

Canal Terrace.

This group of buildings currently includes Canal House and office, the 'saw pit' workshop, stable building and storerooms. Many of which are contemporary with opening of the canal in the late 18th century are constructed of distinctive locally made brick.

Canal House was the residence of the Canal Inspector, who would have been employed to inspect the structure and worthiness of a particular canal stretch. Much of the building layout including Canal House and the workshop complex has changed little; the single storey building abutting Canal House would have been the canal inspector's office which was constructed a little later.



View of the Canal-side buildings taken from Brooks Lane Bridge. In the middle ground is the Canal terraced housing, mainly lived in by boat families. Beyond that is the storage building and the Canal Inspectors office.
 Allan Earl

The workshop complex and the wharf would have been used to load and offload local commodities, in particular coal. According to the census in the mid 19th century there was a coal merchant trading from this yard.

The main function of the workshop buildings appears to be geared towards maintenance rather than trade. One of the buildings on the yard, 'sawpit house', measures 7.5 metres by 1.5 metres and had a saw pit within it, hence the name; this was used for cutting lock gate beams and carrying out repairs.

Just inside the gates, on the northern side of a fine cobblestone road is a brick stable block, early- to mid-19th century in date. This stable has no remaining internal features belonging to the original use of the building; residents from the former Canal side houses that stood next door to the yard remembered this building as an ironmonger, part of the railway canal company. The canal shop, as it is today, was used for general storage, next to that were six cottages built for canal employees, mainly boat families. Using an entrance way between the houses, families would bring their horses to the stables in the yard at the back of the properties, these were dated around 1820. The cottages and stables are now demolished.

The Canal house complex also included a smithy; this was located on the opposite bank to the yard and later a dry dock, also on the opposite side in the Three Locks area and is still used for repairs today.

