

LISTED BUILDING CONSENT APPLICATION

Lock 87 Princess Street Rochdale Canal

Installation of oak load transfer beam to tail gates



October 2019

Canal & River Trust

Submission by Judy Jones BA(Hons) MA IHBC, Heritage Advisor

OVERVIEW

This statement has been prepared to support a Listed Building application by the Canal & River Trust in relation to the installation of oak load transfer beam to the tail gates at Lock 87.

This statement aims to provide supporting information about the historic character of the lock, the methodology of the proposal and to address the relevant impact of the development on this designated asset.

Lock 87 is a Grade II Listed structure.



LOCATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT

The lock is the 87th of 92 locks on the Rochdale Canal and is one of the 'Rochdale 9'. It is located adjacent to Canal Street, near the road junction with Princess Street.

Easting 384297
Northing 397753

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The Listed Building application concerns the following –

- The works comprise of the installation of an oak load transfer beam applied to each tail gate, to ensure the existing timber gates do not cross when in use, therefore stabilising the mitre and making safe.

APPLICANT

Canal & River Trust

STATEMENT PREPARED BY

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Background history of the Rochdale Canal and Lock 87

The lock is situated on the Rochdale Canal. The Rochdale Canal is a trans-Pennine waterway, opened in sections between 1799 and 1804, with several eminent canal engineers involved in the design and construction process including William Crosley (Snr), John Rennie, and William Jessop, and numerous assistants.

In 1766, a group of businessmen met in the Union Flag Inn in Rochdale to propose a shorter route between Manchester and Leeds via Rochdale. James Brindley was commissioned to survey two routes: one via Bury and one more directly via Heywood. However, nothing came from this original exploration. It wasn't until 1790 that a meeting was called in Hebden Bridge to discuss extending the Calder and Hebble Navigation westwards that momentum started to gather again. The Duke of Bridgewater agreed for a junction between the Rochdale and the Bridgewater at Castlefield in order to compete with other trans-Pennine traffic. A revised Rochdale Canal Bill was passed in 1794 and construction began. By 1799 the canal was open between Sowerby Bridge and Todmorden and from Manchester to Rochdale. A proposed 1.6 mile tunnel between Walsden and Sladen was replaced by more locks and a higher summit level at 600 feet. The resulting shorter summit level meant that many reservoirs were required to prevent the summit level drying up and to maintain an available supply of water for the 92 locks.

The canal opened through to Manchester in 1804. This made it the first trans-Pennine canal route, as the Huddersfield, experiencing much difficulty in the Standedge Tunnel construction, did not open until 1811. The Leeds and Liverpool, with a much longer route, was not fully opened until 1816. In 1830 a railway surveyed by George Stephenson was proposed, following closely the route of the canal. When the Manchester and Leeds Railway opened in 1841, the canal company had to reduce tolls to retain business. The company resisted take-over bids from railway companies but leased the canal to a consortium of railway companies in 1855. The canal remained profitable for some time but by the twentieth century the tonnage being carried was in sharp decline. In 1937 the last boat made the through journey across the Pennines on the Rochdale Canal.

In 1952, the canal was closed apart from the short section between Castlefield and the Ashton Canal junction at Piccadilly. The Ashton was abandoned in 1962 and by 1965 the nine locks on the Rochdale through Manchester city centre were almost unusable. Enthusiastic supporters re-opened the Ashton in 1974 and the Rochdale Canal in Manchester was made good. The Rochdale Canal Society was formed to promote the restoration of the canal and in the 1980s and 1990s small scale work began to re-open stretches of the canal between Todmorden and Sowerby Bridge. This involved restoring bridges and locks to navigable condition.

The most major project was the construction of the new Tuel Lane lock and tunnel in Sowerby Bridge. The lock replaced two locks in an infilled section and, with a fall of almost 20 feet, is the deepest lock on the inland waterways system. In 1996 the canal was opened to navigation once again between Sowerby Bridge and the summit level. In 2000, the canal was transferred from the Rochdale Canal Company to the Waterways Trust. Funding of 23 million pounds was announced, mostly from the Millennium Commission and English Partnerships that would enable the remaining obstacles to be removed. In July 2002, the whole canal became navigable once again, almost 200 years after its original opening.

Lock 87 lies within the Whitworth Street Conservation Area and is Grade II listed.

Significance of the Heritage Asset

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 provides the Government's national planning policy of the conservation of the historic environment, in respect of information requirements it sets out that:

'In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any 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'

It is therefore accepted that in order for the LPA to consider this application it is necessary for the applicant to provide a detailed description and justification of the works.

Assessment of significance

The April 2008 'Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance', published by English Heritage (now Historic England), states that 'understanding the significance of places is vital' and that 'articulating the values and significance ... is necessary to inform decisions about the future '

The English Heritage/Historic England guidance describes a range of inter-related 'heritage values' that may be attached to historic places, arranged in four groups:

- Evidential value: the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity;
- Historical value: the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present – it tends to be illustrative or associative;
- Aesthetic value: the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place; and
- Communal value: the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience of memory.

The lock has **Historical value**, as it forms an early part of the national canal network. It also has **Aesthetic value**, being a simple lock with much original masonry retained. It has group value with the listed 'BOUNDARY WALL TO ROCHDALE CANAL BETWEEN PRINCESS STREET AND SACKVILLE STREET'.

It is an area of thriving regeneration and must feature in the memory of those who live and work in the locality, and therefore the lock is of **Communal value**.

Statutory List Description

The lock is a Grade 2 listed asset. The list description reads –

ROCHDALE CANAL LOCK NUMBER 87, TO EAST OF PRINCESS STREET, WITH CAST IRON FOOTBRIDGE BESIDE STREET

Grade: II

Date first listed: 06-Jun-1994

Canal lock, including cast-iron footbridge over lower entry beside street. 1804-5, for Rochdale Canal Company; restored. Coursed squared sandstone, wooden gates. Chamber of 14-foot width with pairs of gates at both ends, ladder in centre of south side. Cast-iron footbridge crossing lower entry, with panelled sides. Fourth in series of 9 locks on extension linking former Rochdale Canal basin at Dale Street with Bridgewater Canal basin at Castlefield, all in working order. Forms group with boundary wall of Canal Street on north side (q.v.).

Listing NGR: SJ8428197740

Reasoning for the proposed works

- The works comprise of the installation of an oak load transfer beam applied to each tail gate, to ensure the existing timber gates do not cross when in use, therefore stabilising the mitre and making safe.

During September 2019, the Rochdale Canal had to be closed for a short period due to the tail gates at Lock 86 rotating, resulting in a failed mitre and poor water seal.



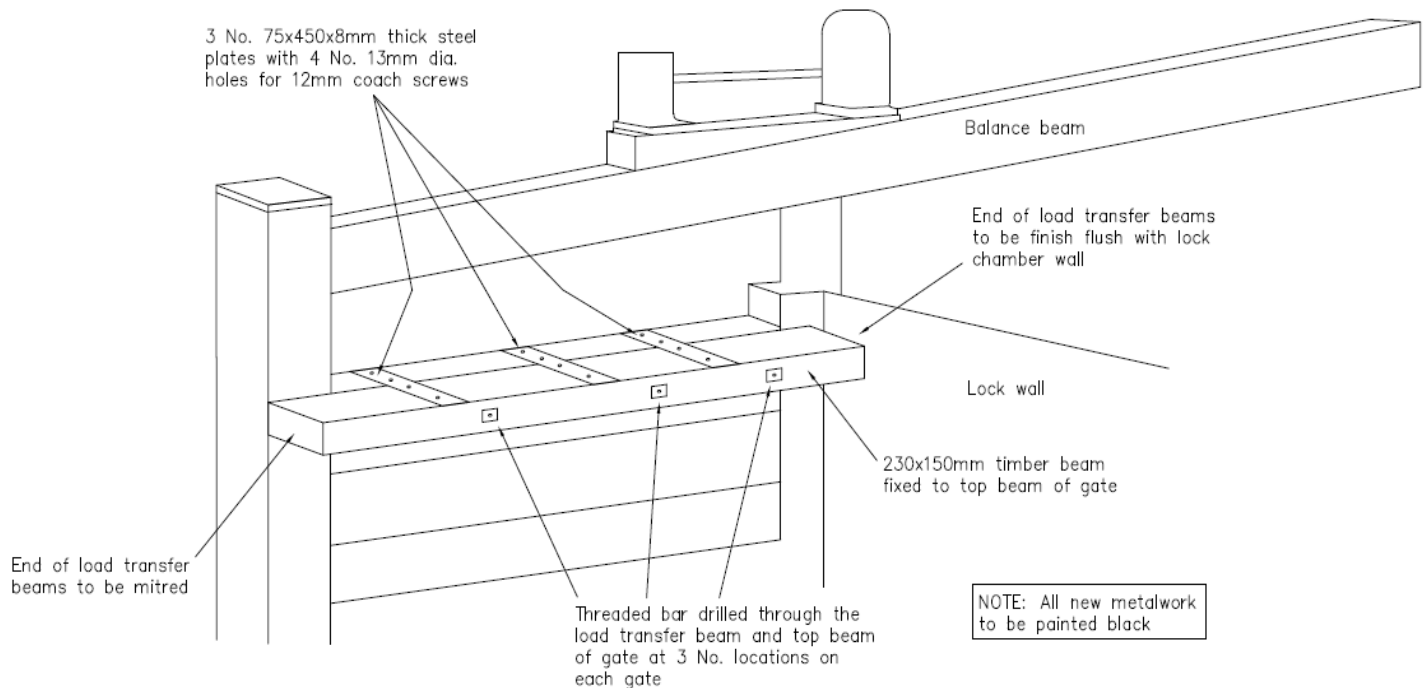
Crossed mitre resulting in major leakage through the gates.

A Listed Building application was submitted for the installation of a simple oak load transfer beam to the gates at Lock 86, and a review of all the lock gates on the Canal through Manchester was undertaken.

At Lock 87, due to significant wear of the mitres from passing boats, our engineers now deem it necessary to install timber inserts down the mating faces of the gate mitres. This element could be considered a like for like oak repair, however in order to reduce the risk of damage to these in the event of a boat striking the gates, the load transfer beams will secure the top of the gates and prevent them crossing, which will reduce the load taken by the inserts.

Lock gates are non-original fabric, being replaced every 25 or so years. Both Lock 86, and in 2014 Lock 88 have had load transfer beams added to the gates following boat strikes. The crossing of the gates is a known and long-standing fault on this Canal, with previous solutions including the installation of large A frames. The Trust wish to be proactive rather than reactive in addressing this fault and install a simple, less visually invasive solution than A frames.

With minor like for like repairs to Lock 87 being planned for January 2020, including resetting the timber cills and fitting oak inserts to the mitres, it is sensible to install the oak load transfer beams at this time.



VIEW ON PROPOSED LOAD TRANSFER BEAM TO LOCK GATE
(2 No. REQUIRED AT TAIL GATES)

Load transfer beam will be fixed to top beam of each gate as shown above. Ends will be flush with lock wall and mitred where they meet.

Beam size is 230 x 150 and will be fixed by 3no flat steel plates across the top and 3 no angles underneath. (Top plates are 100 x 450 x 8mm thick with 4no 13mm dia. Holes), (angles are 70 x 40 with a 13mm hole in each face – longest side fixed to underside of new beam).

All new metalwork will be painted black. Fixings will be 12mm coach screws.



Detail of load transfer beam

Photos of Lock 87 tail gates



It is considered that the timber addition proposed has a **neutral effect** upon the character of the lock, meeting identified operation and safety concerns, whilst using simple and appropriate materials and design.



PHILOSOPHY AND APPROACH TO CREATING AN ACCESSIBLE DEVELOPMENT

The principle behind the installation is to improve the operation and water management of the Rochdale Canal.

KEY ACCESS ISSUES

The works will improve access for canal users as it should increase the safety of this section of the canal.

COMMITMENT TO MAINTAINING A RELEVANT DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

It is confirmed that the issue of access will be considered throughout the development and constructional phases of this project. Works will be undertaken from a work boat.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion it is considered that the proposed installation of an oak load transfer beam is a minor alteration and will not have a deleterious effect on the aesthetic character. It is therefore respectfully requested that this application is approved.

