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Victoria Station Signage Heritage Impact Assessment

Global

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Heritage Impact Assessment [HIA] has been prepared by Lichfields on behalf of Global. It assesses the effect of the proposal for new electronic displays at Victoria Train Station.
- 1.2 The application Site is within the concourse of Victoria Train Station, Victoria Station Approach, Manchester. The proposal seeks the placement of three digital advertising boards within Victoria Station, a Grade II listed building (NHLE 1254725)¹. It is proposed that two advertising boards will be mounted to modern walls in the station, and one will be floor-mounted.
- 1.3 In accordance with Paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF], this HIA establishes the significance of the heritage assets to be affected, including an understanding of their setting and how it contributes to significance. It then considers the effects of the proposal on setting and significance.

¹ List Entry <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1254725>

2.0 Methodology and Scope

Methodology

- 2.1 This section sets out the approach to assessing the significance of heritage assets as well as the approach to assessing the proposal's effect on their significance, including consideration of how changes to setting will affect significance. The methodology accords with IEMA/IHBC/CIfA's guidance the 'Principles of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment in the UK' (July 2021) which sets out a broad methodology for understanding heritage assets and evaluating the consequences of change.
- 2.2 The NPPF defines significance as the 'value' of an asset based on its 'heritage interest', and it defines that interest as archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic. This broadly aligns with the heritage values outlined in Historic England's Conservation Principles, 2008, which are evidential value, aesthetic value, historical value and communal value.
- 2.3 The overview of the significance of the heritage assets has been undertaken using a combination of desk-based study, archival research and fieldwork undertaken on 7 February 2023. Desk-based research has drawn upon the National Heritage List for England and National Library of Scotland Historic Maps.
- 2.4 'Principles of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment in the UK' sets out at paragraph A.16-A19 that the relative importance of an asset should be identified and scaled. A *Classification of Importance of Heritage Assets* table prepared by Lichfields is included at Appendix 1. This assigns levels of importance to the various types of designated and non-designated heritage assets, drawing from relevant national and international guidance. It should be seen as a starting point as there may be instances where the particular characteristics of a specific asset merit a different category.
- 2.5 The approach to considering the effect of changes to setting upon significance has been carried out in accordance with Historic England's The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition), 2017.

Scope

- 2.6 The Victoria Train Station was considered to be the only heritage asset that could potentially be affected by the proposal.
- 2.7 There are several heritage assets in the wider surroundings of the Site, including the Cathedral and Shudehill Conservation Areas, Grade II listed Middle Bridge and City Buildings and Grade I listed Chetham's Hospital and associated buildings. These heritage assets have all been discounted from further assessment, given the proposed signage will be located within Victoria Train Station and will not be visible from outside of the station. It is therefore considered that the proposals will have no impact on heritage assets in the surrounding area.

3.0 Heritage Statute and Policy

Statute and Policy Context

3.1 The relevant statutory development plan for the Site comprises the Manchester Core Strategy [MCS] (2012), Extant Unitary Development Policies [UDP] (1995), the Greater Manchester Joint Waste DPD (2012) and the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals DPD (2013). The heritage statutory considerations for the proposal are s.16(2) and s.66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 [the 1990 Act].

3.2 Material considerations include:

- 1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (July 2021);
- 2 National Planning Practice Guidance: Historic Environment (July 2019);
- 3 National Design Guidance (January 2021);
- 4 National Model Design Code (July 2021); and,
- 5 Relevant Historic England guidance.

Application of Statute and Policy

3.3 The following are the key heritage policies and statutory considerations the proposal will be assessed against:

- 1 Does the proposal preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the setting, significance and special architectural or historic interest of the affected listed buildings? (s.16(2) and s.66(1) of the 1990 Act; Paragraphs 197 and 199, NPPF; Policies CC9 and EN3, MCS.

4.0 **Baseline Conditions**

Site and Surroundings

- 4.1 The Site comprises Victoria Station, Manchester. The station is currently in active use as a train station. Victoria Station is a Grade II Listed Building (Historic England ref. 1254725) that has been developed in various phases throughout its history. The Historic England listing includes the concourse to the rear with the restaurant and booking hall but has not been updated since the remodelling of the station in 2015. The historic development of Victoria Station is further discussed in the subsequent section of this report.
- 4.2 Victoria Station is located in the centre of Manchester and bound:
- To the southwest by Hunts Bank and Victoria Station Approach;
 - To the northwest by the AO Arena;
 - To the northeast by railway tracks extending out from the station and beyond this the Ring Road (A665); and,
 - To the east by a site currently under construction for residential development and beyond this Corporation Street.
- 4.3 The river Irwell runs approximately 150m to the west of Victoria Station.
- 4.4 The surrounding area is categorised by a mix of uses built at a range of densities. The surrounding uses include residential developments, hotels, office space, retail units, the AO Arena, the Stroller Hall, National Football Museum, Chetham's Hospital and Manchester Cathedral.
- 4.5 The façades of Victoria Station to the south along Hunts Bank and Victoria Station Approach adjoin the City of Manchester Cathedral Conservation Area. The City of Manchester Shudehill conservation area is located approximately 60m to the southeast of the station.
- 4.6 The proposed signs are not located within either conservation area. The proposed signs are to be located inside the Victoria Train Station and will therefore have no impact on any conservation area or heritage asset outside of the station.

Historic Development

- 4.7 The original one-storey block of Victoria Station was built on Hunt's Bank in 1844. The station was built for the Manchester and Leeds Railway and Liverpool and Manchester Railway companies. The station was originally constructed to serve both companies in order to link services between Liverpool and Yorkshire through Manchester. The original block was designed by Robert Stephenson in an Italianate style.
- 4.8 The station was subsequently extended in 1864, adding two new platforms, a new booking office and a replacement roof. The station was greatly enlarged in 1909 by William Dawes for the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, creating the L-shaped block that can be seen today on what is now the corner of Hunt's Bank and Victoria Station Approach. The 4-storey façade fronting Victoria Station Approach was constructed in the neo-Baroque style and comprises 31-bays, two large clocks, decorative detailing and 'Lancashire &

Yorkshire Railway' and 'Victoria Station' lettering. An ornate glazed iron canopy with names of railway destinations tiled onto it in Art Nouveau lettering extends outward from this façade.

- 4.9 In the interior concourse of the station there are a number of features from this era, including the booking office, bookstall and first-class facilities. The bookstall and first-class facilities from this era are signposted by mosaics of gold lettering on turquoise background. The interior of the former first-class refreshment room (which is now in use as a public house/restaurant) is decorated by walls of marble, mosaic and tiles and a domed ceiling comprising decorative glass surrounded by festoons of fruit and flowers.
- 4.10 Along the interior concourse, on the rear façade of the L-shaped block, there are clear markings along the wall which indicate where sheds have been previously fixed to this façade.
- 4.11 The 'Soldier's Gate' and associated first world war memorial (unveiled in 1922) and a painted tilework map of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway network can also be found inside the station.
- 4.12 The station was adapted again in 1992 to accommodate the Metrolink. In 2013, work began to refurbish the station, including the construction of the large clear roof comprising EFTE panelling that can be seen today.

5.0 **Significance of Heritage Assets**

Victoria Train Station including Concourse to Rear with Restaurant and Booking Hall (Grade II Listed)

- 5.1 Victoria Station, including the concourse to the rear with the restaurant and booking hall, is Grade II listed and can therefore be considered as an asset of medium importance (Appendix 1). This section summarises the aspects which contribute to the significance of Victoria Train Station as a heritage asset.
- 5.2 As set out in Section 4.0 of this Statement, the development of the station has taken place over the last 170 years across multiple phases. The architectural and historic significance of the building is focused on the L-Shaped block on the corner of Hunt's Bank and Victoria Station Approach (constructed in 1844 and extended in 1864 and 1909).
- 5.3 The modern areas of the station created during the recent expansions to the station in the 1990s and refurbishments in 2013 (including the construction of the new roof) are not considered to have historic value, given their late construction dates.
- 5.4 The aesthetic value of the block off Hunt's Bank is derived from both the façade of the building and the internal features of the concourse. The façade of the block is Italianate in style and the façade of the 1909 extension is neo-Baroque in style. The façades of the station therefore have illustrative and evidential value, providing a record of the different architectural styles that were fashionable at the time of construction. Historic features from the first-class facilities and booking office have been retained and allow an understanding of how the station would have felt and operated historically.
- 5.5 The façade of the building is considered to be characteristic (rather than exceptional) in the context of buildings of a similar date, within Manchester city-centre. The original tiling signposting the first-class facilities and bookstore in the concourse, the iron canopy fronting Victoria Station Approach and domed-ceiling and associated festoons in the former first-class refreshment room all provide interest, and are of aesthetic value / architectural significance. Overall, the aesthetic value of the station is considered to be moderate.
- 5.6 The building also has historic value as a reminder of the industrialisation and expansion of Manchester in the 19th and early 20th century. The station was constructed to improve links between Manchester, Yorkshire and Liverpool during the 19th Century, as highlighted by the iron concourse on the Victoria Station Approach façade and tilework map of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway network, which list the historic destinations that the station served. Improving Manchester's links to other towns and cities in the north of England was an integral part of the industrialisation of Manchester as a city and urban conurbation, and contributed to its world-leading role in the textile manufacturing industry. The construction and subsequent expansions of Victoria Station signifies the industrial and engineering triumphs of Manchester in the 19th Century. In the years after the industrial revolution, the station continued to link Manchester to other cities in the UK, retaining its importance in Manchester's history. The historic value of Victoria Station is assessed to be high.
- 5.7 The Soldier's Gate, located to the southern end of the concourse, previously opened to the former fish docks. Thousands of soldiers left through this exit on their way to their mobilisation

during World War I and the exit now comprises a memorial to these soldiers, providing communal value.

5.8 Victoria Station remains a busy operational train station which allows it to be appreciated, enhancing its communal value. Furthermore, the heritage assets of greatest value are in the publicly accessible areas of the station.

5.9 In summary, Victoria Station is assessed to have high historic and communal significance. The station has been developed over multiple phases across 170 years and therefore comprises areas of differing heritage value. The aesthetic and evidential value of the station is considered to be moderate. The overall significance of Victoria Station as a heritage asset is considered to be medium.

5.10 The location of the proposed signage is within the active station concourse. While the historic buildings provide a backdrop to the concourse it is an essentially modern space which has a very different character to its historic predecessor.

6.0 Proposal's Effect on Significance

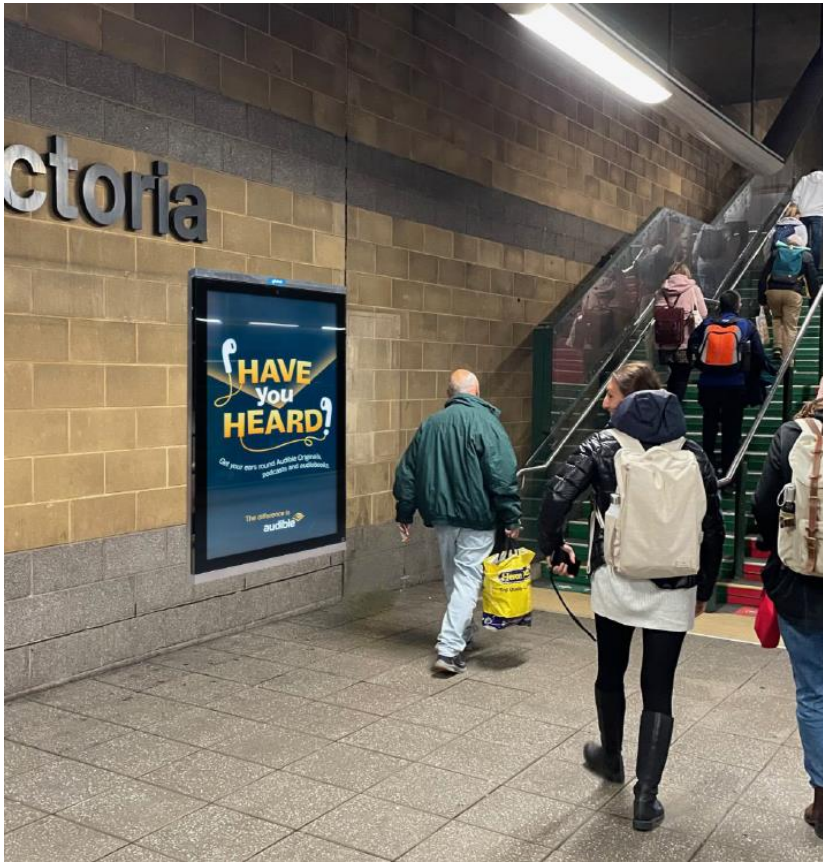
Description of Proposal

- 6.1 The proposals are seeking consent for the placement of three digital advertising boards inside Victoria Station. Further details of the appearance, scale and location of the advertising boards is set out in the 'Manchester Victoria Station Proposed Signage' document dated May 2023 which accompanies this report.
- 6.2 One advertising board will be floor mounted and two will be wall mounted. The wall mounted units will be 1830mm (H) x 1108mm (W). The floor mounted unit will also be 1830mm (H) x 1108mm (W) but sit on a 450mm tall base, creating a total height of 2280mm.
- 6.3 It is proposed that the first digital board will be mounted to the wall by the stairs on Platform 6b. There are currently 10 four-sheet advertising boards and 4 six-sheet advertising boards located along this wall on Platform 6b.
- 6.4 The second digital board will be floor mounted and placed after the ticket barriers by Platform 2, in close proximity to existing digital advertising units.
- 6.5 The third digital board will be mounted to the wall on the concourse, at the top of the stairs which lead down to the metrolink, also in close proximity to existing digital advertising units.

Effect on the Significance of Victoria Station (Grade II)

- 6.6 The first advertising board is located on Platform 6b, mounted on a wall constructed during more recent phases the station's development. This location is a considerable distance from, and out of sight of, the sensitive aspects of the station, as identified in Sections 4.0 and 5.0. Figure 6.1 below provides an indication of the appearance of the first screen.

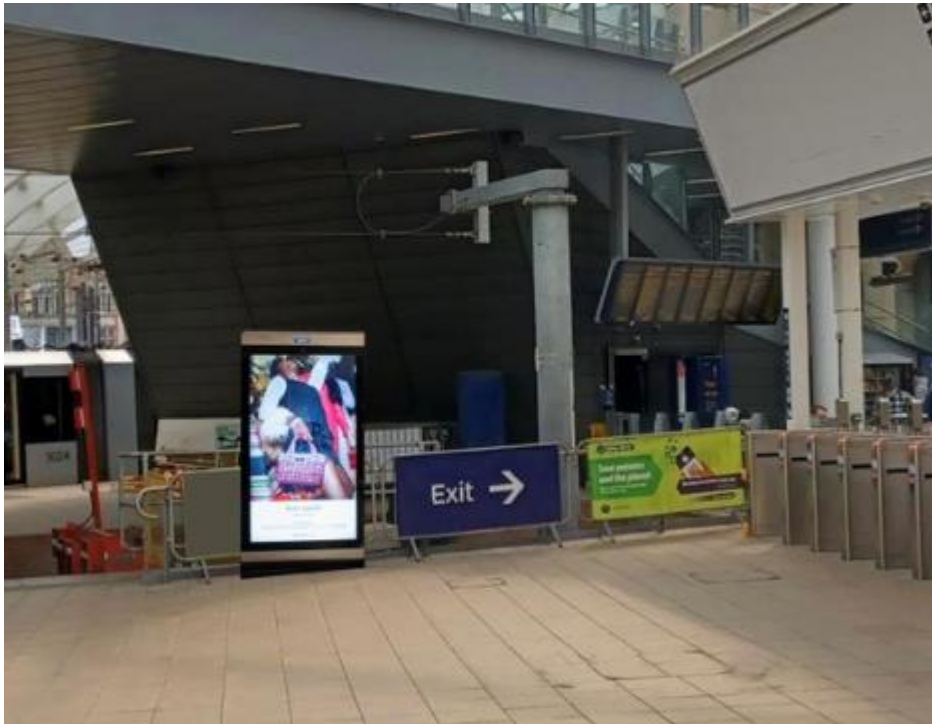
Figure 6.1: Screen 1 Indicative Appearance



Source: Global

- 6.7 The second advertising board is floor mounted within the modern extension to the station. The location of this advertising board has been carefully selected to ensure that it does not obstruct any views of the identified heritage assets. Figure 6.2 below provides an indication of the appearance of the second screen.

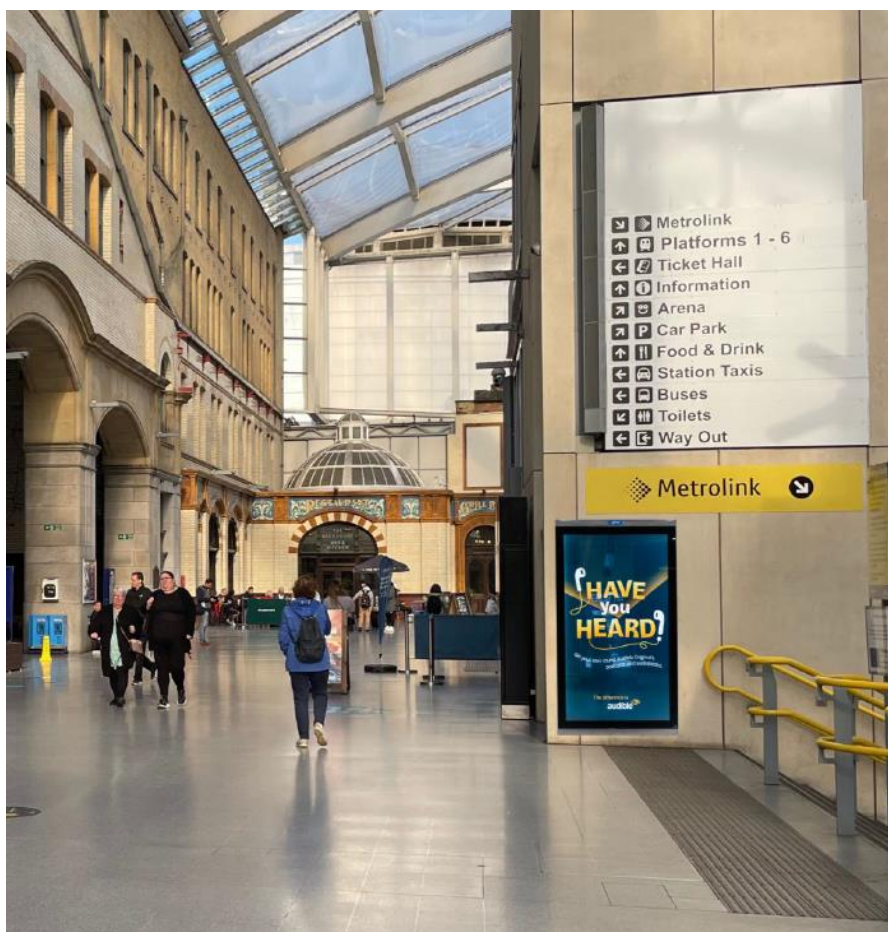
Figure 6.2: Screen 2 Indicative Appearance



Source: Global

- 6.8 The third advertising board is also mounted to a wall constructed during more recent phases of the station's development. The advertising's position does not obstruct any views of the identified heritage assets.

Figure 6.3: Screen 3 Indicative Appearance



Source: Global

- 6.9 There are a number of existing advertising and information boards throughout the concourse, including boards that are located on the historic fabric of the station. The proposed advertising boards will be in keeping with the station's use as a modern operational station.
- 6.10 None of the proposed advertising boards will be attached to the historic fabric of the station or interrupt any views of key features within the station. The ability to appreciate the architectural, historic or communal value of the building would not be affected.
- 6.11 The advertising boards are therefore considered to have a neutral effect on the significance of Victoria Station.

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 This assessment has established the significance of the Grade II listed Victoria Station and has assessed the potential effects of the proposal on its significance.

7.2 It has been identified that the proposal would meet the heritage policy tests outlined in Section 3.0 and the legal requirement can be carried out, as follows:

- 1 Does the proposal preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the setting, significance and special architectural or historic interest of the affected listed buildings? (s.16(2) and s.66(1) of the 1990 Act; Paragraphs 197 and 199, NPPF; Policies CC9 and EN3, MCS.)

Yes – the proposal would preserve the setting and significance of the Victoria Station.

- *The architectural and historic interest of the station would not be altered as the signs will not be attached to the historic fabric of the station or obstruct any views of the historic elements of the station.*
- *The proposals are entirely in keeping with the existing advertising and information boards located within the station and in keeping with Victoria Station's use as a busy, operational, modern railway station.*

Appendix 1 Classification of Importance of Heritage Assets, Lichfields

Table 7.1: Classification of Importance of Heritage Assets

Importance	Designation Types
Very High	World Heritage Sites
High	Listed Buildings (Grade I and II*) Registered Gardens and Designed Landscapes (Grade I and II*) Registered Historic Battlefields Scheduled Monuments
Medium	Conservation Areas Listed Buildings (Grade II) Registered Gardens and Designed Landscapes
Low	Locally listed heritage assets Non-designated heritage assets
Negligible or Nil	Heritage assets with little or no surviving heritage significance

Source: Lichfields

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