

Part 3:

Statement of Significance



Dale Street, Liverpool © Frank Green

John Lennon and Paul McCartney - In My Life 1966

*There are places I'll remember all my life,
Though some have changed,
Some forever, not for better,
Some have gone and some remain.*

*All these places had their moments,
With lovers and friends I still can recall,
Some are dead and some are living,
In my life I've loved them all.*

Part 3: Statement of Significance

3.1 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

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3.1 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Introduction

- 3.1.1 The City of Liverpool is without doubt a historic city of international standing and significance. It is celebrated globally for its historical and contemporary cultural achievements in the fields of music and sport, but its outstanding universal value stems from its historic role as an eminent international seaport from the early 18th century to the early 20th century and the surviving urban landscape that testifies to that role.
- 3.1.2 The period from the early 18th to the early 20th century saw fundamental, worldwide changes in human society. Liverpool played a major role in these changes, particularly through its involvement in the development of world trade; the Industrial Revolution; the growth of the British Empire; and the mass movement of people, particularly to the New World.
- 3.1.3 Liverpool was also a pioneering city and its tradition of innovative development made it an international leader in the fields of dock technology, port management, building construction methods and transport systems.
- 3.1.4 The nominated site is a complete and integral urban landscape that encompasses much of the very heart of the City of Liverpool and provides tangible and coherent evidence of the city's historic character and significance.
- 3.1.5 The nominated site contains a number of internationally significant architectural assemblages including the Pier Head Group, the William Brown Street Civic Buildings, the Docks and Warehouses and the Commercial Centre. In addition to the architectural legacy, the nominated site has a rich cultural legacy of historical and cultural collections.
- 3.1.6 The spirit of innovation and ambition that characterised Liverpool's historic rapid rise to eminence still prevails in the city today and the ongoing regeneration and renewal initiatives are seeking to return Liverpool to a position as a world city. At the turn of the 21st century, the city is at the forefront of the urban regeneration movement and contains many examples of pioneering and successful approaches to urban regeneration in a historic context. The inscription of the nominated site would be a major step in the continued regeneration of the city.

Liverpool's Role in World History

Development of World Trade

- 3.1.7 Global trading is one of the hallmarks of modern history. Early sea exploration from Europe had opened up many new markets, first with Africa and the Americas, then India, the Far East and Australasia. The rapid expansion of world trade since the 18th century can be largely traced to two factors: the Industrial Revolution and the growth of the European imperial powers.
- 3.1.8 The scale of Britain's international trade grew exponentially as the Industrial Revolution gathered pace, and Liverpool was, through innovation, location and ambition, able to capture a huge share of that trade. Up until the mid 18th century, Britain's major commercial ports were London and Bristol, but during the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries, Liverpool flourished and quickly became Britain's leading provincial commercial port and Europe's foremost transatlantic port. By the middle of the 19th century over 40% of the world's output of traded manufactured goods was produced in Britain and over 25% of international trade was conducted through Britain. Britain was only able to achieve this pre-eminent status because of its transport infrastructure and port facilities. Liverpool's vast and innovative port and commercial facilities were critical to Britain's economic development, especially the growth in its international trade.
- 3.1.9 The scale of Liverpool's role in Britain's development, and in world trade in general, should not be underestimated. Between 1780 and 1830 the revenues of the Port of Liverpool increased forty times over, making it the most important port in Britain and the Empire to be administered by a single Port Authority. The port had grown to such eminence that by the end of the 19th century a third of the total shipping in Britain was conducted through Liverpool and one seventh of the entire world's shipping was registered in Liverpool. Throughout the 19th century, the port was also the most significant transatlantic port in Europe.
- 3.1.10 Liverpool made a key contribution to maintaining Britain's involvement in world trade during World War II, not only because the merchant shipping that was based in Liverpool continued to supply the nation with food, other domestic supplies and armaments, but also because the Combined Operations Headquarters, controlling the Western Approaches, was based in Exchange Buildings from 1941. The Battle of the Atlantic was the longest running campaign of the war, and the allied defence relied heavily on the co-ordination of convoys and their escorts from Liverpool and the rapid mobilisation of naval ships and aircraft from nearby Hooton Park and other airfields.

The Industrial Revolution

- 3.1.11 Britain was the first country to undergo radical industrial transformation and the Industrial Revolution was well established by the late 18th century. The Industrial Revolution was not marked by a single event, nor does it have a specific start date. However, it had its origins in cultural, social and economic shifts that occurred throughout Britain and Europe during the early and mid-18th century.

- 3.1.12 As the Industrial Revolution gathered pace in the 18th century, Liverpool's ambitious port developments left it well placed to support, and take advantage of, the growing manufacturing industries in northern and central England. Liverpool handled the lion's share of trade emanating from these pioneering new industries, as well as supplying much of their raw material. Liverpool was influential in enabling the growth of a number of internationally significant centres of industrial production, including: cotton in Lancashire; wool in Yorkshire (as exemplified by the World Heritage Site at Saltaire); salt and chemical extraction in Cheshire; ceramics in Staffordshire and iron in Shropshire (as exemplified by the World Heritage Site at Ironbridge).
- 3.1.13 As well as directly aiding these industries through exporting and importing material, Liverpool provided vital supplies of food and building materials needed to support the growing populations of the new urban centres in the north of England.

The Growth of the British Empire

- 3.1.14 The British Empire was, at its peak, a vast conglomeration of disparate dominions and colonies held together by Britain's naval dominance and mercantile strength. Liverpool, with its role in the growth of world trade and the development of the Industrial Revolution, was a significant factor in the success of the British Empire. The role Liverpool played as the largest provincial port city in Britain, and as the leading transatlantic port in Europe, was crucial to the Empire's growth. Liverpool also supplied much-needed expertise and technology to the colonial ports.

The Mass Movement of People

- 3.1.15 As well as trade in goods, Liverpool has a long tradition of transporting people, as emigrants and as slaves and during wartime.
- 3.1.16 The slave trade was hugely influential in the economic success of the western world in the 18th and 19th centuries. The Portuguese were the first to capture native Africans and forcibly transport them for labour in the 15th century. Other European countries soon joined the exploitation, and the early exponents from Britain were the merchants from London and Bristol. It was they who established the infamous 'Triangle Trade' between Europe, Africa and America: from Britain, manufactured goods were taken to Africa; from Africa, slaves were transported to the Americas and the Caribbean; and from the Americas and the Caribbean, sugar, cotton and rum (amongst other goods) returned to Britain. By the mid 18th century Liverpool merchants had assumed dominance in the trade. Between 1699 and 1807, Liverpool's traders transported 1,364,930 African captives in 5,249 voyages, compared to London's 744,721 in 3,047 voyages and Bristol's 481,487 in 2,126 voyages.
- 3.1.17 The immorality and vileness of the slave trade cannot be denied, but through the cruel and enforced trade in people, the social, cultural and racial mix of human society has become radically altered; the repercussions of which are still to be felt today. Liverpool played a significant role in the trade and ultimately this role has had a profound effect on modern human society. Liverpool is not proud of the role it played in the slave trade - the City of Liverpool has offered its unconditional apology and participates in an annual Day of Atonement.

- 3.1.18 As well as the despair of the slave trade, Liverpool also offered hope to millions of people as they sought new lives across the world. The first emigrants to pass through Liverpool were the 18th century European settlers on their way to the Caribbean to establish the sugar plantations, or to mainland America to found new colonies. Later, during the 19th century, Liverpool dominated the European emigration routes to the United States of America. Of the 5.5 million emigrants who crossed the Atlantic from Britain between 1860 and 1900, 4.75 million sailed from Liverpool. Of the 482,829 emigrants who sailed from Europe to the United States in 1887, 199,441 sailed from Liverpool, and of these, 68,819 were continental Europeans, 62,252 were British and 68,370 were Irish. The scale of emigration from Liverpool peaked in 1904 at around 270,000 people. The last major episode of mass movement of people from Liverpool was during World War II when a total of 1,747,505 service personnel passed through Liverpool's docks on their way to, and from, various theatres of war.
- 3.1.19 Liverpool's role in the mass movement of people has had a profound effect on the cultural, social and racial make-up of the world. Few, if any, other port cities have had such a sustained and influential role on the lives of so many people and the development of so many nations.

Liverpool's Tradition of Innovative Development

Pioneering Dock Technology

- 3.1.20 Liverpool's success was due to many factors, including the port's determination to keep ahead of its international competitors in the development and deployment of innovative technology. In 1715 the Town Corporation opened the world's first commercial enclosed wet dock. This overcame the natural limitations of the river and was a key catalyst in Liverpool's growth. The 'Old Dock', as the 1715 dock became known, was only the first of a rapid succession of new additions. By the end of the 18th century a further five docks had been built and by the end of the 19th century 120 hectares of enclosed docks had been constructed along a seven-mile length of the Mersey.
- 3.1.21 Many of these docks incorporated innovative and pioneering technological ideas that were subsequently copied and adopted in ports around the world. These included:
- ◆ The construction of dockside warehousing (Duke's Dock 1783);
 - ◆ The fireproof construction of warehouses;
 - ◆ The first installation of hydraulic cargo handling machinery in 1847.
- 3.1.22 Perhaps most importantly the continuous evolution of dock construction techniques, such as retaining wall construction, was made possible by Liverpool's continuous engagement in dock construction and reconstruction.

Port Management

- 3.1.23 Liverpool was a leader in the management of docks. The city was the first port to utilise a major non-profit-making board, the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board (MDHB) (founded 1857), to manage the growth and development of the docks. The port had also seen the

appointment in 1824 of the world's first full-time salaried civilian dock engineer, Jesse Hartley (in office 1824-1860). He and his successor, George Fosbery Lyster (in office 1861-1897) played key roles in the development of dock engineering and broader engineering management. The dock engineers that trained under Hartley and Lyster carried their methods around the world to ports as diverse as: Alexandria, Bombay, Buenos Aires and Fremantle, further promoting Liverpool's eminent position and aiding the development of other internationally important ports.

Building Construction Methods

3.1.24 Many buildings in Liverpool demonstrate significant technological innovations. The remarkable commercial expansion of the city attracted entrepreneurs who were willing to invest in innovative and potentially more profitable enterprises and buildings. Key examples include:

- ◆ Oriel Chambers (1864) was one of the first office buildings to be clad in glazed curtain-wallings;
- ◆ The Royal Liver Building (1911) was one of the earliest and most innovative multi storey reinforced concrete office building in the world;
- ◆ The Martins Bank Building (1927-32) is an early example of a completely ducted office and of a low temperature ceiling heating system;
- ◆ The Royal Insurance Buildings (1897-1903), the Tower Buildings (1906) and the Stanley Dock Tobacco Warehouse (1901) were amongst the earliest large steel-framed buildings in England;
- ◆ Lime Street Station (1851), at the time of its construction, was the world's largest iron spanned structure of its kind and its surviving replacement, the north shed (1868), was briefly the largest span in the world.

Transport Systems

3.1.25 Although Liverpool did not play a pre-eminent role in the development of new transport technologies it did pioneer the use of new technologies in the service of trade and industry. The city was often the first, or one of the earliest users, of new technologies and was particularly adept at expanding the use of existing technologies. Liverpool played a crucial role in the development of three key transport technologies: canals, railways and road tunnels.

Canals

3.1.26 The importance of canals was recognised at an early stage by Liverpool and the development of the Sankey Brook Navigation, the first man-made canal in England and the first commercial canal in the world, was assisted by the Liverpool Dock Trustees, Liverpool Corporation and Liverpool merchants. More significant was Liverpool's involvement in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, designed to link the industrial heartlands and coalfields of Lancashire and Yorkshire with the Liverpool Docks. Construction of the canal began in 1770 and was finally completed in 1816. The final link to Stanley Dock was completed in 1848. It was, at 127.25 miles (c.204km), the longest single canal in England,

and also the most profitable. The Bridgewater, Trent and Mersey and Ellesmere Canals were also constructed primarily to carry goods to and from Liverpool.

Railways

- 3.1.27 The development of the railways fundamentally changed the economy of Britain, and ultimately the world. They had a greater all-round impact than canals and created deep social changes alongside the economic shifts. Liverpool was at the forefront of the development of the use of rail. The Liverpool and Manchester Railway was opened on the 15th September 1830 and was the world's first commercial railway to carry passengers, goods and mail. The railway was also the first to be double-track throughout and entirely steam hauled. The railway's gauge of 4 feet 8.5 inches (c.1.42m) has also been adopted on a near-universal basis by all other railways. The railway set the pattern for the development of all other mainline railways of the 19th century.
- 3.1.28 The railway originally terminated at Edge Hill, some 2km east of the current terminus at Lime Street. This location led to the development of a series of remarkable railway tunnels and cuttings from Edge Hill to Wapping Dock, later to Lime Street and finally to Waterloo/Princes Docks. These tunnels and cuttings between the docks, the heart of the city and the original railway, exemplify the manner in which Liverpool utilised and adapted technology to suit its needs and to support the commercial activity of the city.
- 3.1.29 The Mersey Railway Tunnel was not the first, nor the longest, steam railway tunnel when it was opened in 1886. However, in 1903 it became the first under-water electrified railway in the world. Liverpool continued the development of electric railways with the opening of the world's first electric overhead railway in 1893. The overhead railway included a host of innovative features, which were copied by similar urban railways around the world.

Road Tunnel

- 3.1.30 The Queensway Road Tunnel under the Mersey was opened on 18 July 1934. At 2.13 miles (c.3.4km) in length, it was at the time of its opening, the longest under-water road tunnel in the world. What truly sets it apart from other tunnels is the aesthetic beauty of its visible architecture. The main art deco style portal and two of the ventilation shafts lie within the nominated site and are outstanding examples of the combination of art, form and functionality, achieved by the Liverpool architect Herbert Rowse.

The Nominated Site's Urban Landscape

- 3.1.31 The nominated site encompasses much of the heart of the City of Liverpool and includes the outstanding dock complexes. The site is a unique urban landscape that bears testament to Liverpool's historic, technological and social significance as well as demonstrating the city's 800 years of urban evolution. In particular, it demonstrates the 200 years of bold innovation and mercantile growth that characterised Liverpool's development from the early 18th century to the early 20th century. The urban landscape comprises a rich architectural legacy, historic and authentic townscape and an evolved historical layout. Some degradation of these has occurred in the 20th century because of war and modernisation, but this has not obliterated the all-pervading historic townscape, layout and fabric of the Site.

- 3.1.32 The scale, quality and diversity of the site's remarkable collection of mercantile, civic and industrial buildings are tangible evidence of the wealth and power of Liverpool's merchants and trading partners. This urban landscape contains a number of key elements and architectural ensembles that, in many respects, can be considered to be of outstanding universal value in their own right.

The Pier Head Waterfront

- 3.1.33 The focal point for Liverpool's waterfront is the Pier Head and in particular the group of three buildings of the early 20th century, namely the Royal Liver Building, the Cunard Building and the Port of Liverpool Building. They form a dramatic manifestation of Liverpool's historical significance and provide an instantly recognisable icon for the city and the nominated site. Their vast scale, so pioneering for Europe at the time, allows them to dominate the waterfront when approaching Liverpool by ship. They were a statement of optimism and ambition; and they still capture the attention of all who pass by.

The Warehouses

- 3.1.34 Prior to the introduction of steam-ships and railways, delivery and collection arrangements for perishable goods were unreliable, and so warehouses were vital buildings for the storage of those goods at the port. The nominated site contains a broad and comprehensive collection of warehouses dating from the 18th century to the 20th century. An example of a purpose-built warehouse adjacent to a merchant's house, is the c.1799 warehouse at 57 Parr Street adjacent to Thomas Parr's Palladian mansion. Only the foundations survive of the pioneering 1783 Duke's Dock warehouses, which were the first secure dockside warehouses, but the concept was refined further at the iconic complexes of Albert Dock, Stanley Dock, Wapping Dock and Waterloo Dock
- 3.1.35 The surviving examples of these warehouses and dock complexes are one of the most instantly recognisable aspects of the site's architectural form and urban landscape. As an ensemble, they supply tangible evidence of Liverpool's innovative traditions and form a discrete link with Liverpool's historic role as an eminent port city.

The Architecture of the Commercial Centre

- 3.1.36 Liverpool as an eminent port needed an infrastructure of commercial offices, banks and exchanges to support its trading activities. The commercial centre of Liverpool contains a fabulous assemblage of predominantly 19th century buildings, built to service the needs of Liverpool as well as to impress its clients and competitors. These commercial buildings are focused around Castle Street, Dale Street and Victoria Street, and they exhibit an eclectic range of architectural styles drawing their inspiration from trading nations across the globe. Key examples include the Greek Revival-style Bank of England and the Eastern influenced Adelphi Bank on Castle Street.
- 3.1.37 The eclectic mix of styles, the ambitious designs and the exuberant decoration of the buildings in the Commercial Centre are a celebration and manifestation of the city's wealth and trading links. As an ensemble they form one of the finest collections of commercial architecture from the era of the British Empire.

The Civic and Cultural Buildings

- 3.1.38 The nominated site contains an outstanding ensemble of civic and cultural buildings including the Town Hall (1754), the Municipal Buildings (1860-66) and Bluecoat Chambers (1717). The most impressive are the William Brown Street group, containing St. George's Hall (1840- 55), William Brown Museum and Library (1857-60), Walker Art Gallery (1877), Picton Reading Room and Hornby Library (1875-79 and 1906), County Sessions House (1882-84) and the College of Technology and Museum Extension (1898-1909). St. George's Hall is widely acclaimed as perhaps the finest single piece of European neo-classical architecture and together all the buildings in the group make the William Brown Street group arguably the finest ensemble of 19th century neoclassical architecture in the world.
- 3.1.39 All the civic and cultural buildings in the site, taken together as a whole, are remarkable representations of the civic pride and spirit of Liverpool in the 19th and 20th century. They are direct tangible evidence of the wealth and ambition of the city and its eminent status in the British Empire and wider world.

The Domestic Buildings

- 3.1.40 Most of the original residential buildings of the nominated site have been displaced by commercial buildings over the last 200 years, with many of the merchants moving into the Canning area to the east in the early/mid 19th century. However, the nominated site does have some good examples of buildings of the late 18th and 19th centuries that were originally in domestic use, with a particular concentration around Duke Street. These include the terraced artisans' houses at 17-25 (odd) Duke Street and the grand merchant's house of Thomas Parr on Colquitt Street. There are also a few isolated examples of originally domestic premises in the Dale Street Commercial Centre, notably 135-9 Dale Street and 7 Union Street.

The Nominated Site's Historical and Cultural Collections

Historical Collections

- 3.1.41 Repositories in the nominated site hold a number of unique historical collections that add considerable value to the site's historical significance. These include the Merseyside Maritime Museum's collection of merchant shipping records, a complete set of minute books of the Dock Trustees from 1793 and an almost complete record of the transactions of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board from 1858 onwards.
- 3.1.42 The Liverpool Record Office holds extensive collections of archives and local study materials, dating from 13th century to the present and which are of international significance, charting the growth of Liverpool and the movement of people through it. The collections of photographs by E Chambre Hardman at the Records Office and Rodney Street and by Stewart Bale at the Maritime Museum are unique and comprehensive visual records of Liverpool's cultural traditions during the 20th century. These collections taken together supply direct primary evidence of Liverpool's key periods of historical development and significance.

Cultural Collections

- 3.1.43 The mercantile wealth of Liverpool enabled the creation of many exceptional collections of fine art, objects and books from around the world. These were mostly collected privately and were subsequently donated to the city. For instance, the collections of medieval manuscripts and rare books at the Central Library have been amassed since 1856. The collection has many rare and beautiful works of outstanding importance, including the "double elephant folio" of Audubon's Birds of America. Liverpool's role as a seaport was also instrumental in enabling collectors to travel the world and amass material, for example Arnold Ridyard (Chief Engineer of the Elder Dempster shipping line) bequeathed 2,500 ethnographical objects, reflecting the many ports of call of Elder Dempster ships.
- 3.1.44 The collection of over 1,000 ship models at the Merseyside Maritime Museum comprises one of the finest collections of its kind in the world. The Museum houses major collections of marine paintings, vessels and other important artifacts relating to the shipping and seafaring communities of the City as well as material relating to emigration and slavery. These reflect Liverpool's role as a major seaport and the spiritual home of the British Merchant Navy. The Conservation Centre is internationally recognised as a centre of conservation expertise in various techniques such as laser technology for the treatment and preservation of sculpture.
- 3.1.45 The collections all demonstrate Liverpool's international connections and cultural traditions. They supply considerable material evidence of the wealth, power and importance of the city throughout the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries and form a major component of the Site's historic significance.

3.2 NOMINATION CRITERIA

Liverpool - Maritime Mercantile City is proposed for inscription as "The supreme example of a commercial port at the time of Britain's greatest global influence".

- 3.2.1 The nominated site is a complete and integral urban landscape that provides coherent evidence of Liverpool's historic character and bears testament to its exceptional historic significance.
- 3.2.2 The site is nominated for inscription under the following three criteria:

Criterion (ii) The nominated site exhibits an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, townplanning or landscape design

- 3.2.3 Liverpool was an innovator and pioneer in many fields, especially dock technology, port management and transport systems. One of Liverpool's most significant achievements was the construction in 1715 of the Old Dock, the world's first commercial enclosed wet dock. This was the beginning of a movement to create artificial docks in tidal estuaries that spread throughout the British Empire and the world. Liverpool's technologically innovative dock complexes with their warehouses eventually set the standard for all other port developments. Liverpool was also one of the first ports to use a single non-profit-making board to govern the development of the port and the first to appoint a full-time dock engineer. The city also exported trained dock engineers to other ports, which aided the development of many now internationally important ports.

- 3.2.4 Many buildings also demonstrate significant architectural innovations including the early use of glass to clad buildings, the use of reinforced concrete in large buildings and the development of steel-framed buildings. Lime Street Station was, in 1851, the largest iron-spanned building of its type in the world and set the standard for other similar buildings. Taken together, the diverse architecture of the site is a manifestation of the evolution of European architecture from the early 18th to the early 20th century, and constitutes one of the finest integral surviving ensembles from this period in the world.
- 3.2.5 Liverpool's role as an international seaport from the early 18th century to the early 20th century placed it in contact with cultures and civilisations from around the world. This contact led to the exchange and movement of ideas and values in the fields of architecture and technology. Liverpool's role as an international port was crucial in connecting the city to fashions, ideas, cultures and architectural developments around the world. It played a key part in influencing the culture and architectural styles of the city. Likewise, it enabled the technology and culture of Liverpool and the rest of Great Britain to be taken across the world.
- 3.2.6 The variety in the site's, and particularly the Commercial Centre's, architectural ensemble stems from the 18th and 19th century European tradition of appropriating and adapting 'exotic' styles in architecture and reflects the many cultures that Liverpool came into contact with. The site includes buildings modelled on the temples of Ancient Greece, Venetian Palaces, French Chateaux, Eastern architecture, early American skyscrapers and medieval cathedrals. This ensemble is one of the finest examples of this tradition surviving in the world.

Criterion (iii) The nominated site bears a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or has disappeared

- 3.2.7 Liverpool was the leading international seaport of the British Empire and Europe's foremost transatlantic port from the 18th century to the early 20th century. Liverpool was a highly successful general-cargo port, for both import and export, and a major European port of trans-Atlantic emigration. The principal imported commodities were tobacco, cotton, corn, other foods, timber and other raw materials to supply the growing population and industry of its wide hinterland. The principal exported commodities were manufactured goods, such as cotton yarn and piecegoods, woollens, metals and metal goods, including machinery and vehicles. As a result, Liverpool contributed significantly to the global impact of the industrial revolution and the growth of the British Empire.
- 3.2.8 The urban landscape of the site, including its architecture, layout, dock complexes and transport systems, combined with the comprehensive cultural and historical records held on the site, form a unique testimony to the commercial acumen and mercantile strength of the British Empire in the period from the early-18th century to the early 20th century. No other port in Britain, the former British Empire or the world bears such testimony.
- 3.2.9 The British Empire was created principally to increase the wealth of Great Britain through trade. The colonies throughout the world provided relatively cheap sources of raw materials and captive markets for manufactured goods. Liverpool has been described as "The Second City of the Empire" because of its success in generating huge profits almost solely from the

imperial trade, and it exhibits the fruits of that trade, through its lavish commercial, civic and cultural buildings. Liverpool still displays the means of carrying out that trade, through the surviving functional docks and transport systems. Lawrence James, in *The Rise and Fall of the British Empire* goes so far as to say in the early 1980s:

"The abandoned docks of London and Liverpool and Bristol are among the grander monuments to Britain's moment of empire and world power"

Criterion (iv) The nominated site is an outstanding example of a type of building or architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates a significant stage in human history

- 3.2.10 The nominated site is a complete and integral urban landscape that includes an outstanding architectural and technological ensemble of buildings, structures and archaeological remains. The landscape of the site developed primarily during the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries during the Industrial Revolution, the growth of the British Empire and general European expansion throughout the world. These processes are significant stages in human history that have shaped the current geo-political, social and economic environment.
- 3.2.11 Liverpool's role as the major international seaport of the British Empire and its role in the success of the Industrial Revolution in Britain, places it at the heart of both of these processes. The development of its urban landscape during this period reflected these roles. The wealth and power expressed in the commercial buildings of Liverpool are a direct testament to the success and ambitions of the British Empire and the Industrial Revolution. The magnificent surviving dock complexes, including the archaeological remains of Old Dock, illustrate the technological innovations of the Industrial Revolution and bear witness to its achievements.
- 3.2.12 The site's outstanding urban landscape is a result of the development of Liverpool as a leading European seaport during the Growth of the British Empire and the Industrial Revolution, and it illustrates in tangible form both of these significant historical processes.
- 3.2.13 The massive scale of Liverpool's port activities in the 19th century generated strong links and interaction between Liverpool and the developing industrial hinterland of northern England and Wales. Indeed, Liverpool is still known humorously as "the capital of North Wales"!
- 3.2.14 In the 18th and 19th centuries, international trade, through the demand for raw materials to feed the industrial revolution, encouraged young men to travel the world in search of their fortune by establishing plantations and other sources of raw materials. Similarly, the demand for large numbers of sailors to man the ships encouraged many men from Liverpool and its surroundings to go to sea. In addition, the massive volume of trade in Liverpool required thousands of dock workers to load and unload the various goods. The administration of the shipping business, the British Empire and diplomatic duties also brought special categories of workers. All of these activities created a culture and a way of life that has now largely vanished.