



Wrexham General Railway Station

Canopy refurbishment and maintenance access

*Application for Listed Building Consent – Supporting
Heritage Impact Statement (including Access Statement)*

Date: January 2021



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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared by Network Rail in support of an application for Listed Building Consent in relation to proposed works at Wrexham General Railway Station, Wrexham, LL11 2AA. The Station building is Listed, Grade II. The development comprises:

“Replacement of existing canopy glazing panels and canopy access hatches at Platforms 1, 2 and 3 and associated works”

- 1.2 Wrexham General Railway Station was designated as Grade II in 1986 and is located outside of any Conservation Area boundaries. It forms part of the Wolverhampton to Saltney Junction (Chester) Line, Stafford Road Junction to Saltney Junction (WSJ2) in Wrexham, North East Wales. The station first opened in 1846 and the station building was built in c.1875 as a replacement for the original.

- 1.3 In terms of planning consent requirements, the proposed works are on operational land. This is permitted under Schedule 2, Part 17 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, as the works are required in connection with the movement of traffic by rail on operational land.

- 1.4 This Statement incorporates context regarding the proposed project, an outline of the proposed works, and detailed heritage considerations and assess the proposal against relevant planning policy and other relevant material considerations. It is divided into the following sections:

- Site description, historical context and background;
- Proposed development;
- Planning policy framework;
- Planning assessment; and
- Conclusion.

- 1.5 The information contained within this planning statement should be reviewed in conjunction with the following plans and supporting material that have been submitted as part of the application:

- Appendix A: Site Location Plan;
- Appendix B: Historic Wales Listing Description; and
- Appendix C: Photographs.

2 Site Description, Historical Context and Background

Site Description

- 2.1 The application site comprises Wrexham General Railway Station which is situated to the north west of Wrexham town centre. The site is located within the administrative boundary of Wrexham County Borough Council.
- 2.2 Wrexham General Railway Station is designated Grade II Listed by Historic Wales. The Station is on the Wolverhampton to Saltney Junction (Chester) Line, Stafford Road Junction to Saltney Junction (WSJ2) at 201 metres and 66 chains. The station comprises four operational platforms with two disused bay platforms at the southern end of Platform 1.

Figure 1: Aerial View of Wrexham General Railway Station



Existing Structure

- 2.3 The application concerns the canopies on the platforms (1, 2 and 3). A number of the glazed panels over the platforms have been observed by Network Rail as being cracked (photographs are shown within Appendix C). A number of the cracked panels have also had emergency underside plywood sheeting to prevent cracked glazing falling onto the platform. This is a temporary solution. All canopy glazing is proposed to be replaced with new units.

- 2.4 The canopy structure over platform 1 consists of ridge and purlins spanning onto feature steelwork, bracketry and columns. There are a number of cracked glazing units, including 49 boarded up sheets and a further 37 cracked over platforms 1, 2 and 3.
- 2.5 There is a need for this work to take place to avoid any sheeting to fall onto the platform below. You will note from this photo that the glazing itself is mixed in design, as panels have been replaced over time, with a mixed of wired and non-wired panels.

Figure 2: Glazing Panels above Platform 1 – showing aluminium glazing bar system used



Historical Context

- 2.6 Wrexham General Railway Station was designated as Grade II in 1986 and is located outside of any Conservation Area boundaries. It forms Wolverhampton to Saltney Junction (Chester) Line, Stafford Road Junction to Saltney Junction (WSJ2).

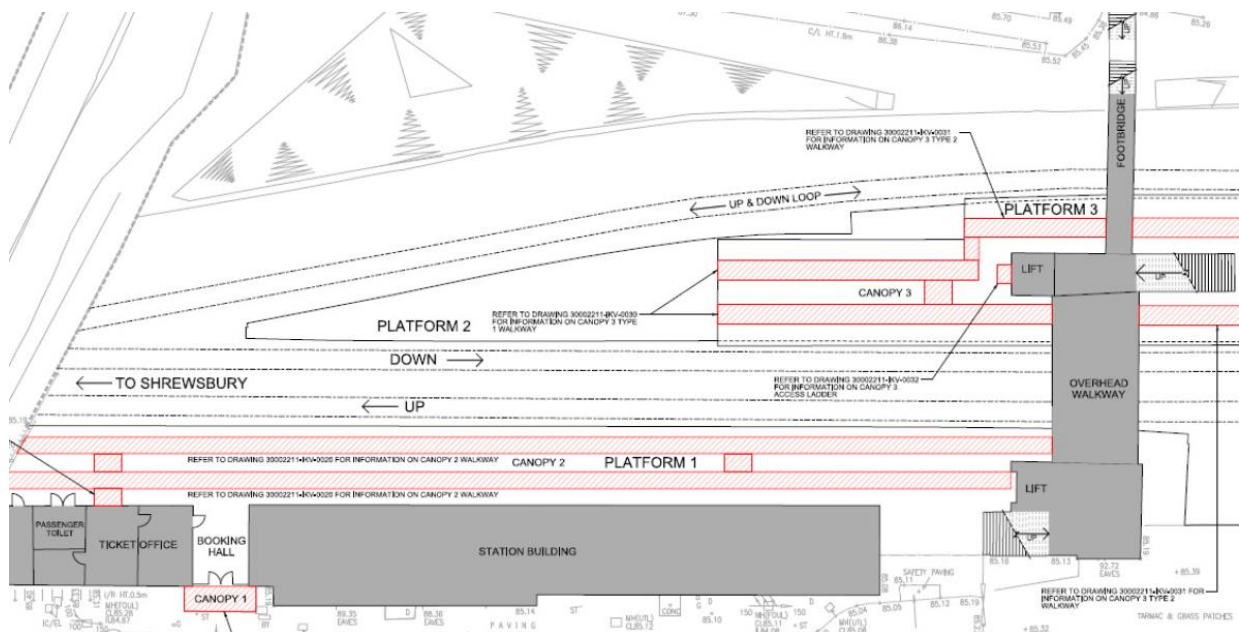
- 2.7 The station first opened in 1846 and the station building was built in c.1875 as a replacement for the original provided by Henry Robertson for the Shrewsbury and Chester Railway Company. The Company was formed in 1846 and absorbed by the GWR in 1854. There were later extensions and enlargements of the platforms in 1909 – 1912.
- 2.8 The full listing description is included within Appendix 2. It notes the details as follows:
- Roughly coursed and squared stone with ashlar dressings and fishscale slate roof.
 - Platform side has roll moulded arches to doorways and 4-pane fixed glazing to windows.
 - Canopied opening links the original building with a later addition to the E in red brick with blue brick dressings.
 - Overall platform canopy with glazed pitched roof carried on cast-iron columns with twisted enrichment to high bases, fluted shafts foliate capitals. These carry cambered iron ties with enriched scrolled rackets, supporting in turn cambered timber trusses with short chamfered king-posts.
 - Similar brackets carry cantilevered canopy projecting to platform edge, terminating in fretted valances.
- 2.9 The listing states that the reason for designation is that it is a good example of GWR station architecture, which, with its fine canopy, survives intact.

3 Proposed Development

3.1 This application seeks Listed Building Consent for replacement of glazing panels, access roof hatches and coating existing roof sheets at the existing three canopies at Wrexham General Railway Station. The details are described below and should be read in conjunction with the proposed plans submitted as part of this application:

- Replacement of the defective glazing with polycarbonate system and subframe;
- Relining the existing guttering with a liquid waterproofing system (see data sheet supporting this application).
- Coat the existing roof sheets with a liquid waterproofing system, with the colour to match the existing (see datasheet supporting this application).

Figure 3: Location of the proposals at the station



3.2 Please note, as per previous discussions with your authority, the initial proposals included provision for access walkways on the canopies, and the relevant supporting paraphernalia. As part of the development of these proposals we have undertaken extensive optioneering in order to develop the most appropriate proposals for this listed station. As per discussions with your authority, we originally proposed to include a mansafe system, which included leveled walkways across the canopies in order to facilitate maintenance requirements. These were considered to impact the character and appearance of the Station, and we have therefore developed the alternative solution proposed in this application.

3.3 The proposals for leveled walkways and access ladders have now been omitted from the proposals,

and these have been excluded from this listed building consent application. All works on the proposed plans with a red strike through or cross are omitted, and the proposals are only as per outlined in this HIA.

- 3.4 The application proposes to replace the defective glazing with a polycarbonate system. The new glazing will include hatch access points to allow for the ongoing maintenance of the canopies. These hatches overcome the requirement to include the roof walkways and ladder access and associated paraphernalia.
- 3.5 It is proposed that the existing glazing shall be replaced with a new glazing panel and sub frame. The existing roof system consisting of pressed metal sheeting is proposed to be upgraded with a cold applied liquid roofing system.

4 Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1 This section provides a summary of the relevant national planning policy guidance and local planning policy relevant to the proposed development.
- 4.2 The application site falls within the administrative area of Gwynedd Council. The ‘Development Plan’ currently comprises the adopted Wrexham Unitary Development Plan. In future this plan will be replaced by the emerging Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013 – 2028.
- 4.3 Other relevant policy documents include:
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as amended
 - Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016
 - Planning Policy Wales (PPW) (Edition 10, December 2018)
 - Technical Advice Notes, including:
 - TAN 12: Design (2016)
 - TAN 24: The Historic Environment (2017)
 - BS 7913:2013 Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 4.4 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 for both England and Wales sets out the government policy and guidance to Local Planning Authorities on the operation of the planning system and identification and protection of historic buildings, conservation areas, and other elements of the historic environment.
- 4.5 Section 66 of the Act requires Local Planning Authorities, in the consideration of whether to grant permission for development which affects a Listed Building or its setting, to have special regard to certain matters, including the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting, or any special features of architectural or historic interest of which it may possess.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Wales) Regulations 2012

- 4.6 The Regulations set out the framework and procedures in relation to the submission of applications for Listed Building Consent. This includes the requirements in terms of the content of such submission, the scope of the accompanying Design and Access Statement and the timescales for consultation.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2017

- 4.7 This Amendment requires applications for Listed Building Consent to be accompanied by a

heritage impact statement which examines the impact of the proposed development upon the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.

Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016

- 4.8 The Act gives more effective protection to listed buildings and improves the sustainable management of the historic environment. Part 3 of the Act makes amendments to the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 in relation to buildings in Wales that are of special architectural or historic interest.

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 10, December 2018)

- 4.9 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) (Edition 10) was adopted in December 2018 and sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government against which development proposals should be assessed. It is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes.
- 4.10 Chapter 6 (The Historic Environment) of PPW provides the national planning policy framework for the consideration of the historic environment and this is supplemented by the guidance contained in Technical Advice Note 24.
- 4.11 Paragraph 6.1.5 states that the one of the Welsh Government's objectives are to:
- “Protect, conserve, promote and enhance the historic environment as a resource for the general well-being of present and future generations”*
- 4.12 PPW sets out a general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of a listed building and its setting. It states that for any development proposal affecting a listed building or its setting, the primary material consideration is the statutory requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses (Paragraph 6.1.10).
- 4.13 Paragraph 6.1.13 states that applications for listed building consent must be able to justify their proposals, show why the alteration or demolition of a listed building is desirable or necessary and consider the impact of any change upon its significance.

Technical Advice Notes

- 4.14 The Technical Advice Notes (TANs) are supplementary documents to Planning Policy Wales and each TAN provides detailed planning advice on a different subject. The TANs relevant to the proposed development are listed below.

TAN 12: Design

- 4.8 TAN 12 was adopted in March 2016 and provides advice on promoting good, sustainable design through the planning system.
- 4.9 The guidance promotes early consultation and consideration of design with the local planning authority and sets out the approach for delivering good design. Guidance is provided on a range of design elements, including, but not limited to access, character, sustainability, movement and context.

- 4.10 With respect to areas of architectural and/or historic value sustaining character is recognised as important. Paragraph 5.6.3 states that in the design of alterations or extensions to listed buildings, professional expertise is essential to assess the elements which make up the special interest of the building and to achieve a balance between sensitive change and maintenance of integrity.
- 4.11 In response to the above guidance, this Statement provides the justification of the proposed works and the wider benefit of preservation and public access to an important historic memorial.

TAN 24: Historic Environment

- 4.15 TAN 24 was adopted in May 2017 and provides guidance on how the planning system considers the historic environment, including listed buildings. The Advice Note identifies that applications for listed building consent require a heritage impact statement to ensure that the significance of the building is taken into account in the development and design of proposals. Consequently, this report includes a Heritage Impact Statement.
- 4.16 Advice is given to local planning authorities on LBC considerations, which include the importance and grade of the building and its intrinsic architectural or historic interest; the physical features of the structure which justify its listing and contribute to its significance; the contribution of the setting of the listed building; the impact of the proposed works on the building's significance; and the extent to which the proposed works would bring substantial community benefits (Paragraph 5.13). These considerations are examined in detail within this Statement.

BS 7913:2013 Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings

- 4.17 BS 7913 serves as the standard of Good Practice for the management and treatment of historic buildings and is intended for those who own, use, occupy and manage historic buildings.

Managing Change to listed Buildings in Wales (Cadw)

- 4.18 Managing Change to Listed Buildings in Wales supplements Planning Policy Wales 1 and Technical Advice Note 24. It sets out general principles to consider when making changes to listed buildings and explains how to apply for listed building consent, including the roles and responsibilities of owners, local planning authorities and the Welsh Government's Historic Environment Service (Cadw).
- 4.19 This document has been used to consider the appropriateness of the proposals, specifically in the use of a modern material such as Polycarbonate. In particular the requirement to: "Retain all historic materials and finishes wherever practicable; repair where necessary; respect inherited character in any renewal." (p5)

Local Planning Policy

Development Plan

- 4.20 As set out above, the 'Development Plan' comprises the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan, adopted on 14 February 2005.
- 4.21 Policy EC9 refers to listed buildings of social architectural or historic interest. It states that

alterations or additions to, and development or redevelopment within the curtilage of, buildings or structures listed as of special architectural or historic interest must respect the setting and character of the listed building or structures.

- 4.22 In respect of alterations/additions to listed buildings the policy states that the greatest skill and care is required in order to avoid damage to the intrinsic character of the buildings themselves (including interiors and fixtures) to their setting.

Emerging Development Plan

- 4.23 The emerging Wrexham Local Development Plan (LDP2) 2013 to 2028 will replace the current adopted Unitary Development Plan. The LDP2 was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate and the Welsh Government on 30th November 2018. The emerging LDP2 has the following policy relevant to proposals.
- 4.24 Policy SP16 refers to historic and cultural environment. It states that development will only be supported where it conserves, protects and enhances listed buildings. The Council are keen to ensure that historic assets are protected from inappropriate development and the opportunity is taken, where possible, to enhance historic areas, buildings and landscapes.
- 4.25 In accordance with the above, the proposals within this application have been developed in accordance with these national and local policies and is in accordance with the wider legislative requirements.

5 Planning Assessment

- 5.1 The following section considers how the proposal is acceptable in terms of the planning policy framework and other relevant matters.

The Need for the Work

- 5.2 It is proposed to replace the glazed panels on the canopies at Platforms 1, 2 and 3. There is a need for this work to take place to avoid any sheeting to fall onto the platform below. The access hatches are proposed to be connected to the existing canopies and station building structure to allow for the future maintenance to the glazing panels.
- 5.3 The canopy glazing at the station is not original, this is confirmed within the listing description, and it seems there were some significant flaws in the design and construction when this canopy was renewed which has caused the ongoing failure of glazing panels and frames. We have undertaken structural surveys (see supporting report with this application) that outlines the current condition of the canopy glazing. The photos outlined below indicate the current condition of the glazing, the adhoc repairs that have been undertaken. Currently there are 49 boarded up sheets and a further 37 that were cracked.

Picture 1 – Glazing Panels above platform 1 – Note aluminum glazing bar system



Picture 2- Loose Plywood sheeting to underside of canopy on platforms 2&3



- 5.4 The overall visual change to the canopy will be minimal, and the only noticeable change will be the use of new twin-fix paneling, which will overall be a significant improvement over the mix of materials currently in place, and the introduction of new cross members to provide additional support to the glazing panels. You will note from the photo 1&2 that none of the glazing is considered original, and the supporting frames have also been replaced with aluminum alternative. Therefore, the works to change the glazing will not result in the removal of any historic fabric and will not negatively impact the character or appearance of the historically important building.
- 5.5 The use of polycarbonate has been successful in several other listed stations across our operating area. The precedent of using this polycarbonate material has been set on a number of listed stations, whereby it has been used to enhance the visual character of canopies. For ease I have included some example photos below, however further detailed photos can be found in the attached example sheets.

Photo Examples 3- Pembroke Station Twinfix Canopy- Grade II Listed



Photo Example 4- Stamford Station, Lincolnshire- Grade II Listed (please note access hatches)



Photo Example 5- Colwyn Bay Station- Twinfix Glazing as proposed with frames, in addition to the liquid water protection to the roofing sheets as proposed as part of this application.



- 5.6 As outlined in section 3, the proposals include hatches to access to the canopy and roofs. This has been developed following the ongoing requirement to access the roof area to maintain the structure. Inability to access the roof area has been attributed to contributing to the degradation of the current structures condition. The operators of the station have requested a method of maintaining the new proposed canopy materials, including the cleaning and ongoing maintenance. This is to ensure that the canopy and roofing is kept clean and safe for passengers and to ensure the safe operation of the railway. The roof access proposals have been designed to be the minimum to allow full access to the roofing areas, while maintaining health and safety for all people working on the railway.
- 5.7 We have successfully installed polycarbonate hatches on listed stations including Stamford as outlined in photo example 4 above, and more recently in Shrewsbury Station which is also grade II listed. I have included photos below:

Photo example- 6 Shrewsbury Station, Shropshire with access hatches installed



- 5.8 Due to the design of the canopy it is not possible to access the roof area to complete regular maintenance and cleaning, as currently it is not considered safe to walk across. Therefore, in order to complete any regular maintenance, there is a requirement to install temporary scaffolding and other arrangements. Constraints of working in a railway environment means that this work often required possession of the railway, disrupting service to passengers.
- 5.9 As part of the project we intend to keep the current roof sheeting and guttering, while applying liquid water proofer to reline the guttering and roof materials. This will enable us to retain the maximum amount of original fabric in the canopy structure, and the colours of the proofer will be chosen to match the existing finish of these materials. The proposed proofer can be seen in photo examples 5 and Colwyn Bay.
- 5.10 The proposals set out here have been designed to minimise the impact on the character and appearance of the structure while making provisions for the ongoing maintenance of the structure and preventing health and safety glazing panels failing onto the platforms.

Heritage

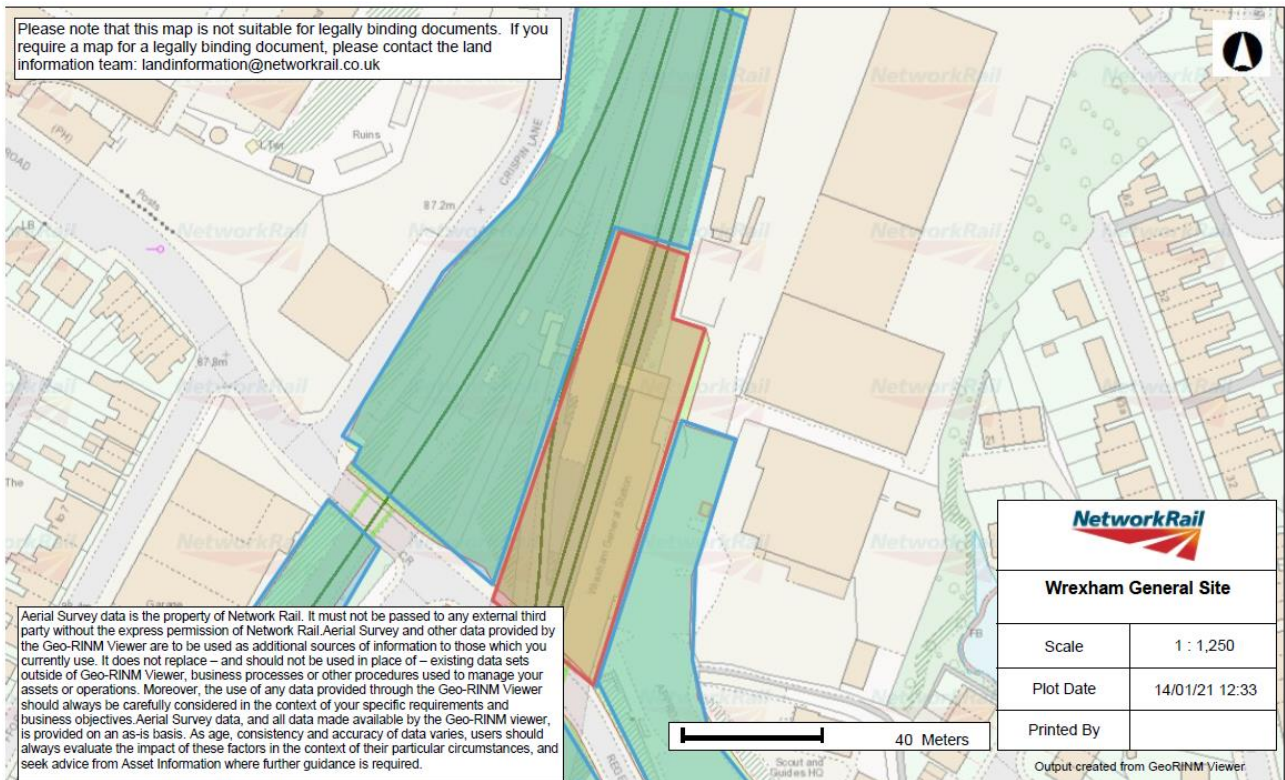
- 5.11 Wrexham Railway Station is Grade II Listed. As such, the PPW and supporting legislation requires the significance of a heritage asset to be assessed in the consideration of an application along with any wider benefits for preservation.
- 5.12 The proposals concern the canopy on the railway station building and as described the works have been developed to minimise to the change to the canopy, while affording the additional access in order to maintain and preserve the structures ongoing operational requirements. The replacement of the current glazing will enhance the current character and appearance over the current arrangement, and will be match the appearance of the original glazing found in this type of canopy. As a result of the works, the character and appearance of the station will not be significantly affected.

- 5.13 In terms of the setting of the station, this will not be altered. As such, the proposal complies with Policies PS20 and AT2 of the Development Plan to enhance heritage assets, as well as PPW and TAN 24 to conserve the historic environment.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 Network Rail is seeking Listed Building Consent for the replacement of existing canopy glazing panels and canopy access walkways at Platform 1, 2 and 3 at Wrexham General Railway Station.
- 6.2 Wrexham General Railway Station was designated at Grade II Listed in 1986 and alterations therefore require Listed Building Consent.
- 6.3 The policy analysis and assessment of the proposals within this statement have demonstrated that the scheme is policy compliant. The proposals have been chosen to ensure careful, sympathetic design and alterations, fully in line with key conservation principles.
- 6.4 The works subject of this Listed Building Consent application do not require planning permission as these works fall within Network Rail's permitted development rights under Part 17, Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, as such whilst we are satisfied that the proposed works will not have an adverse impact on the surrounding properties at the station it is not an issue for when the LPA is considering whether to grant Listed Building Consent for these works.
- 6.5 Overall, Network Rail consider that the proposed development is in accordance with the relevant local, national and heritage policies set out in this Supporting Statement. We therefore trust that Wrexham County Borough Council will support the proposals submitted under this application for Listed Building Consent.

Appendix A: Site Location Plan



Appendix B: Historic Wales Listing Description

Wrexham General Station: Entrance Building

Grade II Listed

Date first listed: 2 August 1986

Date of amendment: 31 January 1994

List entry number: 1855

History

GWR station building, built c1875 as a replacement for the original provided by Henry Robertson for the Shrewsbury and Chester Railway Company, formed in 1846, and absorbed by the GWR in 1854. Later extensions and enlargement of platforms, 1909-12.

Exterior

Roughly coursed and squared stone with ashlar dressings and fishscale slate roof. Symmetrical single storeyed entrance range with outer pavilion blocks with wrought iron brattishing surmounted steep roofs. Central entrance in roll-moulded archway, flanked by cross-pane windows. Cornices over similar windows in pavilions (one now a doorway). Long range of offices, waiting rooms etc. Continuous to right, with similar openings. Platform side has roll moulded arches to doorways and 4-pane fixed glazing to windows. Canopied opening links the original building with a later addition to the E in red brick with blue brick dressings. Overall platform canopy with glazed pitched roof carried on cast-iron columns with twisted enrichment to high bases, fluted shafts foliate capitals. These carry cambered iron ties with enriched scrolled rackets, supporting in turn cambered timber trusses with short chamfered king-posts. Similar brackets carry cantilevered canopy projecting to platform edge, terminating in fretted valences.

Reason for designation

A good example of GWR station architecture, which, with its fine canopy, survives intact.

Appendix C: Photo of Existing Canopy



Photo 1 Glazing on Platform 1 Note aluminium glazing bars

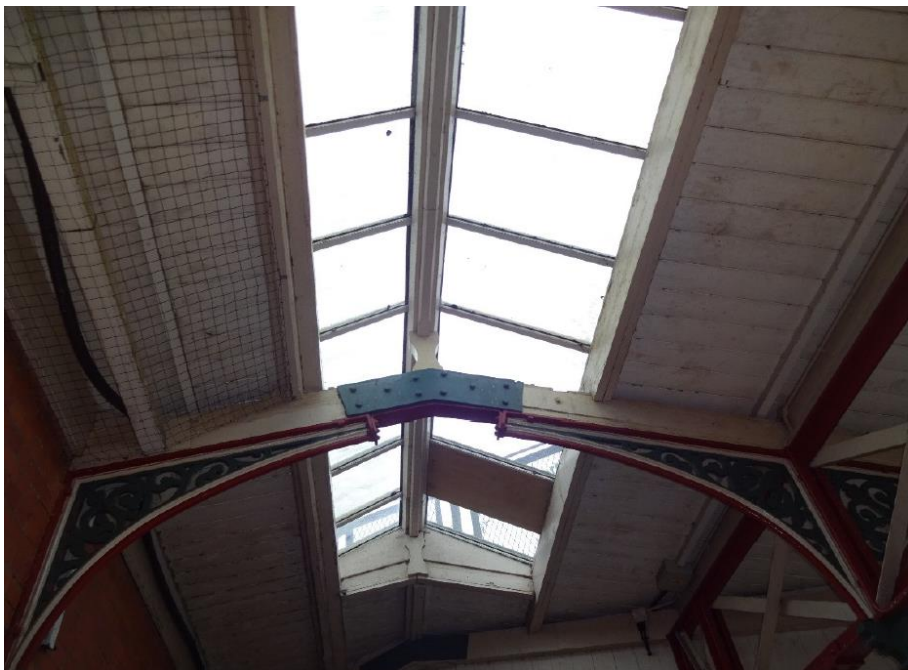


Photo 2 Underside of canopy platform 1 (note boarding)



Photo 3 Underside of Platform 1



Photo 4 Underside of platform 2&3

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