

BULLETIN 1.3

1974

### CONSERVATION BREAKTHROUGH

Conservation in Britain made a major step forward on 31 August 1974 when the new Town and Country Amenities Act came into force. Introduced as a Private Member's measure by Mr Michael Shersby MP the Bill was substantially the same as that put forward by Sir John Rogers MP but lost at the February General Election. The new Act enjoyed the support of the Government and all parties and was unopposed in both Houses.

The last seven years have seen four Acts passed to strengthen conservation powers, of which the Civic Amenities Act 1967 was the first. In 1967 the climate of opinion in favour of conservation was almost non-existent but today, with the new Act, legislation has come about which represents the interests of a substantial proportion of the population.

The contents of the Town and Country Amenities Act fall into three parts relating to conservation areas, listed buildings and trees and gardens. The provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Amendment) Act 1972, where the demolition of selected unlisted buildings in conservation areas could be brought within control, are repealed. Under the Town and Country Amenities Act no unlisted building (subject to the exclusion of sheds, etc.) in a conservation area may be demolished without consent granted by the local authority or, if the local authority is the applicant, by the Secretary of State for the Environment. If ever designation of an area was regarded as enough it no longer can be: the Act imposes on local planning authorities a duty to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas and to submit the proposals to a public meeting. In addition the Secretary of State is given power to make separate regulations for the control of advertisements in conservation areas. These provisions give new scope for the protection and improvement of our 3,065 conservation areas. Nevertheless many suitable areas have not yet been designated and in future where county and district councils are unwilling the Secretary of State could have the power under the new Act to designate conservation areas himself.

For listed buildings the Act's most important provision changes the basis of compensation on compulsory acquisition for preservation. In future, payment by a local authority will be for the value of the listed building only and not, as hitherto, for the value of the site for redevelopment.

Thus, local authorities should be more ready to serve repairs notices knowing that if acquisition of the building follows it is likely to be less costly. Another provision will allow local authorities to recover costs that they incur in carrying out

urgent works to unoccupied listed buildings. In future, local authorities should be more ready to take action where an unoccupied listed building is in disrepair. This provision can be extended to unlisted buildings in conservation areas if the Secretary of State so directs. A further section in the Act requires local authorities to give publicity to planning applications for development that would, in their opinion, affect the setting of a listed building.

Two new clauses moved by the Government were added to the Bill in Committee and increase the powers for the protection of trees. The scope of a tree preservation order is extended to cover cases of uprooting and wilful damage and the penalties for contravention of an order are increased. The Minister of State, in moving this addition to the Bill, said that if it worked well in conservation areas it might be extended to other parts of the country. The Act also enables the Historic Buildings Council to make grants towards the preservation and upkeep of gardens of outstanding interest. Previously it has only been possible to aid gardens associated with a building which was itself outstanding.

On the eve of European Architectural Heritage Year Britain now has some of the strongest and potentially most effective conservation legislation in the world. The opportunities for industrial archaeological conservation within the framework of this existing legislation are considerable and the Association for Industrial Archaeology will be vitally concerned in the coming years to ensure that industrial monuments receive the highest possible quality of protection.

### CAPTAIN BROWN'S BRIDGE

The Union Suspension Bridge at Berwick-on-Tweed, completed in 1820 to the designs of Captain (later Sir) Samuel Brown, is to be restored. Brown (1776-1852) had introduced the chain cable into the Royal Navy and in 1817 took out a patent for wrought-iron links which he incorporated in the Union bridge across the Tweed. The suspension bridge has a span of 361 ft and its 18 ft wide deck is hung from twelve wrought-iron chains. Major repairs have been undertaken on two occasions; the first in 1971-2 by the Berwick and Norham and Islandshire Turnpike Trustees and the second in 1902-3 by the Tweed Bridge Trustees in whose care the bridge now is. A steel cable has been added on each side above the chains to help them support the platform (a similar arrangement can be seen on Telford's Conway Suspension Bridge). The tollhouse on the English side has been demolished—the bridge was made free in 1883—but that on the Scottish bank, belonging once to the Berwickshire Turnpike Trust, still stands. Recently the decaying timber structure below the suspended road caused the bridge to be closed and for a while its future was uncertain but now this earliest surviving suspension bridge is to be completely restored by the local authority.

## MANCHESTER MARKET

Manchester's main street, Piccadilly is now dominated by two huge holes in the ground. To the west around the High Street, Town and City Properties are in partnership with the Corporation to develop five large stores, 200 shops, market hall, bus station, 2,000 car parking spaces and 200,000 sq ft of offices. To the east is the Market Cross development area. At the northern end of Piccadilly, where the Shambles used to be, Central and District Properties are developing 72,000 sq ft of shopping, 282,000 sq ft of offices and 710 car parking spaces. These massive schemes are annihilating Manchester's character, but the Corporation, far from being alarmed at seeing so much of the city disappearing before its eyes, remain keen to develop the seven remaining development areas. One of these, covering 23 acres, includes the obsolete Central railway station. The city want to see a million square feet of offices, 400,000 sq ft of exhibition space and 100,000 sq ft of shops on this site. The area of the city which seems destined to bear the brunt of the Corporation's redevelopment urges is Smithfield. Until 18 months ago it was the area of Manchester's fish, fruit and meat markets. Now all, except part of the meat market, have moved to the eastern boundaries of the city leaving acres of obsolete halls, warehouses and 18th century terraces. The Corporation own most of the land and toyed with the idea of declaring all Smithfield a development area as a preliminary to clearing the lot. So far they have only demolished the huge central market building while leaving the small warehouses and terraces to the vandals. But now the Corporation have announced that they intend to demolish the best building in the area. The fish market was built in 1873, it is a Grade II listed building, and contains all the qualities that make late Victorian commercial architecture so fine. Internally it consists of a well planned trading space with tiers of dealers' boxes hung between the cast iron columns, while outside the architect indulged in righteous and proper decoration. Each of the four entrances is crowned with a carved panel showing biblically inspired fishing scenes. In applying for listed building consent to demolish, the city over-ruled its own planning committee which thought the building should be preserved. The Corporation doesn't know what they will do with the site of the fish market or indeed what they will do with the whole of the Smithfield area. They have plans about eventually developing it as a council house and commercial area. Surely, in such a scheme, the fish market could be a lively centre-piece.

## ROTHERHITHE RENOVATION

A report on local attitudes to the redevelopment of a historical part of the London Docklands has just been published. The report contains the results of market research carried out by Fieldwork International on behalf of the Bermondsay and Rotherhithe Society and the Brunel Exhibition Project. The survey discovered that the main problems experienced by over 50% of the people interviewed were poor shopping and leisure facilities, irregular public transport and depressing physical surroundings dominated by juggernauts. The survey sought attitudes to the conservation of a historic area of warehouses surrounding St Mary's Church. The area is linked with the sailing of the Mayflower and also the Brunels who built the Thames Tunnel there almost 150 years ago. The results show that proposals for renovating the buildings and turning them to new uses are generally pre-

ferred to the likely alternatives of pulling the buildings down and erecting local authority housing on their site with open space along the riverside. The future of the area is in doubt and the warehouses are empty and decaying fast. The Brunel Exhibition Project, which is backed by the local amenity society and many other groups, has proposed renovating the engine house used by Sir Marc and Isambard Brunel in building the first under-water tunnel in the world. They want to turn it into a little museum surrounded by a landscaped park, and this idea was supported by 80% of the people interviewed.

Another project to turn some warehouses into small workshops has been put forward by Rotherhithe Workshops Ltd., a group of craftsmen. This was overwhelmingly preferred to the alternative possibility of conversion to expensive houses if it remained in private ownership. Other ideas that won strong support were for shops and an entertainment centre, including a discotheque.

The report was based on depth interviews by professional interviewers carried out with a sample of 100 local residents using a semi-structured questionnaire. The research was carried out by Fieldwork International who financed the survey as a contribution to the Brunel Exhibition Project. The report was prepared by Nicholas Falk, and also includes sections on the planning context and recommendations for action by the local authorities. A feature of the approach was that it emphasises the potential for putting old buildings that may be worth keeping on environmental grounds to new uses that remedy local deficiencies. The approach was designed to let local people express their preferences for alternative forms of development in the knowledge of possible side effects.

Copies of the report are available from Fieldwork International, 30 Craven Street, London WC2 5NT, price £2.50 to organisations and 40p to persons involved in community, amenity or industrial archaeology groups. For further information on the report or the project, contact Nicholas Falk, 46 Ainger Road, London NE3 3AH (Tel: 01-586 3850) or the Secretary of the Bermondsey and Rotherhithe Society, Nigel Haigh, 8 Grange Walk, London SE1.

## IA HOLIDAYS

A major hotel group and a holiday travel firm have recently offered industrial archaeological weekends. Grand Metropolitan Hotels have weekends planned in Colchester, York, Chichester, West Bromwich, Canterbury, Exeter, Great Yarmouth, Frome and Darlington and further details are available from 'Industrial Archaeology', Grand Metropolitan House, Stratford Place, London W1A 4YU. (Tel: 01-629 6618).

Boswell and Johnson, specialists in travel, also have industrial archaeological weekends planned, under their banner of 'Enrichment holidays', arranged in association with the York Department of Tourism. Both weekends are in Yorkshire and under the guidance of Mr Stanley Tyson, a Chartered Civil Engineer and Lecturer in the Department of Adult Education in the University of Hull.

Further details are available from Boswell and Johnson, Sir Thomas Herbert's House, 11 Lady Peckett's Yard, York YO1 2NF (Tel: 0904 52232) or City of York Department of Tourism, De Grey Rooms, Exhibition Square, York (Tel: 0904 28666).

## ENVIRONMENTAL STATISTICS - LISTED BUILDINGS

### ENGLAND AND WALES

	1970	1971	1972	1973
Number of buildings on statutory list	127,672	137,087	163,155	183,445

#### Listed building consent for demolition

Applications	587	557	1001	927
Consent granted for total demolition	205	203	226	*445
Consent granted for partial demolition	104	43	141	277
Consent refused	186	193	225	718

Figures supplied by the DoE

\*This figure is exceptionally high because one application—the demolition of the Railway Cottage Estate, New Bradwell, Buckinghamshire—involved 163 buildings.

### SCOTLAND

Number of buildings on statutory list	3,800	14,759	20,332	20,355
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#### Listed building consent for demolition

Applications	3	23	34	27
Consent granted for total demolition	3	16	27	24
Consent granted for partial demolition	—	7	7	3
Consent refused	—	1	—	1

Figures supplied by the Scottish Development Department

The number of refusals and consents in Britain in any year is not the same as the number of applications made as decisions may be issued on applications made in the preceding year.

### SHARPNESS CENTENARY

November 1974 marked the Centenary of the opening of the New Dock at Sharpness in Gloucestershire. The date of the Centenary celebrations was brought forward by two months in an attempt to avoid the wet and stormy weather experienced by those attending the opening in 1874. The focal point of these celebrations was the opening on 19 September 1974 of a new quay, Century Quay.

The dock town of Sharpness, on the Severn estuary about 15 miles south of Gloucester, grew up around the southern terminal of the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal, opened in 1827. The canal was built to provide a safe route for ships to Gloucester. Today, Sharpness has an important strategic position at the head of the Bristol Channel, while the canal carries hundreds of thousands of tons of cargo every year. Sharpness thus became the water gateway to the West Midlands and linked up with the national network of inland waterways. The canal took 33 years to build and was opened on 26 April 1827, a public occasion when a band played, the bells were rung and guns fired. The original tidal basin, opened at the same time, is now known as the Old Dock.

Trade progressed steadily on the canal from its opening and eventually it became obvious that the old dock was too small to handle the greater volume of traffic and the new larger steam vessels. In 1869 the Canal Company's engineer, W B Glegram, surveyed for an enlarged dock area. He

suggested a new entrance, tidal basin and dock below Sharpness at a cost of £150,000 to overcome the crowding and long delays to shipping which were occurring at the time. Building began in spring 1871, directed by Baldwin, the resident engineer. The new dock was opened on 18 November 1874. Two steam ships from Italy were the first to enter the dock: the *Tre Fratelli*, over 600 tons, laden with grain, and the *Vaza*, of over 500 tons. The final cost of the new dock was £400,000. There was now an entrance three quarters of a mile lower down the river with a lock 320' by 57', a tidal basin of 540' by 300' and a floating dock 2000' long and with an average width of 320'. Now ships of up to 5,000 tons could berth at Sharpness. The water area and facilities were available for intense dock activities to begin. It would be a centre for loading, discharging and lightening and immediately began to rival Gloucester in this respect. With the opening of the new dock there was little need to continue the old entrance lock, which was closed in 1910.

Sharpness Dock was nationalised in 1949 and passed into the ownership of the British Waterways Board in 1963. Traffic had first passed the million ton mark in 1905 but, despite a period of intense activity during the second world war, trade declined and in 1967 a policy of diversification was adopted to bring new trades to the dock. As a result tonnage increased rapidly, reaching an impressive 0.63 million tons in 1973, made up of over 50 different commodities. A brand new quay, Century Quay, was opened to mark the Centenary on 19 September 1974.

## QUARRY BANK PROPOSALS

In a report prepared by Dr Richard Hills the National Trust has recently published important proposals for a textile museum at Quarry Bank Mill, Styal, near Manchester. In 1939 Mr Alec Greg presented the National Trust not only with Quarry Bank Mill, Styal, founded as a cotton spinning mill by his great-great-grandfather, Samuel Greg, in 1784, but also the surrounding 250 acres, the mill workers' cottages, the Apprentice House and the hanging beech woods of the Bollin Valley in which the Mill is situated. The Trust accepted this important property without endowment. The programme to modernise the 70 cottages is nearing completion and the whole area has been declared an official country park with extensive public visiting. The Trust is now ready to tackle the major task of presenting the Mill to the public in a manner worthy of its history and exceptional setting.

The mill ceased to be used by Greg & Co. in the nineteen fifties since when it has been partially occupied by light industry. The Trust now has almost complete vacant possession and wishes if possible to develop the mill as a working museum to explain the technical history of the processes carried out there as well as the social history of the village. It is the fact that this mill, its owners' houses, its village and the surrounding countryside have survived almost unchanged since the early nineteenth century which makes it such an important example of the early Industrial Revolution.

The report prepared by Dr Hills is in the form of a feasibility study for the Museum although it contains no details of capital costs or the likely revenue budget and only outline proposals for staffing.

## BRIDGE PRESERVATION APPEAL

Durham County Council has recently launched an appeal for £100,000 to conserve the Causey Arch at Tanfield, near Stanley, in the county; what many people believe to be the oldest railway bridge in the world. The bridge was built and paid for nearly two hundred and fifty years ago by "The Grand Allies", a powerful group of mine owning families in the North East. An almost perfectly semi-circular stone arch, spanning 32m across the Causey or Houghwell Burn Gorge, the bridge supported a wagonway which carried coal from Tanfield Moor collieries to the River Tyne.

From an engraving made in 1770, only 45 years after the first recorded mention of the arch, it seems the structure initially deteriorated quite rapidly. Since then the decay has been relatively slow with little visible change in the masonry, but water percolates through the crown, and frost action causes damage every year.

As a result of local government reorganisation the bridge has been transferred from the ownership of Stanley Urban District Council to Durham County and this fact, coupled with the impending 150th Anniversary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway, and European Architectural Heritage year, has prompted the launching of an appeal to various charitable trusts and foundations for money to restore this historic structure. So far the response has been disappointing although the Department of the Environment has promised a "substantial grant" if the remainder can be raised. Four areas require attention: the west abutment needs securing; the structure needs waterproofing; considerable re-pointing is needed; and the causeway will have to be restored.

## NATIONAL TRUST SURVEY

A survey taken in early 1973 amongst a random 6,000 of the National Trust's 430,000 members provides a valuable insight into the likes and dislikes of Britain's oldest and largest conservation body. Conducted by Dr Peter Mann of the Department of Sociology at Sheffield University the survey produced the following statistical breakdown of the interests of members.

	Very interested	Fairly interested	Not very interested
Open spaces for the beauty of the countryside	88	11	1
The gardens of historic houses and castles	69	26	4
The contents of historic houses and castles	65	29	6
Open spaces for their flora and fauna	59	31	9
Architectural aspects of historic houses and castles	46	42	12
Ancient remains of archaeological interest	40	38	22
The family associations of historic houses and castles	34	42	25
Open spaces for active recreation	34	33	33
Industrial monuments	15	30	55

With an average age of 54 the *typical* Trust member may be described as middle-aged and middle class, a country lover with a strong interest in gardens and an appreciation of fine houses. He (or she—there are slightly more women than men) is a lover of beauty rather than an antiquarian.

As might be expected the National Trust member is fairly positively disinterested in industrial archaeology despite the fact that the Trust has a number of sites which might be generally classified as industrial—such as windmills and watermills and Conway Suspension Bridge—and a few—the Cornish beam engines, for example—which are very specifically so. Indeed, the National Trust has a larger stake than any other *single* organisation in the active care and management of industrial archaeological sites. The role of the AIA in industrial archaeological conservation has still to be crystallised but, as the recent Keele conference demonstrated, there is clearly a substantial body of interest within its membership in favour of the Association becoming, in effect, a 'National Trust for Industrial Archaeology'.

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AIA Bulletin is published six times a year by the Association for Industrial Archaeology. The Association was established in September 1973 to promote the study of Industrial Archaeology and encourage improved standards of recording, research and specialist survey and research groups and bodies involved in the preservation of industrial monuments, to represent the interests of Industrial Archaeology at a national level, to hold conferences and seminars, and to publish the results of research. Further details of the Association and its activities may be obtained from the Secretary, Association for Industrial Archaeology, Church Hill, Ironbridge, Telford, Salop TF8 7RE, England (095-245-3522).