

## **1.0 Introduction**

This analysis of Heritage Merit and Heritage Need within the Liverpool World Heritage Site was commissioned by Liverpool City Council in December 2004. It supplements the very full historical account of the historical development and historical significance of Liverpool which is contained in the Nomination Document published in 2003. The present study was carried out by Neil Burton and Lydia Wilson of the Architectural History Practice Ltd. between January and April 2005. In addition to this printed report the study consists of an computerised database, with information about the status of all buildings within the World Heritage Site, and digitised maps showing the present 'at risk' status of listed buildings and buildings of Merit.

The Architectural History Practice is an architectural history consultancy with a wide spread of in-house expertise and experience. Projects completed include characterisation reports for historic town centres, conservation area appraisals, studies of particular building types, conservation plans for nationally important sites; providing historical input for major development schemes and advising public, commercial and private owners in cases of listed building and conservation area consents. Recent clients include English Heritage, The Corporation of London, the Westminster City Council and Manchester City Council.

Neil Burton is a Director of the practice and an architectural historian with over thirty years experience, as an historian with the Greater London Council Historic Buildings Division, as an Inspector of Historic Buildings within English Heritage and, more recently, as Secretary of the Georgian Group, one of the national architectural Amenity Societies. He has published a number of works on historic buildings and is a director or trustee of several heritage organisations.

The original brief for the study was prepared by John Hinchliffe, the Liverpool World Heritage Officer and developed in discussion between Neil Burton, John Hinchliffe and Bob Hawkins, the leader of the Heritage Protection North Team of English Heritage.

## **2.0 Background**

This study is intended to supplement the very full assessment of the history and character of the Liverpool World Heritage area provided in the Nomination Document and Management Plan, both published in 2003. The assessment of the heritage merit and heritage need of buildings within the World Heritage Site partially implements Actions 3.4.4, 4.1.1 and 5.3.1 of the Management Plan, which provide for the a buildings at risk survey of all buildings within the site, a comprehensive townscape appraisal for the city centre and a schedule of inappropriate buildings.

## **3.0 The Purpose of the Study**

This study has been carried out to fulfil the following purposes:

1. To identify which buildings and areas within the World Heritage Site are in most need of investment and resources to overcome problems of inadequate maintenance and repair of historic building fabric.
2. To identify those buildings which are of heritage merit, when considered against a wide range of criteria, and for which every effort should be made to preserve and enhance
3. To identify those buildings which make a negative contribution to the urban landscape, to act as the basis for discussions for their long-term replacement.
4. To give clarity to all concerned on the current status and category of all buildings within the World Heritage Site.
5. To provide baseline data for monitoring levels of protection and change in the World Heritage Site, as UNESCO's World Heritage Committee require that all World Heritage sites should submit periodic monitoring reports.
6. To meet the Vision, Objectives and Action Plan of the World Heritage Site Management Plan.
7. To assist Liverpool City Council and other public agencies to meet their responsibilities in the management of their portfolios of historic buildings.

#### 4.0 Criteria for assessing the Heritage Merit of individual buildings

The World Heritage Site contains a large number of listed buildings. All listed buildings are by definition of some heritage merit. It has been agreed by English Heritage that brief statements of significance indicating the reasons for awarding listed status and grading, will eventually be prepared for all listed buildings. Broad criteria for the assessment of the merit of listed historic buildings have just been issued for consultation by the Department for Culture Media and Sport and will be finalised in due course. The present study shows all buildings in the World Heritage Site which are currently listed, with their current listing grades. The responsibility for reviewing the lists now rests with English Heritage.

The brief for this study suggested the following seven criteria for assessing the heritage merit of unlisted buildings:

Date; Historic significance; Character; Materials; Authenticity; Scale Building materials; Skylines & roofscapes; Locally distinctive buildings; Prominence.

The brief also suggested that the seven principles of Urban Design set out in the publication *By Design*, issued by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment in 2000, should be taken into account. Those principles are:

1.Character; 2.Continuity of enclosure; 3.Quality of the public realm; 4.Ease of movement; 5.Legibility; 6.Adaptability;7.Diversity:

For the sake of simplicity and clarity, in this study the criteria for assessing the heritage merit of unlisted buildings have been reduced to five criteria.

1. Date  
All buildings erected before 1914 are considered worthy of inclusion  
After 1914 only selected and representative examples are included.
2. Character  
Buildings of some architectural interest by reason of their design, materials, construction, or as examples of a particular building type.
3. Historic Significance  
Buildings, structures or monuments associated with historic events, or persons or with particular aspects of local or national culture or relevant to the World Heritage Site values set out in the Nomination Document.

4. Scale

Buildings which by reason of their scale and location contribute positively to the character of the World Heritage Site, regardless of their date or other criteria for Heritage Merit. In some cases this may include structures which have been extensively modernized

5. Prominence

Buildings or structures which have landmark value within the World Heritage Site or within one of the six character areas.

Neutral Buildings are buildings which do not contribute positively to the character area, but do not detract from it.

Negative Buildings are buildings which are considered to have a negative impact upon the historic townscape. This may be by reason of inappropriate character, scale or materials.

## 5.0 Criteria for Assessing Heritage Need

Since 1996 English Heritage has regularly published registers of certain categories of buildings at risk and has encouraged local planning authorities and other bodies concerned with the historic estate to prepare similar lists. Risk is assessed on the basis condition and occupancy. Buildings capable of beneficial use are at risk if they are in very bad condition or poor condition and vacant or only partly occupied. Buildings, monuments and other structures incapable of beneficial use (like street sculpture) are at risk if they are in very bad or poor condition.

For the purposes of its registers, English Heritage has identified six categories of risk, ranked below in decreasing order of urgency.

- A. Immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric; no solution agreed
- B. Immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric: solution agreed but not implemented.
- C. Slow decay: no solution agreed
- D. Slow decay: solution agreed but not implemented.
- E. Under repair or in fair to good repair, but no user identified, or under threat of vacancy with no obvious new user.
- F. Repair scheme in progress and end use or user identified.

For present purposes a simpler classification is appropriate, which does not require knowledge of potential repair schemes. In this study the following classification has been used.

- A. At Risk; in bad condition or in poor condition and vacant
- B. Vulnerable; in poor condition and occupied or partly-occupied, or in fair condition and vacant
- C. Not obviously at risk; in fair condition and fully or partly occupied

## 6.0 Individual Character Area Appraisals

In this section of the report each of the six character areas of the Liverpool World Heritage Site is separately described and assessed. A short illustrated written description is supplemented by a print-out of the database for the area and by one or two maps.

For each individual building the database shows:

Character Area

Building Name

Building Number

Address

Heritage Merit Status

(Listed = I, II\*, II; Heritage Merit = M; Neutral; Negative.

Heritage Merit Criteria

(1 = date; 2 = character; 3 = historic significance; 4 = scale;  
5 = prominence)

Heritage Need/At Risk Status

(A = at risk; B = vulnerable; C = not at risk)

The maps show:

- a) The Listed Buildings, Buildings of Merit, Neutral Buildings and Buildings of Negative Effect.
- b) Listed Buildings and Buildings of Merit at risk or vulnerable

