

NetworkRail

***DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF CONGESTION
RELIEF WORKS TO MANCHESTER OXFORD ROAD STATION***

August 2023



Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in order to support a Listed Building Consent (LBC) application in relation to the proposed package of congestion relief works at Manchester Oxford Road railway station. The proposed works consist of the following scope: Installation of new ticket barriers, works to the ticket office, relocation of CIS display screens and other associated M&E works including alteration to the lighting layout.

Manchester Oxford Road Station is a Grade II listed building and as such Listed Building Consent is required for the works proposed, under the provisions of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The works will also require approval under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. A separate request for Prior Approval under Part 18, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 has been submitted in respect of this.

The 'Proposals' section below explains the works in further detail, setting out the rationale and justification for the proposals. This will also include analysis of the proposals' heritage implications to satisfy the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and relevant local planning policy.

Site and Surroundings

Manchester Oxford Road railway station is a railway station in Manchester, at the junction of Whitworth Street West and Oxford Street. It opened in 1849 and was rebuilt in 1960. It is the second busiest of the four stations in Manchester city centre.

The station serves the southern part of Manchester city centre and consists of four through platforms and one terminating bay platform. The station lies on the route of the original Manchester South Junction and Altrincham Railway (MSJ&AR), one of the country's earliest suburban railways and the first in Manchester.

Manchester Oxford Road Station is built over a Grade II listed viaduct constructed by the MSJ&AR in 1839. This impressive structure comprises two hundred and twenty-four brick arches and a series of decorative Gothic-style ironwork bridges, which extends for one and three quarter miles from Manchester Piccadilly Station via Deansgate Station to Castlefield, where

the viaduct bifurcates to provide both north-south and east-west trans-Pennine rail routes. A new stretch of line at Castlefield, the 'Ordsall Chord' introduced in 2017, provides a direct route through Manchester Oxford Road Station for trains to run from Manchester Piccadilly to Manchester Victoria.



Figure 1 - Map showing Manchester Oxford Road Station in relation to Manchester city centre and other mainline stations within the city centre.

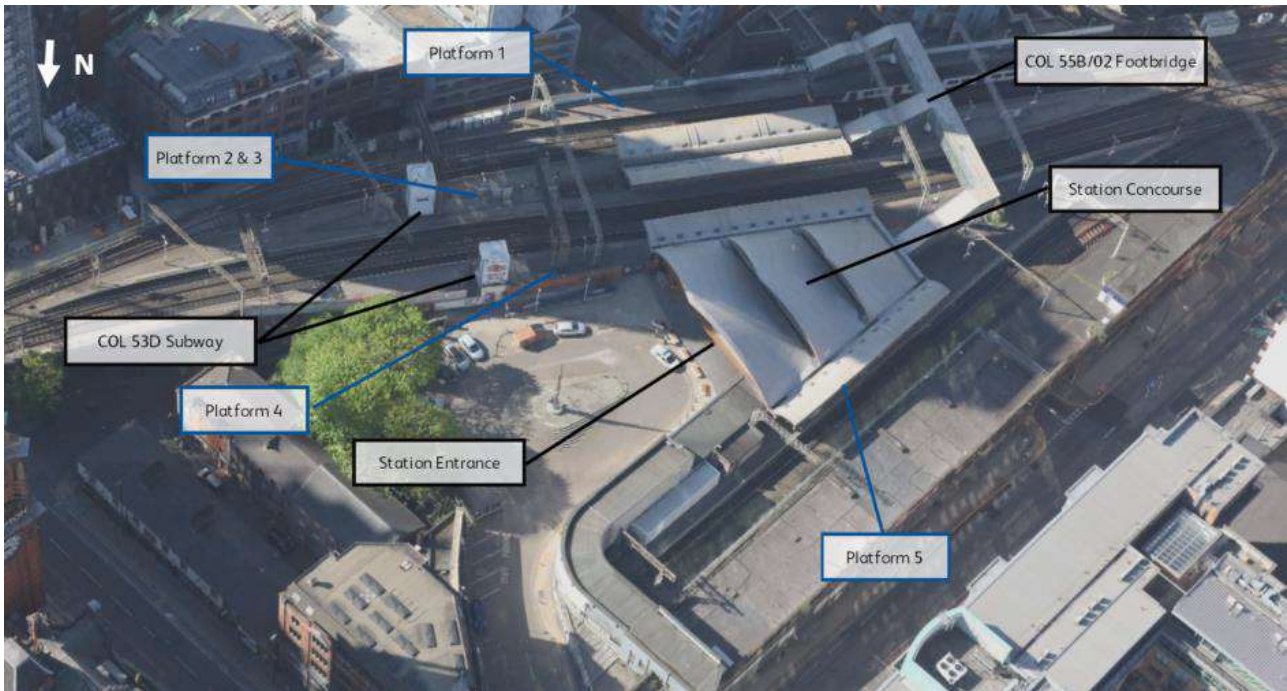


Figure 2 - Aerial image showing Manchester Oxford Road Station

The station concourse is situated in between Platform 4 to the south and Platform 5 to the north. There are 2 No. station buildings either side of the concourse as detailed in Section 1.3.3. When entering the station from the east, passengers have 2 No. sets of double doors to enter the gateline area of the concourse and 1 No. set of double doors to enter the ticket office section of the gateline.



Figure 3 - Station entrance doors to concourse. The entrance to the ticket office on the left and the entrance to the gateline on the right

On the unpaid side of the concourse there is the ticket office waiting area and the runoff area for the gateline. The ticket office waiting area is separated from the gateline by a glass partition wall. This prevents conflicting movements between persons using the gateline and purchasing tickets. The ticket office waiting area is approx. 18m² in area. The station ticket office can be accessed via a staff-only door from within this area.

Legislative and policy context

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) governs the designation and works to listed buildings in England. The Act states in **s.1 (5)**:

‘In this Act “listed building” means a building which is for the time being included in a list compiled or approved by the Secretary of State under this section; and for the purposes of this Act—

(a) any object or structure fixed to the building;

(b) any object or structure within the curtilage of the building which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1st July 1948, shall be treated as part of the building.’

Under the Act, no one is permitted to undertake or cause to be undertaken any works that would affect the character of a listed building unless the works are authorised. Section 16 of the Act identifies that whether such works can be carried out is determined by the local planning authority or the Secretary of State:

‘(1) Subject to the previous provisions of this Part, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State may grant or refuse an application for listed building consent and, if they grant consent, may grant it subject to conditions.

(2) In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

(3) Any listed building consent shall (except in so far as it otherwise provides) ensure for the benefit of the building and of all persons for the time being interested in it.’

In relation to the granting of Listed Building Consent, Section 17 of the Act stipulates that conditions attached to Listed Building Consent may include those with respect to:

‘(a) the preservation of particular features of the building, either as part of it or after severance from it;

(b) the making good, after the works are completed, of any damage caused to the building by the works; [and]

(c) the reconstruction of the building or any part of it following the execution of any works, with the use of original materials so far as practicable and with such alterations of the interior of the building as may be specified in the conditions’.

It is also defined in s.17 (2) that a condition *‘may also be imposed requiring specified details of the works (whether or not set out in the application) to be approved subsequently by the local planning authority or, in the case of consent granted by the Secretary of State, specifying whether such details are to be approved by the local planning authority or by him’.*

The Act also states in s.66 (1):

‘In considering whether to grant planning permission or permission in principle for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses’.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) also governs duties of the local planning authority relating to conservation areas, particularly Sections 69, 72 and 74.

- Section 69 requires local planning authorities to define as conservation areas any *‘areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’.*

- Section 72 confers a general duty *‘with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area... special attention shall be paid to the desirability or preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area’.*

- Section 74 defines that demolition of a building in a conservation area is not permitted *‘without the consent of the appropriate authority’.*

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) provides the Government's national planning policy on the conservation of the historic environment, supported by the Planning Practice Guidance (updated July 2019). This Heritage Statement aims to address relevant policy within the NPPF in relation to Section 16 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' and includes an assessment of significance of the heritage assets and their setting that may be affected by the proposed works, in compliance with paragraphs 194-208.

The following paragraphs as set out in the NPPF include key provisions considered of particular importance to this application.

- Paragraph 194 - *In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.*
- Paragraph 199 - *When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss, or less than substantial harm to its significance.*
- Paragraph 200 - *Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:*
 - a) *grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;*
 - b) *assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.*
- Paragraph 201 - *Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of*

the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*
- Paragraph 202 – *Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.*
- Paragraph 203 – *The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgment will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.*

The National Planning Practice Guidance (Historic Environment) (PPG, 2014) gives further information on how national policy is to be interpreted and applied locally. The PPG includes particular guidance on matters relating to protecting the historic environment. The PPG for historic environment was significantly updated in 2019 to reflect the changes made in 2018/19 to NPPF policy.

Local policy

Manchester Core Strategy

When developing the proposals, regarding was had to the policies within the Manchester Core Strategy, including the following:

Policy EN 3 - Heritage

Throughout the City, the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City Centre

Policy EC 1 - Employment and Economic Growth in Manchester (supporting text)

Ensuring access to job opportunities via sustainable transport such as walking and cycling, and public transport, such as bus routes, Metrolink and heavy rail is vital to improving the quality of life of residents through job opportunities, raising residents' wages and thereby increasing wealth

Policy T 1 - Sustainable Transport

To deliver a sustainable, high quality, integrated transport system...the Council will support proposals that: -Contribute to improvements to the extent and reliability of the public transport network; Facilitate modes of transport that reduce carbon emissions e.g by incorporating charging points for electric vehicles, subject to their appropriate design and location.

Policy EN 1 - Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas

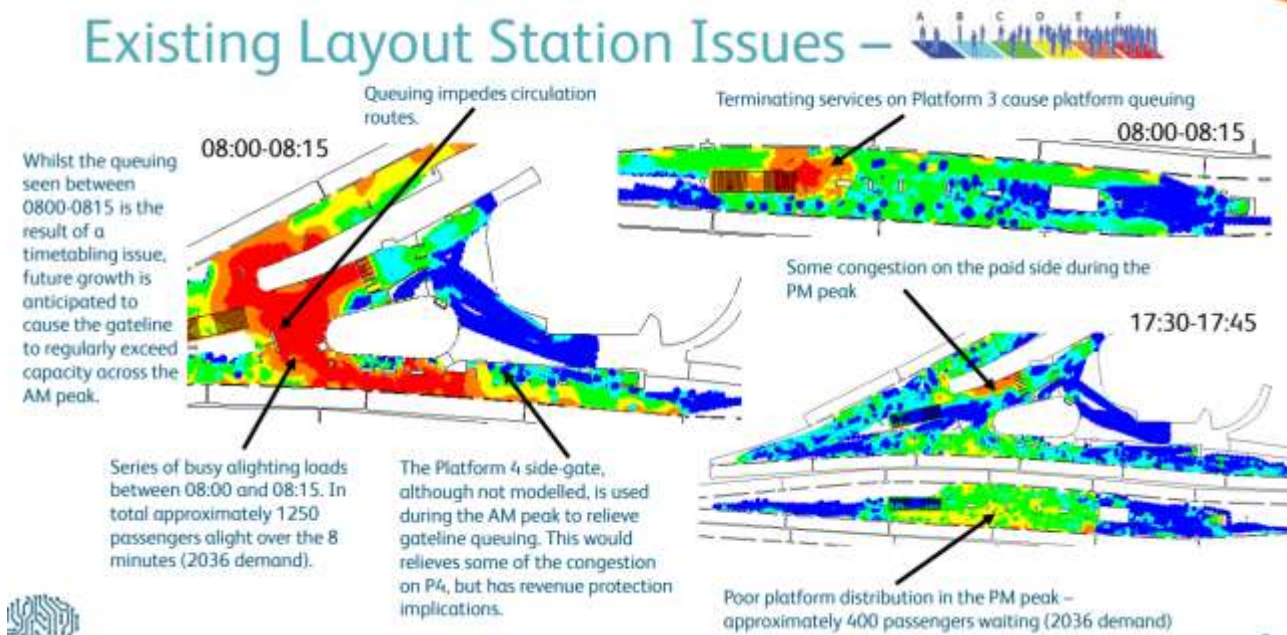
Developers will be expected to consider the City's heritage and continue the rich pattern of activity in the core area

Development Proposals

Network Rail has identified a number of critical stations within the North West & Central region which experience significant congestion issues. One of these stations is Manchester Oxford Road.

The project is a Station Congestion Scheme at Manchester Oxford Road Station. Throughout the past decade, Manchester has seen a high degree of growth, driven in part by the relocation of major employers to the region. This has in turn resulted in increased passenger numbers at the major city centre stations, including Manchester Oxford Road. With passenger growth set to increase further (8 % increase from 2018 to 2033), the station has been marked as a high priority for congestion relief interventions by the Passenger and Station Analysis (P&SA) Team. Network Rail Design has identified the gateline as the primary constraint at the station. Therefore, the scheme will target this as the primary mechanism for relieving congestion. The image below demonstrates some of the key issues observed at the station:

Existing Layout Station Issues –



Schedule of proposed works

The proposal consists of the following scope: To install 8no. new ticket barriers in the existing location, removing the existing glazed dividing rail that provides access to the ticket office, and relocating the ticket office from its existing location to the front of the lozenge facing the station approach. The additional 2no. new ticket gates will allow for increased passenger handling capacity at the gate line, and relocating the ticket desk away from the main entrance allows for this.

These works also require the existing CIS display screens to be removed and relocated and other associated M&E works including alteration to the lighting layout. At the same time other works on platforms XXX will be carried out to the CIS screens. The relocating of the ticket office requires alterations to the lozenge building, minor alterations are also proposed to the interior of the lozenge building. Further information on the full scope of works is appended to this Statement as Appendix 1.

In order to determine the most suitable intervention to remedy the observed congestion issues, Network Rail undertook an Option Selection process, with the following scenarios considered:

Option 1: Do-minimum intervention - Extension of main gate line & reconfiguration of ticket

office building.

Option 2: Do-something intervention - Extension of main gate line, reconfiguration of ticket office building & construction of a platform 4 gate line.

Option 3: Extension of main gate line, removal of doors, reconfigure ticket office. (Option 1 scope + move gate line forwards and thus removal of doors)

Following the completion of the Option Selection process, Network Rail concluded that Option 1 presented an acceptable balance between seeking to reduce the observed congestion and keeping intervention to the Listed structure to a minimum. Option 3, which looked at removing the existing timber structure at the entrance, was discounted given the degree of intervention to historic fabric and continued with the progression of Option 1.

Assessment of Proposals

Impact on heritage assets

The submitted Heritage Statement considers the heritage value of the station and the conservation area within which it sits, with an assessment of the proposals' impact discussed at Section 4. This concludes that the 'very minor degree of less than significant harm will be generated by the works, which will be outweighed by the public benefits arising from the scheme:

“works are required to alter the existing gateline at Manchester Oxford Road Station due to the current constrained layout and the associated congestion for passengers. These works will require some intervention to the station fabric, which in the most part has no impact and no resulting harm to the heritage asset. A couple of aspects of the required works will result in some physical changes to the fabric of the station and its appearance and these have been assessed to be a very minor degree of less than significant harm. This harm is assessed to be outweighed by the public benefits of the station improvements in particular limiting the congestion within the concourse and station frontage.

Public benefit Assessment

The proposals would preserve the significance of the station and its setting, securing its future use as an operational railway station – one of the key transport hubs in Manchester City Centre - whilst enabling a resolution to the congestion observed at the station. It is clear that the public benefits associated with improving the operating efficiency and passenger experience of Oxford Road Station outweighs the less than significant harm to the heritage asset.

The proposals are therefore in accordance with the thrust of MCC Core Strategy policies Policy EN 3 – Heritage, Policy EC 1 - Employment and Economic Growth in Manchester, Policy T 1 - Sustainable Transport and Policy EN 1 - Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas. It is thus concluded that the proposal would result in less than substantial harm in line with the NPPF (para 202) and meet the test of achieving public benefits which outweigh the harm to the significance of the station.

CONCLUSION

It is considered that the works are respectful to the character and appearance of the listed structure and there is a sound justification and strong public benefits associated with the scheme. This will be done in a manner that is respectful to the heritage significance of the station.

In light of the above, the proposals are considered to be in accordance with relevant policy stipulated by the NPPF and the Manchester Core Strategy. The proposals therefore satisfy both national and local planning policy regarding the balance test of the impact of development on significance of heritage assets and their setting, and the public benefits to be realised. Consequently, it is requested that Listed Building Consent be granted for the development.

APPENDIX 1

Proposed Architectural Alterations

Ticket Desks:

- 5no. existing ticket desks to be removed. Exposed façade of lozenge building rebuilt to match original station design.
- Material removed from existing ticket desks to be retained.
- Existing ticket window glazing in proposed staff area retained, and one way film installed to inside face of glazing.
- Existing internal ticket desks removed, and openings filled in.
- 2no. lozenge façade 'bays' prepared to accept new ticket desks & windows, existing centre panelling for window element removed. Removed panel to be stored.
- 2no. new ticket desks installed at the East elevation/curved frontage of the station facing the drop off area. Design to mimic existing ticket desks, finished in stainless steel.
- 2no. 15mm toughened glazing panels with PVB layer installed to 2no. openings at ticket desk counters.

ATG Stanchions:

- 7no. existing ATG stanchions and tread/ramps removed.
- Glazed separation screens to be removed. Floor to be made good where screen support stanchions have been removed.
- 9no. new ATG stanchions with new tread/ramps to be installed slightly to the right of the existing alignment.

CIS Screens:

- 1no. CIS support column above existing ticket gate line to be removed.
- 3no. CIS screens removed and set aside for re-use.
- 2no. screens re-instated onto existing support column at the front of the station in proposed new location between door aperture and lozenge building.

Lighting:

- Existing lighting to be modified. Works TBC by other disciplines.

Internal Walls:

- 1no. 3/4 height 'hockey stick' wall in existing ticket office to be removed. Existing ticket office to be converted into a new staff area.
- 1no. new full height wall and door to be installed in proposed staff area.
- Existing managers office changed into new ticket office, with 1no. door removed, and opening blocked off.
- 1no. new opening formed, and door installed in new ticket office, north of the previously blocked off door location.

External Façade:

- Exposed façade of lozenge building rebuilt to match original station design.
- Rectangular wooden waist panels previously removed and stored, to be used in recreation of the façade of the lozenge building to original design.
- Repairs, where necessary to be carried out by specialist contractor.

Cable Run:

- 1no. additional cable trough installed over front door architrave, following the existing cable route.

Rooms Internally:

- Existing suspended ceiling in existing ticket office partially demounted, up to alignment with new wall to rear as the proposed staff area is created.
- New suspended ceiling grid hung in corridor to rear of proposed staff area,
- 2no. rooms to have carpet tiles removed. Carpet removed from existing ticket office, and existing managers office.
- New carpet tiles to be laid in 3no. rooms, the proposed ticket office, proposed staff area and proposed new corridor.

