Market Weighton Canal Trail ™

A brief timeline of the Market Weighton Canal and surrounding area

Pre 12th Century

The low-lying area where the Market Weighton Canal is situated, originally consisted of mainly rough grassland, carrs (a type of waterlogged wooded terrain), marrs (or meres, a shallow lake, pond, or wetland) and salt marsh (coastal wetlands that are flooded and drained by salt water brought in by the tides) around the River Humber.

Late 12th Century

A series of dikes were cut in Wallingfen to aid drainage of the fens and marshes, including Hansard Dam, Temple Dam and Thornton Dam. These allowed for the expansion of settlement and cultivation, and new settlements like Gilberdyke sprung up.

Early 13th Century

Commissions 'de wallis et fossatis' (regarding the walls and ditches) are set up to investigate drainage problems, including in Wallingfen.

Early 13th Century

The Court of Wallingfen was established, most likely in the late 12th or early 13th century, to manage the fen and its resources.

1425

The Court of Wallingfen's earliest records are from 1425. It had five elected surveyors and 48 governors, known as the Forty-Eight Men. Their duties included maintaining drainage ditches and controlling access to wetland resources like grazing.

1765

Local landowners expressed interest in improving drainage in Wallingfen. It was suggested that a navigation canal should be cut southwards from Market Weighton through Wallingfen to the River Humber. The idea was to make this a dual function canal, providing drainage and navigation.

1772

A plan for the Market Weighton Canal was initially created in February 1772 this first plan was later revised. A number of engineers and surveyors were involved during the canals construction namely, John Smith, John Grundy, William Jessop and Samuel Allam.

1772

On 21 May, Parliament passed the Market Weighton Navigation and Drainage Act, which authorised the construction of a navigable canal or cut from Market Weighton to the River Humber, as well as the drainage of land. This act represented a significant step forward in improving the transportation and drainage infrastructure in the area.

1776

On 6 May, the section of the canal from Weighton Lock to Sandholme Landing was opened, passing through what will eventually become the village of Newport. Additionally, John Whitworth was appointed as the lock keeper at Weighton Lock on an annual salary of £30, and he was responsible for collecting canal tolls. In November, the lock house was constructed at Weighton Lock.

1777

A further short section of the canal, near the River Foulness was opened. Properties began to be built around a stone bridge built by John Peacock which later became Newport.

1778

A wooden swing bridge was constructed at Sod House over the canal.

1793

The construction of the canal was completed in 1793. It extended for 9.25 miles (15.3km).

1795

Darling's Mill, a wind-powered corn mill was completed in Newport. This mill was demolished in the 1920s; the mill house still stands. As does the granary which at one time was a school.

1797

On 1 August, a formal opening ceremony took place.

1840

On 1 July the Hull and Selby railway line was opened by the Hull & Selby Railway Company. The line crossed the canal over a steel bridge to the north of the Broomfleet brickworks. This line, is still in use today.

1823

There were seven brick and tile works operating in and around the villages of Newport and Broomfleet.

1845

The Hull to Selby railway line was leased by the York and North Midland Railway Company.

1847

On 22 July, the York and North Midland Railway Company submitted a proposal to the Parliament to obtain authorisation for the purchase of the shareholders' navigation interests in the Market Weighton Canal.

1851

After a successful takeover bid, the York and North Midland Railway Company gained control of the Market Weighton Canal, as well as several other canals in the East Riding. However, as the railways saw the canals as direct competition, they neglected them with the intention of encouraging the use of railways instead.

1885

The Hull and Barnsley Railway, which crossed the canal just north of Newport, was opened on 20 July.

1900

Official abandonment of the Market Weighton Canal's navigational rights was declared above Sod House Lock. However, Henry Williamson & Co, brick and tile makers, agreed to contribute to the maintenance of the remaining four miles of the canal.

1934

In accordance with the Land Drainage Act 1930, the Market Weighton Drainage Board assumed the powers previously held by the original drainage commissioners.

1971

At this time, the lower section of the canal, which included Weighton Lock (Humber Lock), was closed off to navigation.

1976

On 19 February, the M62 motorway was opened on the track bed of the former Hull to Barnsley Railway line. The motorway crossed the canal just north of Newport, at the same location as the original bridge for the Hull and Barnsley Railway.

1994

The National Rivers Authority oversaw major repair and overhaul of Weighton Locks structure at a cost of £1.5 million. Responsibility for the lock was later taken over by the Environment Agency.

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