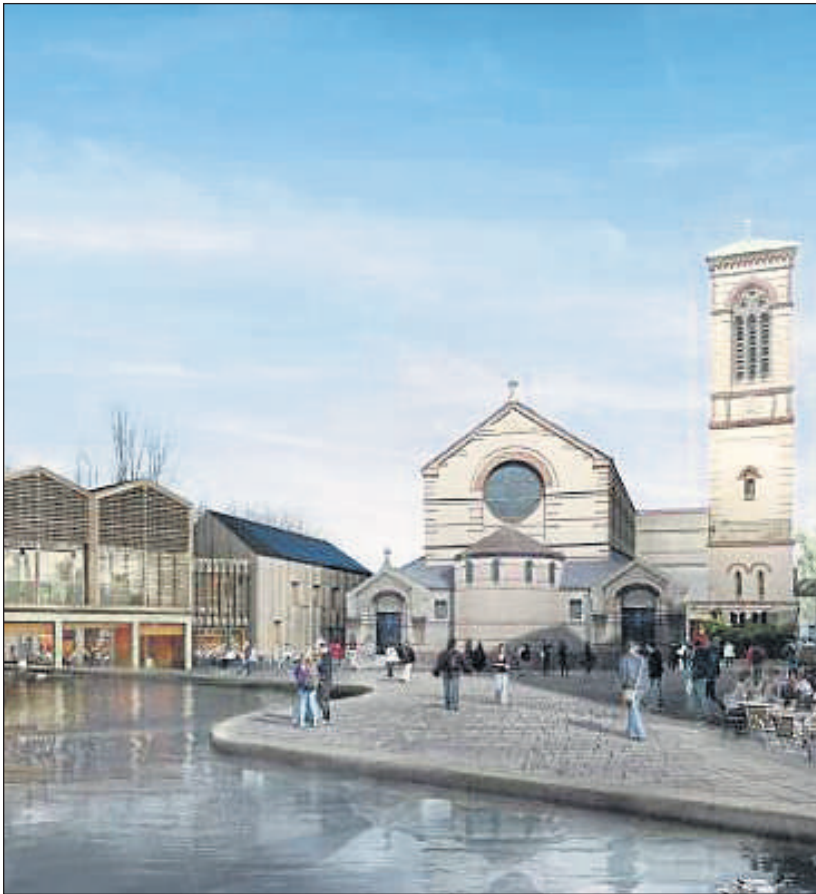


Campaigners welcome action on 'derelict' wharf



Previous proposal for the former Jericho boatyard site. Right, campaigners at the site back in 2013

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CAMPAIGNERS have welcomed Oxford City Council's decision to take action on the "derelict" Jericho Wharf as a crucial step forward in its development.

A city councillor announced on Thursday of last week that the authority was "extremely frustrated" by the lack of progress on the site, which has been left undeveloped for more than 20 years, and said they will be seeking options on how to "intervene".

One of these options is a Compulsory Purchase Order, a "last resort" for the city council but something which the Jericho Wharf Trust - a group formed when the original boatyard on the site

closed nearly three decades ago - has been pushing for since last year.

The order would allow Oxford City Council to take back control of the site from landowner Cheer Team, a Hong Kong-based company who has not begun work or filed new plans since the most recent planning application was approved in 2023.

Peter Stalker, a trustee of Jericho Wharf Trust, said in reaction to the council's statement: "This is a very welcome statement from councillor Turner.

"The predictable lack of response from the developer has only reinforced the case for the city to intervene decisively.

"The trust will continue to work alongside the council to take a Compulsory Purchase Order forward."

Councillor Ed Turner, cabinet member for finance and asset management, earlier said: "The city council is extremely frustrated by the lack of progress on the site, despite, most recently, a planning permission being awarded in February 2023 after an appeal.

"We know that the local community shares this frustration."

He confirmed the council has been in talks with both Jericho Wharf Trust, and the landowner to bring forward a plan but "unfortunately, there has been no demonstrable progress over the last year".

Mr Turner has also asked officers to bring forward a cabinet paper to "seek a steer on the city council's options to intervene".

Mr Stalker added: "This prominent brownfield location, has become an

embarrassing eyesore.

"It has remained vacant for two decades, passing through multiple investors and seeing repeated speculative planning applications without progress.

"This prolonged dereliction has deprived the Jericho community and the wider city of a vital asset.

"The proposed local plan now provides clear, positive direction, stipulating that any future planning permission must be for a mixed-use development incorporating essential community amenities.

"These include a dedicated community centre, public open space, and a replacement operating boatyard.

"After 20 years of stagnation, the clarity in the proposed local plan is a crucial step forward."



The Oxford Canal. Image: Ed Nix

Consultation as 13-tonne weight limit proposed for canal bridge

A 13-TONNE weight limit is being proposed for a bridge over the Oxford Canal.

The weight limit is for the Claydon Canal Bridge is described as a "weak" bridge right now and has a three-tonne maximum gross weight limit.

The proposals have been put forward by Oxfordshire County Council as a result of a recent structural assessment carried out in November 2025.

However, there would be exemptions for fire engines to cross the bridge to continue to use the structure when "operationally required".

Oxfordshire County Council has launched a public consultation for the weight limit which is due to end on February 13.

The bridge is over the Oxford Canal and overlooks the Claydon middle lock, part of the Claydon Flight, a set of five locks built in 1777 by Samuel Simcock for the Oxford Canal's southern extension.

A county council spokesman said: "Claydon Canal Bridge is a single span brick-work arch bridge which carries Claydon Road over the Oxford to Birmingham Canal at Claydon 'Middle Lock', in the north of the county.

"The structure is Grade II listed and has an existing signed three-tonne weight limit introduced in 1970. The county council continues its responsibility to consider the provision of convenient and safe movement of motor vehicles and other traffic, and ensuring that danger is minimised whilst facilitating the effective and safe passage of traffic."

A34 lorry smash investigation ends

AN investigation has concluded into the cause of a major lorry crash on the A34.

Emergency services were called to an incident near to Chilton, close to the Berkshire border at around 2am on Friday of last week. No one was hurt.

Three lorries had crashed and the north-bound section of the road from the M4 Junction 13 to the A4185 Chilton Interchange was shut. A lane on the A34 south-bound was also closed due to damage.

National Highways said they were conducting a "complex operation" after one of the lorries came to rest off and adjacent to the carriageway down an embankment.

By Saturday morning the road had reopened and Thames Valley Police confirmed that an investigation had concluded.

A spokesperson for Thames Valley Police, said: "Our investigation has now concluded, no one was injured, no arrests have been made and parties have exchanged details."

Demolition of uni halls continues

PICTURES of the demolition progress at an Oxford University student halls building shows the works are almost complete as the building is razed to the ground.

The Waynflete Building, a 1960s hall of residence for students of Magdalen College in Oxford, has now been completely demolished.

Plans were approved in February last year to demolish the accommodation block and rear extension in St Clement's and replace it with new flats, including 76 student rooms.

This was despite objections from the secretary of the York Place Residents' Association, which described the Waynflete Quad project as "an albatross around the city's neck" claiming the new building would be "second rate architecture".

The existing Waynflete Building at the east end of Magdalen Bridge, by The Plain roundabout, was completed in 1963.

Although the works have been screened from public view by scaffolding and hoarding on the pavement, pictures show the

building has been reduced to rubble.

Due to the size of the site, described by the college as "tiny and awkward", demolition workers from Gilbert Ash completed the job slowly and carefully.

A spokesperson for Magdalen College earlier said: "Although the Waynflete Building will be gone by the end of the year, part of it will live on in the new Waynflete Quad.

"The crushed concrete will be reused as aggregate in the foundations of the new buildings."



The demolition under way