

# St Katharine Docks Conservation Plan

For

St Katharine's Investments LP

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Sites & Monuments Record, English Heritage

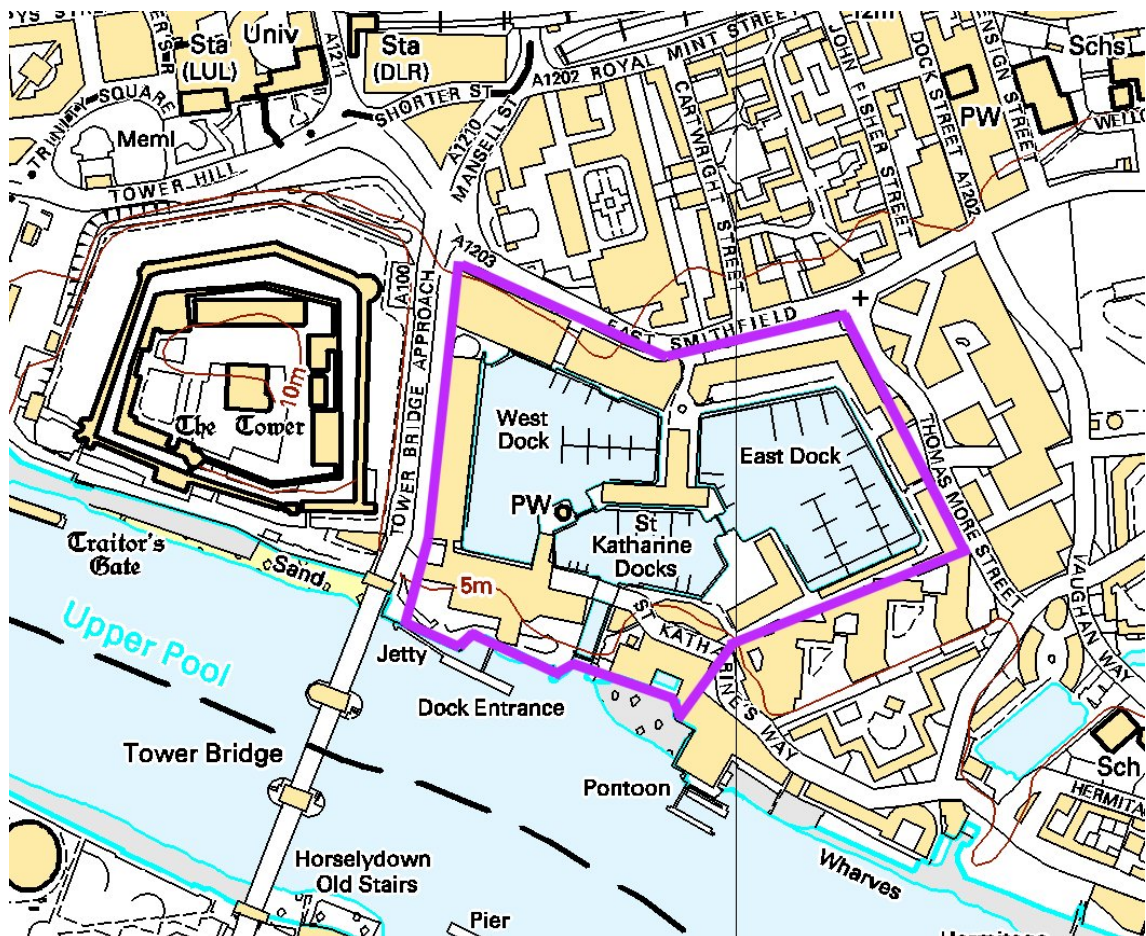


Figure 1: St Katharine Docks and its environs showing the area covered by this conservation plan

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Conservation plans for historic places

Conservation management and planning are increasingly understood to be crucial to the beneficial use and guardianship of important historic structures, estates and areas. Conservation plans are designed to describe a place and define its significance. Using this analysis, they assess the vulnerability of the place and its significance to neglect or damaging action. Finally, they establish conservation policies to ensure the long-term protection of the place, and the retention (or, if possible, enhancement) of its significance and wider social value. In many cases, the conservation plan will be the starting point for the establishment of a management plan, which will develop the conservation policies into a plan of action and thence through to implementation.

Reit Asset Management, on behalf of the owner of the Docks, St Katharine's Investments LP, has commissioned this conservation plan of St Katharine Docks in order to understand, assess the importance of, and provide policies for, the management of the site. The Docks lie in a busy cosmopolitan part of London, immediately to the east of the Tower of London and London Bridge and close to the commercial and financial hub of the City of London. Accordingly, the site has considerable value and interest to business, residential and visitor communities alike. The conservation plan is thus an important document that will serve to inform short, medium and long term decision making about developing the potential of St Katharine Docks and optimising their value and benefit in a sustainable way.

In line with the foregoing, the objectives of this conservation plan are to:

- **Understand the site** by drawing together information, including documents and physical evidence, in order to present an overall description of the place through time;
- **Assess its significance** both generally and for its principal components;
- **Define issues** affecting the significance of the site and its component parts, or which have the potential to affect them in future;
- **Develop conservation policies** to ensure that the significance of the site is retained in future management, use and alteration. If possible, the site and its significance should be enhanced through implementation of the conservation policies.

## 1.2 The nature of the site and limitations affecting the conservation plan

This conservation plan covers the nucleus of the 19<sup>th</sup> century St Katharine Docks, but excludes part of its hinterland in the south east of the site [Figure 1]. The study area is defined today by East Smithfield in the north, St Katharine's Way in the west, the river frontage from Tower Thistle Hotel to Devon House (inclusive) in the south, and the remaining boundary is set by the line of recent housing

on the east side of the east basin of the Docks. This urban site is largely, although not entirely, in the ownership of St Katharine's Investments LP.

A conservation plan, as the name implies, is concerned with the protection of our fragile cultural and/or natural resources so that they can be sustained into the future. The study process involves a series of work stages, and these are reflected in the format of this report. Before one can assess the importance of a site and therefore develop policies to protect it, one must understand it. This has involved both an examination of the place – its fabric, features and townscape – through site visits and rapid visual surveys, and extensive examination of sources relating to it. The latter include primary records and archives relating to its history, archaeology, collection and social value, and secondary sources such as published books (site guides, histories, itineraries etc) and illustrations (maps, paintings, photographs etc). The process does not usually involve new research or formal survey work to any significant degree, but in this instance the consideration of the interaction between different elements of the historic buildings and other townscape features represents a new and valid approach to the site's history and development. There is no doubt, however, that more research can be done in many of the areas covered in this document and we do not make any claim of definitiveness here.

## 2 Understanding

### 2.1 Introduction

This section of the Conservation Plan describes the historical development of the study area. It incorporates information from a wide variety of both published and archival sources. Extensive use has been made of two major archaeological sources of information, both maintained by English Heritage: the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record (GLSMR), and the National Monuments Record (NMR). Full searches have been carried out in both. Information from previous searches of the GLSMR involving slightly different study areas has also been taken into account in this survey. The two sources overlap to a considerable degree, and the GLSMR has therefore been adopted as the main one to be used in compiling the following text wherever archaeological references are concerned. Unless otherwise stated, all primary record numbers (PRNs) are those of the GLSMR. Numerals in parentheses refer to photographs and other illustrations.

### 2.2 Location, geology and topography

St Katharine Docks occupy a prime location on the north bank of the River Thames, just to the east of the historic City and Port of London and, as has already been noted, the Tower of London [1]. Clearly, this was an attractive site commercially, being so close to the financial and trading heart of England's capital city. Today, administratively, the Docks lie within the extreme south west corner of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.



**1: The juxtaposition of St Katharine Docks (International House) to Tower Bridge and the moat of the Tower of London**



Geologically, St Katharine Docks occupy a broad area of London Clay that underlies the north bank of the Thames, with a cover of riverine alluvial deposits. Areas of river gravel and overlying brickearth lie to the north and west of the Docks, but such deposits do not appear to be characteristic of the site itself. Historically, the site had a number of natural advantages in its favour, when the development of a dock was being considered in the early decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Most obviously, it occupied a riverside location. Next, the massively thick layer of London Clay provided a natural impervious lining, preventing water loss. Finally its proximity to the existing Port was important for its potential viability. There were plenty of obstacles to development, of course – but consideration of these will properly wait until the appropriate sections of the historical description below.

Topographically, the surrounding land slopes gradually from north to south, a trend that is obvious on the section of St Katharine's Way that runs along the west side of the site. The Docks, of course, by definition, involved the creation and use of flat sheets of water (surrounded by warehouses) and harnessing of the tidal levels of the River Thames largely dictated the horizontal levels required within the site. This means that much of the interior of St Katharine Docks lies at a lower level than its immediate surroundings, with the change in levels becoming progressively more pronounced the further one goes north away from the river. The height differential is at its most dramatic at the north west corner of the Docks, where the recently completed redevelopment of the former Europe House site, currently known as K2, has created an open terrace to the south of the new building with a sheer vertical edge below St Katharine's Way and Tower Bridge Approach. The consequences are also very evident at the entrance to the Docks on East Smithfield, where the access road into the site has a relatively steep slope sweeping down past Commercial Quay to Ivory House.

## 2.3 Site chronology – archaeology and history

### 2.3.1 Prehistory

The Thames has been reduced in width from both banks through two millennia of development and reclamation, but it would have been a wider and shallower river that confronted prehistoric inhabitants of the area. There was no city before the Romans came, of course, although by the Iron Age (if not before) there would have been a scattering of small, predominantly agricultural settlements on either bank. These would have taken advantage of the good natural drainage of the brickearth-capped gravel terraces flanking the river. A late Iron Age burial has been excavated within the Inmost Ward of the Tower of London (Parnell 1993, 5-7).

The Thames itself has provided some evidence for prehistoric activity in the area, with numerous artefacts of Neolithic (New Stone Age), Bronze Age and Iron Age having been recovered from the river channel over the past couple of hundred years. Most of the finds have been made near Tower Bridge or off the Tower of London. They include:

- two Mesolithic flint tools (c 10,000-4000 BC; GLSMR 080739);
- three stone/flint axes of Neolithic date (c 4000-2000 BC; GLSMR 112000-2);
- an axe, sword and several spearheads, all of copper alloy and dating from the Bronze Age (c 2000-800 BC; GLSMR 112032, 112039 and 112041-4); and,



- an Iron Age gold coin (GLSMR 112047), perhaps of the late 1<sup>st</sup> century BC or early 1<sup>st</sup> century AD.

These artefacts may well have been deposited in the river deliberately as some form of religious act – an offering to a deity, perhaps. At the very least, they testify to the presence of people close to and on the Thames from early times, while they can also be taken as implicit evidence for the importance of the river itself in early peoples' view of their world.

Nothing is known about prehistoric activity within the Docks area, with no artefacts recorded in the study area on the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record. This is not necessarily surprising, as the workmen excavating the Docks in the 1820s would not have been concerned with the niceties of small artefacts of any date unless they looked valuable in some way. Furthermore, the south side at least of the Docks area would have been within the margins of the prehistoric river. This zone at least therefore lies on subsequently reclaimed land. A few finds have been made during excavations on nearby sites such as the Royal Mint, where some undiagnostic flint and a few sherds of Bronze Age and Iron Age pottery were found in 1986 (GLSMR 080810, 080928). These provide little more than a very general background context of prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the Docks.

### 2.3.2 Beyond the edge: the limits of the Roman City

The Roman city of *Londinium* was more than a settlement – it was also (as all cities are) a conceptual entity, with a major role to play in regional and national governance. While *Londinium* was by no means the first major settlement to be established by the Romans within their new imperial province of *Britannia*, its development was under way from c AD50. The site was attractive because the area just to the east of confluence between the Thames and its tributary the Walbrook provided the best crossing point on the main river channel. A group of islands in the centre of the channel and towards the south bank provided excellent conditions (even at high tide) for spanning across the wide river here (Milne 1985, fig 49).

Despite the severe reverse of the Boudiccan uprising in AD 60, the Roman city prospered and major public buildings were in place by AD 70-80 (Bateman 1998). Even then – and despite the still-recent memory of the Boudiccan disaster – *Londinium* was not provided with defences. Nevertheless, the limits of the city had clearly been established well before a wall was built c AD 200 for the defence of the city, as the distribution of cemeteries around the urban area clearly shows. Burial within the confines of a settlement was strictly forbidden under Roman law, and cemeteries therefore provide important evidence for the limits of a town or city before defences were erected. A summary of our knowledge of London's Roman cemeteries in 1996 showed that burials to the east of the walled area included examples of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> century date, that is, pre-dating the urban defences (Hall 1996, 73-4). The distribution of burials within the eastern cemetery stops just short of St Katharine Docks (ibid, fig 9.2), with a small group of tombstones from the east side of the Tower of London and Tower Hill being the nearest recorded sites. Despite this, the Docks clearly lie outside the walled city.

Once more, it is difficult to know whether any evidence for Roman burials or other remains was lost without record in the 1820s excavations for the Docks. Here again, however, there are no records of Roman discoveries within the study area on the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record, though there are a few records from adjacent sites. The top of an amphora (large storage jar for wine, olive oil etc) was found in 1866 at the junction of East Smithfield and Cartwright Street just to the north of the Docks (GLSMR 080827). The 1986 excavation at the Royal Mint site uncovered a few truncated pits containing some Roman pottery. This was the only evidence for Roman activity, and was

interpreted as evidence for a wide area of sand and gravel extraction (GLSMR 081501). Finally there is a reference to flood defences along the north bank of the Thames within the London Borough of Tower Hamlets (GLSMR 081052), but this is likely to have ended at the Tower of London.

### 2.3.3 The Anglo-Saxon period

There is no more information pertaining to the period following the end of Roman rule in AD 410 than there is for the centuries preceding it. There have been a few Anglo-Saxon finds from the Thames, close to the Docks, notably three iron axes (GLSMR 112007-8 and 112049), an iron stirrup with copper alloy inlay in scroll patterns (GLSMR 112009) and a spearhead (GLSMR 112050), also probably of iron. Unsurprisingly, there are no finds recorded from the study area itself. The church of All Hallows by the Tower contains fabric of early to middle 11<sup>th</sup>-century date (Schofield 1994, 81-3), but the building is within the walled area well to the west of the Docks.

The fate of the extra-mural area is unclear during much of the Anglo-Saxon period. The middle Saxon settlement of *Lundenwic* actually developed outside the walls, but to the west in the Strand area (Vince 1990, 13-25). With the exception of All Hallows church, however, there is still very little archaeological evidence for activity in the south-eastern corner of the city or outside it throughout the period. The Roman defences do seem to have been maintained in reasonably good condition, and there is some historical evidence relating to this that hints at occupation of some sort in the extra-mural area.

The earliest pre-Norman evidence for settlement and land use within the south-east corner of the city is associated with its churches.<sup>1</sup> The first to appear was All Hallows, probably a foundation of Bishop Eorcenwald (675-693),<sup>2</sup> as a 'sub-minster' or church dependent on the city's cathedral church. The foundation may have been intended to prompt, or have followed, an extension of settlement in this area, over which it would have then enjoyed extensive rights of revenue and administration. In the 9<sup>th</sup> century, however, after the re-establishment of the fortified city under King Alfred, the area seems to have been split into three wards (administrative and fiscal units with a defensive function). These were centred on All Hallows and two newly-founded churches - St Mary Magdalen by Aldgate and, probably, St Peter ad Vincula (Keevill 2004, 6).

In the mid-10<sup>th</sup> century, further fragmentation took place when a new ward called *Portsoken* was established, embracing those areas of St Peter's and St Mary's wards outside the city wall. This ward was a civil creation, entrusted, or perhaps initiated by, a group of citizens collectively known as the *Cnihtengild*. This body probably ceased to exist with the Conquest, when the establishment of the Tower of London alongside the stretch of wall they were pledged to defend presumably removed its *raison d'être*. However, the property and administrative unit survived, and was granted *en bloc* to the Augustinians of Holy Trinity Aldgate in 1125.<sup>3</sup> It is apparent that possession and administration of the area was minutely accounted for before the Conquest, and that two features of its topography - the churches of All Hallows and St Peter's - were already established.

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<sup>1</sup> The general model followed here is that of Haslam in 1988 ('Parishes, churches, wards and gates', esp pp 38-41).

<sup>2</sup> Brooke and Keir, *London 800-1216*, p 137 and note 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Cartulary of Holy Trinity Aldgate*, no. 871. See also discussion by Brooke and Keir, *London 800-1216*, pp 96-8.

#### 2.3.4 The medieval period: the establishment of the Hospital of St Katharine

In spite of the demise of the *Cnihtengild*, the administrative geography of the area around the Tower of London in c 1100 retained a substantial inheritance from the Anglo-Saxon period. The churches of St Peter and All Hallows and the division of the area into wards had been long established, although both were subject to changes in extent and character. Evidence for actual land use, however, is fairly sparse. In general, we can probably assume that the extra-mural area was relatively thinly occupied throughout the 12<sup>th</sup> century. This is implied by extrapolation from the known topography as it emerged in the later Middle Ages. The large size of the Aldgate and Portsoken wards, for instance, may be compared with those further west, such as Bassishaw or Cheap, 'which probably represent more fully settled areas of the City, where property rights were established and respected'.<sup>4</sup> Indeed the establishment of a series of monastic sites and enclosures in the area immediately outside the city wall and the Tower of London during the 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> centuries would have been more difficult to achieve in a well-used area.

Established routes and watercourses must have existed, but good evidence for these can only be found for the 13<sup>th</sup> century and later. Much of the area is likely to have been pasture, although in 1141 the Constable of the Tower of London, Geoffrey de Mandeville, established a vineyard on land in East Smithfield - seized from, and soon returned to, the canons of Holy Trinity.<sup>5</sup> The Roman City wall and its ditch - largely silted up - split the area in two from north to south as it continued to do for many centuries.

The most important new introduction to the area in the medieval period came with the foundation of two monastic (or quasi-monastic) houses - Holy Trinity Aldgate and St Katharine's Hospital. Holy Trinity was established by Matilda, wife of Henry I, for Augustinian canons, in 1108. It was to become the largest and richest monastic house in the area. Of far greater importance here, however, was the hospital. This was founded by Matilda (wife of King Stephen) in 1147 for 'thirteen poor people'.<sup>6</sup> Initially it was administered by the canons of Holy Trinity, and its revenues were drawn from theirs. In 1152, however, the patron added the further substantial gift of an annual rent of £20 from Queenhithe and a mill and land 'near the Tower'. This enabled the canons to move the hospital from its original site close to their own monastery to a new position due east of the Tower of London. It would occupy this new site for nearly 700 years (see below). The second half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century saw the refoundation of St Katharine's Hospital by Eleanor of Provence (1261), after a long dispute with the canons of Holy Trinity.<sup>7</sup> From then on, it was to be run by a master, three brothers and three sisters, and to provide for ten poor women and six poor scholars.

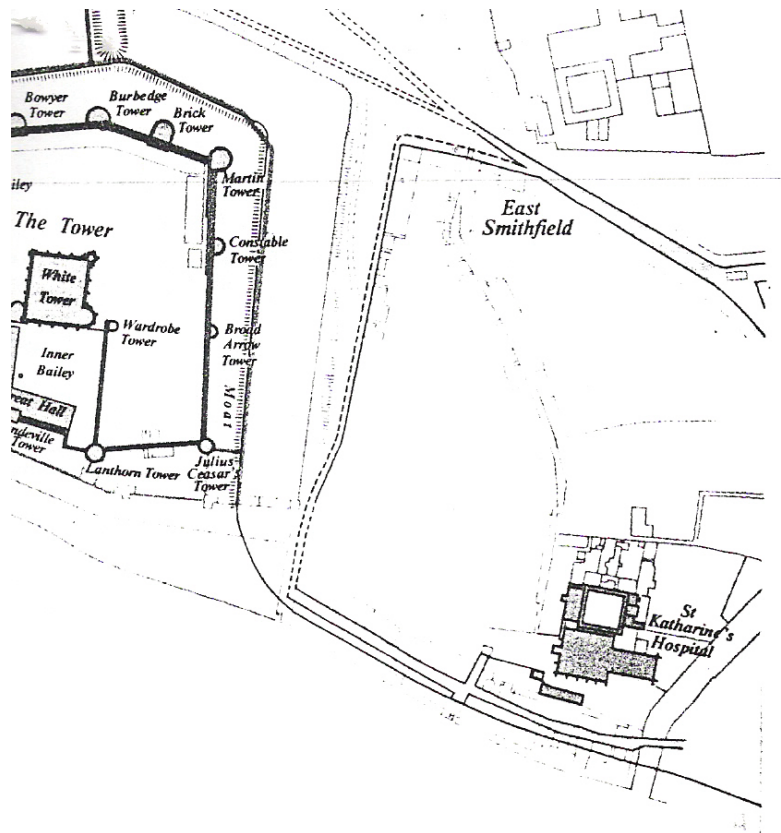
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<sup>4</sup> Brooke and Keir, *London 800-1216*, p 169.

<sup>5</sup> *Cartulary of Holy Trinity Aldgate*, no. 972.

<sup>6</sup> *Cartulary of Holy Trinity Aldgate*, nos. 974, 976.

<sup>7</sup> *Cartulary of Holy Trinity Aldgate*, nos. 986-7.



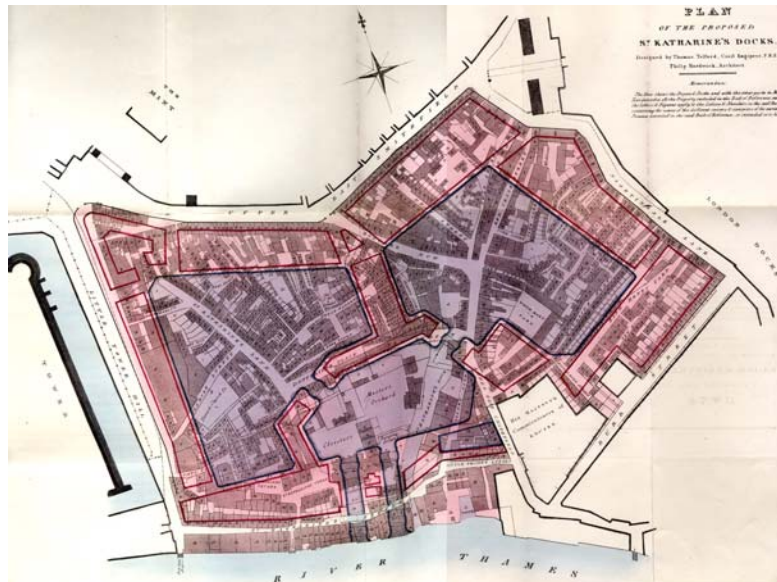
## 2: Location of St Katharine's Hospital

The location of the hospital [2], so close to the Tower, and its seclusion away from the city, made it an attractive place for royal officials, and some began to live within its precinct from the later 13th century onwards (Weinreb and Hibbert 1983, 728). A Charter of Privileges was granted to the hospital in 1442, taking it outside both civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction (the City and Bishop of London respectively). St Katharine's became a royal peculiar enjoying considerable freedom over its own governance. It had its own ecclesiastical court and, in civil affairs, was only answerable to its own Master and the Lord Chancellor. It took on the title of a Royal Foundation, and the hospital's unusual status stood it in good – indeed near unique – stead in the tumultuous affairs of the 1530s (see below).

The conventual and hospital buildings underwent a major rebuilding after 1343, on the initiative of its then patroness, Queen Philippa. The church was finished in 1377; illustrations of the building on the eve of its demolition in 1825 show that much fabric of that date then remained. The quality of this work has led to its attribution to the royal mason William Ramsey (Williamson and Pevsner 1998, 24). The foundation would also have had accommodation for its inmates, who would have lived in an environment similar to the later almshouses that are a familiar sight in most towns and cities.

Detailed maps of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries – including the remarkable 'Master Plan' drawn up in c 1825 to show the relationship of the new Docks to the existing site – tell us something of the arrangements [3]. The medieval church lay fairly close to and roughly parallel with the river (approximately at the north end of the entrance lock built in 1825-8), separated from it by St

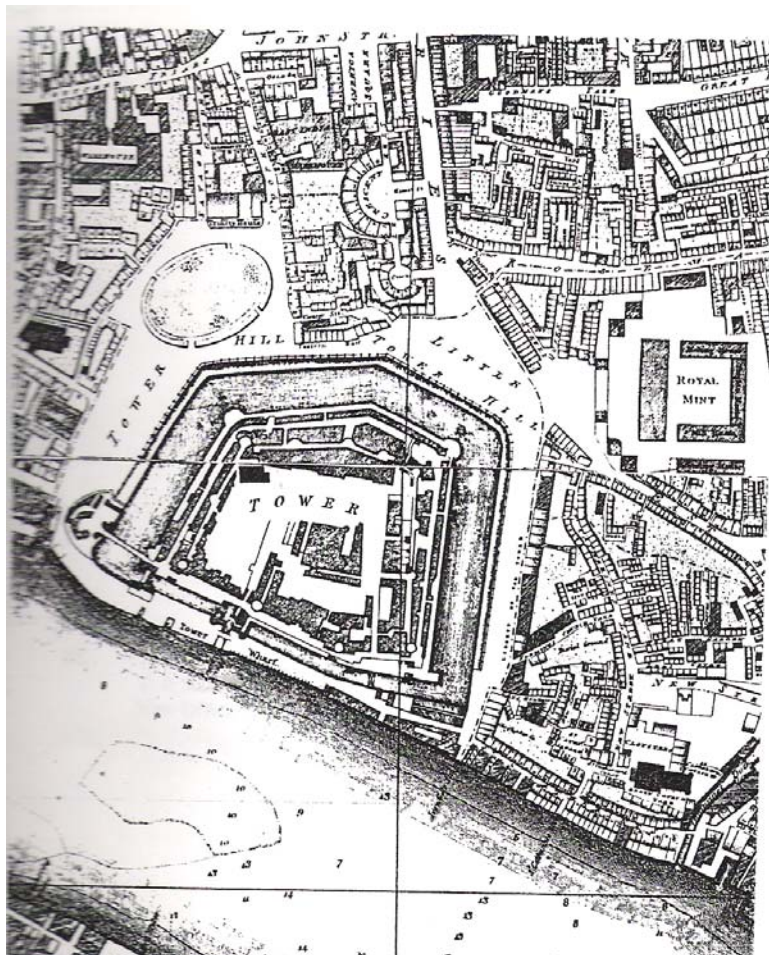
Katharine's Street. There was a cemetery to its east, and the Master's Orchard was to the north of this. The Master's House – seemingly a substantial property – was on the east side of the Orchard, and fronted onto a courtyard between the house and the church. This area was still known as the Cloisters in the 1820s, and a small row of houses along its east side and adjoining the chancel of the church was known as the Brothers' (in other words, inmates) Houses. An area immediately to the south of the church was known as Sisters Close; the small houses around this little close were doubtless where the female inmates lived.



**3: 1825 plan of the proposed Docks**

The precinct had its own dock, shown as a long and narrow feature running back from the river in Horwood's 1799 map of London and the 1825 'Master Plan' [3,4]. There also seems to have been a mill within the precinct, close to or on the river edge to the south of the church. One was present in the reign of Henry VI, while John Stow claimed that it had been established in the reign of King Stephen (GLSMR 080974). The precinct seems to have extended eastwards as far as Lower East Smithfield, beyond which lay the southern part of the parish of St Botolph without Aldgate. Thus, the lands of the Hospital community largely lay within the central and western part of the later Docks.





**4: Richard Horwood's map of 1799**

In fact, the Hospital's precinct had come under considerable pressure from the massive expansion of the Tower of London under Henry III and his son, Edward I. Both kings had to compensate the owners and occupants of the appropriated land. An entry in the Liberate Rolls in June 1239 lists the individuals and institutions indemnified for the 'damages that they have sustained by the wall and ditch of the Tower of London' under Henry III.<sup>8</sup> Among them are artisans and private citizens (such as Hugh le Barber, Payn the Shoemaker, Eustace the Linendraper, Henry the Cook and Richard the Goldsmith), but also the heads or representatives of numerous institutions. Most were local: the list includes St Katharine's Hospital, Holy Trinity Aldgate, Southwark Priory, St Paul's Cathedral, St Bartholomew's Hospital; others, such as Osney Abbey (Oxford), were more distant. The total sum came to over £166, although this was a tiny fraction of that spent on the building work itself.

Within three years of Henry's death, the new king, Edward I (1272-1307), had embarked upon an enlargement of the castle which dwarfed even the scale of his father's achievement. Between 1275 and 1285, Henry's ditch was (at least, partly) filled and an entirely new circuit of walls created, enclosing both the landward side and the river frontage of the castle. The old western gateways were replaced by the south western complex which, although mutilated, remains the castle's main landward

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<sup>8</sup> *Cal Lib*, 1226-40, pp 396-7.

entrance. The new walls were ringed by the existing moat, although this has been redefined and much altered since. Like his predecessor, Edward I was obliged to compensate expropriated landowners. A perpetual annuity was granted to St Katharine's,<sup>9</sup> which saw another area sliced off the western side of its precinct, which had included a mill and the greater part of a garden.<sup>10</sup> It is difficult to assess how much land was taken from the Hospital during the 1230s and 1270s, but the area covered by the eastern arms of Henry III's and Edward I's new defences may have represented as much as 20% of the precinct if all this ground had been within the ownership of St Katharine's.

By 1300, the area immediately to the east of the Tower had largely been occupied and owned by St Katharine's Hospital, in its own right, since 1261. The period 1300-1540 saw no further royal expropriations, although there were differences in the 14<sup>th</sup> century over rights of way between their precinct and the castle.

### **2.3.5 An unusual continuity – the Hospital in the post-medieval period**

The Hospital had continued to enjoy royal (especially, queenly) patronage throughout the medieval period up to and including the reign of Henry VIII. He and his first queen, Catherine of Aragon, founded the Guild of St Barbara there. This connection - and especially its status as a royal peculiar - was strongly in St Katharine's favour at the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 1530s. Very few monastic communities survived the successive waves of closures in 1536 (the poorer houses, with income valued at under £200 per annum) and 1537-9 (the remaining, wealthier houses). Perhaps uniquely, the Hospital of St Katharine was left untouched to continue its charitable business, although its lands were transferred to the Crown in 1546. Twelve years later, the newly crowned Elizabeth I appointed a new Master, Dr Thomas Wilson. His actions (such as closing the choir school) proved unpopular, and the queen had to issue a new charter confirming most of the Hospital's privileges and their remit to help the poor.

The unusual liberties enjoyed by the community of St Katharine's had already attracted attention and residents from the late 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards (see above), but not all seem to have been as salubrious as royal officials. Indeed, even before the end of the medieval period, the Hospital had gained something of a reputation for harbouring a volatile populace. There are records of riots in 1451, suggesting that the site had become home to 'a floating population of foreigners, seamen and criminals' (Weinreb and Nicholson 1983, 728). The attraction was clear enough – the City held no sway here, and the onerous demands of its taxes and Guilds did not apply. Trade and industry could develop freely, but so could crime. The situation was probably under control as long as the Hospital itself still controlled leases and rents, but once these were sold and/or sub-divided standards soon deteriorated.

Development intensified from the late 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, not least as large numbers of immigrants came into the area. Flemish weavers and brewers were at the forefront of this movement, and their influence was still recognisable in the names of streets that were only swept away in 1825-8. The area was still understandably dominated by place and street names associated with the Hospital (for example, St Katharine's Street, Lane, Court, New Court and Square). Nevertheless, 17<sup>th</sup> century and later maps also show us Flemish Street and the Flemish Church Yard. Other names reflect the role of

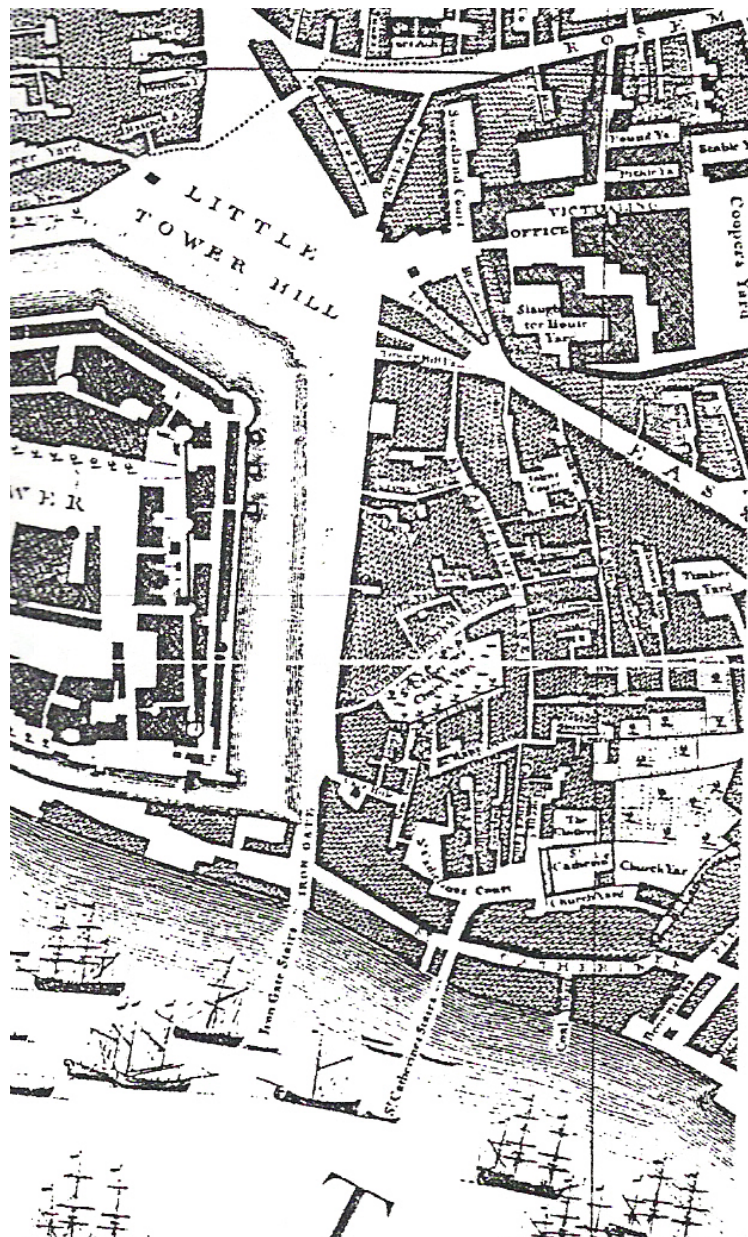
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<sup>9</sup> E372/120 *rot comp* 2d and E372/123.

<sup>10</sup> *Cartulary of Holy Trinity Aldgate*, no. 871. The information is contained in memorandum of the early 14th century.



taverns – and drinking – in the incipient docklands. In a small area, one can find Red Lion Court, Rose and Crown Court, Greyhound Court, Bell Alley and more. Most of these would take their names from inns. Other names seem to have obvious enough origins – Butcher Row, for instance – but others have an uncomfortable air, most notably Dark Entry at the east end of the Row (though to be fair this appears to have been outside the Hospital's land).



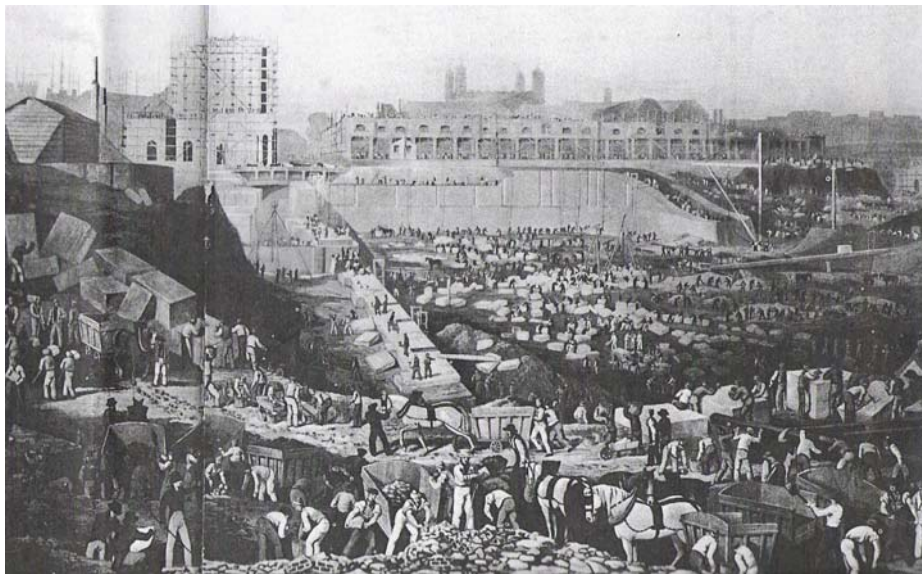
5: John Roque's map of 1746 showing the greatly increased level of development in the area

Neither is it simply a matter of the names. All maps and surveys from Ogilby and Morgan's of 1676 onwards show that most of the Hospital precinct had been the subject of intense development [5]. There were still a few open spaces, principally associated with the St Katharine's, such as the Master's Orchard. Most of the area, though, was covered with small houses packed densely together and often (as noted above) associated with small courtyards behind the street frontages. The population of St Katharine's was estimated at between 3-4,000 by 1640 (Weinreb and Nicholson 1983, 728) – and this does not include the whole of the later Docks area. Despite this, the dire picture of conditions (and indeed the inhabitants) painted in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century by proponents of the Docks appears to have been a substantial over-statement.

### **2.3.6 Using the river: post-medieval evidence from the Thames foreshore in front of St Katharine's**

Archaeological work in recent years has revealed the extent to which the tidal margins of the River Thames have been used over many millennia. In some places, remnants of Bronze Age and later prehistoric causeways have been found, for instance, while Roman exploitation (and reclamation) of the river edges has been known for many years (for the Roman river, see Milne 1985, especially chapters 2, 5 and 9). The foreshore along the St Katharine's stretch of the Thames has been surveyed by Mike Webber, and around 50 sites or finds were noted (GLSMR 083907-60). Many of these could not be dated accurately, but the majority that could be identified were assigned to the post-medieval period (mid-16<sup>th</sup> to late 18<sup>th</sup>/early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries), or the 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Features included timber structures such as probable jetties and mooring posts, while artefacts were dominated by ironwork from boat mending. All of the recorded items seem to reflect the use of the Thames for shipping and trade, and they also relate strongly to the community in the peculiar of St Katharine's.

### **2.3.7 Digging away history: the construction of St Katharine Docks**

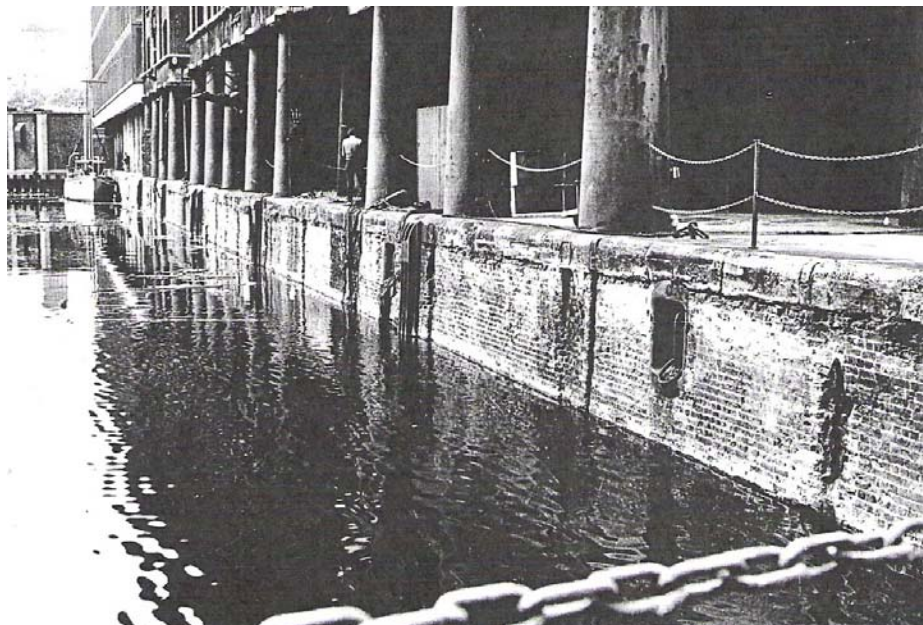


**6: Construction of the Docks c1828**



The single greatest enterprise to have been undertaken to the east of the City in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, even when compared to the building of Tower Bridge, was the creation of London's docklands [6]. The establishment of St Katharine Docks came towards the end of the first wave of development. The background to this lies in the exponential increase in London's trade from 1800 onwards, and the inadequacy of the landing and storage facilities in the Pool of London. From the 1790s onwards, the problem was tackled by creating purpose-built basin docks downstream, as suggested by the London merchant William Vaughan in an influential publication of 1793<sup>11</sup> and campaigned for thereafter. Early enterprises included the West India Docks across the Isle of Dogs (1799-1806) and the docks at Wapping (London Western Docks, 1801-5) and Blackwall (East India Docks, 1803-6).<sup>12</sup>

The initiative in this case was taken by a consortium who obtained an Act of Parliament in 1825, and raised £1,752,752 as the capital stock of the new company. Plans were laid in the face of considerable opposition from representatives of the 11,000 people to be displaced, antiquarian interest, and the owners of the private quays who feared competition, but the company prevailed. The scheme was prepared by Thomas Telford and the architect Philip Hardwick in 1824. The West Dock was opened in 1828, and the East in 1829. A new riverside quay, St Katharine's Wharf, was built on the river frontage in the same year for steamboats.



**7: Warehouse C in 1966 showing the typical quayside arrangement, with Tuscan columns at the water's edge**

The Docks' original warehouses were finished only in 1852.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, these continued to be modified and replaced, with warehouse I (now known as Ivory House) being built in 1858-60 to the design of

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<sup>11</sup> *On Wet Docks, Quays and Warehouses for the Port of London, with hints respecting Trade*, London 1793.

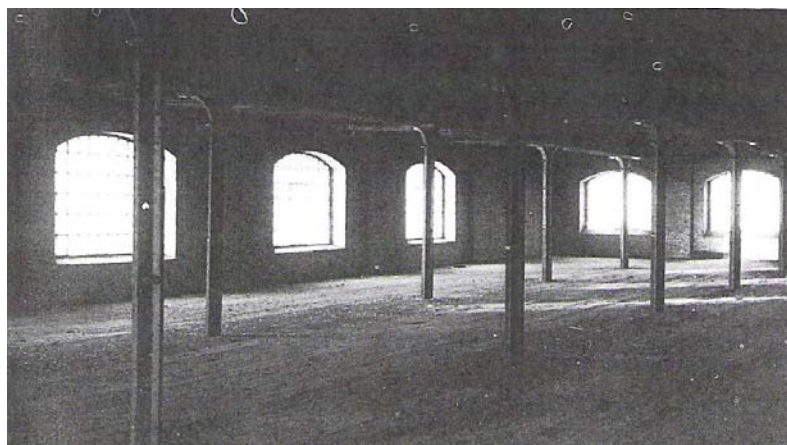
<sup>12</sup> Summerson, *Georgian London*, pp 252-4. See also Broodbank, *History of the Port of London*.

<sup>13</sup> See Rosam, *One Thousand Years of St Katharine Docks*, pp 17-24.

George Aitchison (Senior). The Docks design made the best use of an awkward site, dividing it up into three basins with an entry and exit channel to the Thames. The warehouses were built directly onto the quaysides, with no intervening space [7]. Boats unloaded straight onto the quayside, sheltered under a colonnade supported by massive cast iron Tuscan Doric columns. Goods could then be sorted first or loaded directly into the storage areas, ranged over five or six floors in the six stacks of warehouses built by Hardwick and Telford. The buildings were simple, but of good proportions, with a simple rhythm of tall semi-circular arches and a simple Portland stone coping [8]. Some bays were recessed to accommodate cranes on the quayside, or loading yards for carts on the landward sides. The internal structure was straightforward, with cruciform cast-iron columns and timber floors over groin-vaulted basements [9].



**8: Warehouse B viewed across the west basin**



**9: Interior of Warehouse B**

The Docks as a whole needed to be secure, and this was assured by the construction of a high brick wall around the landward perimeter (the wall still survives on much of the north and east sides) [10]. The warehouses themselves added to the effect of tall, sheer and impenetrable faces [11]. The

principal landward entrance was in the north wall, where the gate is flanked (indeed defined) by tall brick piers surmounted by (modern) statues of elephants. The broad central archway for carts is flanked by smaller openings for pedestrians. The Dockmaster's House on the east side of and guarding the entrance lock from the Thames was a further security device, its full-height bows overlooking the river and dock entrance giving excellent surveillance over traffic and trade. Space at the north west corner of the Docks was occupied by a fine office block, purpose-built for the Docks company.



**10: Looking north in 1966 to the remains of Warehouse D and showing the high security boundary wall of the Docks**



**11: The western basin and warehouses viewed in 1967 from Tower Bridge (north pier)**

The St Katharine site was inevitably constricted, and the area covered by the basins was among the smallest in the new docklands. Furthermore, the locks and passages had not been designed for the larger cast iron hulls of the middle and later 19<sup>th</sup> century. The warehouse space was generous,



however, and the location good. Financially, the enterprise was a success, being steered through the difficult initial years by the company's able chairman, Sir John Hall. Decline came only during and after the 1930s, with changes in world trade patterns and an increase in the size of ships; the seal was set by the development of Tilbury in the 1960s.

The new development necessitated the destruction of all the old buildings and spaces associated with the Royal Foundation of St Katharine, and the houses of the poor. Contemporary – even celebratory – illustrations depict all too clearly the enormous scale of the works. Some even seem to show that the entire area within the Docks' perimeter was dug out before building back up again to create the basins and their associated warehouses. It seems unlikely (but by no means impossible) that such lengths would have been gone to, but it is clear that excavation of the basins, the deep basements and the foundations of the warehouses would have left little behind of the earlier buildings.

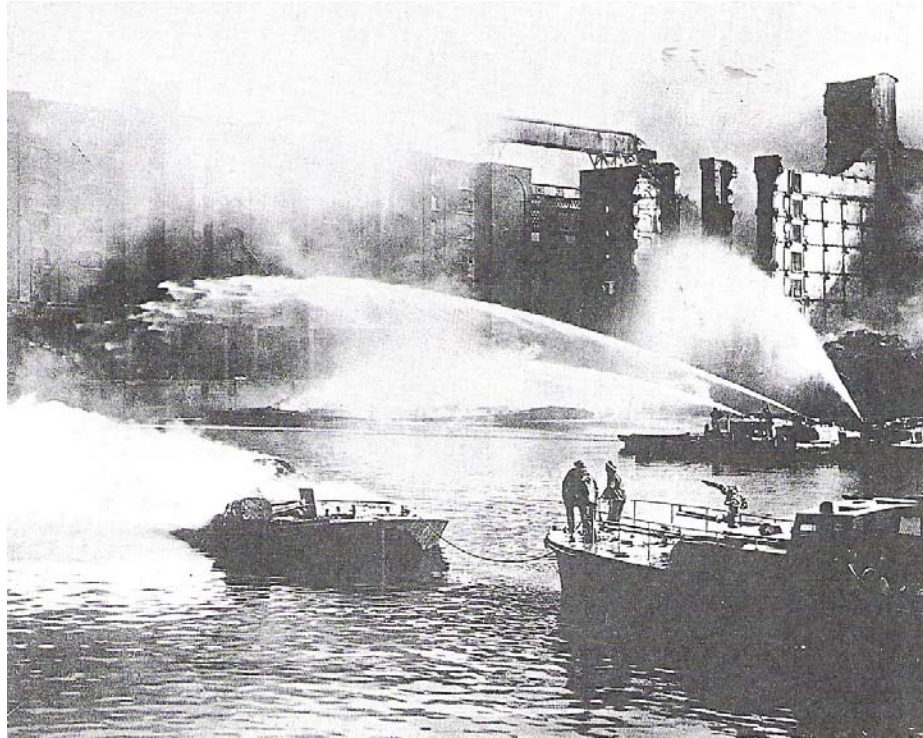
The poor have no choice but to move under such circumstances, and their next place of residence was rarely (if ever) of interest to the developers of the day. Only the politically-aware and social reformers took any interest in their plight. The same could not be said of the Royal Foundation of St Katharine, however, which could not be removed so lightly. The foundation was given land in Regent's Park, and new houses, a school and chapel were built there. Initially, these functioned as a simple almshouse, but the community was re-organised more closely along its original monastic lines in 1878. The Foundation returned to a site close to its medieval origins in 1949, when the community occupied the former Church of St James Ratcliffe, bombed in 1940. In a remarkable link between the ancient and present Foundations, St James Ratcliffe now contains several pieces of furniture from the 14<sup>th</sup> century Church of St Katharine. Pride of place among these undoubtedly goes to the 14<sup>th</sup> century choir stalls (Weinreb and Nicholson 1983, 671-2; Williamson and Pevsner 1998, 146-7).

### **2.3.8 Destruction and redevelopment: St Katharine Docks in and after the Blitz**

The City and the East End suffered heavily during the Blitz in 1940. The Tower of London took several direct hits from bombs, though fortunately these affected 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings more than anything else. At the head of Tower Hill, Trinity House was all but completely gutted, although Samuel Wyatt's façade was saved; the Port of London Authority building lost its roof. Hardwick and Aitcheson's warehouses around St Katharine Docks were damaged, mostly beyond repair. The East Basin suffered the worst [12], with the warehouses here being so badly affected that they were demolished without any question of repair. Most of the East Basin remained vacant as open ground throughout the post-war years until the mid 1990s, when redevelopment finally took place. The West Basin, meanwhile, had seen only the loss of the former Docks offices at the north west corner of the site.<sup>14</sup> The survival of the warehouses here meant that the basin retained an enclosed dockland ambience until the 1970s. After the Docks were closed in 1968, many of the warehouses became colonized with artists' studios; warehouses B, C and G remained as listed buildings in 1982 – curiously, as all three had been demolished by 1980.

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<sup>14</sup> A watching brief carried out in 2002 on pile probing holes on the Europe House site after its demolition found extensive remains of the walls and brick vaults belonging to the Dock House offices and warehouse C. The highest survival of archaeological remains occurred in the south west corner of the site at 8.50m OD, where there were remains of four brick vaults. Elsewhere, the remains had been truncated when Europe House was built in the 1960s. GLSMR reference LO76260.



**12: *Firefighting in the east basin in 1940***

In 1951, Forshaw and Abercrombie proposed that a park should be built on the site of the Docks, with riverside warehouses being demolished to create a tree-lined walk. The proposal was not implemented (Williamson and Pevsner 1998, 47-8). Instead, in 1969, a 125-year lease over St Katharine Docks was awarded to Taylor Woodrow by the Greater London Council. They specified a mixed development, with office space, leisure and housing. The brief was only partially successful in achieving this mixed use. The loss of warehouses B, C and G - as not being economically viable for conversion – now seems especially regrettable, particularly as the inner (east-facing) elevation of International House (the replacement for warehouses B and C) consciously mimicked the massive Tuscan order of Hardwick's colonnade. Nothing among the late 20th-century architecture 'designed in a peculiar medley of styles' (ibid, 213) stands out (at least for positive reasons), though the Coronarium on the west side of the passage between the Entrance and West Basins merits a mention for two reasons. Firstly, it was begun in 1977 to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of H M Queen Elisabeth II. Secondly, this little Classical temple (to the design of Hurden, Gill and Dent) incorporated eight Doric columns salvaged from Warehouse A, formerly on the site of the Tower Thistle Hotel [13]. It is not much, but at least it is a small connection back to the historic Docks. Conversely, whatever its shortcomings, Taylor Woodrow's redevelopment of St Katharine Docks has some considerable historical significance as being the first regenerative scheme to be carried out on a complete redundant dock in the post-War period.

All the surviving 18th and 19th century housing along the south-east side of the docks was replaced with new blocks of flats in the 1930s and 1970s. The earlier development, St. Katharine's Estate, was designed and developed by the London County Council. The later housing was the work of Renton



Howard Wood Associates, extending and enlarging the original scheme. The same architects were also responsible for the final redevelopment of the Docks' East Basin in 1995-7.



**14: *The opening of the Coronarium in 1977***

## 2.4 St Katharine Docks today

### 2.4.1 Defining the site: boundary features

The high security wall along the north side of the Docks, separating the site from East Smithfield (all finished by 1828 and today statutorily listed at Grade II), is the only significant surviving historic boundary feature of the Docks.

On the west side, the boundary is visually sharply delineated by two major parallel features: St Katharine's Way and the vertical brick façade of Tower Bridge Approach, imposed along the line of Little Tower Hill by 1894, and immediately to the east, a strong architectural barrier formed of two

office buildings – K2 to the north and International House – and the Tower Thistle Hotel to the south, occupying the river frontage alongside Tower Bridge [1,14].



**14: *St Katharine's Way and the line of Tower Bridge Approach (right), with International House and a glimpse of Tower Thistle Hotel to the left***

The northern edge of St Katharine Docks, running along the arterial East Smithfield (the A1203), is identical to the historic line of the Docks. Behind the surviving brick security wall and from within the Docks, the character of this boundary changes to either side of the Dock entrance. The western basin is defined by a wall formed of two office buildings: K2 in its north west corner has in 2005 replaced the last building to have been constructed in the era of the working dockyard, Europe House (1964); and alongside to the east lies Commodity Quay, a Taylor Woodrow addition of the mid-1980s which replaced C Warehouse [15]. The east basin today is surrounded by almost continuous residential apartment blocks of the 1990s along its north western and north eastern sides [16] and with older housing to the south east.

The river frontage is very mixed, both in terms of the nature and quality of its architecture. An office block, Devon House, dominates to the east of the river entrance to the Docks. Devon House, formerly occupied by the Port of London Authority, steps back from but still dominates the historic Dockmaster's House visually when viewed from the river or St Katharine's Quay [19]. The Dock entrance is wide, but to its west the Tower Thistle Hotel occupies the former quayside, overwhelming the corner of the basin and eradicating any potential vistas of Tower Bridge from the whole of the western half of the site.





**15: The northern edge of the west basin**



**16: The northern edge of the east basin**

#### 2.4.2 Defining the site: the basins

Today's west and east basins and the entrance basin and lock follow the lines of those of the original docks. Indeed, although repairs and extensive restoration have been carried out to the baulks since closure of the Docks, they are essentially the same historic structures. A timber boardwalk runs along the west basin's edge by Commodity Quay and timber boarded mooring pontoons break up both principal basins at water level [15]. The original retracting bridge (1829) linking the baulks separating the entrance and east basins has been relocated a little eastwards from its former position; elsewhere, modern bridges connect the former quays between the west and entrance basins and the entrance basin and the river.

Lower late 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings form a screen to the southern half of the east basin and the eastern side of the entrance basin and define the edges of roads and public spaces. The quality of this architecture is generally poor and fits uncomfortably with the character of the Docks. On the western side of the entrance basin, a low circular classically inspired Coronarium, marking the Queen's Silver Jubilee, sits on the knuckle of the quayside, providing an effective focal point for vistas across the west basin from the north west (one of the key points for pedestrian entry into the modern Docks), although in itself being a slightly lightweight piece of architecture for the dockyard setting.

#### 2.4.3 Surviving features of the historic Docks

The surviving elements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century dockyard are:

- The main quayside baulks and walls forming and separating the entrance, east and west basins and the entrance lock (1825-8) [17]. These walls, part of Telford's scheme, are faced with bricks and have granite dressings and copings. The quayside baulks and walls are of considerable significance to the modern Docks and make a **positive contribution** to their character.



17: Part of Telford's east basin

- The high security wall along the north side of St Katharine Docks, separating the site from East Smithfield (1828), and its gate piers. The tall walls are of stock bricks capped with Portland stone copings. The former dockyard wall and gate piers are of considerable significance to the modern Docks and make a **positive contribution** to their character.
- The Dockmaster's House on the east side of the entrance lock at its junction with the river Thames (1828 – though late 18<sup>th</sup> century according to its list description entry). Built of yellow stock bricks under a blue slate ridged roof and wide eaves, the Dockmaster's House (originally, primarily his office) is of 3 storeys and a basement, with a semicircular bay on its riverside façade [18]. The Dockmaster's House is a private residence, outside of the ownership and management control of the current owner of the greater part of St Katharine Docks, St Katharine's Investments LP. To its north, there is a two storeyed 19<sup>th</sup> century addition, which until recently was a separate dwelling but has now been incorporated within the accommodation provided by the Dockmaster's House. As a whole, the Dockmaster's House is of considerable significance within the modern Docks and makes a **positive contribution** to their character.



**18: *The Dockmaster's house and office in 1966***





**19: The entrance dock, Dockmaster's House and Devon House. Two of the original bollards lining the entrance dock can be seen**

- Three groups of iron bollards flanking the entrance lock and at the entries to the east and west basins (1828) [19]. There are 12 original bollards around the entrance lock, each marked St Katharine Dock's 1828' in relief; 3 bollards, similarly marked, line part of the west basin and another 3 stand along the lock edge to the east basin. These groups of bollards are of some significance to the modern Docks and make a **positive contribution** to their character.
- Telford's iron retracting bridge across the passage between the entrance and east basins (1829; its original position is marked by a modern bollard) [20]. The bridge is of considerable significance within the modern Docks and makes a **positive contribution** to their character.
- The Ivory House, originally known as Warehouse I (1858-60 by George Aitchison Snr). T-shaped in plan on a T-shaped jetty, this warehouse was built of stock bricks, with brick jack arches spanning between wrought-iron beams supported on circular section cast-iron columns. A tall continuous arcade, with semicircular arches, dominates the ground and first floors and there are three further storeys under the ridged slate roof. There is a tall campanile and separately a small bell turret, also in brick. Ivory House provides retail and catering units at ground level, with inserted bowed shop windows, and forms the focus of commercial activity for visitors with in St Katharine Docks. Within Taylor Woodrow's complex, the upper floors have been converted to residential use, involving considerable alteration to upper windows and the insertion of balconies. All the semicircular openings on the top floor were originally blind. Ivory House, as the sole surviving warehouse structure from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, is of considerable significance within the modern Docks and makes a **positive contribution** to their character.



**20: Telford's repositioned retracting bridge**



**21: Ivory House (former Warehouse I) from the west**



#### **2.4.4 Buildings of the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries**

The great majority of buildings within St Katharine's belong to the Taylor Woodrow regenerative scheme for the redundant Docks. They are of some diversity in terms of mass, design, material finish and quality. The principal buildings and their contribution to the character of the modern Docks are described in outline below.

##### ***West basin***

##### **Tower Thistle Hotel**

The hotel was completed in 1973 and was designed by Renton Howard Woods Associates [22]. It is a massive building, stepping down from 15 storeys in each direction around a staggered cruciform plan. Externally, the concrete framed structure is clad in large flat rectangular concrete panels with exposed aggregate. Internally, it has a multi-storeyed foyer with galleries. The hotel, standing on a former wharf, occupies the prime river front site beside Tower Bridge and the Tower of London. The site was sold by Taylor Woodrow soon after its purchase of St Katharine's and remains in separate ownership from the rest of the Docks.



**22: *The Tower Thistle Hotel viewed from the north across the west basin***

The building was quite simply one of the great planning and design disasters of the time in this part of London. Aesthetically, it has no redeeming features (apart, perhaps, from the vaguely warehouse-like proportions of its west elevation). The building dwarfs and despoils the view eastwards along the Wharf of the Tower of London and across the west basin of St Katharine Docks towards the river. It blights the eastward vistas of the north bank of the river from both London Bridge and Tower Bridge and the westward view of Tower Bridge from both banks and the river. The vehicular 'tunnel' running at ground level along its north side adjacent to the west basin of the Docks is dispiriting and a place of threat, considerably reducing any potential to encourage pedestrian movement from the east gate of the Tower of London into the Docks themselves. The damaging impact of this most important pedestrian access to St Katharine Docks cannot be over-emphasised. In recent years, an attempt has been made to overcome this using funding from the Pool of London Partnership to commission brightly coloured panels to act as a baffle between the footpath and the road. Well-meaning and, in the end, undoubtedly having some practical benefit, the panels stand out incongruously against the drab face of the hotel and are aesthetically jarring and inappropriate themselves when viewed across the basin. Despite these very negative points, paradoxically, the hotel provides much needed accommodation for business and tourist use, and thus contributes economically to the Docks and their survival [23,24].

As a building, the Tower Thistle Hotel makes a **highly negative contribution** to the character of the modern Docks, seriously damaging sense of place within the west basin.



**23: The pedestrian walkway beside the hotel's towering north facade**



***24: The uninviting entrance to the Docks from the bottom of St Katharine's Way***

### **International House**

International House continues the line of the former Warehouse B alongside St Katharine's Way on the western side of the Docks. It was built between 1977-83 to the design of Watkins Gray Woodgate International as the World Trade Centre [1,14,25]. Replacing the last surviving warehouse of the 1820s [26], it incorporates Doric columns salvaged from a number of Hardwick's dock structures. Latterly, it has provided office accommodation for Taylor Woodrow and other major business along with catering/leisure units a ground and basement levels.

In the late 1970s, it must have seemed that International House was being planned and designed with some sensitivity to its situation. The 9 storey plus basement structure respected the general line, footprint and mass of the historic Warehouse B, although it was built as a single block not three linked units. Today, however, from all directions, the building seems neutered, rather than neutral in its impact. The detailing and massing lack the functional robustness and powerful solidity of its forerunner; the plant housing that crowns the whole block degrades the eastward view from within the Tower of London and along its Wharf; and, the large blank windows, lacking detail of any kind, and the hard chocolate brickwork make the elevations sterile. All these facets tend to imply that International House is a major blight on its setting. This is not entirely the case. The mass of the building does provide one significant contribution to the character of the Docks: the west basin still feels and, at least to the cursory glance, reads as an enclosed dockyard space. In terms of sense of place, that is vital [27].





**25: International House viewed across the west basin**



**26: Warehouse B in 1966 from Tower Bridge**



**27: The view looking south west across the west basin, demonstrating the satisfactory mass of International House to that of Ivory House and the damaging impact of the height and mass of Tower Thistle Hotel in between**

Redevelopment of Taylor Woodrow's buildings around the Docks will inevitably take place. When it is the turn of International House, strenuous efforts should be made to correct the current building's failings, whilst strengthening its positive facets. The life and vitality of St Katharine Docks and of St Katharine's Way would be markedly enhanced by the creation of briefly experienced framed views in to and out from the Docks, either as a result of the separation of the redeveloped International House back into three blocks or by the insertion of transparent atrium-like breaks into the length of the single building. The appeal and practical functionality of the west basin to visitors and site users alike would also be considerably improved by the creation of a publicly accessible walkway along the east side of International House, linking the new K2 plaza with the Tower Thistle Hotel within the protected calm of the Docks and away from St Katharine's Way and Tower Bridge Approach.

Overall, International House makes a **marginally negative contribution** to the character of the modern Docks.

## **K2**

In 2002, Europe House, the last building to have been constructed whilst St Katharine's still functioned as a dockyard, was demolished and, in 2005, it has been replaced by a 16,700 sq.m. (180,000 sq ft) seven storey glass and steel structure that will contain offices, flats, leisure and retail facilities. K2 stands on the site of the original Dock House and Offices, which were destroyed during the Blitz.

At the time of preparation of this conservation plan, K2 has yet to be fitted out fully internally and is not occupied – it is thus premature to come to lasting conclusions on its contribution to the Docks. It is difficult to mourn the loss of its predecessor, for Europe House, designed by Andrew Renton and Associates in 1962 and completed by 1964 was a building of its time, but perhaps uglier than most of

its peers. Initially, it housed offices of the Port of London Authority, along with a penthouse flat for its chairman. When it was built, the original 1820s warehouses were remained standing around the west basin. Europe House continued the roofline of the warehouses and, it is said, was constructed using an appropriate structural concrete grid so as to retain the rhythm of the bays of its neighbours. It was clad in drab concrete panels, depressing the vistas from every direction and denying the claim made about Europe House in the Architectural Review of March 1965 that “Andrew Renton’s St Katharine Docks offices are the first major building to be completed in central London in which storey height pre-cast concrete units have been used purely for reasons of quality and of maintaining a fine existing architectural environment”.



**28: *The vista past K2 to Minster Court***



**29: *K2 from along the moat of the Tower of London***



K2, by the Richard Rogers Partnership, is equally a building of its time, although, for better or worse, it speaks more of 'offices' than its other intended uses. As a new building, it is a curious mix of good and bad, or possibly more accurately of fair and poor. It seems to work better from close quarters than it does from afar (at least, in some directions); it does more for the vista looking out from St Katharine Docks westward towards the Tower of London and Minster Court [28] than it does to complement or enhance the long view along the northern arm of the Tower's moat towards the Docks [29]. From that latter vantage point, the building reads as being slightly too narrow or else slightly too high – the end result is that the eye is drawn to the cumbersome plant housing of its neighbour to the south, International House and then back to very different, but equally clumsy, lift towers or other plant structures that project above K2's roofline like stubby stalks. The other problem with its west elevation is the rather tricky, consciously disruptive effect of the building's steel structure behind the glass wall. Honestly functional it may be, but it is unlikely to be regarded in the long term as a lasting tour de force of design that encourages visitors to approach and explore its environs. Yet, there are some good points about K2 from the west. It has created a walkway of some interest and character alongside St Katharine's Way that hopefully will draw people into the Docks [30,31] and, for one brief moment along the north moat walkway of the Tower, it helps to frame a 'surprise' view of the Italianate tower on Ivory House within St Katharine's that is suitably beguiling and hence potentially enticing to the visitor with time to spare for local exploration [32].



**30 & 31: *The successful walkway beside K2***





***32: The surprise view of Ivory House between K2 and International House***

The south, dockside impact of K2 is almost the reverse of that from the west. Aside from a further roofline 'stalk' at its inner corner, K2 would work reasonably well as part of the longer distance vista from the arcade of Ivory House, if only it did not make its neighbour to the east, Commodity Quay, squat in comparison [33]. The building also frames an appealing sneak view of the Tower of London and Minister Court from one vantage point beside Ivory House and then of Minister Court and the PLA tower from just a few metres further south. On the downside, the southern end of the walkway along the building's west side opens out into St Katharine's with a wide paved piazza that is, for the moment, bare and sterile. It is a space curiously lacking in sense of place and it is difficult to see it improving greatly with age and patina given the harsh clean bleakness of its materials which seem more suited to the concourse of a modern station than an open setting framing an important local view of the Tower of London [34]. Major efforts need to be made to alter and modify this cold, clinical piazza, which otherwise may come in time to blight sense of place in this important linking space.

Whilst it is too early to judge all aspects fairly, it must be concluded that K2 is an architectural opportunity that has been missed, and in summation of the preceding, at best it will have made no more than a **neutral contribution** to the character of the modern Docks.



**33: *The imbalance between K2 and Commodity Quay***



**34: *The sterile piazza beside K2***

### Commodity Quay

Designed by Watkins Gray International, Commodity Quay - forming the northern built edge of the west basin – was completed in 1985 [33]. It was designed for the London Commodity Exchange and with a late change in design incorporated two trading floors. Its northern face along East Smithfield is bleak and blank, doing nothing to advertise the charms of St Katharine Docks to the passer-by. Its south, dock front façade is almost fascinating for its childish simplicity of design concept. Taking the mass and profile of one of the historic warehouses, Commodity Quay's architect borrowed the semicircular arcading of Ivory House and transformed it into a giant order. The resulting elevation, built of bricks akin to those used a few years previously on International House and relieved by deep horizontal bands of white Portland stone, bears disconcerting resemblance to waterworks or to a turbine hall. At quay level, the arcade, formed of stumpy brick piers, looks cramped, although it is much improved by copious low growing vegetation along the baulk edge. Also on the positive side, the line of Commodity Quay permits an attractive brief view into the east basin from its boardwalk and helps to draw the first time visitor into the heart of the dock complex. If the south elevation of Commodity Quay is idiosyncratic, its eastern façade is simply hapless, consisting of a massive triumphal arch of brick and glass, incongruously and inelegantly jettied out at mid-height (presumably to accommodate a trading floor at an upper level internally) and presenting a soul-less blank face to the main entrance into the Docks [35]. This aspect of the building is devoid of character and sense of place.

Overall, Commodity Quay makes a **negative contribution** to the character of the modern Docks, although this comment needs to be tempered, as with International House, with the recognition that, at a superficial level, the mass of the building does make one significant contribution by helping to give a suitably enclosed quality to the west basin as a dockyard space.



35: *The negative contribution of the characterless east elevation of Commodity Quay*





**36: The Coronarium in the west basin**

### **Coronarium**

The Coronarium [13,36], lying on the quay between the west and entrance basins, was built in 1977 to the design of Hurden, Gill & Dent. It was designed as a small chapel to commemorate the Queen's Silver Jubilee and lies as close as could be achieved (given the presence of the dock basins) to the site of the medieval church of St Katharine. Eight Doric columns, salvaged from one of the warehouses, frame the low glass-walled copper-domed rotunda. Today, the building is used as a coffee house, with tables spilling out along the quay outside, bringing life to the space in good weather.

The Coronarium, although as a built form somewhat alien to these surroundings, makes for a reasonably satisfactory eye-catcher in vistas across the Docks in every direction. Its only negative contribution to the character of the west basin and St Katharine Docks overall is the loud 'shop fascia style' signage, 'Starbucks Coffee', affixed to the building's entablature – an undesirable feature within a conservation area and one which detracts from its modest appeal. Nonetheless, the Coronarium makes a **positive contribution** to the character of the modern Docks.

### **West basin lifting footbridge**

Alongside the Coronarium, crossing the west passage, the wooden Dutch-styled lifting footbridge was designed by Ove Arup & Partners and built in 1983 to facilitate pedestrian movement around the Docks [36]. It makes a **positive contribution** to the character of the modern Docks.

### ***East basin***

#### **East basin housing**

The north west and north east sides of the east basin are lined by a continuous row of modern residential apartments, designed by Norman and Dawburn and built between 1995-97 for Queensway Quay Development Co. as 'City Quay' [16]. According to the architects, the housing, which won the National Home Builders Design Award in 1999, was designed to reflect "the character of the...early 19th century warehouses...in a contemporary way". They are of yellow brick, and built on six storeys with two and three storey penthouses projecting above the roofline. The elevations are enlivened by recesses and projecting sections and with modern 'warehouse motifs', including bays dominated by glazing, balconies and a reference to quay level arcading with double height columnation. Although the architecture is very different from its predecessor, it is bold, frames the east basin well and makes a **positive contribution** to the character of the modern Docks.

#### **East basin retracting footbridge 2**

A replacement bridge of 1994, designed by Brian Morton, on the site of the old retracting footbridge and constructed using on similar principles with tubular steelwork. The footbridge makes a **positive contribution** to the character of the modern Docks.

### ***Entrance basin and lock***

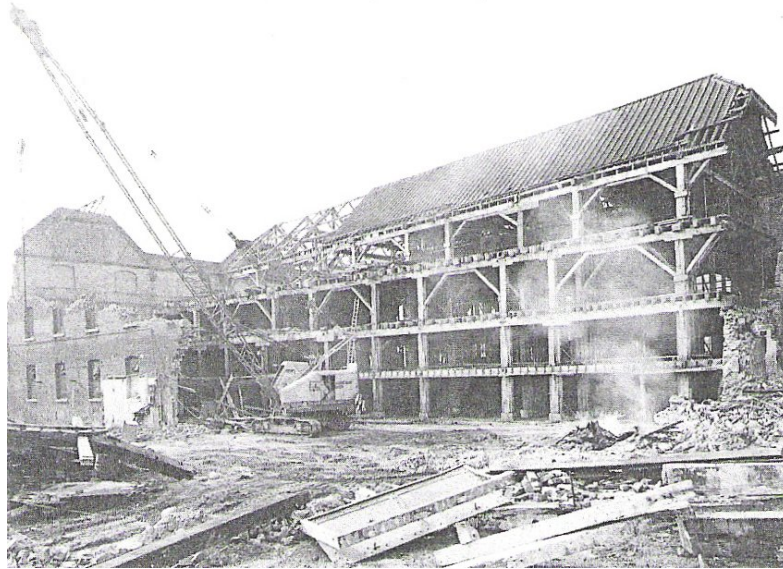


**37: Dicken's Inn in the east basin**

#### **Dickens Inn**

Dickens Inn was re-created in 1974-76 by Renton Howard Woods Levin [37]. The original structure consisted of the timber framing of an old 18<sup>th</sup> century warehouse that had been remodelled by Hardwick. Its brick exterior was removed in 1974 and part of the frame was moved 55m south west on rollers [38]. The exterior of the four storey inn is now boarded and galleried, with brickwork behind.

Undoubtedly, appreciated by tourists for its quaintness and for being bedecked in flowers in summer, it is an artifice within its dockyard context and internally is rather dark and unwelcoming. Nonetheless, it frames the small paved quay to its west and provides colour and interest in views across the east basin. Overall, it must be assessed as making a **neutral contribution** to the character of the modern Docks, whilst being perhaps on balance a good thing for the economy of the complex.



**38: Warehouse G and its timber frame which was partly salvaged to create Dicken's Inn**

### **Marble Quay**

A mish-mash of bland 1980s design and materials, the elevations of Marble Quay combine brick and weatherboarding with featureless fenestration under modern machine made tile clad roofs that have uncomfortably mismatched eaves lines. Marble Quay, built on three storeys to the south of Dickens Inn, provides restaurant and office accommodation. It makes a **negative contribution** to the character of the modern Docks.

### **Tower Walk**

Built in 1987 to the design of Watkins Gray International, Tower Walk is a low crescent of houses, allegedly inspired by Regent's Park terraces [39]. Built on three principal storeys with a continuous attic penthouse, the stuccoed façade overlooking the basin is colonnaded with massive double height columns. The design concept and quality were of considerable paucity and the detailing of the terrace is at best heavy handed. Tower Walk should have had no place in St Katharine Docks and makes a **highly negative contribution** to the character of the modern Docks, damaging the sense of place within and vistas across the entrance basin.





**39: Tower Walk from the north**



**40: St Katharine's Yacht Club**

### **St Katharine's Yacht Club**

Again, by Watkins Gray International and built in 1985, the Yacht Club is as uncomfortable and inappropriate in its setting as Tower Walk [40,41]. It is a comparatively long, but disproportionately low building of brick, but, where visible to the public, it is clad in diagonal boarding at ground level, with a recessed glazed upper structure set behind a small terrace and under a flat roof punctuated by small belvederes. It is a confusing and seemingly ephemeral design in a dockyard context and therefore arguably makes a **negative contribution** to the character of the modern Docks.

### **Entrance basin road bridge**

Constructed in 1973 and designed by Ove Arup & Partners, the road bridge in St Katharine's Way is constructed of welded steel [41]. It performs its function, but is not a structure of beauty. Uncompromisingly picked out in bright red paint, it imposes on vistas out to the river from the Docks. Overall, it makes a **marginally negative contribution** to the character of the modern Docks.



**41: The Yacht Club and the entrance basin road bridge**



**42: The 1996 entrance basin footbridge**

### **Entrance basin footbridge**

Constructed in 1996 to the architectural design of Powell Williams and with engineering by Robert Benaim & Associates, the lifting entrance basin footbridge sits at the river entrance to the Docks [19,42]. Of minimalist design, the footbridge it makes a **neutral contribution** to the character of the modern Docks.

### **River edge**

#### **Devon House**

Devon House was a major component of Taylor Woodrow's concept for St Katharine Docks. It was designed by Watkins Gray International and was completed in 1987 [19,43]. The riverside offices were formerly occupied by the Port of London Authority. The St Katharine's Way elevation of 5 storeys is bland and ungainly, with a projecting 6-bay Portland stone central core flanked by mid-yellow/brown brick faced blocks on either side and perforated by lifeless mock-warehouse fenestration. The central entrance is obscured behind an arcade at street level formed of ill-proportioned stubby columns.

The river frontage is somewhat different. Built principally of 4 storeys in yellow brick to respect the height of the historic Dockmaster's House to its west, the frontage also mimics the Dockmaster's House with its neo-Regency bow window overlooking the Thames. At the back of the site, behind a large flat roof, the building rises a further two plus storeys (taking account of changes in level) to form the full height of accommodation on its St Katharine's Way side. On the river edge, a U-shaped courtyard overlooks the river and, although not advertised as such, constitutes a public right of way accessed through the building's foyer.



**43: Devon House looking east along St Katharine's Way**

As part of Taylor Woodrow's master planned concept for the Docks, Devon House has some significance. On the positive side, it respects the Dockmaster's House reasonably well and from within the Docks, its massing is reminiscent of the original warehousing that stood here; on the negative side, the design of its St Katharine's Way elevation is little short of inept. Overall, Devon House makes a **neutral contribution** to the character of the modern Docks.

#### 2.4.5 Open spaces

Much about the open space within St Katharine Docks has been described already, since its character is substantively defined by the architecture forming the dockyard amphitheatre and by historic and modern features within it. The vital importance and **positive contribution** of appropriate built enclosure around the basins to the character of the modern Docks cannot be stressed too highly. Various examples around St Katharine's for better or worse demonstrate that appropriateness in this respect is a careful balance between the massing of historic warehousing, good modern not derivative design, and the use of robust materials befitting of their historic context.

Comment has already been made about the walkway and piazza recently created beside K2 and no further mention is required of these here. The importance of the quays/baulks has also been highlighted; their character is at least partly wrapped up in the survival of appropriate historic materials. One of the shortcomings of the Docks today is that the quaysides have been littered with an assortment of oddments and curios, presumably in the hope of engendering greater sense of place and, thus, encouraging more visitors to spend more time experiencing the atmosphere of the Docks and using its commercial facilities. There is also a noticeable tendency to place planters wherever a clear hard landscaped space exists around the Docks. The sides of the basin baulks are softened by greenery – in many places this works well, though sometimes particularly around Ivory House it is overdone. There is a careful balance to be achieved if the very character of the historic Docks is not to be lost in a sea of brightly coloured flowers, scattered planters, and landscaping 'knick-knackery'. The proliferation of these elements is beginning to and will increasingly make a **marginally negative contribution** to the character of the modern Docks.

Likewise, within the context of a historic dockyard, there is a balance to be maintained with the number, size, type and location of trees across the open spaces. The limited ecological value and potential of these in St Katharine Docks will be noted in a subsequent subsection of this report, but in terms of character, for the moment, an appropriate balance exists and tree planting around the site makes a **positive contribution** to the character of the modern Docks.

All of the foregoing relates to character within the open spaces of the Docks in a very tangible way. St Katharine Docks are also important for their relative and sudden tranquillity in contrast to the noise and pollution of East Smithfield and Tower Bridge Approach nearby. This spirit and ambience makes a **highly positive contribution** to the character of the modern Docks and to their invaluable sense of place.

#### 2.4.6 Vistas

Vistas, short and long, are a vital component of the character of St Katharine Docks today. Positive and negative contributions to the internal views across the Docks have been highlighted in the preceding sections, either directly or by implication as part of the overall character of the modern Docks. One aspect about internal vistas does need further emphasis: the crucial role played by unexpected, often restricted, enticing framed views into other spaces. Such things can rarely be



planned, yet they are pivotal to the character and sense of place within enclosed environs such as St Katharine Docks. Fortunately, due to topography and the positioning of buildings and structures, there a number of experiences of the kind to be had when walking around the Docks and they make a **highly positive contribution** to the character of the modern Docks. Instances of such surprise vistas are the glimpse gained into the east basin from the boardwalk beside Commodity Quay [44], a further framed view of the east basin from the end of the entrance lock [45], a foretaste of the west basin beyond its lifting foot bridge from almost the same location, and a first sight of the Coronarium up the rise in St Katharine's Way, as the corner between Devon House and Tower Walk is turned (albeit that this vista is seriously degraded by a plethora of street furniture and equipment) [46].



**44: A glimpse of the east basin from beside Commodity Quay**



**45: The east basin and its housing perfectly framed by mature trees**

The latter vista also demonstrates the potential of distant structures outside of the Dock amphitheatre to contribute to the character of the Docks themselves. The view up the short rise towards the west basin contains a number of negative elements. In the foreground, the belvedere to the Yacht Club looks insubstantial and out of place; beyond it, the drabness of Tower Thistle Hotel frames the left; the sterility of the design and material usage on International House is evident as is its uncomfortable modern juxtaposition with K2. However the vista is made by the fortuitously centralised Coronarium within the west basin and the glimpse of the Swiss Re building rising above International House as a backdrop. By chance, the position of Swiss Re manages to emphasise the existence of the concealed opening and associated view that is to be experienced between International House and K2 in the north west corner of the Docks. This and allied vistas make a **positive contribution** to the character of the modern Docks. However, there is one exception. The view eastwards across the east basin is degraded badly by the appearance of the tower over Thomas More Square looming over the recent dockyard housing [47]. Architecturally, the tower is lifeless and 'boxy' in comparison to the east basin apartments, but its presence manages to dominate the scene and to impact upon the Docks sense of place. The Thomas More Square tower makes a **highly negative contribution** to the character of the modern Docks.



**46: A glimpse into the west basin from the southern arm of St. Katharine's Way, with Swiss Re to the rear**



**47: *The vista of the east basin is degraded by the lifeless design of Thomas More Square behind***

Just as with glimpses of buildings above the built structure of the Docks, framed views of the outside world gained ‘accidentally’ and without warning from vantage points around the Docks can be of considerable importance. The changing ‘snapshot’ through that gap between International House and K2 across the west basin from Ivory House has already been described. Equally, the shifting sight of Butler’s Wharf across the Thames over the entrance lock from the basins is bound to attract the attention of the visitor [41,48]. Generally, passing, especially evolving, views of the world outside make a **highly positive contribution** to the character of the modern Docks.

Views in towards St Katharine Docks tend to be somewhat less successful. This is unfortunate since the success of the Docks at least partly depends upon attracting visitors into its special enclosed environment. The single view of the Ivory House campanile from the north Moat walkway of the Tower of London has already been mentioned. Regrettably, a similar positive snatched vista of part of the Docks is not obtained from the opening in the south west corner between Tower Thistle Hotel and International House. The poor quality of the environment and the short vistas have already been noted and these make a **negative contribution** to the character of the modern Docks. Other views into the Docks can be obtained through the historic entrance off East Smithfield, from Thomas More Street through a passageway under the east basin housing and from the south east along St Katharine’s Way towards Devon House. By and large, these are reasonably neutral in character, but in each case the approach and vista could be enhanced with careful thought and planning.

St Katharine Docks also has a part to play as the immediate backdrop to a major strategic view of the Tower of London from London Bridge. The need to protect and enhance this long vista was specifically identified in the Tower’s World Heritage Site Management Plan. At the present time, it



must be stated that Taylor Woodrow's development of St Katharine Docks does not perform this vital role especially well, although in fairness the vista suffers other blights as well. Major shortcomings in the built architecture on the western side of the Docks have already been highlighted, including the massing and design of the Tower Thistle Hotel, the damaging view of roof level plant housing on International House, and the sterility of the latter's brick elevations. Taken together, these reflect a wider **negative contribution** of the character of the modern Docks which diminishes their profile in the area.



**48: Butler's Wharf across the entrance basin**

#### **2.4.7 Access and movement**

Access and movement around the dock space are crucial components in experiencing the special character of the Docks. At present, passage by pedestrians around the open space within the Docks largely utilises the historic quays and baulks, and modern replacements for historic bridges. The principal exception to this is the timber boardwalk beside Commodity Quay. The absence of access along the east side of International House is regrettable and makes a **negative contribution** to enjoyment of the Docks. The same can be said for the quayside down the east side of Ivory House, which is reserved for servicing.

The interface between pedestrians and vehicles along St Katharine's Way from the south end of International House to the Yacht Club is unsatisfactory. Although it has been marginally improved in recent years by the provision of decorative panels beneath Tower Thistle Hotel to separate off and baffle the road from pedestrians, this interface still makes a **highly negative contribution** to the character of the modern Docks and especially the west basin.



#### 2.4.8 Ecology

An outline assessment of the ecological potential of the docks was undertaken during the study for the conservation plan based upon the Phase I Habitat Survey methodology established by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, 1990. This is a survey and classification system enabling habitats (including those in urban areas) and land use categories to be mapped to a consistent level of detail and accuracy.

The Docks are enhanced by the presence of a small number of native and ornamental standard trees. These are, for the most part, semi-mature, although there are young and mature specimens as well [17,19,45]. Historically, of course, the Docks would not have supported any vegetation of this kind. Given the nature of the site, the trees primarily function as landscaping elements and do not afford extensive habitat for wildlife.

The buildings within St Katharine Docks are of varied design and structural form, and feature a range of materials. By and large, again because of their nature, they do not offer potential roosting or nesting habitat for wildlife, such as bats and bird species, although the elevations of the historic buildings (including the artificial Dickens Inn) do contain a few holes and crevices which may provide very limited shelter.

The developing ecology of the Thames and its banks and foreshore are well recognised; the importance of their protection and enhancement as habitat are highlighted in the Environment Agency's Action Plan for the Thames Tideway (1999) and in more recent adopted Unitary Development Plans of the relevant local authorities along the river. However, the ecological significance and potential of the basins within St Katharine Docks appear markedly more limited at the present time due to their size and general isolation from the Thames. Nonetheless, inevitably, the basins do support a small number of estuarine species of fish which are thus of local importance.

Overall, ecologically, the Docks have only local parish value, but it must be recognised that what happens within the Docks and especially the risk of pollution within the basins, could have a passing wider impact on the greater ecological value of the adjoining stretch of the river Thames.

#### 2.4.9 Present day uses

St Katharine Docks today support a range of uses and hence involve a variety of communities. Taylor Woodrow's concept for St Katharine's was primarily as an exclusive office location, close to the City but within a very special environment. This isolation could not be maintained. Achieving compatible mixed use of the buildings and spaces has become increasingly important for the long term sustainability of the Docks. Currently, the complex provides office and residential accommodation, shops and restaurants, leisure and tourism facilities, and it continues to operate as a marina, competing in this respect with Limehouse Basin, Gallions Point (Royal Albert Basin) and South Dock. Mixed use makes a **highly positive contribution** to the character of the modern Docks, but a careful balance between the various elements needs to be nurtured. This will impact in turn on the facilities that are required within the Docks themselves – for example, although the size of the permanent residential community has grown significantly in recent years, the retail and catering foci of the Docks are directed largely at other markets. In the long term, this is not a sustainable approach; more facilities will be needed to meet the specific needs of residents, if the appeal of the Docks as a residential quarter is to thrive.

## 3 Significance

### 3.1 Introduction: the concept of significance

This section assesses the significance of the conservation plan study area. Firstly, the background of statutory and other protection is examined. Then the key significance values of the site are described; these are aspects of the place that can be recognised by specialist and popular audiences alike, and may include intangible concepts which are difficult to define scientifically, but which can be appreciated in spite of this. Finally, the significance of the site is examined at various stages in its chronological development from the prehistoric landscape to the Docks' present-day appearance. Significance may lie in one or more categories, such as architecture, archaeology, landscape, collections, ecology, society and associated personalities. A number of factors have been used in defining significance such as rarity, date/periods present, condition, extent, group value, user value and fragility. Many of these relate to guidelines currently in use for the evaluation and statutory designation of sites and monuments at national and regional levels.

The preceding section of this conservation plan of St Katharine Docks has looked at features and issues that affect the character of the estate, whether positively or negatively. Significance is about social and cultural value. The character of a place may form part of its wider holistic value to society, but an assessment of significance is a far broader and deeper concept than that of character – the two should not be confused. Dictionaries define significance as the “consequence of importance”, and more specifically “having or expressing a meaning” (Collins Concise Dictionary). For most of us, ‘importance’ and ‘meaning’ are relative. For example, the buildings and remains at the neighbouring Tower of London and its impressive riverside setting have importance and meaning(s) that are perceived by, and can be expressed in, a variety of ways to a variety of audiences. For the purposes of conservation plans, however, the significance of an entity must be established according to clearly defined criteria, and should be arrived at as objectively as possible. This requires substantial knowledge of, and research into, one or many relevant subject areas. In the case of St Katharine Docks, the most obvious are the history and architecture of the site, and the commercial development of its buildings. Other very important areas include the site's wide-ranging associated personalities and collections, and its townscape value bordering the Tower of London and (at least potentially) linking it to London's East End. The site also has important community values (especially to its residents), while it is also important for the local and regional economy. The archaeology of the site takes an unusually low profile because of the destructive impact of the excavations undertaken in the 1820s to create the basins and warehouses.

Significance is essentially a hierarchical concept, using ascending levels of value. These follow guidelines established by James Semple Kerr (*The Conservation Plan*, 1996) and adopted by the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage and others. The levels of significance are:

- *Exceptional* – important at national to international levels, reflected in the statutory designations of Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and equivalent nationally graded sites (including those of ecological and nature conservation value);
- *Considerable* – important at regional level individually, or possibly higher for group value – for example, a group of castles with characteristics particular to their regional;

- *Some*, of local to regional significance, again often for group value (for instance, a vernacular architectural feature);
- *Little*, of limited heritage or other value;
- *Negative* or *intrusive* features - that is, those that actually detract from the value of a site. An insensitively designed modern structure adjacent to an important Georgian terrace might be a good example.

A low designation of significance does not necessarily imply that a feature is expendable. Furthermore, there are many instances where parts or aspects of the place may be susceptible to enhancement or reduction of significance as currently perceived, especially where there is a lack of information or understanding at the moment. Instances of this are highlighted in the following text.

### 3.2 Designation: the background to significance

Designation provides an important reference point because a site can only be granted protection (especially at the levels of Scheduled Monument, Listed Building or Site of Special Scientific Interest) if it meets certain criteria. All of these relate to importance in some way, usually at a national level. Statutorily protected sites are therefore inherently among the most significant examples of a type; they may even be unique. Scheduled Monuments in particular must be of national importance by definition, if they are to be so designated. All these protective measures, however, are subject-specific. In most cases, there is only one recognised grade of importance - usually at a national level. The grading system for Listed Buildings does take this into account by providing a three-tier hierarchy, with Grade I being the most important (representing 2% of all listed buildings), Grade II\* next (a further 2%), and Grade II last (the remaining 96%). Even here, however, all listed buildings are considered to be of national importance. The assessment of significance undertaken for a conservation plan has the advantage of being able to use all relevant criteria across many specialist disciplines, rather than concentrating on one of them.

St Katharine Docks and its surroundings contain a number of Listed Buildings, all at Grade II and, in all but one case, directly associated with the Docks. These buildings are:

- The dock/quay walls of the Entrance, East and West Basins (1825-8);
- The high security wall along the north side of the Docks, separating the site from East Smithfield (1828);
- The Dockmaster's House on the east side of the entrance lock at its junction with the River Thames (1828);
- Three groups of original bollards flanking the entrance lock and at the entries to the East and West basins (1828);
- The original retracting bridge across the passage between the Entrance and East Basins (1829; the bridge has been relocated a little to the east of its former position, which is marked by a modern bollard);
- The so-called Ivory House, originally known as Warehouse I (1858-60); and

- The Alderman's Stairs, an access point onto the Thames foreshore at the south east corner of the Docks, but not directly associated with them.

Three original Telford warehouses (B, C and G) survived the Blitz and were subsequently designated as Listed Buildings, also at Grade II. Unfortunately, this did not save them during the redevelopment of the Docks, and all three were demolished during 1973-80. A fragment of the impressive internal framing of the G warehouse (which probably pre-dated Telford's Docks) was re-used to provide the imposing (if quirky) west façade of the Dickens Inn.

St Katharine Docks is part of a Conservation Area within the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The establishment of Conservation Areas was first made possible by the Civic Amenities Act 1967. Conservation Areas are defined within today's current legislation as being '*areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*' [Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990: Section 69(1)(a)]. It is important that areas designated in this way are genuinely of architectural or historic interest, rather than merely being attractive areas in which to live and/or work. Whilst this can be a fine distinction to make, the validity and integrity of the concept stands or falls upon it. Designation potentially gives the local planning authority greater control over extensions and demolition, the display of advertisements, and works to trees. Special consideration has to be given to proposals for development or redevelopment within a Conservation Area to ensure that its character and appearance are preserved or enhanced. In most cases, Conservation Areas are living and working communities, with both residential and commercial uses. The purpose of designation is not to stifle or prevent change and evolution, but to control it in such a way as to maintain and enhance character and local distinctiveness.

The Docks are also immediately adjacent to the Tower of London World Heritage Site. World Heritage Sites are inscribed by UNESCO on behalf of the international community under its 1972 Convention. Monuments, groups of buildings or sites must be of *outstanding universal value* to be approved for inscription. Whilst designation as a World Heritage Site does not in the UK carry with it any direct additional statutory protection, the presence of a World Heritage Site as a neighbour does form a material planning consideration for the local planning authority. Developments and changes within St Katharine Docks, therefore, need to take the setting of the Tower of London World Heritage Site into account. The Docks themselves are not designated for archaeological purposes (unsurprisingly, given the extensive excavations that took place in the late 1820s to create them), but the Tower of London is a Scheduled (Ancient) Monument because of its great archaeological importance. The foreshore of the Thames in front of the Docks is also an extremely important archaeological resource, though it is not specifically designated/protected.

### 3.3 Key significance values

The study area is of **considerable/exceptional significance** for its long historical linkage with the River Thames. This may be taken as far back as prehistory and the deposition of artefacts into the river. More realistically, however, the site has enjoyed dockland usage from the medieval period onwards. The Hospital had its own private dock, and this would have been important for the economy of the foundation. It continued in use right through to the establishment of the St Katharine Docks themselves in 1825-8. Employment on the dock – and indeed the Thames itself – must have been an important attraction for the people flowing into the royal peculiar from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards. St Katharine Docks represented the apotheosis of the site's riverine connection and use, albeit in a



formalised, official and highly secure way. Even the closure of the Docks in 1968 did not sever the link with the river, for the basins continue to be a highly favoured location for boats. Some of these continue to be working vessels, but the majority now are large, luxury pleasure cruisers. They are undoubtedly vital to the ongoing economic viability of the dockland element of the site, but in a way they are also symbolic of the massive changes that have been wrought on London's working river since World War II.

Most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century dock buildings were destroyed during the redevelopment that followed on from the closure of the Docks in 1968, and this has undoubtedly **diminished the significance** of the overall as a heritage asset. However, this assessment needs to be balanced against an appreciation that Taylor Woodrow's redevelopment of the site represented a milestone in planning and regenerative terms being the first of its kind. In this respect, it has to be seen as being of **considerable significance** or perhaps even of **exceptional significance**. The Docks relied on the entire ensemble of buildings - both for their individual and group contribution to the function and work of the site and for the deliberately created aura of impregnable security. Fortunately, two of the most important structures do survive – the high dock wall along the north and east sides, with its imposing gate onto East Smithfield, and the Dockmaster's House on the river edge. The last remaining warehouse (Ivory House) also contributes greatly to the remaining sense of dockland environment, despite its conversion to commercial and residential use. The visual impact of this building does not rely on its interior, but is instead defined by its height, mass, tall arches and colonnade. These three structures/buildings, the historic dock basins, the original bollards and the 1820s retracting bridge are of **considerable significance** individually, and especially for their group value as exemplars of the site's historic dock use.

While the post-1968 buildings around the Docks can scarcely be defined as enhancing the architecture of the site, they have at least respected the historic sense of separation, definition and enclosure. This was important – indeed crucial – to the founding and function of the Hospital of St Katharine, which was designed to be apart from the world as a quasi-monastic community. This separation continued to be important in the social development of the site in the post-medieval period, when its 'otherness' as a royal peculiar made it highly attractive (if not always in a wholly positive sense!). The security of the St Katharine Docks enclosure was of course crucial to its success. Thereafter, with some unconscious irony, Taylor Woodrow's planning concept for the regenerated Docks was as an exclusive office location. Therefore, the historic sense of isolation on this site – despite its proximity to the city, the Tower of London, and ultimately the East End – is of **exceptional significance**. The continuing contribution of modern buildings to the sense of enclosure and separation is of **considerable significance**, even as a new generation of redevelopment commences (for example, K2 on the former Europe House site). There is no reason why tall buildings as such should be negative as part of the envelope to the Docks, although the height, massing and material usage of the Tower Thistle Hotel is unfortunate in isolating the site from its most important historic connections, the River Thames and the Tower of London. This must be seen as a **negative, intrusive** element of modern design on the site. New design in and around the Docks should always be a challenging matter – there is a difficult balance to be achieved between maintaining the strong and essential sense of warehouse-like enclosure and good architecture of its time that avoids pastiche and lifelessness.

The creation of St Katharine Docks in 1825-8 involved massive disruption to, and widespread destruction of, the historic fabric of the site. Virtually all existing buildings were demolished to make way for the new basins and dock buildings, while the excavation of the basins themselves would have removed most (in all probability, all) below-ground traces of the site's historic development.

Furthermore, the foundations and basements of the warehouses surrounding the basins will also have been destructive. It is clear that little physical/archaeological evidence for the site's long history can have survived, except in isolated pockets within and around the margins of the Docks. Even these will have suffered further at the hands of modern developments since World War II. Indeed, sites first developed in the 1960s-80s are now coming up for redevelopment (again, for instance, the former Europe House on the north-west corner of the Docks, where redevelopment was completed in 2005). The effect of these construction programmes from the 1820s onwards has had an **extremely negative impact** on the site's historic significance, and, indeed, has largely destroyed its archaeological value.

### 3.4 Historical, archaeological and social significance

For the reason outlined in the final paragraph of the previous sub-section, little purpose would be served in attempting to provide a detailed consideration of the site's archaeological significance chronologically, as very little pre-dating the 1820s survives anywhere within the site. Accordingly, this sub-section gives an overview of the significance of the site's historic development, while a general assessment of the survival, and potential significance, of archaeological remains across the main study area (that is, excluding the residential areas on the east side and south-east corner of the site) is provided later in the Issues and Policies section.

There is little direct evidence for the early development of the study area from early prehistory through to the Anglo-Saxon period. Indeed, for the reasons highlighted above, there seems to be little prospect of significant new discoveries being made, though this cannot be ruled out entirely. The background of artefacts recovered from the Thames and adjacent sites such as the Royal Mint suggests that the St Katharine Docks area was only lightly used through all these periods, and, of course, it lay outside the defended area of the Roman city from around AD 200 onwards. The development of a separate and distinct administrative area outside that wall in the late Saxon period appears to imply an increase in extra-mural settlement, but this remains elusive in archaeological terms. On the basis of the available evidence, the Docks cannot be seen as having more than **some significance** for the prehistoric, Roman and Anglo-Saxon periods, and even this might seem rather generous. There may be some potential for **enhancement of significance** in the light of new discoveries, either from the study area or its immediate surroundings, and it will be important to make maximum use of opportunities in this respect.

The establishment of the Hospital of St Katharine during the early 12<sup>th</sup> century, albeit initially under the strong influence of Holy Trinity Aldgate, would influence the development of London's east end for the following 700 years. The Hospital, once established on its principal site next to the Tower of London, became one of the most important (and ultimately the longest lasting) of the ring of monastic establishments just within and immediately to the east of the city. The location so close to the Tower had a cost to the Hospital, in that it lost a significant portion of its precinct to the enlargement of the castle's defences during the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Nevertheless, its location clearly brought it to royal eyes, and the foundation continued to enjoy strong royal patronage from its inception for many hundreds of years. The establishment proved to be especially popular with queens of the realm, even through to Catherine of Aragon and, of course, Elizabeth I. Indeed, the connection carried on even after the Hospital had moved away to Regent's Park. Queen Alexandra granted the chapel there to the Danish community in London during World War I, while Queen Mary became patron after World War II (Weinreb and Nicholson 1983, 671). This long-standing royal connection must have been critical to

the survival of the Hospital at the Dissolution of the Monasteries – a most unusual feature – and is clearly of **exceptional significance** to its long history.

The Hospital itself was equally clearly an important feature of the developing east end, both during the medieval period and later. The Hospital maintained its primary role as a place of refuge and solace for the urban and suburban poor throughout its history (indeed, the Royal Foundation continues with this aim at its nearby site of St James Ratcliffe), and this influenced its physical form and development (at least as far as we know it, largely from map evidence). The precinct seems to have been reserved very largely for the monastic community's use during the medieval period, at least until royal officials began to use it for residences. Certainly, the authorities in the Tower of London valued the largely open and undeveloped spaces of the Hospital and the Abbey of St Mary Graces outside the walls. During the post-medieval period, however, the military value of such relatively open space diminished while pressure for development increased. The Hospital was doubly attractive because of its secular and ecclesiastical independence. It became ever more heavily developed from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards, culminating in the sprawling network of small houses, taverns, lanes and courtyards that would be swept away by the Docks in 1825. The historic development of the site from the 12<sup>th</sup> through to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century is, therefore, of **considerable significance**.

The transformation of the site from the Hospital of St Katharine into the Docks of the same dedication was spectacular in many ways, not all of them positive [49]. The new venture proved its value economically, and it provided steady employment for nearly 150 years. Nevertheless, its development had caused massive upheaval for thousands of people, and had necessitated the removal of the Hospital from its historic site. The Docks can, therefore, be seen to have **considerable significance** and a **negative effect** at one and the same time. Their impact on the survival (or otherwise) of evidence for earlier phases of the site's development has already been rehearsed.



**49: Excavation work for construction of the Docks**



**50: The former Dock House since replaced by Europe House and, more recently, K2**

London's docklands were an important – indeed, critical – strategic target for the Luftwaffe in the Battle of Britain during 1940. The docks were crucial for the economy and supply of the capital city and country, and as such they were targeted for massive and sustained bombardment. St Katharine Docks suffered extensive damage, in common with many of her sister docks further to the east. Three warehouses and the offices at Dock House [50] were damaged beyond repair, remaining briefly as gaunt reminders of the resistance shown by London and its citizens. The bomb damage obviously had a severe negative effect on the Docks' significance by removing roughly half of its principal buildings. In the longer term, it opened the site up for development, as the Docks struggled to remain in business after the War and finally closed in 1968.

The subsequent commercial and residential use of the site is of **some significance** for the site's historic, economic and social development. The buildings erected since 1968 seem to be typical of modern structures in having a degree of the ephemeral about them – the former Europe House has already been demolished and redeveloped. This trend seems likely to continue, and it has implications for what is left of the site's buried remains. Each successive generation of buildings requires its own foundations, compounding the **negative impact** on the site's historic fabric. The extant modern buildings are dealt with in the next section.



### 3.5 Significance of the modern and built environment

Surviving elements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Docks are of **considerable significance** individually and collectively as survivals of the original design and purpose of the Docks. The **group significance** of the buildings has undoubtedly been **diminished** by the destruction of the dock buildings around the East Basin in the Blitz, and the subsequent (most unfortunate) demolition of Warehouses B, C and G from 1973 to 1980. Warehouse G suffered the double indignity of not only being demolished, but also seeing its internal frame re-used in a structurally and stylistically inappropriate manner, stuck on as a façade to the Dickens Inn and festooned liberally with floral displays in hanging baskets. This did at least preserve the frame (while providing an interesting ambience for those using the Inn), but it is a sad fate for a Grade II Listed Building to suffer. The loss and mutilation of so many of St Katharine Docks' historic buildings increases the value of the surviving structures, whether they be of small scale (such as bollards) or massive (for instance, the quayside walls and the dock wall along East Smithfield). It is debatable whether, at Grade II listing, the importance of the remaining historic Dock structures is appropriately valued. Although degraded as a complete ensemble, certain components would seem to be of more than local significance – perhaps foremost amongst these is the Dockmaster's House, which makes such a vital contribution to the character of the river frontage, to the approach to St Katharine Docks from the river, and to the vista along the Thames from Tower Bridge.

The high wall along East Smithfield is an equally important surviving dock structure – it is redolent of the need for, and provision of, security for the bonded elements of the docks and warehousing. The main gates, with their piers and decorative elephants (later additions), are an important adjunct to this. It is important to note that this would not just have been the principal, but perhaps only entrance originally, as far as goods were concerned. The smaller (now blocked) doorways were presumably entrances for the dock workers. The accessibility and permeability of the site historically and in the present day do not necessarily sit comfortably together. The need for access is not part of the historic environment, but is a modern construct. It is perfectly acceptable as such, being an obvious necessity both physically and for commercial viability. Indeed, one could justifiably argue that the site's accessibility needs to be **enhanced**. This is partly about making step improvements in the approaches to the Docks and partly about drawing people into and around the complex once they have reached its portals.

Unfortunately most of the modern buildings around the Docks are of dubious merit architecturally, and few of them can be said to have enhanced the site. Conversely, International House, Commodity Quay and Devon House do have **some significance** as being key surviving elements of Taylor Woodrow's master planned concept for the Docks and, thus, as integral parts of the first post-War regenerative scheme applied to a redundant dockyard in the UK. The following table provides a simple ranking of significance for the principal built components, from the historic Docks' buildings through to the modern structures.

Building	Date	Listed	Significance
St Katharine Docks	1825-9		<b>Considerable</b>
Dock/quay walls	1825	II	<b>Considerable</b>
Dockmaster's House	1828	II	<b>Considerable</b>
Bollards	1828	II	<b>Considerable</b>
Dock Wall	1828	II	<b>Considerable</b>

Building	Date	Listed	Significance
East Basin retracting footbridge 1	1829	II	<b>Considerable</b>
Ivory House (Warehouse I)	1858-60	II	<b>Considerable</b>
K2	2004-5		<b>Little/some</b> (too early to assess fairly)
Tower Thistle Hotel	1970-3		<b>None</b>
Entrance basin road bridge	1973		<b>Some</b>
Dickens Inn	1974-6		<b>Some</b> ; arguably, the reused frame from Warehouse G might be rated as <b>considerable</b>
Public housing, SE corner	1975-7		<b>Little</b>
International House	1977-83		<b>Some</b>
Coronarium	1977		<b>Some</b> socially for use and for role as an eyecatcher; <b>considerable</b> for link to QEII Silver Jubilee
West Basin lifting footbridge	1983		<b>Some</b>
Commodity Quay	1984-5		<b>Some</b>
St Katharine's Yacht Club	1985		<b>None</b>
Tower Bridge Wharf	1985-6		<b>Some</b>
Tower Walk	1987		<b>None</b>
Devon House	1987		<b>Some</b>
East basin retracting footbridge	1994		<b>Some</b>
East basin housing	1995-7		<b>Some</b>
Entrance basin footbridge	1996		<b>Some</b>

Ecologically, the modern Docks are of **little significance**.

In terms of their usage, St Katharine Docks are of **some significance** as office accommodation and as a tourist/leisure destination in this part of London. As an economic driver for wider regeneration in the area they are of **considerable significance** for their potential. Allied to this, they are of **considerable significance** as a residential area in recognition of their potential to help transform residential provision in this part of the Borough. As a marina, the Docks are also of **considerable significance**, both in regard to the mooring berths and facilities they provide and in the continuation of maritime interest and activity in and around the historic Docks.

## 4 Issues and policies

### 4.1 Management and development of the Docks and their potential

Good asset management practice, just as with good conservation management practice can only be based upon thorough understanding. Changes must respect areas of greatest significance and are therefore always going to be less controversial in areas of least significance. Changes should not be capricious; rather they must be justified and appropriate in design, so as to continuously build upon existing strengths and potential.

Most legislation accepts the need for compromise in historic contexts. Within these general guidelines, it is not appropriate to be over-prescriptive, setting down formulae for decision making. Each situation needs to be dealt with individually, by skilled and experienced practitioners, for mistakes in a context like St Katharine Docks can have very considerable ramifications and be difficult and costly to rectify. That nonetheless, the whole thrust of this conservation plan is that a historic complex such as the Docks can and should provide a highly effective sustainable working environment both for today and for the long term future.

- **Policy:** Planning and design of the ongoing development of the Docks should be structured around a master plan that takes account of the historic context, seeks to build upon and enhance that aspect of their character, but also is shaped around a sustainable strategy that will optimise delivery of their potential for economic and social benefits.

This conservation plan has made an assessment of positive and negative contributions to the character of St Katharine Docks and, separately, an evaluation of the significance of the site as a whole and of its principal component parts. A conservation plan is a valuable management tool and should be kept up to date. It can also be used, with the agreement of all parties, to benefit and to reduce misunderstandings during the planning process for redevelopment.

- **Policy:** The planning and design of change in and around the Docks and significant management actions should take account of and build upon the findings of this conservation plan.
- **Policy:** A review of the conservation plan for St Katharine Docks should be undertaken at least every five years and strategic management planning for the Docks should be adjusted accordingly.
- **Policy:** Consideration should be given to negotiating and agreeing local management guidelines for the Docks with the local planning authority and English Heritage based upon this conservation plan. This will facilitate many planning matters, making certain day to day management easier to implement, whilst building confidence amongst public stakeholders and reducing the potential for misunderstanding.

The modern character of St Katharine Docks combines overtly tangible and some intangible aspects ('sense of place') of the historic environment with the vitality that comes from mixed use of the

buildings and spaces. Maintaining this balance is critical to the future of the Docks, their economic health, and their continuing social and cultural values.

- **Policy:** Future development of the Docks should nurture balanced mixed use without compromising the quality of the historic environment.
- **Policy:** Management focus must be applied continually to assess and resolve potential and real conflicts between occupier, user and visitor movements and needs that otherwise would devalue the value of the asset to one community or another.

The conservation plan makes clear that the quality and character of the historic environment are intimately linked to the sense of place provided by robustly massed warehouse-like enclosure. Nonetheless, the varying success of modern buildings and blocks within the dock arena demonstrates that good modern design within this architectural grammar is also vital. None of this should preclude the consideration of tall, small or landmark architecture within the overall envelope, but care must always be taken to ensure that new buildings and structures respect and enhance the positive aspects of character and significance of the site as a whole as well as of its individual components. Historic dockyard architecture generally depends upon rhythmic recurrence of structures and characteristic (and characterful) detailing en masse rather than on a dazzling array of differing styles and idiosyncratic design statements.

- **Policy:** New design within St Katharine Docks must respect and reflect the nature of the historic environment, without seeking to mimic it slavishly. Good quality modern design and materials usage are of paramount importance to the life and vitality of the space.
- **Policy:** New developments within the Docks should respect the statutory protection and other heritage or associated designations affecting the Docks and their neighbours, and should seek to enhance the character of the Docks' wider setting, wherever possible.

Some sites intimately related to St Katharine Docks or having a marked impact upon the character of the Docks lie outside of the management control of St Katharine's Investments LP and Reit Asset Management. Where redevelopment of these is desirable (such as with Tower Thistle Hotel), every effort should be made to encourage and work with the relevant owners and developers to ensure that new buildings will benefit the Docks and their sense of place.

- **Policy:** St Katharine's Investments LP should extend its promotion of the Docks to include co-operating and working with adjoining owners and other stakeholders to achieve benefits to St Katharine Docks and the wider public realm.

A major part of the significance of the Docks is tied up in the long history of use of the site. Although, as a phase, Taylor Woodrow's period ownership and management of St Katharine's was shorter lived than most predecessors, it was and remains of some considerable wider significance in two distinct ways. Most obviously, it formed the conceptual and physical stepping stone from first functioning and then redundant dock use to the Docks of today and tomorrow. More importantly and of national significance, it represented the first post-War attempt at regeneration of redundant Docks and, therefore, presaged regeneration work at Albert Docks, Liverpool, and elsewhere. This does not mean that every (or, indeed, necessarily any) element of Taylor Woodrow's St Katharine's development should be retained for posterity. However, it does suggest that thought needs to be given to the value of each structure before its future is determined.



- **Policy:** The significance of existing post-dockyard developments should be considered and recognised as part of the planning process for future redevelopment.
- **Policy:** A detailed photographic record of the existing site and buildings (including any significant internal spaces) should be made without delay before further changes are made to the Taylor Woodrow shaped environment. This archive should be deposited in the local record office or else kept in a secure and appropriate environment and made available to bona fide researchers.

Inevitably, parts of the estate are exposed to damage and loss through fire, flooding and other similar disasters. Given its location and profile, St Katharine Docks must also be assumed to be vulnerable to damage through terrorist action.

- **Policy:** Regular audits should be undertaken to assess safety and security vulnerability and risks around the site. Appropriate disaster plans should be maintained and rehearsed. Building users and contractors should be provided with suitable induction and ongoing training, wherever relevant.

## 4.2 Archaeological potential and the vulnerability of surviving historic structures

It seems clear that such archaeological remains as may once have existed have been removed across most of the site during the last 180 years. The creation of the dock basins and their surrounding warehouses undoubtedly caused destruction on a massive scale. Even so, there is a prospect that deposits will survive locally around the margins of the Docks, and possibly even in the spurs between the basins. This will include elements of the Docks buildings themselves surviving below ground. Fragments of Dock House were revealed and recorded on the Europe House site in 2002, for instance. Perhaps the most intriguing area of all lies towards the north end of the entrance lock to the Docks and on St Katharine's Way immediately to either side, for this is the close to the location of the church of St Katharine's Hospital. The cemetery lay to the east, in an area that is still 'dry land'. A small part of the cloister might also survive to the north. It is by no means certain that archaeological remains will survive even here, but it does seem to be an area of relatively high interest and potential within the overall context of the Docks.

- **Policy:** Any future proposals for redevelopment in the Docks must take account of the site's archaeological potential, no matter how limited that might seem to be. In particular, proposals for work in currently open areas are likely to require evaluation by both desk-based means and through archaeological trial excavations. These should seek to determine the presence (if any), condition, extent and date of remains. Such work would allow for proper consideration of any further mitigation that may be required.

More investigation is required into the late Saxon occupation and administration of the Portsoken area; it should, for example, be possible to plot some of the boundaries mentioned previously using later medieval descriptions. This would help in predicting where archaeological remains of Anglo-Saxon and later date might survive. Indeed, the subsequent historic development of the site also deserves more extensive research to determine in as much detail as possible the layout and use of the Hospital precinct in the medieval period and later.

- **Policy:** Research should be encouraged into the history of the Hospital and Docks area, paying especial attention to the development of the late Saxon administrative divisions, the origins and layout of the Hospital, and the subsequent development of its precinct.

Certain surviving elements of the historic Docks are likely to be particularly vulnerable to damage during the redevelopment of adjoining sites. The Dockmaster's House seems especially at risk in this respect, since plans and section seen during the preparation of this conservation plan, appear to show that Devon House provides integral structural strengthening and lateral support to the historic building. The impact of 'unpicking', removing and replacing Devon House on the Dockmaster's House needs to be considered at a very early stage in the design of any replacement. In another way, the Dockmaster's House and historic structures of its ilk are vulnerable to loss of context and overall diminishment through the construction of a new neighbour of inappropriate scale and massing.

- **Policy:** Careful consideration needs to be given to the vulnerability of surviving historic structures during any proposed redevelopment of sites around the Docks. These risks should be evaluated at an early stage and the design process should be carried out in tandem with and guided by a heritage impact assessment that is focused on mitigating risks, deleterious impacts and damage of all kinds.

The historic features are also vulnerable to damage from day-to-day site activity. The various listed structures are of undoubted importance and merit careful protection in use. The smaller features, such as bollards and the retracting bridge are straightforward, as they have no other obvious use (except the purely decorative) over and above their functions and, consequently, should be less exposed to damage overall. The bridge, of course, is no longer in use, but has been left as an artefact on display. The bollards are generally robust and in isolated locations or groups. They are not especially sensitive to accidental damage from vehicle strikes or similar threats, but they should be checked periodically to ensure that they are still in good condition. This should be done as part of a wider periodic review of the site's heritage assets.

The remaining listed buildings are more substantial and vulnerable to damage. The dock basin walls may be prone to scraping and impact damage from boats during mooring operations, as well as to insensitive design and workmanship during routine operations (for instance, road works). The pontoon and other decking that has been put in place around parts of the basins will provide a degree of protection, but it should not reduce the need for vigilance in protecting and preserving the historic dock walls. The Dockmaster's House, Ivory House and the high wall along East Smithfield are all very important buildings, and of course protection of the surviving historic fabric must be a prime consideration in all work, whether of repair, conservation or redevelopment, as has already been discussed.

- **Policy:** Appropriate regimes of inspection, protection, maintenance and repair should be put in place to care properly for all surviving historic assets around the Docks, respecting their protected status and the implications of this at all times.

### 4.3 Access to and interpretation of the Docks and facilities available to the public

St Katharine Docks will only work as a sustainable economic entity if visitors are encouraged to enter the dockyard area, to pass some time there and to use commercial facilities within the Docks. At the present time, many retail and catering outlets appear to be of marginal viability at best.

- **Policy: Improvements within the Docks should continually focus on improving facilities and enhancing character so as to attract a wider range of visitors to the area. New design should seek to encourage visitors to enter and explore the Docks and to facilitate free movement around the basins without compromising the fundamental nature and appreciation of the historic Docks.**
- **Policy: Consideration needs to be given to the mix of retail and catering offer within the Docks and their location, so that a satisfactory balance of facilities is maintained for all site users and occupiers.**

The St Katharine Docks website includes a useful and succinct summary of the site's history, including the Hospital and the story of the Docks themselves. It contains a number of important historic images, including a painting of the church, Telford's scheme proposal, and photographs of the warehouses in use. The site could be developed further to provide more in-depth information, including maps of the site as it was just before demolition began in 1825. This could be related to the site as it is today, so that the viewer can gain an immediate sense of the relationship between the historic environment of the Hospital and the Docks today. Such an approach could be extended from the virtual to the real world, with discrete signage and differential use of surface materials to indicate (at least in broad outline) where features such as the church, cemetery and cloister used to be. A leaflet or booklet could be provided for visitors, highlighting both the historic interest of the Docks and the attractions available now (or in the future) in the form of retail outlets, catering and other facilities.

- **Policy: Enhanced interpretation of St Katharine Docks should be generated both for use and access online and by improving 'real time' facilities on site.**

Experience shows that character and vistas play a large part in people's subconscious appreciation of an area. The importance of views in to, out from and across the Docks have already been highlighted in the preceding section. Maintenance and enhancement of these qualities will pay dividends in encouraging widespread recognition and use of St Katharine's by an increasingly discerning visitor base.

- **Policy: Planning and design of future developments within St Katharine Docks should nurture and develop the potential for short and long distance views in, out and across the site.**

### 4.4 Working with stakeholders

The importance of and potential for collaboration with local stakeholders to improve the built and economic context for St Katharine Docks has been touched on above already. The strategic location of the Docks, alongside East Smithfield, next to the Tower of London with its huge visitor base and close to the City, means that considerable potential exists to raise the profile of the Docks by working

in partnership with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and others to deliver wider economic benefits to the City Fringe area. This will be to immeasurable long term advantage for the Docks. The management strategy outlined in this conservation plan fits well with the objectives of the emerging City Fringe Area Action Plan of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. It encourages the use of St Katharine Docks and their environs as a better place for living well and safely, as an environmental haven in the locality, and as an area of considerable historic significance that can be used for learning and leisure and which, with care, can be enriched to wider benefit. St Katharine's can also help to improve safe physical connections for people between Tower Hamlets and the City, whilst it offers considerable ongoing potential for economic development and the creation of local jobs.

- **Policy:** St Katharine's Investments LP and Reit Asset Management should seek to work with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets wherever and whenever the best interests of the management and development of St Katharine Docks will also serve to deliver wider benefits to the various local communities in line with the City Fringe Area Action Plan.
- **Policy:** St Katharine's Investments LP and Reit Asset Management should seek to work in partnership with Historic Royal Palaces and with local regeneration programmes to promote and develop tourism initiatives, educational programmes of mutual interest, and joint business ventures.



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Appendix I: Summary of archaeological information taken from the Greater London Sites & Monuments Record, English Heritage

SMR No	Grid ref SJ	Period/type	Comments
080739	33708040	Findspots, mesolithic	Unreworked flake/blade and worked flake
080827	3398080	Findspot, Roman	Top of an amphora found 1866
080927	33908062	Findspot, medieval	S. side of Royal Mint site stonework of date of abbey found but not in situ
080927	33908070	Religious house, medieval	Cistercian abbey, est. Edward III. Part bought 1560 for victualling yard, 1740 used for tobacco warehouses. Cleared for mint late C18. Excavations 1972, 1980s.
080927		Religious House, post-medieval	
080927		Abbey, medieval	
080927		Abbey, post-medieval	
080928	33908070	Findspot, Late Bronze Age-Early Iron Age	Possible prehistoric potsherds found during excavation 1986 at Royal Mint.
080928		Findspot, Bronze Age	
080928		Findspot, Iron Age	
080932	33888043	Hospital, (post) medieval	Founded Matilda m. King Stephen & Eleanor m. Edward 1. Queen Philippa m. Ed. III founded chantry. Escaped dissolution until area converted docks 1825.
080932	33898039	Church, medieval	
080932		Church, post-medieval	
080932	33888041	Cloister, medieval	
080932		Cloister, post-medieval	
080932	33888044	House, medieval	
080932		House, post-medieval	
080932	33938044	Orchard, medieval	
080932		Orchard, post-medieval	
080932	33948040	Cemetery, medieval	
080932		Cemetery, post-medieval	
080932	33898037	House, medieval	
080932		House, post-medieval	
080932		Yard, medieval	
080932		Yard, post-medieval	
080932	33858038	Unassigned, medieval	
080932		Unassigned, post-medieval	
080932	33808036	Landing steps, medieval	
080932		Landing steps, medieval	
080932	33828037	Gate, medieval	
080932		Gate, post-medieval	
080932	33708044	Mill, medieval	
080974	34008020	Watermill, medieval	Mill near St Katharine's in reign of Henry VI. Stow mentions 'mills founded in King Stephen's day'
080975	33768070	Village, medieval	Poll tax records 1377 records 156 persons in E. Smithfield industrial suburbs

SMR No	Grid ref SJ	Period/type	Comments
080996	34038033	Brewhouse, (post) medieval	Kings Brew House at King Henry's Yard. Brewhouse here since C15.
081005	337806	East Smithfield, medieval	Name means 'smooth open space.' C11 onwards large open market area centred on modern West Smithfield. Place of execution, referred to in medieval period.
081052	33608040	Flood defences, medieval	Area subject to flooding. History of river embankment obscure. First mention C12
081052	39508060	Flood defences, post-medieval	
081052		Flood defences, Roman	
081064	33788063	Prison, medieval	1597 map shows 'The Cage' next to small structure, by 'The place where the pound stood.' In C17 'Ye Cage' St Katharine's 1630-65 & E.Smithfield C1630s
081064		Prison, post-medieval	
081065	33808050	Churchyard, C15-C17	
081065		Churchyard, post-medieval	
081066	33818047	Unassigned, post-medieval	OS card marks site of Hammes and Guises corruptly Hangmans Gain. No refs given.
081097	33908070	Cemetery & Churchyard, medieval	Set up for Black Death victims, enclosed by stone wall, later site of St. Mary Graces Abbey. Two trenches, also individual graves.
081097	33908070	Chapel, medieval	Included in later abbey buildings?
081099	33728042	Landing steps, medieval	
081099		Landing steps, medieval	
081099		Landing steps, medieval	
081501	33908070	Quarry, Roman	Exc. 1986; a few truncated pits found with some Roman pottery (the only evidence of Roman activity;) the remains of a wide area of sand & gravel extraction.
081501		Pit, Roman	
081502	33908070	Gravel pit, medieval	C14 quarry pits cut into natural gravel, excavated P. Mills 1986
081566	34008040	Dockyard, medieval	
081566		Dockyard, medieval	
081566		Dockyard, medieval	
081602	33758065	Road, medieval	Road round Wapping waterfront
081602	35378080	Road, post-medieval	
081603	34098060	Road, medieval	Thomas More Street
081603	34158023	Road, post-medieval	
081604	340813	Road, medieval	
081604	341806	Road, post-medieval	
081605	33608118	Road, medieval	
081605	33758065	Road, post-medieval	
081810	33908070	Findspot, prehistoric	Associated Lithic Implement
082233	33908070	Abbey & victualling yard, post-medieval	St Mary Graces Abbey converted to royal navy supply base. Excavations in 1972 and 1983-8



SMR No	Grid ref SJ	Period/type	Comments
082234	33908070	Warehouse and tobacco warehouse post-medieval	Series of mid C18 tobacco warehouses replaced victualling yard which were demolished to make way for Royal Mint.
083028	33908070	Wall, medieval	Exc. 1983; 76m abbey walls revealed on site of Cistercian abbey St Mary Graces. Remains of buildings also present.
083029	33908070	Building, medieval	Exc. 1983; remains of refectory found on site Cistercian abbey St MG. Traces of other buildings present.
083030	33908070	Hospital, medieval	Exc. 1983; remains hospital block found on site of abbey St.MG. Traces of other buildings present.
083031	33908070	Chapel, medieval	Exc. 1983; remains S.chapel found on site abbey St.MG. Traces of other buildings present.
083032	33908070	Chapel, medieval	Exc. 1983; remains of Lady Chapel found on site St.MG. Traces of other buildings present.
083033	33908070	Chapter House, medieval	Exc. 1983; remains of chapter house found on site St.MG. Traces of other buildings present.
083907	33798034	Jetty structure, post-medieval	Timber structure of several phases, possibly jetty. Situated beneath standing structure.
083909	34048022	Shipyards, post-medieval	Timber, possibly part of a ship-working scatter. C19/C20.
083910	34058019	Mooring bollard, post-medieval	Roundwood vertical post, possibly mooring post.
083911	34048022	Revetment structure, post-medieval	Timber, extending at an angle into the foreshore. Possibly the remains of a hard revetment.
083912	34058019	Shipyards, post-medieval	Seven or more timbers, possibly part of a C19/C20 shipworking scatter.
083913	34058019	Findspot, post-medieval	Scatter of slag.
083914	34058019	Mooring bollard, post-medieval	Rectangular post, possibly mooring post.
083915	34088019	Unassigned, post-medieval	Horizontal timber extending under standing jetty at 90degrees.
083916	34058019	Findspot, post-medieval	Scatter of building material, timber and iron. C19/C20.
083917	34078020	Shipyards, post-medieval	Timber, possibly part of a ship-working scatter. C19/C20.
083918	34128018	Findspot, post-medieval	Scatter of industrial slag.
083919	34138017	Structure, post-medieval	Timber structure.
083920	34158017	Deposit, unclassified	Consolidation deposit. Slag?
083921	34118019	Drain, post-medieval	Stone/concrete drain pipe, 0.75m diameter.
083922	34108018	Structure, post-medieval	Metal structure of recent date.
083924	34108019	Trough	Semi-circular stone trough, 0.6x0.4m with apparent gully.
083925	34108020	Findspot, post-medieval	Scatter of nails and rivets, C19/C20
083926	34108020	Structure, post-medieval	Stone/timber structure, possibly a crane base.
083928	34068021	Deposit, unclassified, post-medieval	Consolidation deposit of chalk.
083929	34088019	Structure, post-medieval	Timber platform with massive roundwood posts at corners.

SMR No	Grid ref SJ	Period/type	Comments
083930	34088019	Wharf structure	Timber structure, possibly a wharf. Two parallel rows, 20m long.
083931	34068021	Wharf structure, post medieval	Timber structure 3m high, possibly wharf. Two phases.
083932	34068021	Structure, post-medieval	Structure, possibly crane base.
083933	34008024	Findspot, post-medieval	Scatter of nails.
083934	34008024	Wharf structure, post medieval	Unidentified timber structure consisting of three drilled posts. Possibly a wharf.
083936	34008024	Unassigned, post-medieval	Timber. Square section at 45'.
083937	34008024	Wharf structure, post medieval	Timber structure, possibly a wharf. Posts.
083939	34008024	Findspot, post-medieval	Scatter of nails and staples.
083940	34008024	Shipyards artefact scatter, post-medieval	Scatter of artefacts, including timbers. Possibly nautical.
083941	33988024	Structure, post-medieval	Timber structure consisting of four rows of three squared posts.
083942	34008024	Findspot, post-medieval	Complete modern pot.
083943	34008024	Mooring bollard, post-medieval	Roundwood vertical post, possibly mooring post.
083944	34008024	Shipyards, unassigned; post-medieval	Timber, possibly part of a shipbuilding scatter.
083945	33988024	Wharf structure, post medieval	Timber structure consisting of three rows of seven posts. Possible wharf.
083946	33988022	Jetty, post-medieval	Jetty, C19/C20.
083947	33988022	Structure, post-medieval	Structure consisting of four timber posts with ironwork, 4.5m high. C19/C20, possibly a dolphin.
083948	33988026	Structure, post-medieval	Row of timber fenders, C19/C20.
083949	33988029	Deposit unclassified	Aggradations of sand at top of foreshore.
083951	33958029	Deposit unclassified	Aggradations of gravel.
083952	33948028	Structure, post-medieval	Timber revetted stone construction, bargebed C19/C20.
083953	33948028	Deposit, unclassified	Aggradations of gravel below barge bed.
083954	34008024	Unassigned, post-medieval	Timber posts associated with standing quay.
083955	34008024	Structure.	Unidentified timber structure.
083956	34008024	Structure, post-medieval	Timber structure consisting of two stakes, close to the present quay. C19/C20.
083957	34048022	Drain, post-medieval	Drain made from a hollowed log, C17/C19.
083958	34128018	Structure, post-medieval	Timber structure with four sawn-off piles. Possibly a dolphin.
083959	34048022	Causeway, post-medieval	Causeway associated with Alderman's Stair
083960	34048022	Structure, post-medieval	Structure of brick and stone, with walls and floor.
112000	33608030	Findspot, Neolithic	Axe found in ballast 1915, polished pyroxenite, butt end broken off
112001	33708030	Findspot, Neolithic	Polished greenstone-basalt axe, possibly from New Zealand.
112002	33708030	Findspot, Neolithic	Axe of flaked flint with cursorily ground edges, sides and ridges and glossy surface
112007	3308030	Findspot, early medieval/Dark Age	Axe of Jan Petersen Type 1

SMR No	Grid ref SJ	Period/type	Comments
112008	33608030	Findspot, early medieval/Dark Age	Axe of Jan Petersen Type M
112009	33608030	Findspot, early medieval/Dark Age	Iron stirrup of type R.590 decorated with brass inlay running in scrolls
112032	33608030	Findspot, Bronze Age	Flanged bronze axe found in Thames 1862
112039	33608030	Findspot, Bronze Age	Bronze sword found in the Thames
112041	33608030	Findspot, Bronze Age	Bronze spearhead found in the Thames
112042	33608030	Findspot, Bronze Age	Bronze spearhead found in the Thames
112043	33608030	Findspot, Bronze Age	Bronze spearhead found in the Thames
112044	33708030	Findspot, Bronze Age	Bronze spearhead found in the Thames
112047	33708030	Findspot, Iron Age	Inscribed gold coin of Iron Age date
112049	33608030	Findspot, early medieval/Dark Age	Saxon axe found in River Thames
112050	33608030	Findspot, early medieval/Dark Age	Saxon iron spearhead found in the Thames
222628	33908050	Dockyard, post medieval	St Katharine's Dock built 1823. 8 acres of water divided into 2 basins. Warehouses east and dockhouse destroyed WWII; warehouses west demolished 1970-80.
222628	33958050	Warehouse, post-medieval	Demolished 1977-8, deleted from the list 1982.
222628	3401036	Warehouse, post-medieval	Dates from early C19. Timber frame, brick clad. Framing adapted to house large liquor vats. Mainly demolished 1973, fragment survives in Dickens Inn
222628	33908056	Warehouse, post-medieval	Demolished 1980.
800023	33908080	Hydraulic Accumulator Tower, post-medieval	Red brick accumulator tower, slate roof. Built 1920s by London Hydraulic Power in goods depot for Midland Railway. Deemed of regional importance by Greater London Industrial Archaeology Society.
LO7626 0	338308059 0	Vault, C19	Watching brief of pile probing holes found extensive remains of walls and brick vaults belonging to Dock House and C warehouse of the West Dock.