

Sefton Local Area Heritage Summary

BACKGROUND

This statement has been prepared to provide some context to the development of Sefton borough and should be read in conjunction with the Merseyside Local Listing Selection Criteria for anyone wishing to propose a candidate for the list.

The Borough of Sefton lies on the eastern shore of the Irish Sea between the estuaries of the Ribble and Mersey rivers, extending from Southport in the north to Bootle in the south and Maghull in the East. Sefton's heritage assets reflect various stages of growth over several centuries; heavily influenced by the sea and coast. Until agricultural improvements in the 18th and 19th centuries, much of the southern area was mosslands but these were largely drained, following this, small local farms sprang up.

The Borough has diverse physical, socio-economic, and cultural make-up with some of the most affluent and most deprived districts in the country. The historic cores and earliest commercial centres are located: Churchtown, Southport, Ainsdale, Formby, Hightown, Great Crosby, Waterloo, Maghull and Bootle.

At 1801 there were under 6000 people living on the coast of Sefton, but this increased significantly through the 19th century. Southport for example, evolved from a small group of fishermen's cottages to a resort when sea bathing became popular with the middle and upper classes. Major growth only came about in Sefton as a result of the Industrial Revolution, the construction of the Leeds-Liverpool Canal and the development of the railway. Settlements such as Bootle and Southport became popular bathing resorts for residents of larger industrial towns within Lancashire at the turn of the 19th century. The construction of the Liverpool, Crosby and Southport railway and Manchester and Southport railway and now disused Southport and Cheshire Lines Extension Railway in the mid to late-19th century established fast and effective routes to the coast and prompted significant investment. In the case of Southport, the focus remained on promoting an exciting seaside resort while Bootle had some development as a seaside resort this was soon engulfed within the expanding Liverpool dock system which now stretches as far as Bootle.

Bootle similarly evolved from a small rural village to a resort, though became heavily industrialised as the Liverpool docks developed and expanded with large areas devoted to grid-iron terraced housing for workers, typical of the late 19th and early 20th century, some of which was destroyed in WWII bombing raids. A lot of industry in Bootle was associated with the Docks but also manufacturing, grain-milling and edible-oil refining. Although Bootle can be traced to medieval times, much of the historic core has been removed from bomb damage and post-war development.

The Leeds and Liverpool canal facilitated early tourist and industrial activity prior to the construction of the Bootle docks and the railway, where most early industrial activity was located as far north as Waterloo.

The railway also led to development of larger detached and semi-detached Victorian Villas for commuting professionals in Blundellsands and Birkdale.

Notable landowners include; Molyneux family (later Earls of Sefton), Blundells, Heskeths, Scarisbricks and the Bolds.

ASSETS THAT MAY BE CONSIDERED:

It is important that the criteria on the Merseyside Selection Criteria is followed but generally things to consider and research may include: local events, strong community or socio-economic events, links to a notable person/family, the history of established features such as road materials or furniture. Information relating to the existing historic environment records at MEAS or previously grade III Listed Buildings can be a good source of information.

Buildings: Anything built before 1801 when the area was sparsely populated would be of interest including agricultural buildings, farmsteads or those related to early commercial and industrial activity. The building does not need to be wholly intact but enough should remain for it to be easily recognisable.

Buildings designed by Henry Sephton, a notable local architect, would be of interest.

As there are many Victorian and Edwardian buildings, particularly in and around Southport, selection is important so the best examples of those with high architectural and artistic value would be welcomed, especially where they retain most of their original features and plan form.

20th Century buildings should be of very high quality and interest and intact. Later buildings should be of exceptional architectural and/or artistic significance to be considered.

Other Built Structures: Exceptional historic streetworks or furniture e.g. milestones, old wells, stocks, and crosses etc. could also be considered.