Supporting Statement

River Irwell Bridge signage

Fixing of a 420x594mm, 6mm depth bronze plaque on each of the following five public road bridges and entrance to one pedestrian footbridge. The five public road bridges are Victoria Bridge, Victoria Street; Blackfriars Bridge, Blackfriars Street; Albert Bridge, Bridge Street West; Irwell Street Bridge, Irwell Street; and Prince's Bridge, Hampton Street. The pedestrian footbridge is Trinity Bridge.

Use

The Mersey Basin Campaign in partnership with the Environment Agency seeks permission to produce and fix bridge signage marking crossings of the River Irwell in central Manchester and Salford.

The River Irwell corridor is undergoing extensive regeneration and the project aims to raise awareness of the river, recognise its significant history and support its regeneration. Many people have little knowledge of the River and the objective is to encourage people to explore the Irwell Corridor. In addition, it is believed that the information contained within the plaque draws attention to the importance of the river to Manchester and is therefore consistent with the City Council's policy objectives of using watercourses as an amenity resource.

Location and access

The specific locations of where the plaques would be sited on the bridges have been determined from guidance provided by Manchester City planning department.

- Victoria Bridge plaque will be located on the upstream / northeast parapet on the Manchester side of the River, at a height of approximately 1150mm above the pavement surface and 215mm below the bridge parapet (see drawing P(0)001).
- Blackfriars bridge plaque will be located on the upstream parapet on the Manchester side of the River at a height of approximately 1350mm above the pavement surface and 550mm below the parapet, in line with the top of the main parapet see drawing P(0)002.
- Trinity Bridge plaque will be located on the brick wall to the right of the bridge entrance on the southern bank of the River (Manchester). The structure of the bridge is unsuitable for fixing a plaque of this design (see drawing P(0)003).
- Albert Bridge plaque will be located on the upstream parapet at a height of 1100 above the pavement surface and 200 below the bridge parapet, lining through to the height of the lower parapet to the left of the street name sign (see drawing P(0)004).
- Irwell Street bridge plaque will be located on the downstream parapet, on the Manchester side at a height of 950mm above the pavement surface and lining through with the top of the Manchester crest plaque (see drawing P(0)005).
- Prince's Street Bridge plaque will be located on the downstream abutment on the Manchester side, the left edge to line through with the edge of the stone work above. (see drawing P(0)006).

The plaques have been designed to be located on the bridges to allow access by pedestrians using the bridge. The plaque size and design including text size has been developed to ensure the signs are accessible and easily read.

Appearance and scale

Victoria Bridge, Blackfriars Bridge and Albert Bridge are early to mid 19th Century sandstone ashlar bridges. Irwell Street Bridge and Prince's Bridge were constructed in the mid to late 19th Century and Trinity footbridge was built in 1995.

The plaques will be 594 x 420 mm in dimension and 6mm depth. The plaques will be made of bronze and attached to the location by 6 pre-drilled fixing points to receive flush finished tamperproof security fixings resin anchored into the stone work.

The materials, fixing and plaque design have been developed to ensure the signage is vandal resistant and will require minimal ongoing maintenance. The plaques will be mounted using security fixing and screws will be set in polyester resin to prevent easy removal. The style and materials used for the plaques has been agreed so as to be sensitive to the existing bridge structure and to create minimal aesthetic impact.

The designs will be engraved on the bronze plaque and include the name 'River Irwell', the name of the bridge, a map showing the course of the River Irwell, indication of the sign location and key landmarks and text relating to the history of the River and Bridge (see drawings P(0)001 – P(0)006.

Details of advice and assistance received from a Planning officer prior to submitting our application

Meeting with Warren Marshall, Urban design and Conservation held on 14/03/2007 to discuss signage design, size and material. The subsequent design brief given to the signage design company, Letterbox Type and Design, was informed by the advice given at this meeting.

Advise on required consents received 06/08/07 via email correspondence. A subsequent meeting was held on 19/12/07 with Richard Llewellyn, Deputy Group leader (City Centre) to provide further guidance on the required consents. Richard Llewellyn advised that the series of bridge plaques should be covered within one advertising consent application. In written correspondence received 22/02/08. Richard Llewellyn provided advice on suitable fixing locations for the bridge plaques. These locations have been specified in the accompanying application.