



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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9th May 2018

### **CHARITY'S PLANS FOR FINSLEY GATE WHARF DEVELOPMENT APPROVED**

Canal & River Trust, the charity that cares for the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, has received planning permission to transform Finsley Gate Wharf in Burnley into a leisure, education and community attraction.

The Trust's vision for the site, known locally as Mile Wharf, started to take shape three years ago, with a successful Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant for emergency repair work. Since then, the Trust has secured a further £2.2 million from HLF's Heritage Enterprise Programme and this week planning permission was granted by Burnley Council. Work is expected to start this summer and should take around a year to complete.

Working with the future tenants of the site, Finsley Gate Wharf Ltd, the plans will transform the Grade II Listed buildings - three warehouses, a canal cottage, outbuilding and blacksmith forge - and the outdoor space, into a destination offering boat trips and boat hire, a café and visitor accommodation, as well as a function room and learning area for local community and school groups.

Ian Sprott, development surveyor at Canal & River Trust, said: "Approval of our Finsley Gate development plans is great news and we're excited to see this important heritage site be transformed into an attractive visitor destination and a hub of activity for the local community.

"With the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund, Burnley Council, Finsley Gate Wharf Ltd and the local community, this promises to be an exciting space where people can learn about the canal and enjoy the fantastic wellbeing benefits of spending time on or near the water."

Burnley Council chief executive Mick Cartledge added: "This scheme will breathe new life into an historic part of the borough and help create a regeneration link between the Weavers' Triangle and Burnley Wood. The development builds on other recent activity in this area of the town, including the acquisition of Victoria Mill (formerly the University Technical College) by UCLan and the new canalside Bridgewalk apartments.

"The new development will draw in more visitors to Burnley and tap into the economic and tourism potential of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal."

Glenn Davidson and Lee Shepherd, directors at Finsley Gate Wharf Ltd, commented: "Regenerating and preserving this important piece of British heritage has been paramount for the

Canal & River Trust and Finsley Gate Wharf Ltd, and with the help of the Heritage Lottery Fund and Burnley Council, we have finally made it.

“With planning permission approved we can now start work on the restoration of the site and create a sustainable leisure space that will be central to Burnley’s future.

“Finsley Gate Wharf will soon become a major tourist destination that will showcase the important part this area played in the industrial revolution and offer a host of leisure activities and events that will make the people of Burnley proud.”

Find out more about the Canal & River Trust’s work and how you can get involved with the waterway at the heart of your community at: [www.canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk)

## **ENDS**

### **For further information, images, and interviews, please contact:**

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### **Notes to editors:**

**The Canal & River Trust** is the guardian of 2,000 miles of historic waterways across England and Wales, caring for the nation’s third largest collection of listed structures, as well as museums, archives, and hundreds of important wildlife sites. We believe that *living waterways transform places and enrich lives* and our role is to make sure there is always a place on your doorstep where you can escape the pressures of everyday life, stretch your legs and simply feel closer to nature. Find out more about our work at: [www.canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk)

### **About the Heritage Lottery Fund**

Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife. [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk).

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