

## 5 HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The list to the right details the surviving features of the Canal and their heritage designations.

The buildings and structures along the northern length of the Canal are largely original or early features of the canal. Most survive and most are in good condition.

In many cases heritage significance is recognised with a statutory listing, and most of the Canal is within one of the conservation areas (see Built Heritage Designations plan), but quite a number of features are not listed nor scheduled and a few more do not even have the protection of a conservation area. All but the last 500 metres of the Ambergate end of the Canal is within the World Heritage Site and the remainder is in the Buffer Zone.

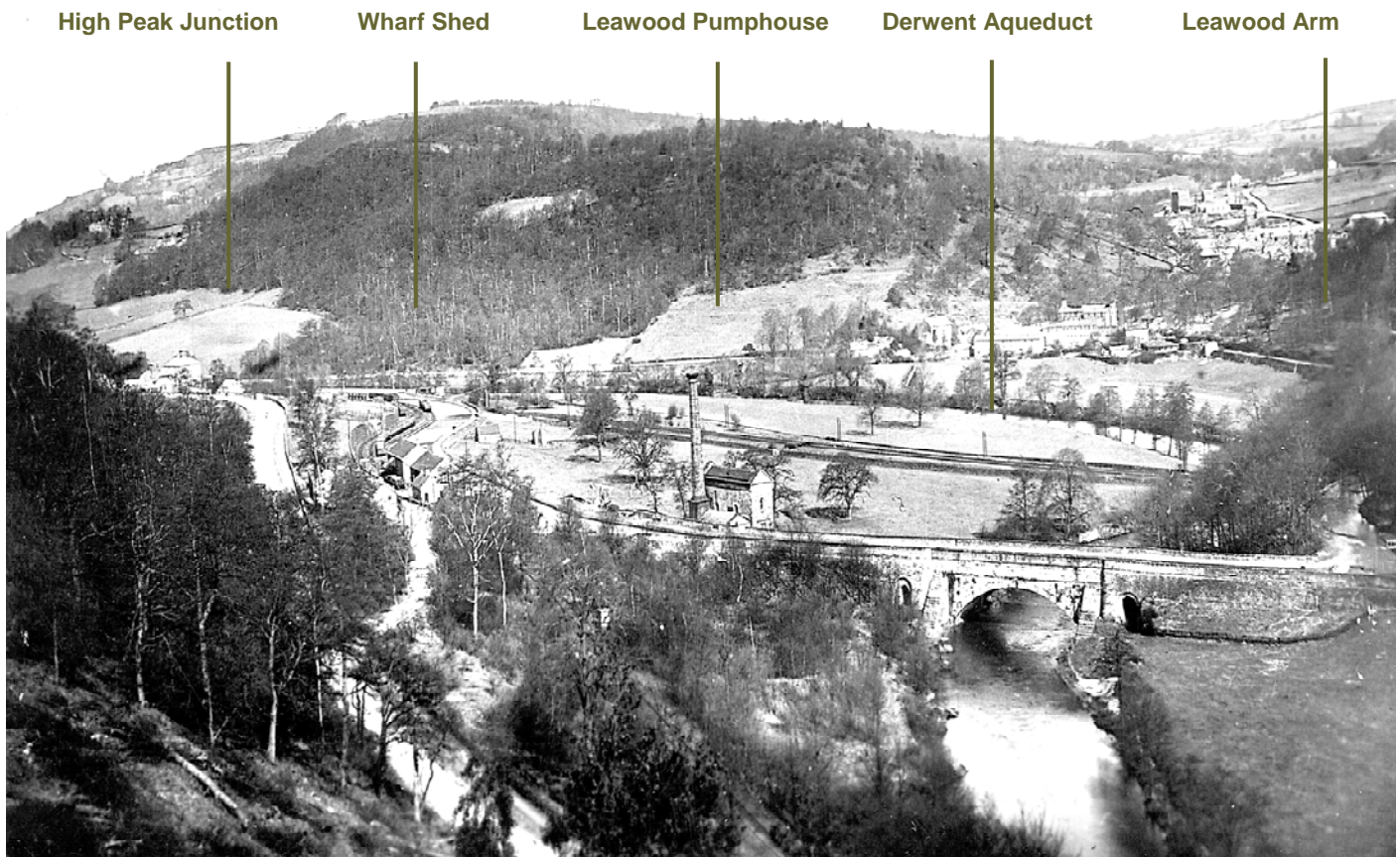
However, conservation area declarations/ extensions which would cover the remaining unprotected lengths of the Canal are under consideration by the two district councils concerned.

### CROMFORD CANAL:

#### A KEY FEATURE OF THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE

- Six original stone bridges  
*three are listed Grade 2*
- Two important aqueducts:  
Jessop's Derwent Aqueduct & Stephenson's railway aqueduct  
*both Scheduled Ancient Monuments*
- Three stone-lined culverts and outflows taking streams under the canal
- Gregory Tunnel, the one tunnel on this section
- Leawood Pumphouse: still pumping water from the river into the canal  
*listed Grade 2\**
- Three major wharfs and at least four minor ones
- The remains of boat-building docks
- Three winding holes which allowed boats to turn
- Stone walls line the canal channel at all wharfs and bridges and for short lengths elsewhere where there may have been wharfs
- Six original or early canal wharf buildings  
*three are listed Grade 2*
- Six cottages along the route which housed those who served the canal  
*one is listed Grade 2 but on the Buildings at Risk Register*
- Seven houses/cottages at High Peak Junction built for railway workers  
*two are listed Grade 2*
- Six early railway buildings on the canal at High Peak Junction  
*three are part of the Scheduled Ancient Monument*
- Two farmsteads located on the canal, but pre-dating it
- Robin Hood industrial hamlet serving the Duke of Devonshire's quarries

*Pre-1916 aerial view of High Peak Junction, Leawood Pumphouse and Leawood Aqueduct. The lack of trees around the industrial structures provides views which are completely obscured today.*



## CROMFORD + HIGH PEAK RAILWAY

- Retaining walls and embankments all along the length  
two are Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- 11 stone bridges  
one is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, one is listed Grade 2
- Two engine houses  
Middleton Top Engine House is a Scheduled Ancient Monument
- Two wheelpits  
one is a Scheduled Ancient Monument
- Catchpit
- Remains of signals, signal indicators and mileposts
- An engine man's cottage
- A railway inn
- Numerous quarries with remains of railway sidings/wharfs & cranes
- Remains of limekilns and brickworks
- Remains of lead mining shafts and buildings

These features lie immediately outside the Conservation Management Plan study area, but are intimately connected with it.

*The High Peak Junction buildings & structures are described with the Canal.*

## 5 HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

**The list to the left details the surviving features of the Railway and their heritage designations.**

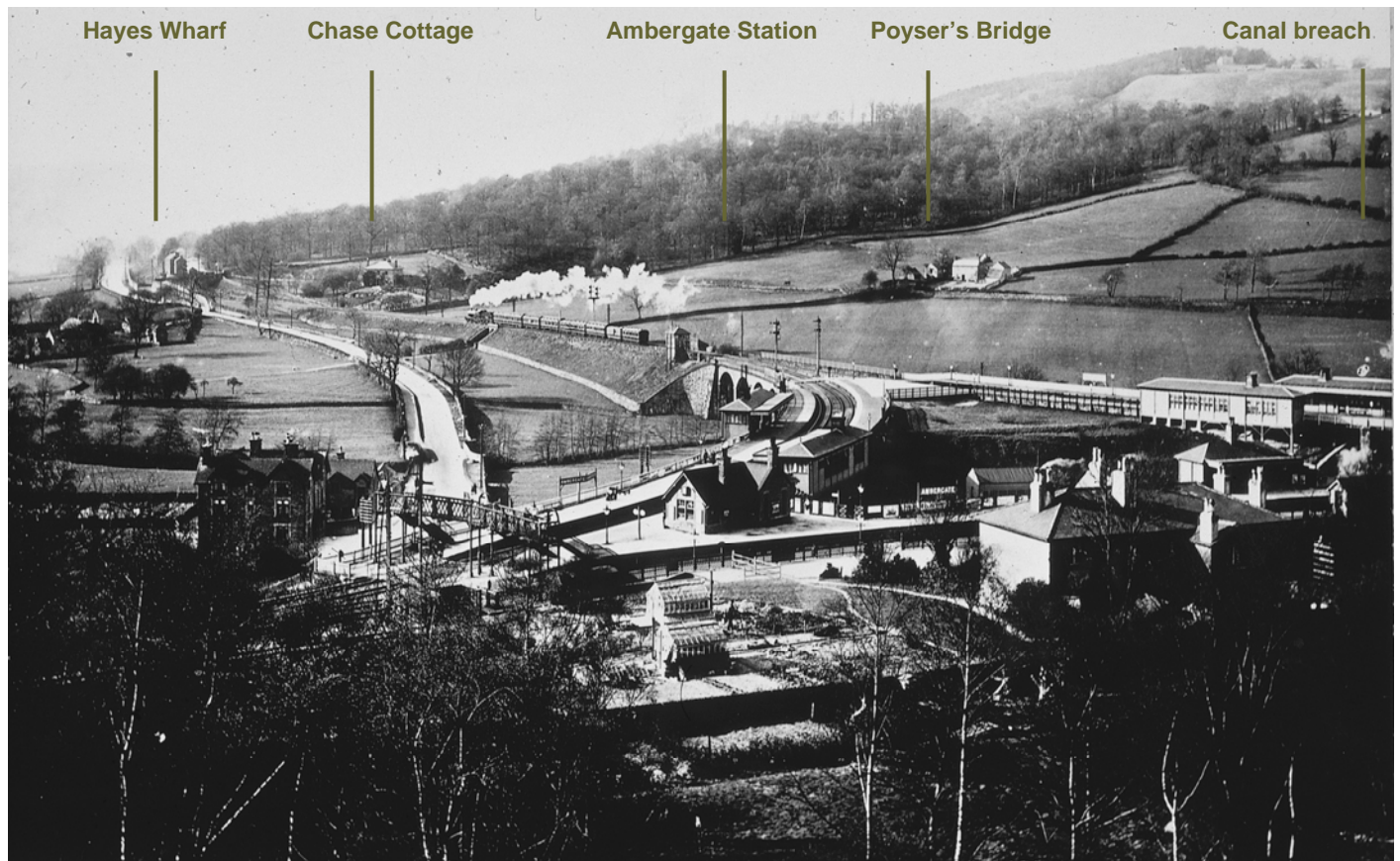
Most of the grand supporting structures of the line survive, generally in reasonable condition, although only two are scheduled.

Of the two engine houses which remain only the one which has retained its machinery is scheduled.

All of the track and a great deal of the integral features of an operational railway line were removed when the service was closed in the 1960s. Those that are left are mostly in a deteriorating state and it will not be long before there is very little left for anyone other than the archaeologists to appreciate.

Whilst the history of the operation of the line has been well covered by historians, there are large gaps in the understanding of the history and significance of the buildings and structures and there is much work to be done to remedy this.

*Aerial view of Ambergate. The canal crosses the hillside opposite: Hayes Wharf and Chase Cottage in the distance and Poyser's Bridge top right. Again the lack of trees along the Canal and railway is notable.*





## 5 HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE



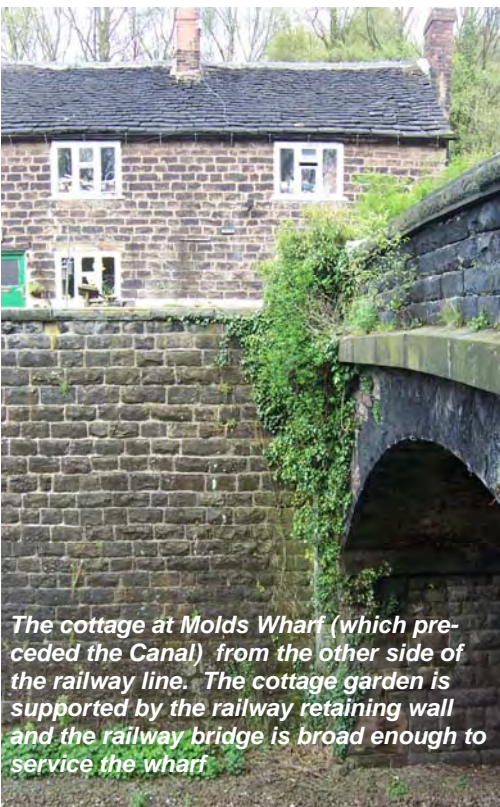
*Stables and workshops (now gone) built against the perimeter wall at Cromford Wharf with the surviving wharf cottages in the background. 1966*



*Leewood Aqueduct*



*Stephenson's railway aqueduct*



*The cottage at Molds Wharf (which preceded the Canal) from the other side of the railway line. The cottage garden is supported by the railway retaining wall and the railway bridge is broad enough to service the wharf*

### **Significant component of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site and the only Canal in a UK WHS**

The Cromford Canal is a well preserved example of a late 18<sup>th</sup> century industrial waterway with links to Arkwright's world class industrial site. The WHS nomination describes the landscape through which the Canal travels as subject to 'arrested urbanisation' - the 18th century water-powered mills which revolutionised industrial processes were overtaken by their Lancashire successors, leaving the industrialised, but still predominantly rural landscape of the Derwent Valley

### **Associated with Arkwright**

The Canal's enabling Act is an example of the new power of the 18<sup>th</sup> century industrial Patronage: Arkwright's name secured parliamentary support. The surviving historic landscape is still that of Arkwright's house and mills, parkland trees, grazed meadowland, wooded slopes and hillside farmsteads.

### **An early example of 'Canal Mania' waterway construction**

The Cromford Canal was conceived at the beginning of the Canal Mania era and linked to the earlier pioneers through the network of expertise represented by its engineers, Jessop and Outram.

### **The First Jessop canal**

The canal was thus part of a continuum of innovation in building for navigation – William Jessop had been an apprentice of Smeaton – in his day at the forefront of river navigation engineering. From here Jessop became one of the most consulted engineers of his day and engineer of the Pontcysyllte aqueduct.

### **Outram: from canal to railway**

From a local surveyor working on this his first canal, Outram moved on to engineer the Huddersfield and many other canals. He was the first proponent of a national railway network, based on his development of tramway systems first tested on the Cromford Canal.

### **Remarkable survival of buildings and structures**

The early halting of urbanisation protected virtually all the component elements of the canal itself and of a good number of canal and early railway-associated buildings and structures. Thus the overlaying of transport and industrial development is still clearly legible, and the way in which this isolated valley was opened up to stimulate pre-existing and new industries and change the nature of the population can be fully understood.

### **Juxtaposition of transport routes**

Here also is a dramatic example of a canal sharing a valley with road, rail and river, often in startlingly close proximity achieved with shared retaining walls, wharf 'bridges' and aqueducts.

### **It retains the original/early wharfs**

There remain little-altered original/early building assemblies along the length of the Canal—Cromford Wharf, High Peak Junction, Whatstandwell, Robin Hood, Molds/Hayes wharfs. Cromford Wharf is probably the only remaining rural terminus of a canal largely unchanged by subsequent development or use.

The boat house in the garden of Arkwright's Rock House opening on to the Cromford Wharf winding hole may be a unique survival.

### Derwent Aqueduct

Jessop's first uncertain leap into large canal structures and engineered to the limits of the contemporary technology.

### Leawood Pumphouse

One of only three original working canal pumps in England and of particular architectural as well as historical merit: an elegant classical composition which is an important local landmark.

### Stephenson aqueduct

Early cast-iron trough aqueduct by George Stephenson (great engineer and promoter of the early railways)– a clear link to those developed by Jessop and Outram culminating in the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct.

### Stephenson railway engineering

The 'main line' railway, in many places sharing retaining walls with the canal, spanning wharfs etc provides evidence of Stephenson's skill as a railway engineer – built at the end of his career (he died before it was opened).

### Railway Workshops at High Peak Junction

These were the world's first railway workshops. Only Robert Stephenson's Newcastle locomotive works were earlier.

### Railways began here

Jessop and Outram developed for the first time the use of rail-ways (tramways) to extend the hinterland of canals. They were pioneers of the change from canal to railway transport.

Jessop was the engineer for the first public railway in 1802. Josias Jessop (son of William) extended the concept of linking canals by a railway – he built the Cromford and High Peak Railway linking the Cromford Canal to the Peak Forest Canal and thence to Manchester.

### Origins of the first nationally important iron manufacturers

From the Cromford Canal project the Butterley Company was established by Jessop, Outram and others – one of the biggest iron manufacturers in the country – manufacturers/builders of St Pancras Station. The company is still in the canal business today, having just completed the prestigious Falkirk Wheel for British Waterways.

### Combined significance of built and natural heritage

Whereas navigability has previously been the overriding aim of the canal restoration movement, it is now seeking models for exemplary heritage and wildlife habitat restoration. This section of the Cromford Canal is an ideal starting point for such a programme of work. It will provide future visitors with a unique understanding of the wildlife, ambience, setting and structures of an historic canal.

### Association with celebrated children's author

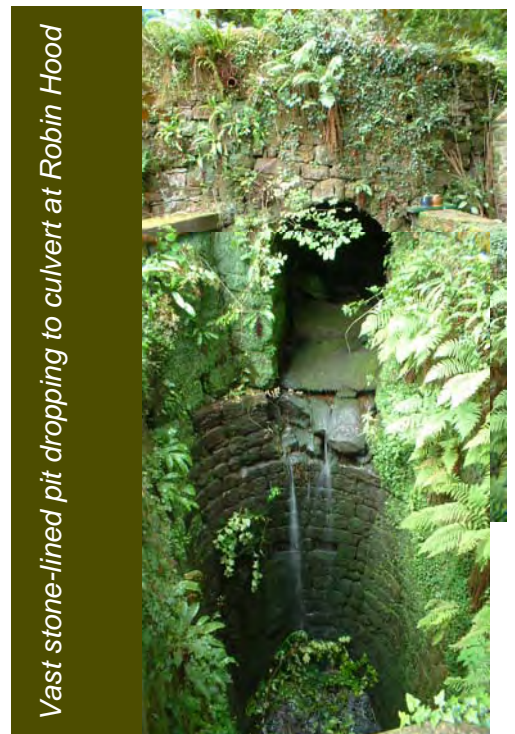
Alison Uttley (author of Little Grey Rabbit) lived above the canal as a child and wrote a number of autobiographical works recounting the delights of the canal from the lead cargoes to wildlife.

### Association with Florence Nightingale

It was Florence's great uncle who constructed the Nightingale arm of the canal and she spent much of her childhood at Lea. She later financed a canal-side tearoom at Whatstandwell.



*The Listed Grade 2 Aqueduct Cottage, on the junction with the Leawood Arm, before it declined into its present state. This building, in its romantic setting, is above all other features, the symbol of the heyday of the Cromford Canal for local people. Mr Bowler, the last known resident, is seen collecting water.*



*Gregory Winding Hole in times past, with the remains of the old boat docks visible beyond the basin. These are now overgrown as is a large proportion of the open water area visible here. The dam construction was also much more legible before vegetation took hold on the downhill side. Restoration work will benefit wildlife and the constructed environment equally.*