



Canal &
River Trust

07 July 2015

Sefton Council
Planning Services
Magdalen House
Trinity Road
Bootle
L20 3NJ

Our Ref [Ref]
Your Ref [Ref]

Dear Mr Hatfield

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OFF GREEN LANE, MAGHULL

Further to our meeting of 11 June 2015, the Canal & River Trust (the Trust) would like to provide the following advice in respect of the above, and in particular the use of our canal bridge numbers 15 (Methodist Swing Bridge, Green Lane) and 16 (Bells Lane Swing Bridge).

Bridges 15 and 16 are boater operated swing bridges, bridge 15 on an automated system and bridge 16 on a manual push system. To give an idea of the frequency of use, Bridge 15 was operated exactly 400 times between 1 March and 1 July 2015. The length of delay to road traffic will vary slightly depending on the number of boats passing through and the level of experience of the boaters, but can be estimated at between 5 and 10 minutes. There are no restrictions on the time or frequency with which the bridges can be operated.

Navigation at the western end of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal has increased in recent years due to the popularity of the Liverpool Canal Link, which allows boaters to travel into the south docks. The Liverpool Link is a booked passage and from August 2015 will change from one direction per day to both directions per day, allowing for further increases in the number of boats travelling. Almost all boats will pass through Bridges 15 and 16 on route to and from the Liverpool Link.

Bridge 15 was assessed in 2012 as having a condition grade B (Good) but serviceability 3 (unfit for purpose) and the Trust's staff are called out to assist with its operation on a regular basis. Bridge 15 has been given a load assessment / capacity of 7.5 tonne MG/VW to BD21, 5 tonne gross axial weight to Be3.

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Bridge 16 was assessed in 2013 as condition grade A (Very Good) but serviceability 2 (restricted use). It has been given a load assessment / capacity of 7.5 tonne MG/VW, assessment to Be3 not undertaken.

The Trust is concerned that the potential increased use of Bridges 15 and 16 by traffic following occupation of the development would result in excessive weight being imposed on the hydraulic and mechanical equipment fitted under the bridges. Breakdowns would be likely to increase, resulting in road closures and delays to both road traffic and navigation. In addition, the restricted width of the bridges would mean that the increased use and size of vehicles would increase the potential risk to pedestrians or cyclists crossing the bridge.

The use of the bridges by buses would be subject to the weight limits detailed above. Any bus operator should be made aware of the potential for delays of unpredictable length and frequency to allow for the bridges to be operated and for breakdowns to be rectified.

Based on the above, it seems highly likely that extensive improvement works would need to be carried out to the swing bridges to accommodate the size and volume of traffic generated by the proposed development. The Trust's first preference would be for the swing bridges to be replaced with fixed bridges to remove the potential for delays to road traffic and navigation. Alternatively, the bridges should be replaced or upgraded to full strength and adequate width to allow for two-way traffic and footways.

These works would need to be fully funded by the developer, including the on-going maintenance and servicing of the new bridges. In the absence of such works being proposed and agreed with the Trust, I can confirm that we would be likely to object to the development of the site.

A proposed residential development at Sty Lane, Micklethwaite may provide a useful case study (Bradford City Council ref. 14/00293/MAO). The site is accessed over an existing canal swing bridge, and the application includes the provision of a replacement dual-lane swing bridge as part of the development. The application is currently subject to a call-in by the secretary of state, but a draft Section 106 agreement includes a financial contribution to the Trust of £973,000 to cover the maintenance of the bridge for its working life.

Finally please find attached plans showing the Canal & River Trust's land ownership in the vicinity of the two bridges (shaded green). It appears that additional third party land would be required in order to replace or upgrade the bridges.

Yours sincerely

Alison Truman

Alison Truman
Area Planner (North West and North Wales)



Canal &
River Trust

Canal & River Trust land ownership

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