MOSI

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Overview of Significance

This is an edited version of the full statement of significance in the MOSI Conservation Management Plan.

Liverpool Road Station heritage site comprises a large number of structures and areas which together constitute a very rare example of the development of a working station and railway yard over 150 years. The site includes seven structures listed in their own right, including two at Grade I, one at Grade II* and four at Grade II, as well as yards and spaces between them which are integral to the working and the character of the site. Liverpool Road Station is therefore of national importance.

The official list identifies the structures, not entirely accurately, as follows:

- **Former Liverpool Road Railway Station Master's House**, now Museum of Science and Industry, Liverpool Road. Designed by George Stephenson, 1830. **Grade I** (18.12.1963, amended 18.10.1977). [As the normal interpretation of curtilage applies, **this includes the former Passenger Station and former Shops/Carriage Shed**, curtilage. None of these buildings were designed by George Stephenson.]
- **Railway viaduct linking bridge over River Irwell to Liverpool Road Station, Water Street, 1830. Bridge rebuilt 1905. Grade II** (20.6.1988). [The bridge referred to is the road bridge over Water Street. The road bridge aside, the viaduct was designed by George Stephenson.]
- **Old warehouse to north of former Liverpool Road railway station, Liverpool Road. Designed by George and Robert Stephenson, c.1830. Grade I** (listed on 8.5.1973 as Grade II, upgraded to Grade II* on 18.12.1981 and then regraded to Grade I on 6.6.1994.)
- **Power Hall of the Museum of Science and Industry, Liverpool Road, 1855. Grade II** (6.6.1994).
- **Colonnaded railway viaduct at former Liverpool Road Goods Depot, circa 1870. Grade II** (18.12.1973).
- **Museum of Science and Industry former Lower Byrom Street Warehouse, Lower Byrom Street, 1880. Grade II** (6.6.1994).
- The adjacent skew bridge over the Irwell (designed by George Stephenson) has a Grade I listing.

The significance of the overall site derives from several different values:

Evidential: Cultural Value:

- **World's oldest-surviving passenger station**

The Liverpool Road Passenger Station of 1830 is the only surviving original passenger station from the pioneering phase of railway development and is therefore the oldest passenger station in the world.

- **World's first railway warehouse**

The 1830 Warehouse at Liverpool Road Station is the world's first railway warehouse because it was the first instance where a railway company needed to build its own warehouse. The Liverpool & Manchester Railway planned to carry a wide range of goods, including livestock, food, raw cotton and finished goods, all of which needed appropriate accommodation.

- **Most complete early railway station**

Apart from the 1830 road bridge over Water Street, which was replaced in 1905, all of the original Liverpool Road Station structures survive – the river bridge, the passenger station, the warehouse and the viaduct. Hence, in addition to their individual merits, the original structures have group value rooted in their mutual context. Further cumulative value is provided by the later buildings, which enable architectural comparisons to be made, particularly in relation to the development of the railway warehouse as a building type. The half-Georgian, half-Victorian character of Liverpool Road Station makes it a fascinating microcosm of railway station evolution.

- **Archaeological potential**

As an area of known Roman settlement during the first four centuries AD, the potential for finds of this nature cannot be discounted.

Historic: Illustrative Value

- **Prototype nineteenth century railway station**

As the most ambitious of the pioneering railways, the Liverpool & Manchester Railway provided a blueprint for railway development. Having no direct antecedents to draw on, the Liverpool & Manchester Railway had been forced to take its cues for passenger and goods facilities from the canal and stagecoach operators. The next generation of railway companies was able to model its stations on those of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway, not merely in their initial form, but as modified in response to operational experience.

- **Example of the technical expertise of nineteenth century Manchester building firms**

The original Liverpool Road Station buildings are a testament to the competence and efficiency of their builders. Both the 1830 Warehouse and the Passenger Station had to be built within a five-month period to be ready for the opening of the Railway on 15 September 1830.

- **Exemplifies several aspects of railway innovation**

The Liverpool & Manchester Railway was the first railway to be approved at the outset as a passenger and goods railway, and to be built in accordance.

The Liverpool & Manchester Railway was also the first railway to use steam locomotives to haul both passenger and goods trains, except for the inclined section of line between Crown Street Station and the Wapping docks, where a stationary engine was used.

The Liverpool & Manchester Railway can also be regarded as the first mainline railway because the first step towards the creation of an interlinking railway network was taken when it joined up with the Grand Junction Railway in 1837. Approved in 1833, the Grand Junction Railway was the first 'long-distance' railway, following a 125-kilometre (78-mile) route between Birmingham and Warrington. It met the Liverpool & Manchester Railway at Newton Junction, near Warrington.

- **Inspirational corporate prototype**

The Liverpool & Manchester Railway Act was the most detailed Railway Act to date, and as such formed a model for future Acts. About a third of the Act covered financial matters and the legal responsibilities of directors and shareholders. As both passenger traffic and goods traffic exceeded expectations, the company was an immediate financial success. The value of the £100 shares quickly doubled, and shareholders were soon assured of a regular annual dividend of 9.5%. This success encouraged the revival of a number of railway schemes that had lain dormant. Thus, the Liverpool & Manchester Railway can be characterised as the progenitor of the national mainline railway network. Between 1833 and 1843, 3,680 kilometres (2,300 miles) of railway were authorised, but the peak of 'railway mania' came in 1844-1846 when 255 Acts were passed, representing 7,774 kilometres (4,859 miles) of new track.

- **The interconnection between the railway and industrial development and trade**

Economic motives underpinned the creation of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway. Merchants and manufacturers had become increasingly dissatisfied with the inability of the canals and roads to cope with growing goods traffic and with the costs of goods transport. Railways proved to be economically beneficial, not just by facilitating trade, but also by increasing demand for raw materials that they directly consumed, such as coal, iron and steel. It has been estimated that railway construction created 250,000 labouring jobs and railway operation another 100,000 jobs. Manufacturing industry in general benefited from the extended catchment area for raw materials and the expanded market for finished goods that an improved distribution network brought. This created opportunities for mass production and the associated economies of scale, but at the same time it increased competition.

Historical: Associative Value

- **Association with the leading railway engineer, George Stephenson**

It is widely accepted, even by those who question his engineering inventiveness, that George Stephenson did more than anyone else to establish steam-powered railways as a practical proposition. The construction of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway and the creation of *Rocket*

(jointly with his son, Robert, and Henry Booth), together with the construction of the Stockton & Darlington Railway, certainly rank foremost amongst George Stephenson's achievements.

Aesthetic: Design Value

- **Dramatic contribution to the character of the streetscape**

Liverpool Road Station occupies a prominent site, which is bounded by Liverpool Road, Water Street, Lower Byrom Street and the Granada site. It is the Liverpool Road façade that forms the frontage of the site. The long frontage gives the site an imposing presence and is a characteristic shared by many of the Victorian railway stations that followed. Indeed, the nearby Great Northern Warehouse has the longest Victorian façade in Britain. The overall mass of the station buildings also makes an important contribution to the streetscape, particularly when viewed from one of the operational railway viaducts that cross Castlefield.



Liverpool Road, with Power Hall on right



Junction of Liverpool Road & Lower Byrom Street showing the Power Hall, with the Air and Space Museum (part of MoSI but not part of the Station site) to the right

Communal: Social Value

- **Impact on passenger travel and mobility**

As a cheaper and faster form of transport than the stagecoach or mail coach, the railways made travel accessible to more people. Canal packet boats were forced to offer cheaper rates, but the routes tended to be less convenient and the journeys were very slow.

- **Publicity triumph of opening celebrations**

The opening of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway was a public relations triumph. Propitiously, the opening ceremony attracted a more prestigious guest list than any previous railway opening, epitomised by the agreement of the Duke of Wellington, the current Prime Minister, who was still feted by many as the hero of Waterloo, to preside as chief guest. Large crowds thronged the route, particularly in Liverpool and Manchester. The celebrations turned sour midway through the day when William Huskisson, MP for Liverpool and former president of the Board of Trade, met with a fatal accident when the trains stopped at Parkside to take on water. A further blight was cast on the proceedings by the hostile reaction of some of the crowd gathered in Manchester to the Duke of Wellington, as an opponent of political reform.

- **Valued by the community**

The closure of Liverpool Road Station by British Rail in 1975 was noted by Robert Waterhouse in an article in *The Guardian*.[117] He gloomily wrote that: "Looking forward to the 1980 celebrations of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, it would be pleasant to report that the future of Liverpool Road Station ... was fully assured, but the position is as confused as ever. ... the only certain factor is the station's deteriorating condition." Impatient with Greater Manchester Council's indecisiveness about acquiring the site for museum use, the Manchester branch of the Victorian Society organised

a meeting in December to discuss the future of the Station. This led to the formation of the Liverpool Road Station Society in early 1978. The Society's objectives were to secure the restoration of the buildings for museum use and to promote Liverpool Road Station's inclusion in the 150th anniversary celebrations. Society members were active in both campaigning for the Station's preservation and assisting with preparations for the 1980 Great Railway Exposition. When the Museum opened, the Liverpool Road Station Society was disbanded, but its members were invited to join the Museum's new Friends organisation and some remain Friends today.

Communal: Symbolic Value

- **Inspiration to engineers**

The Liverpool & Manchester Railway was a remarkable achievement in terms of both civil and mechanical engineering. As such it inspired a young generation of engineers, including James Nasmyth (1808-1890). The Museum has a sketch that Nasmyth made of Liverpool Road Station.

- **Inspiration to writers**

One of the famous guests at the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway was the poet Alfred Tennyson, later Lord Tennyson and poet laureate. He later drew on his impressions for a line in his poem *Locksley Hall, which* was published in 1842, but written in about 1838. The line runs: "Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change". As a beacon of change, railways continued to inspire nineteenth-century writers, including Mrs Gaskell (in *Mary Barton*) and Charles Dickens (most notably in *Dombey and Son*).

- **Inspiration to artists**

In his seminal work *Art and the Industrial Revolution*, Francis Klingender notes that the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway "became a national sensation, stimulating the publication of prints in unprecedented quantities, to say nothing of commemorative medals, mugs and jugs, printed handkerchiefs, jigsaw puzzles .... No engineering work had ever been so well documented before. None would be so well documented again until Crystal Palace in 1851."[118]

Schedule of Significance

The individual buildings, structures and areas do not have the same level of significance when assessed separately. These elements, and separate components of these elements, have been assessed on their intactness, their special interest, and their contribution to the wider significance of the site. There are four levels of significance as well as Neutral and Intrusive grades.

Level A:Very High Level of Significance

The element has international significance. The element is relatively intact, has a very high level of special interest and is vital to the wider significance of the site.

Level B:High Level of Significance

The element has national significance. The element is relatively intact, has a special interest or makes an important contribution to the wider significance of the site.

Level C:Medium Level of Significance

The element has been altered, has less special interest or its contribution to the wider significance of the site is less important.

Level D: Low Level of Significance

The element has been significantly altered, has a low level of integrity, the special interest has been lost or it makes little contribution to the wider significance of the site.

Neutral: The element is historically unimportant or has a neutral visual impact on the surrounding buildings.

Intrusive: The element is historically unimportant and has a negative physical or visual impact on the surrounding structure.

Element	**Significance**
Building 1: Station Master's House	
Overall	**B**
- Original exterior structure	B
- Original interior structure	B
- Later interior partition walls	D

Element	Significance
- Backyard	C
Building 2A Passenger Station in the Station Building	
- Original exterior structure	A
- Original interior structure	A
- Later reconstructed elements of interior	C
Building 2B: Carriage Shed & Shops in Station Building	
Overall	**B**
- Rebuilt exterior structure	B
- Office shell	Neutral
- Store shell	Neutral
- Rebuilt interior structure	B
- Office interior walls and fixtures	Neutral
- Alterations and insertions for exhibition	Neutral
Building 3: 1830 Warehouse	
Overall	**A**
- Original exterior structure	A
- Modern glazing and automatic doors	Neutral
- Ramps	Neutral
- Original interior structure	A
- Secondary offices and lifting equipment	B
- Steel and concrete frame and floors (Bay 5 only)	Intrusive

Element	Significance
- Steel and glass stairwells	Neutral
- Roof insulation	Neutral
- Sluice room (Basement, Bay 5)	Neutral
- Toilets (Ground Floor, Bay 2)	Neutral
Building 4: Power Hall	
Overall	**B**
- Original exterior structure	B
- Original interior structure	B
- Glass infill of exterior entrances	Neutral
- Roller-shutter doors	D
- Internal overhead crane	C
Building 5: Curatorial Centre	
Overall	**C**
- Original exterior structure	C
- Original interior structure	C
- Later interior and exterior alterations	Neutral
Building 6: Main Building	
Overall	**B**
- Original exterior structure	B
- Brick, steel and glass entrance extension (north-east corner)	Neutral
- Steel and glass stair and lift tower (south-west corner). 2 steel and glass stair and lift towers (southern elevation) added 2010.	Neutral

Element	Significance
- Steel and mesh fire escape (north-west corner)	Neutral
- Internal staircases	Neutral
- Interior walls and fixtures	Neutral
- Altered floors	Neutral
Building 7: Toilet Block	
Overall	**Neutral**
- Brick toilet block	Neutral
Building 8: Visitor Services	
Overall	**Intrusive**
- Brick structure	Intrusive
Building 9: Gatehouse and Barriers	
Overall	**Intrusive**
- Gatehouse (removed 2012), gates and barriers	Intrusive
Structure 1: 1830 Viaduct	
Overall	**A**
- Original structure	A
- Secondary exterior brick walls and boarding	B
- Interior partition walls and doors	Neutral
- Floors	Neutral
- Staircases, stairwells and lift	Neutral

Structure 2: 1867 Viaduct and Colonnades	
Overall	**B**
- Original structure	B
- Store, office and workshop shells	Neutral
- Tarmac paths	Neutral
- Interior walls and fixtures	Neutral
- Concrete floors	Neutral
- Steam boiler house, added 2011	Neutral
Structure 3: Vehicle Ramp	
Overall	**Neutral**
- Vehicle ramp	Neutral
Area 1: Upper Yard	
Overall	**C**
- Stone sett floor	C
- Rail lines	C
- Tarmac paths and parking bays	Neutral
- Metal fencing	Neutral
- Telephone kiosk	Neutral
- Train platform and shelter	Neutral
- Aqueduct valve and compound	Neutral
- Crane Gantry	C
- Service pits	C

Area 2: Lower Yard	
Overall	**C**
- Stone sett floor	C
- Spiral staircase	Neutral
- Sub-station	Neutral
- Tarmac paths	Neutral
Area 3: Ramp from Liverpool Road to Upper Yard	
Overall	**Neutral**
- Pedestrian ramp and garden	Neutral

The above tables, together with the following plans identifying the significance of the Buildings, Structures and Areas, document that the most important buildings and structures, those assessed at a Very High Level, are clustered to the western end of the site. The Medium and High Level buildings and structures are distributed throughout the site. The Neutral and Intrusive structures and buildings are located in the south central and eastern sections of the site, reflecting higher levels of interventions, alterations and extensions found in these areas. The south-western section of the site contains only High and Very High buildings and structures, reflecting both the historic importance of the structures, but also reflecting the high levels of restoration, and low levels of alterations, extensions and interventions to these structures.

Although the two major areas, the Upper and Lower Yards, have been assessed at the same level of significance, Medium, the Upper Yard is significantly later in date compared with the 1830 origin of the Lower Yard. The Upper Yard has also lost more of the elements which documented its use as a rail goods yard such as turntables, whereas the Lower Yard always functioned as storage area and transhipment area to road wagons, and has consequently lost less original elements.

Issues and Vulnerability

This is an edited extract from the full Conservation Management Plan

- **Impact of twentieth century additions and alterations**

Alterations made for the early conversion of the buildings to Museum use lack some of the quality of work which could be expected for buildings of such importance. Some additions or new buildings were built so like the existing historic buildings that differentiation for the public is difficult.



Upper Yard and Lower Byrom Street entrance, with crossing from Main Building to Power Hall

- **Poor visual quality of gatehouse and barriers**

The gatehouse and barriers were necessary to restrict access whilst admission was charged to the site. These barriers give a negative impression to visitors, making it difficult for them to identify the entrance to the Museum.

In 2012, a decision was made to cease the use of the Upper Yard for visitor car parking, in order to allow greater appreciation of the historic setting, to improve safety by reducing conflicting movements between vehicles and pedestrians, and to improve security by restricting public access through the perimeter at the eastern end of the site to the main entrance and cafe. Subsequently the gatehouse was demolished and the barriers removed. The gates remain in place and still give a negative impression to visitors, blocking the view down the site and across to the Lower Campfield Market (Air & Space Hall).