

HERITAGE STATEMENT



PROPOSED CAFÉ LOCAL RETAIL UNIT READING RAILWAY STATION, PLAT.7 Proposed Internal fit out works and signage

1.00 INTRODUCTION

- 1.01 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Allen Associates Architects Limited to accompany and explain the Planning Application for the refurbishment works and proposed signage to convert the Pumpkin Retail unit on Platform 7 to a Café Local Retail Unit at Reading Railway Station.
- 1.02 The purpose of this statement is to provide an analysis of the Listed building and its fabric to demonstrate that the Main Station Grade II Listed Building is capable of accommodating the proposed development without causing harm to the setting of the Grade II Listed building

2.00 SITE CONTEXT

- 2.01 Reading Railway Station is a major transport hub in Reading, Berkshire, England. It is on the northern edge of the town centre, near the main retail and commercial areas and the River Thames, 36 miles (58 km) from London Paddington.
Reading is the ninth-busiest station in the UK outside London, and the second busiest interchange station outside London, with over 3.8 million passengers changing trains at the station annually.
The station is managed by Network Rail and is served by four train operating companies: Great Western Railway, Cross Country, South Western Railway and the Elizabeth line
- 2.05 The retail unit is located within an existing Pumpkin Retail Unit located adjacent to Platform 7 within the Main Reading Station Building.

3.00 HISTORIC CONTEXT

- 3.01 The station was designated as a Grade II listed building in 1976.
- 3.02 The first Reading station was opened on 30 March 1840 as the temporary western terminus of the original line of the Great Western Railway . The line was extended to its intended terminus at Bristol in 1841. As built, Reading station was a typical Brunel-designed single-sided intermediate station, with separate up and down platforms situated to the south of the through tracks and arranged so that all up trains calling at Reading had to cross the route of all down through trains.
- 3.03 Between 1865 and 1867, a station building, built of buff bricks from Coalbrookdale with Bath Stone dressings, and incorporating a tower and clock, was constructed for the Great Western Railway. Sources differ as to whether this was a new building, or remodelling of an earlier Brunel building.
- 3.04 In 1989 a brand new station concourse was opened by InterCity, including a shopping arcade named after Brunel, opened on the western end of the old Reading Southern station site, linked to the platforms of the main station by a new footbridge.
- 3.05 By 2007, the station had become an acknowledged bottleneck on the railway network, with passenger trains often needing to wait outside the station for a platform to become available.
- 3.06 In July 2007, in its white paper *Delivering a Sustainable Railway*, the government announced plans to improve traffic flow at Reading, specifically mentioned along with Birmingham New Street station as "key congestion pinch-points" which would share investment . On 10 September 2008 Network Rail unveiled a and reconfiguration of the station and surrounding track to reduce delays. The following changes were made:

- Five new platforms: Four new through platforms on the northern side and an extra bay platform for the Wokingham lines.
- A new footbridge on the western side of the station, replacing the 1989 footbridge. This also included a new entrance on the southern side, for ticket holders only.
- A new street-level entrance and ticket office on the northern side of the station.
- The original subway was converted into a pedestrian underpass between the two sides of the station, with no access to the platforms.
- Making the Cow Lane bridge under the tracks two-way with a cycle path.
- A flyover to the west of the station for trains to allow fast trains to cross over the lines to Reading West, replacing the flat junction.
- A section of track beneath the flyover to provide a connection between Reading West and the relief lines.

4.00 PROPOSED WORKS HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

- 4.01 The proposed refurbishment works contained by the demise shell provided by the landlord are such that no works will affect the existing station.
- 4.02 The internal store layout has been designed in accordance with the Latest Café Local store design manual and has been approved by our client Select Service Partner.
- 4.03 The external works are limited. Existing signs position and size are to be retained with changed content. Internal lights will be visible from outside and new vinyl's are to be applied to the inside of the windows. However, the impact of the lights will be negligible while the areas covered by the vinyl's will be very small.
- 4.04 Staff and public access to the retail unit will be retained as existing determined by the unit shell construction.

5.00 CONCLUSION

- 5.01 The proposed updated Café Local Retail Unit will benefit passengers, providing a retail experience within the station concourse area.
- 5.02 Taking into account policy guidance and assessment of the proposal it is considered that as all the proposed refurbishment works are internal within the existing demise area and therefore would not detract from the historic character or significance of the Listed building.
- 5.03 The external works are limited with the existing signs position and size are to be retained with changed content. The impact of the internal retail lights will be negligible while the areas covered by the vinyl's will be very small. In overall terms, the impact of the works on the external appearance of the station when viewed from the platform will be very limited and will not affect the special character and appearance of the Listed Building.