



Elmbridge
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Wey Navigation Conservation Area

Wey Navigation Conservation Area (Designated By Elmbridge Borough Council – 2 January 2002)

Statement of Designation

The designation of the Wey Navigation, in Weybridge, as a conservation area forms part of the comprehensive strategy to designate a linear conservation area along the total length of the Wey & Godalming Navigations. The Navigations, owned by the National Trust, run for 20 miles from the River Thames at Weybridge to the Town Bridge at Godalming, passing through five local authority areas (Waverley, Guildford, Woking, Runnymede and Elmbridge). They merit conservation area designation by virtue of their antiquity, appearance and special quality. They form the country's second oldest man made inland waterway, and the southernmost extremity of the Inland Waterway network, and for these reasons are considered to be of great archaeological and historic importance. The construction of the waterway involved other engineering works including locks, weirs and other means to manage the flow of the river. Associated structures such as lock keepers cottages, mills, storehouses, stables and wharves, together with the waterway itself make up a unique man made feature.

Although a few are listed, the majority of buildings and structures along the length of the Navigations, if taken individually, are not of exceptional historic or architectural interest. However, they are felt to be of great interest if considered together in context with the Navigations themselves. Many of the buildings along the waterway help illustrate the development and use of the Navigations. Conservation area designation affords planning protection to such structures from inappropriate change or development or demolition.

The Elmbridge section of the Wey Navigation runs from its mouth at the confluence with the Thames along the Borough boundary with Runnymede for approximately 180 metres to Weybridge Lock. The towpath follows the Runnymede bank for the whole of this stretch. The Elmbridge bank displays varying character, and includes the Thames Lock and its rebuilt lock keepers cottage and commercial and partially derelict frontages on Whittets Ait; tree-

lined abandoned pasture at The Bull Dogs island; part open and part screened private rear gardens of large detached properties in Wey Road, several with landing stages and boathouses; and the frontages of a terrace of recently constructed properties at Portmore Quays facing the small basin in the vicinity of the Grade II listed bridge over the River Wey carrying Bridge Road.

The Conservation Area boundary closely follows the channel of the waterway extending for a few metres in from the bank to take in wharves, landing stages and small boathouses, widening at the Thames Lock to include related buildings, and also to embrace The Boat House near the Wey Navigation entrance. The whole of The Bull Dogs island is similarly included, the boundary running along the centre of the channel of the River Wey. This not only affords a measure of protection to the weirs and associated structures at either end of the island, but also underlines the importance of retaining the character of this potentially important area of Green Belt open space which is proposed as a local park in the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000. It will also preserve fine views across to the spire of the Church of St. James in Weybridge town centre.

For more information, please email us at [**tplan@elmbridge.gov.uk**](mailto:tplan@elmbridge.gov.uk)