

Date: 5th September 2025
Ref: 18-015-L1

PHOENIX IRONWORKS PLANNING CONDITION 8

TECHNICAL NOTE

Project	Phoenix Ironworks – PP Ref: 137346/FO/2023
Client	Eric Wright Construction
E3P Project No.	18-015
Subject	Planning Condition 8 - Clarification
Author	Roy Walker

1. INTRODUCTION

E3P has prepared this clarification letter to address Planning Condition 8 (a/b), which is attached to the planning approval for the proposed development: Land Bounded by Naval Street to the north, Poland Street to the east, Jersey Street to the south and Radium Street to the west, Ancoats, Manchester.

BACKGROUND

E3P has received a response from Chris Nugent at the Environment Agency (EA) dated 1st September 2025. The synopsis of this letter is that the EA agrees with the February 2025 recommendation to remove the infilled canal basin materials due to the significant contamination present and the uncertainty surrounding the feature itself. However, the April 2025 report is not clear on the extent to which this operation will take place.

This letter is intended to provide additional information to support the process and satisfy the requirements of the EA.

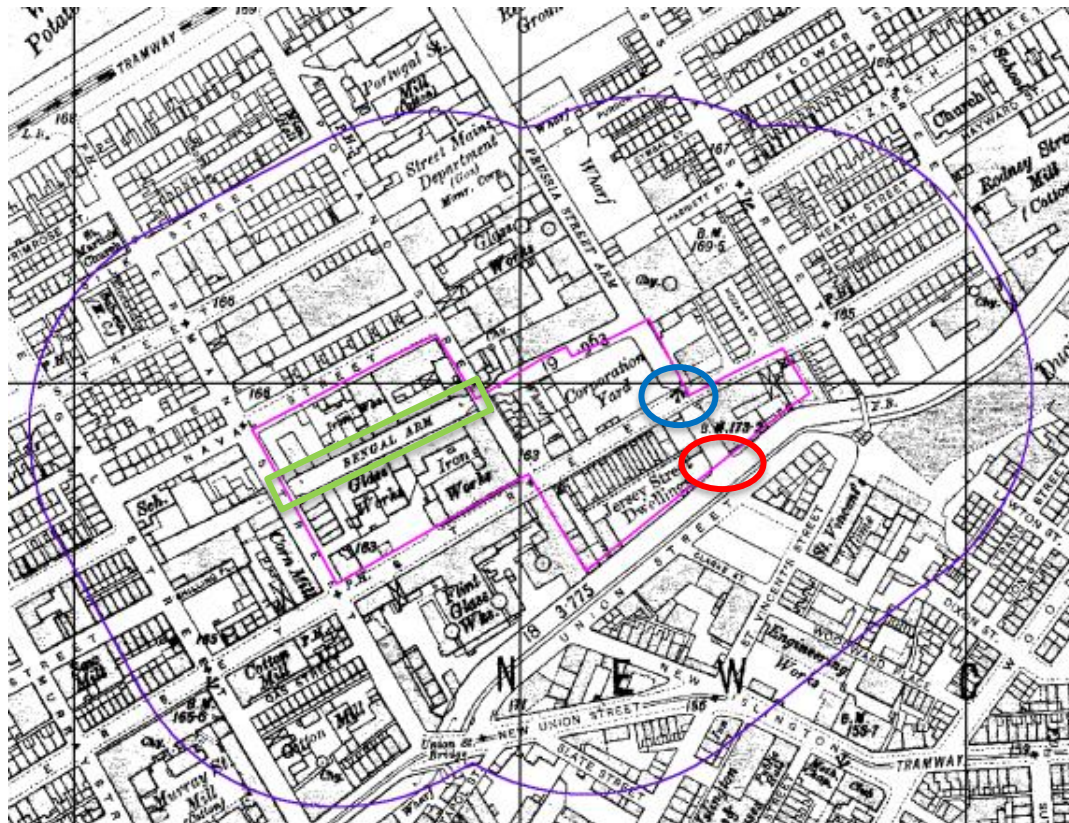
HISTORY

It's important at this stage to understand the course of the former canal and the more recent works that have occurred in the continuity of this feature.

Figure 1 presents the historic mapping demonstrating the course of the canal arm as it passes through the subject site and the wider Ancoats area and eventually connects into the existing Rochdale Canal in the southwest.



Figure 1 Canal Arm Historic Map



With reference to figure 1 – the Bengal arm (Green) represents the canal within the planning site boundary crossing between Poland Street and German Street (now Poland Street). The arm terminates just to the west as it passes under German Street and reaches Bengal Street.

The Bengal Arm meets the Prussia Street Arm to the east and runs beneath Jersey Street before meeting the Rochdale Canal in the south east (indicated by Red Circle).

In more recent periods, E3P is aware that land to the south east, labelled as Jersey Street Dwellings, on either side of the Prussia Street Arm has recently been redeveloped, with the connection to the Rochdale canal severed. The works here are unknown, but it is expected that some form of permanent construction has taken place to reinstate this section of the Rochdale canal, allowing it to continue. In doing so, the hydraulic continuity to the remainder of the Prussia Street Arm and beyond has also been disconnected. It is anticipated that this section of the Prussia Street Arm will have been removed due to geotechnical uncertainty and possibly similar contaminant issues in the backfill soils within the canal lining.

Furthermore, more detail is known about the area circled in blue, formerly a bridge supporting Jersey Street over the canal. This feature meant that Jersey Street rose slightly along its course. The bridge feature has been removed and the road regraded in recent years to accommodate the progression of redevelopment in the area. It is understood here that a clay stank was placed within the Prussia Street Arm on both sides of the bridge, again with the structure and infill materials removed at this section. In doing so, a further hydraulic barrier (though granted this was perhaps considered temporary) will limit the movement of groundwater within the existing canal arms back to the Rochdale Canal.



2. PHEONIX IRONWORKS

With regards to the subject site, the E3P and Curtin's previous investigations have confirmed that the materials within the Canal Arm used as backfill to establish levels for construction are significantly contaminated. This is likely to be the case in terms of the soils and the perched water held within the canal structure.

Investigation of the soils beneath and surrounding the canal structure does not demonstrate evidence of contamination. Furthermore, the natural materials beneath the canal are cohesive in nature, of low permeability, and unlikely to allow sufficient vertical migration of groundwater or contaminants to underlying aquifers or lateral migration to sensitive receptors in the surrounding area. In addition, bedrock is confirmed to be beneath low-permeability cohesive drift in excess of 10m.

As a result of the above, there is not considered to be a risk to controlled waters receptors given the disconnection of hydraulic continuity to surface water features (albeit the Rochdale Canal of anthropogenic construction) and the low likelihood of vertical migration. Certainly, following the works proposed to remove the feature within the boundaries of the proposed development, the source materials will be removed from the scenario and further reducing the risk. A high-level plan for the working methodology as E3P understands it, is presented below.

The full and detailed assessments including the chemical analysis of soils and the subsequent assessment in comparison to relevant criteria are included in the Curtins Phase 2 Ground Investigation Report (Ref: 0800866-CUR-XX-XX-T-GE-00003) dated February 2025, on behalf of Mace, the E3P Phase II Geoenvironmental Site Assessment Report (ref: 13-729-R2-Parcel A) dated February 2020, and the E3P Remediation and Enabling Works Strategy (Ref: 18-015-R1-4) dated June 2025.

2.1. EARTHWORKS OVERVIEW

The works to control the migration of contamination, both from the existing development area and from outside the boundary of the remaining canal sections, involve:

- ✦ A sheet pile 'stank' will be placed at the site boundary at Poland Street and Radium Street – In part this is to ensure the ingress and egress of groundwater held in the canal beyond the site boundary, severing hydraulic continuity here, but also to allow earthworks to be completed right up to the site boundary as per the geotechnical requirements to construct the proposals.
- ✦ The concrete at the surface can then be lifted (this may be the first item depending on requirements).
- ✦ Having revealed the canal materials and features the soils will be removed, allowing a sump to be created to pump the held/perched water out of the system. The soils will be processed to segregate the inert hard materials and the detritus and waste to be picked and removed from site. The water having been pumped into a tanker will be removed from site. The sludge and silt will be segregated from the waters and removed from site.
- ✦ Once exposed, the concrete/brick/stone that makes up the canal can be removed and processed for reuse.
- ✦ The remediation and validation requirements dictate that the natural soils beneath the canal will then be chemically tested on a chainage to ensure the materials remaining in situ aren't grossly contaminated and suitable to remain. This will also further demonstrate that vertical migration has/hasn't occurred historically. Any visual contamination will be chased out at the time and removed with the bulk fill if this is necessary.



- ✿ The open excavation can then be backfilled with a coarse material initially and then a reengineered matrix that has been confirmed to be chemically and geotechnically suitable with validation requirements associated with this.

3. CONCLUSION

It is E3P's view that following the controlled progression of works proposed at the site there will not be a controlled water risk from the subject site and development. This is based on:

- ✿ A completed site-specific ground investigation and assessment,
- ✿ Conservative approach for removal, including reinforcement to site boundary,
- ✿ Separation from the Rochdale Canal,
- ✿ Removal of source contaminants from site (soil and water)
- ✿ Processing and validation sampling of retained soils,
- ✿ Backfilling with suitable materials

I trust that the content is sufficient to demonstrate the proposal and satisfy any concerns.

Kind Regards

Roy Walker
Associate Director – E3P
BSc(Hons), FGS, AIEMA, AMICE, MEnvSc, CEnv

