

Bury But Better 2009

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BURY COUNCIL



Western Waterside

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The Western Waterside was identified as a major development opportunity in the original Bury But Better masterplan. This area in the valley bottom was formerly Bury Wharf, the terminus of the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal and retains a significant amount of industrial heritage including a number of Victorian warehouses, a feeder reservoir for the canal, the Daisyfield Viaduct and a historic weir on the river. The canal itself has, however, been filled in to a point about half a mile to the south of the site.

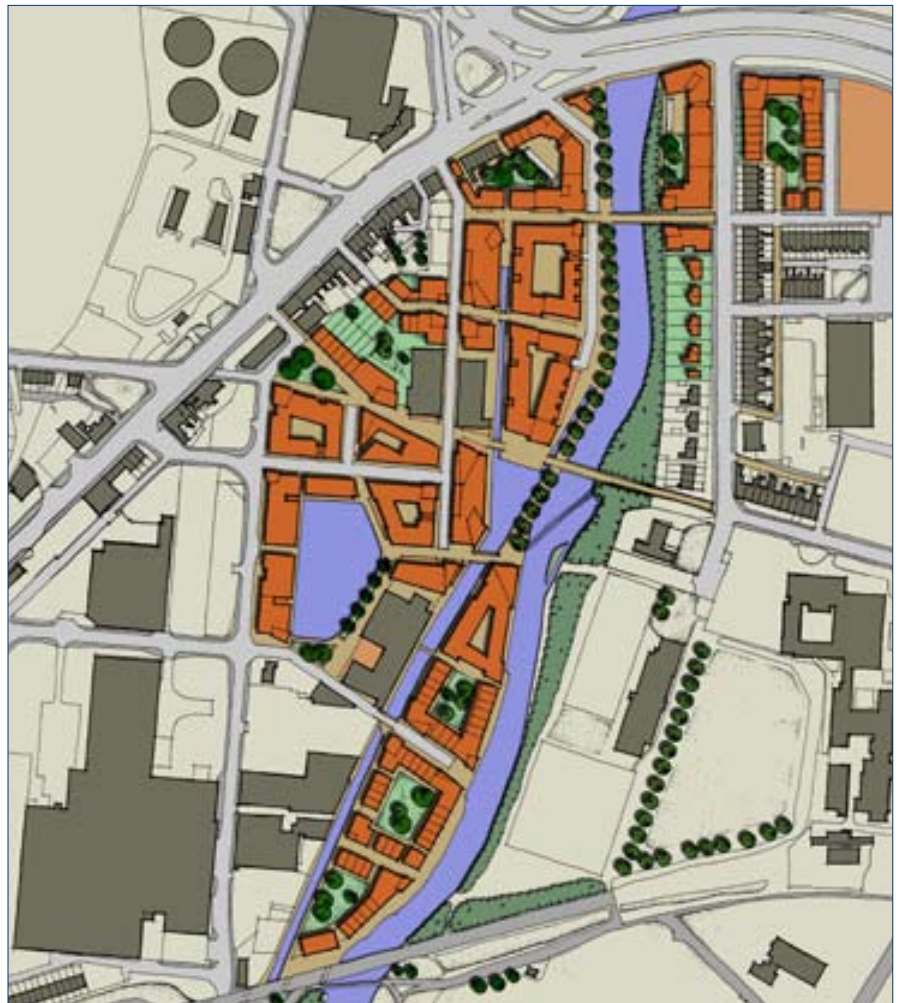


The area lies between the busy Bolton Road and the River Irwell and is a forgotten corner of the town. The frontage properties are generally poor and the interior of the area is still largely industrial. The main industrial user is Milliken Industrials Ltd. This is a major, successful international fabrics manufacturer. Their plant manufactures materials for airbags for the car industry and has recently expanded into modern premises on Wellington Street. The other main use is an industrial estate off Bolton Road still owned by British Waterways.



Bury But Better Vision: At the time of the original vision, British Waterways were actively working on the reopening of the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal. Fresh from the successful reopening of a number of canals with Heritage Lottery funds they were confident that the canal would be their next major project. This vision proposed the development of a new mixed-use waterside development based around the reopened canal and basin. This included the

Facing page: Daisyfield Viaduct;
 This page:
 above: location of Western Waterside;
 left: the area in 1894





following elements:

- The relocation of the Bridge Trading Estate
- The assembly of land jointly by the council and British Waterways
- The appointment of a development partner and the promotion of a scheme that funded the reopening of the canal and basin
- The construction of two new pedestrian footbridge links over the river to the town centre

Recent activity: Since the time of the Bury But Better Vision progress has been made on the restoration of the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal with the completion of a £5.9 million scheme to reopen the Middlewood section in Salford. However, British Waterways (BW) are generally more pessimistic about prospects of the canal reopening to Bury. One particular problem is the Water Street Bridge in Radcliffe and it is difficult to see at present where funding will come from. While British Waterways are now less enthusiastic they nevertheless support the Council's Core Strategy Preferred Options Report, which acknowledges the role that mixed use regeneration around the canal basin can play as part of the Council's wider spatial vision.

The Preferred Option for the Core Strategy specifies that it may be appropriate to prepare an Area Action Plan for the Western Waterside Area. BW would welcome the opportunity to work with the Council to explore this option further and together ensure that the opportunities associated with canal-related regeneration are maximised.

As part of this strategy we have also had discussions with Millikens who, now that they have expanded into their new factory, have a significant land holding in the area that they are interested in bringing forward for development in line with Bury But Better.

Facing page:

top: the 2003 masterplan for Western Waterside;
below, clockwise from top left: foot bridge across the River Irwell; the canal bed on the Millikens premises; shops along Bolton Road; Daisyfield Viaduct

This page: Victoria Mill (south)



Projects

- 1a: Reopening of the Canal
- 1b: Development of a new footbridge and square.
- 1c: Redevelopment of the industrial estate on the northern part of the site for mixed-use development.
- 1d: Residential development on the vacant industrial land in the southern part of the site.

Updated vision: The updated vision therefore reinforces the strategy suggested in the original 2003 masterplan, namely a new mixed-use waterside scheme following the plan of the original vision. We have, however, suggested that this is considered in the long-term to allow time for the canal restoration to come forward. It is also likely that the Bridge Trading Estate (owned by British Waterways) will need to be relocated for the development of the area to be achievable. However, if land owners wanted to bring forward projects in line with the vision in advance of this we see no reason why they should be resisted. There would be value in putting the canal back in water even before it can be connected to the wider network and this in itself would be a spur to development.

The masterplan is based on reopening the canal on its original line and creating a narrow spur of land between it and the river – what in Wigan they would call a pier. A series of development plots are envisaged as four storey blocks with commercial ground floors created in two areas, Canalside North and Canalside South. In both areas there are a number of buildings (and the feeder reservoir directly east of Albion Street) which have been retained in the proposals either because they are required by adjacent uses or are of industrial heritage value to the area. Proposed

blocks within Canalside North surrounding a public square, located where a new bridge from Sankey Street terminates, have the potential to contain restaurant and offices at ground floor with residential units on the upper floors.

Blocks within Canalside South are more likely to consist of residential development. The reality is that there are flood issues although these are not as extensive as the areas to the north of Bolton Road/ Bury Bridge. There is a narrow corridor along the river where there will be a need for flood defences and the southern part of the site will need protection from extreme flooding. This, however, should be possible to overcome.

A new footbridge is proposed on a direct route from the end of Sankey Street. The bridge lands in a new public square at the end of the canal. The development extends southwards along the canal and river including a new canal basin and the feeder reservoir. This is a significant land area, extending to just over 6 hectares, which would accommodate approx. 400 homes and 1,500 m sq of commercial space (office, leisure).

This page: London, Camden Lawford Wharf, John Thompson;

Opposite page: 2008 masterplan for Western Waterside

