Wrexham General Railway Station

Digital Screen Display

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

Date: August 2025



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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:

"The installation of a free standing 65" Digital Poster (D6 Screen) on Platform 1".

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

2 Site Description, Historical Context and Background

Site Description

2.1 The application site comprises of 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 meters 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 Advertising

2.3 The application concerns the installation of a freestanding digital advertisement display on Platform 1. Currently there are a number of static advertisement displays on platform 1 which do not meet the needs of station users due to having to be manually changed and updated with information which may not occur in real time.

2.4 There is a need for better advertising within the station to improve passenger experience and provide important passenger focussed information though multifunctional technology.

Historical Context

2.5 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).

2.6 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.

2.7 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 molded 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.

2.8 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 the installation of a free standing 65" Digital Poster (D6 Screen) on Platform 1, 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 static advertisement on Platform 1 with a digital display;

3.2 The screen will be mounted on a concrete footing (1500mm x 1000mm x 700mm) with chemical anchors, using stainless steel fittings (A2/304 grade finish) to ensure durability and minimal visual intrusion.

3.3 The digital poster advertisements are capable of being posted from a central location without the need to visit each site individually. Whilst this is an advertisement, the digital displays will also be used for Wrexham Match Day information, Emergency information, updates on trains and delays. The screens will be dual purpose, adding to the value and need for the display within the station.

3.4 The overall aim of the advertisement is to upgrade the existing static sign to a more efficient D6 poster, whilst minimizing the impact on visual amenity.

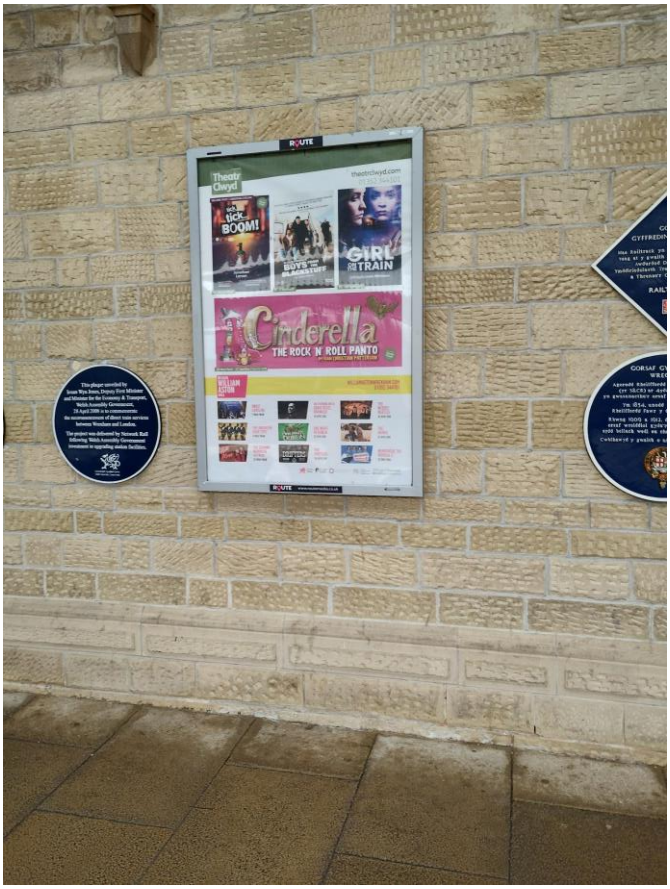


Image 1: Existing Advertisement Display on Platform 1

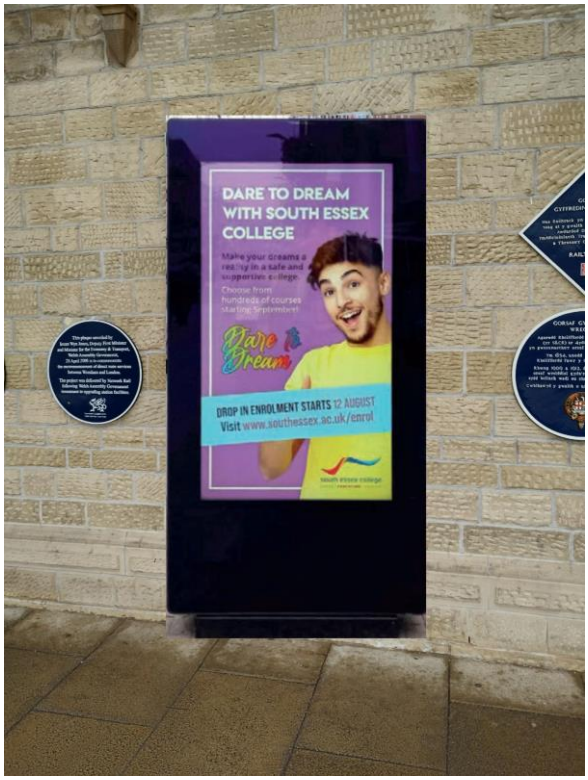


Image 2: Option for Digital Display on Platform 1



Image 3: Location for possible Digital Display on Platform 1

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 12, December 2024)
- 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 12, February 2024)

4.9 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) (Edition 12) was adopted in February 2024 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, 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 are 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 install a freestanding advertisement digital display on Platform 1 (D6 poster). The new installation is intended to function as a multipurpose display. In addition to commercial advertising, it will be utilised to provide passenger-focused information, including details relating to Wrexham match days, live train service updates, emergency messaging, and other relevant notices. This dual functionality will enhance passenger experience and provide a wider public benefit through the additional public services the display will provide.

5.3 The freestanding advertisement display has been designed to mitigate the impact on the listed building. The design has considered the historic fabric of the station by being a completely freestanding display. The advertisement is considered reversible in nature and is not a permanent fixture, ensuring that the display does not alter the station's original structure or impact on historic fabric. The sleekness of the design means that the screen will not detract from the visual appearance of the station, minimizing the overall impact on the historic station.

Proposed Fixing Details

5.4 The fixing point for the display has been chosen due to having the least impact on the historic fabric of the station.

5.5 As part of the project, we propose to introduce appropriate fixings for the advertisement display. All of these fixings have been designed in such a way to mitigate any requirement for permanent works such as drilling, cutting or altering the original fabric of the building. I have included relevant information on the proposed fixings below:

- A concrete footing is required for each totem at 1500mm x 1000mm x 700mm with chemical anchors to secure them into place. The anchors will cause minimal stress on the historic fabric and masonry whilst being reliable and long lasting.

- Stainless steel anchors are proposed to be used based on an A2/304 grade finish, although the diameter and length will need to be determined for the site.

5.6 The overall visual change to the station will be minimal with impact on historic fabric being minimal.

Optioneering

5.7 As part of the Listed Building Consent, Network Rail considered a number of options for advertisement display within Wrexham Station. This has included the use of more digital displays across the station and the addition of wall-mounted screens. We decided to discount these options as wall mounted screens, whilst removable in nature, would likely impact more upon the historic fabric of the building.

5.8 We reduced the number of screens to be installed and discounted a number of locations because both options would likely impact the visual amenity of the building and therefore it was decided that less screens should be used in order to preserve the historic fabric and overall appearance of the building.

Heritage

5.9 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.

5.10 The proposals concern the installation of a freestanding advertisement screen on Platform 1 at Wrexham General Station, and as described the works have been developed to minimise to the change overall appearance of the platform, while affording the additional access in order to maintain and preserve the structures ongoing operational requirements. The replacement of the current advertising will enhance the passenger experience at the station whilst providing a necessary service to all customers to display important, real time information. As a result of the works, the character and appearance of the station will not be significantly affected.

5.11 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.

Access

5.12 Access to the station will be unaffected during and post works.

6 Conclusion

6.1 Network Rail is seeking Listed Building Consent for the installation of a free standing 65" Digital Poster (D6 Screen) on Platform 1Wrexham General Railway Station.

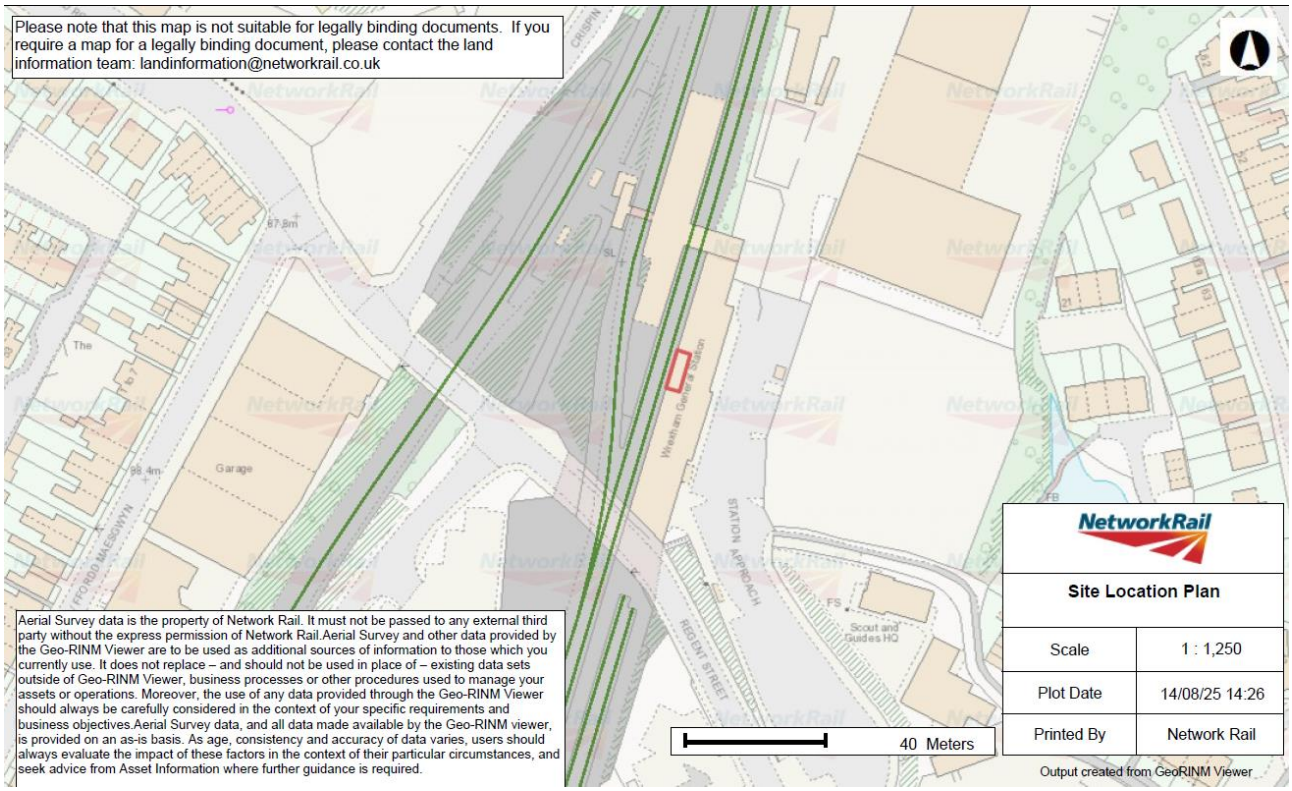
6.2 Wrexham General Railway Station was designated at Grade II Listed in 1986 and alterations therefore require Listed Building Consent.

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 considers 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.

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