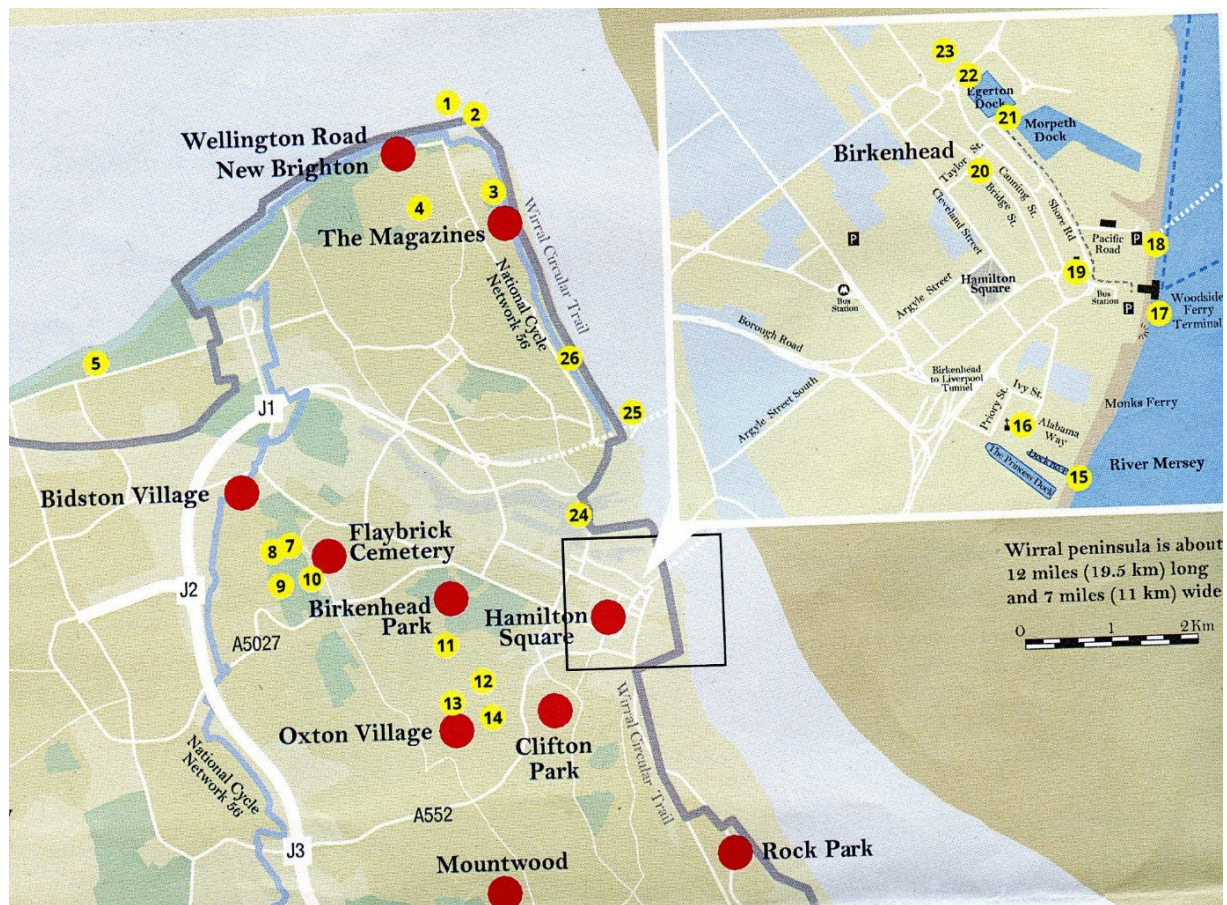


Conservation Areas and Heritage Trail. North East Section.



Introduction:

The north east corner of the peninsula has undergone more change than any other part of Wirral. Originally a scatter of small rural villages, like Bidston, the introduction of a steam ferry service across the Mersey saw the area become popular as a place of residence for Liverpool merchants.

The first streets in Birkenhead were laid out in the early 1800s around the priory, close to Tranmere Pool. To this original nucleus was added an ambitious town plan, focussed on Hamilton Square and with a rectangular pattern of streets running to the north and west, similar in conception to Edinburgh New Town and designed by the Scottish architect, James Gillespie Graham. With foresight, Birkenhead Park, the first publicly funded park, was added to the plan in the 1840s. A large and attractive municipal cemetery, Flaybrick, followed in the 1860s.

The growth of industry and port facilities around Wallasey Pool and along the Mersey shore brought years of sustained urban development, with the consequent spread of housing.

Away from the centre, Oxton expanded into a fashionable suburb, while a villa estate, Clifton Park, was laid out in the 1840s on the slopes of Tranmere Hill. Further development took place in the woodland settings of Noctorum and Mountwood. Here substantial dwellings, individually designed and with spacious gardens were erected to serve the needs of the well to do.

North of the Pool the original settlements of Wallasey, Liscard, Seacombe and Poulton became engulfed in later housing. New Brighton developed as a seaside resort, with Wellington Road representing the first and most fashionable phase of development. The Magazines, a former fishing village, facing the Mersey and close to Vale Park, grew to cater for a variety of uses.

Start: New Brighton, from the Floral Pavilion:

Parking: Pay and display car parks.

Trains: Trains from Chester and Liverpool via Hamilton Square.

The New Brighton Area Loop:

From the Floral Pavilion,

Perch Rock Lighthouse and Fort Perch Rock are opposite.

Heritage Site 1: Perch Rock Lighthouse:

Early 19th century. The rock which gives the lighthouse its name was known as the Black or Perch Rock, called after the perch or seamark erected to warn shipping of the dangers of running aground. The lighthouse replaced the perch in 1830. Constructed of Anglesey 'marble' and coated with Pozzolanic cement, it was designed by John Foster Junior and stands 28.5 meters high. It remained in use until 1973.



Heritage Site 2: Fort Perch Rock.

Stone fort. Built 1826-9. Designed to defend the mouth of the Mersey and to accommodate a garrison of over a hundred men and officers. It houses a museum with displays including military aviation, maritime history, and the Fort Perch Rock Marine Radio Museum.



Having viewed the above locations, the trail then continues as follows:

Walking & Cycling to Dr Poggi's Shelter & The Magazines:

Continue along the promenade alongside The River Mersey and views across to Liverpool on your left passing Tower Grounds on your right to the far end of Vale Park. Magazine Lane and **Dr Poggi's Shelter** is on your right.

Heritage Site 3: Dr Poggi's Shelter.

Seaside shelter, with decorative, cast iron columns and Minton tiles. A blue plaque commemorates Italian born Dr Poggi, whose New Brighton College stood close to the site and burned down in 1862. After the fire Dr Poggi's family were given shelter in nearby Vale House and his pupils taken in by local residents. One or both of the sons of the great Italian liberator, Garibaldi, were educated at the College.



Driving to Dr Poggi's Shelter & The Magazines:

From the roundabout outside The Floral Pavilion, return back along The Marine Promenade with the marine lake on your right. Left at the roundabout for Rowson Street, A554, which becomes Seabank Road at the top of the hill and turn left into Magazine Lane for Vale Park.

Continue to the end of Magazine Lane with promenade and the River Mersey in front of you and **Dr Poggi's Shelter** on your left.

Being at the southern end of **Vale Park**, you are in the centre of **The Magazines Conservation Area**:

The Magazines Conservation Area:



The Magazines:

The Magazines Conservation Area, designated in 2009 and often overlooked, is a fascinating area of New Brighton, close to the shore, with impressive views over the Mersey. The core of the area is a small collection of buildings dating from the 17th century which originally formed a small fishing village. The name 'Magazines' derives from the underground chambers or powder magazines which from 1751 to 1851, were used for storing ships' gunpowder for the expanding Port of Liverpool. There are some excellent individual Victorian developments and other features include the early 19th century Vale Park and the imposing listed gates of the former Liscard Battery, built to guard the entrance to the Mersey. The richness and diversity of the different building styles and spaces all contribute to the distinctive character of this Conservation Area.

There are virtually no buildings of sufficient quality to justify statutory listing within the area, but many important buildings that add real richness and interest to it. Nos. 17-21 Magazine Brow are highly significant. They are made of traditional materials - thick stone walls and slate roofs, with stone quoins and sills. They are bounded by a notable low stone wall which has moulded stone copings. The buildings are likely to date from the C18th or early C19th, and some retain historic windows. Their picturesque appeal is enhanced by their front gardens, and a set of mounting steps is integrated into the wall of one cottage.

The Magazine Hotel is a highly significant building in terms of both its historic and social value within the area. It is a three-storey rendered building, painted white, and a date-stone reading 1759 (re-sited on the later bays) is likely to be a fair representation of the present building's date of construction. The building faces the sea and is very much linked to it through the custom that it brought, and the fact that many businessmen met here socially or conducted their port-related business informally.



The Magazines Hotel 1759



The Magazines Conservation area collage



Marine Terrace, including nos. 13 & 14, are typical late Georgian villas and are significant because of their early date of construction (circa 1820-1830).



110 Vale Drive (The Roundhouse) identified in the historic Environment Record as a structure of Archaeological Importance



Vale Park Bandstand was built in 1926 to the design of Zwinger. Though striking its circular form blends into the verdant surroundings of the park. Its distinctive domed roof is supported on Doric columns, and although the regular appearance of brass bands is now a far more sporadic phenomenon, the structure still provides the setting for a diverse programme of music at fetes in the summer months. The names of classical composers are inscribed around the base of the dome in elongated gold lettering, also including Arthur Sullivan - famous for his light operatic compositions that together with WS Gilbert's lyrics provided popular entertainment in the Victorian period.



The local War Memorial sits in front of the Liscard battery on the promenade and is of local interest. Originally erected to commemorate the First World War, the names of those killed in WWII were added later. The monument is the work of William Bernie Rhind, eldest son of the sculptor John Rhind. Born in Edinburgh, William Rhind's best known works are his war memorials to the Royal Scots Greys, Black Watch and Kings Own Scottish Borderers - all to be found in his native city.

More information

Wirral Council website: bit.ly/magswallasey Conservation Areas Wirral website: www.cawirral.co.uk

Walking & Cycling and driving:

Return back along Magazine Lane up the hill to the main road, Seabank Road and turn right. Turn left into Rowson Street and right into St Georges Mount and as you turn the left bend **The Dome of Home** is ahead.

Heritage Site 4: Dome of Home:

A Catholic Church of 1935, monumental in scale, and baroque in its spatial conception, its hemi-spherical dome, visible from afar, became a welcome landmark to shipping during the war. The church closed in 2008, due to concerns about the cost of repair. Following an enthusiastic local campaign, it reopened as a Shrine Church in 2012. Dedicated to Saints Peter, Paul and Philomena

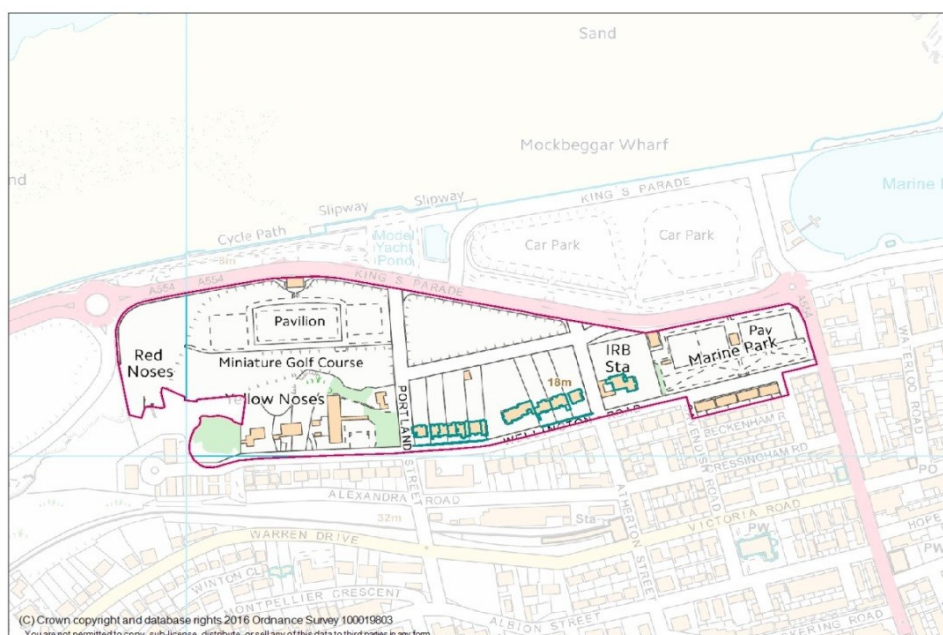


Having turned right into Atherton Street passing the Dome of Home on your left, continue down the hill over the series of crossroads junctions, pass **New Brighton Railway Station** on your left to Wellington Road:

Wellington Road Conservation Area is on your left.

Once you've finished here continue down the hill to Kings Parade, turn left and leave New Brighton behind you passing The Clown Roundabout with the Sea on your right and 'The Dips' on your left all the way to the end of Kings Parade either on the road or the parallel walk and cycle tracks along the Sea Front.

Wellington Road Conservation Area:



In the 1830s the north east corner of Wirral developed as a fashionable watering place. James Atherton (1777 – 1838), a Liverpool merchant, purchased 127 acres

of land in the area and with his son in law, William Rowson (1791 – 1863) laid out the resort. Sea bathing was becoming increasingly popular and steam ferries linked Liverpool and Wirral, so the new settlement flourished. Wellington Road, with its Regency and early Victorian villas and sloping terraced gardens, was the first of its street to be developed. Among its early residents were Christopher Ewart, (1800 - 68), MP for Liverpool 1855-65 and Harvey Lonsdale Elmes (1814 – 47), the initial architect of St. George's Hall.

The villas are unusual, with the part of the house facing the street being single storey and the seaward side two storeys, to take account of the slope of the land. They are highly decorative, exhibiting a variety of architectural detailing. Some are Classical or Italianate in influence, others Vernacular Revival or Gothick. Their features include gabled roofs, barge boarding, stuccoed elevations, decorated friezes, pointed arch windows and cast-iron railings, gates and balconies. One exception to the general use of stucco is the stone-faced Redcliffe, No 34, designed in 1845 by the already famous Harvey Lonsdale Elmes (1814 – 1847). Elmes was the initial architect of St. George's Hall, Liverpool, begun in 1842, and one of the major neo-classical monuments of Europe.



Wellington Road's highly decorative villas Grade II listed



Redcliffe, No 34, designed in 1845 by the already famous Harvey Lonsdale Elmes (1814 – 1847).

Listed buildings within the conservation Area include the following properties, with, in many instances, their railings and gate piers as well.

Nos. 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34 Redcliffe, 36, 38, 40, 42, 42A, 44, 44a & 46.

Nearby, but outside the Conservation Area and also listed are:

- 21 and 23 Montpelier Crescent
- 33 Rowson Street
- 16 and 18 St George's Mount

Also of interest are Ewart Villas, Nos. 50, 52, 54 Wellington Road, one of which was the summer residence of William Rathbone, (1819 – 1902) in the 1860s. The nursing care given to Rathbone's first wife, Lucretia who died in 1859, inspired Rathbone to establish a district nursing service in Liverpool.



28 and 30 Wellington Road Grade II listed with Gothic influence

RT final draft 24th November.