

The proposal was for a major mixed use urban extension, incorporating housing, employment, shops, school etc. The application proposed the reinstatement of part of a lost canal and utilised it within the development's open space provision, sustainable transport network and surface water drainage strategy.

Whilst the application site falls beyond the area where the Trust is a statutory consultee, the Trust commented on the proposal as an interested party.

The Trust noted that the application explicitly proposed the safeguarding of the route of the former Lichfield Canal through the site, and welcomed the acknowledgement within the application documents of the importance of protecting the former canal route.

It was observed that the scheme included the construction of a section of canal to form a self-contained water body incorporated within the overall landscaping and drainage schemes for the site, and that the Lichfield & Hatherton Canal Restoration Trust (LHCRT) had been involved in detailed discussion with the applicant regarding this aspect of the scheme.

The Trust therefore welcomed the positive approach taken by the applicant in seeking to accommodate the aspirations of the LHCRT for the future restoration of the Lichfield Canal within their application. The proposal has in-principle approval from the LPA, subject to the signing of a S106 agreement.

The LHCRT has been working since 1988 to bring about the re-establishment of this lost waterway. They have secured the provision of culverts and an aqueduct as part of the M6(Toll) Road developments and the strategic policies of Lichfield District Council's development plan documents support the safeguarding and development of the route as an important social, environmental and economic asset to the area.

The Trust is happy to provide advice, as an interested party, to LPAs and Developers where their policies or proposals are to include new or restored navigable waterways. If you would like our comments on a proposal, even though technically we are not a statutory consultee, please make this clear to us.

Protecting the route of redundant and derelict waterways can assist projects for their future restoration, which in turn can help to provide social, economic and environmental benefits to the local area.