

LIVERPOOL MARITIME MERCANTILE CITY (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Desired State of Conservation Report for the Removal of the Property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) and a set of Corrective Measures.

Preamble

The following DSOCR and Corrective Measures was developed on behalf of the UK State Party by Liverpool City Council with the advice of Historic England in response to the requests of the World Heritage Committee. It takes account of decisions taken by the Committee and is based on the approved Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) for the Property and its attributes as defined in the Management Plan (2017-2024) that was approved by the Cabinet of Liverpool City Council in 2017, namely:

- *The spirit of **innovation** illustrated by the architecture, engineering, transport, port management and labour systems created and developed in Liverpool;*
- *The tradition of **cultural exchange** exemplified by Liverpool's roles in the development of popular music and as a patron of the visual arts.*
- *The buildings and monuments, stories and records that evidence Liverpool's central role in the development of the British Empire and **global trade**.*
- *The buildings and monuments, stories and records that evidence Liverpool's central role in global **migration**.*
- *The docks, warehouses, commercial buildings, cultural buildings and dwelling houses and their relationships to each other that illustrate Liverpool's development as a **port city** of global importance.*

The Property contains **six main character areas** that help to convey the above key attributes. These are:

- *The waterfront **Pier Head** that contains the emblematic trio of buildings known as the Three Graces, and acted as the prime gateway into the city from the River Mersey;*
- *The waterfront **Albert Dock**, its linkage to a series of neighbouring docks, and a group of privately owned warehouses now successfully and sensitively refurbished to include museums and galleries;*
- *The waterfront **Stanley Dock**, including three privately owned warehouses now successfully and sensitively refurbished as a hotel, and the massive Tobacco and Southern warehouses currently in progress of conversion to adaptive re-use;*

- **Castle Street/Dale Street Commercial Centre** - the historic ‘downtown’ area that contains the City’s key civic and financial buildings;
- **William Brown Street** that contains a cluster of monumental buildings, including St George’s Hall, Museum, Art Gallery, Central Library, and Lime Street Station;
- **Ropewalks** area that developed shortly after the opening of the Old Dock in 1715 and contains merchants’ housing and warehouses close to the existing city centre and the Bluecoat, the oldest arts centre in Great Britain and the oldest surviving building in the city centre.

The above areas – taken as a whole - are manifestations of the commercial enterprise of Liverpool as a global trading port, and the civic and cultural institutions that grew as part of this trade. They help define its physical characteristics.

State of Conservation

The **physical state of conservation is not the issue** - as this has **improved substantially** - and **systematically** - since inscription in 2004; indeed, the repair and re-use of a number of outstanding historic buildings that were previously at risk was highlighted in the Report of the Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS mission (24-25 February 2015). This positive situation continues:

- *The number of **Buildings at Risk** (problematic heritage buildings requiring repair and re-use) **have been reduced** to below 2.75% of building stock - far below the UK national average – an achievement made possible by prioritisation of the substantial finances for heritage managed by Liverpool City Council;*
- *From 2015 each development proposal that has the potential to affect the OUV of the Property is accompanied by an ICOMOS-compliant **Heritage Impact Assessment** that details the significance of the asset/s that may be affected, the nature of that impact and, where appropriate, how any harmful impacts can be mitigated. **Historic England**, as the national heritage advisory body, is **consulted on all of these proposals** and the State Party, taking into consideration the advice of Historic England, will notify the World Heritage Centre, as necessary, under the provisions of the Operational Guidelines paragraph 172.*

The issue is the ascertained threat of “the proposed development of Liverpool Waters”. The State Party accepts that this scheme - *if* implemented in line with the *illustrative* masterplan that accompanied the *outline* planning permission granted on 18 June 2013 – would undoubtedly cause substantial harm to the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Property and would lead the World Heritage Committee to delete the Property from the World Heritage List.

Planning consent for Liverpool Waters legally lasts until 2042. However, it should be emphasized that the masterplan, which illustrated the quantum of development for which approval has been granted, is not one of the ten parameter plans that, together with the development schedule, govern the consent. As such, it carries little weight in planning terms. More importantly, Peel Holdings (the property owner that proposes the Liverpool Waters Regeneration Project) has recently confirmed to Liverpool City Council that there is no likelihood of the scheme coming forward in this form. Instead, Peel Holdings is undertaking a comprehensive review of the scheme and drawing up new masterplans taking full account of heritage considerations including all recorded commentary by the World Heritage Committee. The key stakeholders would welcome the advice of ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre as the new masterplans come forward. The thinking behind the new masterplanning exercise for the Central Docks neighbourhood is summarised below in Corrective measure (g). In addition, it should be remembered that the plans for the implementation of the outline consent require detailed planning consent for the layout, scale, appearance, access and landscaping of all components of the scheme. The new masterplanning work is taking account of these requirements, particularly as they relate to OUV, and reflects exactly the 2015 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS mission report which states *“As the Liverpool Waters is a 30 year plus long-term development project, involving some parts of the World Heritage property, it is likely to become an evolving concept, transmuting and developing through time in response to changing context.”*

The lack of confidence by the World Heritage Committee in Liverpool’s effective planning control to avoid negative impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value of the Property is a serious concern to the State Party which, while it does not believe this is the case, is committed together with other key stakeholders, to making improvements to the management and protection regime, should this prove necessary.

Detailed planning proposals that have subsequently been approved within the Princes Dock neighbourhood / first phase of Liverpool Waters have, however, not been deemed to have negatively impacted on the attributes that convey the OUV of the property by Historic England, the State Party’s heritage adviser. Such proposals have been guided by the 2009 Supplementary Planning Document (to be revised in 2018), which contains detailed guidance on how development is managed to avoid harm to OUV within the World Heritage Site and its Buffer Zone. However, the World Heritage Committee considered the approval (2016) of a planning proposal for a 34-storey residential tower block on Princes Dock in the Buffer Zone unacceptable due to excessive height, albeit recognising that this was much lower than the 2013 Outline Planning Consent. ICOMOS also found the approved student residences at Skelhorne Street, in the Buffer Zone of the Property adjacent to Lime Street railway station unacceptable. Further approvals, whilst again acceptable to the State Party’s heritage

adviser, Historic England, were granted in 2017. These applications were each carefully assessed through ICOMOS-compliant Heritage Impact Assessments.

Desired State of Conservation for Removal

- *Effective protection of the physical dimension and the characteristics of the townscape and port landscape, together with an understanding of the historic function, that is relevant to the **Outstanding Universal Value** of the Property and its Buffer Zone;*
- *Effective protection of important views related to the Property and its Buffer Zone;*
- *Threats to the World Heritage Property from the **Liverpool Waters** development (whether from within the Property, or its Buffer Zone) have been **reversed or mitigated** to such an extent that they no longer pose a threat to the OUV of the Property;*
- *Policy and regulatory measures in place to **regulate maximum heights** for new developments (“Liverpool Skyline” policy to be adopted);*
- *Awareness and appreciation of Liverpool’s **World Heritage status** by its citizens and visitors enhanced through the successful implementation and evaluation of a heritage interpretation and communication strategy;*
- *Awareness, by developers and building professionals, of the World Heritage Property, its **Outstanding Universal Value and conservation and management requirements** under the World Heritage Convention enhanced through progressive engagement by stakeholders;*
- *Integrity of the World Heritage Property **enhanced** through the inscription of an extension to the World Heritage Property and its Buffer Zone.*

Corrective Measures and Timeframe for their Implementation

- *a) **Update of planning tool in force**, responding to the 2015 mission to “...provide comprehensive documentation concerning the management system/plan to be put in place...”: a **comprehensive updated Management Plan** was **adopted in 2017** that integrates the attributes of the World Heritage property to guide Citywide policies and actions (responsive to the economics of the city-growth target of a population of 460,000 for the year 2020), and that clearly integrates the necessary public-private investments from 2018 onwards to ensure a feasible phasing of action for the World*

Heritage Property in particular, and the City centre and wider Liverpool regeneration in general;

- *b) **Update of planning tool in force**, by the definition and adoption of policy and regulatory measures embodied in a **Local Plan** (link to final draft documentation pack at **Appendix A**) based on townscape characteristics, functional relationships in the port area, together with relevant important views, to ensure protection of the attributes of the World Heritage Property. U.K. National Planning Policy places Local Plans at the heart of the planning system. The Liverpool Local Plan, together with the Neighbourhood Masterplans being developed for Liverpool Waters, the adopted World Heritage Site Management Plan, and the Supplementary Planning Document (being updated in 2018), are the regulatory planning documents which provide: clear legal guidelines to protect the OUV of the Property; assistance for developers to design their projects accordingly; and the basis for considering whether applications can be approved. Historic England is a statutory consultee. This will manage the comprehensive regeneration of the city, set the context for the World Heritage Site, and will integrate heritage conservation with the on-going socio-economic and regeneration imperative for Liverpool within the City Region;*
- *c) **Update of planning tool in force, following the adoption of the Local Plan** before the end of 2018, through the revision of the **Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** that adopts the Historic Urban Landscape approach and further strengthens the clear analysis and description of the townscape characteristics relevant to the attributes of the OUV of the Property that has been described in the **SPD Evidential Report (March 2009)** that will be made available **online** in 2018. The existing SPD will be subject to a full review and, if necessary, enhancement of the section on important views related to the Property and its Buffer Zone, as currently defined, together with a clear description of the functional relationships and public circulation in the port area (with the community of Liverpool in mind);*
- *d) **Review the development in progress for the Princes Dock Neighbourhood** (approvals received no objections from Historic England) and, by negotiation with all parties concerned, to continue the pattern of substantially lowering the height of schemes which receive detailed permission as compared to the maximum envelope granted under the Liverpool Waters Outline Planning Consent;*
- *e) **Bramley Moore Dock**. Everton Football Club is considering the potential to construct a new stadium at Bramley Moore Dock. No planning application has been submitted, nor is such an application imminent. In the event that a planning application is submitted it will be dealt with in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Liverpool's own statutory Development Plan including the World*

Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document. As part of the assessment, Historic England, as advisor to DCMS, will be a statutory consultee and that the World Heritage Centre would be immediately informed under section 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

- *f) **Develop and finalize a height (“skyline”) policy for tall buildings** within the Property and its Buffer Zone. Note: - A tall buildings policy has been included in the submission draft of the Liverpool Local Plan. The Local Plan, approved by Cabinet and Council on 19th and 24th January 2018 respectively, will be published for pre-submission consultation for a period of 6 weeks. After which it is expected that it will be submitted to the Secretary of State for the purposes of an independent public examination in mid 2018. After the examination, the City Council would hope to adopt the Plan towards the end of 2018 or early 2019.*
- *g) Responding to the 2015 mission to “...ensure urban design guidelines that will provide continued coherence for the architectural and town-planning values and that will be pro-active to ensure the management of the World Heritage property and the city centre...” the **Neighbourhood Masterplans** for Central Docks and for Northern Docks and their respective surroundings will be reviewed and finalized, in accordance with the terms of the outline permission in close consultation with the national statutory heritage advisor Historic England and be guided by the core principle of the DSOCR to ensure that the architectural and town-planning coherence and the conditions of authenticity and integrity of the World Heritage Property are sustained.*

The detailed plans will integrate all the different dock areas of the property into one continuous historic urban landscape, maintaining the existing horizontal layering of the city profile, expressed as a three-tiered urban structure, and the important views from the northern and central docks back to the Three Graces and the strategic views of the city from the opposite side of the River Mersey. The detailed plans will provide detailed content on: the general disposition of buildings in each neighbourhood and plan for a general reduction in the height and urban density from the maximum indicated in the outline permission, in order to attain a more sustainable and deliverable development that will re-vitalise the City for the well-being of the community and its visitors alike; the rationale for the height limitation of buildings by relating to, and being guided by, specific buildings in the World Heritage Property (some individual buildings might break height threshold but will nonetheless reflect historic elements); and how the morphology and functional hierarchy expressed by the port circulation system is maintained. To demonstrate the very real progress that is being made to realize this desired state of conservation, the emerging Central Docks neighbourhood plan has initiated a fresh approach, which utilizes OUV as a driver for place making.

Key protected views are being maintained and enhanced and a legible pattern of historic streets is being established reflecting historical characteristics. We recognize that this is work in progress and we invite the active participation of the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS in the masterplanning process to assist us in reaching the desired state of conservation that is set out here.

- *h) **Implement the new complementary framework** within the WHS Buffer Zone of the “Ten Streets” proposals area of the City (south of the Stanley Dock complex comprising the remnants of historic warehousing that have been redundant for decades). The City Council has produced a “Ten Streets” Spatial Regeneration Framework (SRF). A draft SRF was consulted on in autumn 2017 with the final document due to be considered for adoption as an SPD by the City Council’s Cabinet in February 2018. This articulates a shared vision for the area, provides an overarching context for regeneration, establishes principles for development, and a focus for investment and regeneration. Celebrating heritage is one of the ten ‘big ideas’ that are fundamental to the SRF and support the vision and conservation and refurbishment of all the area’s listed and important heritage buildings, starting with Liverpool’s largest listed structure – the Tobacco Warehouse at Stanley Dock.*

- *i) **Strengthen the management system for the Property, and the consistency of approach in managing the development process**, through an integrated multi-stakeholder approach, including consideration of the **creation of a Liverpool World Heritage Trust (LWHT)**, a new partnership under an agreed mandate on behalf of the wider stakeholder interest including: the UK Government Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport; Historic England; ICOMOS UK; Liverpool City Council; property owners; developer interests; Merseyside Civic Society and ‘Engage Liverpool’. LWHT is designed to embrace the comprehensive interests of Liverpool not only in the management of the Property but for the benefit of the City’s wider historic environment. Note: - The Terms of Reference for the WHS Steering Group were reviewed and refreshed in 2017 and are included in the WHS Management Plan adopted in April 2017. An independent Design and Heritage Review Panel has also been set up in 2017 which considers appropriate major schemes of local and or national importance including those within the World Heritage Site and its Buffer Zone.*

- *j) **Develop and implement a World Heritage interpretation and communication strategy** aimed at the community of Liverpool, and its visitors, and an awareness-raising programme aimed at developers and building professionals, of the World Heritage Property, its **Outstanding Universal Value and conservation and management requirements** under the World Heritage Convention. Note: - The City Council in*

partnership with Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) North has established a **Hub for Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Site** in the City Gallery of the new national architecture centre, which opened on Liverpool’s Waterfront in 2017. The **Digital City Model** in the City Gallery provides accessible information on the WHS and its OUV to a wide range of audiences and can be used as a planning and development tool with developers and buildings professionals;

- k) Review the Property boundaries and Buffer Zone, and consider an enhancement of its integrity by an **extension of Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Site** to better reflect her maritime and mercantile pre-eminence as the greatest Western European seaport, from the early eighteenth to the mid -twentieth centuries.

Timeframe

a)	<i>Implementation of the comprehensive updated Management Plan</i>	2018 (ongoing)
b)	<i>Approval of Local Plan</i>	2018
c)	<i>Revised Supplementary Planning Document</i>	2018-19
d)	<i>Princes Dock development amendments</i>	2018 (ongoing)
e)	<i>Bramley Moore Dock. As there is no planning application for the proposed stadium, nor is this imminent, a timeframe cannot yet be established</i>	
f)	<i>Develop and finalize a height (“skyline”) policy for tall buildings</i>	2018
g)	<i>Review and approval of neighbourhood plans</i>	2018 (ongoing)
h)	<i>Implement the new complementary framework</i>	2018 (ongoing)
i)	<i>Creation of a Liverpool World Heritage Trust</i>	2018
j)	<i>World Heritage interpretation and communication strategy</i>	2019
k)	<i>Extension of Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City</i>	2025

Desired State Indicators

The following Desired State Indicators have been developed specifically for the DSOCR and respond to its Corrective Measures. In the case of Liverpool, it is fundamental to understand that the indicators are not measures of the restoration of the attributes that convey the OUV

of the Property. The indicators are measures that monitor progress towards the elimination of a major perceived development threat, and of the strengthening of the Property's overall effective protection and management and consequently the strengthening of OUV as a whole. Such Desired State Indicators augment existing indicators implemented since inscription to monitor the condition of the OUV of the Property.

Corrective Measure	Indicator for removal of the Property from the List in Danger	Rationale	Method of Verification
a)	Adoption of an approved updated Management Plan	Update of planning tool in force	Date approved.
b)	Adoption of Local Plan	Update of planning tool in force	Date approved
c)	Supplementary Planning Document	Update of planning tool in force	Date approved
d)	Adoption of Neighbourhood Masterplan for Princes Dock	Update of planning tool in force	Date approved
e)	Planning status of a football stadium on the site of Bramley Moore Dock	Mitigation of potential negative impact on the OUV of the Property if application arises	Satisfactory Heritage Impact Assessment accompanying any application
f)	Height policy for the WHS and its Buffer Zone	Update of planning tool in force	Date of an approved tall buildings policy adopted in Local Plan
g)	Adoption of Neighbourhood Masterplans for Central Docks and Northern Docks	Update of planning tool in force	Date approved
h)	Spatial Regeneration Framework for "Ten Streets"	Update of planning tool in force	Date approved; Date implemented
i)	Creation of a Liverpool World Heritage Trust	Strengthened, independent management of the WHS and its Buffer Zone	Date implemented
j)	World Heritage Interpretation and Communication Strategy, and an awareness-raising programme	Enhanced awareness and understanding of World Heritage values	Dates implemented
k)	Extension of the WHS and its Buffer Zone	Enhanced integrity and	Date of nomination, date of inscription

Appendix A

Links to Liverpool City Council Local Plan Final Draft – January 2018:

1. Link to the Submission Draft Local Plan document only
<http://consult.liverpool.gov.uk/file/4855757>
2. Link to the Policies Map – City Centre Inset
<http://consult.liverpool.gov.uk/file/4852923> - shows whole of the WHS and most of the Buffer
3. Link to Policies Map – rest of Liverpool <http://consult.liverpool.gov.uk/file/4852923> - note a small part of the Buffer Zone is shown on this map