File Note: 006

Date: 03/06/2020

Subject: Regent Road Wall - The Switchback

Introduction

The Regent Road wall forms the eastern boundary of the Bramley Moore dock with Regent Road. The wall is constructed of roughly coursed granite and is approx. 4.0 m in height and incorporates two entrances into the BMD dock areas. On the dock side of the wall there is a substantial section of low level brickwork which abuts the stonework of the wall. The heritage significance of this section of unknown and this file note aims to clarify its original purpose and significance.

Historical Development

The Bramley Moore dock was completed in 1848 and became a major hub for coal distribution through the extension of the Lancashire and Yorkshire railway line in 1856 which allowed coal trucks to be transported directly to the Bramley Moore dock edge. This high-level line rail line crossed Regent Road via a hydraulic viaduct which could be raised or lowered to allow passing traffic on Regent Road.

In 1893 the Liverpool Overhead Railway system was completed and this ran as an electrified railway line along the line of the Liverpool Docks. Also being a high-level railway it generally avoided the existing dock infrastructure however in passing the Bramley Moore dock it needed to avoid the coal line which was also at an elevated level. To do this a section commonly known as the "Switchback" was introduced where the line ran back to ground level to pass under the line to the hydraulic bridge.

The Switchback was the only section of the Overhead Railway that was laid on ballast track whereas all other sections were supported by the iron framework of columns and beams.

Plan view of Lancashire and Yorkshire railway lines running into Bramley Moore Dock and Overhead Railway line following the line of Regent Road.



Northern Dock complex showing rail connections. OS surveyed 1890, published: 1894

Document Ref: BMD01-HPM-XX-XX-FN-Z-100006 Revision: P02

heritage project management

Hydraulically operated bridge over Regent Road (4No raising towers).

High level coal railway crossing over Regent Road wall.

Overhead Railway to rear of the Regent Road wall – tapering under the Hydraulic bridge.



Aerial Photo - Bramley-Moore Dock, 1927

Image taken from the Overhead Railway travelling north approaching the Hydraulic bridge. (Internal elevation of the BMD entrance gate piers).

Photo taken from "Liverpool Overhead Railway" by Online Video (1990). Original footage dates unknown.



Document Ref: BMD01-HPM-XX-XX-FN-Z-100006 Revision: P02

Image taken looking south showing the Hydraulic bridge and the Hydraulic tower in the distance.

heritage project management

Overhead railway (date unknown)

Image looking north showing the "Switchback" as it descends to the Hydraulic bridge. The top of the Regent Road wall is shown to the RHS of the image.

Photo taken from "Liverpool Overhead Railway" by Online Video (1990). Original footage dates unknown.

The brickwork to the rear of the wall aligns with the position of the "switchback" gradient and is one of the only remains of the Overhead Railway system.

Photo taken from Drone Footage (LoR 2020).





heritage project management

Archaeological Desk Based Assessment it is considered only as remains that may be discovered under the existing ground levels and as an existing feature.

Careful consideration needs to be given to the overall heritage significance of this remaining elements of the Overhead Railway and the impact and heritage loss as a consequence of the proposed interventions.