



Laura Dymond
Development Management
Exeter City Council

Submitted electronically

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Reference TCP/21/060

Dear Laura,

**THE PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO STATION CANOPIES AND EXTENSION OF PLATFORM 2
AT ST DAVIDS RAILWAY STATION, EXETER, EX4 4NZ**

**REQUEST FOR PRIOR APPROVAL UNDER PART 18 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING
(GENERAL PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT) ORDER 2015**

I write regarding the proposed upgrading of St David's Railway Station to facilitate the extension of platform 2 to provide more train capacity at the station and facilitate longer trains using this platform. Works to facilitate this project started late last summer with the demolition of two redundant buildings at the front of the station. This submission is therefore further to our letter dated 20 July 2022 outlining the first stage of demolition and further to our letter dated 13 July 2023 which outlines a second stage of demolition and the construction of a plant room.

As part of this submission please find enclosed with this letter the following supporting proposal plans, images and previous letters sent:

- Location Plan 1.1250 and at 1.2500
- Drawing Ref 0001 P01 – Station Site Plan - As Existing
- Drawing Ref 0002 P01 - Station Site Plan - Demolition
- Drawing Ref 0003 P01 - Station Site Plan - As Proposed
- Drawing Ref 0004 P01 - Front Elevation - Existing & Proposed
- Drawing Ref 0005 P01 - Proposed New Electrical Services Plant Room
- Copy of Network Rail Letter dated 20 July 2022
- Copy of Network Rail Letter dated 13 July 2023
- Birds Eye View from 3D Model – towards south
- Birds Eye View from 3D Model – front elevation
- Birds Eye View from 3D Model – second front elevation

The drawings submitted include all elements of the overall project albeit not all of these works actually require prior approval as they are permitted development under other parts of the GPDO as outlined in earlier letters.

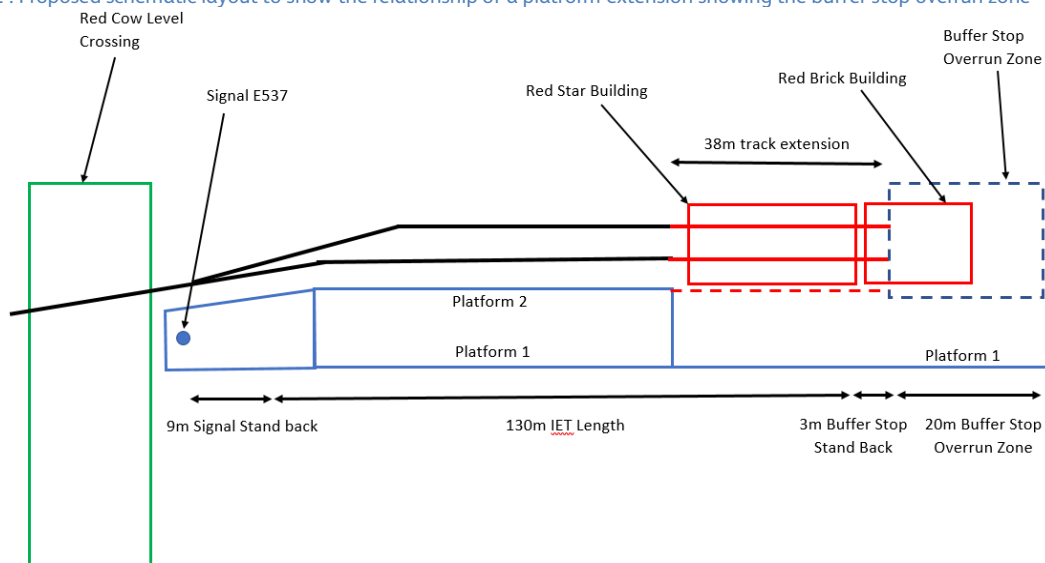
The works proposed by this prior approval application are to facilitate the extension of platform 2. These works will provide additional capacity for longer trains, as St David's Station is currently operating at capacity. Particularly since the success of the reopening of the Dartmoor Line and Okehampton Station the ability for longer trains to use this platform is particularly important in operating these additional passenger services in Devon and the economic, social and transport benefits this provides to Exeter and Devon.

Figure 1: The Location Plan – the red line illustrating all the works proposed (some not needing prior approval)



Due to the geographical constraints and proximity to the adjacent Train Care Depot at St Davids there is no option to expand the station to the west and therefore to adapt and extend the existing terminating platform 2 which is the only location to enable this additional capacity at the station. However, the platform is unable to be extended to the north as there is a Level Crossing and signalling which physically cannot be moved. To the south of the platform there is the old re brick station masters house which hasn't been fully utilised as part of the station operations for many years and is mainly redundant.

Figure 2 : Proposed schematic layout to show the relationship of a platform extension showing the buffer stop overrun zone



In figure 2 this shows the challenges and limitations in the ability for the platform to be extended. You can see from this very simplified plan that building need to be demolished to allow for the track bed and platform to be extended. The Red Star building has already been demolished to make way for the infrastructure and the works required to demolish the red brick will be started this September/ October.

In addition to the removal of the buildings once the platform and new track is extended an open area know as a buffer stop overrun zone needs to be provided should an accident happen when a train could overrun the existing buffer stop which should contain no structures. Unfortunately, there is an existing canopy support column within this zone so the existing canopy at the end of the platform (currently between the existing main station building and red brick building) also needs to be removed. The reason being should an accident happen, and a train hits the canopy support all of this section of canopy would collapse.

I have previously written to you to outline that the proposed demolition of the red brick building constitutes permitted development under the provision of Schedule 2, Part 11, Class B of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, as amended and the works do not trigger the requirement for the Local Planning Authority's prior approval in this instance.

Notwithstanding that the building demolition doesn't require a consent from the LPA when we met you and your Conservation Officer colleague it was suggested that whilst it was acknowledged a formal application would not be required to demolish under Part 11 of the GPDO we should carry out historic recording by a qualified heritage consultant. We sent you a copy of the Written Scheme of Investigation in May 2022 and we subsequently carried out the recording in line with the WSI. I have separately sent you a link by email to download that document as it is too large to email.

Also, to balance the concerns about the loss of this building, some of the materials from the building will be removed from site by volunteers from the Cholsey & Wallingford Heritage Railway. They are in the process of developing a new station building to support their heritage railway and we have agreed with them that they will be salvaging a number of key architectural features as well as bricks, lintels, architectural detailing, railings, fireplaces etc.

We thought it would helpful for you to know and part of the consideration of our proposals that whilst our current building will be lost from Exeter key components will be found a new home in a heritage railway elsewhere on the Western Route.

In advance of the demolition taking place, we will construct a new plant room at the side of the existing station building which will accommodate some of the electrical equipment which is currently within the red brick building.

As the plant room building is a free stranding structure sited on operational land in connection with the movement of traffic by rail these works will be permitted development under Part 8 of the General Permitted Development Order. Whilst the plant room is permitted development it will be clad in timber affect (FRP) cladding, on a brick plinth with aluminium water goods to improve the appearance in this prominent position compared to a standard steel or concrete railway structure.

Once the red brick building and section of canopy between the two buildings is removed the track bed excavated and the new platform face of the extended platform can be constructed as well as correct gauging of the existing platform (to reduce the gap between the platform coping stones and the train).

The remaining canopy can then be adapted and extended in width to match the remaining canopy structure already covering the existing platform 2 with new dagger boards to match.

In addition to the main railway infrastructure to allow longer trains to use platform 2 other ancillary elements of the project will involve new cycle stores to replace the hoops currently between platform 1 and 2 and the covered store already at the front of the building and new fencing to secure the platform and wider station from the public not using the railway.

The following photos shown below from figures 3 – 7 show the key parts of the station where works are proposed.

Figure 3: View of existing red brick building from within the station with cycle hoops in the foreground.



Figure 4 : Section of canopy to be removed to facilitate the platform extension supporting post in exclusion zone



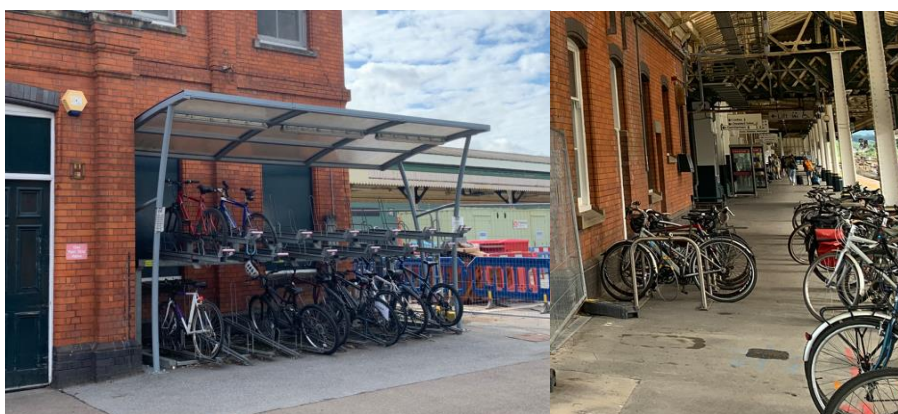
Figure 5 : Section of canopy to be adapted and made good once building has been demolished from underside



Figure 6 : Section of canopy to be adapted and made good once building has been demolished from the front



Figure 7 : Existing cycle parking storage to be re-provided



Part 18 Legislation and Prior Approval

This proposal is submitted under Part 18 Class A to Schedule 2 of the GPDO 2015 as permitted development. It does not require planning permission, but the Local Planning Authority (LPA) must give its approval prior to implementation of the scheme to the siting and appearance.

Part 18 of the GPDO is applicable to developments which were initially authorised by an Act of Parliament. The existing St David's Railway Station site to include the train maintenance depot and yards were constructed under a combination of the Bristol and Exeter Railway Act 1836 and the South Devon Railway Act 1844. The site has been in the ownership of the railway company ever since its original acquisition to construct and maintain a railway.

These Acts bestow the railway company and its successors the power to make developments necessary to the running and management of the railway; including the erection, construction, alteration or extension of any building and the formation, laying out or alteration of a means of access to any highway used by vehicular traffic.

The hereby proposed works are therefore permitted development, as outlined in Part 18 Class A of Schedule 2 of the GPDO. Paragraph A.2 of Part 18 sets out the process by which the LPA can give prior approval and comment on the proposals. It states:

The prior approval referred to in paragraph A.1 is not to be refused by the appropriate authority nor are conditions to be imposed unless they are satisfied that –

- (a) the development (other than the provision of or works carried out to a dam) ought to be and could reasonably be carried out elsewhere on the land; or*
- (b) the design or external appearance of any building, bridge, aqueduct, pier or dam would injure the amenity of the neighbourhood and is reasonably capable of modification to avoid such injury.*

The LPA may consider only the design, materials, or siting of the project to ensure that development 'would not injure the amenities of the neighbourhood' and be satisfied that it could not be 'reasonably carried out elsewhere'. Issues of siting and design for this proposal is examined further below.

Siting

As explained above there are very limited opportunities to add railway capacity to the existing station due to the position of adjoining railway infrastructure. The only way of adding capacity (by accommodating longer trains) within the station footprint is by extending platform 2. It cannot be extended to the north due to the existing level crossing and the associated signalling infrastructure and therefore the only way of extending is to the south which requires the removal of buildings and alterations to the station canopies.

Therefore the only viable siting available for this construction is as proposed, as there are no other available options that will meet our operational needs on our existing operational land.

Design and Materials

The overall aim of the work proposed is to add capacity to accommodate longer trains is to extend the existing platform which requires the removal of buildings and alterations to the station canopies. The design has been carefully considered to make good the altered platform canopies replicating the continuation of the existing canopy using materials to match. The platform design and surfacing will be to match the existing. The proposed plant room will be clad with timber affect cladding with aluminium detailing. The works will open up views into the station.

The design and the materials proposed are therefore appropriate to its setting and location which can be seen on the 3D model produce below in figure 8 and 9.

Figure 8 : The proposed design of the extended platform and adapted station canopies



Figure 9 : The proposed design of the extended platform and adapted station canopies

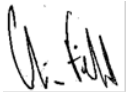


Summary

The proposal does not require full planning permission as it has deemed consent through Part 18 to Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. However, the LPA's prior approval of the scheme is required for some elements of the work before those works can commence. When undertaking prior approval considerations, the LPA must be satisfied that the scheme will not 'injure the amenities of the neighbourhood' or could not be implemented somewhere else on the land – as set out in paragraph A.2 of Part 18. It is our view that this application with supporting design drawings meet the requirements of the legislation.

Network Rail looks forward to receiving written confirmation that Exeter City Council is satisfied with the proposed works, and that prior approval has been granted. If you have any queries regarding the application or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Colin Field", enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

Colin Field MRTPI
Town Planning and Heritage Manager
Wales and Western Region