

BENCH ARCHITECTS

CONSERVING THE PAST, DESIGNING THE FUTURE

Eagle Parade Conduit - Level 3 - Historic Building Record



Figure 1 - Eagle Parade Drinking Conduit c2004

Project name: Eagle Parade Conduit

Listing Reference: DRINKING FOUNTAIN - Grade II listed
List entry Number: 1258032

OS Grid Reference: SK 05757 73194 - MARKET PLACE

Client: Buxton Civic Association

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Contents:

CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES	2
STATUTORY DESIGNATION	3
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
APPENDICES	4
CHOLERA - STEWARDSHIP - CARTOGRAPHY - DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE -.....	5
DESIGN - STRUCTURE - MATERIALS - OPERATIONAL LIFESPAN	6
ADVERSE ALTERATIONS - CONDITION SURVEY -	8
SPECIALIST REPORTS.....	9
SIGNIFICANCE	11
BIBLIOGRAPHY	12

Appendices:

- Appendix A: Documentary Evidence
- Appendix B: Statement of Heritage Impact & Design & Access Statement
- Appendix C: Sensitivity Matrix
- Appendix D: Mann Williams - Structural Assessment
- Appendix E: Enrichment Through Archaeology - Archaeological Monitoring Report
- Appendix F: Buxton Well Dressing Statement
- Appendix G: Existing Drawings and Photographic Analytical Record
- Appendix H: Proposed Drawings & Repair Proposals

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Issue Record:

Revision	Issue Date	Description / Status	Prepared by	Approved by
-	30.04.26	Listed Building & Planning Applications	ALB	RKB
A				
B				
C				

1.0 CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

1.1. Introduction:

This **Level 3 - Historic Building Record** has been prepared in pursuance of: a Full Planning and Listed Building Application for proposed works at *Eagle Parade Drinking Conduit, Eagle Parade, Buxton, SK17 6EQ*.

1.2. The **Level 3 - Historic Building Record** should be read in conjunction with all report **Appendices A-F**, the associated **Appendix G - drawn and photographic analytical record**, and **Appendix H - the repair proposals**.

1.3. This statement accompanies a full planning and listed building application for proposed works on Eagle Parade Drinking Conduit, Buxton. The works aim to restore the conduit to its original 1840 design. The proposals are informed by a detailed understanding of the conduit's significance, statutory designation, and relevant planning policies including **NPPF** (para 189) which requires applicants to describing the significance of heritage assets. Historic England **NPPF** and **HEAN 12** require the applicant to consider impact in terms of the level of detail in the description of significance, and to consider impact, its avoidance, etc, to assist a positive assessment of impact by the LPA.

1. Para 189 - **Understand the form, materials and history of the affected heritage asset**, and the nature and extent of any archaeological deposits.
2. **Understand the significance of the asset.**
3. Para 190 - **Understand the impact of the proposals on that significance.**
4. Avoid, minimise and **mitigate negative impact**, in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF
5. Look for opportunities to better **reveal or enhance significance**.
6. **Recording.**

1.4. The proposed repair and reinstatement arises from our detailed documentary research, understanding of significance, and the amelioration of the structural defects and ashlar deteriorated noted below.

There have been **pre-application consultations** with all stakeholders and consultees, including 02.03.26 and 16.03.26 site meetings with HPBC and Historic England. Any consultees concerns have now been addressed and agreed. Consultees queries and their accord are recorded in **Appendix C - The Sensitivity Matrix**.

1.5. Reinstatement of Historic External Appearance: [**Appendix H**]

The works include the repair or replacement of masonry, and the reinstatement of the cast-iron railings, gate and railing plinth onto the 1840 footings.

2.0 STATUTORY DESIGNATION

2.1. SK0573SE MARKET PLACE 616-1/4/58 (West side) 10/12/73 Drinking Fountain - GV II

Drinking Fountain or Well Head. Early C19. Weathered dressed stone. Bowl shaped urn with rolled top on stepped base, supported by square stone pedestal with cornice to top. The pedestal base has recessed panels on 3 sides; that to front is arched possibly originally with raised motif and date 1840. The rear is of coursed stone blocks.

3.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3.1. The production of a Level 3 Historic Building Record has permitted communication of the following -

1. NPPF Para 189 - the Understanding of the form, materials and history of the Conduit, and the nature and possible extent of any archaeological deposits via trial holes.

- *Refer to Appendix A - Documentary Evidence, Appendix G - Drawn and Photographic Analytical Record, and section 5.0 and section 6.0 below.*

2. Understanding of the significance of the asset -

- *Refer to Appendix F - Buxton Well Dressing Statement and section 10 Significance below.*

3. NPPF Para 190 - Understanding the impact of the proposals on that significance and avoiding, minimising and mitigating negative impacts, in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF.

- *Refer to Appendix B - Statement of Heritage Impact, Appendix C - Sensitivity Matrix, Appendix D - Mann Williams Structural Assessment, Appendix E - Sensitivity Matrix, Appendix G - Drawn and Photographic Analytical Record, Appendix H – Repair Proposals and section 9.0 below.*

4. Provision of opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance

- *Refer to sections 9.4 and 10.4-10.5 below.*

5. Recording of the Heritage Asset

- *Refer to Appendix G - Drawn and Photographic Analytical Record and sections 9.4 and 10.4-10.5 below.*

1.0 APPENDICES

1.1. **Appendix A: Documentary Evidence - Statement of Heritage Significance -**

Having appraised archival and contextual evidence - the Statement of Significance considers aspects of the Conduit's architectural / aesthetic, historical, technical and social significance and summarizes the structures cultural values.

1.2. **Appendix A: Statement of Heritage Impact -**

This considers the impact of the proposal on the significance of the designated heritage asset in relationship to its sensitivity to change and includes an assessment methodology.

1.3. **Appendix C: Sensitivity Matrix -**

The Sensitivity Matrix responds to the consultees comments following the HPK/2005/0366 & 0367 determination, and records HPBC and Historic England agreed specifications and repair strategies following their 02.03.26 and 16.03.26 site meetings.

1.4. **Appendix D: Mann Williams - Structural Assessment -**

Mann Williams attended the 16.03.26 trial-holes, and reported on structural condition of the Conduit and the adequacy of the existing footings. Their report also justifies the proposed repair strategy and recommends a methodology for the Conduit's dismantling.

1.5. **Appendix E: Enrichment Through Archaeology - Archaeological Monitoring Report -**

Archaeological monitoring of groundworks was requested by Derbyshire County Council's Archaeologist. ETA monitored and reported the trial hole excavations.

1.6. **Appendix F: Buxton Well Dressing Statement -**

BWD's emphasises the importance of well-dressing as Peak District tradition, its phoenix in 1840 as a celebration of the Conduits construction, which continues adding significance to the Conduit and Buxton's culture.

1.7. **Appendix G: Analytical Record and Condition Survey -**

This provides a drawn and photographic record to illustrate the Conduit's appearance, condition, structure, and ashlar deterioration patterns.

1.8. **Appendix H: Proposed Drawings -**

The proposed drawings illustrate, retention and consolidation of the Conduit's footings, the reconstruction of the Conduit onto a handmade brick core, the repair of fountain-urn, and the reinstatement of the cast-iron railings and gate onto an ashlar plinth. Further revelation of significance is provide by a donor's plaque and interpretive signage with a QR code.

2.0 CHOLERA - STEWARDSHIP - CARTOGRAPHY - DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE -

2.1. Cholera -

Throughout history the provision of clean water has been an intermittent public responsibility.

Cholera ²⁶ in Derbyshire was not just an urban problem but also a rural one. In 1831 there was an outbreak of 'typhus fever' (typhoid) at Beeley and Pilsley. This continued into the following year and also spread to Edensor.

The Derbyshire typhoid outbreak nearly coincided with the first outbreak of cholera in this country in October 1831. The number of deaths reported in England alone reached 52,500 by the end of 1832. There were few or even no recorded deaths from Cholera within Buxton, the conditions were not dissimilar to other urban areas²⁶.

2.2. Stewardship and Governance -

Buxton and the Devonshire Buxton Estate was largely governed by Chatsworth agents.

Despite national and local cholera outbreaks, and the supply of *soft spring water* in 1820-21 to the Crescent, the Hall and George Inns plus nearby lodging houses owned by the estate at Buxton, it was only in 1840 that Buxton was provided with a [limited] public water supply via the Eagle Parade Conduit²⁶.

"In 1840, a convenient school was erected in the market place by the Duke of Devonshire, which has endowments amounting to about £100 per annum. ... A fountain and conduit in the market place was also erected by his Grace in 1840"

1846 - Samuel Bagshaw - History, Gazetteer And Directory Of Derbyshire

2.3. Ownership and Cartography -

The Conduit was constructed within the curtilage of The Eagle & Child Inn, which had been purchased in 1748 by the Devonshire Buxton Estate. The extent of the Eagle's curtilage is illustrated on the **1847 Tithe Map of Buxton** [DRO 4071], the stables and ancillary structures were set back from market place frontage, allowing the positioning of the Conduit within the Inn/s forecourt. The Conduit is depicted in **Godfrey Sykes**^[5] 1849 Buxton Market Place, **John Cumming Bates**^[11] 1851 [?] Buxton Market Place, and Buxton Museum photographs of the Wesleyan Chapel and Conduit DCBM100382-3 ^[7] of the same date.

The first cartographic representation of the Conduit is provide in the 1878 - OS Map 10.56 feet to 1 mile (1-500) ^[AA-DE pp6 & 12.]

2.4. Documentary Evidence -

For the sources of the documentary evidence used in this report including **Appendix A - Documentary Evidence**, refer below to section **11.0 - Bibliography**. The superscript numbers ^[1-30] within this texts refer to documents and illustrations within the bibliography.

3.0 DESIGN - STRUCTURE - MATERIALS - OPERATIONAL LIFESPAN

3.1. The Waterworks Design

The works were planned and organized by the Cavendish Buxton agent and Chatsworth's first estate professional manager Philip Heacock [1801-1851], probably from about 1836. **Sir Jeffry Wyattville** [1766-1840] may have been responsible for the design of the ashlar as the detailing of the VASE & CENOTAPH is similar to Chatsworth & Ashridge. Following Wyattville's decline - **Sir Joseph Paxton** inherited the design. Paxton had been modify Wyattville's layout of St Anne's Cliff, the Crescent Slopes from 1839. The railing design is Paxtonesque, and 'plant-like' in lieu of militaristic.

- 3.2. Paxton was a great **hydrologist** - In the early 1840's, in anticipation of a visit to Chatsworth by Czar Nicolas I of Russia, the 6th Duke instructed the construct the world's highest fountain. Paxton designed an eight acre lake (32,000 square metres) to be dug on the moors 110 m above the house to provide the necessary water pressure. It was finished in 1844 but, without a visitation from Czar.

The internal operation of the cistern is unknown, but probably comprised a **drop valves**, 2no* [?] gravity filled **iron, slate or Caithness granite tanks** (*"formed in five parts, the bottom in one piece, and each of the sides and ends also in one piece, flanged at the edges, so as to fit exactly together, and kept so by means of screw bolts and nuts"*), operated by ballcocks, [as per the *Mechanics Magazine* 32 (1840), p. 457] each with external taps for bucket filling. The fountain would have been operated by pipework to a **small waterjet** and drain serving the urn-vase. [*There may have been a single tank and the upper tap may have been fed from the urn].

It is probable that the ashlar cenotaph was constructed with its capping and urn and the eastern Cavendish Serpent monogram ashlar [component 2A] placed last following the completion the internal mechanisms. The thinner western ashlar containing the taps [components 2D and 4D] would have been loosely bedded and removable to allow for maintenance of the valves.

- 3.3. The Conduit opened on June 24th 1840 - and the 6th Duke of Devonshire wrote in his diary ***"Tell Dody the fountain has begun to pour wholesome streams in upper Buxton. With a snake, & 1840"***. CS2_0001_11_0001 Chatsworth Archive

Well dressing in Buxton dates from the opening of the Eagle Parade Conduit on Wednesday, June 24th, 1840. The 6th Duke of Devonshire's patronage of the Conduit is illustrated in contemporary Directories and Gazetteers, including **William Adam (1843) - Gem of the Peak**, and **Samuel Bagshaw (1846) - History, Gazetteer And Directory Of Derbyshire**.

"WATER-WORKS in the Market-place. There, enclosed by a railing, is an elegant structure in the shape of a cenotaph, surmounted by a vase, with the crest of the Duke

of Devonshire in one panel, executed in the boldest relief; and attached to the plinth of the railing on the opposite side are two taps, by which the people of the High town of Buxton may obtain water. The water has been brought here the distance of a mile. This is both an ornament and a great acquisition to this part of Buxton. And in consequence of the erection of this the in-habitants have revived the beautiful custom of “Well-Flowering”, which takes place annually on 28th June”.

3.4. Ashlar Source

The ashlar used for the conduit is a Marsdenian ‘Ashover’, fine-grained, flaggy, feldspathic, sandstone. **Corbar Gritstone** was a major contributor to 18th and 19th-century Buxton, including The Crescent and the Devonshire Royal Hospital.

Sir Jeffrey Wyatville (1766-1840) and his successor **Sir Josheph Paxton** (1803-1865) utilized **Chatsworth Burntwood ashlar**, a [*still active*] quarry high above Beeley, later work sourced **Stancliffe Stone**, from Darley Dale, outside the Cavendish lands.

[For the 2026 ashlar repairs a Derbyshire gritstone is proposed with a similar density and porosity to the Corbar and Burntwood gritstones. **Stanton Peakmoor** (New Pilhough) or **Birchover Buff Gritstone** ashlar has been approved by Historic England and HPBC as a suitable stones sources].

3.5. Cast Iron Railings -

The cast iron railings and corner/gate posts were fluted and the railings floral and of an Italianate design. Such designs were influenced by **Lewis Nockalls Cottingham** (1787-1847) influential pattern-book for ornamental ironwork entitled ‘*The Ornamental Metal Worker’s director*’ 1824 and **George Basevi**’s 1830’s decorative ironwork designs for various London estates. Sundry Well-Dressings photographs of the 1920’s and 1930’s provide detailed evidence of the cast-iron railings/posts, as does do the Buxton museum 1851 photographs.

3.6. Operational Lifespan -

Derbyshire Record Office documents DE/BX/1/1/2 illustrate the early redundancy of the conduit with its 2” iron-pipework from Cold Springs solid with corrosion and frozen in poor weather. The compensatory 1853 construction of Watford Reservoir and the laying of domestic water pipes in the Broadwalk, Market Place and Terrance Road areas had negated its requirement. From 1864 to 1868 Robert Ripon Duke was the Superintendent of the Waterworks for the Devonshire Estate and supervised the construction of the Burbage and Cold Edge Reservoirs, along with pipelaying, public baths, and further drinking fountain constructions. In 1872 the Buxton Local Board acquired the water works from the Chatsworth Estate - [Accounts of G. Drewery 1868-1872]. It is assumed that because of the conduit’s redundancy it was not an appurtenances included in the 1872 transfer. The Local Board Parliamentary Act of 26th May 1873 Authorized the District of Buxton to construct Waterworks, Reservoirs and supply water; also to purchase Land for a Gasworks [DRO D3040 L/W 2/7/1-9].

4.0 ADVERSE ALTERATIONS - CONDITION SURVEY -

- 4.1. In the 1860's the Eagle Parade Conduit plinth and railings were altered, at the front and rear. A cast iron drinking fountain and catchment bowl projected past the eastern railings as illustrated in the 1878 - OS Map and in a post and Buxton Museum photograph DCBM100285.
- 4.2. During WW2 the interior and operating mechanisms of the Conduit were removed along with the railings and railing plinth. The Conduit was reassembled with and pointed with hard cementitious mortar.
- 4.3. In circa 2004 the gritstone urn was dismantled and stored in the HPBC Market Street depot, where it was stripped of its leadwork. In December 2022 Buxton Civic Association took stewardship of the urn.
- 4.4. A non-intrusive visual inspection, photographic and endoscope survey have been undertaken to assess the conduit's current condition and to inform the scope of proposed works. Refer to **Appendix G - Drawn and Photographic Analytical Record** for a detailed record of the ashlar decay types and deterioration patterns.
- 4.5. The structure exhibits settlement and severe patterns of masonry deterioration; including stress cracking and deformation, delamination and blistering of the ashlar, and surface loss.
- 4.6. The following significant decay types are evident -

Type A - DISPLACEMENTS - indication continued and worsening structural movement.

Type B - CRACKS / FRACTURES - caused by structural movement or freeze-thaw salt crystallization.

Type C - SURFACE LOSS - greater than 8mm and up to 15mm with delamination and 'contour-scaling', which has been followed by further crumbling and flaking of the ashlar.

Type C3 - Minor surface delamination, including impact damage less than 8mm.

Type D - Cementous Mortar - leading accelerated weathering, ashlar soluble salt entrapment.

- 4.7. For details of the proposed repairs, reinstatement of missing components, alteration justification, and the avoidance, minimalization and mitigation of any negative impacts, refer to the following documentation -
 1. **Appendix B - Statement of Heritage Impact**
 2. **Appendix C - Sensitivity Matrix**
 3. **Appendix D - Mann Williams - Structural Assessment**
 4. **Appendix E - Enrichment Through Archaeology - Archaeological Monitoring Report**
 5. **Appendix H - Repair Proposals**

5.0 SPECIALIST REPORTS

5.1. Appendix D: Mann Williams - Structural Assessment -

Mann Williams note that Many of the stone units are badly weathered with contour scaling and surface spalling. A number of the ashlar units are also fractured.

The cistern has suffered from significant structural movement and is in need of prompt repair. The large ashlar format of the side walls of the cistern are considered likely to have originally be held together by iron cramps although evidence of these was not encountered. It may be that there were of modest thickness and have corroded losing all integrity without fracturing the external exposed stone face. Loss of restraint has allowed the ashlar units to displace and some to fracture. It is likely that the mass of the stone cap keeping the bulk of the stone in compression is currently the key component in preventing the cistern from collapse.

It is recognised that even after these works are completed isolated stone repairs will be needed to the cistern in years to come. It is therefore proposed to construct an internal brick core to the structure that the perimeter stone units can be cramped back to utilising inert grade 316 stainless steel cramps. This approach allows future removal of individual stones for repair / replacement without further wholesale dismantling of the cistern. The presence of the brickwork will also improve the overall robustness of the structure and mean certain stones would not currently need replacement as they would if the stone structure were reassembled without the core and just stone to stone cramps. A frost-resistant conservation brick is proposed for the core material.

5.2. Appendix E: Enrichment Through Archaeology - Archaeological Monitoring Report -

Archaeological monitoring of groundworks was requested by Derbyshire County Council's Archaeologist. The excavation of two trial trenches to assess the below ground remains revealed that recent works carried out in the area of the Market Place in 2004 had not impacted below ground archaeology and that the original foundations for the cistern had been laid in made-up ground. There was no evidence of medieval material culture in either test trench.

6.0 FURTHER INVESTIGATIONS AND METHOD STATEMENTS -

6.1. Contractor Risk Assessments / Method Statements for Dismantling and Re-erection

The principal contractor is to provide risk assessments and method statements for the dismantling and re-erection of the Conduit. These are to illustrate the scaffold and craneage required, along with temporary strapping, soft packing, timber wedges, lateral restraints.

The statements are to clarify the labelling, protection, palleting of the ashlar components.

A method statement is also required for the re-erection of the Conduit following the repairs.

6.2. Inspection of Ashlar on Dismantling -

The masons (<https://www.rmeaton.co.uk>) and Bench Architects are to assess individual ashlar components for workshop repairs should salvage be an option. The original components will be used both as templates for renewal, or repaired with indents sourced from the sounder adjacent identical ashlar.

6.3. Archaeological Recording of Excavations -

The trial holes have evidenced that the cistern and railing plinth footings are sound, and the bed-rock high; therefore, the footings can be retained in situ to support the reassembled cistern ashlar and railing plinth. The compacted clay deposited in the trenching at the time of the cistern's 1840 construction, is to be replaced with a well compacted Type 3 - limestone hardcore. As the trenching is of sterile character it therefore seems highly unlikely that any medieval and post-medieval material evidence would remain in the unexcavated areas around the cistern

A further archaeological watching brief is to be undertaken during the full excavation of the clay trenching between the retained and consolidated footings.

6.4. Photographic Recording of the Repairs and Reconstruction -

The project's patron Richard Vessey has commissioned a professional photographer Matt Armett www.mattarmett.com to periodically photograph and record the ashlar repairs, production of the cast-iron railings, and the dismantling and re-erection of the conduit, along with the sign-making.

10.0 SIGNIFICANCE

10.1. Water Supply -

The provision of clean water has, intermittently, been seen as a **public responsibility** since early times. Most medieval towns were supplied via wells or springs, as were fortified sites and manors. Spring water was generally delivered by gravitation to a conduit head, which often have considerable **architectural elaboration**. Historic references of elaborately designed conduits include The Great Conduit at Cheapside [1245] ²⁹, St. Mary Le Wigford - Lincoln [1540], George Dance's Newgate Conduit [1780] ^{HS-p5}, Disley's Conduit funded by the Legh family of Lyme Park ^{HS-p5}, the Youlgreave conduit [1829] ^{HS-p4}.

Many conduits are and were symbols of civic pride, including the Eagle Parade Cistern, its significance is illustrated by its grade II listing.

10.2. Social and Architectural significance - Devonshire Patronage - Wyatville / Paxton Design

Buxton and the Devonshire Buxton Estate was largely governed by Chatsworth agents. The patronage of the 6th Duke of Devon, and the premiant the implementation by the Duke's agent Buxton Philip Heacock.

10.3. Contemporary Relevance - Setting of the Heritage Asset -

The Eagle Parade Conduit is especially important as it is associated with Buxton Well Dressing. Section 4.6 above notes the importance of well-dressing as a Peak District tradition. Well dressing phoenixed in 1840 as a celebration of the Conduits construction, this continues to date - adding significance to the Conduit and Buxton's culture.

Further, as with Heritage Action Zone projects the restoration of the Conduit may assist the revisitation of upper Buxton acting as a catalyst for further regeneration.

10.4. Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance -

Documentation including photography and film of the Conduit repairs and railings reinstatement along with the Conduits history is to be produced. This will be disseminated through publications, news-letters, local periodicals, website features and interoperative signage.

10.5. Recording -

This level 3 survey provides analysis of its surviving fabric, particularly that affected by the proposal, and detailed documentary research, map regression, architectural history, archaeological investigation and setting of the heritage asset.

As noted above, the patron has commissioned a professional photographer to photograph, film and record the repair and restoration of the conduit, including the participating consultants, masons, metalworkers.

11.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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