

Heritage Statement

for an information board at
Heald Well, Wellgate, Clitheroe



Introduction

Clitheroe Town Council is seeking advertisement consent to erect an A1 historical information board at Heald Well, Wellgate, Clitheroe. The board would be located to the immediate north of the masonry wall surrounding Heald Well, in front of the Dog and Partridge pub (fig. 1).



Figure 1 Site location plan – red dot marks the proposed location of the board

The information board is one of three planned for the town's three historic wells, which will be produced and funded by Clitheroe Town Team and grants from RVBC and The Duchy of Lancaster. The aims of the project are to promote public awareness of Clitheroe's heritage and history, and the unique place the three wells have had in the formation and success of the town since the earliest times.

The proposed board at Heald Well will tell the story of the well's origins, historic events associated with it and how it went out of use when piped water was brought to the town in 1856.

The heritage significance of Heald Well

Heald Well, located on Wellgate outside the Dog and Partridge pub, is listed at grade II as 'The Towns Well' (List Entry Number: 1362199) and is within the Clitheroe Conservation Area (fig. 2).

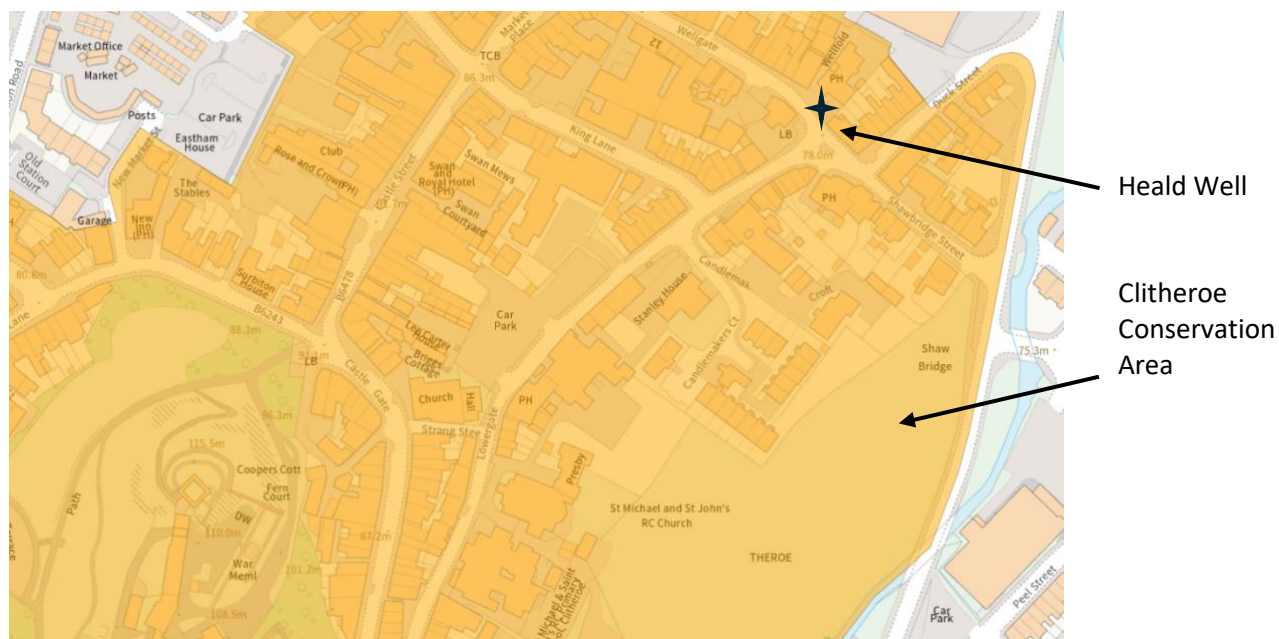


Figure 2 Location of the site within Clitheroe Conservation Area

The list entry for the well states:

A square flagged and walled pool. 3 steps down. Together with the wells in Parsons Lane and Well Terrace was the only water supply for the town until 1852.

The well consists of a sunken square pool with a flagged base surrounded by a low stone wall on three sides with a stepped entrance to the north-west. The entrance is flanked on the outside by two well-worn horse mounting blocks. The south-east side is formed by the gable end of Wellgate Fisheries fish shop.

The outer wall consists of roughly coursed limestone, approximately 1m high, capped on two sides with large slabs of gritstone. The mounting blocks and steps appear to be made from the same gritstone (fig. 3). In some places the remains of iron pins joining the slabs together can be seen.

The well has been very little altered throughout the 20th century, as can be seen from its appearance on the historical photo (fig. 4). It was first recorded in documents dating to 1643, but is likely to be much older. Like the other wells in Clitheroe, it sits on a natural spring line, and the square pool would have filled with clean drinking water, which drained away via a sluice which can still be seen.



Figure 3 Heald well today



Figure 4 Heald well c 1900 (Red Rose Collections, image ref 273303)

Description of the proposals

It is proposed to install an information board at the well. This will contain historical interpretation material and images based on research undertaken by Clitheroe Town Team, the Clitheroe Town Wells Conservation Campaign, and from the book *Reflections on the Water*, 2024, by A. Bowes.

The proposed board dimensions are 841mm wide by 594mm tall, and it will be fixed at a height of 900mm from ground level. It has been designed using the Heritage Fund *Interpretation good practice guidance* (<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/funding/good-practice-guidance/interpretation>) so the text, wording and design meet accessibility guidelines.



Figure 5 Proposed location and dimensions of the information board

Relevant planning policy

National policy relating to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment is set out in chapter 20 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2026). These policies state that heritage assets such as the grade II listed Towns Well and Clitheroe Conservation Area should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. If proposals affect the significance of heritage assets then they should be clearly and convincingly justified (section HE4).

Section HE9 of the NPPF states that new development within conservation areas and within the setting of heritage assets should look for opportunities to enhance or better reveal significance.

Key Statement EN5: Heritage Assets in the Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008-2028 states that there will be a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of the significance of heritage assets and their settings. It also states that the Historic Environment and its Heritage Assets and their settings will be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance for their heritage value; their important contribution to local character, distinctiveness and sense of place; and to wider social, cultural and environmental benefits. This will be achieved through requiring all development proposals to make a positive contribution to local distinctiveness/sense of place, and avoiding harm to heritage assets.

Assessment of heritage impacts

The proposed board would introduce a new feature to the street scape on Wellgate; however, this would not result in harm to the fabric or setting of any listed buildings, or to the character and appearance of Clitheroe Conservation Area.

The board will be of modest scale and muted colours. It will be well-designed and made from high-quality durable materials. Although there would be a small amount of physical impact to the ground from the fixings, this will be contained in modern make up layers of the tarmac surface, and will not have any impact on the physical fabric of the listed well or any below-ground archaeological remains.

The anchor fixings into the ground would be minimal and reversible

There will be numerous positive public benefits of the proposals; for example, improved understanding and appreciation of the historic well, making Clitheroe's history more visible and accessible, and increasing civic pride by connecting people and place.

Through linking in with the other town wells and the forthcoming updated town heritage trail, it will encourage tourists and local people to explore different parts of the town. The



board will therefore enhance and better reveal the significance of the listed well and of Clitheroe Conservation Area.