

SHREWSBURY AND NEWPORT CANALS TRUST
WAPPENSHALL UPDATE NO.1



Plan B.

Stage 1

RESTORATION OF SMALL WAREHOUSE AND BASIN.

Stage 2

RESTORATION OF LARGE WAREHOUSE

Stage 3

FINAL LANDSCAPING

Stage 1

Basin:

We will need to obtain planning consent to excavate and restore the east basin but before we apply we do need to establish if the material to be excavated is contaminated. Soil samples have been taken and tested and the results show that there are some heavy metals and hydrocarbons in the soil. This is not surprising given that the site was used originally as a coal yard and then as a transport depot where lorries were serviced and repaired. One of the samples tested showed slightly higher levels of hydrocarbons and to see if this is just a localised "hot spot" further samples have been taken and sent for testing. Once we have all the test results we will decide how best to deal with the material and then submit a planning application.

A big thank you is owed to DENSO who have paid for all the sampling so far.

The original canal liner is unlikely to be suitable so we intend to provide a new liner which will be protected with a concrete slab. The existing brick walls to the basin will be restored and a new wall constructed along the north side of the basin using large precast concrete "lego" blocks.

Whilst the excavation of the basin will need to be carried out by contractors the remaining restoration work will be undertaken by volunteers.

Planning permissions:

We now need to reapply for Planning Approval (PA) and Listed Building Consent (LBC) as the last ones have lapsed due to no substantial work being carried out. A few small alterations need to be made to the drawings and these will be carried out by our architects AHR.

We intend to submit both the PA and LBC later this year.

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Ecology Report:

We also need to update the Ecology Report and during the summer months our ecologist has been undertaking new surveys including bats and birds.

Small warehouse:

Plan includes: Café on the ground floor and meeting room/s upstairs

The existing roof is leaking and so the first priority is to replace the roof. It has been agreed with Telford Council's Conservation Officer that we can carry out this work without the need to obtain planning consent provided we do the work on a "like for like" basis and that we reuse at least 80% of the existing roof slates. However, before we do any work on the roof there are a couple of small problems that we have to deal with. They come in the form of two small bats that are currently roosting in the eaves. To enable us to work on the roof our ecologist has to obtain a licence from Natural England so that the bats can be temporarily relocated into some bat boxes. The new roof will include provision for the bats to return to both roost and hibernate.

Earlier in the year we also had birds including a Barn Owl nesting in the eaves. Most of them have now vacated the building but to mitigate the loss of a nesting site for the Owls we will be erecting special Owl boxes around the Wappenshall site. We are hoping that we can have all the approvals in place to allow us to replace the roof slates and carry out any repairs to the roof in the autumn of this year. This is the optimum time as it is after the birds have finished nesting and before the bats start to hibernate.

A few quarry tiles from the ground floor were lifted to ascertain what we would be dealing with at that level.

We checked outside and inside the warehouse to ascertain the depth of the footings and were very happy to see the results shown in the attached sketch done by our volunteer Dirk Van Rensburgh. These buildings were built to last.

A consultant has been spoken to regarding the heating of the warehouse. To provide a costing his charges would be approx. £11,000 + VAT. He also suggested that to install underfloor heating without the cost of necessary floor alterations would cost £25-35,000 more than a simple gas installation. On this basis it is likely that a gas system will be installed.

Funding:

Of course, we cannot do any of this work without funds. It is estimated that the work on the small warehouse will cost about £155,000 and to excavate and restore the east basin will cost £100,000. The Trust has set aside £100,000 and to date we have grants and a small legacy which total some £63,000. We are hoping for further support from DENSO but we still need more money to complete Stage 1 of this project. We are looking at more grants and also encouraging members to raise money in various ways to support this project. Please do all you can to help raise the funds to restore Wappenshall Wharf.

