



Conservation Area

appraisal and management plan



Basingstoke canal



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1. Introduction

Overview Document

- 1.1 This document should be read alongside the [Rushmoor Conservation Area Overview document¹](#) which sets out the context in which conservation areas in Rushmoor have been designated. This includes the legislative and planning policy framework as well as the geographic and historic setting of the borough. The Overview document also explains what you need planning permission for, if your property is within a conservation area.
- 1.2 Whilst nationally listed buildings may be included within a conservation area, it is the combination of factors such as buildings, walls, trees, hedges, open spaces, views and historic settlement patterns that create the sense of place that gives the area its special character and appearance. Less tangible senses and experiences, such as noise or smells, can also play a key part in forming the distinctive character of an area. It is this character, rather than simply individual buildings, that the conservation area designation seeks to preserve and enhance.

Appraisal and Management Plan

- 1.3 This appraisal document sets out the special architectural and historic interest of the Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area, which justifies its designation as a heritage asset, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. The appraisal also identifies which features of the conservation area make a positive or negative contribution to its significance and is accompanied by a management plan which sets out ways in which the Basingstoke Canal Authority and other interested parties, the local community and the council can manage change in a way that conserves and enhances the historic area.
- 1.4 Character appraisals and management plans provide a framework and guide to enable planning decisions to be made on a site-specific basis, within the context of national planning policy and the adopted Local Plan.

Sub-Character Area Appraisals

- 1.5 The Conservation Area has been split into four-character areas based on their character, historical development and the contribution they make to the conservation areas. The four areas are as follows:
- Sub Area 1 – Old Ively Road to Eelmoor Bridge
 - Sub Area 2 – Eelmoor Bridge to Farnborough Road Bridge
 - Sub Area 3 - Farnborough Road Bridge to Government Road
 - Sub Area 4 – Government Road to Aqueduct

¹ Document available to view at: <https://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/conservationareas>

2. An Overview of Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area

Designation History

- 2.1 The Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area was designated in 1977 by Hampshire County Council. This Appraisal and the accompanying Management Proposals are being prepared as part of an ongoing review of all the conservation areas within Rushmoor Borough.
- 2.2 The Basingstoke Canal is an inland waterway, running from Basingstoke in Hampshire to the River Wey Navigation in Surrey. It follows a meandering west to east course through Rushmoor Borough passing through picturesque countryside, woodland, and Aldershot Military Town with the canal forming a border between two distinct areas, notably North and South Camps.
- 2.3 The canal was constructed in the late 18th century to provide easy transport of agricultural produce to Metropolitan markets and its construction opened up the area for farming. The canal opened in 1794 and although never commercially successful, it did play a valuable role in the construction of Aldershot Camp from 1854 through the supply of building materials and later food and drink.
- 2.4 The canal's picturesque surroundings made it a notable leisure resource in the mid-19th century, a role it continues to fulfil to the present day. During the 20th century, the declining use of the canal and a general lack of maintenance led to a gradual deterioration. During the Second World War, the canal formed part of the GHQ Line, a line of defences running from Somerset to Yorkshire via Aldershot and Essex. As a result, pill boxes, and other defensive features remain along the line of the canal and in its immediate setting.
- 2.5 The interest of the canal as an historic waterway is supported by the architectural value of the structures along its course. These include 18th century canal bridges, military girder bridges as well as a set of canal locks and the Grade II listed Ash Lock Cottage.

Biodiversity

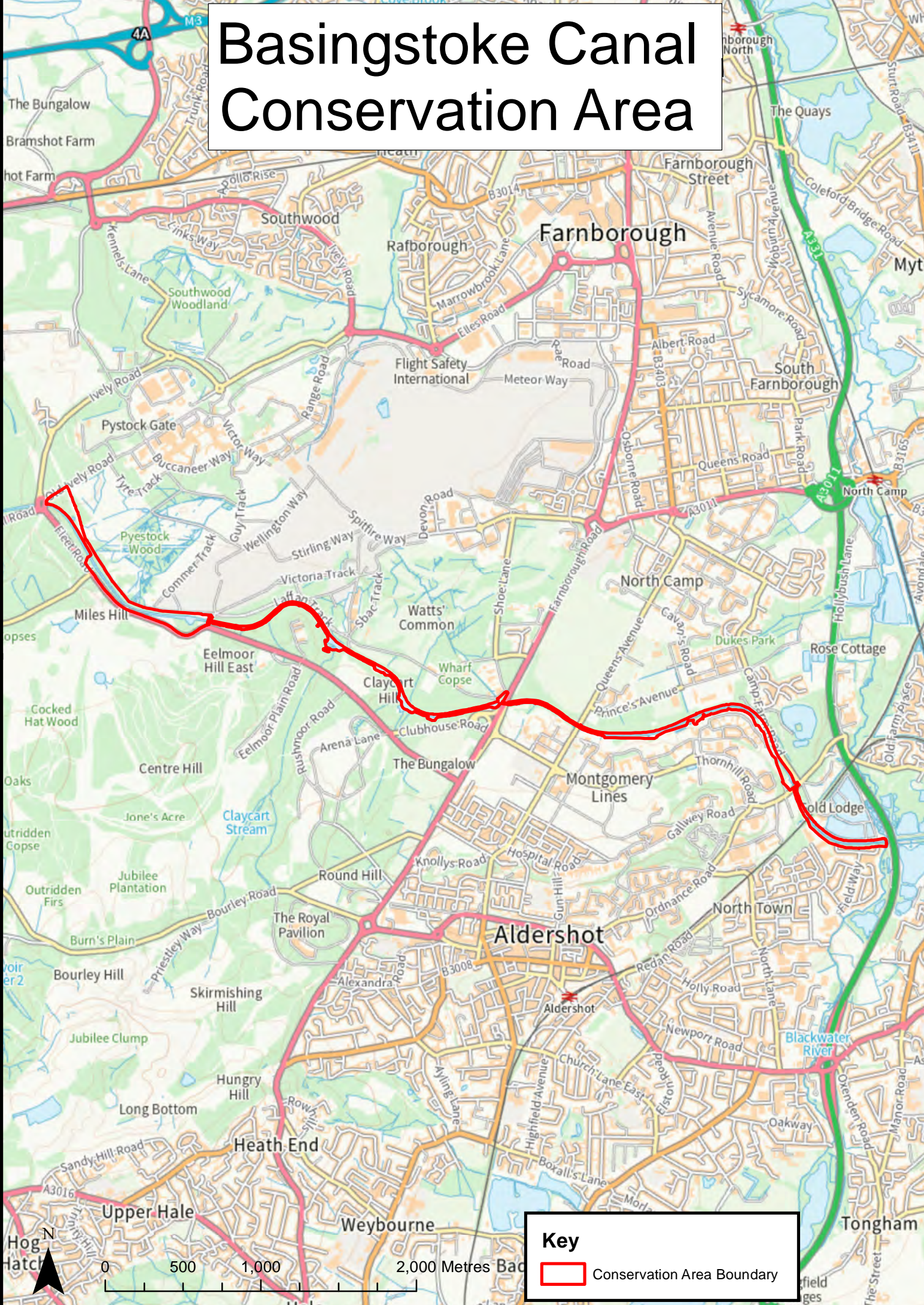
- 2.6 The Basingstoke Canal is a waterway of national importance being designated for its unique water chemistry and the range of plants and invertebrates that this supports. It is considered the most biodiverse freshwater body in England & Wales. The full length of the Canal and the majority of the three 'flashes' located within the borough are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Summary of key Characteristics


- 2.7 This Character Appraisal concludes that the key positive characteristics of the Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area are:
 - The Basingstoke Canal represents one of the inland waterways constructed in England in the late 18th century representing an engineering achievement of great historic significance and a significant example of human impact on the environment;
 - The canal's construction contributed towards the development of the Aldershot Military Garrison;

- The canal's reuse as a 'stop-line' during the Second World War is represented by the survival of military features (such as the locally listed pill box) and other features along parts of its length, illustrating the impact of the war on the British landscape;
- The Canal provides an attractive green corridor and is designated as such in the Rushmoor Local Plan;
- The Canalside including the tow path is used for leisure and recreation as a route for cycling, walking, pleasure boats, canoeing and angling, providing an attractive green route avoiding busy roads;
- The Canal has considerable value to the ecology of the borough and has been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area



Key

-  Conservation Area Boundary

3. Sub Area 1 – Old Ively Road to Eelmoor Bridge

Area Summary

- 3.1 This section of the Conservation Area adjoins Hart District Councils administrative area where the full length of the canal is designated as a Conservation Area which is supported by an appraisal and management plan.
- 3.2 This section of the conservation area includes the canal and a bordering tree belt between environmentally designated land to the North including Eelmoor Marsh Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which also forms part of the Thames basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) and a tree belt that provides a buffer between the canal and A323 Fleet Road beyond which lies military training land which forms part of the SPA.
- 3.3 This section of the conservation is generally peaceful due to a lack of activity on this stretch of the canal other than the occasional pedestrian or cyclist making. There is some road noise is evident on the sections of the tow path that are located closest to the A323 Fleet Road.

Views

- 3.4 This section of the Conservation Area is generally well enclosed by mature trees for the majority of its length with a number of features from the canals use as part of the GHQ Line in the second world war visible from the tow path including anti-tank cubes. The predominant type of views due to the meandering nature of the canal along this section and the tree cover are ‘unfolding views’ as you travel along the tow path (images 1 and 2).
- 3.5 There are sections along the tow path where there are gaps in the tree cover that provide glimpsed distant views out of the conservation area to the north east over Eelmoor Marsh (image 3).
- 3.6 The character of the conservation area changes when reaching the final section of this sub area that adjoins the boundary of Farnborough Airfield that provides far reaching views of the adjoining heathland and woodland. The Eelmoor flashes are a contributing factor to the feeling of openness at this section of the conservation area which frames Eelmoor bridge which also provides an elevated viewing location (images 4 and 5).
- 3.7 Outside of the conservation area boundary a small number of buildings associated with operations at Farnborough Airport and Eelmoor Marsh are visible from the tow path and from the centre point of Eelmoor bridge.

Public Realm

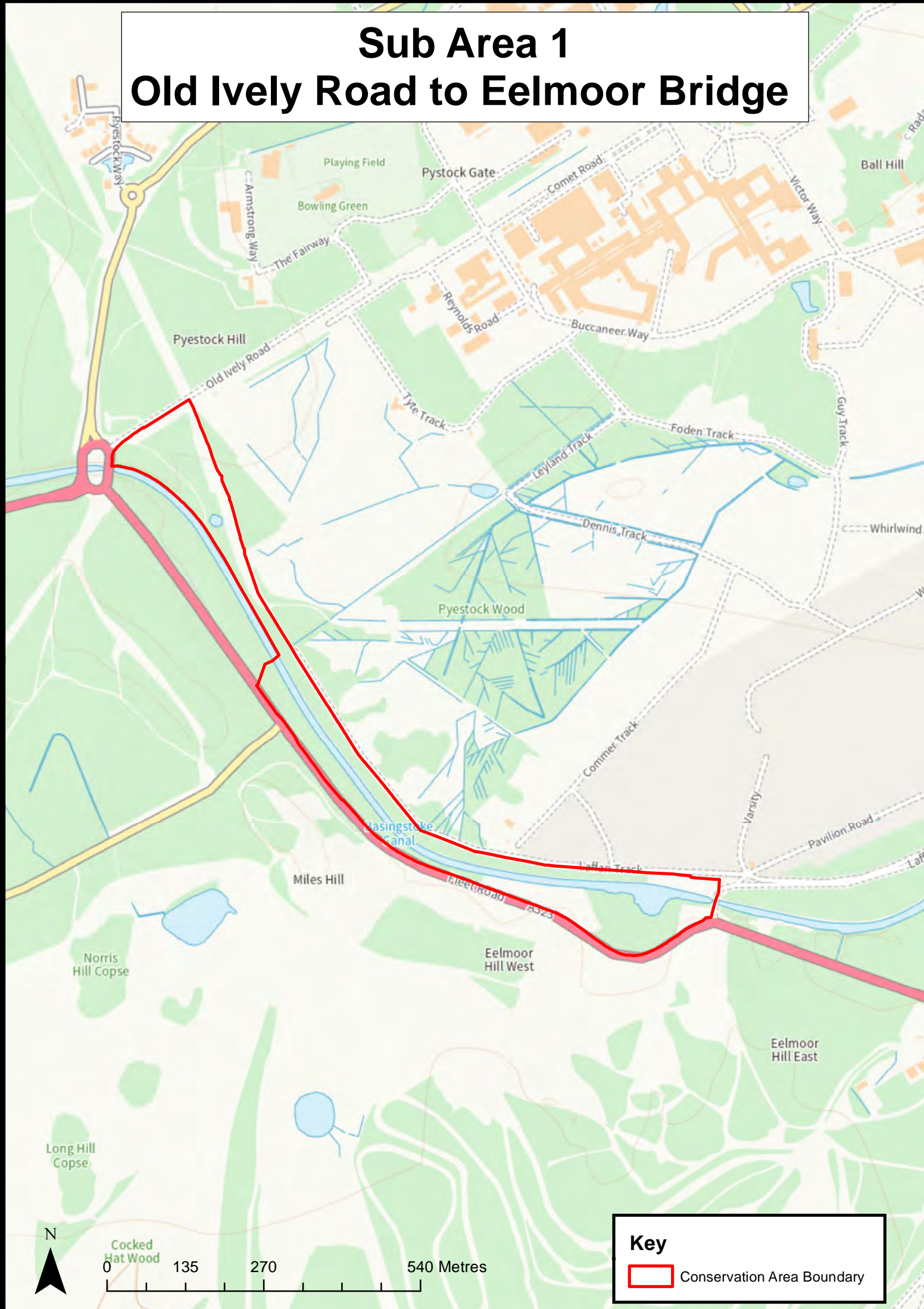
- 3.8 The tow path is the main form of public realm along this section of the canal and there are some historic war defence measures visible that contribute towards its character.

Building form and details


- 3.9 Eelmoor bridge is a girder bridge constructed by the military in the 1920's that replaced an earlier brick-built bridge, the footings of which are visible under the present bridge on the southern side of the canal. The bridge is the only structure within the sub area and it provides vehicular access from the A323 Fleet Road to Laffans's Road.

Sub Area 1

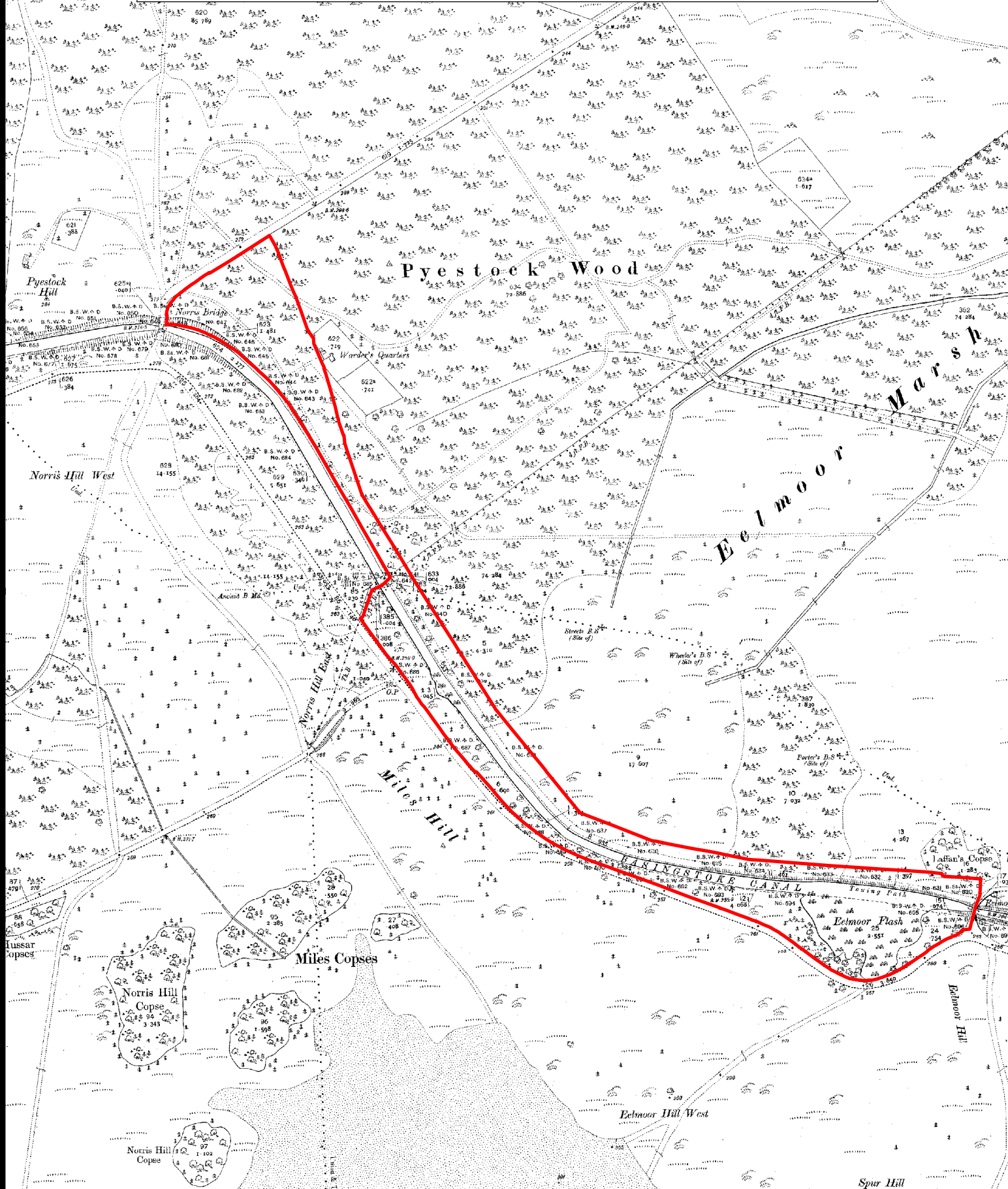
Old Ively Road to Eelmoor Bridge




Key

 Conservation Area Boundary

1911 OS Map of Sub Area 1 Old Ively Road to Eelmoor Bridge



Key

 Conservation Area Boundary

Sub Area 1— Old Ively Road to Eelmoor Bridge



Image 1 —View Looking East approximately 100m from the border with Hart District.



Image 2—View Looking East approximately 500m from the border with Hart District

Sub Area 1— Old Ively Road to Eelmoor Bridge



Image 3—View to the North of the adjoining Special Protection Area (SPA) and Site of Special Scien-



Image 4—View from Eelmoor Bridge Looking West towards the Flashes

Sub Area 1— Old Ively Road to Eelmoor Bridge



Image 5—View looking West towards Eelmoor Bridge



Image 6 —Historic Marker Post alongside the tow path

4. Sub Area 2 - Eelmoor bridge to Farnborough Road Bridge

Area Summary

- 4.1 Eelmoor bridge acts as a transition point of the Basingstoke Canal character. Sub Area 2 forms part of the Welesley Woodland Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace which is reflected by the improvements made to the tow path surface and furniture provided (such as benches and wayfinding signposts) through the area.
- 4.2 The Canal meanders around Dukes wood a sizable woodland that contains Puckridge Barracks within its centre. The perimeter fence around the barracks can be seen occasionally from the tow path but the barracks themselves are well screened. There are also some historic military defences visible on the southern bank.
- 4.3 Claycart Flashes that act as a mini reservoir for the canal, storing water for when levels are low are a key feature within this sub area framing Claycart Bridge which at its northern side contains historic road block posts (image 12) can be seen reflecting the bridges use as a military crossing over the Basingstoke Canal from local training areas.
- 4.4 A new 200m mooring platform has recently been constructed to enable the mooring of 10 boats along this site that forms part of the Farnborough Road Wharf. The platform travels underneath the locally listed Inglis bridge. Whilst the wharf area is relatively quiet now, although still used for launching canoes, historically it was a key location in the landing of building materials that were transported by canal to enable the construction of Aldershot Camp. Following this period, the wharf was used by rowing boats and skiffs with two boat houses (no longer evident) constructed in this location.
- 4.5 On the northern side of the canal is a sluice which acts as a key feature prior to the canal narrowing to travel under the locally listed Wharf Bridge that enables northbound vehicular traffic on the Farnborough Road to cross the canal. That bridge was constructed in circa 1790 and is constructed of red brick in English bond, providing a low brick single arch bridge with parapet and half round coping bricks.

Views

- 4.6 The key viewpoints within the character area are as follows:
 - Views looking East from the centre of Eelmoor Bridge into the sub area (image 7).
 - Views from the tow path looking west towards Eelmoor bridge (image 8)
 - Views from the tow path looking south towards Puckridge barracks where historic defence measures are visible adjacent to the canal (image 9).
 - Views from the tow path looking north through the narrow tree belt over Lafans Road into land within the airport operational boundary that is a Site of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC) (image 10)
 - Views approaching Claycart Bridge from the tow path from either direction (images 11 and 13)

- Views of Claycart Flashes from the tow path
- Views from Claycart Bridge that connects the Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space located either side of the canal and as a result is well used by pedestrians and cyclists.
- Views from the tow path looking north through the narrow tree belt over the historic Army Golf Course (image 14)
- View of the locally listed Inglis bridge and pill box from the tow path.
- Views from the tow path approaching the historic wharf bridge adjoining the recently constructed mooring platform on the southern bank of the canal (image 16)

Public Realm

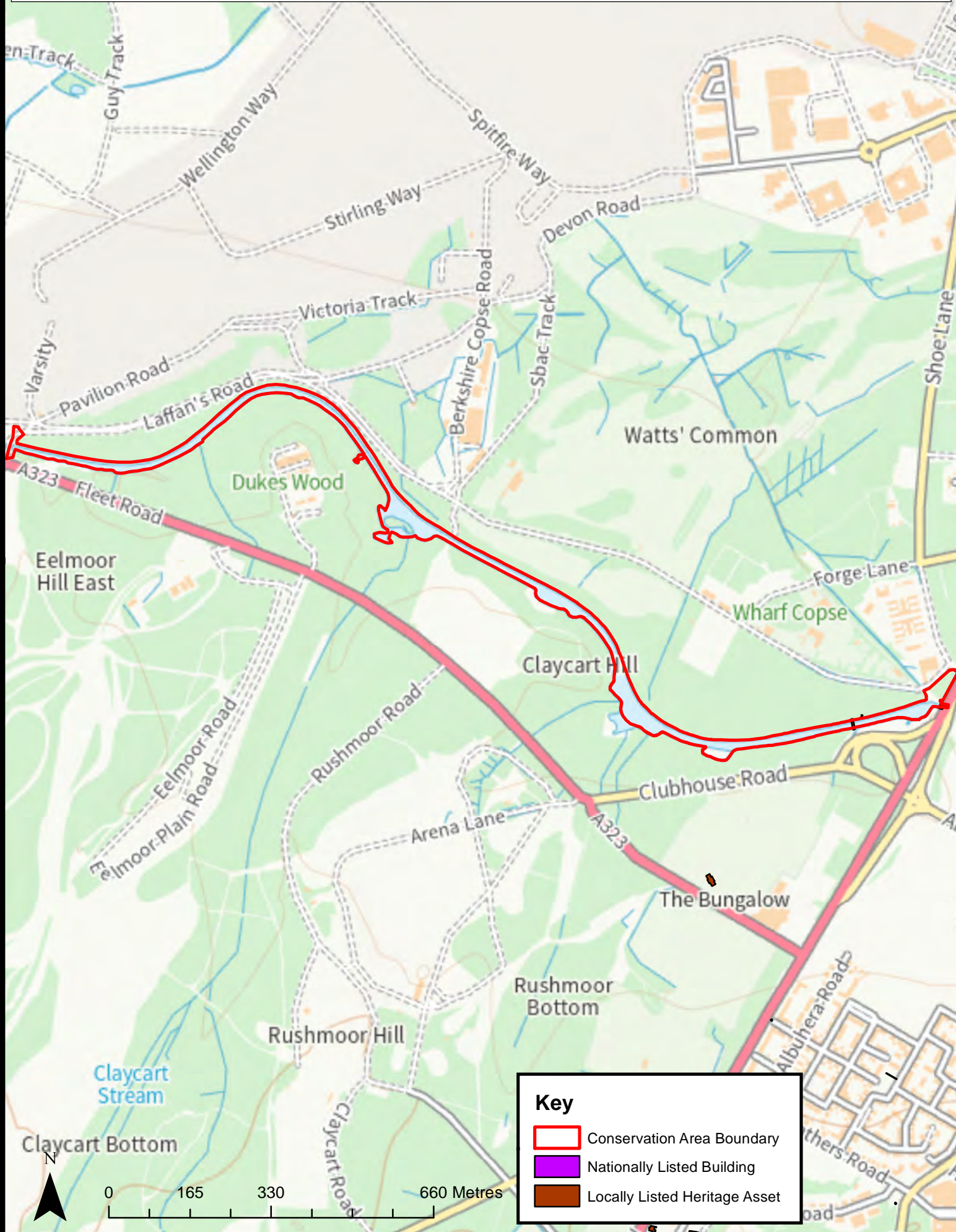
- 4.7 The canal tow path forms part for the entire length of the sub section forms part of the Wellesley Woodland Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG) and as a result there is some street furniture that has been introduced such as benches and timber signs posts (image 15) alongside the tow path to direct people to the adjoining woodlands where these form part of the designated SANG.
- 4.8 The tow path itself has been resurfaced as part of the works that were required for the land to become SANG. The recent construction of a 200m mooring platform as part of the Farnborough Road Wharf (image 16) contributes to the setting of the canal.

Building form and details




- 4.9 There are no physical occupied buildings within the sub area, however a key part of the character are the four bridges that cross the canal (as noted above in the key views).
- Eelmoor bridge (image 7) is a girder bridge constructed by the military that replaced an earlier brick-built bridge, the footings of which are visible under the present bridge on the southern side of the canal (opposite side to the tow path).
 - Claycart Bridge (image 11) is a girder bridge that was designed by Captain Hopkins during the First World War to replace an earlier military drawbridge.
 - Inglis Military Bridge is the only remaining example of an Inglis Portable Military Bridge – Light Type with its pyramidal construction. The Inglis bridge currently carries a utility pipe over the canal.
 - Located near the Inglis bridge is a Pill Box that was constructed between 1940 and 1941 for defence purposes during World War Two as part of the GHQ Line.
 - A325 Farnborough Road Wharf bridge is understood to predate the military camp and have been constructed in circa 1790 although substantial strengthening works were varied out in 1914. The bridge now carries the northbound carriageway of the A325 over the canal.

Sub Area 2

Eelmoor Bridge to Farnborough Road Bridge

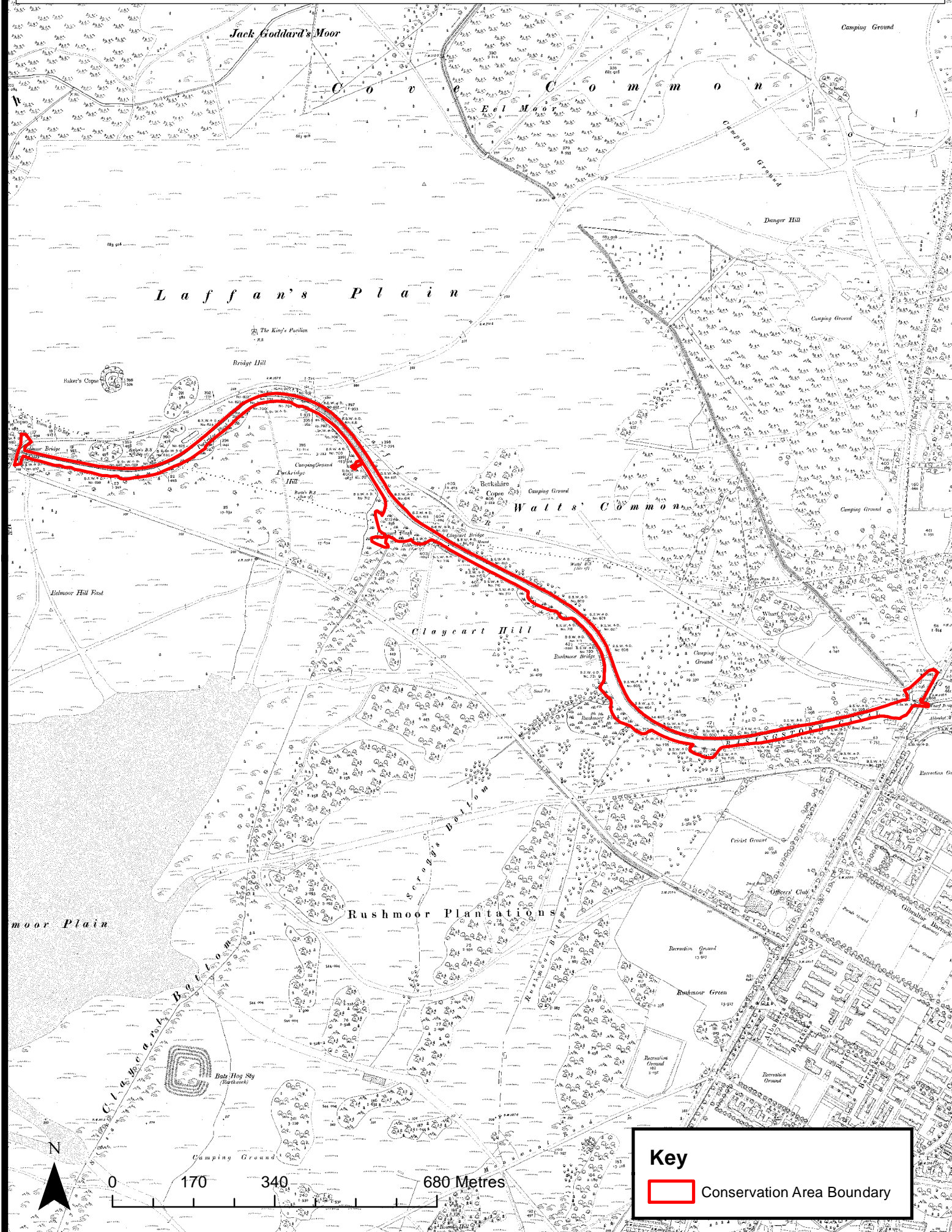


Key

-  Conservation Area Boundary
-  Nationally Listed Building
-  Locally Listed Heritage Asset

1911 OS Map of Sub Area 2

Eelmoor Bridge to Farnborough Road Bridge



Sub Area 2 — Eelmoor Bridge to Farnborough Road Bridge



Image 7—View to the East into sub area from Eelmoor bridge



Image 8—View to the West looking towards Eelmoor Bridge

Sub Area 2 — Eelmoor Bridge to Farnborough Road Bridge



Image 9—View to the South over the canal towards Puckridge Barracks with historic defence measures visible



Image 10—View to the North East from the tow path of Lafans Road into Farnborough Airport SINC

Sub Area 2 — Eelmoor Bridge to Farnborough Road Bridge



Image 11—View Eooking East towards Claycart Bridge



Image 12—Historic Defence measures—Claycart Bridge Concrete Road Blocks

Sub Area 2 — Eelmoor Bridge to Farnborough Road Bridge



Image 13— View looking West Towards Claycart Bridge



Image 14— View looking North from the tow path into the Army Golf Course

Sub Area 2 — Eelmoor Bridge to Farnborough Road Bridge



Image 15— Signage and Benches provided alongside the Canal as part of the Wellesley SANG



Image 16— View looking East towards the locally listed Farnborough Road Bridge

5. Sub Area 3 - Farnborough Road Bridge to Ash Lock

Area Summary

- 5.1 This sub area of the canal travels through military land holdings and forms part of the Wellesley Woodlands SANG which is reflected by the improvements made to the tow path surface and furniture provided (such as benches and wayfinding signposts) through the area. The canal maintains its enclosed nature with established tree buffers.
- 5.2 The transition from sub area 2 into this sub area is by travelling along to tow path under the A325 bridge that was constructed in the early 1970's to allow vehicles to travel southbound on the A325. This bridge has no historic merit however once under this low bridge the feel of enclosure due to the established tree coverage either side of the canal provides the sense of enclosure with views being 'concentrated' down the canal.
- 5.3 Despite the location of the canal between military land holdings, it is peaceful once away from the highway crossings, such as the A325 bridges and Queens Avenue Iron bridge. There is also some noise associated with military land holdings either side of the canal.
- 5.4 More activity is observed along this section with pedestrians and cyclists and the area around Ash Lock Cottage makes a significant contribution towards the conservation areas character and appearance with the cottage being nationally listed (Grade II) and the only set of locks within the borough being locally listed along with a historic crane.
- 5.5 There are historic military defences visible from the tow path, including anti-tank cubes, reflecting the canals historic function as part of the GHQ Line in the second world war.

Views

- 5.6 This section of the Conservation Area is well enclosed by trees for much of its length. The predominant type of views due to the meandering nature of the canal along this section and the tree cover are 'unfolding views' as you travel along the tow path, although there are glimpsing views through the tree cover into military land located to the south and occasionally to the north around Mon's Barracks.
- 5.7 The key viewpoints in the sub area are:
- View travelling East and exiting the section of tow path under the modern A325 (image 17)
 - Views of the Iron bridge from the tow path heading in either direction (images 18 and 19)
 - Views of the canal from the footways located on the Iron Bridge
 - Views of the modern pedestrian footbridge connecting the military barracks on either side of the canal (image 22)
 - Views of the Ash Lock Cottage and crane (image 23)
 - View of Ash Lock (image 24)

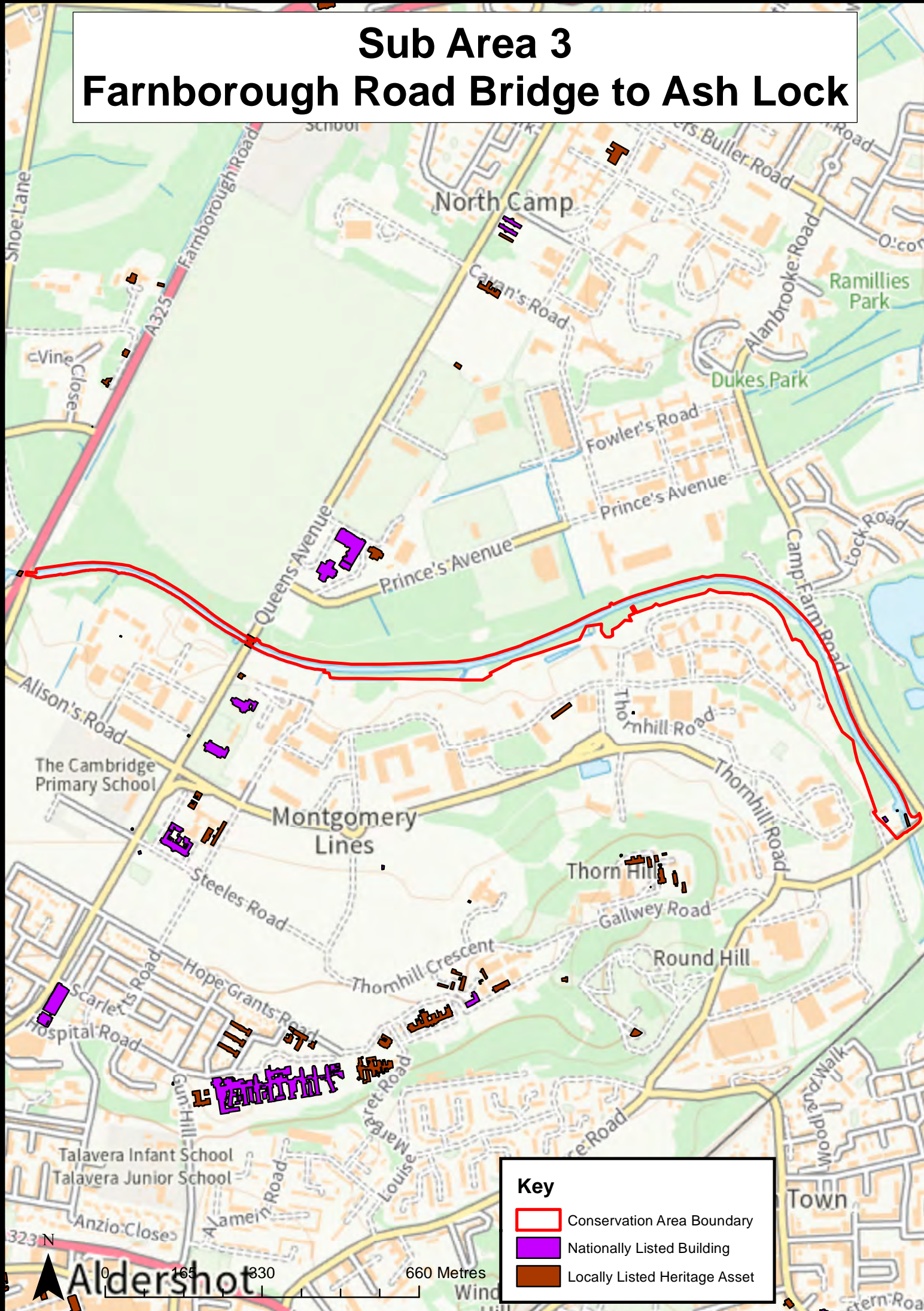
Public Realm

- 5.8 The canal tow path forms part for the entire length of the sub section forms part of the Wellesley Woodlands Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG) and as a result there is some street furniture that has been introduced such as benches and timber signs posts alongside the tow path to direct people to the adjoining woodlands where these form part of the designated SANG.
- 5.9 The area adjoining the tow path at Ash Lock provides a small area of open space with picnic benches which is a character change from focused views resulting from the enclosed nature of the canal to an area of openness.




Building form and details

- 5.10 Within the sub area there are three bridges, only the locally listed Iron Bridge is historic that was constructed in circa 1865-1870 and has been refurbished. The views of this bridge from the tow path make a valuable contribution towards the conservation areas setting. In addition, pedestrians crossing the bridge are provided with views into the conservation area.
- 5.11 Unlike the other sub areas of the conservation there are operational buildings, including nationally listed Ash Lock Cottage. In addition, Ash Lock and the historic crane are locally listed and make a valuable contribution towards the conservation areas character and appearance.

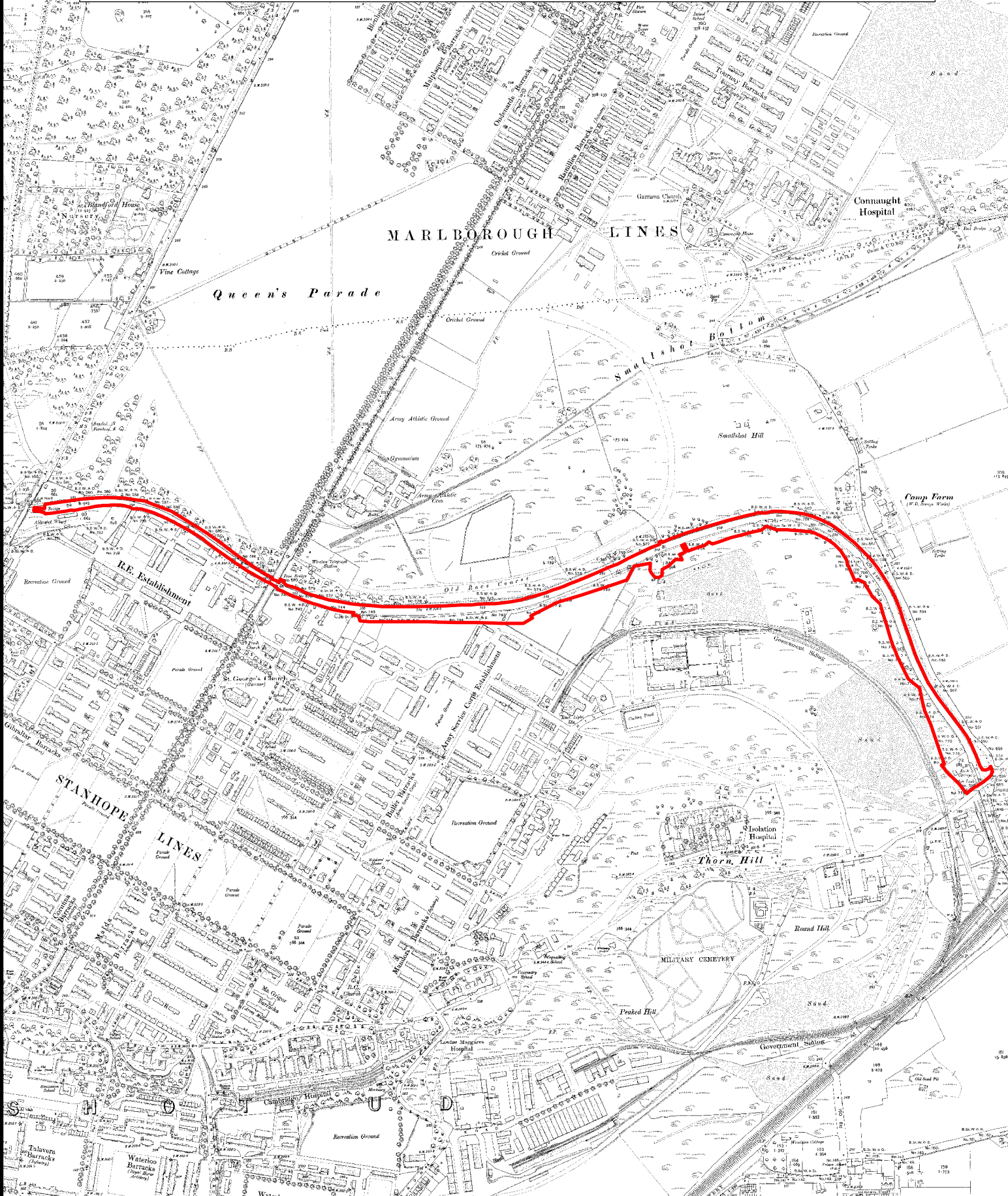
Sub Area 3 Farnborough Road Bridge to Ash Lock




Key

-  Conservation Area Boundary
-  Nationally Listed Building
-  Locally Listed Heritage Asset

1911 OS Map of Sub Area 3 Farnborough Road Bridge to Ash Lock



Key

 Conservation Area Boundary

Sub Area 3 — Farnborough Road to Ash lock



Image 17— View East from the modern A325 Farnborough Road Bridge



Image 18—View East towards the Locally listed Iron Bridge

Sub Area 3 — Farnborough Road to Ash lock



Image 19— View South West of the locally listed Iron Bridge

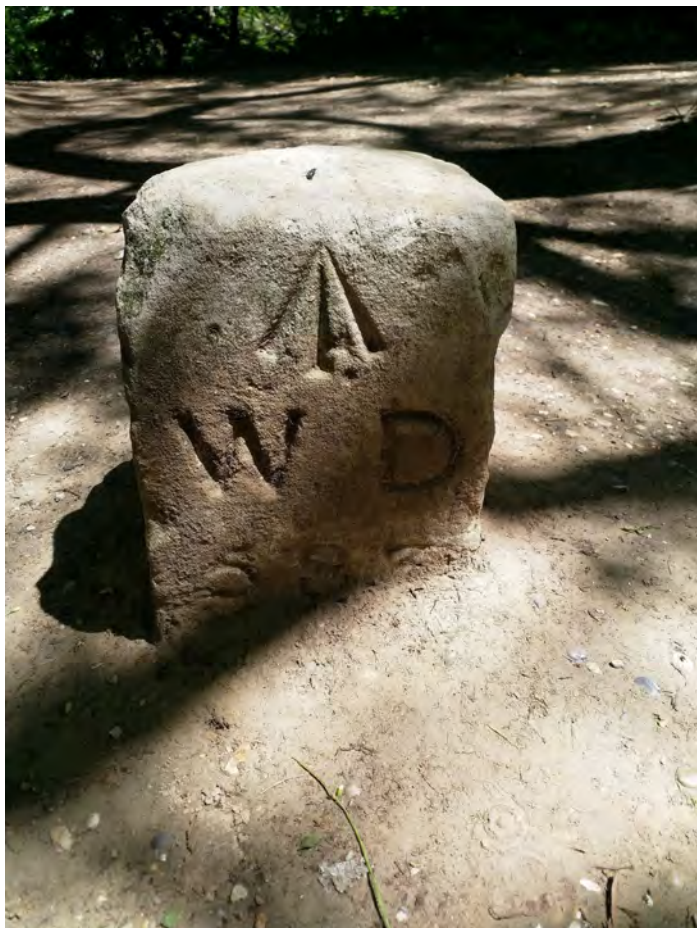


Image 20—Historic marker post alongside canal

Sub Area 3 — Farnborough Road Bridge to Ash lock



Image 21— View South towards military accommodation



Image 22— View looking East of the modern pedestrian bridge connecting military sites

Sub Area 3 — Farnborough Road Bridge to Ash lock



Image 23—View Looking West towards the Nationally listed Ash lock Cottage and locally listed crane



Image 24— Locally Listed Ash Lock

6. Sub Area 4 – Government Road to aqueduct over the Blackwater Valley Road

Area Summary

- 6.1 Government Road bridge forms the start of this sub area which is a bridge of no heritage value that is due to be replaced as part of the Wellesley redevelopment. Pedestrians can travel under the bridge using the stairs, although an alternative level access is provided by the tow path however this requires pedestrians and cyclists to cross Government Road.
- 6.2 The tow path and canal travel under a railway bridge which act as a character transition point with the elevation of this section of the canal offering some far-reaching views and the reduced tree coverage providing a sense of openness.
- 6.3 The canal remains elevated until it reaches the aqueduct that was constructed in the mid 1990's to enable the canal to pass over the over the A331 Blackwater Valley Relief Road and river Blackwater. The aqueduct is located outside of Rushmoor borough in neighbouring Surrey Heath.

Views

- 6.4 The core views from the sub area are:
- From the elevated section of the canal tow path looking North there are sections with open views over the Gold Valley Lakes and beyond (image 27).
 - From the elevated section of the canal there are breaks in the established tree buffer located on the embankments providing views to the south of the built-up area of Aldershot (image 28).
 - View looking east towards the Aqueduct located in Surrey Heath Borough (image 29).

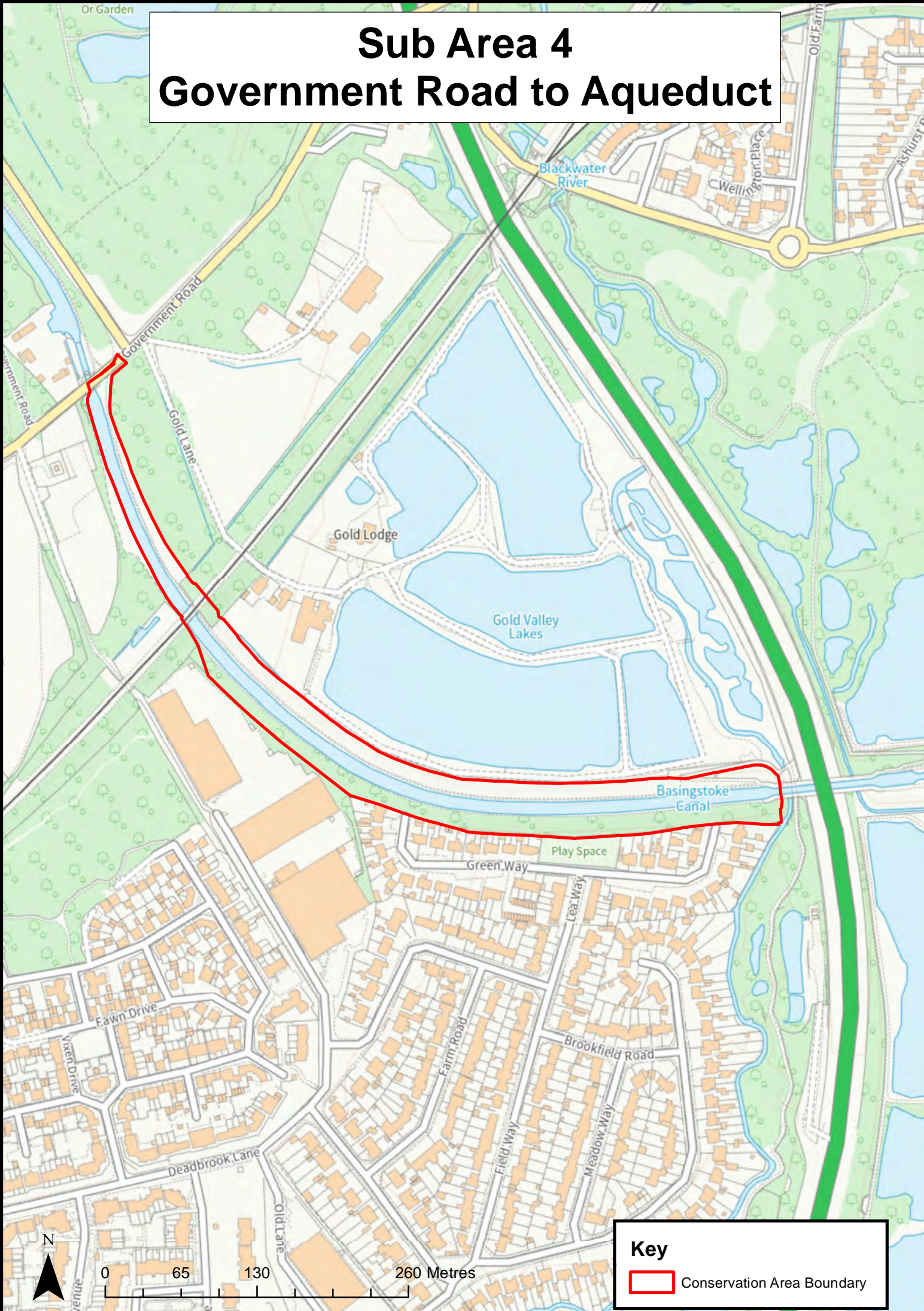
Public Realm

- 6.5 This sub area lies outside of the Wellesley SANG designation and as a result the tow path surface isn't of such a high standard and there is no street furniture (such as benches or signage) along this section of canal.


Building form and details

- 6.6 Within the sub area there are two bridges including the government Road bridge that is of no historic significance and is due to be replaced as part of the Wellesley redevelopment. The railway bridge is of an unknown age and is constructed out of steel.

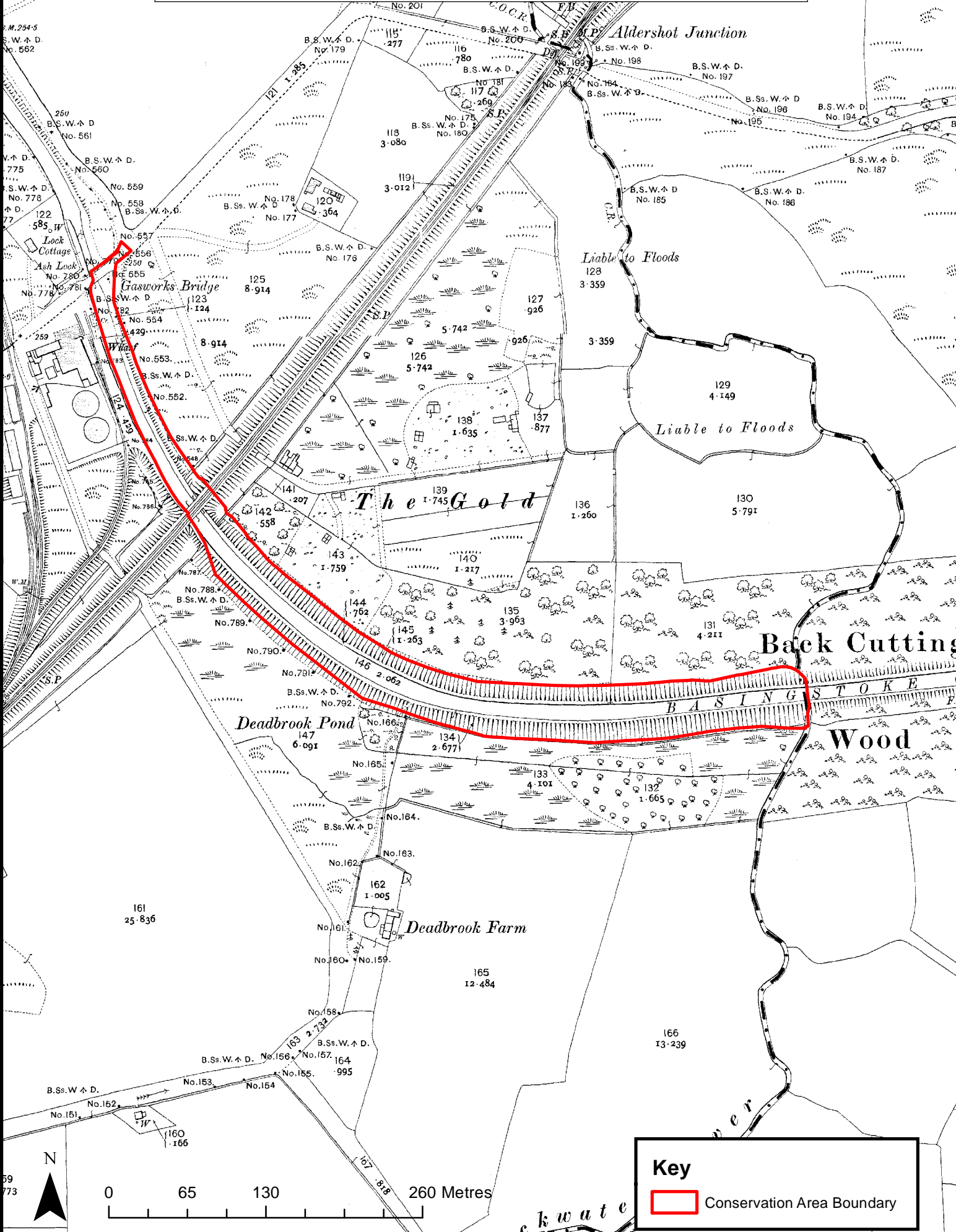
Sub Area 4 Government Road to Aqueduct



Key

 Conservation Area Boundary

1911 OS Map of Sub Area 4 Government Road to Aqueduct



Key

Conservation Area Boundary

Sub Area 4 — Government Road to A331 Aquaduct



Image 25—View Looking North West towards Government Road Bridge and Ash Lock beyond



Image 26— View looking South east from Government Road Bridge towards the railway bridge

Sub Area 4 — Government Road to A331 Aquaduct



Image 27—View Looking North East over the Lakes



Image 28— View looking South West with views of modern housing development.

Sub Area 4 — Government Road to A331 Aquaduct



Image 29— View looking east towards the aqueduct over the Blackwater Valley Road

7. Listed Buildings

Nationally Listed Buildings or Structures

Name	Grade	Link to Historic England
Ash Lock Cottage	II	https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1092635

Locally Listed Buildings or Structures

Reference	Name
LL5032	Basingstoke Canal bridge, Farnborough Road
LL5071	Iron Bridge, Queens Avenue
LL5195	Pill Box by the Basingstoke Canal, west of Wharf Bridge
LL5196	Inglis Bridge
LL5045	Crane at Ash Lock
LL5046	Ash Lock

8. Management Plan

Introduction

8.1 The management plan outlines a positive strategy to deal with the threats and opportunities identified in the conservation appraisal.

Good Stewardship

8.2 The Council will work with key partners in managing the land within the Conservation Area including the Basingstoke Canal Authority, Basingstoke Canal Society, Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership (BVCP), Grainger Plc, the Land Trust and Natural England.

Development Management

8.3 New development within the setting of the conservation area (within, views into and out of) should also be carefully managed as it has the potential to detract from its character and special interest.

8.4 In summary, any change to the conservation area should seek to:

- Preserve its historical features;
- Enhance, where possible, its special interest;
- Positively contribute to its established character; and
- Be of high quality.

Implementation and Monitoring

8.5 Progress on the implementation of the management plan and the extent to which planning policies in the Local Plan are complied with or effective in delivering community aspirations for conservation areas will be monitored through the council's authority monitoring report.

8.6 These assessments can then be used to review and, if necessary, modify the planning policies as part of the 5-year review of the local plan. They can also be used to review and, if necessary, modify this character appraisal and management plan as part of the ongoing review of the Borough's conservation areas.

Appendix A – Areas removed from Conservation Area following review

- A.1 Conservation areas are intended to recognise areas of historic or architectural character. The location of the boundary for a conservation area is a qualitative decision relating to character. It is essential for the protection of conservation areas, that only areas which are a heritage asset are designated so that the concept of conservation is not devalued (NPPF Paragraph 191).
- A.2 During the public consultation on the draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan that was undertaken between November 2021 and December 2021, it was proposed to remove several areas from the conservation area are shown in the map overleaf and summarised in the text below.
- A.3. Whilst some comments on the removal of these areas were received, we do not consider that they provided any evidence to justify the retention of these areas within the conservation area.
- A.4 The boundary changes that were made are shown in the map overleaf with the text below summarising why the changes were made:

Woodland that forms part of the Wellesley Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG)

- A.5 The Wellesley SANG is secured in perpetuity through a legal agreement and there are restrictions on development that can take place in these areas. In addition, as part of the legal agreement and planning conditions associated with the Wellesley developments planning consent an Ecological Management Plan was submitted and approved which sets out the programme for delivering a scheme of ecological improvements works, including a range of habitat improvement works. Therefore, given the protection provided by SANG designation it was not considered necessary to include these areas of land within the conservation area.
- A.6 The management of the SANGs are a legal requirement and an Ecological Management Plan was approved by the Council for the land in question. The Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership (BVCP) has been appointed by the Land Trust to manage Wellesley Woodlands.

Minor boundary amendment to the land adjoining St Omer Barracks

- A.7 Since the conservation area was initially designated in 1977, St Omer Barracks has been redeveloped to provide modern accommodation for military personal. The boundary of the conservation area was therefore amended to track recognisable ground features, in this instance the perimeter fencing. This proposed change resulted in the inclusion of some additional land that predominantly forms part of a tree belt. This land is in Ministry of Defence control.

MOD land to the south of the canal forming part of Travers / Gale Barracks

- A.8 This area forms part of the military garrison and consists of large areas of hardstanding (tarmac) that are predominantly used for the storage of military vehicles (including HGVs). Historic Mapping identifies that the area in question was utilised as allotment gardens around the time the Conservation

Area was first designated in 1977. This area of land is in military use (some areas of hardstanding for vehicle storage), is not publicly accessible and is well screened from the tow path by an established tree belt.

Woodland to the north of Canal between the A325 Farnborough Road and Queens Avenue

A.9 This area is designated as being part of the Aldershot Military Conservation Area. Therefore, it was removed from the Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area as there are no additional benefits to including the land within two conservation areas.



Land between the canal and Gold Lane

A.10 This narrow tree belt forms part of the Wellesley Outline Planning consent and part of this land will be used for a replacement vehicle bridge and to provide a car park for the allotments to be provided to the east of Gold Lane.

Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area



Key

-  Conservation Area Boundary
-  Areas removed from Conservation Area in 2022