have produced between 5-15 chicks a year, although no young have fledged in the last two years.
- The Peregrine nesting on the Millennium Dome can be seen from the Pier.
- The exposed mud in winter attracts some of the highest numbers of Teal and Shelduck recorded anywhere in the Regional Park, though it has poor visual amenity and has a negative impact on other forms of aquatic wildlife.

Medium/High Significance

Siltation: Intrusive Significance

65 From information provided by John Archer, e-mail 01/11/11

3.4 Significance Plans

The significance of the built fabric remaining on the site is outlined on the plan below. As well as simply assessing the architectural significance of the features, the assessment also takes into account the various themes discussed above, such as historic, communal or aesthetic values. The designations can be used to inform the level of future change that is likely to be acceptable, though each case or proposal for change should be considered on a more detailed, individual basis.

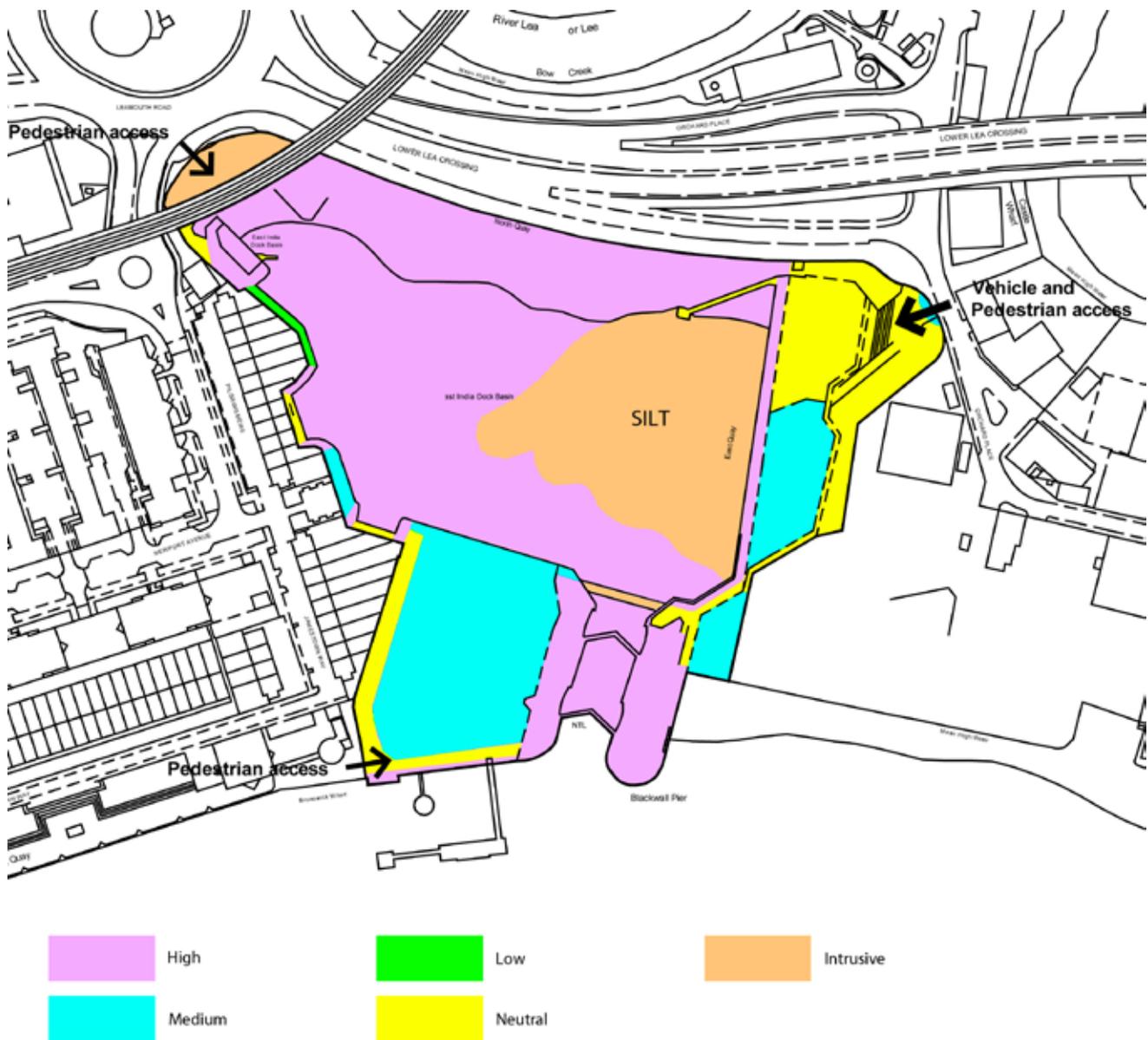


Fig. 57: Significance Plan

4.0 Issues and Opportunities

The opportunities outlined below are discussed in further detail in the accompanying document '*Recommendations for Acknowledging, Sharing, Conserving, Enhancing and Enjoying East India Dock Basin*'.

4.1 Condition

Issues

A condition survey of the river walls and lock was carried out in 2006 by Royal Haskoning. The findings showed that there were areas of the river walls where brickwork had deteriorated and some thermal expansion cracks had appeared. The condition of the lock gates was reasonable but there was some corrosion and marine growth present, with a few areas of decay to the timber elements of the outer gates.

LVRPA has made a budget provision for carrying out the necessary repair work to the river walls, including replacement of brickwork, repointing and grouting to cracks.

Otherwise the site is generally well maintained by LVRPA and the external contractor that carries out general maintenance tasks. Other issues include the subsidence of the pathway along the riverside, which results in trip hazards and the need to remove and re-lay the paving in the area. Some minor damage to the timber bird hides was also noted. Further details are provided in the gazetteer, which identifies minor areas of dock wall which need repointing and repair, and areas where further inspection of the dock walls is required.

Opportunities

LVRPA has allocated a budget for the river wall repairs. General site maintenance, such as painting street furniture or cleaning the reed bed, can continue to be carried out by volunteers.

4.2 Silting

Issues

The silting of the Basin is an ongoing problem. This is a natural effect which was exacerbated by the infilling of the north shore and by the welding shut of the lock gates. The slit is unsightly and odorous, particularly during the summer. It is also detrimental to the bird and aquatic life that uses the Basin.

The silting has not been alleviated in recent years. The opening of the sluices in the lock gates increases the water levels in the Basin and reduces the amount of visibly exposed slit, though probably contributes to further amounts of slit being deposited in the Basin with each tide⁶⁶. The dredging of the Basin to remove the silt will be a costly process and requires significant amounts of planning. Boats cannot access the Basin through the lock gates as they have been sealed shut, so access into the Basin for the de-silting is problematic. The problem is one that will continue to be an issue and will need to be planned and budgeted for in the future.

Opportunities

LVRPA are fully aware of the need to improve the siltation problem. An Analysis and Options Appraisal for managing the siltation and discussing options for its removal from the Basin was completed in 2010. This gave an indicative cost of £250,000 for the appropriate level of silt removal. A Bathymetric Survey has also been carried out to assess the current depth of the water. LVRPA are currently in the process of finding an appropriate contractor to carry out a Scheme Design to identify the operational requirements for the removal of the silt.

⁶⁶ Royal Haskoning, 2006, p.24

4.3 Visitor Use

Issues

The Basin has a number of casual daily visitors from the local area who walk through the site on their way to work or visit to observe the wildlife. There are occasional volunteering or nature conservation events a few times a year but generally the site is currently underused.

At present there are no visitor facilities, such as WCs, an education room (with a sheltered area for children to have lunch) or a cafe. Funding to provide these facilities is not available without an outside source (see section 4.9 for more details). The site generally appears clean and tidy (other than the silting problem) due to good general site maintenance. There are benches, interpretation panels and bird hides provided around the site. These are relatively functional in appearance, though the bespoke Salome gates provide some interest.

Opportunities

Proposals for a Visitor Centre have been drawn up by Urban Space Management for the Trinity Buoy Wharf Trust for WCs, a meeting space and a possible cafe. LVRPA are currently reviewing the terms of a lease for the Centre in order for this to progress. Without a facility of some kind, such as an Education Room, it is difficult to imagine how the educational use of the Basin might be developed.

Recent events, such as an RSPB 'Wild Place, Your Space' day have been very popular and should be encouraged. Volunteering events will also be beneficial to the site as they will bring existing and new users to the site, as well as free labour for conservation or maintenance projects (see section 4.13 for more details).

There are many opportunities to link up with neighbouring sites and schemes in order to share resources, promotion and to encourage more users to the site by holding further events. Trinity Buoy Wharf is a vibrant centre for arts and is home to many creative companies. Music and drama performances are held there, the site takes part in the London Open House Weekend with an Arts Festival and three educational establishments, The Faraday Elementary School, The London Art School and the University of East London's dance department, have or soon will have bases on the site. There is ample opportunity to link up with the activities on the Trinity Buoy Wharf site to provide open air performances or arts and crafts activities or classes on the EIDB site.

Another way to promote the site is to encourage participation in or promotion of schemes such as Walk London, where the EIDB is included in two of the walks given on the scheme's website and in leaflets; the Thames Path Walk and the Lea Valley Walk⁶⁷. As part

of the scheme there is a service on site that users can telephone to listen to a tour. This not well promoted at present and could be enhanced to be more site specific. Reference to such schemes and a link to the appropriate website could be placed on the LVRPA webpage for the EIDB.

4.4 Links to the Local Area

Issues

There is no parking on or near site. However, the DLR has a good service and the East India stop is located nearby, within easy walking distance, though there is no proper road crossing at the roundabout at the east end of Blackwall Way.

There is signage for Trinity Buoy Wharf from the DLR station but none for the EIDB. The current main entrance is on the north-east corner of the site and in fact is not the first entrance you come to from the station. The entrance at the north-west corner is rather lifeless and uninviting.

The lack of a riverside route between the EIDB and Trinity Buoy Wharf, which means that the Thames Path is incomplete, is a serious disadvantage for the potential regeneration of the local area. The historic riverside industries have a historical link but are now disconnected, particularly through the lack of a pathway along the riverfront.

The addition of a pathway of this nature would greatly improve the ease with which visitors could access both sites. This would have to cross two sites: Orchard Wharf and Atlas Wharf. While the owners of Orchard Wharf (Ballymore and the Grafton Group) previously had an 'in principal' agreement with Urban Space management and London Thames Gateway Development Corporation for a link along the river, this has recently been withdrawn⁶⁸. However, the proposed development on the Orchard Wharf site does include an extension to the Thames path so it is likely that in this or any alternative development of that site a linking path will be included in the designs.

The local area is a mix of pleasant residential development along the water front, derelict buildings and sites to the east, the arts centre at Trinity Buoy Wharf and large scale roads and traffic interchanges. The Blackwall area is one which has areas of deprivation. Without development and regeneration in the local area, the improvement of facilities at the EIDB may end up isolated and unsuccessful as a result.

Opportunities

Signage and routes from East India DLR station could be improved. Much could be done with the north-west entrance to make it more appealing, and LVRPA have

pdf and http://www.walklondon.org.uk/uploads/File/leaflets/lvws6directions_18072011152623.pdf

67 Maps of the walks can be found here: http://www.walklondon.org.uk/uploads/File/leaflets/lvws6map_18072011164513.

68 *Future Enhancement of East India Dock Basin*, 6th June 2011, p.2

identified this as an area for enhancement. This would create an appealing view of the site which would draw visitors onto the site.

If an Education Room was built, signage around the dock area would need to be improved.

There are several potential opportunities to link with other sites and developments going on around the area and will greatly help to encourage further regeneration of the area and bring more users to the EIDB site.

- Tower Hamlet's Core Strategy envisages a new bridge across the Lea into Canning Town and a bridge across the mouth of the River Lea, plus increased connections across existing bridges and through local streets.
- A cable car across the Thames is to be built by 2012, connecting O2 and Royal Victoria Docks to the east of the EIDB across the Lea.
- LVRPA could work with USM and the Trinity Buoy Wharf Trust to encourage the owners of Orchard and Atlas Wharfs to create a riverside pathway between the sites.
- Bow Creek is another LVRPA site within walking distance. There is currently a pedestrian bridge alongside the A13 to the north of the site but the route to it is past busy roads so not very appealing. Information about Bow Creek at EIDB and how to get there would be useful.
- Blackwall is identified as a 'public transport improvement area' in Tower Hamlet's *Core Strategy*⁶⁹. It proposes new river crossings from the O2 Arena and East India Pier, and a further river crossing from Queen Elizabeth II Pier to Silvertown. Local interchanges, including the East India DLR station are marked for improvement.
- The 'Fatwalk' is planned the backbone of the Lea River Park, a large path connecting the River Thames at East India Dock Basin to the Olympic Park. It will be possible to walk or cycle along this length of new parkland, experiencing different activities along the way. The energetic amongst us will be able to travel 26 miles from East India Dock Basin, through the Lea River Park, all the way to Ware in Hertfordshire.
- Up to 1,700 new homes are to be built on the Leamouth Peninsula, site of the old Pura Foods development. This will substantially increase the number of people able to readily access the EIDB and therefore there is an opportunity to improve and encourage links between the two.
- A river walk connecting Trinity Buoy Wharf to the EIDB and areas further west could be developed.

LVRPA need to monitor these developments and other planning applications in the area. This will enable them

to get involved to encourage or discourage development which would enhance the setting and wider offer of the local area, or which would detract from the EIDB's setting and would dissuade visitors from choosing it at a destination.

4.5 Interpretation and Presentation

Issues

There are currently two interpretation panels which explain some of the history of the dock; one located at the side of the lock and one at the north end of the eastern quay. The latter is in a slightly obscure position away from the direct route to the gates on the eastern side of the site so visitors may not notice it. Other panels give information about the ecology of the site.

The panels at present do not give much of a sense of where the historic Export and Import Docks were and the sheer size of the complex. Other heritage assets are not interpreted or put into context, particularly the machinery pits but also the mooring posts, capstans, etc. Additionally there is nowhere at present for guide books, leaflets or videos to be placed on site.

The website for Lee Valley has a section on the East India Dock Basin: http://www.leevalleypark.org.uk/en/content/cms/leisure/nature_reserves/dock_basin/dock_basin.aspx. This has some very brief information about the history of the site and the public can access the Short Site Management Plan which has some more detailed facts, though there is no direction on the page that says that is where to access information about the history of the site.

The current visual presentation of the site is generally good. There is little evidence of neglect and there would appear to be a good balance between keeping the site clean and tidy whilst maintaining the sense of natural wildness. However, much of the hard landscaping could be improved as a piece of public realm. It currently has a municipal character which does not help either the interpretation or presentation of the site.

Opportunities

An Interpretation Plan should be developed for the site to include its history and ecology. Such a plan would identify the stories or themes which could be communicated and the method by which they would be achieved. An Interpretation Plan is a strategic document and would set out a long-term vision for the interpretation of the site.

If the vision for some kind of Education Room is realised, this could provide a location for improved interpretation of the Basin. The historic information within this CMP would be a useful starting point for the production of either a short guidebook and/or a brief introductory exhibition explaining the history of the Basin, how it was used, the part it played within

⁶⁹ http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgsi/851-900/855_planning_consultation/core_strategy.aspx, pp.70-87, accessed 02/09/11

London's Docks, its eventual demise as a working dock and its development since the 1980s. In developing the themes of such an exhibition it might be useful collaborating with the curatorial staff at the Museum of Docklands which in itself tells the story of London's Docks from Roman times to the development of Canary Wharf in the 1980s.

Some kind of Education Room could also provide a place where the ecology of the site was explained in more detail and provide opportunities for visitors to view and understand the wildlife in the Basin.

It would be desirable to locate further information about the Basin at the north-west corner of the site. This is the initial entrance to the site for visitors arriving from East India DLR station. Interpretative information here would serve to orientate visitors and assist in wayfinding. A current map of the Basin and its wider context within the docks would be useful.

The details on the website could be updated to include further information about the history of the site. There is an opportunity to download self-guided walks or fact sheets from the website, which would solve the problem of there being no-where to store leaflets on site at the moment. An additional facility to download these (and/or short videos about the site) to smart phones from electronic points located on site will be worth exploring as part of a future Interpretation Plan.

Downloaded self-guided walks could include directions to other remains of the EID in the locality (the dock walls and entrance the Pepper Warehouse on Leamouth Road, dock walls on Naval Row, the pumping station on Naval Row, and the plaque near the entrance to the Blackwall Tunnel) so that the visitor could put the historic location of the docks into context within the modern road layout. This may, however, be difficult to achieve due to poor access routes around the area for pedestrians and heavy traffic levels.

Several local history groups may be able to contribute towards the understanding of the history and industrial heritage of the site, provide volunteers or help promote the site, though they do not promote the EIDB specifically at present:

- Docklands History Group (<http://www.docklandshistorygroup.org.uk/>)
- The East London History Society (<http://www.mernick.org.uk/elhs/ELHS.htm>)
- The Greater London Industrial Archaeology Society (<http://www.glias.org.uk/>)
- The Victorian Society (<http://www.victoriansociety.org.uk/>)

The Brick Lane Circle is also interested in the East India Docks; a site which many members of the Bangladeshi community have links through family who used to work at the docks and who came over to England with the EIC. The organisation carries out guided walks of EIC sites in London but is conscious that most of the community is not aware of their connections with local heritage, though this interest is growing. They would be willing to work with LVRPA to help with interpretation of this theme and to explore other potential opportunities to expand the knowledge of this aspect of the site's history.

Improvements to the current public realm would assist with the presentation of the site. This would need to be carefully considered using appropriate landscape materials and other furniture.

4.6 Security and Vandalism

Issues

There have been problems with youths hanging around the woodland and entrance to Virginia Quays. The security guard from the adjacent site has been given a key to this entrance and shuts the gate if the number of people on the EIDB site becomes a problem, which seems to alleviate the issue.

In 2011 a corner of the section of scrub at the south-east edge of the site was burnt. Fifty bricks were remove from the retaining walls in this area and thrown into the dock. They have since been replaced by LVRPA.

There was also a mugging on site in 2011 and also three adjacent houses have been broken into. The site ranger has been in contact with the local Safer Neighbourhoods Officers from the Metropolitan Police and LVRPA have undertaken the following changes to improve security:

- Replenishing the anti-vandal paint;
- Add anti-vandal paint to the top of the bird hides;
- Liaise with the residents association and meet with residents on site to discuss their concerns.

Opportunities

Vandalism may be significantly reduced during the day if the Basin was enjoyed by more visitors. The presence of people is always a deterrent to vandalism. Consideration should also be given to reviewing the boundary of the Basin in order to explore options of introducing protection at night. This is a difficult problem to solve and care needs to be taken in introducing any defensive boundary as this may damage the atmosphere of the Basin during the day and only increase the attractiveness of penetrating the boundary at night.

4.7 Intrusive features

Issues

There are several intrusive features on site which detract from visual appearance (as discussed in 3.3.3) and the heritage value of the site:

- Utilitarian entrance to the north-west
- Pipeline gantry over the lock and metal walkways
- Some damage to bird hides
- The silting of the Basin

Opportunities

An improved public realm will enhance the appearance of the Basin and increase the quality of visitor experience.

4.8 Threat of development

Issues

A planning application for a 'concrete batching plant, cement storage terminal and aggregate storage facilities' at Orchard Wharf, adjacent to the EIDB to the east, was submitted to Tower Hamlets Council in February 2011. The site is defined as a Safeguarded Wharf in the GLA's *Safeguarded Wharves on the River Thames: London Plan Implementation Report (2005)*⁷⁰ for transport and distribution purposes, which may cause difficulties for anyone proposing alternative uses of the site.

The proposed use of the site comes with the threat of heavy lorries passing by on a regular basis, several times an hour. There will also be increased river traffic directly adjacent to the site, with boats docking at a large wharf projecting out into the river close to the existing lock on the EIDB site. This will cause noise pollution and be visually intrusive both for residents in nearby housing and for visitors to the EIDB, with views across the Thames and the setting of the heritage assets at EIDB significantly damaged.

Opportunities

The planning application for the concrete batching plant is currently live on Tower Hamlets Planning Applications Register online⁷¹. LVRPA has made an objection to the proposal on the grounds that:

- a) there would be unacceptable noise impact from the proposed facility and from large numbers of Heavy Goods Vehicles upon the amenity of East India Dock Basin;*
- b) the adverse impact of 280 Heavy Goods Vehicles movements per day on access to the East India Dock Basin;*

- c) the ecological mitigation measures proposed would not be sufficient to compensate for the habitat that will be lost on the application site;*
- d) the landscaping proposed along the boundary of the site with East India Dock basin is not of sufficient width to provide a meaningful landscape buffer to soften the considerable visual impact of the development upon East India Dock Basin⁷².*

Planning Policy Statement 5 states that the setting of any heritage asset is an integral part of its value. There is no doubt that if the proposed batching plant goes ahead the setting of the Basin will be damaged.

LVRPA should also take the opportunity to comment on any other planning applications which would affect the setting of the EIDB; either good or bad. This will help to discourage development that will detract from the EIDB and its setting and will give the opportunity for LVRPA to encourage development which would enhance it.

4.9 Funding constraints

Issues

LVRPA have a budget set aside for repairs to the river walls. Other proposed works, including the Visitor's Centre, de-silting of the Basin, improvements to the north-west entrance and general site enhancement, will require a large amount of funding. LVRPA cannot cover all of these expenses so will have to seek funding from various sources for the works. If funding is not found there are risks to the site. The silting problem will become worse and therefore more costly to put right.

Opportunities

The main funding sources which LVRPA have identified are:

- The Heritage Lottery Fund for conservation and enhancement works to the heritage and biodiversity values of the site
- USM/Trinity Buoy Wharf Trust for the proposed Visitor's Centre⁷³

⁷⁰ http://www.pla.co.uk/pdfs/pe/safeguarded_wharves_05.pdf, accessed 16/06/11

⁷¹ http://194.201.98.213/WAM/searchsubmit/performOption.do?action=search_searchforplanningapplicationnumberPA/10/02778

⁷² Letter 12th April 2011, Stephen Wilkinson, Head of Planning and Strategic Partnerships, LVRPA, to Ms A. Cooper, London Borough of Tower Hamlets

⁷³ *Future Enhancement of East India Dock Basin*, 6th June 2011, p.4

4.10 Accessibility

Issues

The site is mainly wheelchair accessible, having ramps to access the differing levels. There is no wheelchair access across the lock as the walkways are fairly narrow and are accessed via a step. Wheelchair users would therefore have to access each side of the Basin via the unattractive pavement along the edge of the Lower Lea Crossing. Disabled access to the site is difficult because of the lack of local parking and pedestrian crossings on the route from the DLR.

Opportunities

It is unlikely that it will be possible to adapt the lock walkways for wheelchair access. The route along the Lower Lea Crossing could be enhanced with improvements to the north-west entrance.

Ramped access should be maintained in any future site enhancements. Improved interpretation could include tactile displays and Braille text for the visually impaired.

4.11 Health and Safety

Issues

Until a few years ago the site was only opened at weekends because of health and safety concerns about the site being unmanned and the potential risk of people falling into the water. Now it is opened every day but locked up at night. There are life-rings located at various points around the Basin in case of emergency.

The subsidence of the pathways along the riverside has caused trip hazards to appear.

Opportunities

It is recommended that a comprehensive health and safety report is carried out on the Basin to ensure the safety of all visitors.

4.12 Sustainability and Climate Change

Issues

Climate change is an important consideration for the future protection of heritage assets, as is recognised in policy HE1 of PPS5. The direct impacts of climate change have been explored in English Heritage's Climate Change and the Historic Environment (2008) and those risks which could affect the EIDB are listed below:

- *"rising sea levels and a possible increase in storminess that endangers historic landscapes, structures, buildings and archaeology in the coastal zone*
- *increased extremes of wetting and drying that heighten the risk of ground subsidence and*

accelerated decay of stonework and thus pose a threat to many historic buildings...

- *changes in vegetation patterns that threaten the visibility and integrity of archaeological remains and historic landscapes...*
- *possible increases in the frequency or geographic range of extreme weather that could pose an increased risk of damage to some historic landscapes and buildings.*"⁷⁴

The document also notes that the "design integrity of some historic buildings and landscapes could be damaged by the need to provide new and more effective rainwater disposal or storage systems or flood prevention features" which could have a visual impact if eventually necessary at the EIDB. Though these risks are not issues that need to be acted on immediately, they will need to be kept in mind and monitored for the long term future of the site.

Opportunities

The ecology of the site and its benefit as an area of wildlife within a built up urban space is highly significant. Any future interpretation scheme could highlight the environmental benefits and sustainability of the site.

4.13 Education and Schools

Issues

The Ranger (Andrew Vaughan) currently takes occasional guided walks for school children. However, the Youth and Schools Service at LVRPA currently do not use the site for their overall education programme. This is partly due to limited resources of the department and because of the presence of a range of sites throughout the Park which have a higher profile and better facilities, such as toilets and classroom space. Nearby Bow Creek has an outdoor classroom that can be used by school and youth groups throughout the year. This facility, however, lacks WC provision and cannot be used in bad weather. Trials of education sessions there received a low demand as the lack of facilities created a problem.

Opportunities

The historic development section of the CMP could be used to form notes for the Ranger/guide to aid interpretation of the history of the site.

The education pages on the Lee Valley website contain information about the education opportunities for the area: <http://www.leevalleypark.org.uk/en/content/cms/education/education.aspx>.

Bow Creek and the EIDB could be linked up for school visits, especially if an Education Room goes ahead which could provide the necessary WC and indoor teaching space facilities for visiting school groups.

⁷⁴ *Climate Change and the Historic Environment*, 2008, pp.6-7

A self-led trail for the Bow Creek Ecological Park is downloadable from the LVRPA website for schools and this could be expanded to be relevant to EIDB as well. Programmes with the Faraday School at Trinity Buoy Wharf could be promoted to increase their use of the site. The departments from the London Art School and The University of East London also at Trinity Buoy Wharf could be encouraged to use the site.

The Learning Department at the Museum of London has been approached for advice on possible link ups for educational purposes. There may be the possibility of linking up with the Museum of London Docklands in either an informal or formal way:

- Informally, LVRPA could arrange their own schools visit to the dock and combine this with a self-guided tour of the museum.
- LVRPA could work with the Museum to produce a guided walk and museum tour which specifically focus on the EID. On the walk the Ranger could talk about the ecology of the site while the museum representative could discuss the history of the site. This would be the museum's preferred option as it better leads to cross promotion between sites.

The Learning Department carry out workshops and walks which often explore themes, such as Regeneration or the Olympics. They begin to prepare their schools programming in January, to be published in June.

4.14 Volunteering

Issues

There is currently an ad hoc programme of volunteer events to help with clearing of the reed bed, painting of metal features on site, etc. These are arranged either via the LVRPA's wider group of volunteers or as corporate days by local businesses. Volunteering opportunities are advertised on the LVRPA webpage for EIDB (http://www.leevalleypark.org.uk/en/content/cms/leisure/nature_reserves/dock_basin/dock_basin.aspx) and are promoted on the Lea River Park website (<http://www.leariverpark.org/node/480>). There is a weekly volunteer conservation programme for the whole Lee River Park which covers all LVRPA's sites. Due to the size of the EIDB there are only a few tasks each year that have to be carried out by volunteers here.

Other organisations also arrange occasional volunteer days, such as Thames 21, a charity that provides volunteers to clear up London's waterways and create new habitats for wildlife. LVRPA have also been working with the Green Gym scheme, run by the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, which organises a youth group to help on site with tree maintenance and planting. The scheme attracts enthusiastic youngsters, usually early school leavers. LVRPA have also hosted events for the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games' (LOCOG) 'Changing

Places' scheme which encourages volunteers to "get out and transform their local area- improving the negative parts, celebrating the good"⁷⁵.

Opportunities

The present volunteering programme should be maintained. LVRPA have recruited a volunteer warden for EIDB and Bow Creek. In order to enhance the programme further facilities would be necessary, particularly toilets and some form of shelter. For large groups a kitchen facility would also be useful.

4.15 Ecology

Issues

The silting of the Basin has affected the wildlife by reducing the available aquatic habitat. It also affects the amenity value of the site and has affected bird numbers. Reed warbler numbers have declined and this is the first year that Common Terns have not bred on the rafts. A balance is needed between the mud and water, as the exposed mud attracts waders and deeper water attracts diving birds.

Dragonfly numbers have declined this year (2011) due to the hot start to the summer and the sudden plunge in temperature. However, butterfly numbers are up, probably due to the cutting regime of the meadow and the hot weather.

Within the group of trees, 50 trees were planted in winter 2010/11. Generally there is a poor species mix in this area. Much of the area is concrete with little soil cover, which creates difficult digging conditions. On one occasion a jack-hammer had to be used to break up the concrete. A small amount of Japanese Knotweed is controlled by spraying. Local residents are divided over the best way to treat this area; some want more trees planted, while others want some removed.

On the north bank the reed bed, scrub and willow all encroach onto the marsh and need to be contained and cut back on a regular basis. Within the dock the tidal action of the water causes a build up of debris, creating a hazard and contaminating the area. Litter needs to be removed on a regular basis.

The vegetation growth within the machinery pits includes important ferns and liverworts. Other more invasive species, such as buddleia, have to be removed periodically and if not kept in check could cause damage to the historic machinery remaining in the pits.

No formal surveys of the bird life or animal life has been carried out, except for an otter survey in 2004 which found no evidence of the species. There has been little research of the botany of the site, except for a report by Brian Wurzell in 1998.

⁷⁵ <http://www.london2012.com/making-it-happen/sustainability/changing-places/>, accessed 09/09/11

Opportunities

The EIDB is currently protected under policies in the Tower Hamlet's UDP as a Grade I Site of Nature Conservation of Borough Importance⁷⁶. Policy DEV57 states that "*The Council will not normally permit development which unjustifiably causes significant harm to a site of nature conservation importance*"⁷⁷ and this means that it will be flagged up when a planning application affects it, though it does not impose any legal obligations.

Discussions with the Biodiversity Officer at Tower Hamlets, John Archer, identified that the site could have the potential to be designated in the future as a Local Nature Reserve, which are sites of importance for wildlife, geology, education or public enjoyment⁷⁸. The benefits of this are outlined on Natural England's website:

"By declaring Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), local authorities can provide many benefits for both people and wildlife to:

- *increase people's awareness and enjoyment of their natural environment*
- *provide an ideal environment for everyone to learn about and study nature*
- *help to build relationships with national and local nature conservation organisations and local people*
- *protect wildlife habitats and natural features*
- *provide a great opportunity for people to become involved in managing their local environment*
- *offer a positive use for land which they would prefer was left undeveloped*
- *make it possible to apply bye-laws which can help in managing and protecting the site.*"⁷⁹

This designation is one that local authorities can apply only to sites they have a legal interest in. This would mean that LVRPA would have to enter into a legal management agreement with Tower Hamlets before it could be designated.

LNR status would impose a legal designation on the site, meaning that would be better protected against harmful development. Though John Archer was not aware of any funding streams specifically targeted to LNRs, the status does add weight to other funding applications.

An LNR proposal will also mean that Natural England will provide feedback to the land owner with management ideas, giving more clarity to the aims for the biodiversity of the site.

⁷⁶ For more information see: <http://www.london.gov.uk/sites-impotence-nature-conservation>

⁷⁷ UDP, p.69

⁷⁸ <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/designatedareas/lnr/default.aspx>, accessed 05/09/11

⁷⁹ <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/designatedareas/lnr/whydeclarelnr.aspx>, accessed 05/09/11

4.16 Management and Ownership

LVRPA own and manage the whole site. At present there do not appear to be any issues regarding ownership and management.

4.17 Archaeology

Issues

At present the potential for archaeological remains is unknown, though there are some areas where finds are more likely to be located, as discussed in the 'Archaeology' section in 3.3.1. Most of the potential remains are unlikely to be disturbed in the near future. However, if an Education Centre is planned in the future its likely position would be on the eastern quay where there is some potential for remains of warehouses to exist below ground. It is likely that before any work is carried out an archaeological assessment will be needed and possibly a watching brief or excavation before or during construction to ensure that significant archaeology is avoided and/or recorded.

The remains of the Import Dock lock to the north-west of the site are currently covered by ivy. This could be causing damage to the remains but presently their condition and extent of survival is unknown. This is an area which has the potential to be uncovered and interpreted as part of any future plans for the site.

Opportunities

It may be useful to commission an archaeological assessment of the whole site to further the understanding of what potential archaeology could remain. Any archaeology that is discovered in the course of building an Education Room, or any other future building or landscaping works, could be incorporated into the interpretation of the site to aid the understanding of its history. If any archaeological investigation is necessary, the site could be visible to the public or open days could be organised while this was being carried out, in order to further the public's understanding of the history of the site and the process of archaeological digs.

5.0 Policies

5.1 Conservation Objectives

Conservation can best be defined as a process of managing change in a way that retains the significance and special character of a building, landscape, place or cultural artefact whilst ensuring their sustainability. It does not seek to prevent all change and preserve a place as if frozen in time. Nor does it seek to restore or return a place to how it once was at one period in time. Implicit in the term conservation is the acceptance of change as the requirements for buildings or places evolve.

LVRPA's *Park Development Framework: Vision, Aims and Principles* (July 2010) sets out the organisation's main aims for the future of the Lee Valley. One of the document's six main aims is for Landscape and Heritage: "A *Park landscape that embraces the physical, cultural and social heritage of the area. We want the Park to be a great landscape: a place that looks, sounds, smells and feels amazing. We want a Park landscape that reflects its river valley character, yet retains the distinctive personality of each local area. It should tell the unique story of the Lee Valley and communicate its rich and historic diversity.*"⁸⁰

In response to this, a set of key conservation aims and policies for the East India Dock Basin have been prepared for this CMP, which will seek to guide the site's future management, use and conservation:

Objective 1: To conserve and enhance the heritage of the EIDB to ensure its preservation for the future.

Objective 2: To maintain, protect and enhance the ecological values of the site.

Objective 3: To enhance the visitor experience of the site through improved visitor facilities, better promotion, increased links with other sites and improved interpretation.

Objective 4: To expand the opportunities for schools, volunteers and local residents to get involved with the site.

⁸⁰ <http://www.leevalleypark.org.uk/parkframework/archive/VisionsAimsPrinciples.pdf>, accessed 05/09/11, p.12

5.2 General Policies

Number	Policy	Reasons	Action
The Conservation Management Plan			
GP1A	Formally adopt the policies contained within the CMP.	The CMP should be a working document that guides any future change to the site. The parties involved should feel that they can happily agree to follow the policies within it.	LVRPA to review the policies before formally committing to adopt the policies. The policies should be used, in conjunction with the associated gazetteer, as a starting point for any proposed works to the EIDB.
GP1B	Review the CMP on a regular basis, normally every five years or when major change is planned.	The CMP will need regular reviewing to ensure that the policies stay relevant in the future and that the information contained within it is up to date.	LVRPA to review the CMP every five years or when major change is planned to check that it is up to date. If updates are required a suitable professional consultant should be appointed to review the document.
GP1C	Make the current CMP and any future revisions available to any parties with a legitimate interest in the site, such as English Heritage or local interest groups.	Other parties with an interest in the site should be involved in the ongoing development of the CMP and should have a direct say in the future of the site.	Relevant stakeholders have been invited to comment on the draft CMP during the consultation period. Once the CMP is finalised LVRPA should make the plan available at their offices or consider uploading it onto their website.
Statutory Requirements			
GP2A	Consult English Heritage and Tower Hamlets Borough Council at the earliest stages possible when a project is planned and continue to involve them in the development of plans as they progress.	Discussions between conservation professionals and stakeholders at the early stages of proposed works can bring useful input and will cut down on disagreements at later stages when a substantial amount of work has already been done.	LVRPA to consult with EH and THBC at pre-application stage when works are planned.
GP2B	Proposed changes will take note of relevant statutory designations and proper consents will be obtained before work starts.	Statutory consents, which could include Listed Building Consent or Planning Permission, need to be obtained to ensure that work is carried out to the required standard and in order to avoid penalties for inappropriate work and the loss of historic fabric.	When work is proposed LVRPA to liaise with THBC to find out which consents are needed.
Research and Recording			
GP3A	Future alterations or refurbishments will be adequately researched as the work is planned.	This policy aims to ensure that changes to the building are historically appropriate and that a clear picture of the site's development over time is established. Speculative work should be avoided.	LVRPA or a suitable professional consultant should refer to this CMP or carry out any necessary additional research when works are planned.

Number	Policy	Reasons	Action
GP3B	Changes made to the building/structures, including repair, alteration, demolition and extension will be adequately documented.	This is so that changes made now are adequately understood by the custodians of the site in the future. A record should include plans, before and after photographs, a description of the works carried out, the cost and who carried out the works. The documentation should be stored in an appropriate archive. It may also be appropriate to deposit documentation at the local record office in Tower Hamlets.	The LVRPA to retain a copy of documents relating to changes to the buildings in an appropriate archive.

5.3 Issue Specific Policies

Number	Policy	Reasons	Action
Condition, Repair and Alteration			
IP1A	Prepare a maintenance and inspection programme for the historic structures on site.	A regular programme of inspection and repair is important so that minor defects are spotted and dealt with as soon as possible. If left untreated some problems can easily escalate, causing loss of original fabric and the necessity for expensive repair work.	LVRPA to prepare/continue the existing inspection and maintenance programme and to periodically review whether any other items require further inspections, maintenance or condition surveys. Works identified as a result should be completed in an appropriate and timely manner. LVRPA are currently preparing a site furniture audit, which will cover maintenance issues for site furniture.
IP1B	Repair of the historic structures on site will be carried out using appropriate conservation materials and techniques.	Inappropriate repairs can be very damaging to historic structures in the long run and for significant buildings a high standard of work is necessary.	When work is needed LVRPA to consult with conservation professionals who can advise on appropriate repair methods and materials. Works should be carried out by suitably qualified professionals and contractors familiar with historic buildings or working at historic docks.
IP1C	Alterations to the historic structures on site will be the minimum necessary and wherever possible alterations will be carried out in a way that is reversible.	Alterations should pay attention to the significance of the structures and are more likely to be acceptable to those of lower significance.	LVRPA to make any architects designing potential future alterations aware of this policy and the significance assessment in this CMP and the accompanying Gazetteer. Where loss of significant fabric is proposed this should be weighed against the benefits of the proposal.
IP1D	Undertake repairs to the river walls.	The repairs are necessary for the continued condition and stability of the river walls.	LVRPA have secured funding for this work.

Number	Policy	Reasons	Action
IP1E	Carry out works to de-silt the Basin.	The current silt levels are not only unattractive but they are a potential threat to the bird and aquatic life that uses the Basin. It is an ongoing problem that local residents are particularly worried about.	LVRPA are in the process of seeking a contractor to prepare a plan and costing for the de-silting of the Basin.
Access to the Site			
IP2A	Improve wayfinding signage to the site and strengthen wayfinding at the north-west entrance.	There is currently little signage to direct the visitor to the EIDB site, particularly from the DLR station. The north-west entrance is utilitarian and uninviting. These aspects should be improved in order to encourage more visitors to the site.	LVRPA have identified that the northwest entrance is an important enhancement area and design proposals will be developed as in-house resources allow.
IP2B	Work with the owners of Orchard Wharf and other local land owners to provide a riverside walkway which would better link sites in this area.	A riverside walkway, particularly between EIDB and Trinity Buoy Wharf but also to the Royal Docks and to Reuters, would greatly improve linkages between sites in the area, increasing cross-promoting of the sites and allowing visitors greater access to the river's edge.	Await outcome of Planning Application for the Orchard Wharf site.
IP2D	Explore opportunities to better link the EIDB to other sites in the area.	The EIDB is currently fairly isolated, with busy roads restricting access and creating barriers to movement. Trinity Buoy Wharf, Bow Creek and the wider Lea Valley Park would be obvious sites which the EIDB could link to, increasing cross-promotion of the sites and improving the visitor experience and offer in the locality.	Continue or implement discussions with Trinity Buoy Wharf Trust to find out about potential opportunities to work together on projects for the site. Look at ways in which the EIDB and Bow Creek could be better linked together. This will increase with the completion of the Fatwalk but other opportunities, such as better signage between the sites or joint schools visits, could also be explored.
Visitor Use and Experience			
IP3A	Maintain the site's current use as a nature reserve and heritage site.	The quiet and undeveloped nature of the site is what users most value.	Options for future site enhancements should be sympathetic with the site's character. Major development should be avoided.
IP3B	Any new structure/building for visitors should be discreet in its massing and sensitive to the historic character of the Basin and its role as a refuge for visitors within a heavily built-up area.	New additions to the site should be sympathetic to the site and designed to high standards. It should not cause harm to the implicit heritage values and should be sensitive to the existing character of the Basin	LVRPA to ensure that this policy is clearly understood by any future designer of improved visitor facilities within the Basin.

Number	Policy	Reasons	Action
Interpretation and Presentation			
IP4A	Improve and enhance the interpretation of the Basin for visitors.	Improved interpretation could help the visitor to better understand the historic context of the site. This could include better signage, interpretation panels, electronic interpretation, guide books and updates to the website.	Options for interpretation to be explored following completion of the CMP as part of a site wide enhancement scheme, with potential funding from the HLF.
IP4B	Improve and enhance the presentation and public realm of the Basin for visitors.	An improved public realm will enhance the way visitors experience the Basin.	Options for the enhancement of the current public realm across the Basin to be explored following completion of the CMP as part of the site wide enhancement scheme with potential funding from HLF.
Security and Vandalism			
IP5	Explore options for securing the boundary of the Basin.	The exploration of options will provide information on the implications of creating a more secure boundary in relation to visitor perception and the presentation of the site.	If any works arise from the review options these may be included within site wide enhancement scheme as described above.
Intrusive Features			
IP6	Remove any intrusive features currently causing harm to the presentation of the site.	There are currently several features which are visually intrusive to the site and their removal should be considered.	Options for removal to be explored following completion of the CMP as part of a site wide enhancement scheme, with potential funding from HLF.
Threat of Development			
IP7	Monitor future planning applications in the area in order to assess any potential harm to both the heritage values implicit within the Basin and its character as a quiet refuge.	To avoid causing harm to both the heritage asset and the existing character of the Basin.	Ensure prompt and robust responses are given should the LVRPA be a consultee in any planning application.
Funding Constraints			
IP8	Explore funding opportunities for any enhancement work.	Improvement and maintenance works to the site will be very costly. All opportunities for additional funding should be sought in order to ensure that necessary works are carried out, particularly for the de-silting project.	Explore the possibility of a site wide enhancement scheme as a project for HLF funding and seek advice from a specialist for other sources of funding.
Accessibility			
IP9	Future changes to the site will comply with DDA standards.	The site currently meets with access standards. Should any changes be made to the site, these should also conform to standards in order to ensure that those with disabilities can enjoy the site as fully as possible.	LVRPA to make the designer of any future site works aware of this policy.
Health and Safety			
IP10	Monitor the ongoing health and safety of the Basin.	To ensure the health and safety of all visitors.	Carry out a health and safety review of the Basin.

Number	Policy	Reasons	Action
Sustainability and Climate Change			
IP11	Monitor environmental and climate changes which could in the future affect the EIDB.	Climate change is increasingly a concern within our society and for national and regional governments. It may be necessary in the future to make upgrades or alterations to the site to compensate for increased risk of flooding or rainfall. A continued awareness of long term changes in climate will mean that LVRPA is better prepared to deal with necessary alterations.	LVRPA to take note of this policy.
Education and Schools			
IP12	Improve the education programme and investigate potential links with other organisations.	The EIDB is a valuable source of historical and ecological information for learning and education. Potential links could be with the Museum of London Docklands or with local history or amenity groups.	LVRPA to review with their Schools Officer which of these opportunities should be explored further.
Volunteering			
IP13	Enhance the volunteering programme.	Volunteers are a valuable source of labour for the site, providing help with necessary works to the natural habitats and with general maintenance work that would otherwise be a cost to LVRPA. Volunteering also encourages use and promotion of the site.	LVRPA to review their volunteer programme for EIDB and identify whether any enhancements could be made.
Ecology			
IP14	Protect and enhance the natural habitats and species on site.	The EIDB is an important site for flora and fauna. The ecology and bird life is particularly valued by local residents. These should be preserved and enhanced for current and future generations.	LVRPA to continue their programme of nature conservation and maintain the site as an important natural habitat. Also explore the possibility of having the EIDB designated as a Local Nature Reserve and seek advice from a specialist on other designations or sources of funding for ecological sites.
Archaeology			
IP15	Protect and enhance archaeology found on the EIDB site.	The current extent of archaeological remains is unknown, though there are certain areas where archaeology is more likely to survive. Any future works to the site may disturb or damage significant archaeology so the extent will need to be established before work is carried out and archaeological investigation may be necessary.	Before any building or major landscaping works are carried out to the site, an archaeological assessment should be commissioned and the recommendations within it adhered to.

Appendices

Appendix A - Bibliography and Further Research

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The Museum of Docklands

Plans Viewed

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- 662 2958: Site of proposed Garage for Nor-Med Lines Ltd
- 662 2946: 'A' Warehouse
- 657 0012: Swing Bridge
- 676 0078: Lock Import to Basin plan and sections
- 676 0047: Dock Basin Apron Line, amended plan
- 676 0018: New Cut East India Export Dock

Further Research

Numerous plans are listed in the catalogue at the Museum of Docklands but many have been lost, damaged or are uncatalogued. Only eight plans were found or available when a visit to the archives was made, despite twenty being requested. Further research could bring up many more historic plans of the dock Basin.

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Appendix B - List Descriptions

Blackwall Pier and Entrance Lock to Former East India Dock Basin, G II

C1803 origin with later enlargement, the entrance lock to Rennie and Walker's East India Dock Basin. Brick faced with ashlar coping to quays, partly timber fended. The lock has now been backed filled up to later C19 iron plated lock gates but beyond them the quay walls have pairs of grooves cut in ashlar blocks probably for earlier set of gates. The quays and pier retain their complement of bollards and capstans.

Trinity House Buoy Wharf Quay and Orchard Dry Dock, G II

C1860 fine ashlar dressed quay to Thames and returned to Bow Creek with river stairs set into riverside wall. The wharf was built to serve all Trinity House lightships, lighthouses and buoys. The dock lies to the west side of the site, ashlar lined, partly filled but retaining iron plated caisson in situ.

Trinity House Chain Locker and Lighthouse Block, G II

C1860 stock brick double gabled range with octagonal lighthouse built into east gable end nearest river. Coped parapet gable ends. Squat segmental gauged brick arched windows with wall raised up with segmental head in centre of south side over blocked former large work doors. Oculi in upper part of gable flank lighthouse tower which has recessed full height panels to its faces framing narrow windows with blind panels to "third floor" level. Moulded cornice gallery around base of circular lantern. Originally there was a similar light to tile east gable. Same details of fenestration to the north gabled section. This block served as chain locker shop for the servicing of Trinity House lights and ships. Still used for repair work.

Dry Dock at Blackwall Engineering, G II

Dry dock. Late C18, in existence in 1803, enlarged and rebuilt to its present dimensions before 1850. Truncated to two-thirds of original length 1988 and north end reprofiled by Richard Rogers Partnership. Brick and stone construction with the usual stepped bottom. PLAN: rectangular, with waisted east side at north end and curved north corners. EXTERIOR: one step visible above water line, paved with millstone slabs on lower step, and with granite facing blocks to edges of both steps. Side walls of yellow stock brick laid in English bond. Terminal south walls of red stock brick and with millstone coping. Granite-faced steps on either side at south end, and opposite each other at point of waisting. Steel caisson gate at south end renewed in 1988. One of the earliest large dry docks remaining on the Thames. Used by the Greens in their Blackwall Yard, famous for Blackwall frigates and later adapted for repairing paddle wheel tugs.

Entrance Gateway, G II

Pair of gatepiers, joined by later brick wall. 1807 - 15. Probably S P Cockerell. Stuccoed brick; Portland stone bases. Broad moulded piers, the front faces with battered edges and pointed crest to resemble pylons (top of left hand pier missing). Coade stone Caduceus emblem inset into each pier. Originally an entrance to East India Company's Cos Pepper group of Warehouses. S P Cockerell was appointed surveyor to the company in 1806.

East India Dock Wall and Gateway, G II

Early C19. Stock brick, approximately 15 ft high boundary wall with interval chamfered buttresses. Brick capping. Central gateway advanced. Central arch with impost caps now blocked. Flanking advanced sections containing empty arched niches.

East India Dock Wall Boundary, G II

Early C19. Stock brick, approximately 15 ft high boundary wall with interval chamfered buttresses. Brick capping. Central gateway advanced. Central arch with impost caps now blocked. Flanking advanced sections containing empty arched niches.

Plaque on Modern Dock Wall Facing West, G II

Formerly part of the East India Dock Gateway, listed in 1950 demolished 1958. Plaque 1806. Polished granite with white stone frame, moved from original gateway to East India Dock. Commemorates the construction of the dock and its opening on 4 August 1806.

East India Dock Pumping Station, G II

Mid C19. Italianate influence. Stock brick with blue brick and white stone dressings Eastern campanile tower with 3 bay, 1 storey building to west. Arcaded tower has pyramidal ribbed leaded roof with finial. Top storey has 3 arched recesses with white stone keys in blue brick dressings. Recesses bricked except for roundel under arch. Wide band and coved soffit separates lower portion which has 3 similar arched recessed panels extending from tower base. Rusticated blue brick corner quoins. 1 storey wing has modillion brick cornice with blocking course above, centre bay with brick pediment. Large round headed, double arches to centre and eastern bay. Western bay has central arch with flanking round arched windows with glazing bars. The 3 large arches with separated and shaped blue brick voussoirs. Parts of arches now bricked up.

The East India Dock Pumping Station forms a group with the East India Dock Boundary Wall and the Embankment Wall and steps on Naval Row.

East India Dock Boundary Wall and Gateway, G II

Early C19 high stock brick wall to former East India Dock, with interval buttresses. (Wall continues along pedestrian walk above Blackwall Tunnel Approach.)

The East India Dock Boundary wall forms a group with the East India Dock Pumping Station and the Embankment Wall and steps on Naval Row.

Embankment Wall, Railings and Steps, G II

Stock brick railed wall supporting embankment, with trees and paths, below East India Dock's boundary wall (qv). Wall continues behind Robin Hood's Lane. Iron railings with spear shaped finials.

The Embankment Wall and steps form part of a group with the East India Dock Pumping Station and the East India Dock Boundary Wall on East India Dock Wall Road.

Appendix C - Core Strategy for Leamouth and Blackwall



Leamouth

LAP 7 & 8

Vision

Creating a modern waterside place where the River Lea Park meets the River Thames

Leamouth will become a mixed-use place with a creative and arts hub at Trinity Buoy Wharf alongside new residential communities, set around the River Thames and River Lea. New connections, pedestrian and cycle bridges will make the area more accessible to the rest of the borough and allow residents and workers to get to Canning Town station and town centre.

Taking full advantage of its waterside location, buildings will positively address the asset of the water. This will invite people to spend time by the river edges for relaxation, leisure, living and working.

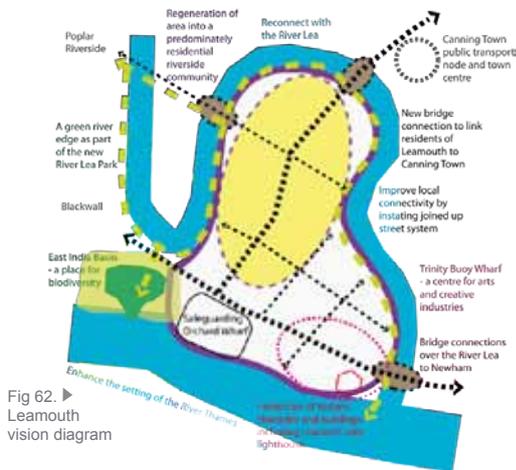


Fig 62. Leamouth vision diagram

Opportunities and growth

Older industrial uses are making way for new, predominantly residential development. New homes and new jobs are being delivered on this peninsula alongside new infrastructure.

How we are going to get there

Priorities

1. To support a mix of uses across Leamouth with Orchard Place North being primarily residential mixed-use, and Orchard Place South as being employment-led mixed-use.
2. To ensure that new development is supported by the timely provision of appropriate social, community, and physical infrastructure.
3. To improve the accessibility, permeability and connectivity of Leamouth as part of the redevelopment and regeneration of the area, including bridges with inclusive access across the River Lea to Canning Town and river crossings to North Greenwich.
4. To continue to protect Orchard Wharf for cargo-handling uses. Development that prejudices the operation of the wharf for these purposes will not be supported.
5. To protect and enhance the ecological value of East India Basin and ensure new development enhances biodiversity value.
6. To ensure a continuous and animated riverside walkway is provided and linked into new green spaces, to allow enjoyment and use of the water edges, and for it to become part of the Lea River Park and FAT Walk.

Principles

1. Ensure the protection and conservation of historic industrial buildings in order to preserve and enhance the character of Leamouth.
2. Buildings to focus leisure uses adjacent to waterside locations and present an active edge to the riverside walkway.
3. Effective buffers are needed to protect the residential amenity and the future operation of Orchard Wharf.
4. Instate public streets to ensure future public access and the permeability of the area.



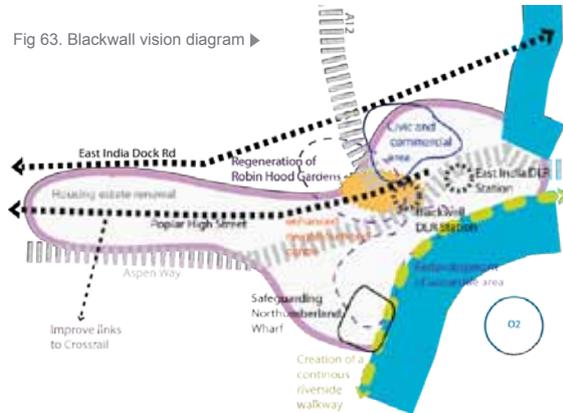
Vision

A mixed use area with a new town centre and the Town Hall as its commercial and civic hearts

Blackwall will undergo transformation through housing growth and investment, and will emerge as an attractive and desirable place to live and work. An extended neighbourhood centre will be created to include the shops along the east of Poplar High Street and a new public square in front of Blackwall DLR station.

A new green space will be provided through the redevelopment of Robin Hood Gardens, and East India Dock Basin will see accessibility and biodiversity improvements. Poplar High Street will continue to be the main east-west connection within a clear and coherent network of streets and spaces with excellent walking and cycling connections.

Fig 63. Blackwall vision diagram ▶



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Opportunities and growth

The Blackwall area will undergo transformation over the next 10-15 years, with the new Crossrail station being delivered across Aspen Way in Canary Wharf, new housing developments, and the Blackwall Reach Regeneration Framework.

How we are going to get there

Priorities

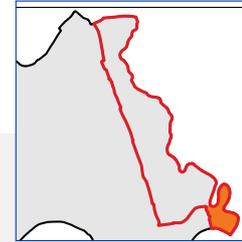
1. To improve and extend the neighbourhood centre in and around Blackwall DLR station and the existing parade of shops along Poplar High Street.
2. To establish a new public square in the town centre as part of the Blackwall DLR station transport interchange and support the development of town centre uses within the square.
3. To redevelop Robin Hood Gardens as part of the Blackwall Reach Regeneration Framework, and provide new public green space.
4. To improve connections to, and protect and enhance the ecological value of, East India Dock Basin through the FAT Walk.
5. To ensure a continuous and animated riverside walkway is provided to allow enjoyment and use of the water edges, and to become part of the Lea River Park.
6. To address the barriers of the A12 road and implement the Aspen Way Masterplan to improve north-south pedestrian and cycling routes to Canary Wharf.
7. To continue to protect Northumberland Wharf for cargo-handling uses including the transport of waste. Development that prejudices the operation of the wharf for these purposes will not be supported

Principles

1. The public square around Blackwall DLR should be framed by active ground-floor uses to animate and bring vibrancy to the square.
2. New development should improve east-west pedestrian and cycling connections between East India Basin and Cotton Street.
3. Development between Blackwall and Canary Wharf should integrate both places, helping to bridge Aspen Way.
4. Effective buffers are needed to protect the amenity of surrounding uses and the future operation of Northumberland Wharf.

Appendix D - Leaside Area Action Plan: Leamouth Sub Area

Leamouth

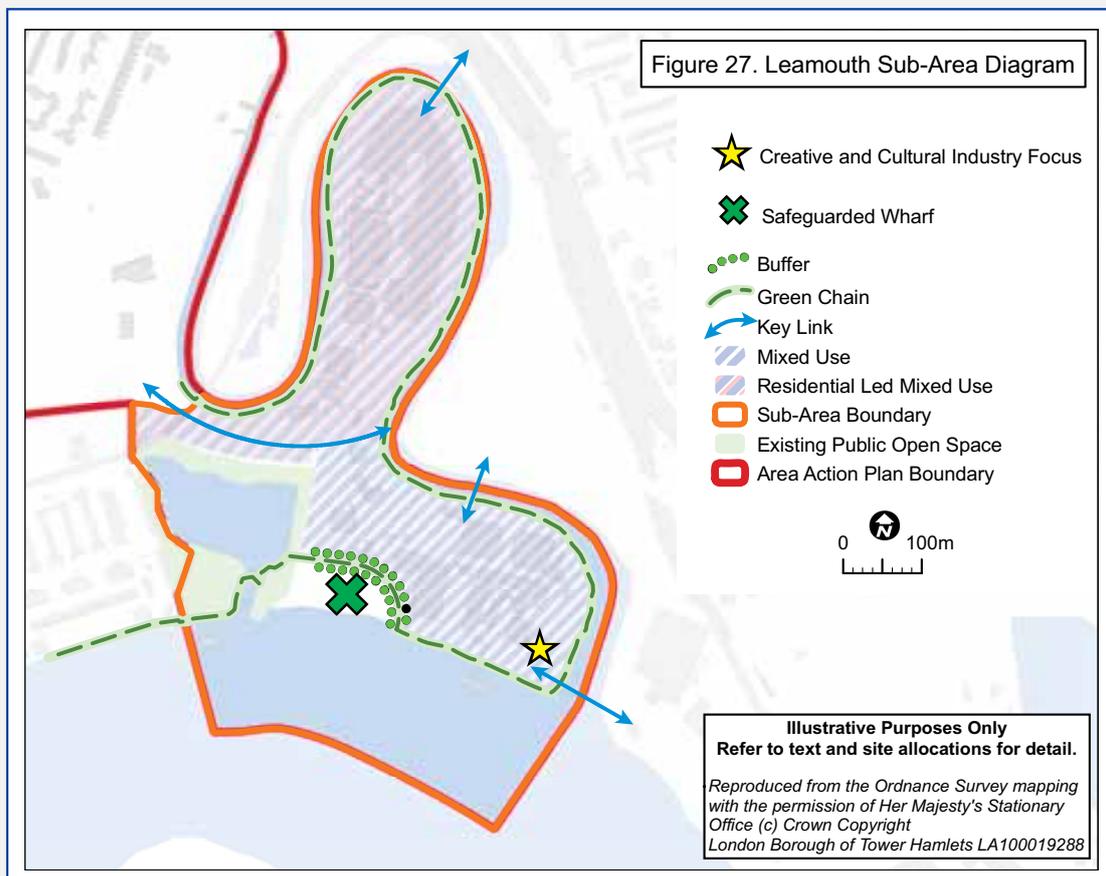


Summary of existing character

4.72 The current industrial use on the Leamouth Peninsula site has come to the end of its economic life and the opportunity exists to redevelop this site for alternative uses. The site is a gateway to the Borough, and the convergence of the rivers, proximity to East India Dock Basin and the size of the site raise the potential for a striking landmark development.

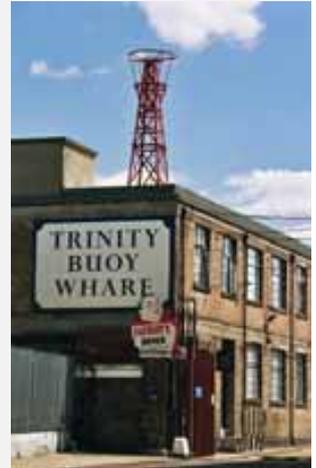
Future character statement

4.73 Leamouth will become a diverse area which takes full advantage of its unique waterside location. The area will contain housing, creative industries and workshops, a protected wharf, community and health facilities and green spaces, all set within a strong, legible built form, well connected to neighbouring communities.



Employment uses in Leamouth sub-area

- 4.74 Trinity Buoy Wharf at the east of the sub-area is the location of a growing creative and cultural industries cluster which has developed in and around the unique industrial heritage, including London's only lighthouse. Despite the limited access, the effective occupation of old industrial buildings by creative and cultural industries, combined with the unique setting at the mouth of the River Lea, has resulted in the area becoming increasingly popular for a variety of events, gatherings and public/tourist attractions.
- 4.75 Orchard Wharf is a Safeguarded Wharf and is located adjacent to East India Dock. It is accessed off a slip road from the Lower Lea Crossing. While the Wharf is not currently operational, its strategic location within East London and the site characteristics have led to the safeguarding of the wharf for cargo transfer (including aggregates or waste).



Policy L38 Employment uses in Leamouth sub-area

1. Orchard Wharf will be protected for aggregates transfer. Development that prejudices the operation of the wharf for these purposes will not be supported.
2. Mixed-use development will be expected on development sites Orchard Place North and South. Employment uses should be the dominant use in Orchard Place South, and should include B1 uses for small and medium sized enterprises and workshops.
3. Small-scale offices and workshops (B1) will be encouraged throughout the sub-area to provide workspaces for creative and cultural industries.

Residential uses and social and community facilities in Leamouth sub-area

- 4.76 Residential uses in Leamouth will contribute to the vitality of the area, provide natural surveillance and activity after working hours, and will help meet broader housing targets. The housing densities that can be achieved in Leamouth, particularly in LS23, are only possible if connections are made across the River Lea to Canning Town station and connections to East India DLR station are improved. These enhancements will be required to be constructed prior to development taking place, to support the large residential and employment population expected in the area.





- 4.77 For the purposes of housing density, this sub-area is considered to be urban in character, given the existing built form and the sub-area's proximity to Canning Town District Centre. Housing densities within this sub-area should be assessed against the criteria in Development Control Policy HSG1 (Determining Residential Density), and be within the range from 450-700 hr/ha.
- 4.78 The mix of housing provided within this sub-area will comprise a range of housing, including smaller units and family dwellings, in accordance with Development Control Policy HSG2 (Housing Mix). A mix of housing types, being both flats and terrace-style housing, will be sought on development sites which are greater than 2 hectares. Within this sub-area, these sites include LS23 and LS24.
- 4.79 Due to Leamouth becoming a key new growth area, the area will witness a significant increase in residential population. As a result, social and community facilities will need to be provided in accessible areas to serve this new population (see Core Policy CP27).

Policy L39 Residential uses in Leamouth sub-area

1. Residential uses will be promoted throughout Leamouth as part of mixed-use development. The extent of the residential uses as part of any development scheme should have regard to the type and extent of employment uses which should be provided in line with Policy L38.
2. For the purposes of housing density this area is considered urban in character.
3. Development for residential uses will be subject to the timely provision of appropriate social and community facilities and infrastructure.

Retail and leisure uses in Leamouth sub-area

- 4.80 Leamouth is not considered to be a major location for retail development. Leamouth's proximity to Canning Town District Centre means only smaller scale retail uses are appropriate to serve the expanded residential and working community. Leisure uses would play an important role in animating the existing and new riverside walkways, and attracting visitors to the creative industries' activity and historic assets in and around Trinity Buoy Wharf.

Policy L40 Retail and leisure uses in Leamouth sub-area

1. Leisure and community uses will be supported.
2. Retail uses will be supported only where they are of a scale and kind intended to serve the needs of the Leamouth sub-area.

Local connectivity in Leamouth sub-area

4.81 The whole of the sub-area has low access to public transport. Despite the relative proximity of transport nodes (Canning Town and East India) there are significant barriers to access. The regeneration of Leamouth for residential development is dependent upon improved access to East India DLR station and across the River Lea to Canning Town; without such connectivity improvements, the type of development and density envisaged and the long-term integration of Leamouth is unlikely to be achievable. Only through the integration of Leamouth with its surrounding areas will successful, sustainable regeneration occur, and only then can the benefits of change be shared by new and existing communities.

**Policy L41 Local connectivity in Leamouth sub-area**

1. New east-west pedestrian and cycle connections linking Leamouth to East India North will be promoted.
2. Improved access for East India Dock to Trinity Buoy Wharf, provided this would not prejudice the operation of Orchard Wharf.
3. Pedestrian and cycle crossing points at Orchard Place North to Canning Town will be required as part of any new development.
4. New bridges to improve access across the River Lea will be supported.

Design and built form in Leamouth sub-area

4.82 The sub-area contains the East India Dock, which is of high ecological value, and Trinity Buoy Wharf, which contains buildings of historic merit, and currently forms an attractive feature of the sub-area providing a real sense of place. Sandwiched between these is Orchard Wharf, which is safeguarded for aggregates transfer. This presents considerable challenges in responding sensitively to the local character and minimising conflict between old and new land-uses. The design and form of development near the Wharf should incorporate design solutions that minimise this conflict.





- 4.83 North of the Lower Lea Crossover is in some ways a blank canvas, and the Council will require an exciting and innovative development that opens up access to the area and draws upon the unique waterside location.

Policy L42 Design and built form in Leamouth sub-area

1. Development must protect existing, and provide for new pedestrian walkways and cycle paths along the waterways.
2. Effective buffers must be developed between employment uses, including Orchard Wharf and residential uses.
3. Historic industrial buildings at Trinity Buoy Wharf should be retained and development should seek to preserve the character of this part of Leamouth.
4. Development should respect East India Basin and protect the ecological value of the basin
5. Retail and Leisure uses should be focused in waterside locations where they can capitalise on the unique setting of the sub-area and contribute to activity levels and the vibrancy of the area.

Site allocations in Leamouth sub-area

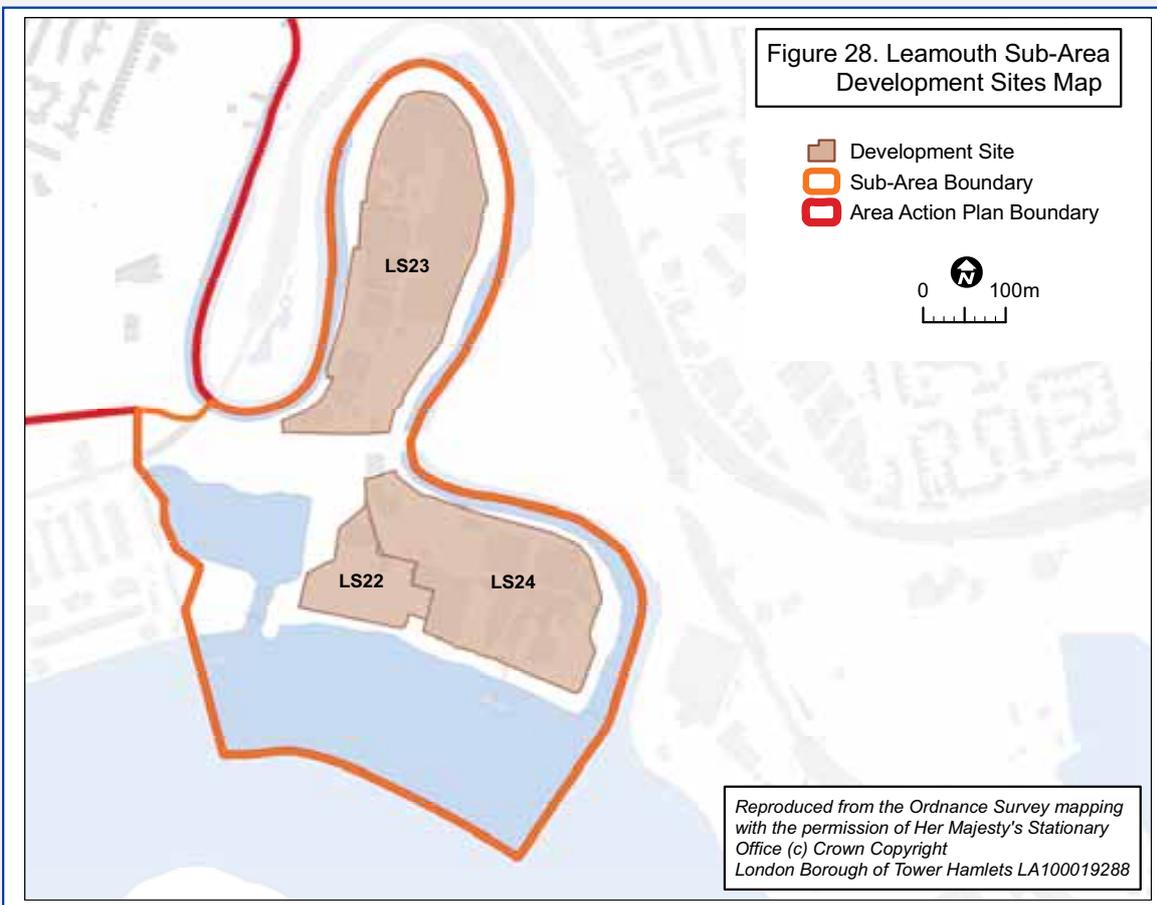
- 4.84 Site allocations for the Leamouth sub-area are included in Policy L43, and are illustrated in Figure 28.

Policy L43 Site allocations in Leamouth sub-area

The following sites allocated on the Proposals Map will be developed in line with the following preferred uses. In addition to these uses, other uses supported by policies within the Local Development Framework may also be acceptable.

Ref	Site	Size (ha)	Preferred Use(s)
LS22	Orchard Wharf	1.28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarded Wharf for Aggregates Transfer
LS23	Orchard Place North	5.18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential (C3) • Employment (B1) • Social and Community (D1) • Public Open Space
LS24	Orchard Place South	5.62	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment (B1) • Residential (C3) • Public Open Space

(Sites marked (*) have valid planning permissions as at July 2006)



Appendix E - Non-Technical Summary of Significance

Section 4.1 of LVRPA's brief included the requirement for a non-technical summary of the East India Dock Basin's significance, of no more than 2000 words. This is provided below. The brief also asked for a 250 word significance statement. This is provided within the CMP text at section 3.2.

The East India Dock Basin has significance which derives from several different sources. The site has a long and interesting history but is also important for its uses today and as a resource for the local community. There are three key areas of significance: its historical links with the East India Company and the London Docks, its value to the local community as a quiet open space away from the city and as an important inner city ecological habitat and source for nature conservation.

A Link to the Past

The significance of the site is firstly drawn from its history. The East India Docks are intrinsically linked with the history of the East India Company; a business which came to hold great influence and power internationally. The company held a monopoly over trade in the East Indies from its establishment in 1600 until the early 19th century. The Company's aspirations for political rule in India eventually lead to British Colonial rule. Their trading needs in England lead to the establishment of the East India Dock Company, which constructed and ran the docks. Therefore, the Basin's association with the East India Company has high historical significance.

The East India Docks also have high significance because of their historical association with the growth of the London docks. They were constructed at a time of expansion, shortly after the West India Docks were built. A massive industry grew up to form the Port of London, with the King George V Dock the last to open in 1921. The docks handled cargo from the British Empire and the rest of the world. After the decline in dock trading during the 20th century, the East India Docks were the first of the docks to close down in the 1960s.

The Basin is a rare surviving fragment of the East India Docks and is also the largest remaining portion of the docks. As such it has high significance. Sections of the Import Dock walls, the dock pumping station and gateways have survived in the local area but are out of their historical context because of later building and road development. The location of the Basin and lock next to the Thames, as well as remains such as mooring posts and machinery pits, gives a sense of the physical workings of the former docks. Documentary evidence, such as photographs, plans and historic maps, also help to give an impression of how the dock once appeared and how it developed over time.

The East India Docks were designed by engineers John Rennie and Ralph Walker. Rennie was a respected engineer who made his reputation designing milling machinery, canals and bridges. Walker was a less well known engineer but worked with Rennie to design the West India Docks between 1800 and 1802, shortly before they again collaborated on the East India Docks. Their association has medium significance.

The Basin also has several other important historical associations. It was from this locality, before the East India Docks were established, that the Virginia Settlers left from Blackwall to travel to America in 1606. The event is commemorated by a memorial, which was originally located on the edge of the Basin but is now situated further to the west, outside the Virginia Quays residential development. Though the East India Docks were not constructed at the time of the settlers' journey, the longer shipping history of the area provides some link between the two.

The docks are also located near to the end of the River Lea, which was traditionally a key navigation route for industries, such as flour and gunpowder mills, which grew up on its banks and for transporting coal, malt and other goods down river to London. As such it has links with the industrial heritage of the Lower Lea area. It is also part of a rich industrial heritage along the Thames front, with the location of the Blackwall Yard not far to the west and Trinity Buoy Wharf close by to the east.

In more recent times the site has been used as part of the Millennium celebrations, with the installation of a memorial sign and beacon. It also has associations with Sir Antony Caro, a renowned British Sculptor specialising in abstract welded metal structures, as he designed the Salome Gates at the north-east entrance to the site.

Another aspect of the site's history is its link with the Bangladeshi and Bengali community. The largest Bangladeshi community in the UK is now situated in the East End of London. The community developed in this area after Bengalis working on the East India Company ships began to be housed in accommodation around the East India Docks when in England and then went on to work at the docks. Many of them settled here and today the Brick Lane Circle works to promote their community history. Walks around the East India Company's sites in London are carried out which include the Basin and a group of young adults were supported in writing a book, 'Plassey's Legacy', in 2010 which explored the links between the East India Company and this part of London.

Benefit to the Local Community

The Basin is an attractive open space within a built up and busy area. The reed bed and greenery to the north of the site and the woodland to the south-west contribute greatly to its appearance. The open water is also an appealing feature. The site is also clean and well maintained which is a benefit to its character.

Views from the site are particularly important. The view across to the O2 arena is spectacular and eye-catching, while the River Thames stretches out to the east and west encapsulating scenes of industrial buildings, the rising hill of Woolwich across the river and taller buildings on the Isle of Dogs to the west.

The site is also highly valued by local residents as a rare open and green space within an urban area. It is considered a haven away from the city and is often used by local people for walking, bird watching or just to 'get away from it all'.

The site attracts volunteers, who work with the wider LVRPA volunteer programme, to clean up and carry out regular maintenance tasks. It is also occasionally visited by school groups who learn about the ecological and historical aspects of the site. The site is a very valuable potential resource for learning and education.

An Inner City Ecological Habitat

The ecology of the East India Dock Basin has high significance. Since being converted into a nature reserve in the 1990s the site has become an important natural habitat for flora and fauna. The site contains open water, woodland, meadows, a reed bed, exposed mud, tern rafts, south facing banks, scrub and salt marsh. It is the furthest site up the Thames to have a salt marsh present and one of the only remaining examples in the city.

Important plant life in the reed bed includes Scurvy Grass, Halberd (Spear)-Leaved Orache, Common Spiked Rush, Sea Aster, Sea Arrow Grass and Glaucous Bull Rush. Ferns and liverworts have thrived within the machinery pits, where an ideal micro-climate has been created. Other notable species on site include Soft Shield Fern, Warty Cabbage (a relic of shipping days), Salsify (unique to this meadow in the park) and Sea Milkwort.

The site also forms an important part of the Lee Valley migration route and regularly attracts notable vagrant bird species. Over 65 species of bird are regularly recorded on the site. Notable species include Black Redstart, Little Ringed Plovers, Kingfisher, Blackcap, Reed Warbler, Little Ringed Plovers, Common Terns, Teal and Shelduck.

The ecology of the site is one aspect which particularly attracts members of the local community. The site is regularly used by bird watchers and local users observe that wildlife can be seen at very close quarters. A local ecologist, Gary James, remarked that "*East India Dock Basin Nature Reserve is one of the best known and well regarded small nature reserves in the London area.*" Unfortunately, the siltation of the Basin impacts negatively on the ecology of the site, and on its visual appearance.

Appendix F - Consultation Email Responses

Original E-mail sent 27/07/11:

Dear all,

Purcell Miller Tritton have been commissioned by Lee Valley Regional Park Authority to prepare the Conservation Management Plan and give conservation advice on the East India Dock Basin. Your details have been passed on to me from LVRPA as someone who has an interest in site. As part of the report preparation process we wish to gather comments from those people who use the Dock Basin and have an interest in its future so that we can gain a better idea of the ways in which it should be conserved, used and/or developed. We would greatly appreciate any responses to the questions below as a starting point to inform our study.

- What is your relationship to the East India Dock Basin? Local resident, community group, etc.?
- How often do you use the East India Dock Basin and for what purposes?
- What do you value about the site?
- What problems or issues do you feel detract from the site?
- What changes or new uses do you feel would be beneficial to the site?

We are aiming to prepare the first draft of the report by the beginning of September in order to be prepared for the Autumn deadline of HLF applications, so we would appreciate your responses, or any other comments about the site you may have, by the end of next week (Friday 5th August). Alternatively, feel free to ring me on the number below if you would like to discuss anything.

We are also considering holding a meeting with local community groups to discuss the heritage and future of the site. Please let me know whether you would be interested in attending.

Kind regards,

Sally Brownlow
Heritage Consultant

John Gordon, e-mail 28/07/11

What is your relationship to the East India Dock Basin?

1.1) Local resident living next door to the EIDB reserve for 12 years.

How often do you use the East India Dock Basin and for what purposes?

2.1) All windows at the rear of our house plus our back garden overlook the reserve. Hence we look at it several times each day and observe the bird life constantly.

2.2) I physically walk in the reserve several times each month to get fresh air, see the views and watch the wildfowl.

What do you value about the site?

3.1) The dock basin (EIDB) is the last remaining stretch of open water within the London Docklands area that does not have regular boat usage or any moorings. This preserves it for the wildlife which can then be seen in all its variety at close quarters. This makes EIDB an important local resource for visitors including school groups from more densely built-up areas of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, and surrounding boroughs.

3.2) This is an historically important site, preserving part of one of the largest docks system as water. The East India Docks were the first docks to close after World War 2 and the lock gates to the River Thames are grade 2 listed.

3.3) The evolution of the site since the docks closed has created a rare inner city habitat which now attracts a diverse range of birds and other wildlife.

3.4) The EIDB offers peace, tranquillity and a place to reflect to the visitors who use the site.

3.5) During Summer evenings especially during June and July, bats can often be seen flying along the edge of the reserve over our back garden.

What problems or issues do you feel detract from the site?

4.1) The silting up of the dock. Silting is a by-product of the tidal nature of the dock, which otherwise is good as it prevents the water becoming stagnant. Hence silting should always be expected to occur but LVRPA do not appear to be in full control of this issue currently.

In my opinion, this is an unfortunate legacy from the days of the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) who created the EIDB as it is. The LDDC failed in two areas:

Firstly, the LDDC did not go far enough when declaring the site as a bird reserve to secure this via an official designation by a national body such as the Department of the Environment. Hence funding for maintenance is always subject to the decision of the body who the LDDC passed the ownership to, namely LVRPA. There is no statutory requirement I am aware of for LVRPA to maintain the dock. Hence, the de-silting issue has dragged on now for several years as LVRPA are apparently under no obligation to resolve the issue.

Secondly, the LDDC failed to develop a sustainable plan for LVRPA to maintain water within the dock and periodically de-silt. The provision of man made islands within the water and the softening of the northern boundary against the flyover, both done by the LDDC, probably increased the rate of silting versus when the space was a dock.

The LDDC further exacerbated the problem by welding shut the lock gates into the River Thames prior to transferring ownership to LVRPA. This prevents a vessel entering the dock to de-silt on a periodic basis. LVRPA report the cost of opening the lock gates to enable a vessel to access from the river is now in excess of £1 million.

4.2) The derelict Orchard Wharf site is not pretty. It is regrettable that no one thought to incorporate some or all of this site when the EIDB was created via compulsory purchase. This would have enabled much easier provision of visitor facilities, like toilets and/or a café in an area of the reserve easily accessible from Orchard Place roads by service vehicles.

4.3) The Orchard Wharf site is now under threat of re-development as an aggregates batching facility. This will involve unloading of vessels on the river right next to EIDB and frequent HGV movements along Orchard Place adjacent to EIDB. If it goes ahead, this facility threatens the EIDB due to industrial noise, dust, increased air pollution, possible local road safety concerns and likely visual impairment of views from within the EIDB when looking towards the east. Further details can be found at:

<http://194.201.98.213/WAM/searchsubmit/performOption.do?action=search>
Search 'Application Number' with code PA/10/02778.

What changes or new uses do you feel would be beneficial to the site?

5.1) Provision of a visitor facility incorporating toilets. This is needed to enhance the EIDB as a resource for local schools and for other visitors such as walkers using the revitalised "Fat Walk" along the banks of the River Lea. The EIDB will be the southern terminus point for the "Fat Walk" and needs to be more of a destination. I understand there are ideas within LVRPA to develop something on the eastern shore of the reserve using a design that takes inspiration from the famous Thames barges. Unfortunately, the location selected is close by the proposed aggregate batching plant at Orchard Wharf.

5.2) The site needs improved signage from places like East India DLR station and around the roundabout between Aspen Way and the Lower Lea Crossing to attract more visitors.

5.3) Better publicity throughout Tower Hamlets and Newham to promote the benefits of the EIDB.

5.4) The EIDB needs urgent de-silting and the establishment of a sustainable plan to manage the future silt levels within the dock on a long-term, ongoing basis.

5.5) The EIDB needs to be declared an official bird reserve via an appropriate national government process in order to secure the legacy for future generations.

Cliff Prior, e-mail 28/07/11**What is your relationship to the East India Dock Basin?**

Lives next to the reserve

How often do you use the East India Dock Basin and for what purposes?

Walks in it to see the bird life at least once a week

What do you value about the site?

- this is a globally significant site, as the origin of the British Empire through being the starting point of the East India Company. Whatever we think of that past for good and ill, this little stretch of water was the starting point for something that ended up covering a quarter of the world's population. It is also just a couple of hundred meters from the origins of the USA, as the Virginia Memorial marks the departure point for the first settlers - we get a lot of American tourists here as a result. It's surprising so little is made of this extraordinary history.

- EIDB is the only tidal bird reserve on the north of the Thames for 20 miles in each direction. There is a matching one (much better maintained and with much stronger education facilities - worth a look) on the south side at Greenwich Millennium Village.

What problems or issues do you feel detract from the site?

The wildlife we get here is remarkable, though impaired recently by the silting problem.

What changes or new uses do you feel would be beneficial to the site?

No comment made

Gary James, e-mail 05/08/11**General**

I am surprised that LVRPA have commissioned somebody to conduct a management plan at this time. I am sure you are aware that London Concrete have put in a planning application for a large industrial installation at Orchard Wharf. If this goes ahead it will have devastating effect on EIDB turning a quiet and peaceful oasis into a place to avoided.

Also about two years ago London Thames Gateway drew up some proposals for the site which were fiercely opposed by the local community, and eventually dropped. I am hoping that you are not going to prepare something as drastic as those plans.

What is your relationship to the East India Dock Basin?

I am an Ecologist and belong to a group who have recorded and surveyed the wildlife at EIDB for the last twelve years.

How often do you use the East India Dock Basin and for what purposes?

I visit the site 2-3 times a week mostly for about 2-4 hours a time.

What do you value about the site?

East India Dock Basin Nature Reserve is one of the best known and well regarded small nature reserves in the London area. Over 130 bird species have been recorded (30+ have bred); over 20 species of Butterfly, rare Hymenoptera (bees and wasps) occur as do many other invertebrates. Bats forage over the site and on the northern shore of the basin rare salt marsh is found, the nearest to central London. The site benefits from being on two migration routes, the rivers Thames and Lea. During spring and autumn the area acts as a magnet for migrating birds to feed and rest and the site is home to hundreds of Wildfowl in winter.

The most important areas of EIDB for wildlife are the tidal basin, the northern shoreline with the reed-bed and the scrub behind. This northern area is very important for breeding birds and for Wildfowl in winter, who have a safe haven here because there is no public access to this area. Public access to this area would disturb and probably remove wildlife from this area. The woodland area alongside the Thames is the only piece of woodland along the river for 30 miles. The woodland is managed to maintain a diverse canopy to allow an understory to develop for the benefit of Biodiversity. The meadow also has a diverse flora with associated invertebrates.

EIDB is a quiet and peaceful site where people can escape the madness of the city, it is important that this ambience is maintained. The area suffers little vandalism but that is because there is little to vandalise on the site.

What problems or issues do you feel detract from the site?

The tidal basin has been silting up for a number of years and has now reached a critical point, though this has been alleviated somewhat by the recent raising of the sluice gates in the lock. This has led to more water staying in the basin and slowing down the silting process. But it is only a temporary measure, and eventually if unchecked the whole basin will silt up. This is of course the most urgent matter that needs to be addressed. The islands in the basin were originally meant to attract breeding birds but they flood at the highest tides. These islands could be reprofiled to attract breeding birds like the protected Little Ringed Plover.

What changes or new uses do you feel would be beneficial to the site?

There has been some discussion as to the possibility of developing a classroom/cafeteria on site. There are mixed views on this, mostly to the economic viability. But I think if an interpretation centre is proposed then it should be placed in the north east corner of the site where it will cause less disturbance and that is the area where the services are located.

There are a number of historical artefacts on the site and these need to be conserved, particularly the lock-gates and the associated machinery.

EIDB is well used the by public and so far we have maintained a good balance between people and wildlife. Recently the RSPB organised a well supported wildlife week which raised the profile of EIDB as a nature reserve. I think more of these small but effective events could be beneficial to both the Area and community.

John Archer, e-mail 08/08/11**What is your relationship to the East India Dock Basin?**

Biodiversity officer:

I am Biodiversity Officer for Tower Hamlets Council.

Local resident:

I am a keen birdwatcher who works close to the site.

How often do you use the East India Dock Basin and for what purposes?

Biodiversity Officer:

For work purposes, I visit occasionally to discuss management with the rangers, assess the value of the site compared with others in the borough, and assess the implications of adjacent planning applications.

Local resident:

2-3 times per week (every lunchtime that I'm in the office unless the weather is horrible) for birdwatching.

What do you value about the site?

Biodiversity Officer:

It is one of the most important sites for biodiversity, and for providing access to nature, in the borough, and therefore key to delivering biodiversity targets and programmes.

Local resident:

It is by far the best site in the area for birdwatching, attracting a good range of migrant birds with an occasional rarity.

What problems or issues do you feel detract from the site?

Biodiversity Officer:

The build up of silt detracts from its nature conservation value (and will increasingly do so), and from the aesthetic appearance of the site for visitors. The threat of a concrete batching plant on adjacent land is also likely to impact on visitor enjoyment of nature, and possibly on the nature conservation value of the site.

Local resident:

It needs desilting.

What changes or new uses do you feel would be beneficial to the site?

Biodiversity Officer:

It needs desilting. Nest boxes for shelducks would be worth trying. Anything which increases disturbance, particularly on the water (such as boating in any form) would be seriously detrimental to the biodiversity value of the site.

Local resident:

Desilting. I'd strongly oppose anything that increased disturbance, particularly water-based activities such as boating.