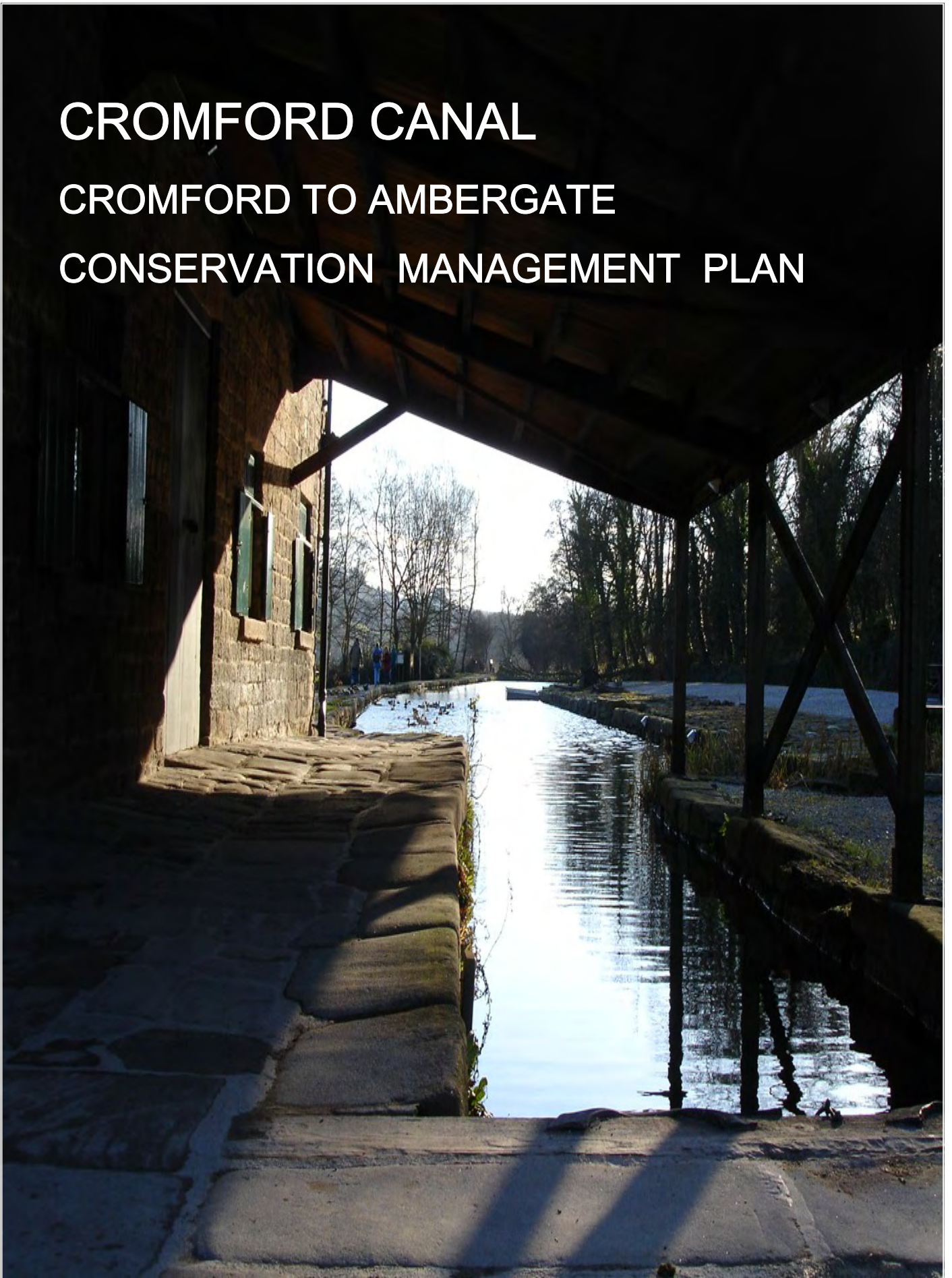


# CROMFORD CANAL CROMFORD TO AMBERGATE CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN



# Foreword

## **The value of the Cromford Canal's Industrial and Natural Heritage**

Cromford Canal, its wharves, roads bridges and aqueducts, the Leawood Pumphouse, and the High Peak Junction goods sheds, workshops and other railway buildings are pioneering examples of industrial development.

They are significant elements in the cultural landscape which constitutes the **Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site**, which was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2001 for its critically important contribution to the Industrial Revolution.

A remarkable amount of the original 18th and 19th century engineering structures survive in a largely unaltered setting — a 'relict' industrial landscape which, after the Manchester, Matlock, Buxton and Midlands Junction Railway line had been threaded through the valley in 1849, remained and remains largely unchanged.

The Cromford Canal is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest, a wildlife site of national importance for its aquatic plants and animals. It is a Derbyshire haven for water vole, a rapidly declining species despite its protected status.

The Canal and the landscape in which it sits are enjoyed as a recreational venue, for walking in particular, by thousands of visitors each year.

## **The County Council's responsibilities**

The County Council, as owner of the Canal from Cromford Wharf to Ambergate, and of the High Peak Junction Workshops, Leawood Pump House and other historic structures along the route, recognises its responsibilities for their conservation and enhancement. In 2002 the County Council was awarded a Heritage Lottery Grant for a series of studies into their care, management and interpretation of the historic village of Cromford, the Cromford Canal and High Peak Junction workshops. The studies were largely completed in 2005.

The studies were brought together into a Conservation Management Plan for the Canal and Workshops. The Plan will guide the restoration, development and management of the canal and Workshops, for their heritage, ecology and visitor use. The Plan will be occasionally reviewed but its policies will provide the framework for activity for the next 20 years.

## **Consultation and participation**

To implement the Conservation Management Plan, the potential availability of resources will be a major consideration, whilst the support of the World Heritage Site Partnership, together with that of other organisations and adjacent land owners will be extremely valuable. Their ability to support, assist or promote the conservation and enhancement of the canal and associated historic futures within the authority's ownership, will all contribute to the Plan's implementation.

Consultation on this Conservation Management Plan is therefore being undertaken in order to provide organisations and individuals with an opportunity to express their views on the policies and proposals and to indicate where they might wish to offer assistance in the future.

## **Consultation responses are welcomed and should be sent to**

Chris Coombs  
Countryside Service Area Manager  
Middleton Top Visitor Centre  
Rise End  
Middleton by Wirksworth  
Matlock  
Derbyshire DE4 4LS

Please return consultation responses by:.....

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## INCEPTION TO RAILWAY TAKEOVER 1771—1870

<b>1771</b>	Arkwright begins building at Cromford with the Upper Mill
<b>1776</b>	Arkwright's Lower Mill at Cromford underway
<b>1783</b>	Lea Bridge textile mill established
<b>1788</b>	Cromford Canal proposed from Langley Mill to Cromford
<b>1789</b>	Cromford Canal Act of Parliament: Cromford Canal Company formed. William Jessop appointed principal engineer.
<b>1790</b>	Work on Cromford Canal commenced Butterley Company founded (then Benjamin Outram & Co)
<b>1791</b>	Benjamin Outram took over construction from insolvent contractors
<b>1792</b>	Richard Arkwright died. Tolls first taken at Butterley Tunnel from Feb 1792
<b>1792</b>	Cromford Canal opened Langley Mill to Pinxton
<b>1793</b>	Derwent aqueduct partially collapsed delaying opening.
<b>1794</b>	Remaining length of canal to Cromford opened.
<b>1795-1838</b>	47 canal boats built at Cromford and Whatstandwell wharfs
<b>1802</b>	Leawood (Nightingale) arm of canal opened.
<b>1818</b>	Nightingale's Mill taken over by Smedleys
<b>1825</b>	Cromford & High Peak Railway. Act of Parliament passed.
<b>1830</b>	Cromford & High Peak Railway opened. High Peak Junction Workshop complex begun
<b>1830s</b>	Canal - peak tonnage 300,000 tons per annum.
<b>1840s</b>	Competition from railways began to undermine canal trade.
<b>1840</b>	George Stephenson's (1781-1848) North Midland Railway line opened: from Derby via Ambergate to Leeds.
<b>1849</b>	George Stephenson's Manchester, Buxton, Matlock and Midlands Junction Railway (MBMMJR) opened: Ambergate to Rowsley line parallel to Cromford Canal.
<b>1849</b>	Leawood Pumphouse installed to pump water into the canal from the River Derwent as original water supply diminishes.
<b>1852</b>	Canal sold to MBMMJR Cromford Canal Company dissolved. Whatstandwell's first station built.
<b>1853</b>	Cromford & High Peak Railway extended to join Midland Railway. A railway siding built at Mold's Wharf to serve adjacent ironworks.
<b>1862</b>	Cromford & High Peak Railway leased to London & North Western Rlwy.
<b>1867</b>	Railway became part of Midland Railway Derby to Manchester main line
<b>1870</b>	Canal became part of Midland Railway





## DECLINE, CLOSURE + THE MODERN CANAL 1871—2004

Cromford & High Peak Railway absorbed by LNWR.	1887
Canal carrying less than 46,000 tons per annum.	1888
Butterley tunnel collapsed severing upper canal from rest of network.	1889
Butterley tunnel repaired	1893
Whatstandwell station re-located adjacent to canal at Hurt's Wharf.	1894
Butterley tunnel second collapse; Cromford end of the canal closed for through traffic permanently.	1900
Canal burst its banks east of aqueduct. Derwent Valley section of Canal still carrying 1,000 tons of coal, coke & limestone per month.	1920
Cromford & High Peak Railway became part of LMSR.	1923
Leawood Pump last operational (although remained on standby)	1930s
Leawood branch of canal ceased to be used.	1936
Announcement of intention to close the canal.	1937
Last canal traffic passed along upper section.	1938
Whole canal officially abandoned by Act of Parliament	1944
Canal taken over by British Transport Waterways	1947
Ambergate land/canal sold to East Midlands Gas	1960s
Ambergate to Cromford stretch sold to Derbyshire County Council	1974
High Peak Junction to Middleton Top section of CHPR closed in stages.	1963-67
Cromford Canal Society founded: restoration of Ambergate to Cromford length commenced	1971
Canal designated Local Nature Reserve	1977
Cromford to Leawood Pumphouse section restored & opened to navigation.	1977
First public steaming of Leawood Pump after restoration	1979
Canal from Cromford to Whatstandwell declared SSSI	1981
Railway workshops at Junction restored and opened to the public	1985
Canal from Whatstandwell to Ambergate declared SSSI	1987
Canal overtopped south of Gregory Tunnel putting paid to hopes of making that section navigable.	1989
Cromford Canal Society ceased trading: management returned to DCC	1990
Arkwright Society leased the Cromford Wharf buildings from DCC.	1995
Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site inscribed, including Cromford Canal	2001
Friends of Cromford Canal formed and announce aim of restoring and re-opening the full length of the canal.	2002

## 1 INTRODUCTION



*High Peak Junction has been enjoyed by the public as a leisure destination since the railway and canal were acquired by the County Council 30 years ago.*



*The Canal starts here in the yard of Arkwright's Cromford Mill where a sluice diverts water into a culvert under the buildings and via a feeder arm to the Wharf across the road.*

### **DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE**

*"The ensemble of industrial sites and settlements dating from the eighteenth to the early twentieth centuries, situated in the lower Derwent Valley in Derbyshire, represents a unique surviving example of outstanding human endeavour in what the world has recognised as the 'Industrial Revolution'.*

*The textile mills of Matlock Bath, Cromford, Belper, Milford, Darley Abbey and Derby were the forerunners of an explosion in the development of the textile factory system that has led to the area becoming known as 'the cradle of the new factory system'...*

*The ensemble remains substantially intact, and represents a unique cultural landscape of industrial buildings, related housing, canal, road and railway architecture set for the most part in a green landscape".*

**World Heritage Site Management Plan**

### **WHAT IS THE PLAN FOR?**

A Conservation Management Plan has been prepared to guide the future restoration, development and management of the Cromford Canal (northern section) and Cromford and High Peak Railway (Cromford end).

#### **Cultural landscape**

The Plan addresses the wider 'cultural landscape', encompassing both the built and natural heritage.

Derbyshire County Council purchased the two connected routes of the canal and the railway in the 1970s for recreational purposes. Both are now acknowledged as of major historical significance and the Canal additionally as of special ecological value. The Plan evaluates this significance and value of the sites and identifies their future management within this context.

### **WHAT IS COVERED BY THE PLAN?**

#### **Canal in the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site**

The Plan covers the northern Derwent Valley section of the Cromford Canal from Cromford to Ambergate. This section lies within the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. This five mile length is owned by Derbyshire County Council and managed as an amenity waterway.

#### **Cromford and High Peak Railway: High Peak Junction**

The Plan also covers the junction of the Canal with the former Cromford and High Peak Railway, known as High Peak Junction. The Junction is also owned by the County Council and is within the World Heritage Site.

### **THE PLAN AND ITS SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

The Plan provides a summary of the cultural and natural environmental value of the features within the Plan and sets out policies and proposals. It is underpinned by the extensive studies undertaken by Mansel Architects:

#### **Condition Reports:**

DCC –owned buildings at High Peak Junction.  
Retaining Walls

#### **Historic Map sequences and Data Sheets and photos of 157 canal Features:**

Vol 1	Cromford Wharf – Derwent Aqueduct
Vol 2	Derwent Aqueduct to Whatstandwell
Vol 3	Whatstandwell to Ambergate

#### **Location Maps:**

Buildings and Structures

#### **Proposals in detailed maps:**

Buildings, Structures + Settings  
Ecology

#### **Appendices:**

Designations and Dates  
Bibliography

#### **OTHER PARALLEL STUDIES which contribute to the Plan:**

Ecology Study by Scott Wilson  
Interpretation and Access Plan by Event Communications  
Market research by Four 1V  
Water Level Management Study by Scott Wilson  
Engineering study (in preparation) by DCC.

## THE PLAN IN BRIEF

The Plan is based on a comprehensive evaluation of the significance of both built and natural conservation features. It has evolved from extensive analyses and comparison of the main issues in relation to conservation of the built and natural environment.

### The Issues

To the casual visitor it might appear that, without effort, an extraordinarily well preserved early canal survives in an idyllic rural setting, whilst High Peak Junction, where the canal and railway structures meet, encapsulates the historical development from water to rail transport. It appears that the cultural and natural heritage harmoniously co-exist here, assisted by the abandonment of the canal and railway for their original purpose. Each year thousands of visitors enjoy strolling, picnicking, feeding the ducks and, on the way, picking up on the unique story of an historic canal linked to one of the first railways ever built.

Over the years, management of large numbers of visitors, the historic fabric of the canal and buildings and the protected nature conservation interests have sometimes been perceived to be in conflict. The need to safeguard embankments, manage water depth and flow, control tree growth and vegetation and maintain the towpath have sometimes seemed at odds with the need to protect wildlife.

### The Findings

The findings have, in fact, revealed this to be a false assumption. They have identified the same issues as being of greatest concern for both built and natural environment and, in general terms, the need for the same measures to tackle them.

- **Biodiversity is being diminished** as habitats deteriorate
- **Historic structures are being undermined** by rampant vegetation
- **The Canal is disappearing** due to low water levels
- **Historic setting is disappearing** due to unchecked tree growth
- **Interpretation and public information** is limited

### The Way Forward

The Plan identifies the way forward for the next 20 years through a series of policies and proposals; in brief:

- Most of the work needed to reverse this damaging decline will benefit equally the built and natural environment. This is the most important conclusion of the Conservation Management Plan.
- Mending leaks, improving water flow, pruning and strategic felling of trees and restoration of a channel to enable maintenance by boat will all protect and enhance biodiversity and the built heritage.
- To take forward these proposals the County Council will seek to work with voluntary organisations and individuals committed to the Canal's future.

## THE CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

### Derbyshire County Council Countryside Service

commissioned Mansel Architects to undertake the extensive survey and assessment work and to provide recommendations.

The **Heritage Lottery Fund** and **Derbyshire County Council** funded the Plan preparation.

The **Steering Group** comprised representatives of :

Derbyshire County Council  
Cromford Parish Council  
Arkwright Society  
Derbyshire Dales District Council  
Amber Valley Borough Council  
English Heritage  
Heritage Lottery Fund  
English Nature

### Preparation

Mansel Architects with Hugh Potter undertook extensive in depth study to produce the detailed documentation listed on the facing page and much of the text for this Plan.

The County Council has utilised these studies from which to finalise this Plan; it remains underpinned by Mansel Architects valuable studies.

*Panorama of Cromford Meadows with Arkwright's Rock House and Cromford Wharf*

