

Media City Footbridge, Salford Quays

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Steve Thompson has over 20 years experience in design and project management of a wide variety of high quality bridge structures, including landmark footbridges and moving bridges.

Summary

This paper examines aspects of a new moving footbridge over the Manchester Ship Canal in the City of Salford, and its role in urban regeneration and development. The Media City Footbridge is an asymmetric cable stayed swing bridge of approximately 65m main span providing pedestrian access over the ship canal into the heart of the new Media City Development at Salford Quays. This paper describes how the Media City footbridge has been designed to respond to the particular geometrical constraints of its location. The proposal is highly contextual and unique and provides a spectacular southern pedestrian gateway to the Media City development. The bridge also addresses anticipated future development at Trafford Wharf to the south of the Manchester Ship Canal and in conjunction with the existing Lowry Bridge enhances pedestrian links for the area as a whole, celebrating the heritage of the Manchester Ship Canal as a living amenity.

Keywords: footbridge; moving bridge; cable stay; landmark; development; steelwork; aesthetic; environment.

1. Introduction

Peel Holdings appointed Gifford, Wilkinson Eyre Architects and Bennett Associates; a collaboration of Bridge Design Engineers, Architects and Mechanical and Electrical (M&E) Engineers; to design a new opening pedestrian footbridge across the Manchester Ship Canal at Salford Quays. The new bridge will link the Media City development on the North Quay (Salford) with the South Quay (Trafford), adjacent to the Imperial War Museum North.



Fig. 1: Media City Footbridge, Salford Quays

The function of bridges extends beyond mere utility. Bridges have an inherent significance and symbolism as connectors and conduits, gateways and meeting places, landmarks and icons. The new Media City Footbridge is only a small component of the ongoing development of Salford Quays, yet will assume strategic importance as a symbolic marker for Media City and for Trafford Wharf.