Heritage Impact Statement – Trevor Basin Hire Boat Premises - Car Parking

Application Type

This assessment has been prepared to support a full planning application for the change of use, minor alterations and landscaping to create 17 car parking spaces at Trevor Basin, New Road, Trevor, Wrexham LL20 7TT.

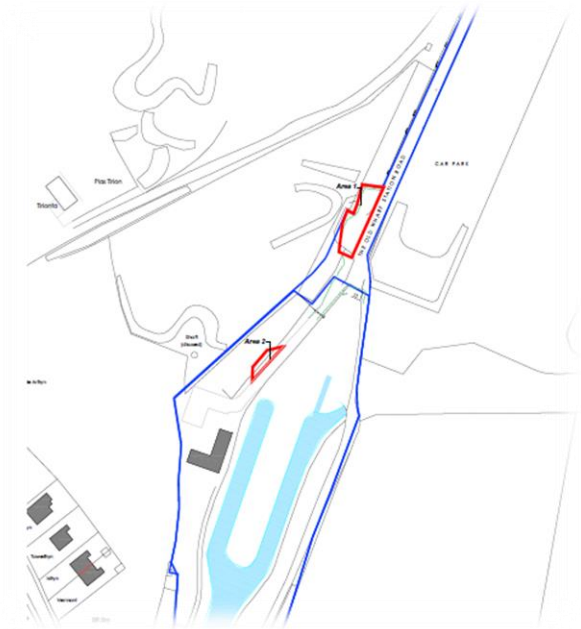
Context

It has been identified that the proposed development could potentially impact a number of designated heritage assets and their settings. The site is located within the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site. Also, part of the site is located within the designated Pontcysyllte Aqueduct Conservation Area, including the Trevor Basin site. Also, part of the site is located within the designated Pontcysyllte Aqueduct Conservation Area with the other part on the edge but within the setting. The Trevor Basin site includes a Scheduled Monument and a designated heritage asset (Scotch Hall bridge) listed at Grade II.

The Site

The application site ('the site') consists of two parcels of land situated within close proximity of one another, which are located towards the north of Trevor Basin on a private vehicular access drive, off Tower Hill, on land adjacent to the existing main Trevor Basin visitor car park.

The image below illustrates the extent of the site edged in red and remaining Trust landownership in blue



The site is currently being used, on a temporary basis, as the compound and storage area in association with construction works to build-out planning consent P/2021/0560 for '*Redevelopment of canal basin for use as a boat hire business including erection of 2 buildings and storage enclosure'*. The current temporary compound use will be removed when construction works finish.

The site currently has a surface finish suitable to accommodate the vehicular parking and manoeuvrability requirements associated with its use as a construction compound. This consists of a 'no-dig' construction method to protect tree roots, which involves creating a suitable sub-base to level out any undulations, laying a geotextile fabric (cellular confinement system) to separate the granular stone and MOT type 1surface finish infill material. All of which is fully permeable to accommodate surface water drainage

There are established trees located beyond the north west boundary to the rear edge of the site. The site has an open frontage facing out onto the private vehicular access driveway.

Date of Preparation

July 2025

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Statutory Legislation

Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023

Planning law relating to Conservation Areas in Wales is set out in the **Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023**

Section 160 (1) of the Act deals with the responsibilities of exercising a planning function within the context of a designated conservation area, stating that...

'In exercising a planning function in relation to a building or other land in a conservation area, a person must have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.' [1]

[1] Historic Environment (Wales) Act, 2023

Statutory Guidance

Planning Policy in Wales, 2024 & 2017 (TAN24)

'The impacts of proposed developments on a World Heritage Site and its setting and, where it exists, the World Heritage Site buffer zone and its essential setting, is a material consideration in the determination of any planning application.' [2]

'The setting of a historic asset includes the surroundings in which it is understood, experienced and appreciated, embracing present and past relationships to the surrounding landscape. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Setting is not itself a historic asset, though land within a setting may contain other historic assets.' [3]

Non-statutory Guidance

The Setting of Historic Assets in Wales

'The setting of a historic asset can include physical elements of its surroundings. These may be boundary walls, adjacent fields or functional and physical relationships with other historic assets or natural features.' [4]

Historic Information

Trevor Basin is an integral part of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site, inscribed by UNESCO in 2009. The site is of local, national and international importance. The aqueduct and the accompanying canal navigation are an acknowledged masterpiece of civil engineering and an outstanding representation of improvement in transport during the Industrial Revolution.

Historically, the basin operated as a large trans-shipment wharf for a range of industries including lime, coal and more latterly, chemicals. The unusual 'tuning fork' design supported multiple wharves, as well as rail and canal branches to support the localised movement of industrial goods.

The Llangollen Canal (formerly the Ellesmere Canal) opened in 1805 with the Pontcysyllte and Chirk Aqueducts being the central engineering structures that linked the basin with the wider national canal network. Both structures were designed by Thomas Telford and William Jessop, two of the most important canal and infrastructure engineers of the period.

Cadw's designation description describes the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct as:

'Built between 1795 and 1808, the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal comprise an exemplary group of civil engineering features from the heroic phase of transport improvement that accompanied the Industrial Revolution. The Principal Engineer for the canal was William Jessop (1745-1814), one of the most important canal and dock engineers of the day. The General Agent was Thomas Telford (1757-1834), then a little known county surveyor, but to become the most

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[2] Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, 2024) p.132
[3] Planning Policy Wales, 2017, *Technical Advice Note 24 – The Historic Environment* (Annex D: Glossary of Terms)
[4] Cadw, 2017, *Setting of Historic Assets in Wales,* (page 2)

prolific civil engineer of the early nineteenth century. Owing to its particular daring and elegance, the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct is regarded as a spectacular masterpiece of waterways engineering and an influential pioneer of iron construction.

The monument is of national importance as the masterpiece of two exceptional figures from the heroic phase of civil engineering in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, reflecting the crucial developments within inland navigation, civil engineering and the use of iron. It is an outstanding example of the pivotal importance of transport improvement to the Industrial Revolution. As the largest civil engineering projects of their day, canal construction projects were responsible for numerous organisational and technical innovations. Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal is an exemplary manifestation of the innovations which produced the British canals system and were carried forward into the development of later railways, roads and industrial projects. In organisation, innovations included principles of contract management, delegation of duties within engineering teams and the professional independence of engineers. In technology, innovations included hollow masonry and new waterproofing methods to reduce weight, composite use of cast iron and stone, earthwork calculations, construction railways, barrow inclines and cut-and-cover tunnels.'

Figure 1. Trevor basin including central peninsular structure creating the tuning fork shape.



Summary of Heritage Significance

In the context of Cadw's guidance for assessing the significance of heritage assets[5], the significance of the Trevor Basin site is largely manifested by the group of canal related structures (basin, bridges, aqueduct, dry dock and warehouses) all of which retain high evidential, historic,

[5] Cadw, 2011, *Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales,* (page 16)

aesthetic and communal value, however, these values are not reflected in the public realm that forms part of their overall setting.

Proposed works

The proposal is for the change of use, minor alterations and landscaping to create 17 new car parking spaces in this location to replace 17 existing car parking spaces located nearby, which are required to be made available through obligation of s106 Agreement NR/042504 associated with planning consent P/2021/0560 ('*Redevelopment of canal basin for use as a boat hire business including erection of 2 buildings and storage enclosure'*).

The current location of the 17 car parking spaces is no longer available in perpetuity and therefore the car parking must be relocated elsewhere to full the long-term obligation of the s106 Agreement. Therefore, this application seeks planning permission to create the car parking spaces in an alternative suitable location. Necessary changes to the s106 Agreement will be addressed separately with Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC).

Planning permission is sought for the permanent change of use of the land and only requires some minor alterations on the basis that it already has a suitable surface finish for vehicles to park and manoeuvre. The proposed physical alterations consist of constructing a timber sleeper edging along the rear boundary of the site. Also, introducing a native shrub species soft landscaping scheme to the edge of the site (excluding frontage).

Summary of Heritage Impact

As stated above, the heritage significance of the Trevor Basin site (within the context of the World Heritage Site) is largely manifested by the group of canal structures (basin, bridges, aqueduct, dry dock and warehouses). Whilst the proposed development is located within the boundary of the World Heritage Site and partly within the designated Conservation Area, it is perceived, based on their proximity and scale, that there would be no direct impact on the canal structures or their settings. This type of development should be viewed as an enhancement, especially if it serves a wider public benefit of providing safer and more convenient access to the facilities that are designed to enhance the experience of visiting the World Heritage Site.