

Royal Hotel, Llangollen Heritage Impact Assessment on Conservation Area and Impact on Setting of Designated Assets January 2024



Report by: Trysor

For: Knights Construction Ltd

January 2024



Royal Hotel, Llangollen Heritage Impact Assessment on Conservation Area and Impact on Setting of Designated Assets January 2024

By

Jenny Hall, MCIfA & Paul Sambrook, MCIfA
Trysor

Trysor Project No. 2023/919
HER Event Record PRN – CPAT 215550

For: Knights Construction Ltd

January 2024

38, New Road
Gwaun-cae-Gurwen
Ammanford
Carmarthenshire
SA18 1UN

www.trysor.net
enquiries@trysor.net



Cover photograph: From the river Dee, looking southwest to the Royal Hotel

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DYDDIAD 8^{fed} Mis Ionawr 2024 **DATE** 8th January 2024

Paratowyd yr adroddiad hwn gan bartneriad Trysor. Mae wedi ei gael yn gywir ac yn derbyn ein sêl bendith.

This report was prepared by the Trysor partners. It has been checked and received our approval.

JENNY HALL MCIfA *Jenny Hall*

PAUL SAMBROOK MCIfA *Paul Sambrook*

Croesawn unrhyw sylwadau ar gynnwys neu strwythur yr adroddiad hwn.

We welcome any comments on the content or structure of this report.

38, New Road,
Gwaun-cae-Gurwen
Ammanford
Carmarthenshire
SA18 1UN
01269 826397

82, Henfaes Road
Tonna
Neath
SA11 3EX
01639 412708

www.trysor.net

enquiries@trysor.net

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Jenny Hall (BSc Joint Hons., Geology and Archaeology, MCIfA) had 12 years excavation experience, which included undertaking watching briefs prior to becoming the Sites and Monuments Record Manager for a Welsh Archaeological Trust for 10 years.

She has been a partner in Trysor since 2004 undertaking a variety of work that includes heritage impact assessments, setting assessments and other desk-based appraisals and assessments, as well as evaluations, watching briefs, building recording and field survey.

Paul Sambrook (BA Joint Hons., Archaeology and Welsh, MCIfA, PGCE) has extensive experience as a fieldworker in Wales. He was involved with Cadw's pan-Wales Deserted Rural Settlements Project for 7 years.

He has been a partner in Trysor since 2004 undertaking a variety of work that includes heritage impact assessments, setting assessments and other desk-based appraisals and assessments, as well as evaluations, watching briefs, building recording and field survey.

Event Record PRN – CPAT HER

PRN	CPAT 215550
Name	Royal Hotel, Llangollen Heritage Impact Assessment on Conservation Area and Impact on Setting of Designated Assets November 2023
Type	HERITAGE ASSESSMENT
NGR	SJ2154042111
Easting	321540
Northing	342111
Summary (English)	In autumn 2023, Trysor undertook a review of a Heritage Impact Assessment completed in 2022. The 2022 assessment was to consider the impact on other designated historic assets in relation to proposals to refurbish and extend the Royal Hotel, Bridge Street, Llangollen, Denbighshire. Planning permission and Listed Building Consent was granted for the scheme. In 2023 alterations to the consented scheme required that the Heritage Impact Assessment was reviewed. © Trysor 2024
Crynodeb (Cymraeg)	Yn hydref 2023, cynhaliodd Trysor adolygiad o Asesiad Effaith Treftadaeth a gwblhawyd yn 2022. Roedd asesiad 2022 i ystyried yr effaith ar asedau hanesyddol dynodedig eraill mewn perthynas â chynigion i adnewyddu ac ymestyn y Royal Hotel, Bridge Street, Llangollen, Sir Ddinbych. Rhoddwyd caniatâd cynllunio a Chaniatâd Adeilad Rhestredig ar gyfer y cynllun. Yn 2023 roedd newidiadau i'r cynllun a ganiatawyd yn ei gwneud yn ofynnol i'r Asesiad o'r Effaith ar Dreftadaeth gael ei adolygu.© Trysor 2024
Description	In autumn 2023, Trysor undertook a review of a Heritage Impact Assessment completed in 2022. The 2022 assessment was to consider the impact on other designated historic assets in relation to proposals to refurbish and extend the Royal Hotel, Bridge Street, Llangollen, Denbighshire. Planning permission and Listed Building Consent was granted for the scheme. In 2023 alterations to the consented scheme required that the Heritage Impact Assessment was reviewed. © Trysor 2024
Sources	Trysor, 2024, Royal Hotel, Llangollen Heritage Impact Assessment on Conservation Area and Impact on Setting of Designated Assets, January 2024
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Contents

Summary	1
1. Introduction	2
2. Methodology	4
3. Heritage Impact Assessment Stage 1	5
4. Heritage Impact Assessment Stage 2	6
5. Heritage Impact Assessment Stage 3	7
6. Heritage Impact Assessment Stage 4	17
7. Bibliography	18
Appendix A: Photographs	19
Appendix B: Setting Assessment Llangollen Bridge (Listed Building 1080 & Scheduled Monument DE026)	32

Summary

Trysor have undertaken a review of the heritage impact assessment undertaken in 2022. That assessment was for the impact on the Llangollen Conservation Area, the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site and an assessment of the impact on the setting of the intervisible scheduled monuments and listed buildings from the proposed refurbishment and improvement of the Royal Hotel, Llangollen. The scheme was consented in 2022, planning application 03/2022/0173 and Listed Building consent 03/2022/0174. The client wishes to make some variations to the consented scheme to reflect the current market and this report considers those changes.

The proposed variations to the consented scheme include a new-build residential block to replace the new-build spa, an additional stairwell/lift block to service the residential block, no canopy over the riverside decking, and blocking up of the gateway into the courtyard from Bridge Street. The new-build residential block will have similar design elements to the consented spa, but will not feature the stone elements and will have a smaller footprint taking it away from the riverside slightly.

The Llangollen Conservation Area was designated in 1985, with its key characteristics defined in the Conservation Area Appraisal, dating to 1997. In 2016, Cadw undertook an Understanding Urban Character assessment for Llangollen, providing a more detailed assessment of the town's history and character, defining 6 character areas, and providing a Statement of Significance (Cadw, 2016). Both documents have informed this assessment.

Having considered the characteristic elements of the Conservation Area identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal, this assessment concludes that the key characteristics of the Conservation Area will be preserved by the proposed development.

The assessment has found that impacts of the proposed changes on the setting of the Conservation Area range from a Very Low Negative impact on setting caused by the addition of new structural elements to the complex, to a Low Positive impact arising from the renewal of one of the most important buildings in the town. The hotel will be retained as a prominent building serving its original function as a result of the proposed development.

The Royal Hotel does lie within the Essential Setting of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site but there would be no impact on its significance.

1. Introduction

1.1 This document has been prepared by Trysor, at the request of Knights Construction Ltd, to re-assess the impact on the Llangollen Conservation Area, and on the setting of nearby designated historic assets from a proposed variation to consented changes and improvements at the Royal Hotel, Llangollen at SJ2154042111, planning application 03/2022/0173 and Listed Building consent 03/2022/0174.

1.2 The proposed development consists of the refurbishment of the Royal Hotel and includes replacing a 1960s element with a new build, , and a new external décor. A previous heritage impact assessment on the Conservation Area and on the setting of other designated historic assets as undertaken by Trysor in 2022 (Trysor, 2022b).

1.3 A separate document considers the heritage impact of the proposed variations on the Royal Hotel arising from the proposed development (Trysor, 2024).

1.4 The Royal Hotel is a Grade II Listed Building and identified in the Llangollen Conservation Area Appraisal as one of the "top" ten Listed buildings out of 101 listed at the time of the appraisal in 1997. The Royal Hotel lies within the Llangollen Conservation Area and in the essential setting of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site. It also lies in the Llangollen character area of the Vale of Llangollen Historic Landscape.

1.4.1 There are also two Scheduled Monuments within 150 metres of the development: Llangollen Bridge, DE029 and Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal, DE175 and 53 Listed Buildings.

1.4.2 A full setting assessment is included for Llangollen Bridge (Appendix B). The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal has not been further assessed as it will not be affected by the proposed development as intervening buildings and trees block views of the development. No listed building would experience a negative impact from the development.

1.5 Site visits were made by Trysor on 22/11/2021, 07/01/2022 and previously for a slightly different proposal for the Royal Hotel on 16/05/2019.

*Royal Hotel, Llangollen: Heritage
Impact Assessment on Conservation Area and
Impact on Setting of Designated Assets
January 2024*

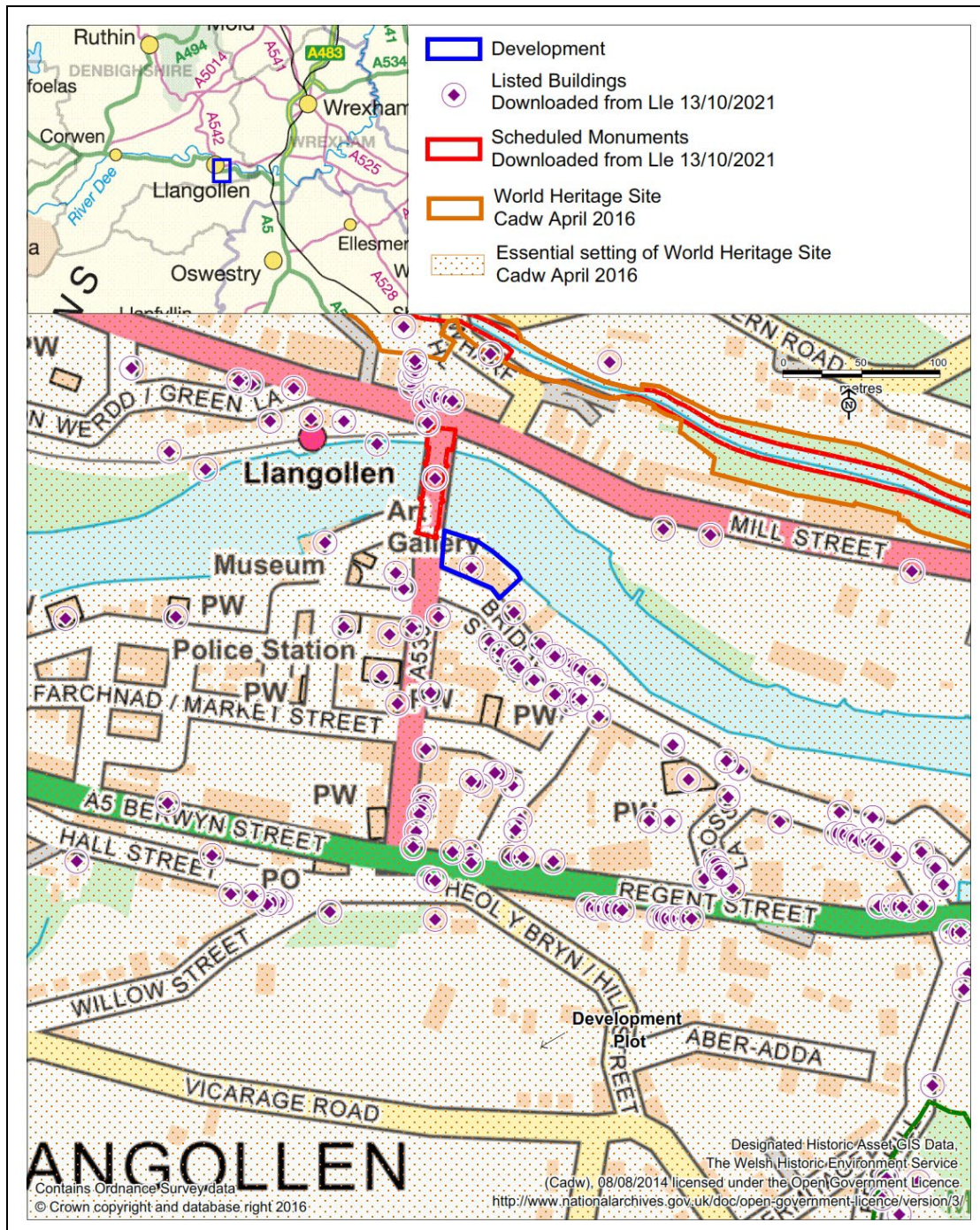


Figure 1: Location of the development site on Bridge Street, Llangollen

2. Methodology

2.1 At the request of Knights Construction Ltd, Trysor have undertaken a review of a heritage impact assessment completed in 2022 (Trysor, 2022). The 2022 report assessed the impact on the Llangollen Conservation Area, the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site, and an assessment of the impact on the setting of the intervisible scheduled monuments and listed buildings, from a proposed refurbishment of the Royal Hotel, planning application 03/2022/0173 (Denbighshire) and Listed Building Consent 03/2022/0174 (Denbighshire). Planning permission and Listed Building Consent was granted in August 2022 for that scheme, but some variations to the overall scheme are now proposed. This document assesses if there is a change in impact.

2.2 The process outlined in "*Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales*" has been followed (Cadw, 2017a). This process applies to Conservation Areas as well as individual historic assets and has four stages;

Stage 1: Explain the objective and why changes are desirable or necessary

Stage 2: Understand the significance of the historic asset

Stage 3: Assess the impact of the proposals.

Stage 4: Set out the reasoning behind the preferred option, including design concepts and principles, in the light of the assessment process

2.3 In addition, Cadw's guidance "*Managing Conservation Areas in Wales*" (Cadw, 2017c) has been used to inform this assessment.

2.3.1 The impact on the settings of the scheduled monuments and listed buildings in the vicinity of the proposed development was assessed using the methodology outlined in "*Setting of Historic Assets in Wales*" (Cadw, 2017b). After initial assessment the only designated historic asset which required a full assessment was the Llangollen Bridge, (scheduled monument DE026, Listed Building 1080). Other designated assets were considered together as the change was either neutral or positive.

2.4 Levels of impact are recorded using the terms None, Very Low, Low, Medium, High or Very High. An impact can be negative or positive. Where impacts have equivalent positive and negative values, the term Neutral is used.

3. Heritage Impact Assessment Stage 1: *Explain the objective and why changes are desirable or necessary*

3.1 The objective of the proposed changes is to refurbish the now closed Royal Hotel, which is located on the northern side of Bridge Street, Llangollen.

3.2 The proposed redevelopment will enable The Royal to be brought back into use with a mix of residential and holiday accommodation.

3.3 The proposal is to undertake a full refurbishment and reordering of the hotel, creating new spaces within the interior to allow for a more organic flow through the building.

3.3.1 The existing riverside external decking will be replaced.

3.3.2 The 20th century block will be replaced with a new block of private 1- or 2- bedroomed apartments, those overlooking the river having their own private balcony.

3.3.3 Due to the historic importance of the hotel, all works will be undertaken in close consultation with CADW and the Local Authority's Conservation Officer so as to ensure sensitivity towards the existing fabric of the building.

4. Heritage Impact Assessment Stage 2: Understand the significance of the Conservation Area

4.1 The Llangollen Conservation Area was designated in 1985 covers an area of 20.4 hectares.

4.2 The Conservation Area Appraisal in 1997 was a short document that did not seek to define individual character areas within the overall area (Denbighshire Council, 1997). Instead, it gave some key characteristics of the Conservation Area which included:

- Important Open Areas
- Important Views
- Natural Landscape
- Building styles
- Building materials
- Building details
- Other Important Features
- Principal Buildings
- Problems in the Conservation Area

4.3 In 2016, Cadw undertook an Understanding Urban Character assessment for Llangollen (Cadw, 2016). This document was a more detailed assessment of the history of the town and the character of its buildings. It included a Statement of Significance (Cadw, 2016, p.71).

4.4 As well as the Statement of Significance for the overall Conservation Area it also defined 6 Character Areas (Cadw, 2016, pp 53 -70, & pp 80-86)

- 1. The Early Town
- 2. Nineteenth-Century Growth: Around Canal and Railway
- 3. Nineteenth-Century Growth: Around the Holyhead Road
- 4. Plas Newydd
- 5. Castle Street and the Western Town
- 6. The Canal

4.5 The Royal Hotel lies in Area 1: The Early Town character area to its western side, the core of the area centred around the church. It is visible from parts of Area 2: Nineteenth-Century Growth: Around Canal and Railway and from parts of Area 5 Castle Street and the Western Town.

5. Heritage Impact Assessment Stage 3: Assess the impact of the proposals on the Conservation Area (including the designated historic assets)

5.1 The proposed variations to the consented planning applications for the Royal Hotel, as viewed from Bridge Street and Castle Street areas, would be limited in scale. The colour scheme and the replacement of the roof line on the 20th century block from a flat roof to a ridged roofline will remain as in the consented applications, planning application 03/2022/0173 and Listed Building consent 03/2022/0174.

5.2 The proposed variations when viewed from Llangollen bridge over the river Dee (a listed building, 1080, and a scheduled monument, DE026) will include more physical changes. The proposed extension of the external walkway with a canopy will not now be included. The riverside façade of the new build on the rear of the 20th century block will change. The variation to the design uses white render, timber cladding and black steel cladding.

5.3 The physical and visual changes to the north side of the Royal Hotel will also be visible from parts of the area to the north of the river.

5.4 The Statement of Significance from the Understanding Urban Character has been used in order to understand and assess the change of impact from variations to the consented scheme on the conservation area. The following table (Table 1) details each sentence from the Statement and assesses the Royal Hotel in context to that and what impact there would be, if any, from the proposals.

Table 1: Impacts on the conservation area

Statement of Significance	Royal Hotel in Context	Impact from Variations
Llangollen is known as a small town of handsome and substantial red brick buildings on the banks of the river Dee.	Royal Hotel lies in Character Area 1: Early Town as defined in the urban characterisation published by Cadw in 2016. Red brick buildings are not typical of this character area which contains the earliest development of the town. The buildings here are more likely to be plain-coloured render or roughcast with some enhancement of architectural detailing (quoins, window surrounds etc.).	There are no variations to the colours in the consented scheme.
Its highlights include the bridge, the heritage railway, the canal, Plas Newydd — the home of the Ladies of Llangollen — and the site of the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod.	The Royal Hotel lies adjacent to southeast end of Llangollen Bridge (DE026, 1105) and within its setting.	Under the proposed variations the new block at the eastern side of the hotel complex, replacing a 20 th century wing which has now been removed would be for housing not a spa. The variation will still be largely screened from view from the bridge, and would not be visible from its southern end. The northern side of the proposed variation does not extend as close to the river as the consented scheme and will be sheltered from most views. Overall, the impacts of the proposed variations to the consented scheme on the setting are assessed as being Neutral, ranging from Low Negative to Low Positive, but with no impact on the Significance of the bridge.
	The heritage railway (Listed Buildings 1083, 1082, 1084, 1085, 87500 & 87501) stops at the northwestern side of Llangollen Bridge, the Royal Hotel is adjacent to the southeastern part of the Bridge. The Royal Hotel forms part of a backdrop of views from parts of the heritage railway although with the bridge in the foreground, truncating the view.	The variation to the consented scheme will not alter views from the heritage railway. Its significance will not be affected.

*Royal Hotel, Llangollen: Heritage
Impact Assessment on Conservation Area and
Impact on Setting of Designated Assets
January 2024*

Statement of Significance	Royal Hotel in Context	Impact from Variations
	The Royal is generally not intervisible with the canal, a World Heritage Site, scheduled monument DE 026 and with listed elements. The canal is on higher ground than the Royal Hotel with buildings, many of them 3-storey, and mature trees on the slope down to the river Dee.	The canal has very partial views of the Royal Hotel from limited viewpoints. The views are so limited they cannot be seen as part of its visual setting as a scheduled monument/listed building. The Royal Hotel does lie within the Essential Setting of the World Heritage Site There would be no impact on its significance.
	Plas Newydd (Listed Building 1127) is not intervisible with the Royal Hotel but did have an important link as the Ladies of Llangollen patronised the Kings Head as the Royal was known at that time. The site of the International Eisteddfod is not intervisible with the Royal Hotel.	There is no impact on, or change of, setting with regard to Plas Newydd (Listed Building 1127) or the site of the International Musical Eisteddfod (non-designated historic asset).
Beyond these individual features lies a deeper history of an older town of winding streets and small alleys with stone and timber buildings.	The Royal Hotel lies at the southeast corner of Llangollen Bridge and the western end of Bridge Street one of the main streets of the older part of town. The Kings Head as it was known in the 18 th /19 th century is part of this older town although the earliest parts that now remain probably date to the very late 18 th / early 19 th century	The changes to the Royal Hotel visible from the older part of town are limited to views along the western part of Bridge Street, from the Three Eagles (Wynnstay) westwards. These views will be limited to the Bridge Street frontage of the Royal Hotel, where there are limited variations to the consented scheme. The main change is that gates into the Royal Hotel on Bridge Street will be removed and the gap blocked in
The church was founded by St Collen in the sixth or seventh century and, although much altered, is the earliest known building in the town.	The church (Listed Building 1164) lies within the same character area, 1: Early Town, as the Royal Hotel but the two are not directly intervisible	There will be no change or impact to the church and its setting from the proposed changes.
It marks the early establishment of a settlement in the Dee Valley at a natural crossing point of the river on one of the main valley routes into and out of the mountainous interior	The Royal Hotel will continue to stand at the side of the post-med/modern crossing point of the river Dee. From modest beginnings as the Kings Head alongside the road from the crossing, it has developed into a large building with several phases of	The changes will maintain the presence of the hotel as a prominent building at the crossing point of the Dee. The façade alongside Castle Street will be improved with the paint removed from the decorative stonework and a new colour scheme used.

*Royal Hotel, Llangollen: Heritage
Impact Assessment on Conservation Area and
Impact on Setting of Designated Assets
January 2024*

Statement of Significance	Royal Hotel in Context	Impact from Variations
of Wales.	development	
Little else of this early settlement survives except for the core street pattern of Bridge Street and Church Street, and the small lanes behind with some scattered small vernacular buildings.	The proposals for the Royal Hotel do not alter the lines of Bridge Street or Church Street, or any small lanes behind buildings.	There will be no impact on or change to the street pattern of the earlier town from the development
This street pattern however survived and continued to exert an influence over the development of this part of the town.	The proposals respect this street pattern and do not weaken views of it	There will be no impact on or change to the street pattern of the earlier town from the development
The early town remained essentially a small rural settlement through to the later eighteenth century. The restrained Georgian styles of this time are still very much evident today despite later remodelling	The core of the Royal Hotel as it is today developed in the Georgian period and is still identifiable within the hotel complex. It probably incorporates a version of the Kings Head although the smaller structure shown on the 1791 map of the holdings of the Rev. Edward Roberts. (Denbighshire Archives, DD/DM/736/1) has disappeared and probably does not survive in the structure.	The proposed variation to the consented scheme will a different design to the new build. It replaces part of a 20 th century block that was demolished when the river wall began to fail. It is modern in design but has a smaller footprint than the consented block and it set back further from the river.
By this time, the town and the surrounding area had become a focus for the fashionable interest in natural wild landscapes known as the Picturesque movement.	The changes to the northern façade of the Royal Hotel will be visible in views from Llangollen Bridge looking eastwards. This will include the new decking and canopy, the new build to the eastern end of the hotel and the renewed paintwork with pale tones picking out the different phases of the building.	The proposed variations will not change the consented scheme in this regard.
Llangollen and the Dee Valley became one of a number of areas renowned for their landscapes and the town welcomed an influx of tourists and settlers to the area.	The Royal Hotel has been an integral part of the tourist industry for over 200 years and the Ladies of Llangollen required that people visiting them stayed there	The proposed variations split the focus of the Royal Hotel into visitor accommodation and residential, but will still see this large building retained in the streetscape and offering a place to stay.
The visitors brought fashionable ideas on	The northern façade of the Royal Hotel, shows changes in	The impact of the proposed variations will not alter from the

*Royal Hotel, Llangollen: Heritage
Impact Assessment on Conservation Area and
Impact on Setting of Designated Assets
January 2024*

Statement of Significance	Royal Hotel in Context	Impact from Variations
architecture and design which inevitably influenced the appearance of the town and its outlying areas.	architectural design through the 19 th century	consented scheme
The restrained Georgian styles of this time are still very much evident today despite later remodelling	The core of the Royal Hotel is Georgian and this will remain visible and distinctive. On the northern façade the Georgian element will be picked out by slightly darker painted render but with the same-coloured architectural detail as the rest of the hotel. There will be some loss of view of the Georgian elements on the eastern façade where the new build will obstruct views to roof height.	The painted render on the northern façade will highlight the development of the hotel and in particular the Georgian element. The loss of view of the eastern façade will have limited impact as it is not generally visible. Development along the south bank of the river, the slight change in course of the river Dee, the bulk of the Llangollen Bridge and mature trees along the north bank of the Dee limit views.
At broadly the same time, the improvement of road links from London to Holyhead (and Ireland) followed by the construction of the railway and canal caused a surge of development.	The railway and the canal have played some part in the development of the Royal Hotel, bringing paying customers to the town.	The changes to the Royal Hotel will not affect this relationship, nor impact on the railway and canal.
The town now became a stopping point on a much wider transport network.	The transport network helped the Royal Hotel develop as a successful establishment.	The changes to the Royal Hotel will not affect this relationship, nor impact on the wider transport network.
This brought new infrastructure and activity	Past developments at the Royal Hotel were part of the new infrastructure	The proposed changes will not affect any other infrastructure and will not impact negatively on the setting of designated historic assets.
It enabled the development of new industries and generated demand from travellers and workers for accommodation and supplies.	Developments at the Royal Hotel were part of the new infrastructure that supplied accommodation and refreshments.	The proposed changes will not affect any other infrastructure and will not impact negatively on the setting of designated historic assets.
The water power of the Dee had long been used for industry but was now exploited for the production of	The Royal Hotel did not use the water power of the Dee. The cornmill to the west of the bridge is not intervisible with the Royal Hotel.	The proposed changes will not affect water power and will not impact negatively on the setting of designated historic assets.

*Royal Hotel, Llangollen: Heritage
Impact Assessment on Conservation Area and
Impact on Setting of Designated Assets
January 2024*

Statement of Significance	Royal Hotel in Context	Impact from Variations
textiles, timber and slate quarrying.		
With the improved transport links, industry prospered and tourism developed and flourished.	The Royal Hotel was part of this prosperity. It has declined in recent years and the objective of the proposals are to bring back the building as a destination hotel with a modern offer, whilst retaining and promoting the historic fabric	The development will ensure that the hotel is retained as a prominent building providing accommodation and more and impacting on the general prosperity of the town and area.
It was during the nineteenth century that Llangollen grew into the town with which we are familiar today.	The Royal Hotel was an integral part of the development of Llangollen at in the 19 th century. It is located in a prominent position in the town at the Llangollen Bridge crossing of the river Dee, and was a short walk from the railway and canal.	The Royal Hotel and its diverse architecture reflect the process of development and change with new wings being added to meet the needs of the time at various points in its history. The proposed development is in keeping with that tradition and will ensure the viability of the business and enhance its architectural value.
Whole new streets were laid out in straight lines away from the lanes of the existing town.	These streets mainly lie to the south of the Royal Hotel in Character Area 5: Castle Street and the Western Town. Castle Street to the west of the hotel was built after the Royal Hotel started to develop on its current footprint. On the 1843 tithe map, the road crossed the bridge and turned to the southwest along Bridge Street. In 1860 Castle Street was built running southwards and then the development of the grid pattern to the west developed quickly. The buildings of these broad, straight streets are largely of red brick and contrast with the painted render and roughcast buildings in the winding, narrow streets of the old town.	The proposed changes to the Royal Hotel will not directly impact on the character of this area. The visible changes will be the repainting of the southern and western facades and the change in roof to a more suitable line of the 20 th century wing. The colour scheme will be similar to now a unifying pale painted render with darker detailing revitalising a slightly tired façade.
Often lined with large new buildings in red brick or in fashionable Gothic styles, they were distinct from their Georgian predecessors.	The buildings of these broad, straight streets are largely of red brick and contrast with the painted render and roughcast buildings in the winding, narrow streets of the old town. However, the buildings on Castle Street still retain some	The proposed changes would not directly affect the buildings in this area. The visual changes on the southern and western facades will be an improvement to the general area.

*Royal Hotel, Llangollen: Heritage
Impact Assessment on Conservation Area and
Impact on Setting of Designated Assets
January 2024*

Statement of Significance	Royal Hotel in Context	Impact from Variations
	<p>Georgian style features with symmetrical features, and painted detailing.</p> <p>The Victorian element of the Royal Hotel facing onto Castle Street, has gothic elements around the tower adjacent to the bridge.</p>	
Most of the major commercial and civic buildings in the main thoroughfare, Castle Street, which define the town today, date from this time.	The commercial and civic buildings in Castle Street are intervisible with the southern and western façades of the Royal Hotel	The changes to the southern and western façade are positive and will not have a negative impact on these buildings.
The nineteenth-century boom faltered during the early twentieth century when most of the traditional manufacturing and local industries declined.	The Royal Hotel continued to provide a service during this period even as things changed around it.	The changes to the Royal Hotel do not affect this.
In their place, the town turned to its earlier role as a tourist destination.	The Royal Hotel has been part of the tourism industry since it first developed and adapted and changed with it	The Royal Hotel is one of the main hotels in Llangollen and the proposed changes will be beneficial, bringing the hotel back into use and retain this historical link.
The railway, which had survived in part the cuts of the 1960s, became a heritage leisure line.	The railway now only runs from the western side of the bridge, whereas formerly it ran under the bridge and along the north bank of the Dee opposite the Royal Hotel.	The Royal Hotel is only visible in some views from the railway station as the bridge stands in between the two. The changes proposed will be an improvement to the tired façade, including a refreshed paint scheme. The new build will be partially visible but is designed to be modern but reflect the surrounding architecture.
The canal too was brought back to life and is popular with tourists.	The canal is now separated from the Royal Hotel by buildings, often 3 storeys, and trees.	
The eisteddfod site was established as an international centre for music and other destinations were developed in and	The Royal Hotel is not intervisible with the eisteddfod site but does provide accommodation for people attending.	No change.

*Royal Hotel, Llangollen: Heritage
Impact Assessment on Conservation Area and
Impact on Setting of Designated Assets
January 2024*

Statement of Significance	Royal Hotel in Context	Impact from Variations
around the town.		
Traces of this rich history are preserved in the street patterns and buildings, which give Llangollen its distinct character.	The Royal Hotel lies with the street patterns at the junction of the earlier town and the mid 19 th century development	The changes will not impact on the street pattern, and the refurbishment will preserve part of the heritage of the town.
Together, they help tell the story of the transition from a small rural town to a Georgian tourist destination and the rise and fall of a Victorian industrial boom town.	The Royal Hotel has a key part in the telling of this story	The proposed variations do not alter this.
Its twentieth century reinvention as a tourist centre depends on this historic character, which should be cherished and respected for the benefit of future residents and tourists alike.	The Royal Hotel is a key part of this tourism centre	Bringing it back into use which will support other elements of the tourism industry. The upgrade is sympathetic to heritage of the building, and to the surrounding setting. Other elements of the tourism offer in Llangollen will benefit.

5.5 The conclusion from the assessment above is that the key characteristics of the Conservation Area will be still be preserved with the proposed variations.

5.6 The proposed variations to the southern façade of the hotel from the consented scheme can be summarised as follows:

5.6.1 The gates into the courtyard area of the hotel will be removed and the gap blocked up. Although the gateway may be an historic opening the gates themselves are more recent.

5.6.2 There will not be shop-front style awnings added to the ground floor of the 20th century wing.

5.6.3 Impact of variations to the southern façade;

a) The changes will remove some elements that were included in the consented scheme but they will not have a negative impact on the conservation area.

5.7 The proposed variations to the western façade of the hotel from the consented scheme can be summarised as follows:

5.7.1 There are no changes in the proposed variation.

5.7.2 Impact of the variations on the western façade.

a) None

5.8 The proposed variations to the northern façade of the hotel from the consented scheme can be summarised as follows:

5.8.3 The current boardwalk terrace will be replaced but will not have a canopy.

5.8.4 A window looking east will not be inserted at the base of the turret

5.8.5 There is a change to the new build at the eastern end of the hotel will replace the rear of the 20th century block demolished in 2021. The new block will still be at an angle to the Georgian block but will have a slightly smaller footprint. The new build is modern in design and includes similar elements to the consented design without the stone elements and projecting spurs.

5.8.6 Impact of the changes of the northern façade

a) The variations to the northern façade are variable. The history of the hotel will still be more readable, but still understood as a single entity. The terrace will be maintained as it is and any impact from the canopy will be removed. The new build will be a change from the consented scheme and is simpler and more functional, but is also set back further from the river reducing its visibility from key views.

b) The façade is intervisible with all or parts of Llangollen Bridge (DE029 & 1080), Listed Buildings 1191, 1192, 1993, 1081 and 1083 but the changes will not have a negative impact on their setting.

5.9 The proposed variations to the eastern façade of the hotel from the consented scheme can be summarised as follows:

5.9.1 Eastern façade of the Georgian elements: the variation design of the new-build block allows two windows which were previously going to be blocked to remain open.

5.9.2 The eastern façade is generally not visible from many places. Development on the southern bank of the Dee and the slight change in course of the river means there are few views from this side. The northern bank of the Dee has many mature trees which obscure most views.

5.9.3 The façade is only visible with Listed Buildings 1106. The gable of this building faces the eastern side of the Royal Hotel, and the new build will be adjacent to it with the addition in the variation of the lift/stairwell block.

6. Heritage Impact Assessment Stage 4: *Set out the reasoning behind the preferred option, including design concepts and principles, in the light of the assessment process.*

6.1 For the consented scheme Trysor and the wider team involved in the project worked through the HIA process together, refining the proposal for the best outcome for the historic environment and the client (Trysor.2022). Consultations with Cadw and the Denbighshire Conservation Officer were undertaken and fed back into the design.

6.2 As part of the earlier HIA process, Trysor were brought into the project as historic environment consultants at an early stage and examined the interior and exterior of the Royal Hotel in May 2019. This informed an unpublished report "*Royal Hotel, Bridge Street, Llangollen: History of Development*" (Trysor, 2019) which gave the hotel's history.

6.3 This initial study demonstrated that the hotel included wings of varying dates, from the late 18th century to the late-Victorian and a phase plan of the complex was created which identified Early Georgian, Georgian, Mid-Victorian and Late Victorian wings. Some outbuildings and service areas at the centre of the complex were undated but thought likely to be of Victorian or later date.

6.4 The findings of the initial Trysor report informed the subsequent proposals for the Royal Hotel. These sought to preserve and enhance the historic character of the complex and ensure that the distinctive architecture of wings of different dates is protected within the new scheme and were consented in 2022, planning application 03/2022/0173 and Listed Building consent 03/2022/0174.

6.5 Throughout the consultation and development of the proposals, attention was also given to the issue of potential impacts on the character of the Llangollen Conservation Area. Therefore, the final proposal gives full cognisance to the need to respect the character of the Conservation Area, the details of which are outlined in Table 1 of this report.

6.6 The colour scheme for the exterior of the complex as consented will be implemented in the variation proposal.

6.7 The new residential block replacing the consented scheme stand between the 20th century wing on Bridge Street and the riverbank but with a slightly smaller footprint and set back a little from the riverside. It will again follow the river and be angled away from the Georgian block, so it will not be dominant in views from Llangollen Bridge or detract from the older parts of the hotel.

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Appendix A: Photographs

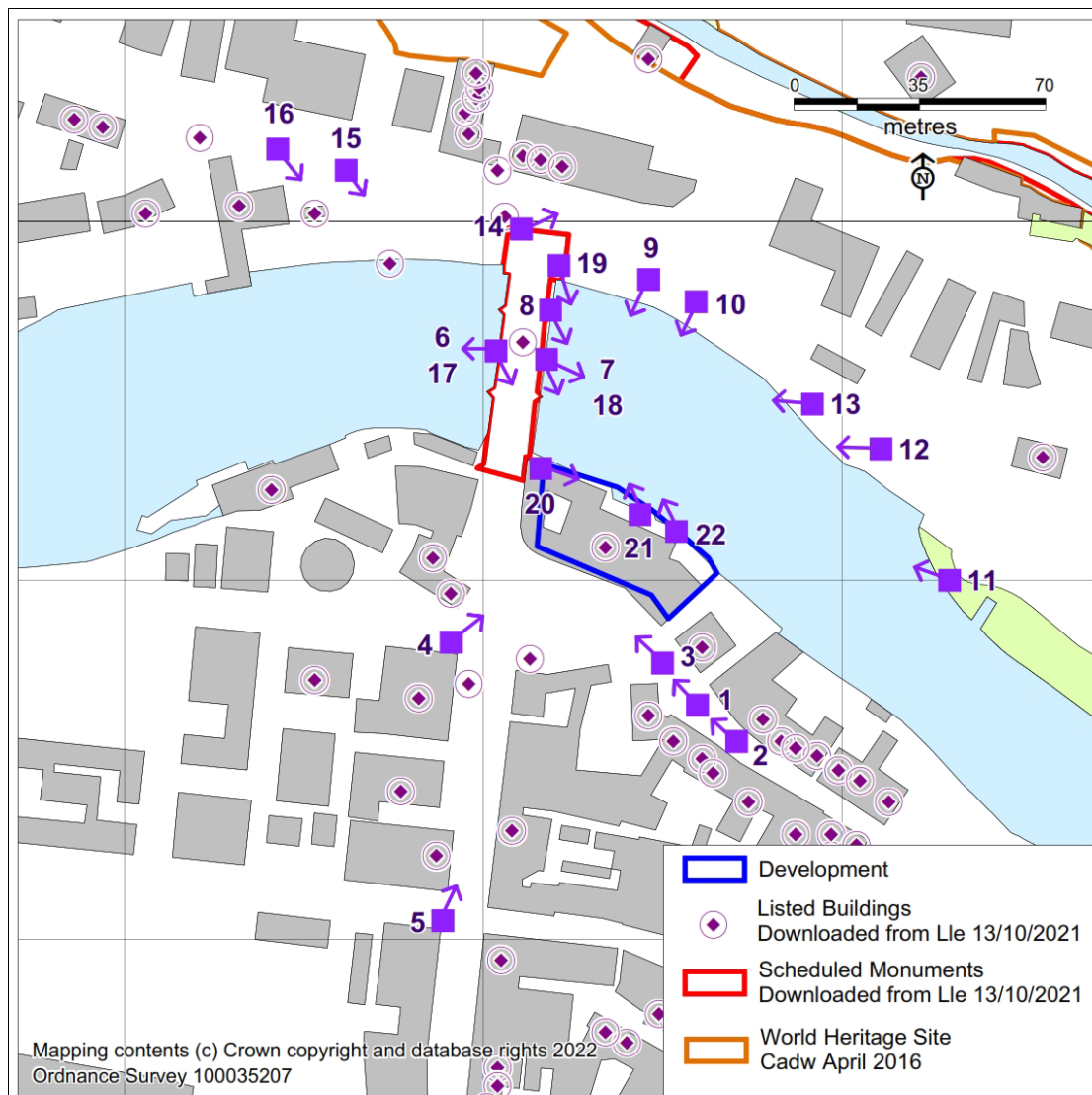


Figure 2: Location of photographs



*Plate 1: The view of the Royal Hotel from Bridge Street, May 2019
Looking northwest.*



*Plate 2: 2021. The view of the Royal Hotel taken further southeast along
Bridge Street, May 2019. Looking northwest.*



Plate 3: The view of the Royal Hotel from Bridge Street, November 2021. Looking northwest.



Plate 4: The view of the Royal Hotel from the eastern end of Parade Street, looking across Castle Street, November 2021. Looking northeast.



Plate 5: A view down Castle Street from its junction with Market Street. A partial view of the Royal Hotel is gained in the distance. The variety of colours and tones in the buildings of Castle Street is striking and draws attention to the light colours of the larger buildings either side of the river.



Plate 6: The view of the Royal Hotel from the river bridge, May 2019, demonstrates how prominent the hotel is when looking across the bridge from the north. Looking south-southeast.



*Plate 7: The view of the Royal Hotel from the river bridge, May 2019.
Looking south-southeast.*



Plate 8: The view of the Royal Hotel from the river bridge, November 2021. The variation to the consented scheme in the form of the new residential block in place of the spa will be partially visible to the left of the hotel but would not block any significant view. The loss of the tree in the same direction since 2019 has now opened up a view of the parish church tower, which will not be affected by the proposed development. Looking south-southeast.



Plate 9: A view of the Royal Hotel from the opposite side of the river Dee. Note the repairs to the riverside wall, which had partially collapsed early in 2021. The new-build residential block would be to the left, in front of the 20th century wing. Looking south-southwest.



Plate 10: A view of the Royal Hotel from the opposite side of the river Dee. The new-build residential block would be to the left, in front of the 20th century wing. Looking south-southwest.



Plate 11: A view of the Royal Hotel from the opposite side of the River Dee, November 2021. The proposed new-build residential block replacing the spa in the consented scheme would stand in front of the eastern side of the Georgian "New Hotel" wing, on the site of the former 20th century "Dee Bar" building, which was removed in May 2021. Looking west-northwest.



Plate 12: A view towards the Royal Hotel from the opposite side of the River Dee, November 2021. In general, trees and foliage obscure views of the hotel from the publicly accessible areas to the north of the river. Looking west.



Plate 13: A view of the Royal Hotel from the opposite side of the River Dee, November 2021, with the river bridge also in view. The modifications to the existing parts of the hotel would not impact negatively on this view. Looking west.



Plate 14: The buildings which face the river bridge from the north, photographed in November 2021, display varied styles of architecture and décor, not unlike the proposed exterior décor scheme for the north-facing side of the Royal Hotel. Looking east-northeast.



Plate 15: A view towards the Royal Hotel from Llangollen Railway Station, November 2021. Views from this location are partial as intervening trees screen the hotel. Looking southeast.



Plate 16: A view towards the Royal Hotel from Llangollen Railway Station, May 2019. Views from this location are partial as intervening trees screen the hotel. The new-build residential block would be obscured in views from this area as the main hotel would stand in its way. Looking southeast.



Plate 17: A view from the river bridge looking along the River Dee, November 2021. Looking west-southwest.



Plate 18: A view from the river bridge looking along the River Dee, November 2021. The proposed variation of a new-build residential block rather than a spa will reduce impacts on this view. Looking east-southeast.



Plate 19: A view of the Royal Hotel from the northern end of the river bridge, May 2019. Looking south.



Plate 20: A view from inside the hotel looking over the decking and down the river, January 2022. The canopy over the decking will not be added under the proposed variation so this view not be altered from the present. Looking east-southeast.



Plate 21: A view of the river bridge from the decking area at the northern side of the hotel. This view will not be lost as a result of the modifications to the decking, which will be now not be roofed and glazed. Looking north-northwest.



Plate 22: A view from the edge of the terrace in front of the former Dee Bar, which will be replaced by the decking in front of the new-build residential block. This view of the scheduled river bridge will not be lost due to the development. Looking northwest.

APPENDIX B

**SETTING ASSESSMENT NOTES
STAGE 2**

LLANGOLLEN BRIDGE

**(Listed Building Number 1080
and Scheduled Monument DE026)**

LLANGOLLEN BRIDGE	
Stage 2: How do the present surroundings contribute to our understanding and appreciation of the historic asset today?	
• Thinking about when the historic asset was first built and developed:	
What were its physical, functional and visual relationships with other structures/historic assets and natural features?	<p>Although there is documentary evidence that a bridge may have stood here by the late 13th century and was improved during the 14th or early 15th century, the present bridge is thought to have been constructed in early post-medieval times to replace an earlier bridge. It is possible that it dates to the 1540s, based on the inclusion of "sepulchral stones" in its fabric, or to the 1650s, when one Rondle Read may have been paid £250 for work undertaken here.</p> <p>The selection of this site as a bridging point was undoubtedly made for functional reasons and dominated by the fact that this section of the river's course is characterised by bedrock outcropping in the river bed and either side of the river, giving a solid foundation for the bridge structure.</p> <p>The bridge was extended northwards in 1863 when the railway was built along the river's edge. During the 1870s it was widened, and it was widened considerably again in 1968. The present bridge is therefore a composite of early post-medieval and modern work.</p> <p>No contemporary structures or features associated with the medieval or early post-medieval bridge now survived, but it is a prominent feature at this point along the course of the river. It crosses the river at the apex of a bend in its course, which means that the bridge is only clearly visible from a stretch of some 400 metres upstream along the river to the west, and 300 metres downstream to the east.</p>
What topographic or	This point was undoubtedly chosen for the

earlier features influenced its location? What was its relationship to the surrounding landscape/streetscape?	original bridge as a convenient place to cross the river at a relatively narrow point which offered a solid bedrock foundation on either bank due to rock outcropping in the river bed. Later versions of the bridge were constructed here as the river was best crossed at this point and the road system would have already developed to cross here.
Was it constructed to take advantage of significant views or to be a part of a significant view? Although there may be a 360-degree view, some areas of the view may be more significant than others.	There is no reason to believe that the choice of this site as a bridging point was made to be part of a view or to offer a view. The choice would have been based on the functional requirements of exploiting a convenient bridging point which offered a solid bedrock foundation to any structure.
Has its function or use changed?	The bridge has been used to allow people to cross the river safely since it was first built. It has undergone significant changes in terms of length and width in the past 150 years however to accommodate first the railway and then the growing use of motor vehicles.
What changes have happened to the surrounding landscape/streetscape?	Llangollen would have been a small settlement around the parish church, to the south of the river, when the bridge was first built. The town has grown and now occupies both sides of the river, with a number of large, prominent buildings standing at either end of the bridge. The railway was built along the riverbank in the 1860s, requiring an extension to the northern end of the bridge.
Have changes happened because of changes to the historic asset or to its historical setting?	Changes to the present bridge have occurred to accommodate the development of rail transport and the increased use of the roads by motor vehicles in modern times, which have necessitated the lengthening and widening of the bridge.
Has the presence of the historic asset influenced changes to the landscape, for example, where a	The presence of the bridge has attracted development at both ends and made it possible for a significant spread of Llangollen town northwards across the river Dee.

monument has been used as a marker in the layout of a field enclosure?	
Has the presence of the historic asset influenced the character of the surrounding landscape /streetscape?	As above.
Have historic and designed views to and from the historic asset changed?	Yes. The growth of the town has seen buildings accumulate at either end of the bridge. This has changed views of the bridge. In the 18 th and 19 th centuries artistic representations of the bridge portrayed it as a romantic, relatively rural location. Since Victorian times it has become much more urban in character.

• Thinking about the original layout of the historic asset and its relationship to its associated landscape:	
<p>Were these relationships designed or accidental?</p> <p>How did these relationships change over time?</p>	<p>The choice of location for the present bridge was determined by the existence of an earlier bridge at a suitable bridging point of the river Dee. That relationship with the bridging point has not changed.</p>
<p>How do these relationships appear in the current landscape; are they visual or buried features?</p>	<p>They are visual features as the bridge remains in use, although it has been highly modified in the past century and a half.</p>
<p>• Are there other significant factors, such as historical, artistic, literary, place name or scenic associations, intellectual relationships (e.g. a theory, plan or design), or other non-visual factors such as sounds or smells that can be vital to understand the historic asset and its setting?</p>	<p>There are many depictions of the bridge since the late 18th century and it has been well photographed in modern times. These record the changes to the bridge and its environs through two centuries, as its once rustic setting has given way to a far more urban setting.</p>

Stage 2 should also identify the viewpoints from which the impact of the proposed change or development should be assessed, taking into account, for example:	
• views to, from and across the historic asset that were designed and developed when the historic asset was first created – for example, in the case of a defensive or ritual structure	<p>The bridge has always been visible from the river and riverbanks to the west-southwest and east-southeast, for a limited distance due to a bend in the course of the river. The best views of the bridge are from relatively close proximity but developments along the riverside in post-medieval times have restricted many of these views, as do the many trees which now grow along the rivers edge, both upstream and downstream.</p>
	<p>The best modern views of the eastern side of the bridge are gained from the Royal Hotel itself, particularly from the riverside decking along its northern side. The western side of the bridge is best viewed from Llangollen Railway Station, to the northwest.</p>
	<p>There are also good views along the bridge from either end, although it must be noted that the widening of the bridge in 1968-69 means that this is an essentially modern view.</p> <p>There are good views from the bridge along the river to both the east and west. These views include fine landscapes, with wooded riverbanks leading towards rising, wooded ground in the distance, with the buildings of the town seen either side of the river.</p>
• views to, from and across the historic asset which are linked with a time in its history – for example, a historic artistic depiction of the site	<p>Historic depictions of the bridge show views from both the west and east. Romantic views of the bridge of late 18th and early 19th century date reflect the fame of the original structure as one of the wonders of contemporary Wales, much visited by travellers visiting the north.</p> <p>Llangollen has remained a popular tourist destination to the present day and the bridge has been frequently photographed and used as an image to promote the town or as a postcard image.</p>

<p>• important modern views to, from and across the historic asset – for example, popular visitor viewing points.</p>	<p>The bridge is popular with visitors who enjoy views along the picturesque river to the east and west. Good views of the bridge structure are less easily found and mostly enjoyed by visitors to the railway station to the northwest or the Royal Hotel to the southeast. Some views can also be gained from public paths above the river to the northeast of the bridge, but trees along the river's edge screen these views to a large extent.</p>
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Stage 3: Evaluate the potential impact of change or development.			
POSSIBLE IMPACT	COMMENT	IMPACT ON SETTING	IMPACT ON SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HISTORIC ASSET
The visual impact of the proposed change or development relative to the scale and location of the historic asset and its setting	The proposed change to the exterior décor of the Royal Hotel would not have a negative impact on the bridge or views from or towards it. The décor has changed over the years and the proposed redecoration conforms with this pattern.	Low Positive	None
	The proposed enhancement of the decking along the riverbank outside the hotel will include a canopy roof glazing. This will change views of the hotel from the bridge to some degree but will not interfere with any key views of the bridge itself, which will still be visible from the decking. Importantly, this 20 th century decking offers one of the best viewpoints of the bridge and its retention and	Low Positive	None

	<p>enhancement is a positive factor in allowing the public to view and appreciate the bridge from the east.</p> <p>The proposed new-build residential block which would be added to the eastern end of the hotel complex will be partially visible from the bridge but in a reduced capacity from the spa in the consented scheme; only decking would now extend to the river bank. The building will be slightly set back and, due to the bend in the river, will be set at an angle which ensures that more of the new wing would be hidden from view from the bridge by the main hotel buildings. Only from the northern end of the bridge will the new-build be seen more completely, but it will not block any key view, will not break the roofline of the present buildings around it, nor the skyline.</p>	Very Low Negative	None
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Whether the proposed change or development would dominate the historic asset or detract from our ability to understand and appreciate it – for example, its functional or physical relationship with the surrounding landscape and associated structures and/ or buried remains	As above. The proposed changes to the Royal Hotel would have a Low impact on the bridge at most and would not impact on its significance.	Neutral	None
The presence, extent, character and scale of the existing built environment within the surroundings of the historic asset and how the proposed change or development compares with this	The bridge stands in an urbanised environment with substantial commercial and domestic buildings visible on both sides of the river, with the Royal Hotel being the most prominent of these. The development, in terms of additional or new structures, would be modest in scale in comparison and not impact significantly on	Neutral	None

	key views to or from the bridge.		
The lifespan of the proposed change or development and whether or not the impact might be reversible	The proposed changes would be reversible. The hotel complex has changed over time with wings being added, modified or removed to suit contemporary requirements.	None	None
The extent of tree cover, whether it is deciduous or evergreen, and its likely longevity	There are numerous deciduous trees growing along the river to the east and west of the bridge. This tree cover is likely to be permanent.	None	None
The impact of artificial lighting – for example, on night-time views	There is already artificial lighting along the street, on the bridge and in adjacent buildings on all sides. The additional lighting from the proposed development would not represent a significant increase in lighting.	Neutral	None
The capability of a landscape setting to absorb change or new development without the erosion of its	The proposed changes to the Royal Hotel would be modest in scale and not significantly change the setting of the bridge or	Neutral	None

key characteristics	impact on the ability to appreciate and understand the structure.		
The impact of the proposed change or development on non-visual elements of the setting and character of the historic asset, such as sense of remoteness, evocation of the historical past, sense of place, cultural identity or spiritual responses	The development would not take place in a tranquil or remote setting but would be an addition to a large and well-established hotel which displays a varied architecture, reflecting its complex, multi-period history.	None	None
The impact of non-visual elements of the proposed change or development, such as the removal or addition of noises and smell	The proposed development would not add new noises or smells to the local environment and the Royal Hotel would continue to serve the purpose it has been built for as a prominent and popular attraction for visitors to the town of Llangollen.	None	None
Cumulative effect of the proposed change or development — sometimes relatively small changes, can	The proposed development will not impact on the ability to understand and appreciate the river bridge. The scale of the	None	None

have a major impact on our ability to understand, appreciate and experience a historic asset.	development would be modest and not impact physically on the bridge or on any key views of the structure.		
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