



NORTHERN TRAINS

MANCHESTER OXFORD ROAD STATION

STAFF TRAINCREW REFURBISHMENTS



HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

October 2020

Revision /

Prepared by

S T R  A L A
| architects

Northern Trains – Manchester Oxford Road Station – Staff Traincrew Refurbishments**CONTENTS**

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Cover illustration sourced at the Historic England Archive
“General view of the station from the roof of the palace hotel in the east”

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 This Heritage Impact Statement has been produced to support the Listed Building Application for the proposed reconfiguration and refurbishment of the Traincrew Facilities at Manchester Oxford Road Station by Strzala Architects on behalf of Northern Trains (NT).
- 1.2 The intention of this document is to outline the design proposals and to demonstrate that due consideration has been given to the heritage value of the existing features and appearance of the building, and to preserve the historic character of this Grade II Listed Building and its surrounding environment.
- 1.3 Strzala Architects have been appointed by Northern Trains (NT) to consider the reconfiguration and refurbishment of the staff facilities at Manchester Oxford Road Station to create improved and upgraded accessible facilities, to include a new prayer room and quiet room for use by station staff.
- 1.4 We recognise that any proposals will need to acknowledge the character of the existing building and our proposals have been designed to be complimentary to the existing fabric of the building, whilst recognising the demands of the operational requirements regarding physical use and the wellbeing of station staff.
- 1.5 A description of the existing building condition can be found in sections 4.0 (Existing Photographs) and 5.0 (Current Condition). The proposed works are described in Section 6.0 (Design Statement) of this document.



Manchester Oxford Road Platform Structures 1960's – Historic England Archive

2.0 BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Manchester Oxford Road Station

The station opened as Oxford Road on 20th July 1849 and was the headquarters of the Manchester, South Junction and Altrincham Railway (MSJAR) until 1904. The station was built on the site of 'Little Ireland' a slum "of a worse character than St Giles", in which about four thousand people had lived in "measureless filth and stench" (according to Engels in *The Condition of the Working Class in England*), and of a gasworks which was relocated to the west. The station buildings, which were temporary wooden structures, were accessed by an inclined esplanade winding to the right from Gloucester Street (now Whitworth Street West) to reach their north front.

There was a single platform on the north side of the line through to Manchester London Road (now Manchester Piccadilly) and a second platform on a west-facing siding. To allow for extra trains in connection with the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition in 1857, extra platforms and sidings were built, but afterwards removed. A meeting of MSJAR contract ticket holders in 1863 included in its list of complaints the want of punctuality", especially as at Oxford Road station there is only one platform used for both passengers and milk".



Manchester Oxford Road Station Platform 1992 - Historic England Archive

Reconstruction took place during 1903-04. The approach was further improved, and the ticket office and the refreshment room expanded, the MSJAR offices being removed. An island platform was added on the through lines, coming into use in November 1904. The creation of British Railways in 1948 amalgamated four companies: the Great Western Railway (GWR), London, Midland & Scottish Railway (LMS), London & North Eastern Railway (LNER) and Southern Railway (SR). Each company had its own architects' department, and this did not change after nationalisation. Leslie Martin established the LMS as the 'cradle of prefabrication' when he designed three stations in 1945, which was followed by his successors adopting a lightweight steel system for a series of small stations north of Crewe when the lines between London, Manchester and Liverpool began to be electrified in 1957.

The present Manchester Oxford Road Station building was constructed in 1958-60 on top of the Manchester South Junction & Altrincham Railway viaduct and replaced the earlier station of 1874. The development was the only large-scale station in England rebuilt using prefabricated methods. The station building and platform structures were designed by Max Clendinning of British Railways' Midland Region in conjunction with the engineer, Hugh Tottenham of the Timber Development Association who had been researching timber-shell roofs since 1956; the building's lightweight roof structure partly being designed to reduce loads on the viaduct beneath. Following his work with British Railways' Midland Region, Clendinning went on to become a successful interior and furniture designer.



*Manchester Oxford Road 1959 – Laminated Timber Shell Roof
(Photo from RIBApix Ref: S59 3816)*

The main station building is covered by three shell roofs of diminishing size (the largest being at the eastern front and the smallest at the western rear) that range between 13m and 29m in span and are supported on a cruck-like frame. The front (east) elevation is reminiscent of the styling of Sydney Opera House and has a recessed, glazed upper section, underneath which lies the main entrance and eastern end of the booking office. The station's booking office, buffet, toilets and staff facilities are constructed of timber and concrete, with the two former facilities forming a lozenge-shaped island along the southern side of the main building.

The main building sits between two railway tracks with tall, curved canopies that extend out over the platforms and are supported by similarly styled crucks to the main building. Similar canopies incorporating a

central spine with raised, arched glazing cover the station's two central island platforms, which, along with a far platform, are accessed via an enclosed footbridge, which is not of special interest. All the canopies have lozenge shaped skylights that echo the lozenge shape of the booking office and buffet in the main building, and deep fascias to their front edge.



Manchester Oxford Road Interior 1960's – The Beauty of Transport website

When Manchester Central railway station closed in 1969, further rebuilding took place: one of the bay platforms was taken out of use and a new through platform provided (Platform 1), the others being renumbered accordingly. In 1971 the Altrincham line was re-electrified at 25 kV AC and the 1930s DC trains withdrawn; from then on, local trains from Altrincham ran through to Piccadilly and on to Crewe. Oxford Road thus became once again predominantly a through station.

Since its construction the station has been subject to various improvements works, including the installation of new passenger shelters and disabled toilets, the erection of a new customer information point, and re-surfacing of the concourse area and footbridge steps, predominantly in the early 21st Century. The main concourse incorporates an original semi-circular, concrete and timber bench and two curved, back-to-back timber benches exist to the central island platforms. Two sympathetically styled waiting shelters constructed in 2011, located on the central island platforms and far platform are unaffected by our proposals.

Historic England / Listed Building Entry



Manchester Oxford Road Station as it is today

3.0 LISTED BUILDING ENTRY

List Entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: MANCHESTER OXFORD ROAD STATION (INCLUDING PLATFORM STRUCTURES)

List entry Number: 1255053

Location: MANCHESTER OXFORD ROAD STATION (INCLUDING PLATFORM STRUCTURES), OXFORD ROAD

County: Greater Manchester

District: Manchester

District Type: Metropolitan Authority

Parish: Non-Civil Parish

Grade: II

Date first listed: 24-November-1995

UID: 1255053

MANCHESTER OXFORD ROAD STATION (INCLUDING PLATFORM STRUCTURES), OXFORD ROAD

*Manchester Oxford Road Station, including platform structures, is designated at Grade II for the following principal reasons: * Architectural interest: it is one of the best post-war railway stations in the country, with a striking and highly elegant design constructed of laminated timber; * Design interest: the station's unique design employs a high level of sophistication and innovation through its use of conoid shells supported on a cruck-like frame, which not only create a dramatic aesthetic form, but endow the building with a light and spacious interior; * Architect: it was designed by Max Clendinning of British Railways' Midland Region and Hugh Tottenham of the Timber Development Association, and represents Tottenham's finest work; * Technological interest: it is the most dramatic example of the use of timber-shell roofs in England; utilising techniques pioneered and developed by the Timber Development Association; * Rarity: it is the only large station in Britain to have been re-built in prefabricated materials.*

Listing NGR: SJ8402097475

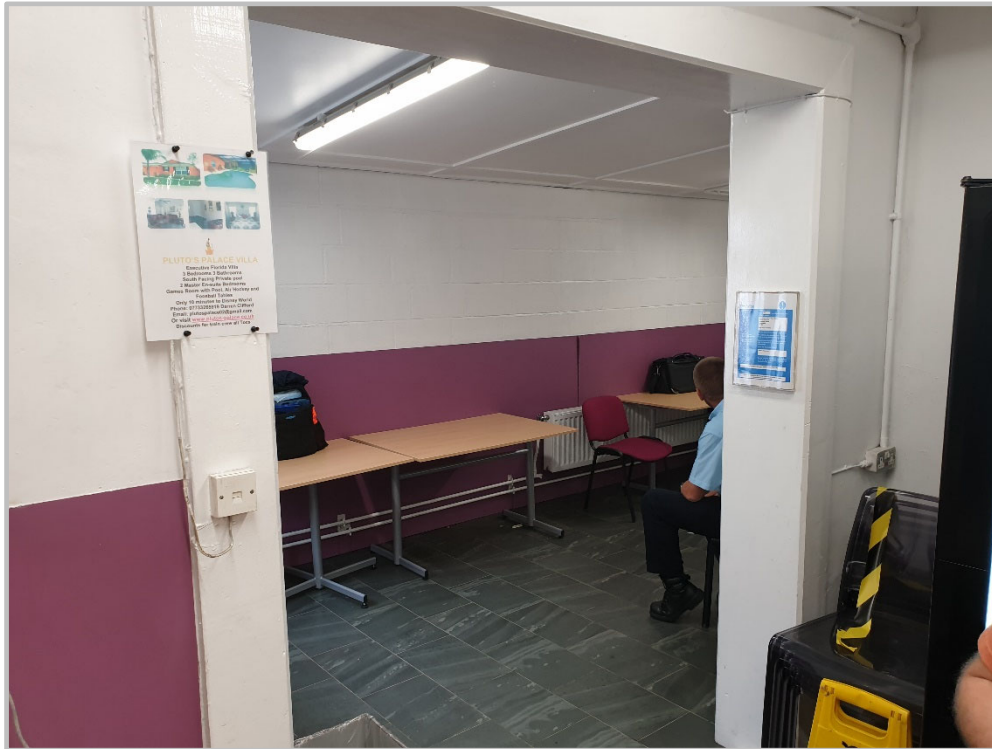
4.0 EXISTING PHOTOGRAPHS



Manchester Oxford Road Station – Existing Station Canteen Area



Manchester Oxford Road Station – Existing Station Mess Room



Manchester Oxford Road Station – Existing Station Canteen Area



Manchester Oxford Road Station – Existing Station Canteen Area

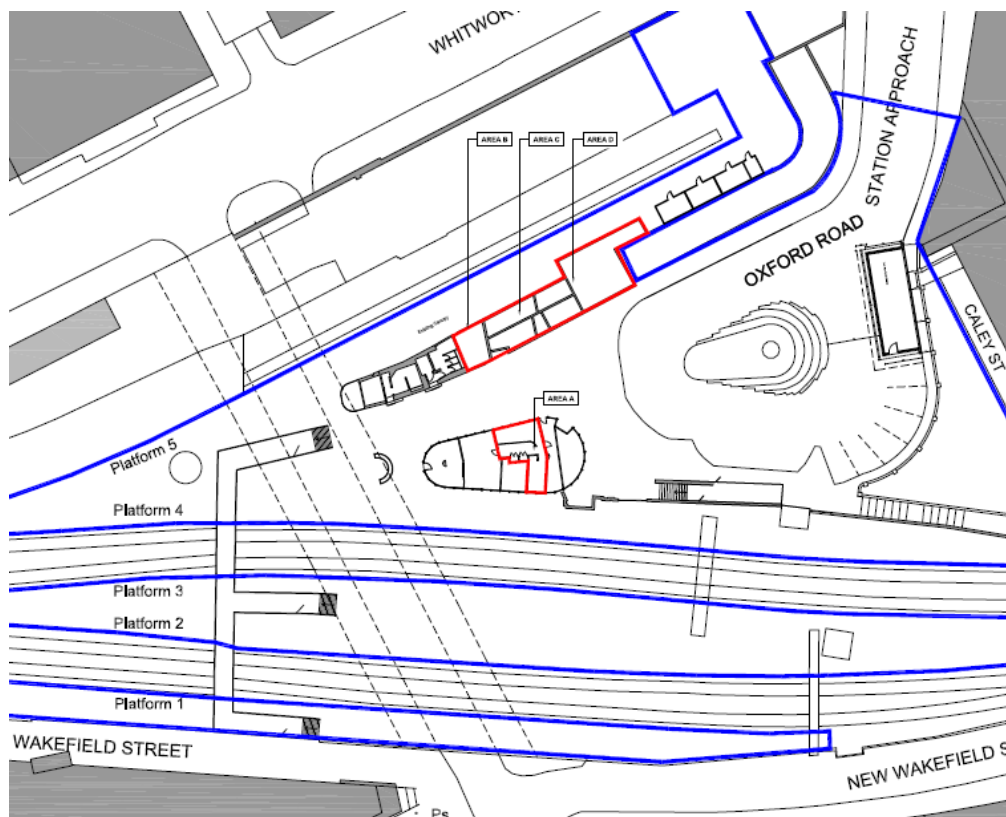


Manchester Oxford Road Station – Existing Ticket Office Mess Room



Manchester Oxford Road Station – Existing Locker Room

5.0 CURRENT CONDITION



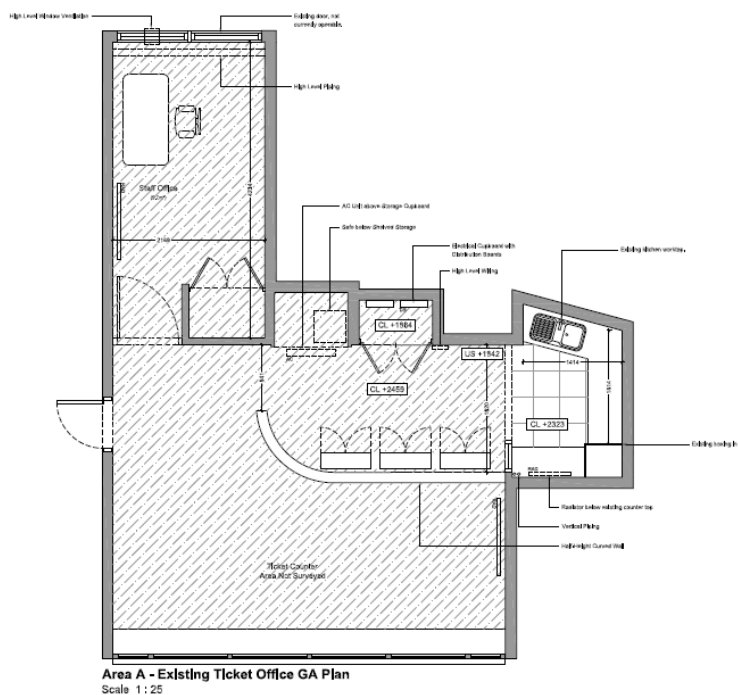
Existing Station Areas - Site Layout Plan

The proposed location for this project is back of house staff areas across the station development. Area A is located to the rear of the existing ticket office within the central stand-alone structure located to the north-east of the main concourse area of the station, of which is sheltered by the laminated timber conoid roof structure.

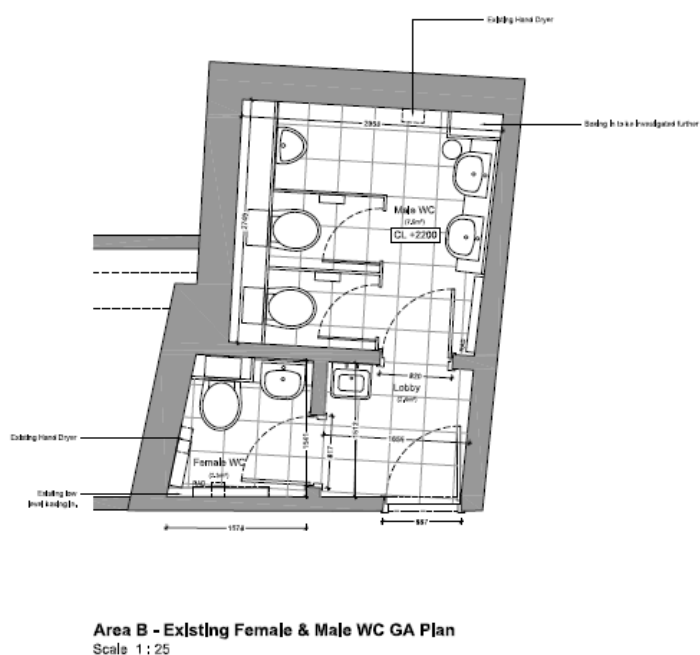
The mess room and staff office to the rear of the ticket office has carpet and vinyl floor coverings, the walls are clad in original timber and painted in white with a tiled splashback to the kitchen. Suspended tiled grid ceilings are installed throughout. To the rear of the ticket office there is currently a number of free-standing storage units that sit behind the un-original half height partition and there is currently no provision for staff members to rest.

The proposed work areas B, C, D & E are located within the lozenge shaped structure to the North of the concourse, comprising of staff toilet facilities, locker room, mess room and canteen area. These areas are accessed through individual doorways located to the far end of Platform 5. The locker room, staff toilets and mess facility are currently cramped and narrow due to the sub-division of the spaces within this area.

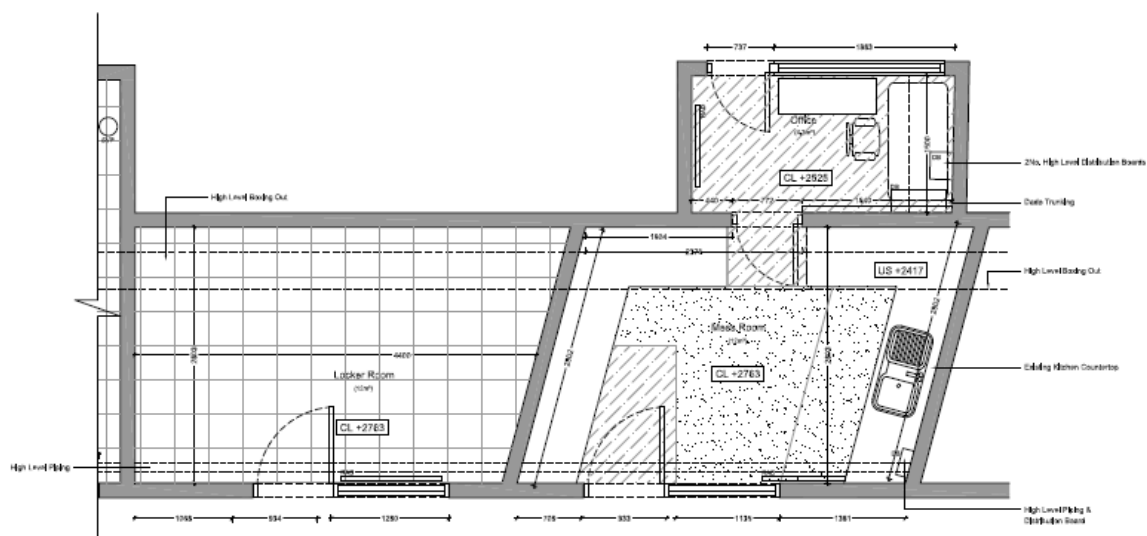
The existing canteen area sits to the end of Platform 5 and utilises a modern single storey masonry extension to the far end of the platform, with a timber framed window and fire exit single door onto the platform. The existing facilities are currently looking tired due to the high number of station staff using the facilities. The purpose of the proposed scheme is to improve the quality of the fixtures and fittings, to provide a more pleasant back of house area for staff at the station.



Existing Area A – Ticket Office Mess Room & Staff Office



Existing Area B – Staff Toilets

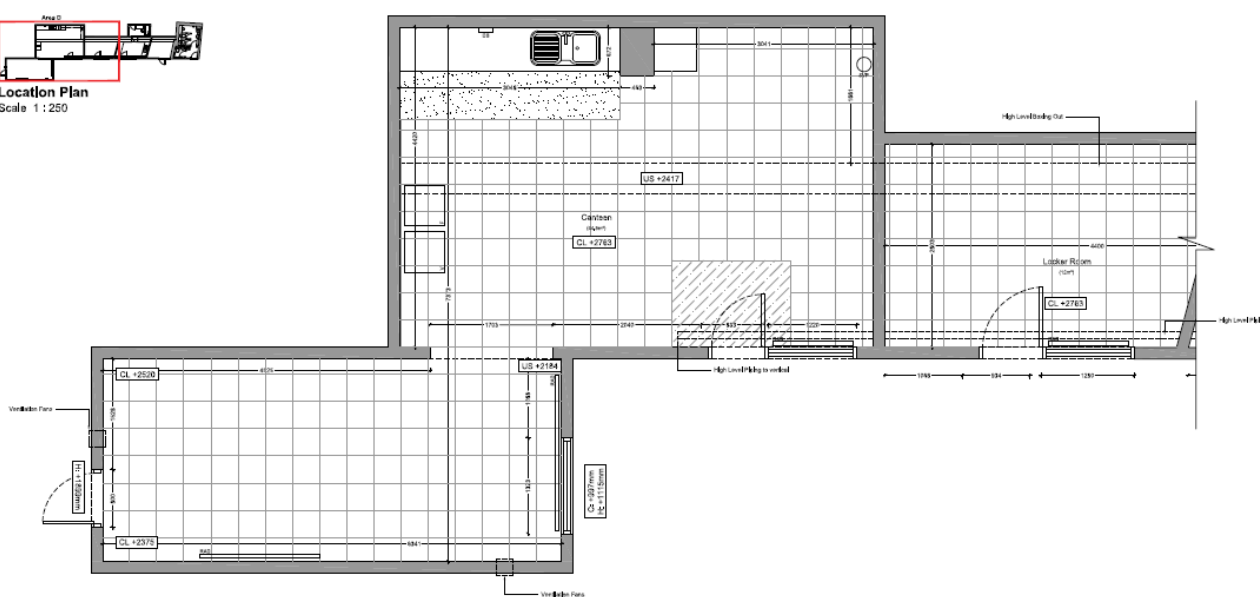


Area C - Existing Mess Room GA Plan
Scale 1 : 25

Existing Area C – Mess Room & Locker Room



Location Plan
Scale 1 : 250



Area D - Existing Canteen GA Plan
Scale 1 : 25

Existing Area D – Existing Canteen

6.0 DESIGN STATEMENT

The scheme proposes the reconfiguration and refurbishment of the existing staff areas across the station development that are under the control of Northern Trains (NT). The proposed works aim to improve the facilities for staff at the station, providing accessible for all facilities in line with Equality Act 2010 guidance, whilst preserving the historic elements of the listed building that are in evidence.

The works involve the refurbishment of the existing mess facility and office to the rear of the ticket office to create a reworked mess room to provide a new breakfast bar with seating against the existing half height partition wall and upgraded kitchen facility with hygienic cladded splashback. The original painted timber panelling is to be retained and protected. New suspended ceiling tiles are proposed within the frames of the existing, with new areas of suspended plasterboard ceiling with skim plaster finish painted white within the office area.

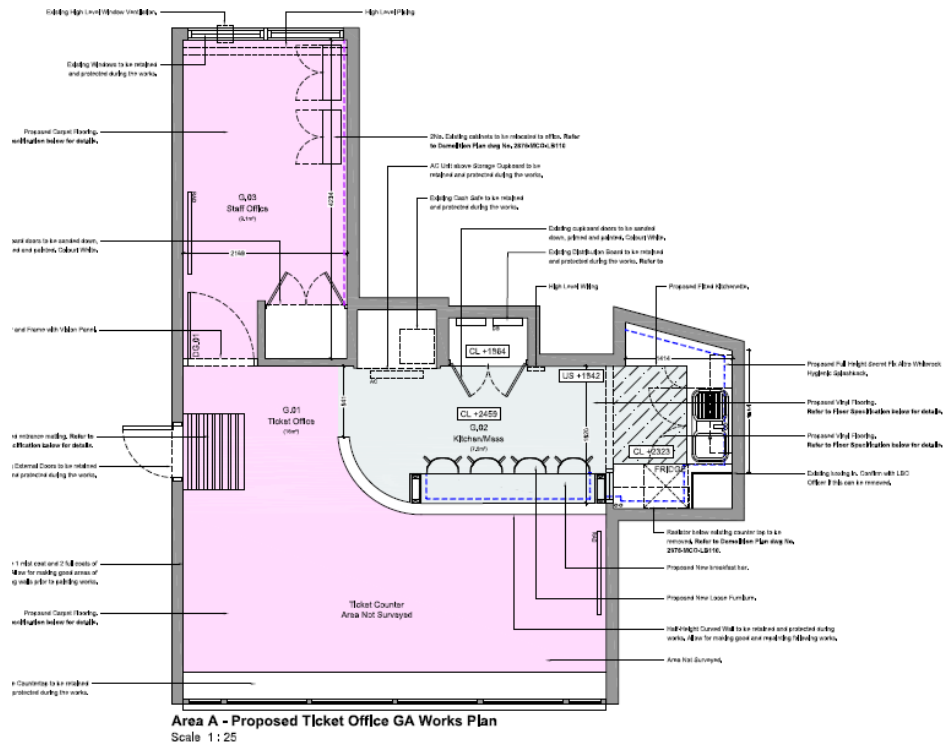
The proposed works within the existing staff toilets are to remove the existing internal doors, sanitaryware, cubicles and tiled wall & floor finishes in preparation for new, opening out the existing space. New full height stud partition walls with hygienic wall cladding finish are proposed to create 1No. Ambulant Unisex Disabled WC and 2No. Unisex WC's, each with dedicated wash hand basins and hand dryers contained within. New suspended plasterboard ceilings with skim plaster finish painted white are proposed with new LED lighting throughout. New vinyl sheet floor coverings are proposed to the toilet facility.

It is proposed that the existing masonry walls that currently divide the mess room, locker room and canteen areas are removed to provide a natural flow through these existing sub-divided spaces and increase the available area within the canteen for use by station staff. The internal walls to be removed are not deemed to be of heritage significance to the listed building. New structural steel beams are to be installed to the new openings and will be enclosed within new plasterboard bulkheads with skim plaster finish and painted. A new full height stud partition wall is constructed to create a new prayer room facility with ritual footwash provision. To the adjacent area, a quiet room area with soft seating is also proposed, with new full height glazed partition wall to provide an acoustic divide between the main canteen area, whilst opening out the space visually to create a sense of space through the narrow existing form.

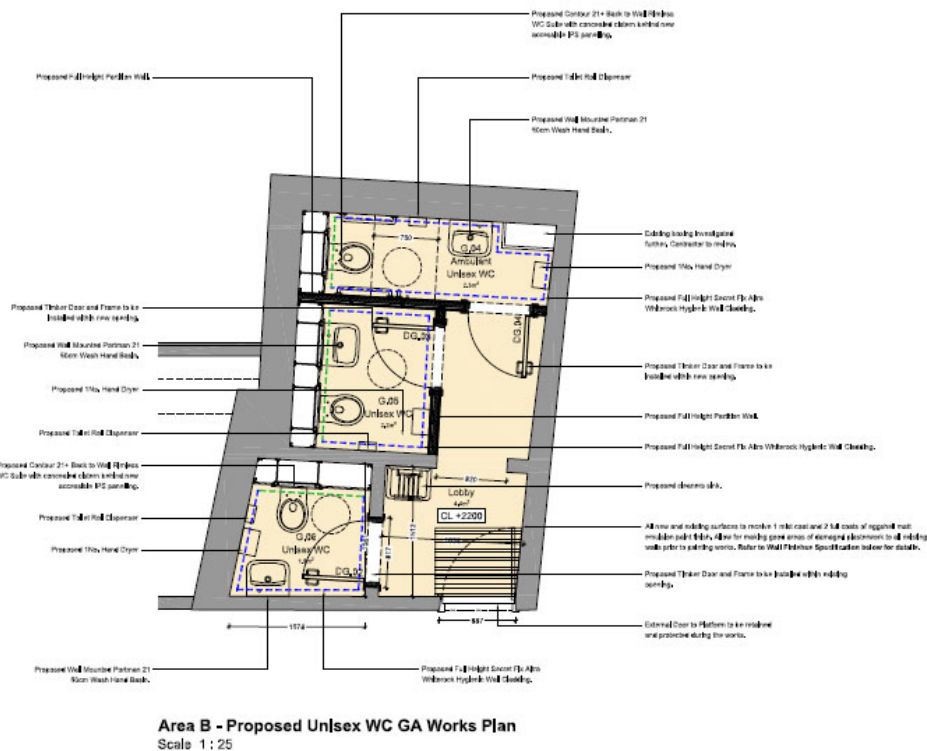
The works within the existing canteen area involve the relocation of the kitchen facility into the modern single storey extension area with new kitchen units, breakfast bar and accessible countertop for use by wheelchair users, to create a more useable staff seating space with new loose furniture and decoration works proposed throughout. The existing ceiling is to be retained and refurbished with new skim coat plaster and repainted in white.

New flooring is proposed in all areas, with new hard-wearing carpet within the prayer room, quiet room and office spaces, with vinyl provided to the canteen area and new barrier matting to each of the existing entrance doors from Platform 5.

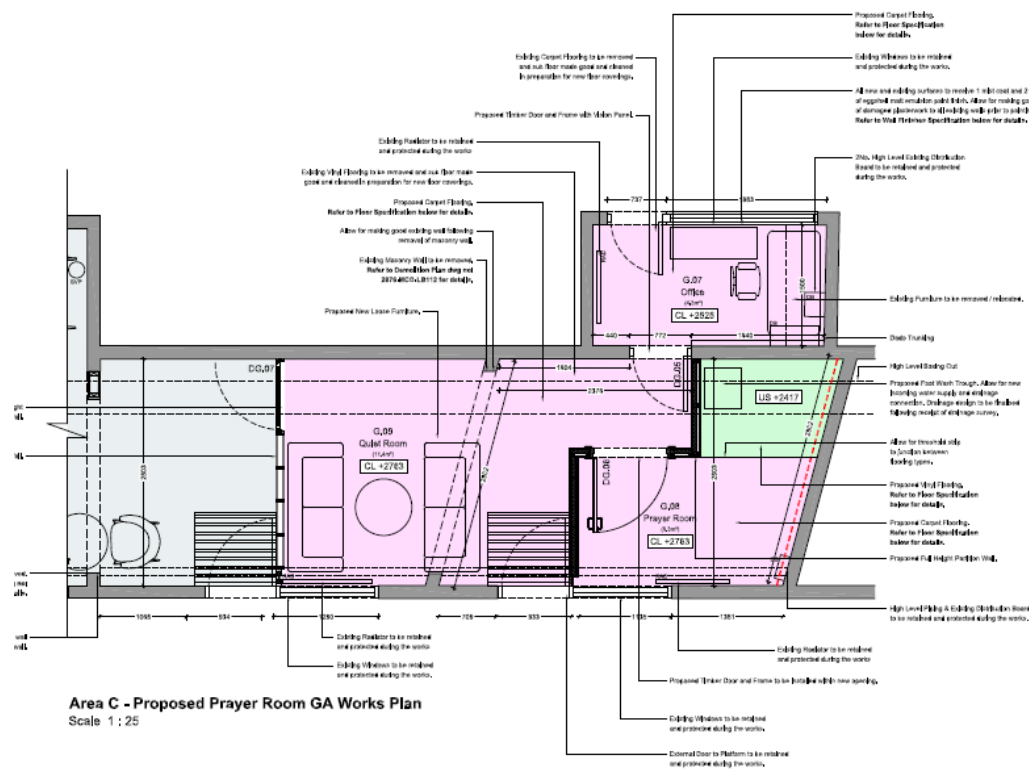
No works are proposed to the external doors, windows and façade, all of which are to be protected and retained, remaining unaffected by the proposals.



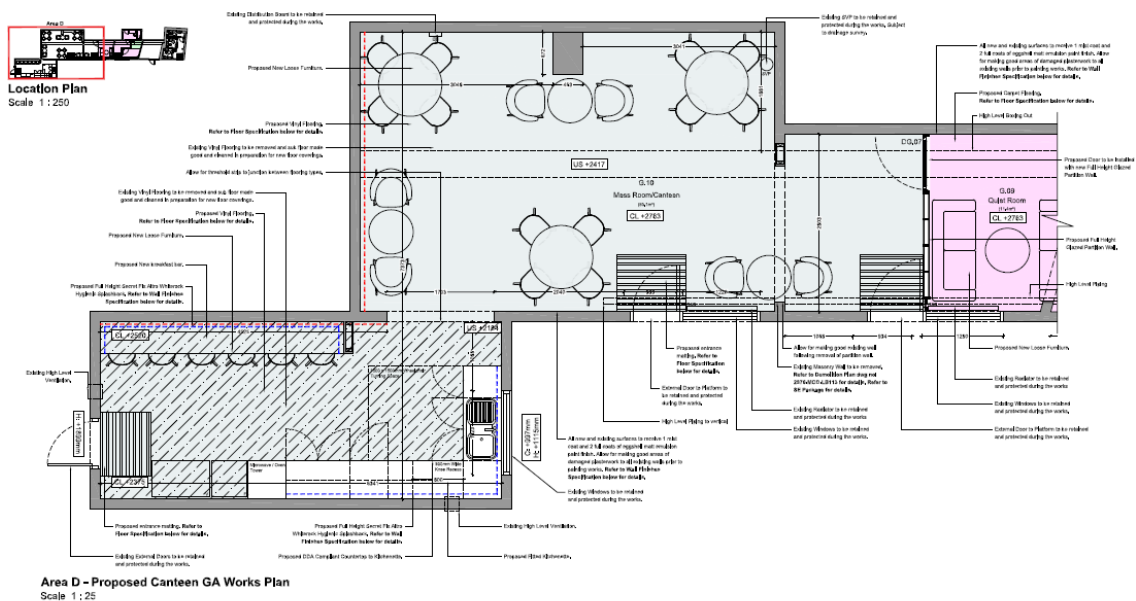
Proposed Breakfast Bar & Seating to Ticket Office Mess Room



Proposed Unisex Staff Toilet Facilities



Manchester Oxford Road Station – Proposed Quiet Room & Prayer Room



Manchester Oxford Road Station – Proposed Canteen Area

7.0 CONCLUSION

The proposed design for the Staff Traincrew Facilities aims to provide refurbished back of house breakout and rest areas, improving the provision of accessible facilities for staff at the station. New facilities including a prayer room and quiet room are also provided to improve employee wellbeing and in line with Equality Act 2010 guidance. The proposals have been developed to ensure the existing visual features of the station, including the main laminated timber roof structure, external timber door sets and facade, which are of primary importance are unaffected by the proposals.

The importance of Manchester Oxford Road Station as a Grade II Listed Building has been a central consideration within the design proposal, and we have maintained the character of the original design – so far as it is in evidence, whilst providing for the practical requirements of the operation of the station and wellbeing of staff members.

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