Project: Desk-based historical assessment: Westley Bridge, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

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SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of a desk-based historical assessment of Westley Bridge, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire.

There has been a bridge at the site since the 13th century. An estate map of 1597 shows an early bridge which is probably only a footbridge or packhorse bridge. A later estate map of 1766 shows what is probably the same, or a similar, bridge, although this is not entirely certain. The present bridge was probably built after that date and certainly pre-dates 1829, when it was adopted as a County Bridge. There are no records of replacement or rebuilding since then, although it was widened on the west side in 1982.

The bridge is not of sufficient age, rarity or importance to be Scheduled as an Ancient Monument. Although probably of an age which merits serious consideration for Listing, there is no clear case for Listing in its own right. It is arguably a good candidate for Listing as a representative example of its type. It is certainly a heritage asset of local importance.

Any works that may affect it should be planned to minimise impact on the structure, and appropriate measures implemented to mitigate any such impact.
1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Archaeology Warwickshire were commissioned by Warwickshire County Council (Highways) to undertake a desk-based historical assessment of Westley Bridge, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire in connection with proposed improvements to the A46 Stoneleigh Road junction. The assessment has been carried out according to the Standard and Guidance for desk-based assessment published by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

Aims and Objectives

1.2 The assessment attempts, as far as feasible from available records, to identify the history and development of the bridge, and assess its significance. A full archaeological assessment of the area has not been carried out, as this is not relevant to the specific requirements of the project.

1.3 Sources consulted for the assessment included the Historic Environment Record (HER), modern aerial photography, cartographic and other sources in the Warwickshire County Record Office and the Shakespeare Centre Library and Archive (Stratford-upon-Avon), and other secondary sources. The site location is shown on Fig 1. Section 2 of the report is a historical narrative bringing together evidence from these sources and other documentary data collated during the research. Section 3 is a description and discussion of the bridge structure, based on a site inspection carried out in May 2017, and Section 4 draws conclusions.

Site location, topography and geology

1.4 Westley bridge is located at NGR SP 31789 73701, c.1.5km north-west of the village of Stoneleigh, on the minor road from Stoneleigh to Gibbett Hill and Canley (Stoneleigh Road) c.400m north-west of its junction with the dual carriageway A46 which it crosses on a bridge.

1.5 The underlying geology is the Kenilworth Sandstone Formation, with superficial deposits of Alluvium and sand/gravel River Terrace Deposits (BGS 2017).
2 HISTORICAL ASSESSMENT

Modern summary records

2.1 The Warwickshire Historic Environment Record has an entry for Westley Bridge, but giving little detail (MWA2931; Fig 1). It dates the bridge as medieval to modern, mentions a few early references to the name and has a brief description: ‘The present bridge is single span, of red sandstone and brick. The under part appears to be quite old, with modern reinforcements and additions above on the downstream side. The upstream side has been repaired in recent times.’ (In fact it has been widened; see ss2.4 & 2.21 below). The bridge is neither Listed nor a Scheduled Monument. Other nearby records were checked but are not relevant to this assessment (MWA2894, prehistoric flint; 2907, possible Romano-British settlement; 3084, site of post-medieval windmill; 9945, medieval managed woodland).

2.2 The bridge is listed in a survey of all historic bridges in the county by Palmer & Booth (1997, Bridge No. 301). This was only the first stage of what was proposed as a three-stage programme, and was defined as a ‘preliminary gazetteer of bridge sites, a preliminary examination of likely historical sources for each bridge, and an introductory overview of the cultural resource that they represent’. Where appropriate it also suggested possible sources for detailed examination. Stage 2 would have included detailed documentary research, site visits etc, and Stage 3 detailed surveys of each bridge, but these were not carried out. It was acknowledged that some of the dating reflects the incompleteness of the available data, and may not be reliable in some cases (other categories were also incomplete), and that details of work carried out after 1970 were not available.

2.3 The authors of the survey examined the available lists of County Bridges; these are bridges for the maintenance of which the county authorities were responsible (originally the Justices of the Quarter Sessions, replaced from 1889 by the County Council). In the Warwickshire County Record Office there are three manuscript lists for 1764, 1839 and 1843 (QS24/22/1&2, 3, 4), and printed lists in a series of publications usually known as the County Handbooks or County Books (CR352.War), the earliest of which is undated but c.1820, then 1828, 1843, 1865, 1883 and at intervals to 1959. They noted that Westley Bridge first appears in the 1839 manuscript list, and then in all subsequent lists. Based on references in the available lists, its adoption as a County Bridge could therefore be any time between 1828/9 and
1839. No construction date was given in the 1997 survey. The County Lists do give dates of rebuilding, but none is recorded for Westley.

2.4 The Warwickshire County Council Highways section maintains a computerised bridges database, which records details of work carried out from the later 20th century, but not early historic information. Most relevant to the present study are details of damage repairs in the 1960s and widening in 1982, discussed in more detail below (2.20-1).

**Cartographic evidence**

2.5 Maps from a number of sources were examined:
- Early maps in the Warwickshire County Record Office (WCRO) and the Shakespeare Centre Library & Archive (SCLA).
- Ordnance Survey 25-inch maps from the 1880s and later.

2.6 The earliest map showing the bridge is the Leigh Estate map of 1597 by John Goodwine (SCLA DR671/3; Fig 2). This shows Finham Brook and the Stoneleigh to Gibbet Hill Road in most respects as they exist today. The carriageway widens on the south bank of the stream, and a smaller road branches off to the left (west) north of the stream, heading towards Crackley. A bridge is shown in the angle of the fork. The Crackley road had ceased to exist by the mid-19th century, but its alignment was traceable until the 1930s as the field boundary parallel and to the west of it survived until then. The bridge appears very narrow, and was probably only a footbridge or perhaps a packhorse bridge, with wheeled vehicles fording the stream, and is at an angle to the main road.

2.7 There are two versions of Matthias Baker’s 1766 Leigh Estate map in the SCLA. The complete original survey plot is on a series of boards (DR18/25/17; Fig 3), and there is a final version showing specific areas at a smaller scale in two bound volumes including tenants, acreage etc; the relevant map in the latter is *Part of the Manor and Parish of Stoneleigh* (SCLA DR671/30 Vol. 1). Neither shows the continuation of the road north of Finham Brook and Westley Bridge. Making allowance for the differences in the depiction of the carriageway of the road, particularly the width at the stream crossing, the bridge appears likely to be the one shown on the 1597 map, although this is not certain.
2.8 The Tithe Map of 1843 (WCRO CR569/213; Fig 4) shows the wider carriageway on the south bank of the stream, which has been straightened east of the bridge. The Crackley road is no longer present although the field boundary parallel and to the west of it is still shown. The bridge is now clearly shown positioned within, and parallel to, the carriageway of the main road, well towards the right (east) side. It is also relatively wider than on the 1597 map, and appears to be a new structure.

2.9 The Ordnance Survey 25-inch maps published in 1887 and 1905 show the same layout as the Tithe map, but in more detail (Figs 5, 6). Those of 1925 and 1945 (the latter revised in 1938 but publication presumably delayed by WW2) are similar, although the field boundary indicating the former Crackley road has disappeared (Figs 7, 8). The 1977/81 1:2500 map (examined online at www.old-maps.co.uk) shows no change to the bridge.

2.10 Current OS mapping shows increased development around the bridge, and a new road layout with a roundabout between the bridge and the dual carriageway A46 to the south-east (Fig 9). The bridge itself, as far as can be measured at the scale, is slightly wider than on the earlier OS maps.

Primary and secondary historical sources

2.11 As described on the HER, there has been a bridge on the site since at least medieval times. The Victoria County History (1951, 229) discusses a boundary perambulation of the parish, apparently of 14th-century date, one of the landmarks in which is Westley Bridge which it calls Wolfyesbrigge. Gover et al (1936, 185) give other early forms of the name: Wolfyesbrugge, Wolfiesbrugge from the 13th-century Leger Book of Stoneleigh Abbey; Wolsee bridge from a deed of 1546; Wolce Bridge in a 1547 description of land. They define the earliest forms as meaning ‘bridge of a woman named Wulfgiefu’, noting that the name was subject to ‘various corruptions at a later date’. The Leigh Estate map of 1597 (discussed above; Fig 2) appears to say estley bridge (with no initial ‘W’), although it is unclear and this author does not state so with certainty. The Stoneleigh parish accounts for 1663 refer to it as Worstley Bridj, when Thomas Elliot was paid 1s-8d for repairs to the bridge (Baker 2013, 3).

2.12 By the 18th century the present name was in use, although other variations were still found. The Leigh Estate map of 1766 and the Tithe map of 1843 use the current form (above, and Figs 3, 4). Murray (1815, 16) gives it as Worsley Bridge and, according to Gover et al (ibid), the Tithe apportionment has the same despite the map using the
modern spelling. *Worsley* appears on the 1st Series Ordnance Survey map (1834), and is also used in the Quarter Session minutes for the Epiphany Session of 1831 (WCRO QS 39/16, QS42/5), although all other QS minutes record it as *Westley*. A conveyance of 1854 to Lord Leigh refers to *Worsley Bridge* (SCLA DR18/1/821-2) and the Leigh Estate papers continue to use that name as late as 1898 (SCLA DR18/5/9918 & 9968).

2.13 The Quarter Session Minute Books were examined in an attempt to refine the date of adoption as a County Bridge and, if possible, its construction. These confirm that the bridge was added to the County List as from the Easter Session of 1829, for which the relevant Book (QS39/15, p408) includes an entry that reads:

‘Studley and Westley Bridges to be taken by the County – The Bridgemaster reports that the new bridge at Studley and that at Westley are completed in a workmanlike manner and may be taken by the County.’

2.14 Subsequent entries record the County carrying out its new responsibilities for Westley Bridge, for example at the Epiphany Session in 1831 the Bridgemaster was instructed to carry out a survey (QS39/16, p4). Much of the maintenance was carried out by one Thomas Johnson, who held a general contract for ‘upholding the gravelling’ of the surface and the road for 100 yards either side of three, later five bridges. Such arrangements were introduced following a resolution at the Midsummer 1830 Quarter Session that this routine work would henceforth be done ‘…by contract and open to competition…’ (QS39/15 p408). Johnson’s contract ran from 11th October 1831, with Westley added at Michaelmas 1836, and for the five bridges and their approaches he was paid £11-10-0d per half year (QS24/24 & 25). Specific repairs were carried out and invoiced separately, and the QS records contain numerous entries recording the regular contract payments and one-off repairs. The QS records later than 1841 were not examined for this assessment, but the largest individual repair carried out for the County prior to then, again by Thomas Johnson, amounted to £12-0-0d for ‘Repairs to Westley Bridge and the Embankment, including timber, piles, ironwork, carriage etc’, recorded in the Epiphany 1835 minutes.

2.15 Unfortunately the wording in the Minute Book is ambiguous as to the construction date of Westley Bridge, although Studley was clearly newly-built. It can be read as either Studley and Westley were both new, or that Studley was new but Westley was an existing bridge that could be adopted by the County because it had been built (and
maintained) to an appropriate standard. There is no mention of rebuilding Westley in the County Bridge Lists, and nothing to indicate anything other than normal repairs in the surviving accounts for bridge maintenance for 1833-40 (WCRO QS24/23, QS24/24), QS Minute Books (examined for 1828-41, refs above), the Bridgemaster’s reports 1861-88 (WCRO QS2/12) or the modern records (ss2.20-21 below).

2.16 The basic construction of the arch is in brick, but the voussoirs, and the rest of the east and west elevations, except the parapets, is sandstone ashlar (see s3 Site Inspection below). An all-brick bridge would have been cheaper (Harrison 2004, 176). There is nothing to suggest that the brickwork is part of an earlier bridge, and no structural reason why it should not have been built entirely of brick. The most likely explanation seems to be for aesthetic reasons.

2.17 It is possible that Westley Bridge was paid for by the Leigh family of Stoneleigh Abbey, who may have preferred something more than a purely utilitarian design, although it is some distance to the north-west of the Registered Park at Stoneleigh Abbey (landscaped by Humphrey Repton and others), is not visible from the Abbey, is not mentioned as part of any view in the NHLE description (1000377), and nothing was found during this assessment to suggest it was ever considered as part of the designed landscape of the park. The Stoneleigh Estate accounts are in the SCLA, and those for January 1765 to January 1831, i.e. from immediately prior to the 1766 map to shortly after adoption by the County, were examined in an attempt to confirm this hypothesis and the dating (DR18/31/16-68). For reasons of time, only the sections relating to repairs in Stoneleigh parish and general repair disbursements on the estate could be checked in detail; these are the obvious places and it seems unlikely there are entries elsewhere that were missed, but it is possible.

2.18 The accounts confirm that the Leigh Estate was responsible for the repair of at least some of the bridges in the area. The First Schedule to the accounts for 1803-4 (DR18/31/37) records expenses for ‘rebuilding the carriage bridge over Crackley Brook [usually known today as Canley Brook] which crosses the turnpike road and belongs to the Leigh family to uphold as has been formerly established by a Sessions Trial’. (This is interesting, as Crackley Bridge is one of those included in the 1764 County List, which should mean that the estate was no longer liable for its maintenance in 1803; no explanation can be suggested here.) Minor repairs to Cryfield Bridge (1821-2), Pipes Mill Bridge (1818-20) and Stare Bridge (1774-5) were also noted.
2.19 However, no references to repairs or replacement of Westley (or Worsley) bridge were noted for the period studied in those records examined. Unless there are other entries that were not located, this suggests either that the bridge is older than 1766, and that despite appearances the present structure is the one on the map of that year, or that its maintenance was not the responsibility of the Leigh Estate.

Modern WCC highways records

2.20 The 1997 survey listed three photographs taken by WCC in the 1960s, that are now held in the County Record Office. The first, taken on 16th July 1964, shows the west (upstream) elevation, and appears to be a record shot of the bridge as then existing (PH329/W9; Fig 10). Two, dated 24th January 1967, show accident damage to the south end of the eastern (downstream) parapet (PH329/DA/67/17; Fig 11) and the undamaged western parapet. A drawing in the Bridges database shows repairs to the parapet, reinforcement of the abutment with concrete, and repairs in brick to a separate area of damage to the elevation below the springing point of the arch (database plan ref 01409, Drg. No. B418/01; Fig 12).

2.21 The Database contains no record of a complete rebuilding or replacement of the bridge since adoption in 1829, but does confirm that it was widened by 3m on the west side in 1982 by the addition of a concrete arch, above which the elevation is faced with new stone ashlars and string course, with a new brick parapet (database plan ref 03643; Drg. No. SWB418/11/1/1; Fig 13).
3 SITE INSPECTION AND DISCUSSION OF STRUCTURE

3.1 The site inspection was undertaken on 5TH May 2017 by Ian Greig. Digital photographs were taken to provide a record of the bridge and several are included. The weather was dry and bright. The bridge was examined as closely as possible, but access and Health & Safety considerations meant that not all elements could be examined in detail.

3.2 The bridge is visible from road level only as two low brick parapet walls with sandstone coping (Fig 14). It has a single span with a segmental arch, springing from a point roughly 0.75m above the water level at the time of inspection. The east elevation is of red sandstone ashlars with the voussoirs of the arch in the same material, immediately above which is a string course again in red sandstone (Fig 15). The parapet is a mixture of brick types, clearly much repaired and rebuilt. The parapet repairs carried out after the 1967 accident damage are still in situ: the concrete abutment reinforcement and the blue engineering brick repair below the south arch springing point (Fig 16).

3.3 The underside of the arch is brick, with coursed sandstone blocks of varying size below the springing point (Fig 17). Safe access for a detailed close examination was not available, but a brick was measured at 9” x 4½” x 3”. Bricks of this size became common after changes to the brick tax in 1803 (Richardson 2000), which may suggest construction after this date although dating based on brick size is far from conclusive and this cannot be said with certainty. The original bridge is c.6m wide. The 3m-wide concrete arch of the 1982 extension appears to have been added to the existing face without disturbing the stone voussoirs (Fig 18).

3.4 The west elevation clearly shows the concrete arch, but it is striking that the rest of the elevation has been faced with new stone ashlars with a string course to match the original work of the east elevation (Figs 19, 20). The parapet brickwork is all new. There is a rough stone revetment on the embankment abutting the south-west face (the north-west could not be examined); this is shown on a 1982 WCC drawing (SWB 418/15/-/1).

3.5 Nothing was observed to suggest that there has been any major work or alteration to the original elements of the bridge below the parapet walls since it was constructed, apart from the addition of the extension to the western side. This has certainly
preserved the original voussoirs of the arch, and probably also the original stone facing, behind the new extension.

3.6 No evidence of any earlier bridge could be seen. A few large stones were noted on the stream bed, but these did not appear to be in situ masonry. A large roughly squared timber could be seen on the stream bed immediately adjacent to the modern south-west abutment. It could not be examined closely, but it seems extremely unlikely that it could be of significant age, and it is more likely to be a relic of the 1982 work, perhaps the base for some sort of work platform (Fig 21).
4. CONCLUSIONS

History

4.1 Documentary evidence indicates that there has been a bridge of some sort on the site since at least the 13th or 14th century. The original structure is likely to have been only a footbridge or packhorse bridge, the same as, or similar to, that shown on the earliest map (1597) which appears to be too narrow for vehicles; these would have forded the stream. A map of 1766 shows probably the same bridge, although this is not certain. The present bridge, wider and in a slightly different position, appears on maps from 1843 onwards.

4.2 It is not known why the brick arch was given a sandstone ashlar facing on the spandrel walls and abutments. An all-brick bridge would have been significantly cheaper (Harrison 2004, 176). There is nothing to suggest that the brickwork is part of an earlier bridge, and no structural reason why it should not have been built entirely of brick. The most likely explanation seems to be for aesthetic reasons. It is possible that the bridge was paid for by the Leigh family of Stoneleigh Abbey, who may have preferred something more than a purely utilitarian design, although nothing relating to Westley Bridge was found in the Estate accounts for 1765-1831.

4.3 Westley Bridge was adopted as a County Bridge in 1829, but at the time of writing it is not possible to date its construction accurately. If it is accepted that the 1766 map shows the same bridge as the 1597 map, which is clearly not the one existing today, in the absence of any record of complete rebuilding since adoption by the County in 1829 it can be assigned to the period 1766 to 1829. It was widened on the west side in 1982.

Significance

4.4 Westley Bridge is currently neither a Scheduled Monument nor Listed. In relation to bridges, Scheduling is ‘…reserved for those sites of manifest national importance which retain considerable evidential value and which will benefit from the close management of the national heritage body…’, and for the majority of bridges Listing is the preferred designation (HE 2012, 9). Non-statutory criteria including age, rarity, vulnerability, diversity etc. are used to help determine whether scheduling is appropriate. Westley is a minor post-medieval bridge in current use, with no outstanding features, and is clearly not of such significance.
4.5 Listing, with its three grades, permits designation of heritage assets of lesser significance than Scheduling. The grades are:

- Grade I buildings are of exceptional interest;
- Grade II* buildings are particularly important buildings of more than special interest;
- Grade II buildings are of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them.

Selection should take into account the statutory criteria (architectural and historic interest) used by the Secretary of State to determine eligibility for Listing, which are applied in accordance with a number of general guidance principles, outlined by the Dept. of Culture Media and Sport (2010) as:

- age and rarity.
- aesthetic merits.
- selectivity, i.e. where Listing is to ensure that examples of a particular building type are protected, this should be based on a comparative exercise to ensure that the most representative or significant examples are designated.
- national interest.
- state of repair is not relevant.

4.6 Historic England guidance (2011, 6) states that most pre-1840 bridges, where substantially intact, will warrant serious consideration for Listing. The criteria are discussed in more detail by Tilley (2002, 11-12) and, based on the DCMS general principles for age, include:

- all bridges built before 1700 surviving in anything like original condition.
- most bridges c.1700-1840, though some selection is exercised.
- bridges built between 1840 and 1914 are selected according to quality and character, including principal works of principal engineers.
- only selected bridges of high quality built between 1914 and 1939 are Listed.
- a few of the most outstanding bridges, post-dating 1939, are Listed.

4.7 On the best available dating evidence, Westley Bridge falls into the second of these categories. The 1997 Palmer & Booth survey recorded 78 bridges in the county which could be dated to the 18/19th centuries, of which 54 were identifiably c.1840 or earlier with 33 of these Listed, two at Grade II*, the rest Grade II. (It must be remembered that their survey was based on incomplete information; a number were dated only as ‘19th-century’, and within the total of 380 recorded there were 252,
including Westley, to which no date could then be given.) However, on date alone Westley Bridge does not seem to be particularly rare. Aesthetically, it is a pleasing but not exceptional bridge, although the sandstone ashlar facing suggests that appearance may have been a consideration in its construction. On age and aesthetics it is therefore an example of a relatively common type.

4.8 A current search for Listed bridges in Warwickshire on the National Heritage List for England returns 123 entries, some of which are also Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs). Many of these are railway or canal bridges, or are private bridges designed purely as part of an estate landscaping scheme, and are not directly comparable with Westley. Eliminating those which can be readily identified leaves 53 Listed public road bridges, including a small number which have been replaced by new bridges and/or road diversions but survive. (The 1997 survey recorded a total of 58 Listed bridges, 11 of which are described as private bridges. Because of the limitations of the data, a precise correlation with the NHLE is not possible, but the figures are close enough to give a reasonable indication of numbers for the present purpose.)

4.9 The majority of the Listed bridges are larger, often much larger, multi-span bridges which are usually prominent in the landscape. Excluding these gives a total of 14 single-span Listed road bridges in the County, of which two are early 19th-century cast iron bridges that can also be eliminated. This leaves a total of 12 Listed single-span masonry bridges to be considered as relevant to Westley.

4.10 The bridge at Over Whitacre incorporates medieval work, and is therefore Listed by virtue of age, and also Scheduled. Although Westley is at a crossing where there is known to have been a medieval bridge, the present structure is entirely post-medieval.

4.11 The settings of the bridges have been considered with reference to the map and details on the government Multi-Agency Graphic Information for the Countryside website (www.magic.gov.uk) and other records, but have not been inspected on site. With two exceptions, all the Listed bridges are within the setting of another designated heritage asset (or in one case, Marton Bridge, arguably so). Many of the List descriptions are quite short. None discuss setting issues or the detailed reasons for designation, but it is a reasonable assumption that setting or association was at least a factor in most.
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<td>1184083: Within, and part boundary of, Registered Park &amp; Garden of Warwick Castle (1000386)</td>
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<td>Bridge c.200m NE of Talton House</td>
<td>C18</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>1186060: Within setting of Grade II listed Talton House (1355645); poss. also former Ettington Park</td>
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<td>Bridge c.200m NW of Croft House</td>
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<td>1361279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offchurch Bridge</td>
<td>Prob 1665 (HER); C18/ C19 (NHLE)</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>1364929: Within Offchurch Bury Park, and poss. setting of Offchurch Bury House (1035085)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiorn’s Bridge</td>
<td>1829, rebuilt C20</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>1381826: Within (on boundary of) Registered Park &amp; Garden of Charlecote (1001187)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.12 In some cases, the design of the bridge suggests that contribution to a visual aspect was a consideration. For example, the bridge c.30m NW of Talton Mill (NHLE 1035664) is of limestone ashlar, with string course, a prominent arch keystone and a pilaster directly above the keystone below a prominent parapet coping. Whilst it is
certainly part of the setting of the Listed Talton House, this relatively ornate design suggests it may actually have been a feature within the former Ettington Park, which surrounded Ettington House (now a hotel) to the north-east. This is not Registered, but was considered in Lovie’s review of parks and gardens (HER MWA1281).

4.13 The two exceptions, which are certainly not related to any other heritage asset, are Wixford and Fieldon Bridges, both of which are considerably larger than Westley. The former has a spectacular segmental arch, with the spandrel walls pierced by circular flood openings. The latter has an elliptical arch with rusticated voussoirs, string course and splayed approaches with terminal piers. Both are prominent landmarks, and of more distinctive appearance than Westley.

Conclusion

4.14 Westley Bridge survives in good condition (albeit with a modern extension on the west side), and has a more sophisticated appearance than necessary for strictly functional purposes. As far as can be ascertained, it is of an age where Listing is to be considered for most bridges, subject to a degree of selection. However, it presents no exceptional design characteristics, does not form an element in a designed landscape, does not contribute to the setting of any designated heritage asset, and no exceptional historical associations have been identified. It is therefore suggested that, based on currently-available evidence, there is no clear case for Westley to be Listed as an exceptional structure in its own right, although it is arguably a good candidate for Listing as a representative example of its type under the DCMS ‘selectivity’ criterion (4.6 above). Palmer & Booth (1997, 75) point out that small post-medieval rural bridges are probably under-represented in the Lists, and recommended that consideration be given to preservation of appropriate examples.

4.15 Westley Bridge should, however, certainly be considered as a heritage asset of local importance. There has been a bridge on the site since medieval times. The present structure is, at least, almost 200 years old, and has a pleasing appearance even though there are currently no viewpoints from which this can be appreciated. It was certainly thought to be of sufficient significance as to merit the provision of an expensive matching stone ashlar facing when it was widened on the west side in 1982.
**Impact of Works**

4.16 Any works in the vicinity of Westley Bridge should therefore be designed and implemented in such a way as to avoid impact on the structure if possible, to minimise any unavoidable impact, and to be consistent with the conservation-minded approach adopted in the 1982 widening. The possibility of below-ground (or below-water) remains of the earlier bridge(s) being affected should also be considered. Appropriate measures should be put in place to mitigate any impact.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Fig 1. Location of application area and Historic Environment Record information

Fig 2: Detail from Leigh Estate map of 1579 by John Goodwine (SCLA DR18/25/69a)
Fig 3. Detail from Leigh Estate map of 1766 by Matthias Baker (SCLA DR18/25/77)

Fig 4. Detail from Tithe map of 1843 (WCRO CR 569/213)
Fig 5. Detail from First Edition Ordnance Survey 25-inch map of 1887

Fig 6. Detail from Second Edition Ordnance Survey 25-inch map of 1905
Fig 7. Detail from Third Edition Ordnance Survey 25-inch map of 1925

Fig 8. Detail from Fourth Edition Ordnance Survey 25-inch map of 1938
Fig 9. Detail from current Ordnance Survey map

Fig 10. WCC photo, 16/7/1964, west elevation looking north-east (WCRO PH329/W9)
Fig 11. WCC photo, 24/1/1967, damage to south-east abutment (WCRO PH329/DA/67/17)

Fig 12. WCC drawing B418/01, June 1968, showing reinforcement to south-east abutment
Fig 13. WCC drawing SWB418/11/1/1, June 1981, showing widening on west side

Fig 14. East parapet wall, looking south-east, May 2017
Fig 15. East elevation, looking south-west, May 2017

Fig 16. South-east abutment looking north-west, showing 1967 concrete reinforcement (left), and brick repairs to parapet (top right) and elevation (bottom right), May 2017
Fig 17. Underside of arch, east side, looking south, May 2017

Fig 18. Underside of arch looking west, showing 1982 concrete widening to right of original brick arch, May 2017
Fig 19. West elevation, looking north-east, May 2017

Fig 20. South-west abutment, showing concrete arch springing from stone abutment, May 2017
Fig 21. Large timber on stream bed adjacent to south-west abutment, May 2017