

APPLICATION REPORT - FUL/349445/22
Planning Committee – 15th February 2023

Registration Date: 18th July 2022
Ward: Medlock Vale

Application Reference: FUL/349445/22
Type of Application: Full Application

Proposal: Construction of a new 127.5m long pedestrian and cyclist bridge across the Medlock Valley at Park Bridge, including upgrading and creation of foot and cycle links from bridge landing points to NCN Route 626

Location: Park Bridge, Medlock Valley, Oldham

Case Officer: Graham Dickman
Applicant: Oldham Council
Agent: AECOM

INTRODUCTION

The application is presented to Planning Committee as it has been submitted by the Council as applicant and objections have been received.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the application is approved subject to the conditions set out below.

THE SITE

The application site crosses the valley of the River Medlock and Waggon Road between the existing footpaths situated on higher ground to the north (in Oldham) and to the south (in Tameside). The route follows the line of the former railway viaduct which was demolished in 1971.

The River Medlock runs west to east along the valley bottom, with Waggon Road running adjacent it on the south side. The valley sides have steep slopes with a 1:2.5 gradient falling approximately 27m.

Alongside the site there are the standing remains of the industrial buildings of the former iron works. The remains of the railway viaduct are present at the base of the valley. The immediately adjacent landscape is largely dominated by woodland.

A residential property, Station House, is located adjacent to the application site (in Tameside) on the eastern side of the southern bridge landing. The nearest residential properties to the site on the north (Oldham) side are on Dingle Terrace (Tameside) to the east.

THE PROPOSAL

The application is for construction of a 127.5m long foot and cycle bridge across the valley. It will be partly located with both Oldham and Tameside Council areas, and a related application has been submitted to Tameside Council.

The composite steel bridge deck will be supported on two slim piers dug into the valley sides which will be faced in brickwork. The deck itself will have a width of 5m and be adjoined to either side by a 2.4m high parapet, the full detailed specification for which will be required for approval by means of condition.

Lighting will be provided to the bridge deck and will be designed to ensure adequate safety for users, whilst minimising any light spillage into the surrounding woodland.

In addition, it is proposed to upgrade and pave an existing section of the Oldham Bardsley RR10 Recreation Route, approximately 200m in length from the northern bridge landing point to the existing path to the north, and upgrade and paving of the existing pathway approximately 100m to the east, to connect with NCN Route 601.

Within Tameside to the south, it is proposed to create a new foot and cycle path, approximately 200m in length, from the southern bridge landing point to existing NCN Route 626 to the south.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None in Oldham.

Relevant applications within Tameside

22/00780/FUL - Full planning application for the construction of a new pedestrian and cyclist bridge across the Medlock Valley at Park Bridge, including the following works:

- Construction of a 127.5m long foot and cycle bridge across Medlock Valley at Park Bridge.
- Upgrade and paving of an existing part of the Oldham Bardsley RR10 Recreation Route, approximately 200m in length from the northern bridge landing point to the existing path to the north, and upgrade and paving of the existing pathway approximately 100m to the east, to connect with NCN Route 601; and
- Creation of new foot and cycle path, approximately 200m in length, from the southern bridge landing point to existing NCN Route 626 to the south (within Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council).

Pending determination. It is presently anticipated that the application will be considered at Tameside's Speakers' Panel (Planning) on 22nd February 2023.

21/01216/FUL - Extension to Park Bridge Heritage Centre to form an extended cafe, shared use of public car park, bin storage and proposed outside dining area. Approved 12th September 2022

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The 'Development Plan' is the Joint Development Plan Document (Local Plan) which forms part of the Local Development Framework for Oldham.

The site is designated as Green Belt on the Proposals Map.

The following policies are relevant to the determination of this application:

Policy 1 – Climate Change and Sustainable Development;
Policy 2 – Communities;
Policy 5 – Promoting Accessibility and Sustainable Transport Choices;
Policy 9 – Local Environment;
Policy 19 – Water and Flooding;
Policy 20 – Design;
Policy 21 – Protecting Natural Environmental Assets;
Policy 22 – Protecting open Land;
Policy 23 – Open Spaces and Sports; and,
Policy 24 – Historic Environment

Saved UDP Policy D1.5 - Protection of Trees on Development Sites.

CONSULTATIONS

Highways Officer:	No objections subject to submission of measures to upgrade or segregate existing footpath routes providing links from the bridge to the National Cycle Network.
Ramblers:	Request measures to ensure separation of cyclists and walkers when using the bridge and associated paths.
Environmental Health:	No objection or recommended conditions.
Trees Officer:	No objections subject to the implementation of on and off-site tree planting to comply with the 3 for 1 replacement policy.
G M Ecology Unit:	No objection subject to measures in relation to updated bat and badger surveys, submission of a lighting scheme, compensation for any biodiversity loss resulting from the development, and a scheme to deal with invasive species.
Environment Agency:	No objections in principle, subject to a condition that should any contamination not previously identified be found, no further work shall take place until details of a remediation strategy are approved.
Coal Authority:	Recommends that a scheme of intrusive investigations should be undertaken before development is commenced.

G M Police: Recommend implementation of measures within the submitted Crime Impact Statement.

G M Archaeological Unit: Require submission for approval and implementation of a programme of archaeological works.

REPRESENTATIONS

The application has been publicised by Press Notice, Site Notices, and individual notification.

6 letters of objection have been received. These comments raise the following (summarised) issues:

- The proposal will lead to additional traffic in the area;
- There will be increased anti-social behaviour;
- The bridge could result in loss of life;
- The raising of the bridge parapet to 2.4m would increase the visual impact;
- The costs could be better spent elsewhere;
- A new tram link would be preferable;
- Loss of privacy due to overlooking of Dingle Terrace;
- Adverse impact on wildlife, including light intrusion; and,
- Visually incongruous in the river valley.

Two letters of support have been received on the grounds of enhancement of cycle infrastructure and views which will be obtained from the bridge.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of development

The proposal forms part of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority's (GMCA) delivery of the Bee Network, a plan to create a city-region-wide cycling and walking network which connects all 10 boroughs and includes more than 1,800 miles of routes as part of the largest planned walking and cycling network in the UK.

The intention is to provide improved cycling and walking conditions for users which supports a modal shift in travel behaviour, in turn reducing pressures on the surrounding road network.

Current walking and cycling routes between Oldham and Ashton-under-Lyne via National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 626 and Route 601 do not meet Bee Network standards due to users having to take a poorly defined and steep 1km diversionary route through the Medlock Valley that includes climbing / descending gradients of up to 1 in 7 across the valley sides. This route is not accessible to everyday cyclists or those with a buggy or mobility issues.

The proposed bridge seeks to improve access between Oldham and Ashton by providing a new, more accessible bridge link which simplifies the existing route.

Green Belt

NPPF Paragraph 150 states that local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location can be considered 'appropriate' development in the Green Belt subject to preservation of the Green Belt's openness, and that it does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.

Of the five stated purposes of the Green Belt in NPPF paragraph 138, "*to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment*" is of particular significance.

It is inevitable that the creation of a large bridge structure will involve some built encroachment, and similarly, this will impact on the Green Belt's openness to some degree. Recent case law has confirmed that 'openness' can have both a spatial and visual impact as relevant to the specific context of the site.

In this regard it is worth noting that the historic context of the surrounding landscape until the 1970s was one of substantial industrial architecture. This included the former railway viaduct which was supported on multiple piers.

Although the structure is of significant size, it has been designed to have a minimal impact. The design of the parapets allows through views. Furthermore, the structure would be largely set against the backdrop of the presently wooded valley sides allowing the continued appreciation of the surrounding landscape character.

Taking these factors into consideration, the introduction of the structure would not result in significant harm to the Green Belt's openness.

Furthermore, any identified harm must be weighed alongside the benefits of improved access by sustainable means of transport in line with the need that "*opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued*" in NPPF paragraph 104.

The proposed development serves a site-specific purpose which, as noted above, provides an opportunity to improve sustainability and recreational access in the immediate and wider area. There are no feasible alternative solutions which could achieve the necessary improvements to cycling and walking connectivity between Oldham and Ashton.

It will also form part of initiatives in the vicinity of the site. This includes providing improved access to the 'Northern Roots' eco-park and Bike Hub being developed to the north, as approved by Planning Committee recently, and proposals for the former Park Bridge Heritage Centre to be converted into a cafe, which will increase the attractiveness of the area for local residents and visitors.

Consequently, it is concluded that very special circumstances exist to outweigh any limited harm to the purposes and openness of the Green Belt.

Landscape & Visual Impact

The application is accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). The LVIA has identified 8 viewpoint locations and considers the impact on landscape character and visual amenity arising during the construction activity phase, 1 year post construction and 15 years post-construction.

The design of the bridge uses materials, forms, finishes and colour that seek to address the character of the surrounding area and its industrial history and features. Visual clutter has been avoided in the choice of a simple, uncomplicated, light-looking structure.

The weathering of the chosen materials has also been considered to maintain the design quality over time, whilst the red brick clad piers and weathered steel would complement the industrial heritage of the area.

The assessment of landscape effects concludes that there would only be significant adverse effects on one of the landscape receptors (trees and woodland) during the construction stage of the development, with no other significant adverse effects on other landscape receptors. Once the development site is operational and the proposed landscaping has matured, beneficial landscape effects are anticipated given the widened recreational routes and the reconnection of the north and south valley sides.

Once the site is operational and established, the LVIA advises that the development would be assimilated within the landscape and views.

Having regard to the assessment, the overall landscape impacts will be minimised over time, whilst the bridge itself will provide improved opportunities to appreciate the visual attractions of the surrounding wooded valley environment.

Ecology and Trees

The Medlock Valley is an important corridor both for people and wildlife and supports extensive areas of important broadleaved woodland. Although parts of the Valley are assumed to support the original tree cover and may constitute Ancient Woodland, much of the woodland in the vicinity of the site has grown since the replanting of the 1960s and subsequent removal of former industrial buildings, and comprises a mix of self-sown trees and planted trees,

An Ecological Assessment has been submitted which considers the ecological implications of the proposal and recommends mitigation measures where appropriate. It concludes that there should be no impact on any European Designated Site or Site of Special Scientific Importance (SSSI).

However, parts of the site are included within the Bankfield Clough Grade B Site of Biological Importance (SBI) to the north of the river. The southern landing of the bridge and connecting footpath/cycleway (within Tameside) are adjacent to the Rocher Vale Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Site of Biological Importance (SBI), designated for its varied habitats and geological features.

Much of the existing woodland of the site is substantial and would be retained. However, areas of woodland and vegetation clearance are required for the bridge landings, and to accommodate the construction compound, crane and lifting requirements, and to allow construction access along the existing footpaths which are proposed for improvement.

An Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) has been submitted.

The proposed works will require the removal of 54 individual trees, seven groups, three partial woodlands and eight partial groups. These trees vary in quality with 18 tree features classed as

moderate quality (Category B) and 44 tree features classified as low quality (Category C). In addition, 10 individual trees of very low quality (Category U) are also recommended for removal.

It is noted that where part of a group of trees is to be removed, the final extent of tree loss must be determined on site by an arboriculturist to allow an assessment of the suitability and stability of retained trees and to identify any additional tree works as appropriate.

The tree removal will be mitigated with a scheme of new tree planting and associated landscaping works which are shown on the submitted Landscape Layout Plans. These include a total of 277 replacement trees to satisfy the 3:1 replacement requirement of saved UDP Policy D1.5, as far as is possible within the constraints of the immediate site.

The Council's Trees Officer has accepted the findings and has raised no objections subject to appropriate protection of retained specimens and replacement planting for those trees based on the proposed replacement ratio.

In respect of wider ecological impacts, the Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Report found that there were no granted European Protected Species Mitigation Licences for bats listed within 2km of the scheme. Within a GMEU 2021 report, there were 8 bat roosts identified within 1km of the site, and one record of bat activity. A further survey was then commissioned to undertake a further survey of bats in April 2022.

Following this preliminary bat roost assessment, one tree (T1), a semi mature sycamore located on the edge of the area identified for tree clearance and which is intended to be protected, was identified as having moderate suitability to support roosting bats. The remaining trees within the survey area had negligible bat roost suitability. Should further tree removal be subsequently identified, further surveys will be required.

The woodland could be enhanced in the short-term for roosting bats by creating artificial roost provisions, particular as there are currently limited potential roost features. This could include the provision of 5-10 tree mounted bat boxes.

It is recommended that that tree works and scrub clearance should not be undertaken in the main bird breeding season (March-August inclusive), unless nesting birds have found to be absent, by a suitably qualified person.

For security and safety reasons, lighting will be installed along the new bridge. At present there is no lighting within the woodland, existing footpaths and around the River Medlock. Additional lighting will be required to the bridge deck for safety and security purposes. A Lighting Proposal Report has been submitted, taking into account relevant guidance on lighting in sensitive ecological settings. The scheme will therefore need to be designed to minimise disturbance to bats and other nocturnal species, and a full specification will be required for submission by means of planning condition.

As a precautionary measure it is recommended that any excavations which are created on the site, should not be left open overnight, or should be covered or fitted with a ramp to prevent any mammals from becoming trapped. All excavations should also be checked each morning prior to any works commencing.

Concerns have been expressed by GMEU in respect of lighting on bats. Some form of lighting is deemed necessary to ensure the safe use of the bridge outside clear daylight hours. The use of

handrail lighting and photocell/PIR sensor usage is therefore welcomed. A detailed specification has not been identified at this stage, and therefore, this detail will be approved by means of a planning condition.

GM Ecology Unit has also recommended that compensation for impacts on biodiversity at the site should be provided, which could include bat and bird boxes.

With the recommended mitigation measures, it is considered that the ecological impacts of the proposed development would be acceptable and in accordance with relevant national and local plan policies.

Due to the potential timescales for implementation of the development; an up-to-date survey of invasive species has not been undertaken. GMEU has expressed concerns that although a condition requiring a survey and implementation of mitigation measures is capable of being imposed, this would allow any invasive species to further develop in the meantime.

Whilst the concerns of GMEU are noted, planning conditions cannot be used to resolve existing problems; only to ensure any adverse impacts of the development can be appropriately mitigated. As a precise timeframe for implementation of the development is not known at this stage, it would therefore fail the test of reasonableness to impose such a restriction. Nevertheless, a full survey and mitigation strategy will be required before work can commence.

Highways and Access

The Highways Officer has recommended that any planning permission should require approval of those parts of the route that are currently designated as Footpaths to either have been segregated from use by cyclists, or the appropriate Order be granted that will allow the combined use by pedestrians and cyclists. This aspect will be dealt with by means of a separate Footpath Order.

Furthermore, as there are existing public rights of way (Definitive Footpaths 1A and 10 Oldham) which pass near the site, statutory obligations exist to ensure that the developer maintains free passage of the public along the right of way. The rights of way shall not be temporarily removed unless a Temporary Footpath Closure Order has been granted.

Representations have been expressing concern about traffic generated as a result of the proposed development.

The bridge will be provided to enhance the existing cycle and pedestrian routes in the area. Whilst there may be some additional traffic generated as a result of an increase in cyclists and pedestrians using the bridge, it is not anticipated that it will lead to any significant level of traffic generation that would be detrimental to highway safety.

Visitors will be able to enter the pedestrian and cycle route network from a number of locations spread across Oldham and Tameside, thereby dispersing the effect of traffic generation and demand for car parking. Nor will there be an absolute reliance on on-street parking, as there are car parks available at Alexandra Park, Northern Roots and the Heritage Centre.

Consequently, there would be no significant adverse impacts on the highway network which would be outweighed by the public benefits associated with the provision of the proposed new infrastructure.

Heritage and Archaeology

The application is accompanied by a Heritage Statement in accordance with NPPF paragraph 194. It is noted that historically a large brick arch railway viaduct crossed the Medlock Valley in this location.

The crossing would be situated within, and be a key feature of, the Park Bridge Heritage area, connecting the site's industrial history with its modern function as a tourism and leisure destination. In addition to increased connectivity, the proposed development will also form a new landmark within the valley and will provide a new vantage point from which to view the Medlock Valley and Park Bridge landscape.

There are no designated heritage assets recorded within the site boundary. Two Grade II listed buildings (Fairbottom Farmhouse and Ten Houses) are located approximately 470m north-east of the site.

The settings of designated assets within 500m of the Site have been assessed as part of the submitted heritage statement. No impacts upon the setting and significance of any designated heritage assets have been identified in relation to the proposed development.

There are two known non-designated assets within the site boundary, the site of the original Park Bridge packhorse bridge and the site of Park Bridge Railway Station.

The proposed bridge will clearly have an impact on the setting of these assets. However, it is considered that the proposal would lead to 'less than substantial harm'. It must therefore be weighed alongside any public benefits.

NPPF paragraph 206 of the NPPF states that *"proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably"*.

Furthermore, in addition to the previously identified benefits in relation to transport sustainability and improved cycling/walking infrastructure, it is considered that the proposal will offer positive heritage and historic landscape public benefits through reinstating a historic access across the valley and offering a new vantage point from which to view and appreciate the heritage significance of the surrounding standing and buried industrial remains.

NPPF Paragraph 205 directs local authorities to require developers to record and advance understanding of heritage assets affected by development. Submission for approval of a programme of archaeological works has consequently been recommended by the GM Archaeological Advisory Unit, and this will form a condition of any approval.

Amenity issues

There are no residential properties within the Oldham borough on which the proposals will have a direct amenity impact.

Although Dingle Terrace is located within Tameside; these residential properties are sited to the east of the main bridge structure which is to be assessed within this application. The bridge structure will be a minimum of 100m from the neighbouring properties. Whilst glimpsed views towards the houses may be available from the bridge deck, the intervening distance and

presence of tree cover, particularly during the summer months, should ensure that no significant privacy impacts are likely to arise.

Similarly, the degree of separation should ensure that the introduction of the structure should not appear as an overbearing presence when viewed from these properties.

Station House is located adjacent to the section of the proposed bridge within Tameside; and is being assessed as part of that Authority's linked application.

It is, nevertheless, anticipated that a Construction Environmental Management Plan will be secured by condition to ensure that potential construction impacts are mitigated as far as reasonably practicable.

The fear of anti-social behaviour is an important concern. However, to be a material planning consideration, there must be genuine evidence to support such suppositions. In this instance, the measures to be put in place, including the prevention of unauthorised vehicular access, within recommended Condition 5 will ensure that any potential impacts would be minimised.

The proposed development has been assessed against the principles of 'Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design' (CPTED) to reduce the opportunities for crime and the fear of crime. The submitted Crime Impact Assessment confirms the proposal is not considered to be a development which will generate significant levels of crime.

Measures have similarly been incorporated to enclose the parapets of the bridge in response to concerns raised during the consultation process.

Due to the height of the structure, and the pedestrian and vehicular use of the area below the span, the proposed development has been designed to reduce the risk of falls and objects being dropped from the bridge deck. Anti-slip surfaces have been incorporated along the deck and paving along the route. Lighting provision has also been accounted for to help enhance feelings of pedestrian and cyclist safety.

Flood risk

The proposed bridge crosses above the River Medlock and its associated flood zones. However, the development spans Flood Zones 2 or 3 rather than being located within them.

A drainage system will be incorporated to capture bridge deck surface water run-off and full details will be required by planning condition.

In order to protect the water environment, the Environment Agency has requested a condition that if any contamination is identified during the development, work should cease until a satisfactory remediation strategy has been approved and implemented.

Ground conditions

A Ground Investigation Report has been submitted which does not identify any ground contamination, although it is recommended that a piled foundation solution is utilised.

The site is located within a defined Coal Mining Development High Risk Area where historic unrecorded coal mining may have taken place at shallow depth. A Preliminary Sources Study

Report has been submitted. The submitted report considers that recorded underground mine workings are unlikely to pose a risk to the footbridge. However, it concludes that there exists the potential for shallow workable coal seams beneath the site, and that the unrecorded mining of these seams may pose a moderate risk to the proposed development.

On this basis, the Coal Authority has recommended that a scheme of intrusive investigations should be undertaken before development is commenced.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development represents a significant investment in improving sustainable transport and enhancing outdoor recreational facilities as part of the wider Bee Network and local initiatives, including Northern Roots.

The network of cycling and walking routes is projected to significantly increase the proportion of trips made by active means, with benefits including traffic reductions, air quality improvements and positive contributions to mental and physical health outcomes.

The proposals will deliver a landmark bridge structure across the valley designed to complement the historic landscape and surroundings.

Whilst impacts in relation to Green Belt openness and ecology have been identified, it is concluded that satisfactory mitigation will be incorporated into the development to outweigh any adverse impacts.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

1. The development must be begun not later than the expiry of THREE years beginning with the date of this permission.

REASON - To comply with the provisions of Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby approved shall be fully implemented in accordance with the Approved Details Schedule list on this decision notice.

REASON - For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and specifications.

3. No above ground development shall take place until a design and specification for the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the bridge, including the anti-climb parapet, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON - To ensure that the appearance of the development is acceptable and to minimise the potential for anti-social behaviour having regard to Policies 9 and 20 of the Oldham Local Plan.

4. No development shall be commenced until a scheme in the form of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), including details of construction vehicle access routes, identification of works compounds, storage of machinery, materials and spoils, pollution prevention measures and construction surface water management (particularly on cleared steep slopes on thin soils), construction lighting measures, and measures to protect wildlife from uncovered excavations, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall also include details for the methods to be employed to control and monitor noise, dust, and vibration impacts. The approved scheme shall be implemented to the full written satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority before the construction works are commenced, which shall be maintained for the duration of the construction works.

REASON - Prior approval of such details is necessary since they are fundamental to the initial site preparation works and to safeguard the ecological value of the site and the amenities of the area having regard to Policies 9 and 21 of the Oldham Local Plan.

5. Prior to the commencement of the construction of the bridge structure, a scheme to mitigate any impact of crime and anti-social behaviour, including measures to prevent access to the bridge by unauthorised motor vehicles, and safety lighting, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The proposed measures shall be implemented before the bridge is first brought into use and shall be retained at all times thereafter.

REASON - In the interests of the amenity of the local area having regard to Policy 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.

6. No development shall commence until;
 - a) a scheme of intrusive investigations has been carried out on site to establish the risks posed to the development by past shallow coal mining activity; and,
 - b) any remediation works and/or mitigation measures to address land instability arising from coal mining legacy, as may be necessary, have been implemented on site in full in order to ensure that the site is made safe and stable for the development proposed. The intrusive site investigations and remedial works shall be carried out in accordance with authoritative UK guidance.

Prior to the bridge being brought into use, a signed statement or declaration prepared by a suitably competent person confirming that the site is, or has been made, safe and stable for the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This document shall confirm the methods and findings of the intrusive site investigations and the completion of any remedial works and/or mitigation necessary to address the risks posed by past coal mining activity.

REASON - To ensure that risks to the development have been adequately assessed in the interests of public safety, having regard to Policy 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.

7. If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority) shall be carried out until the developer has submitted a remediation

strategy to the local planning authority detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with and obtained written approval from the local planning authority. The remediation strategy shall be implemented as approved.

REASON - For the ongoing protection of the Water Environment from risks arising from land contamination, and to ensure that the development does not contribute to and is not put at unacceptable risk from or adversely affected by unacceptable levels of water pollution in accordance with Policy 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.

8. No development shall take place until the applicant or their agents or successors in title has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works. The works are to be undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The WSI shall cover the following:
 1. Informed by the updated North West Regional Research Framework, a phased programme and methodology of investigation and recording to include:
 - i. an archaeological watching brief
 - ii. informed by the above, further archaeological investigation and recording
 2. A programme for post investigation assessment to include:
 - i. analysis of the site investigations records and finds
 - ii. production of a final report on the investigation results.
 3. Deposition of the final report with the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record.
 4. Dissemination of the results commensurate with their significance.
 5. Provision for archive deposition of the report and records of the site investigation.
 6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the approved WSI.

REASON - To record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible in accordance with Policy 24 of the Oldham Local Plan.

9. No development, including site clearance, excavation or construction works or the entry of vehicles or plant into the site shall commence until a detailed survey of the site for the presence of invasive plant species has been undertaken and a method statement for removing or for setting out the long-term management / control of the identified species on the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The method statement shall include proposed measures that will be used to prevent the spread of the invasive species during any operations and shall also contain measures to ensure that any soils brought into the site are free of the seeds / root / stem of any invasive plant covered under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended. Development shall proceed in accordance with the approved method statement.

REASON - To prevent the spread of invasive plant species having regard to Policy 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.

10. No development shall be commenced, until a scheme and timetable showing how the development helps contribute towards the achievement of Biodiversity Net Gain, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details and timescale.

REASON - To ensure that the proposals result in enhancement of biodiversity having regard to Policies 9, 20 and 21 of the Oldham Local Plan, and paragraph 174 of the NPPF.

11. All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan Ref: 60653222-ACM-00-01-SE-0001 P04, 0002 P04 and 0003 P04 prior to the first use of the bridge or in accordance with the programme agreed with the local planning authority. Thereafter any trees or shrubs which die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased within a period of five years from the completion of the development shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size, number and species to comply with the approved plan unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON - To ensure that the landscaping scheme is carried out and protected in the interests of visual amenity and to safeguard the future appearance of the area having regard to Policies 9, 20 and 21 of the Oldham Local Plan, and saved Policy D1.5 of the Unitary Development Plan.

12. Prior to the commencement of any development the following information shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
 - a) an updated bat survey
 - b) a scheme for the provision of lighting to the bridge deck.

The development shall be implemented in accordance with the subsequently approved lighting scheme, and no additional lighting shall be added to the bridge structure or deck without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

REASON - To ensure the protection of protected species having regard to Policy 21 of the Oldham Local Plan.

13. Prior to the commencement of any development an updated badger survey shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This survey should be undertaken in the period 3 months prior to the planned commencement of works and should encompass an area 30m from any active clearance, haul road, crane platform, or works compound, and details of working methodology and RAMS (Reasonable Avoidance Measures) even where no setts are located within this footprint. If evidence of badger setts is found then the Report will need to include details of restrictive working methods and consideration of the need for a Natural England licence to close/temporary disturbance.

REASON - To ensure the protection of protected species having regard to Policy 21 of the Oldham Local Plan.

14. No works to trees or shrubs shall take place between the 1st March and 31st August in any year unless a detailed bird nest survey by a suitably experienced ecologist has been carried out immediately prior to clearance and written confirmation provided that no active bird nests are present which has been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON - To ensure the protection of bird habitats, which are protected species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, having regard to Policy 21 of the Oldham Local Plan.

15. Prior to the commencement of construction of the bridge hereby approved, a specification for the provision of a drainage system for the disposal of surface water from the bridge deck shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

REASON - In order to ensure a satisfactory form of drainage in the interests of the amenity of the area having regard to Policies 9, 19 and 21 of the Oldham Local Plan.

SITE LOCATION PLAN (NOT TO SCALE):

