



Listing Review Request Form

Before completing this form please ensure you have read the accompanying guidance notes. All sections marked * are essential; please complete all other sections as fully as you can. An electronic version of this form and the guidance notes may be downloaded from:

<https://www.gov.uk/how-to-challenge-our-decision-to-list-or-not-list-a-building>

Sharing of Information with interested parties

Information submitted by you in this review request may be shared with other interested parties as part of the consultation process of a review and/or in response to a request for information. Such disclosure will be subject to the statutory provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and those regarding the safeguarding of personal information. Please see Section H below.

Section A – Key dates*

Date of review request 27 October 2016

Date of decision letter 3 October 2016

Section B – Applicant information *

Name (including name of organisation representing where applicable)
Nigel Welbourn (With the endorsement of The Friends of Alton Station)

Your contact address inc. postcode

Preferred telephone number

Alternative telephone number

E-mail address

Section C – Details of the building *

Building name ALTON STATION FOOTBRIDGE

Building address Alton Railway Station, Station Road, Alton, Hampshire

Historic England reference number 1437002

Section D – Brief summary of your grounds for review *

There are factual errors that may have affected the outcome.

The Listing Selection Guide for Transport Structures has been incorrectly applied to this extremely rare last remaining operational wooden railway footbridge.

There was significant new evidence that was provided after the application was submitted. This has not been considered and taken into account in reaching a decision. There is other new evidence detailed below.

Section E – Full grounds for review *

Please refer to supporting documentation where appropriate

It is suggested that 'numerous footbridges incorporate substantial timber elements such as Clapham Junction and Shrewsbury.' It is a factual error to consider that the substantial metal leg and support footbridges at Clapham Junction and Shrewsbury can be considered in any way comparable. Alton is a diminutive two-person width bridge in comparison, with its structural integrity entirely based on wood. The staircases, main bridge girders and solid legs are all made from wood. Whilst parts of the veranda structure at Eridge has some similarity, only the wooden footbridge in Darlington museum is comparable and this has been listed.

The view that the footbridge 'does not exemplify LSWR type or house style' is a factual error. Firstly as it the only surviving wooden example remaining, comparison with the 25 demolished bridges, which were all similar, is impossible. Secondly, it is immediately recognisable as a covered LSWR footbridge in shape and form; the similarities with later classic iron examples such as at Okehampton are clear. The handrail supports and wooden legs are chamfered and are designed in the same way as LSWR wooden signal box staircases. As the Friends of Alton Station logo shows (included below) it is a distinctive exemplar of LSWR design and provides a valuable functional and visual relationship between a disparate ensemble of railway buildings at a key heritage railway station.

The point is made that the bridge is 'conservative in its design and old fashioned in its construction'. This would apply to almost every other footbridge that has been listed. They are mostly simple flights of stairs with a pedestrian bridge crossing the railway. However, the design at Alton imperceptively and cleverly uses steps to achieve the very minimum of height and distance to cross the railway. Furthermore, the main wooden spans extending over the tracks are so amazingly thin that they are often confused as being made from metal.

There is local anecdotal evidence that the bridge was covered because of complaints by women, that men were able to see their ankles. However, it is not possible to expand or provide a definitive source for this subject in the time available.

The assertion is made that the bridge was 'only rare because the railway companies had abandoned wood by the time it was built'. This makes the bridge even more unique and reinforces the view in the listing report that the footbridge is in fact 'a rare survival'. Earlier

wooden bridges have suffered greater decay. All other freestanding wooden footbridges in the entire country, except that at Darlington which had the advantage of being undercover, have all been demolished. Alton is arguably the last operational wooden footbridge in the world.

It is pointed out that 'increasingly rigorous selection should be applied to railway structures post-dating 1860 due to the quantity of buildings, but rarity is a consideration'. The case against the bridge has been built up in a biased way in favour of rigorous selection, this is not balanced against the extreme rarity and other historic issues associated with the structure.

New evidence that the wood for the bridge was imported all the way from Canada was made after the main application was submitted. The wood lends itself to plain, but immensely strong construction. This provides a wider historical international dimension to the structure. This information was entirely omitted from the report and therefore not given any consideration. Further new information is also provided in that very skilful engineering repairs were made in concrete to small parts of some of the wooden support legs by the Southern Railway in the pre-1948 period and are apparent only on close inspection.

In the wider policy context, the bridge is located at a busy heritage railway station, it is a unique part of the Watercress Line's historical offering and contributes to the wider tourism of the area. Government policy includes the desirability of helping heritage railways and also includes policies to assist with the economy.

The national importance of the bridge of this bridge cannot be underestimated. It is the only wooden operational footbridge remaining in the country and arguably the world. There is only one other freestanding wooden footbridge in the country. This is an entirely similar structure in construction and historic interest, it is in a railway museum and has been rightly listed. It is accepted that the Alton footbridge at a railway heritage station is 'rare'. This and other historic factors make a positive case for listing, fully justifying the conclusion in the report that the loss of this footbridge would be 'extremely regrettable' and without creating a precedent for any further wooden footbridge listings.

Nigel Welbourn Railway Historian

Section F – Supporting documentation

Please list the titles of any supporting documentation submitted. You should not submit documents previously considered during the listing assessment.



The iconic LSWR outline of the footbridge joining disparate buildings can be seen from the logo of the Friends of Alton Station.

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary

Section G – Substantiated threats to the building

Is the building the subject of a planning application, or the subject of existing planning permission or consent?

Yes No

Is the building the subject of pre-application discussions with the local authority?

Yes No Not known

Has the owner given formal notice to the local authority of their intent to demolish?
Probably not required to inform LA as at operational station owned by Network Rail.

Please give brief details of the above threats:

Network Rail have given their intent to demolish the footbridge in 2017.

Section H - Freedom of Information Act 2000, Environmental Information Regulations 2004 & Review Consultation

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR). Both regimes require us to disclose information in certain circumstances where we receive a request to do so. Any personal information that we receive must be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). More information on each of these regimes is available on the Information Commissioner's website: <http://www.ico.gov.uk/>

Information provided to us by you, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the FOI, EIR and the DPA). In addition, consultation with interested third parties on the information disclosed by you may be necessary as part of the review process.

For the purposes of FOIA or EIR requests, and for review consultation, the information disclosed by you in this application will be presumed, in the absence of an explanation to the contrary, not to be confidential.

If you want the information provided by you to be treated as confidential, please explain to us why you regard it as confidential (see Section I below). If we receive a request for disclosure of the information under FOIA or EIR we will take full account of any such explanation provided by you but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances as the Department is required to act in accordance with its obligations under the FOIA, EIR and the associated Code of Practice. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding upon the Department.

Please note that in certain circumstances, a review may not be possible without disclosure of information provided by you to interested third parties.

Data Protection Act 1998

The information you provide, including personal details, and any information obtained from other sources will be retained by DCMS, in hard copy form and /or electronically.

DCMS will process your personal data in accordance with the DPA and, in the majority of circumstances, this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties under an FOIA or EIR request or a review consultation.

Section I – Information regarded by you as confidential

If you regard the information you have submitted in support of a review to be confidential please explain why below. Please remember that, in certain circumstances, a review may not be possible without disclosure of information provided by you to interested third parties.



Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary

Submitting your listing review request

Please submit your completed Review Request Form with any supporting evidence, **preferably by e-mail**, to: review.requests@culture.gov.uk (file attachments may not exceed 24MB). Documents submitted by e-mail do not need to be provided in hard-copy as well.

If you do not have access to e-mail, or your documents exceed the 24MB limit, review requests may be posted to:

Listing Review Manager,
Department for Culture, Media & Sport,
4th Floor
100 Parliament Street
London
SW1A 2BQ