



## 4. Significance

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### 4.4 Evidential Value

The Eastern Coal Drops are one of the largest and most architecturally ambitious coal drop buildings in the country. It retains archaeological evidence of the process of coal handling, and the canal-side setting. The later infilling panels at yard and viaduct level are clearly legible, allowing the once-open arcading to be easily read.

It retains a number of archaeological remains of its original function. Its extant cellular plan form and section allow its original design to be clearly understood.

The roof trusses, composed of both timber and iron, show the technological development of metals during the 19th century. It also contains a number of adaptations from its later uses as warehousing and as a nightclub. Whilst these adaptations destroyed a lot of evidence of its original use, the surviving fabric from these periods enrich the understanding of its development.

The major fire in the 1980s destroyed much of the building's most important archaeological remains at the northern end, and the loss of the roof structure left what had survived without adequate protection.

Key surviving elements include the original cobbled bay towards the northern end; the contrasting north and south elevations showing functional differences; and the remains of the internal timber and brick structure.

It has **high evidential value**.

### 4.5 Historic Value

As the Eastern Coal Drops date from the initial development of the Goods Yard at King's Cross, they are an important building for understanding the development of rail transport in Britain, and at a more local level, the historic development of the wider King's Cross area. The Eastern Coal Drops also show the historic relationship of different modes of transport, including horses and canals.

Their historic value is enhanced by their association with Lewis Cubitt, engineer and builder, who was part of the Cubitt Family. Collectively they were responsible for designing or building a large number of buildings in mid-19th century London, transforming the face of the City and the West End.

It has **high historic value**.

### 4.6 Overall Significance

The overall significance of the Eastern Coal Drops derives from the close associations of the building's design and function with its physical and historic setting. Architecturally the building is derived from functional considerations with restrained ornamentation and materiality that help unify it with neighbouring buildings.

Its significance has been reduced by a century of ad-hoc alterations, lack of maintenance and the fire. The repairs of 2016-2018 have sought to address a number of these issues and better protect what has survived. Some further loss of historic fabric during these works was justified on the grounds of finding a sustainable new use for the building.

The most important elements that contribute to the significance of both the Eastern Coal Drops and to this area of the Conservation Area are those features that relate to its railway use and the understanding thereof. Elements such as the viaducts, the capstans and the original functional plan-form are critical in allowing current and future generations to understand the heritage of the building and the surrounding associated structures.



Figure 14 (opposite): Section through the Coal Drops showing their original configuration (Source: Thorne, 1990)

Figure 15 (above): The new curved slate roof looking south east





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## 5. The Proposals

Under the terms of the 2015 planning and listed building consents (2015/6015/P and 2015/6016/L respectively), a strategy for signage was developed to ensure that it would not cause harm to the appearance, character or fabric of the listed building, whilst also ensuring that there was sufficient scope for each retail unit to incorporate their individuality and graphic language.

This application covers only the signage for Unit 1 (the Upper Level unit) which will be within the stair core of the listed Eastern Coal Drops building.

The proposed signs are shown in figures 16 and 17. They are as follows:

**On the 1850s Stable Street East Elevation** the existing suspending sign is to be brought slightly forward by 333mm, to increase its visibility when arriving from Stable Street. The relocated sign will be fixed to the existing modern metalwork above, as it is at present. As requested in the November 2019 pre-app, fixing details are included within the drawing package. This proposal was considered acceptable at pre-app stage.

**On the 1850s Viaduct Level West Elevation** a new suspended illuminated letter sign, to match the existing sign on the east elevation. As with the eastern sign, this will be fixed to existing metal cable tray, with the cabling also fed from here. . As requested in the November 2019 pre-app, fixing details are included within the drawing package. This proposal was considered acceptable at pre-app stage.

The existing column sign on the adjacent pier will be removed, as it does not help with navigation. This proposal was supported at pre-app stage.

**On the 1920s Viaduct at Yard Level** the existing column sign on the pier will be removed, as it does not help with navigation. It will be replaced with a projecting blade sign,

as this will be more visible for pedestrians approaching from the north and south. This will be in-keeping with the projecting signs on the other retail units at Coal Drops Yard. This proposal was supported at pre-app stage.

At pre-app stage, there was a proposal to introduce a hanging sign, similar to that at the Stable Street entrance, into this archway. This was not supported at pre-app stage due to its impact on the historic fabric. This has now been changed to a sign within the meshed area of the arch. This mesh is new and not of historic significance. This sign will be fixed to the mesh and project by 100mm. The 'SAMSUNG' lettering will be illuminated from behind, in matching style to the hanging signs at Viaduct Level.

**Internally** an additional square, wall-mounted wayfinding sign will be installed on the staircase, with an arrow. This will match the existing internal wayfinding signs. It is located on historic brickwork, but will be fixed into mortar. The cabling will be fed through additional conduit, to match the other conduits in the building. This will also be fixed into the mortar joints.

### Materials

The Stable Street sign is the existing aluminium and acrylic sign, but relocated. The proposed Viaduct Level west elevation hanging sign will also be constructed of this material. In both cases, the supporting metal is painted in RAL 7021, which is the dark grey colour used elsewhere at Coal Drops Yard. This will therefore help the signage to 'blend in' with the overall aesthetic of Coal Drops Yard.

The new archway sign at Yard Level and the new wall-mounted wayfinding sign will both have white acrylic lettering, on an aluminium panel. This will have a 'weathered steel' finish. This finish will be in keeping with the industrial aesthetic of Coal Drops Yard.



Figure 16 (opposite): Visualisation showing the proposed new signage on the west elevation  
Figure 17 (above): Visualisation showing the proposed relocated hanging sign on the east elevation





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Figure 10