



Heritage Statement

Manchester Oxford Road Station

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1.0 INTRODUCTION / PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement for Oxford Road Station in Manchester has been prepared by BB Heritage Studio on behalf of Network Rail.
- 1.2 BB Heritage Studio provides built heritage advice and consultancy services. It is led by Bernadette Bone who is a qualified architect with over 20 years experience of designing in historic environments. Bernadette is an RIBA Accredited Specialist Conservation Architect (RIBA SCA) and has a Post Graduate Diploma in Building Conservation (GradDiplConsAA). She has provided heritage advice on a number of rail projects including the Northern Hub, the new roof at Victoria (Manchester), Carlisle, Swansea, Pontypridd and Shrewsbury Stations.
- 1.3 Oxford Road Station is a Grade II listed building located adjacent to the Whitworth Street Conservation Area in Manchester.
- 1.4 The main station building and platform structures were completed in 1960 by a team consisting of the architect WR Headley for the London Midland Region, A.N. Butland (chief civil engineer, Midland Region), J.H. Wyatt (principal assistant architect), Max Clendinning (architect in charge) and Hugh Tottenham of the Timber Development Association. The building is composed of laminated timber shell roofs and supports with hardwood strip ceilings to the shell roofs and canopies. The main station building is covered by three shell conoid roofs of diminishing size and sits between railway tracks with arched canopies to each platform. Similar canopies cover two other platforms. The single storey buildings accommodate the booking office, buffet, toilets and staff facilities and are also constructed in timber. Beyond the main shell roofs are two smaller shells and these lead to arched timber canopies over the platforms. The theme is also carried right through to the specially designed timber seats on the island platform. The station is considered to be one of the most dramatic stations in England.
- 1.5 The importance of the structure is due to (but not necessarily limited to) the following
 - Its unique architectural and aesthetic quality
 - Its technological interest as a large timber structure
 - Its historic interest in relation to the development of the railway nationally and in Manchester
- 1.6 The heritage statement assessment has been carried out using detailed analysis which has included desk top research, site visits and professional judgement guided by established methodologies for appraising special interest. Consideration has been given to a variety of factors which have contributed to the identification and understanding of the special interest of the building. These include the historical development of the structure in the context of national railway history, the historical development of the station site as a whole and the adjacent context.
- 1.7 This report consists of six parts. Following this introduction the second section describes the historic background of the proposed site and outlines the heritage context. The third part contains an assessment of significance which is followed in section four by an outline of the proposed works and assessment of impact. The fifth part considers the statutory requirements and section six contains the conclusions.

2.0 UNDERSTANDING THE HERITAGE ASSET

2.1 HISTORIC CONTEXT

- 2.1.1 Manchester was the busiest market town in medieval Lancashire. From the middle of the eighteenth century Manchester experienced huge growth to become the world's first industrial city. Transport infrastructure was key to that growth and Manchester was at the forefront of the railway revolution. Competing companies invested huge amounts to establish lucrative routes and station facilities, resulting in three transport nodes in the city at Castlefield, Piccadilly and Victoria.
- 2.1.2 The site of Oxford Road station existed largely as open fields up until the laying out of Oxford Road in the 1790s. The Laurent map of 1793 (Fig 01) shows the main axis of Oxford Road and the start of the layout of the basic geometry of streets that still exists today including Cambridge Street, Great Marlborough Street and Charles Street. Other than the basic layout of streets, the area was largely undeveloped at that time with the River Medlock flowing through open fields.

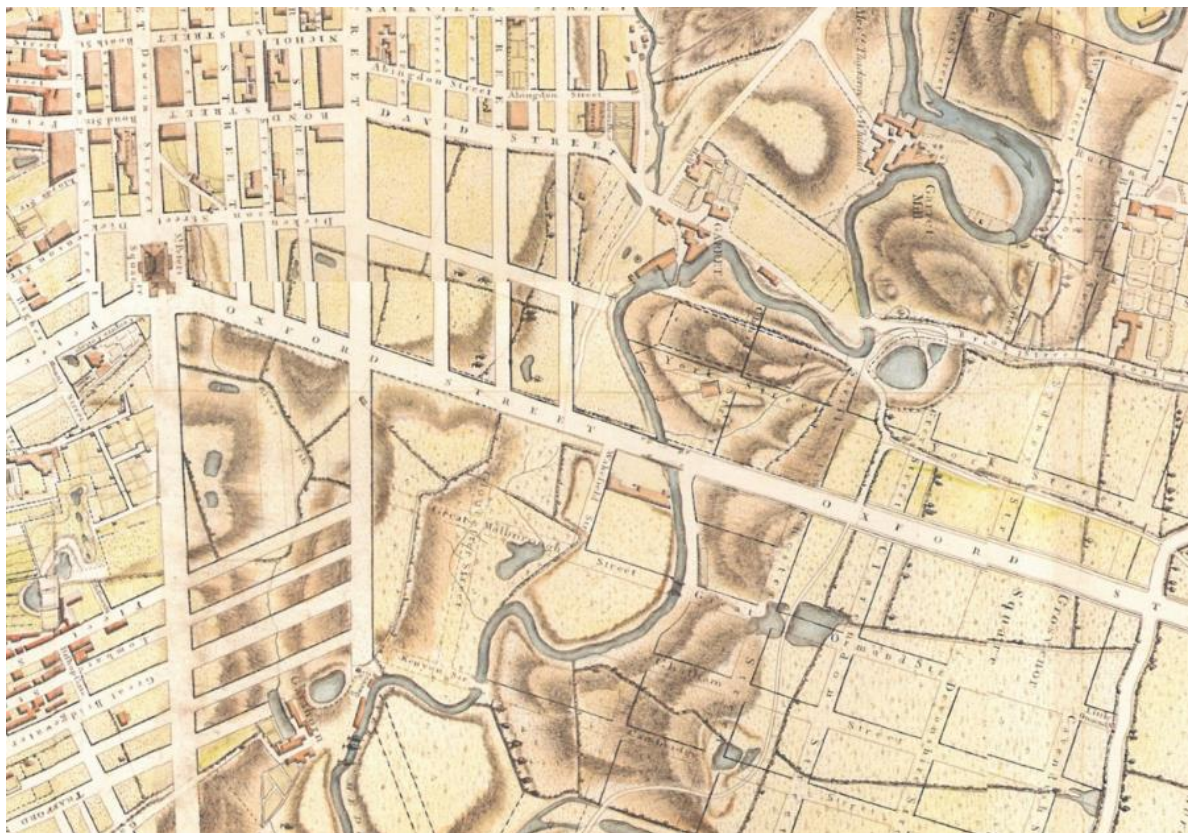


Fig. 01: 1793 Laurent Map

- 2.1.3 Being at the “rapidly advancing frontier of Manchester’s industrialisation” however, meant that the site soon attracted industry. The Rochdale Canal provided transport plus water for industrial purposes and the River Medlock was convenient for both water supply and waste disposal. By the 1820s textile mills, iron foundries, food processing factories, slaughterhouses and coal and timber yards had been paid out. Those buildings shown in the 1831 Banks & Co. map (Fig 02) that still survive today include Chorlton Old Mill, Chorlton New Mill and attached chimney and Hotspur House.



Fig. 02: 1831 Bancks' Map

- 2.1.4 In the 1820s the area around the River Medlock and Rochdale Canal contained mainly poor Irish immigrants and it became famous for its depiction in Friedrich Engels' "The Condition of the Working Class in England" where the social scientist write unfavourably about his experience of Little Ireland. Much of the area was demolished during the development of the Manchester South Junction and Altrincham Railway (MSJAR) which opened in 1849 and cut through Little Ireland, although two terraces of original housing remain on Oxford Road and James Leigh Street.
- 2.1.5 The building of the MSJ&AR Viaduct brought with it significant changes to the character of the street pattern, with the notable loss of Wakefield Street and the creation of New Wakefield Street along the southern frontage of the viaduct.
- 2.1.6 A station opened at Oxford Road on 20th July 1849 and at the time of opening had one flagged platform either side of the line, two sidings and a temporary wooden ticket office. An account of the opening of the station in the Manchester Weekly Times and Examiner dated 21 July 1849 states;
- 'We left the Oxford Road station precisely at eleven o'clock. At present, only a temporary wooden box has been put together there as a booking-office. The station itself is exactly over the very centre of the district known as Little Ireland, and the ascent to it is by an esplanade winding to the right, from Gloucester Street, corner of Oxford Street, passing over the site of the late Gloucester Street gas-station.'*
- 2.1.7 The station was enlarged in 1874, and more significant reconstruction works took place 1903-1904.

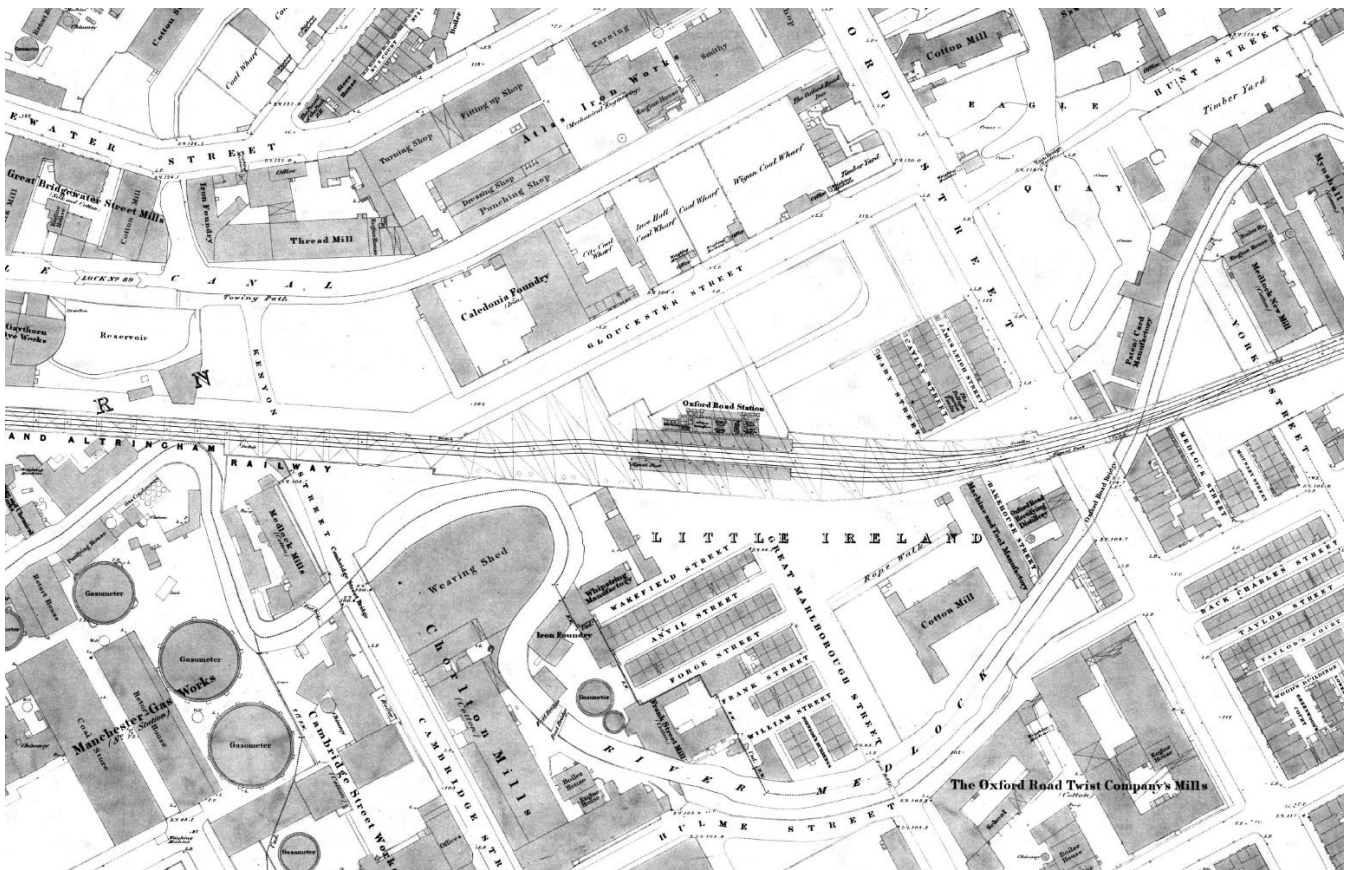


Fig. 03 Above: 1849 Map

Fig. 04 Below: 1891 Map



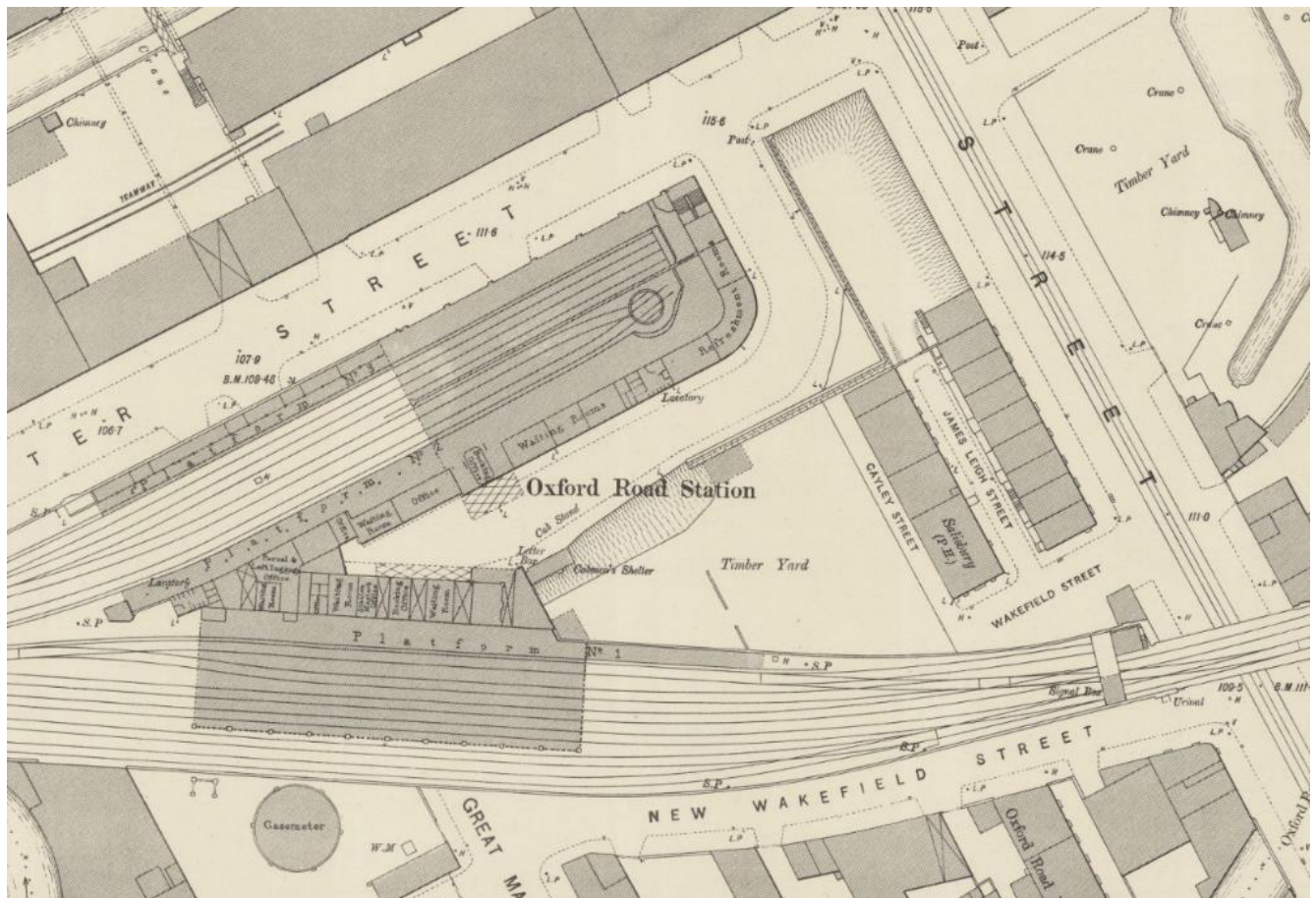
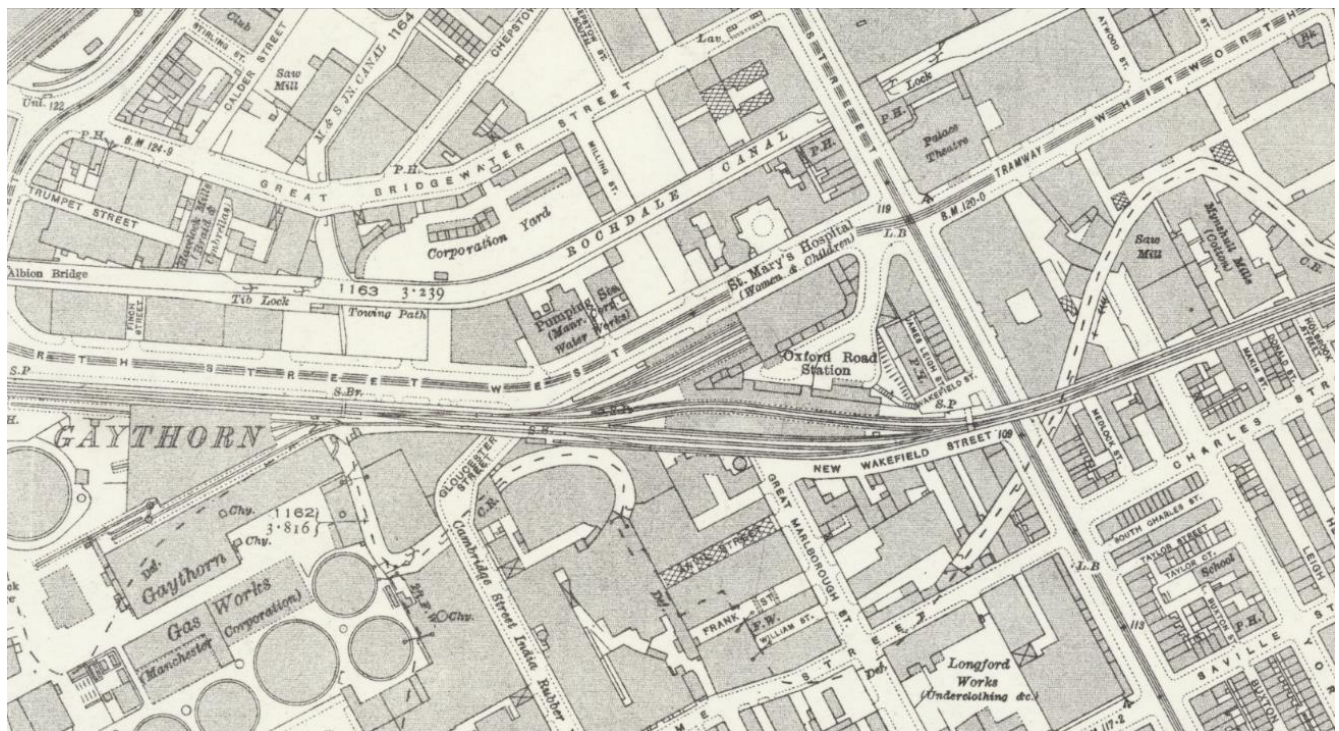


Fig. 05 Above: Extract from 1891 Map

Fig. 06 Below: 1922 Map



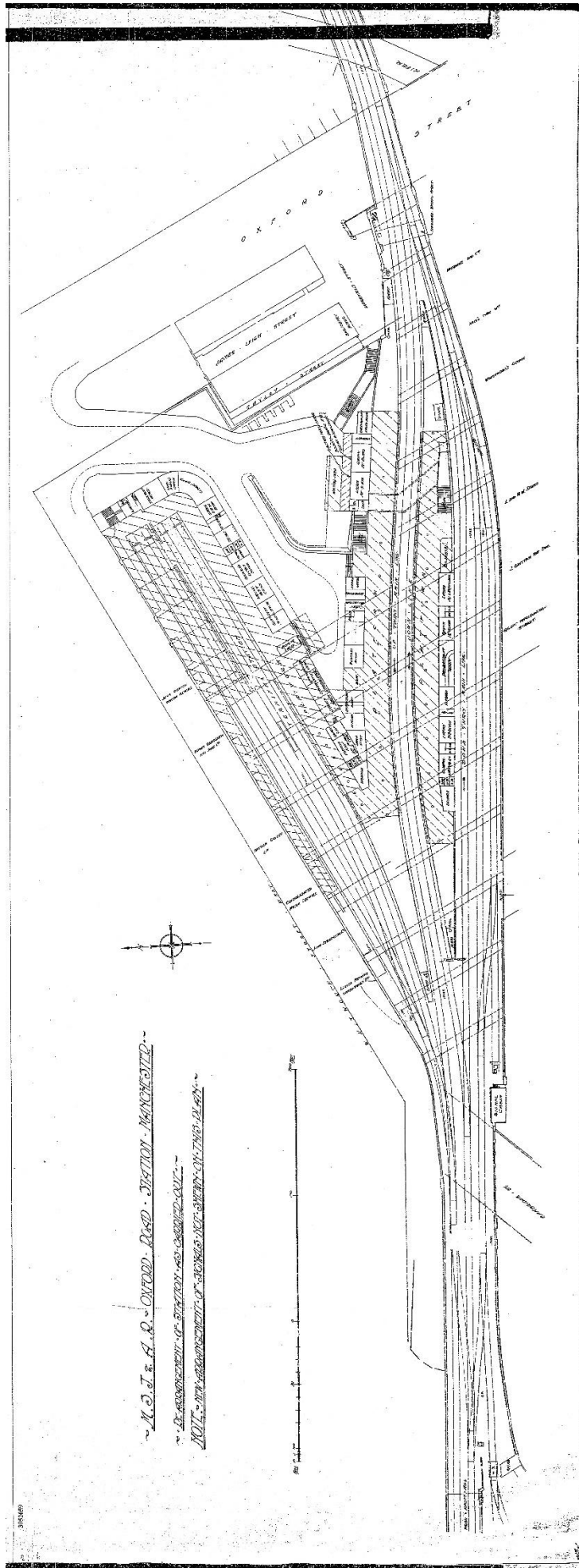


Fig. 07 Left: Station Plan circa 1903



Fig. 08 Above: Aerial Photo Dated 1934

2.1.8 Then in 1958-1960 the station was substantially rebuilt to designs by W.R. Headley and Max Clendinning of British Railways Midland Region in conjunction with the engineer, Hugh Tottenham of the Timber Development Association. The works were undertaken as part of the British Railways' Modernization programme.

2.1.9 A journal article of the time describes the new station as follows;

Oxford Road Station, Manchester, is being rebuilt as part of British Railways' modernization programme. The station concourse, containing ticket office, inquiry office and waiting and refreshment rooms, is on a tapering site and is to be covered by a dramatic "umbrella" consisting of three conoid shells. This form of construction is easily adaptable for a triangular site and, in addition, allows uninterrupted floor space and good natural lighting. The three conoids range in width from 97ft3in maximum to a 41ft6in minimum. These shells, which are being constructed on site, are made up of three layers of tongued-and-grooved boarding, nailed and glued. Laminated arches and ties are being prefabricated as completed units. Timber was chosen for the roof structure partly in order to reduce foundation loads.¹

2.1.10 The entry in 'England's Post-War Listed Buildings' by Elain Harwood and James O. Davies states;

*Oxford Road Station
Manchester
1959-60, British Railways London Midland Region
Listed grade II, 24 November 1995*

¹ The Architect and Building News, 4 November 1959

London, Midland and Scottish Railways was dubbed a 'cradle of prefabrication' for prototype stations devised under Leslie Martin's supervision in 1945. After nationalization, his successors adopted lightweight steel for rebuilding stations in the region's electrification programme.

Manchester Oxford Road was the only large station rebuilt by prefabricated methods, made necessary by the weakness of the viaduct on which it sits. The architect Max Clendinning turned to Hugh Tottenham, then engineering shell roofs for the Timber Development Association, and they produced three conoid shells, ranging 13-29m (42-95ft) in span, made of three layers of laminated timber and supported on a cruck-like frame. Timber was also used for the shopfronts, café and bench seating, giving the station its rich, cohesive appearance. Smaller crucks support curved canopies over the platforms. Timber-shell roofs were a peculiarly English achievement, and Oxford Road's in the finest. Clendinning later became well known for designing interiors.

- 2.1.11 The entry in 'Britain's Historic Railway Buildings: A Gazetteer of Structures and Sites' by Gordon Biddle states;

Oxford Road Station; British Railways; W.r. Headley, 1960; GII

Replacing the former MSJAR station with a remarkably innovative design, the concourse is roofed with three laminated timber conoids of 'shells', ten years before Sydney Opera House and with considerably greater success. Curved platform canopies match. Difficult restoration in 1998 was achieved with concealed steel reinforcement.

- *S. Parissien, Station to Station (1997); 'Mancunian Makeover', in New Civil Engineer, Railtrack supplement (Sept 1998). Manchester and railways: J.R.Kellett, The Impact of Railways in Victorian Cities (1969)*

- 2.1.12 The entry in the Pevsner Architectural Guide for Manchester by Clare Hartwell states;

Oxford Road Station Approach runs SW from the corner of Whitworth Street West and Oxford Street to Oxford Road Station, 1958-60. One of the most remarkable and unusual stations in the country both for the architectural form and the technological interest. It is sited high on the 1849 MSJ&AR viaduct. An inverted timber prow rears up over the station entrance, part of a roof formed by a series of three prefabricated timber shells on huge laminated timber beams. More curved beams support curved platform canopies with lines of portholes. The use of timber is continued with the booking office, café and the seating. The design is by the Midland Region architectural team (project architect Max Clendinning) with engineer Hugh Tottenham of the Timber Development Association who developed the technique of using laminated timber to create conoid shell roof forms. This was not the Midland Region's only experiment with timber shell technology but it is the most architecturally dramatic, and it is an important example of the deployment of timber to achieve large roof spans incorporating clerestory lighting. In this instance the fact that the lightness of the structure reduced foundation loads was a consideration.

- 2.1.13 Following are archive drawings from the time of construction.

Fig. 08: Overall Station Layout circa 1958

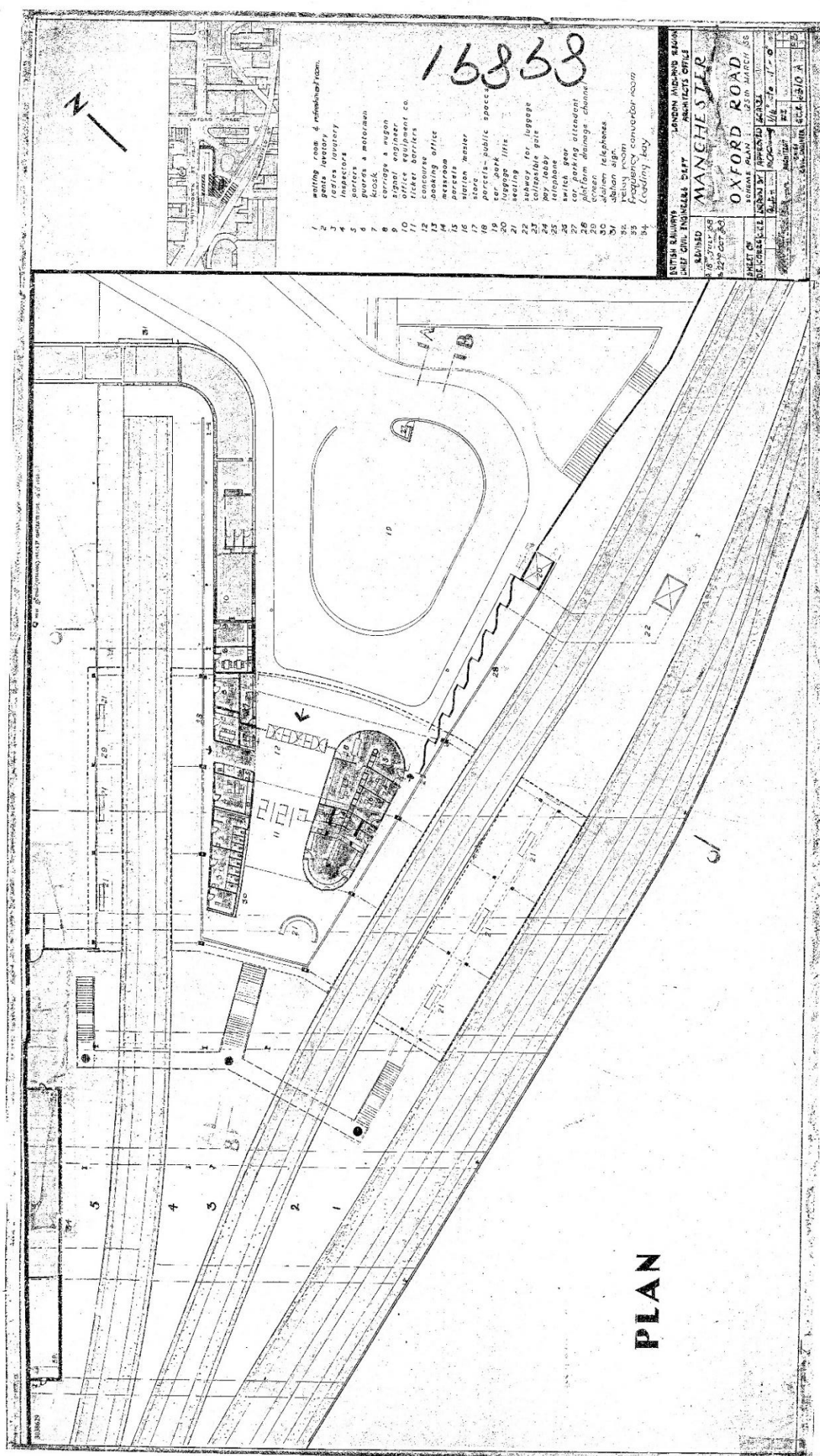


Fig. 09: Station Elevations circa 1958

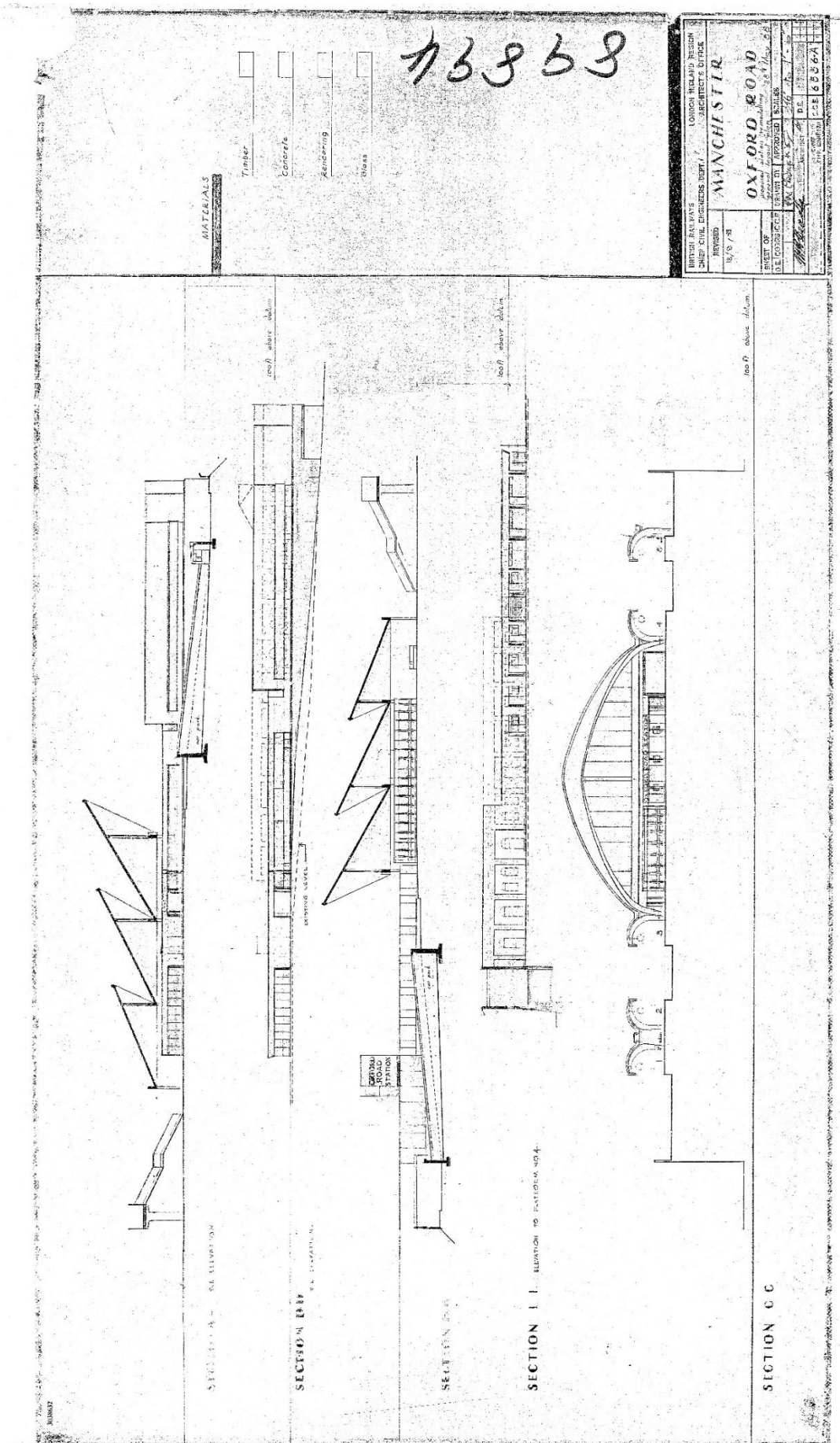


Fig. 10: Detailed Station Plan circa 1958

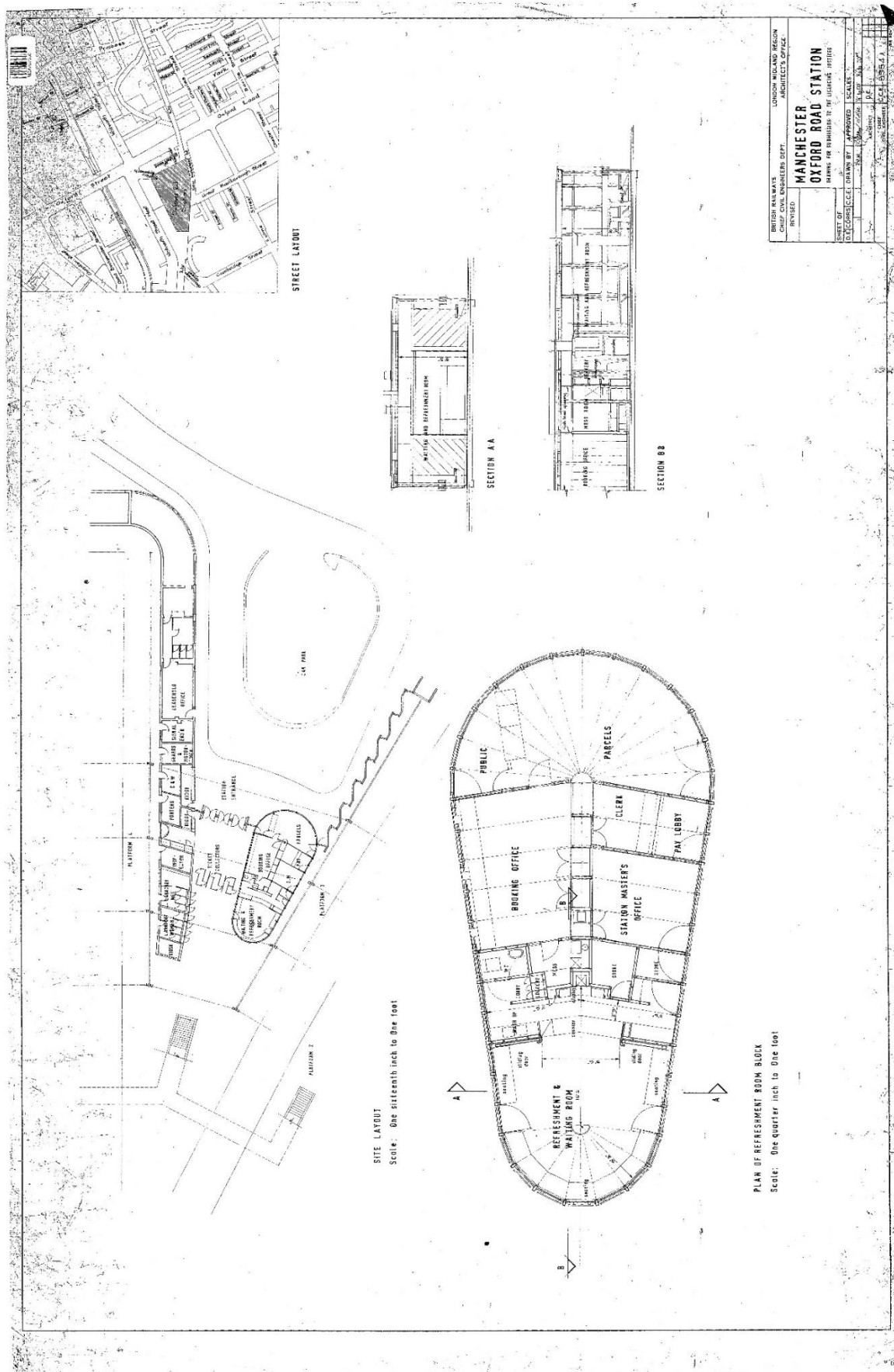
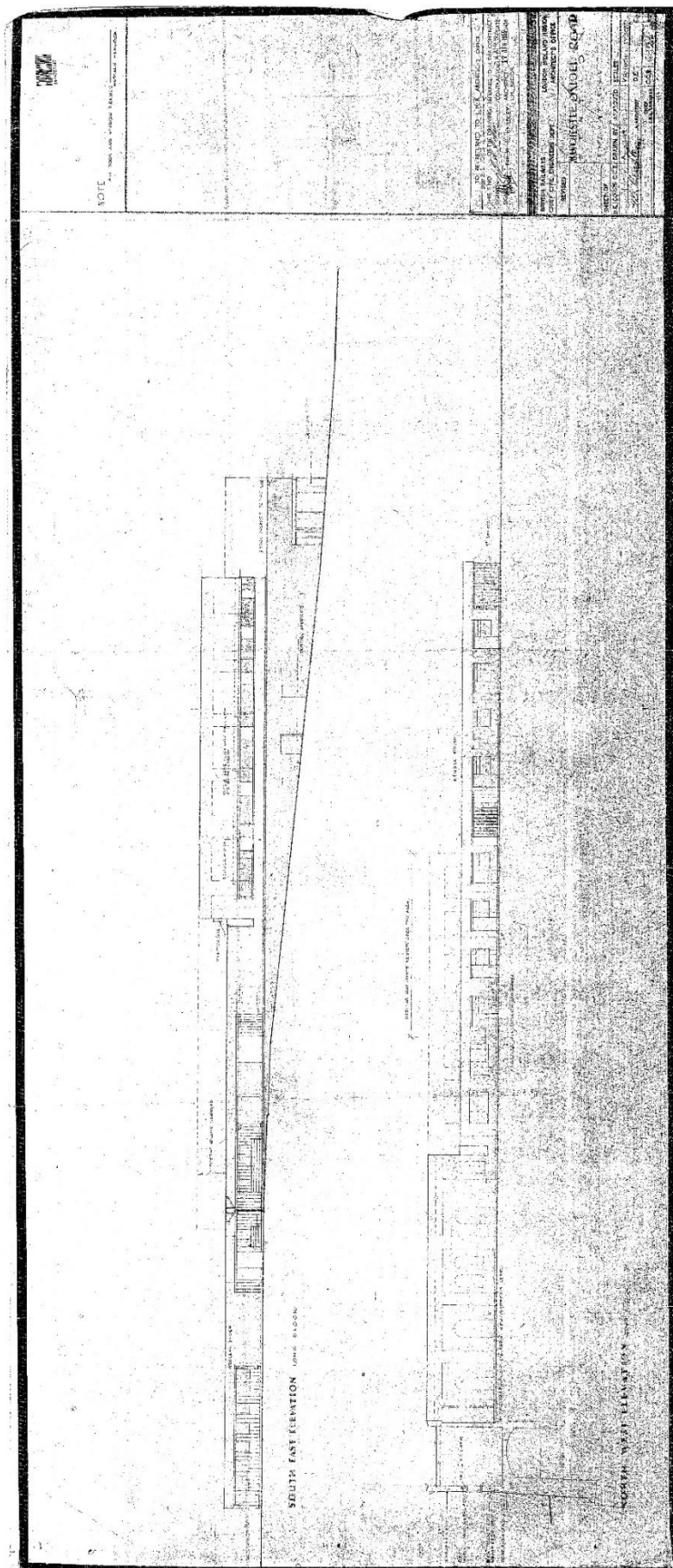


Fig. 11: Station Approach Elevations circa 1958



2.2 OXFORD ROAD STATION TODAY

2.2.1 The listing notice contains the following information;

Statutory Address:	Manchester Oxford Road Station (including platform structures), Oxford Road
Grade:	II
List entry Number:	1255053
Date first listed:	24-Nov-1995
Date of most recent amendment:	26-Feb-2013
District:	Manchester

Summary

Railway station building and platform structures, 1958-60, by Max Clendinning of British Railways' Midland Region with Hugh Tottenham of the Timber Development Association. Laminated-timber structure of three conoid shells, with hardwood strip ceilings to the shell roofs and canopies. Single-storey.

Reasons for Designation

*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.*

History

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.

Manchester Oxford Road Station, which was constructed in 1958-60 on top of the Manchester South Junction & Altrincham Railway viaduct and replaced an earlier station of 1874, 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.

Since its construction the station has been subject to 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-C21.

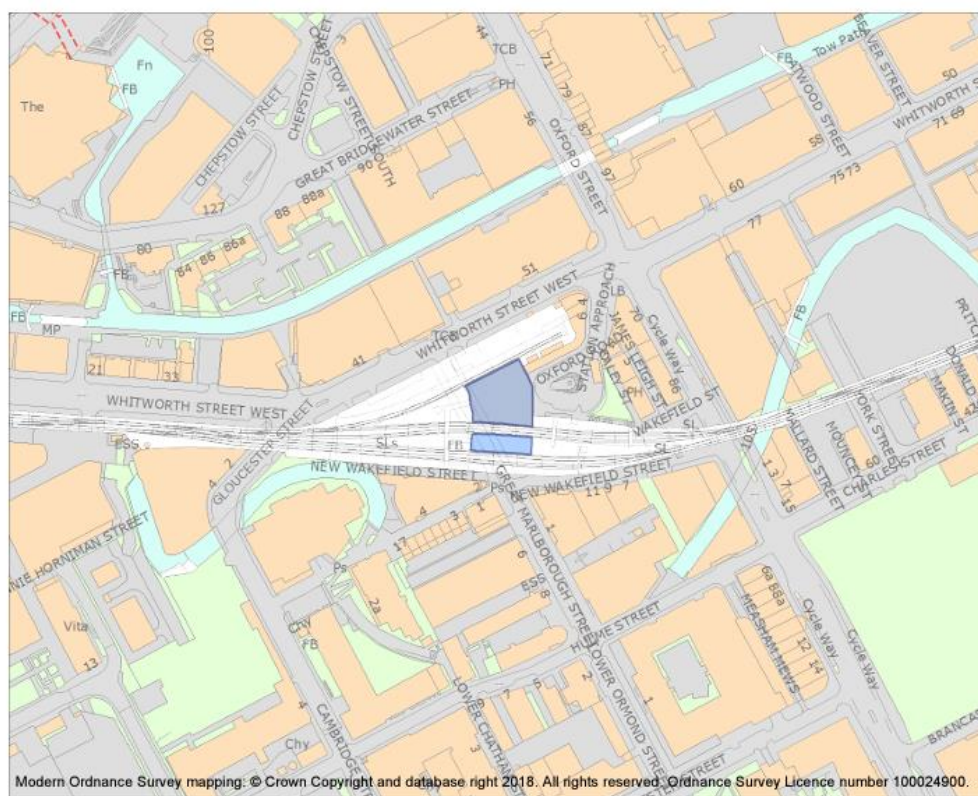
Details

Railway station building and platform structures, 1958-60, by Max Clendinning of British Railways' Midland Region with Hugh Tottenham of the Timber Development Association. Laminated-timber structure of three conoid shells with hardwood strip ceilings to the shell roofs and canopies. Single-storey.

DESCRIPTION: 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. 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 of c2011 located on the central island platforms and far platform are not of special interest.



Name: Manchester Oxford Road Station (including platform structures)

Heritage Category:	Listing
List Entry No :	1255053
Grade:	II
County:	
District:	Manchester
Parish:	Non Civil Parish

For all entries pre-dating 4 April 2011 maps and national grid references do not form part of the official record of a listed building. In such cases the map here and the national grid reference are generated from the list entry in the official record and added later to aid identification of the principal listed building or buildings.

For all list entries made on or after 4 April 2011 the map here and the national grid reference do form part of the official record. In such cases the map and the national grid reference are to aid identification of the principal listed building or buildings only and must be read in conjunction with other information in the record.

Any object or structure fixed to the principal building or buildings and 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 is by law to be treated as part of the listed building.

This map was delivered electronically and when printed may not be to scale and may be subject to distortions.

List Entry NGR:	SJ8402097475
Map Scale:	1:2500
Print Date:	26 June 2023

Fig. 12 Listing Map

- 2.2.2 As noted in 'Britain's Historic Railway Buildings: A Gazetteer of Structures and Sites' by Gordon Biddle, restoration works were undertaken to the station in 1998. There have been other alteration works undertaken in addition to this restoration phase as would be expected to a busy active station, as noted in the listing description, but the architectural form today remains principally as conceived in the late 1950's.
- 2.2.3 Alteration works have included the installation of new passenger shelters and disabled toilets; improved customer information, CCTV and PA and resurfacing of the concourse and footbridge steps. In 2013 further refurbishment works were undertaken.

2.3 WHITWORTH STREET CONSERVATION AREA

- 2.3.1 Manchester Oxford Road Station is located adjacent to the Whitworth Street Conservation Area, see Fig. 13 below. The online conservation area appraisal does not include any information relating to Oxford Road Station. There are a number of heritage assets within the adjacent conservation area and in the wider setting of Oxford Road station (see Fig. 14). These have not been considered in detail as part of this appraisal as the proposals will not have any impact on adjacent heritage assets.

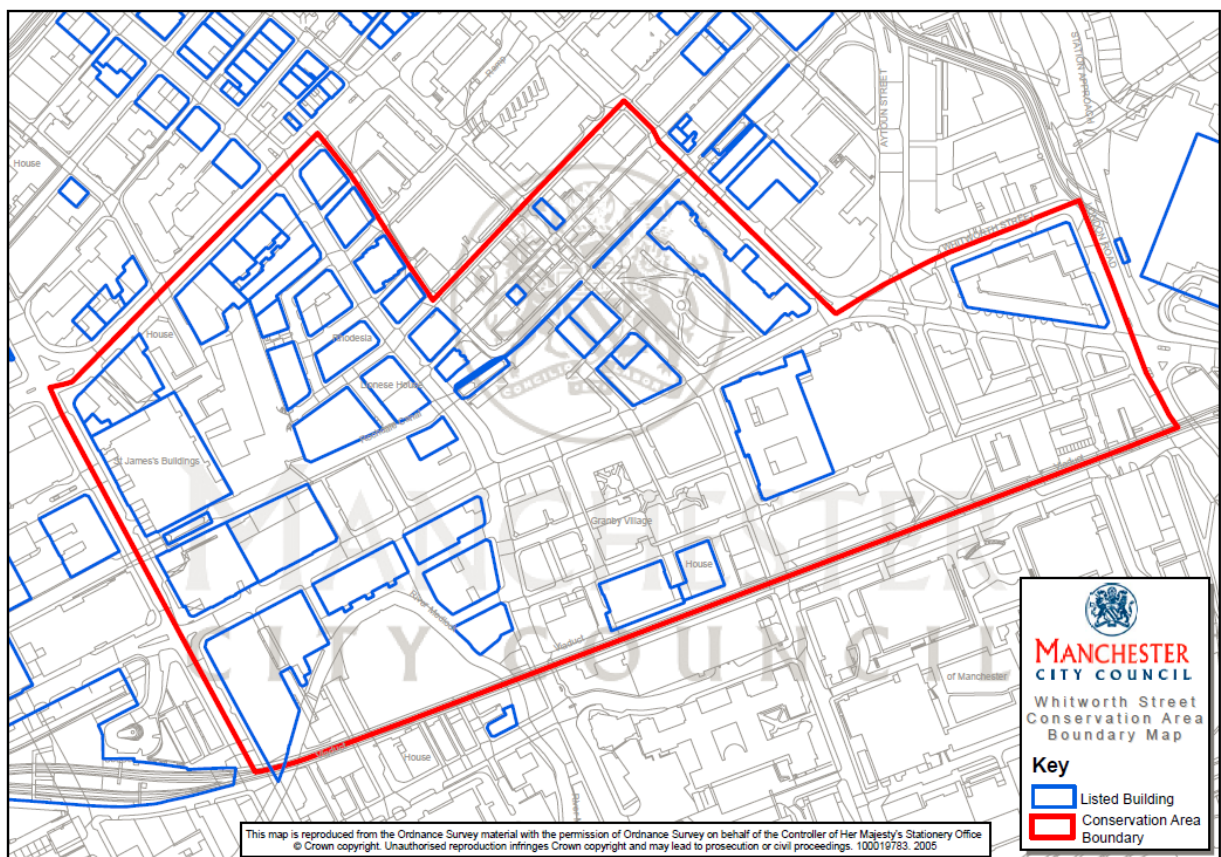


Fig.13 Map Showing Boundary of the Whitworth Street Conservation Area & partial footprint of Oxford Rd Station

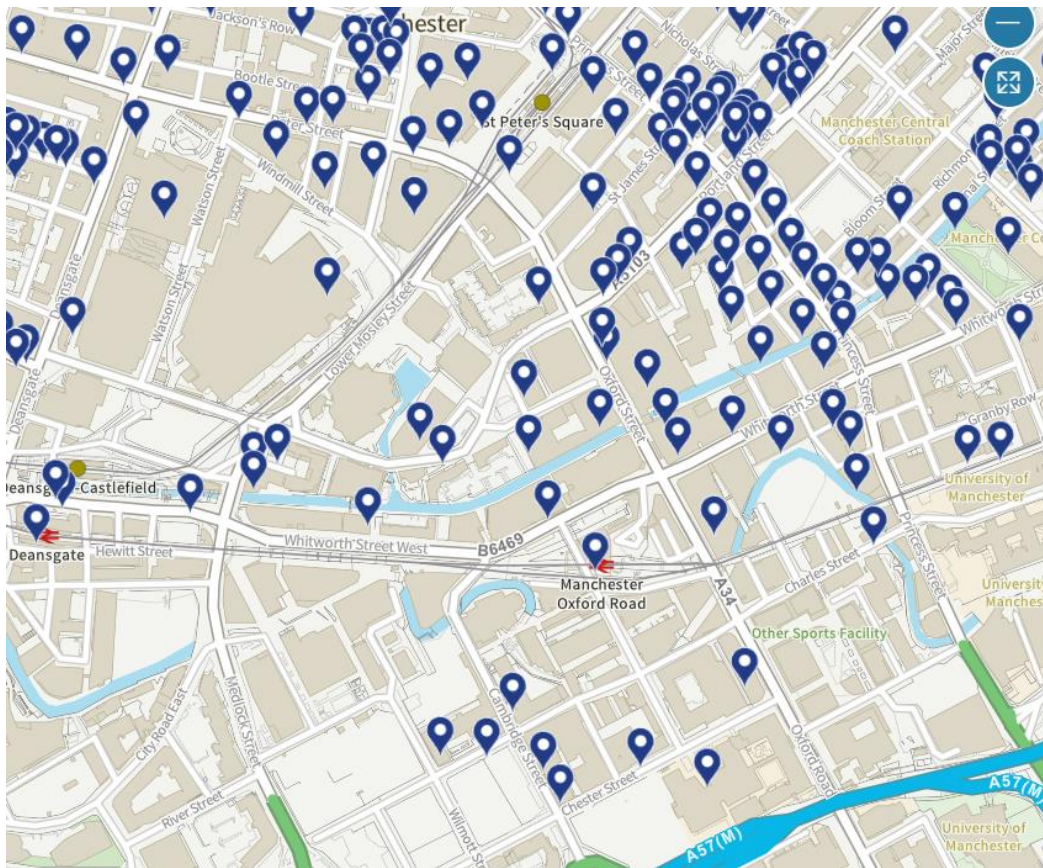


Fig.14 Map Showing Location of Heritage Assets in Proximity to Oxford Road Station (denoted by blue marker)

3.0 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

3.1 An assessment of significance is a requirement for any planning application that affects a heritage asset. This section of the report provides an assessment of the heritage merit of the site. The assessment has been carried out with reference to the heritage values as defined in the English Heritage document *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidelines* which can be summarised as follows;

- Evidential value – the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity (i.e. archaeological interest)
- Historical value – the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life are connected through a place.
- Aesthetic value – the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place (i.e. architectural and artistic interest)
- Communal value – the meanings of a place for the people that relate to it.

3.2 A statement of significance follows which uses the following 'grades' of significance

- Exceptional – the elements of the heritage asset which are of exceptional value (equivalent to Grade I)
- High – the elements of the heritage asset which are of high value (equivalent to Grade II*)
- Considerable – the elements of the heritage asset which are of moderate value (equivalent to Grade II)
- Some – the elements of the heritage asset which are of some value (equivalent to local listing status)
- Neutral – the elements of the heritage asset which have neutral value
- Negative – the elements of the heritage asset which have a negative impact or are visually intrusive
- Undefined – any elements which could be of heritage value but have yet to be determined due to lack of available information

3.3 The following assessment of significance applies these values and grades of significance to Manchester Oxford Road Station;

3.3.1 Evidential Value

Evidential values are those that derive from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity (Conservation principles para 35). These values will usually comprise physical remains inherited from the past and tend to be primarily archaeological in form. Consequently, the ability to understand and interpret the evidence is diminished in proportion to the extent of its removal or replacement (Conservation Principles para 36).

Manchester Oxford Road Station has the potential to yield some evidential value relating to the 19th century phases of construction although this has been significantly limited by the substantial later alterations. Oxford Road Station has considerable evidential value relating to the 1960 phase of construction. This value is connected to the fact that the station is an unusual form of construction from which we can learn about today.

3.3.2 Historical Value

Historical values derive from the ways in which people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present day (Conservation Principles para 39). The evidence may be either illustrative or associative.

Oxford Road Station provides an unusual and unique example of how the Victorian infrastructure was adapted in the post-war era. It has considerable historical interest which relates to a number of aspects, firstly to its architectural interest as one of the best post-war railway stations in the country; its design interest employing a unique design in the use of the conoid shells and its technological interest being the most dramatic example of the use of timber-shell roofs in England.

3.3.3 Aesthetic Value

Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place (Conservation Principles para 46), in particular architectural and artistic interest.

Oxford Road Station has considerable to high aesthetic value – the striking and highly elegant design creates a dramatic aesthetic form which is unique. The form is very site specific relating to the site constraints in a totally unique way to provide uninterrupted floor space and good natural lighting. The use of timber and consistent detailing throughout the station buildings and to the platform structures provides the station with a cohesive appearance.

3.3.4 **Communal Value**

Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory (Conservation principles para 54).

As a working station which has continuously functioned since the mid 1800's Oxford Road Station as a whole has considerable communal value.

4.0 SUMMARY OF DESIGN PROPOSALS & ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

- 4.1 The proposed scheme is described in full in the accompanying drawings. As such the proposed works are summarised here in sufficient detail to provide the context for the assessment of impact.
- 4.2 Currently the single main access route into the station and through the ticket gate line becomes over capacity at peak times, resulting in overcrowding / congregating in the station concourse. The crowding creates congestion on both sides of the ticket barriers as passengers both attempting to enter and leave the station wait for a gate to become available. The current configuration of the ticket barriers and currently location of the ticket office is contributing to the congestion. In peak times, passengers leaving the station typically become crowded on the platform side of the gateline. A secondary manually opened gate located on platform 4 is occasionally used in peak times and is staffed by ticket inspectors to relieve congestion.
- 4.3 The aim of the project is to improve access into and out of the station. The proposal is 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.

- 4.4 As such the resulting interventions and their impact on the listed fabric are as follows;
- Removal of existing gateline, dividing rails and adjacent CIS display screens and supporting column. This is all modern fabric and its removal will not cause harm to the heritage asset.
 - Removal of 5no. external ticket desks. The fabric removal that is proposed as part of these works removes the modern alterations associated with the ticket desks only. There will be no removal of original fabric and reinstatement of missing details is proposed as part of the works. The removal of the fabric associated with the extant ticket desks is therefore considered not to cause harm to the heritage asset.
 - Alterations to the interior of the lozenge building - removal of internal partition wall, provision of new partition wall, provision of new door opening. The partition walls that are to be altered in removal or provision of a new door opening are later partitions which are not part of the original plan layout of the lozenge building. Therefore these works will not cause harm to the heritage asset.
 - Provision of a new gateline. The new wider gateline is to be located in the same place as existing. There is no requirement for direct fixing to the adjacent station buildings, as such these works will not cause harm to the heritage asset.
 - Alteration to 2no. existing windows to provide new tickets desks. These works will require some alteration to the existing fabric to enable the provision of ticket desks. The works will be undertaken in a sensitive manner which will enable the original fenestration pattern to remain legible and the number of tickets desks has been kept to a minimum. The level of intervention is very minimal and therefore the works are considered to cause a very minor degree of less than significant harm.
 - Provision of new CIS display screens and column to the station frontage. The existing location for the CIS display screens cannot be maintained and as such a study was undertaken into the options for relocating this essential part of the station communication system, see the separate report (MORS CIS Post Location Memo). All other locations being discounted for a number of technical reasons, the proposed location is

to the station frontage between the lozenge building and the station entrance gate. The new location will have a minor visual impact on the frontage of the station, the level of intervention is minimal and reversible and therefore the works are considered to cause a minor degree of less than significant harm.

- Provision of new CIS display screens to platform 4 and the island platform. The locations of the new screens follow the principles of the existing screens, they have been carefully selected and are considered to not cause harm to the heritage asset.
- New lighting & CCTV positions. The new lighting & CCTV positions have been carefully considered, the lighting to the new ticket office has been selected as individual fittings rather than strip lights to minimise where they are fixed and visible. Likewise the CCTV locations have been minimised although a number are required due to the curvature of the lozenge building. These works are not considered to cause harm to the heritage asset.
- M&E works associated with relocating equipment and lighting. The M&E required for these works will be contained within existing runs or within a new cable tray which will be visually concealed over the existing front entrance.

- 4.5 In conclusion, 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.

5.0 Statutory Requirements

5.1 The aim of the following statement is to demonstrate that the proposed works meet the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation) Act 1990 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

5.2 PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990

5.2.1 Section 66 of the Act requires that in considering whether to grant listed building consent special regard should be given to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses and that 'considerable importance and weight' should be attached to any harm to a designated heritage asset.

5.2.2 Response: The proposals seek to undertake the required improvements to ease congestion at the gateline with minimal impact on the historic fabric. The necessary changes to the historic fabric seek to retain the key features of special architectural and historic interest.

5.3 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.3.1 Section 16 (paras 189-208) of the NPPF is specific to conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

5.3.2 Para 197 states; *'In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*

- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation*
- *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.'*

5.3.3 Para 199 states: *'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'.*

5.3.4 Para 200 states; *'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'.*

5.3.5 Para 202 states; *'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.'*

5.3.6 Response

The proposals so require areas of reconfiguration in particular to the ticket offices and the CIS display screens. These will necessitate some physical intervention to the historic fabric. There are limited areas which will lead to very minor negative impact. Clear justification has been provided for these interventions within this Heritage Statement and the accompanying planning and listed building consent documentation.

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 The NPPF requires planning applicants and local planning authorities to assess and understand the particular nature of the significance of heritage assets which will be affected by proposed development. Such assessment of heritage asset significance is necessary to understand the potential impact of proposed development.
- 6.2 This report considers the nature of the significance of the proposed site. The analysis shows that Manchester Oxford Road station is a designated heritage assets of considerable historic, aesthetic and communal value. 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.
- 6.3 Therefore, the proposals are considered to meet the requirements of the NPPF.