



# **Flaybrick BPS**

Heritage Statement

14 November 2019



Mott MacDonald  
Mott MacDonald House  
8-10 Sydenham Road  
Croydon CR0 2EE  
United Kingdom

T +44 (0)20 8774 2000  
F +44 (0)20 8681 5706  
mottmac.com

# Flaybrick BPS

## Heritage Statement

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# Issue and Revision Record

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# Executive summary

Mott MacDonald (MM) have been commissioned by United Utilities (UU) to produce a heritage statement as part of the listed building consent for above ground pipeline works at Flaybrick Booster Pumping Station (BPS) at the water tower at Flaybrick Reservoir.

The pipeline is required to increase flow into the clean water supply network for the Prenton area of the Wirral. The increased flow into the network is required as an above ground water tank on a different site (Prenton Service Reservoir) is to be taken offline. Listed building consent is required as a section of pipeline at Flaybrick BPS is to be above ground, attached to the retaining wall between the Grade II listed water tower and stores building.

This Heritage Statement considers the heritage significance of the Grade II listed water tower and curtilage, and the impact of the proposed development on the listed building.

Following an assessment of the significance of the listed building in accordance with the NPPF and Historic England GPA2 and GPA3, this heritage statement has found that the proposed development will cause no harm to the significance of the water tower. This is because the pipe will be attached to the retaining wall between the water tower and stores building. This is an ancillary structure which makes a limited contribution to the significance of the water tower. Therefore the significance of the water tower as an example of 19<sup>th</sup> century municipal engineering, and its landmark status in the local area, will not be affected.

# Introduction

## Background

Mott MacDonald have been commissioned by United Utilities to produce a heritage statement in support of a listed building consent application for above ground pipeline works to be undertaken at Flaybrick Booster Pumping Station (BPS). The heritage statement concerns the Grade II listed water tower at Flaybrick reservoir (Figure 1).

The pipeline is required to increase flow into the clean water supply network for the Prenton area of the Wirral. The increased flow into the network is required as an above ground tank on a different site (Prenton Service Reservoir) is to be taken offline. This is due to it reaching the end of its working life.

## Scheme description

The scheme includes the creation of a new pipeline at Flaybrick BPS (see drawing no. FB BPS - SK 0001). The pipeline is to be partially above ground to avoid existing mass concrete foundations and to avoid the removal of any fabric from the historic retaining wall on the south-east side of the building (Figure 3). It is proposed that the pipeline will be 500mm above ground and 300mm in diameter as it passes around the south-east side of the building. The pipeline will pass over steps descending to the basement access of the stores building and the retaining wall between the water tower and stores building (Figure 3). The pipe will be secured to the mortar of the stone retaining wall by a bracket on the top of the wall. After this the pipeline will then drop back down to ground level (which is lower on the eastern side of the water tower than the western side). The pipe then approaches the entrance to the water tower on the eastern side (Figure 5). The pipe will then return below ground level before the door on the eastern side of the water tower and will go under the concrete threshold into an existing service tunnel which runs under the tower. This service tunnel is accessed via an existing services hatch.



**Figure 1: View of the water tower from the western entrance**



Source: Mott MacDonald, 2019

**Figure 2: View from the west showing the existing steps and retaining wall**



Source: Mott MacDonald, 2019

**Figure 3: Existing retaining wall as viewed from the eastern side**



Source: Mott MacDonald, 2019

**Figure 4: View of the eastern door and existing retaining wall**



Source: Mott MacDonald, 2019

## Scope

The requirement for assessment and its scope is guided by the requirement to apply for listed building consent and the policy contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), specifically paragraph 189 which seeks an assessment which is proportionate to an asset's importance, sufficient to understand the potential impacts of the development and to appraise the nature and extent of any impact upon the setting and significance of heritage assets.

This heritage statement considers the historic development of the designated asset, utilising on-site analysis and documentary research to determine any affects to the asset by the proposed development. It describes the significance of the asset including any contribution made by the setting. The statement includes a description of the proposals and an analysis of the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the designated heritage asset is provided, alongside a conclusion that places the proposals within the legislative and planning context.

# Methodology

This heritage statement follows the guidance set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) Standards and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessments (2014) and Historic England Good Practice Advice Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (2015) and Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017).

## Desk-based research

The following actions were undertaken to gather the baseline and establish the potential heritage resource:

- An examination of the Historic England National Heritage List for England (NHLE) listing for the water tower at Flaybrick reservoir (NHLE: 1201596);
- An examination of local, regional and national planning policies in relation to the historic environment;
- An inspection of the cartographic evidence for the land use history of the site; and
- A search of published and non-published resources relating to the scheme area.

## Surveys

A site walkover was undertaken on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2019 by a Mott MacDonald Heritage Consultant. The site visit took the form of a visual inspection of the water tower and curtilage.

## Assessment of potential impact

This assessment is based on the guidance contained in Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning note 2 (GPA2) – Managing significance in decision taking in the historic environment (Historic England, 2015). Paragraph six of the guidance outlines the steps which should be taken to establish potential impact of the scheme on the significance of a heritage asset and where appropriate justify any harmful impacts and identify mitigation and enhancements. These steps are:

- Understand the significance of the affected asset;
- Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
- Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF;
- Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;
- Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change; and
- Offset negative impacts on aspects of significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

Section 4 of this document assesses the significance of the designated asset.

Section 5 addresses the level of potential impact of the scheme on the affected asset.

In accordance with paragraph 189 of the NPPF and the Historic England guidance, the level of detail supplied is proportionate to the level of significance of the asset and the overall effect the scheme will have.

## Assumptions and limitations

Advantage was taken of the best available information at the time of writing. It should however, be noted that many historic documents are inherently biased; older primary sources often fail to accurately locate sites and interpretation can be subjective.

## Consultation

### Local Planning Authority

Following consultation on site with the Planning Officer and receipt of pre-application advice from the Local Planning Authority on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2019, it was deemed that listed building consent would be required to undertake work as it was indicated that the setting of the water tower was likely to be impacted by the pipeline. It was also confirmed that the pipe would be 300mm in diameter and could not be installed underground due to the presence of a solid area of concrete below ground to the rear of the water tower.

Following a subsequent telephone conversation with the Planning Officer on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019, it was agreed that listed building consent was only required where the pipe would physically attach to the listed structure, in this case the retaining wall between the water tower and the stores building.

# Legislation, Planning Policy & Guidance

It is important to understand the legislation and policy framework which governs changes to the historic environment when developing options and undertaking design work which may impact heritage assets. This section outlines the relevant legislative requirements and national and local planning policy which apply when considering the acceptability of these proposals in relation to the historic environment.

## Legislation

### Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

This Act sets out the protection given to buildings of special architectural or historic interest through listing.<sup>1</sup>

## Policy

### National Planning Policy

The revised National Planning Policy Framework<sup>2</sup> considers the importance of historic environment in planning and development and sets out the government's policies regarding development which effects the historic environment.

Paragraphs 189-202 outline these policies. The following paragraphs are relevant to this Heritage Statement:

Paragraph 189: In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of information submitted should be proportionate to the assets importance and no more that is sufficient to understand the potential impact on the assets significance.

Paragraph 192: The following should be taken into account when determining applications;

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 193: When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/contents>

<sup>2</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/810197/NPPF\\_Feb\\_2019\\_revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf)



Paragraph 194: Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

Paragraph 196: Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

## Local Planning Policy

Several Policies in the Wirral Borough Council Unitary Development Plan (2000)<sup>3</sup> relate to heritage:

- CH01: The protection of Heritage (Strategic Policy)

In considering all development proposals the local planning authority will pay particular attention to the protection of:

- i) Buildings, structures and other features of recognised architectural or historic importance

- CH1: Development affecting Listed Buildings and structures Policy

Development likely to affect a building or structure listed under Section 1 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 will be permitted where:

- (i) the proposals are of a nature and scale appropriate to retaining the character and design of the building or structure and its setting; and
- (ii) adequate provision is made for the preservation of the special architectural or historic features of the building or structure.

## Guidance

### Historic England Guidance

Historic England have published a series of Good Practice Advice (GPA) of which those of most relevance to this appraisal are GPA2 Managing Significance in Decision-taking<sup>4</sup> and GPA3 The Setting of Heritage Assets.<sup>5</sup> Also of relevance is Historic England's Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the historic environment<sup>6</sup>.

GPA2 emphasises the importance of having a knowledge and understanding of the significance of heritage assets likely to be affected by the development and that the 'first step for all applicants is to understand the significance of any affected heritage asset and, if relevant, the contribution of its setting to its significance' (paragraph 4). Early knowledge of this information is also useful to a local planning authority in pre-application engagement with an applicant and ultimately in decision making (paragraph 7).

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<sup>3</sup> Wirral Council, 2000

<sup>4</sup> Historic England, 2015

<sup>5</sup> Historic England, 2017

<sup>6</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/guidance/conservation-principles-consultation-draft-pdf/>

GPA3 provides advice on the setting of heritage assets. Part 1 of the document confirms the extent of setting, as defined in the NPPF, to be the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced and that elements of a setting can make positive or negative contributions to the significance of an asset and affect the ways in which it is experienced. Historic England state that setting does not have a boundary and that setting is often expressed by reference to views, comprising the visual impression of an asset obtained from a variety of viewpoints. Setting is not an asset or a designation, rather its importance is in what it contributes to the significance of an asset and its appreciation is not dependent upon public access (paragraph 9).

Historic England's Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the historic environment aid in the understanding of asset significance in terms of interest.

# Baseline

## Site description

The Grade II listed water tower is located on the Wirral Peninsula in the North West of England, approximately 3.53km west of the River Mersey. It is located directly adjacent to an operating reservoir (Flaybrick Reservoir) located to the north of the water tower. To the south is a stores building, and it is between this building and the water tower that the retaining wall is located. The retaining wall is of coursed rusticated stone which is joined with lime mortar. The wall is topped by a stone coping which has horizontal ridges, a rounded edge on its eastern side and is flat on its western side and top. The eastern door threshold of the water tower is composed of concrete and will not be affected by the pipeline.

The surrounding area has a mainly residential land use, and there is a recent residential development approximately 10 metres to the south and east of the water tower. The site is accessed off Boundary Road and is bordered by Upton Road (approximately 126m to the north), Hill Road (approximately 55m to the east) and Ashburton Road (approximately 48m to the west).

## Historical background

This section explores the history and development of the Grade II listed water tower at Flaybrick reservoir, in so far as it helps to understand the significance of this designated heritage asset and the potential impact of the scheme upon it. A summary of consulted maps is listed within section 8.

The water tower at Flaybrick reservoir is a Grade II listed building (NHLE: 1201596), built between 1860 and 1865. The building itself is a cylindrical tower of 2 storeys divided by Tuscan pilasters to the ground floor with engaged columns above; it is built from coursed and squared sandstone and is capped by an iron tank. It also features round-headed windows and blind arcading on the west elevation<sup>7</sup>. The land upon which the water tower is built is shown on the Tithe map of the area from c.1842 and the land use is recorded as 'building and garden'<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Historic England Listing

<sup>8</sup> Cheshire Tithe Maps Online

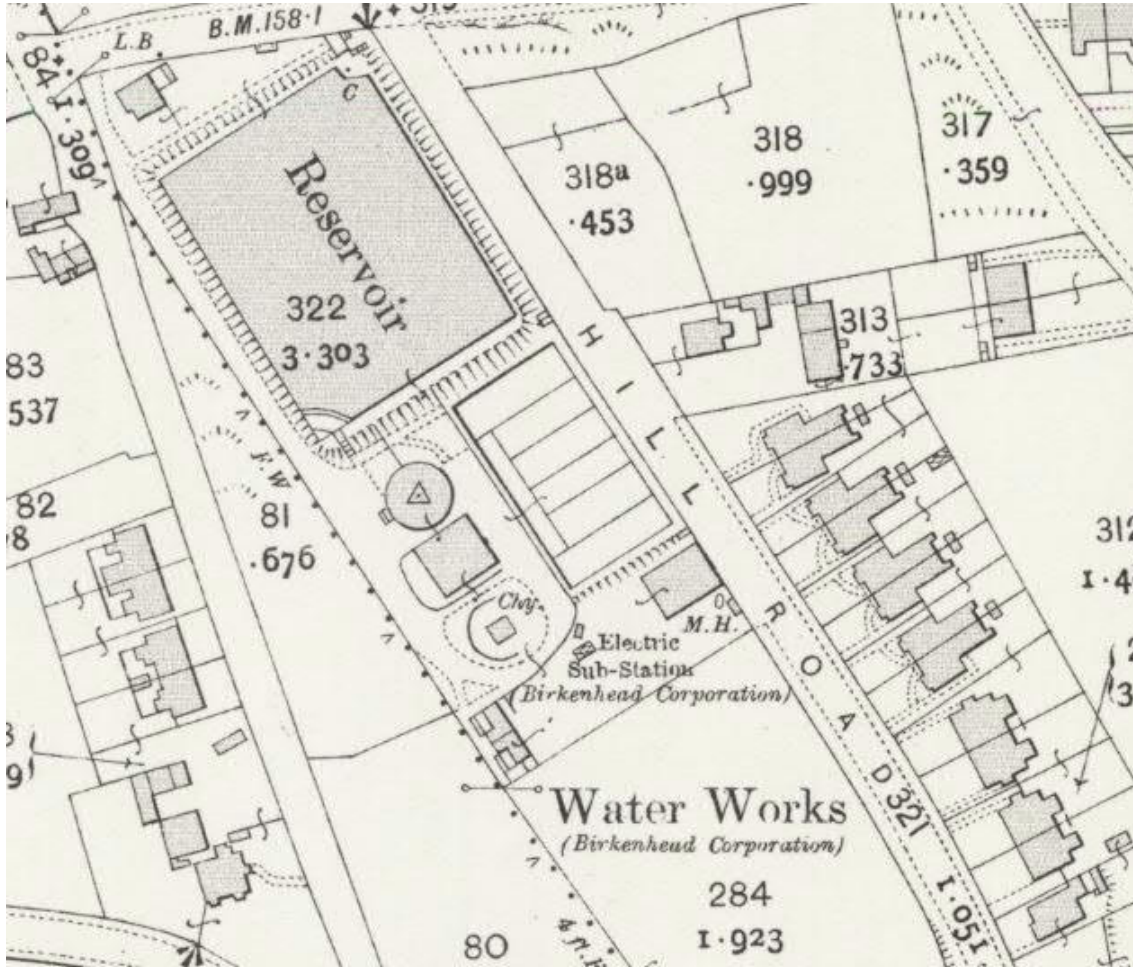
**Figure 5: OS extract Cheshire XIII (including Birkenhead St. Mary; Storeton) published 1882**



Source: Ordnance Survey

The water tower is first shown on the OS 6 inch, Cheshire XIII map (published 1882) which shows the circular water tower and the surrounding associated features, including the reservoir and stores building, labelled 'Birkenhead Water Works' (Figure 5). It does not, however, clearly show the retaining wall. This may be due to the scale of the map not allowing this detail rather than the retaining wall not being present.

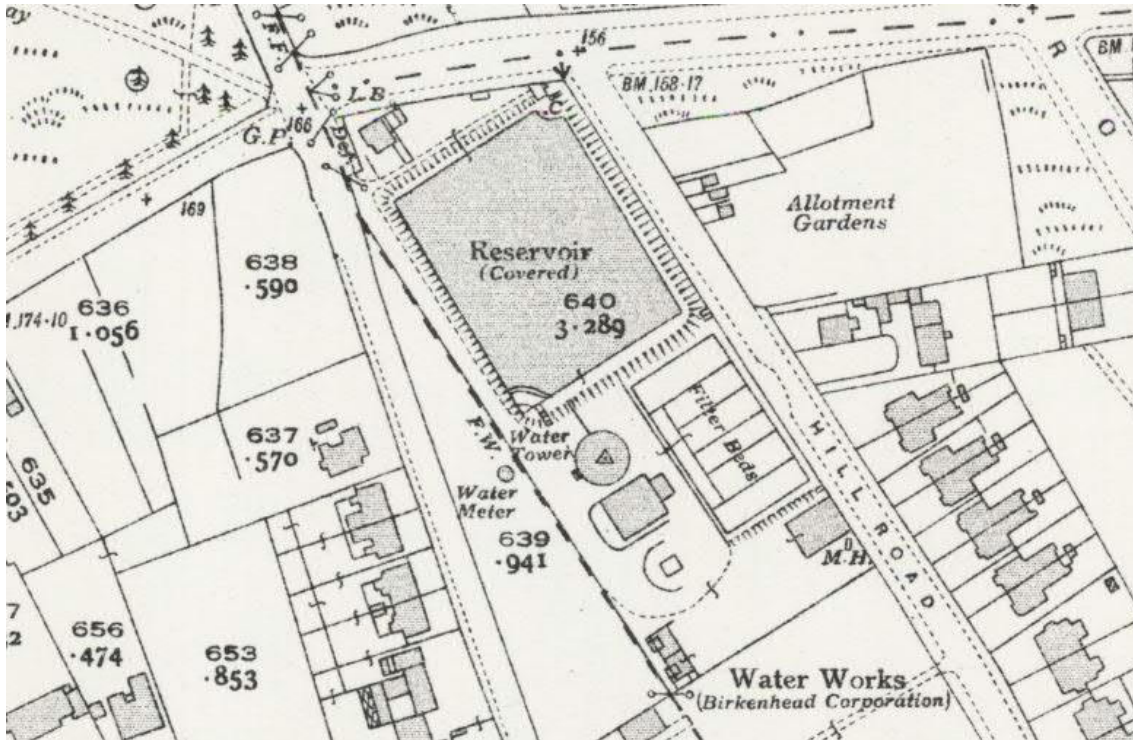
Figure 6: OS extract Cheshire XIII.2 (including Birkenhead St Mary; Wallasey) published 1912



Source: Ordnance Survey

The tower is shown on the 1912 OS 25 inch map, labelled as 'Water Works (Birkenhead Corporation)' (Figure 6).

**Figure 7: OS extract Cheshire XIII.2 (includes Birkenhead St. Mary; Wallasey) published 1937**



Source: Ordnance Survey

The building itself is labelled on the OS 25 inch, Cheshire XIII.2 map published in 1937 (Figure 7).

The water tower appears to have remained unchanged on online aerial imagery from 2000-2019.

## Significance and setting

The significance of the asset is contributed to by its historic interest as a feature of Victorian engineering and clean water supply, a development associated with improved sanitation during the period. Additionally, the survival of the majority of the original fabric of the building contributes greatly to its historic interest and the ability to gain information from the building. Further to this, the architectural style of the building also contributes to its significance by providing aesthetic interest. It is also possible due to its distinctive nature that the asset has communal value as a landmark feature on the skyline of the local area.<sup>9</sup> The retaining wall, although likely to be contemporary with the water tower, is an ancillary structure, built to account for the change in level across the site. It has been built at the closest point between the stores building and the water tower, confirming its functional character. It has an aesthetic relationship with the tower, expressed through the materials and construction style.

The setting of the water tower has remained the same from its original historic setting; located next to an operational reservoir. The surrounding setting has developed through time to become more densely residential in nature. Areas of park and woodland have been maintained such as the Grade I Registered Park and Garden: Birkenhead Park (NHLE: 1000994), which is located approximately 726m to the east of the water tower and opened in 1847. Flaybrick Memorial Gardens is located approximately 300m to the north of the water tower and is a Grade II\* Park and Garden (NHLE: 1001564) opened in 1864. The construction of a number of municipal sites during the 19<sup>th</sup> century demonstrates the investment in public service during this period. However, the water tower does not make an aesthetic, communal or evidential contribution to the significance of the registered parks and gardens.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/guidance/conservation-principles-consultation-draft-pdf/>

## Assessment of Impact

As previously stated, it is proposed that the pipeline will pass around the south-east side of the Grade II listed water tower at which point it will be above ground and pass over existing steps and an existing stone retaining wall where it will be supported by fixings into the mortar joints of this wall. The pipeline will then drop back down to ground level as it approaches the entrance to the water tower on the eastern side. It will return below ground level into an existing service run within the water tower where it will be accessed via an existing services hatch. The proposed works are shown in drawing no. FB BPS - SK 0001.

No physical work is being undertaken to the water tower itself. Physical work is restricted to the retaining wall, which makes a limited contribution to the significance of the water tower due its function as an ancillary retaining structure. The impact on the fabric of the wall has been mitigated as fixings will be attached to the mortar joints. This prevents the stonework from being damaged and means that in the future, should the pipe be removed, the mortar can be repointed, removing all evidence of the pipe. As such the physical works are not considered to harm the architectural or historic interest of the listed building.

Although there will be a small change to the setting of the tower through the installation of the pipe, this is considered to be in keeping with the overall character of the site as a functioning reservoir and pumping station. The pipe is above ground for the minimum distance required and for most of its run will be concealed between the tower and the stores building. Where it is visible it will be seen in the context of a large working reservoir site and will not change the contribution the setting makes to the special historic or architectural interest of the water tower.

As such it is considered that the proposed scheme will not harm the significance of the Grade II listed water tower.



## Conclusions

This Heritage Statement considers the heritage significance of the Grade II listed water tower and the impact of the proposed development on this designated asset.

The pipeline is located outside of the listed building and the only work likely to impact the fabric of the building is the fixing of the pipeline to the retaining wall. As previously mentioned, the effects of this have been mitigated through attaching the brackets supporting the pipe into the mortar joints of the wall. The retaining wall is an ancillary functional structure. The proposals will not change this character, nor will they detract from the relationship between the water tower and the retaining wall. Therefore, the proposal will result in no harm to the significance of the asset.

It is considered that as much of the pipeline is underground or obscured from view between the water tower and the stores building and will be seen in the context of a working reservoir site, it will not impact the wider landmark, communal interest of the listed building. Therefore, the scheme will not harm the contribution the setting makes to the significance of the water tower.

It is considered that the proposed development will not result in a change in the ability to understand the significance of the water tower. Following an assessment of the significance of the listed building in accordance with the NPPF and Historic England GPA2 and GPA3, the proposed development will cause no harm to the significance of the water tower including the contribution setting makes to significance.

## References

ClfA. 2014. Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment [Online] Available at: [https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/ClfAS&GDBA\\_2.pdf](https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/ClfAS&GDBA_2.pdf) [Accessed 02/10/19]

Historic England. 2018. Conservation Principles, for the sustainable management of the historic environment [Online] Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/guidance/conservation-principles-consultation-draft-pdf/> [Accessed 09/10/19]

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Historic England. 2015. GPA 2 – Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment [Online] Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa2-managing-significance-in-decision-taking/gpa2/> [Accessed: 04/10/2019]

Historic England. 2017. GPA3 – The Setting of Heritage Assets [Online] Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/> [Accessed: 04/10/2019]

Wirral Council. 2000. Unitary Development Plan [Online] Available at: <https://ww3.wirral.gov.uk/udp/> [Accessed 04.10.19]

### Cartographic references

Cheshire Tithe Maps Online, Bidston Tithe c1842 [Online] Available at: <https://maps.cheshireeast.gov.uk/tithemaps/> – [Accessed 07.10.19]

Date	Surveyed	Scale	Title
c1842		3 chains per inch	Bidston Tithe <a href="https://maps.cheshireeast.gov.uk/tithemaps/">https://maps.cheshireeast.gov.uk/tithemaps/</a>
1882	1872-1875	6 inch to 1 mile	OS Cheshire XIII (Including Birkenhead St. Mary, Stoneton)
1912		25 inch to 1 miles	OS Cheshire XIII.2 (Birkenhead St. Mary, Wallasey)
1937		25 inch to 1 mile	Cheshire XIII.2 (Birkenhead St. Mary; Wallasey)

