



Liath Heritage

**Knowsley Gateway, (Archway
Road Bridge) Huyton, Knowsley**

Heritage Statement

April 2021

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INTRODUCTION 1 | ONE

1.1 Overview

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Liath Heritage Ltd in support of a planning application for a lighting scheme at the Grade II Archway Bridge, Archway Road Huyton (the Application Site). For the purposes of this project, the bridge is also known as Huyton Gateway. The lighting scheme has been designed by LITE Ltd for Knowsley Borough Council. The bridge is owned by Network Rail who are in support of the proposals.

The scope and purpose of this report is to describe the context of the Application Site, to provide an assessment of the significance of the site and finally, to evaluate the impact that the proposals will have upon said significance. It is to be read in conjunction with the additional supporting documentation that will accompany the application.

1.2 Author

The author of this report is Lorraine Ward (MA). Lorraine has held various roles in the Conservation and Urban Design industry. This includes 10 years as a 'Senior Conservation & Design Officer' at Liverpool City Council followed by over 2 years with St Helens Council. These roles involved dealing with a broad range of major projects - involving listed buildings, conservation areas, and the safeguarding and management of Liverpool's World Heritage Site. Her qualifications include a degree in Architectural and Building

Conservation, a Masters' degree in Heritage Management and she is a full member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation.

1.3 INVESTIGATION AND RESEARCH METHODS

Site visits were carried out in April 2021 to assess the physical character, nature and setting of the Grade II listed bridge. Additional desk-based research has also been carried out to provide contextual and background information to better inform the statement of significance. Consultation has also been carried out with the Merseyside Historic Environment.

The scope of this research has been proportionated to the nature of the site, in accordance with the NPPF, with particular emphasis placed on the special architectural and historic significance of the site and the heritage assets located within its setting, and those planning policies and legislation that affect and control future change.

1.4 ORDNANCE SURVEY GRID REFERENCE

53.409706953712345, -2.8464679026120434

1.5 BUILDING ADDRESS

Railway Bridge, Archway Road, Huyton, Knowsley, L36 9XF

RELEVANT LEGISLATION & PLANNING POLICIES 2 | TWO

2.1 SCOPE AND PURPOSE

A review of the planning policy context associated with the Proposed Development at statutory, national and local level is provided within this section of the Statement. An assessment of the accordance of the proposals with this legislation and policy is provided in chapter 4's 'Impact Assessment'.

All schemes are assessed against legislation and national and local planning policies, so - in the first instance, any proposals should adhere as closely to the legislation and policies as possible. The following are relevant to this application.

2.2 LEGISLATION

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant listed building consent or planning permission for any works to a listed building, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses (s.16 and s.66).

The 1990 Act goes on to state that in the exercise of planning functions with respect to any buildings or land in a conservation area that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of that area (s.72).

2.3 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

The recently updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019) is pertinent and provides a full statement of Government policies for the identification and protection of heritage assets which includes historic buildings, conservation areas, world heritage sites, archaeology and other elements of the historic environment.

In line with the aforementioned, Paragraph 189, please see the following:

"In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance."

Paragraph 190 of the NPPF states local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of a heritage asset, including its setting, and take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal in order to avoid or minimize conflict between the asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal. Significance is defined in the NPPF Glossary (2019) as:

"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance

derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting."

In determining applications, the NPPF advises that the local planning authority should take account of positives associated with the heritage asset and that the more important a heritage asset, the greater weight that should be given to the protection of its significances. It also outlines the approach that local planning authorities should take when determining applications. The following paragraphs are relevant:

"192. In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation
- The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

193. When considering the impact of a Proposed Development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance."

Paragraph 194 states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

Moreover, the NPPF advises that:

"196. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

2.4 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

Locally, the LPA's policy guidance is contained within the adopted Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy, (formally adopted in January 2016) and the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development **PLAN** (formally adopted in June 2006). Whilst the application will be assessed directly against numerous adopted policies, it is considered that Policy CS20 - Managing the Borough's Historic Environment is highly relevant and as such carry significant weight.

Core Strategy Policy CS20 intends to secure appropriate integration of development with Knowsley's heritage assets and provide a positive approach to their future management to safeguard their preservation. The following extracts contain those elements of the policy applicable to this application.

Part one of the policy states that

“Development proposals in Knowsley should preserve or enhance the borough’s historic and architectural assets. The Council will:

Require preservation of the local distinctiveness and character of historic assets through sensitive design of new development, including appropriate integration with their setting and immediate landscape;

Prevent demolition and/or development which would result in substantial harm or the loss of a designated historic asset or its setting, unless the proposal would result in substantial public benefits which clearly outweigh the harm or loss;

Where a development proposal will result in less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset or its setting, assess such harm against the benefits of the proposal;

Facilitate long term conservation and enhancement of local assets and areas of historic importance, including through the preparation of Conservation Area Management Plans.”

Part two of the policy is also in part, relevant and states:

“The re-use of vacant and underused historic assets will be encouraged, with favourable consideration given, where appropriate, to proposals which will: a) Enable a use for a purpose sympathetic to its conservation; b) Retain or

introduce public access; and c) Enhance the importance of the asset for local tourism, leisure or the economy.”

The Design Quality in New Development Supplementary Planning Document (formally adopted in January 2016) identifies the overarching context for design in the Borough, and highlights Borough-wide issues which should be taken into account in designing new development, including guidance relating to preserving the built heritage.

2.5 GUIDANCE

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2 contains useful information on assessing the significance of heritage assets and the impact of any proposed works. It is a useful tool when considering alterations within the historic environment.

ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE 3 | THREE

3.1 LOCATION

The Grade II listed Railway Bridge is an overbridge that spans Archway Road and lies to the west of Huyton Town Centre. The bridge carries the Chat Moss railway line between Manchester and Liverpool. The surrounding area is largely residential, and Archway Road is a busy throughfare.



FIGURE 1 LOCATION OF THE GRADE II LISTED RAILWAY BRIDGE, ARCHWAY ROAD © GOOGLE MAPS

3.2 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE IMMEDIATE LOCAL

The town of Huyton, in which the site is located, sits on a natural outcrop, surrounded by lower marshy land. It is an ancient parish and settlement of the area pre-dates the Norman Conquest. To this day, the town retains churches of medieval origin with evidence of the earliest settlement to be found to the south of the church.

However, it was not until the industrial development during the late 18th century and 19th century that the Huyton transformed from an isolated farming community to a small country village with surrounding wealthy estates. This was largely in part, due to the expansion of Huyton Quarry. As the popularity of Huyton grew with the opening of the railway in 1830, land close to the station and turnpike roads were developed into picturesque residential villa estate neighbourhoods for the growing merchant class of Liverpool. These estates were namely Church Road, Victoria Road and towards the mid- late 19th century, The Orchard. These villa estates leny a previously absence, air of gentility to Huyton.

3.3 HERITAGE ASSET: RAILWAY BRIDGE, ARCHWAY ROAD

Please note: due to the modest nature of the proposal, only the bridge and the impact on said is assessed as part of this heritage statement.

The bridge was listed on the 19th of March 1987 as a grade II listed building. Its associated list description is brief and primarily for identification purposes only. It describes the bridge as:

“ Bridge. 1828-30. For Liverpool and Manchester Railway, Engineer G Stephenson. Stone. Segmental arch with rusticated voussoirs and top modillioned cornice and parapet. Flanking abutments.”

Historic Significance of Railway Bridge, Archway Road

The Liverpool & Manchester Railway (L&MR) is the world's first inter-city railway and was primarily constructed as a means of carrying goods from Liverpool, then a major trading port to Manchester. It was seen as a cheaper and more efficient alternative to canals. Routes were first explored in the late 1790 by engineers William Jessop) and Benjamin Outram however the proceeding attempts to move the project forward, came to nothing.

It was not until 1822 that thoughts once again turned to the creation of a train route between the two cities (then large towns) and the Liverpool & Manchester Railway Company was formed on 20th May 1824. In 1824, the House of Lords in London rejected the original route proposed by George Stephenson , the company's engineer, highlighting survey discrepancies. This original scheme started from Princess Dock, north of Liverpool town centre and ran through the eastern suburbs. Moreover the proposed route was met with opposition from local landowners.

In 1825, George Rennie and his brother John Rennie junior were appointed jointly as the company's engineers-in-chief and devised a route that addressed landowners objections by utilising deep cuttings when passing through established suburbs to the south of the town centre. This was subsequently approved by parliament in 1826 with George Stephenson been appointed as the company's principal

engineer for this standard gauge line and in 1828, construction commenced.

By 1829, most of the 63 bridges originally built for the railway line were under construction, at a total cost in the region of £100,000. It is likely that the original stone bridge to Archway Road was among them. The railway was completed in 1830 and opened in September by the Duke of Wellington, the then Prime Minister. The line ran through the centre of Huyton, and just to the east of the village a later branch led to Prescot and St. Helens. The line became the first commercial railway line designed to carry paying passengers as well as cargo and was a considerable financial success. Its success played a pivotal role in the importance and growth of the railways. Such was the growth that in the late 1870, works to the line were necessary to further expand its capacity.

In terms of the Railway Bridge to Archway Road, according to Merseyside's HER, “the bridge on the line before Huyton Hey Bridge is recorded in 1830 as Ball's Bridge, a square bridge carrying the railway over the road, made of a brick arch with ashlar quoins. It is recorded as 34.5 feet wide (between the parapets) and 12 feet wide under the arch.” The 1845 OS map supports this view as it shows a narrow and apparently perpendicular bridge providing access to a field on the north side of the line (the path notably skewed in the opposite direction of the existing) with no road extending from the field side of the bridge. This configuration is notably changed by the 1889 OS map, with the previous road now continuing northwards in a easterly direction, the orientation of which is reflected in the current bridge's configuration. It remains unchanged thereafter.



FIGURE 2 THE 1845 OS MAP



FIGURE 3 1889 OS MAP

It is therefore clear that as part of the late 19th century railway line expansion works necessitated the rebuilding of the bridge to Archway Road. Therefore, contrary to the list description, this bridge does not date from the early 19th century and nor is it by the eminent engineer George Stephenson. It is in fact, a later rebuild of the original bridge associated with the quadrupling of the Liverpool to Manchester railway line in the 1870s by the London and North Western Railway (L & NWR). It's possible engineer, dependant on the exact date of construction was either John Ramsbottom who was in post with L & NWR from 1857-1871 or Francis William Webb, who was in post from 1871-1903.

Architectural Significance of Railway Bridge, Archway Road

The bridge is an example of method bridge construction called 'skew arch' that enables an arch bridge to span an obstacle such as a road at an angle as oppose to a right angle. It employs the helicoidal shew arch method of construction and it is likely that it was done so based on the drawings of the engineer Peter Nicolson that can be found in the book written by him '*A Popular and Practical Treatise on Masonry and Stone-Cutting*' (1828).

The bridge is faced on either side in sandstone with helicoidal brick intrados. It benefits from segmental arch with rusticated voussoirs that consists of bevelled edged springers on a gradient and a central slightly splayed keystone and top modillioned cornice. The parapet along with flanking abutments are also of dressed sandstone.

The existing stone wind walls lead away both elevations, in a decreasing in height manner. The adjacent embankments are

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currently covered in vegetation and a palisade fenceline protects the railway line from trespassers.

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

The bridge is of historic interest due to its association with the Liverpool and Manchester railway lines which is one of the first commercial and passenger railway in the world. It is also of historical interest as it illustrates the rapid growth and expansion of the railways in the 19th century. It's likely engineer, be it John Ramsbottom who was in post for the London and North Western Railway Line from 1857-1871 or Francis William Webb, who was in post from 1871-1903 are also of historic interest in their own rights.

Architecturally, the bridge is a good example of a skew bridge built to the helicoidal principles set out by Nicolson using stone with brick intrados.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT 4 | FOUR

4.1 OVERVIEW

The application site consists of following:

- a grade II listed helicoidal skew bridge dating from c1870 that is located along the first commercial and passenger railway line in the world. It replaced an earlier bridge that required replacement due to a capacity expansion of the original railway line, a reflection if you will, of the important role of the railway as a means of transport in the late 19th century.

The proposal consists of a proposed lighting scheme that will require:

- 16 no. light fittings mounted on each side of the existing bridge structure. Full details of the proposed location and appearance of said, has been supplied on working drawings supplied by MGMA architects. This includes details pertaining to the method of fixing. Illustrations of illuminations methods have been supplied by LITE.

4.2 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The proposed works associated with the chosen lighting scheme have been carefully considered to recognise and respond to the significance of this Grade II listed bridge. It has been carefully designed to minimise any impact on the built fabric of the bridge. To that end, any fixings will utilise mortar joints, thus ensuring ease of reversibility.

The final appearance (including colour) of wires, junctions' boxes etc have been chosen to be as visually unobtrusive as possible. Equally, the orientation, location and run of all the necessary lighting paraphernalia have been carefully considered so that it is the minimum necessary to provide a sympathetic lighting scheme for this designated heritage asset.

It will illuminate a heritage asset in a sympathetic manner that will highlight and celebrate the craftsmanship that went into the construction of this late 19th century skew bridge.

4.3 CONCLUSION

Based on the aforementioned considerations, the proposals meet the key policy objective of the NPPF by conserving the designated heritage assets as set out at paragraph 192 and 200. The proposals also accord with local core strategy Policy CS20 'Managing the Borough's Historic Environment' 'as it represents 'a positive approach to their future management to safeguard their preservation' as the scheme will bring renewed attention to the bridge, highlighting in a positive manner the careful and considered craftsmanship that went into its construction. It will also illuminate any maintenance issues as and when they occur which will allow for a more routine approach to its maintenance.



Liath Heritage

Address: M4, 5 Mann St, Liverpool L8 5AF

Telephone: 07523 609811

Enquiries: admin@liathheritage.com

Website: www.liathheritage.com

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