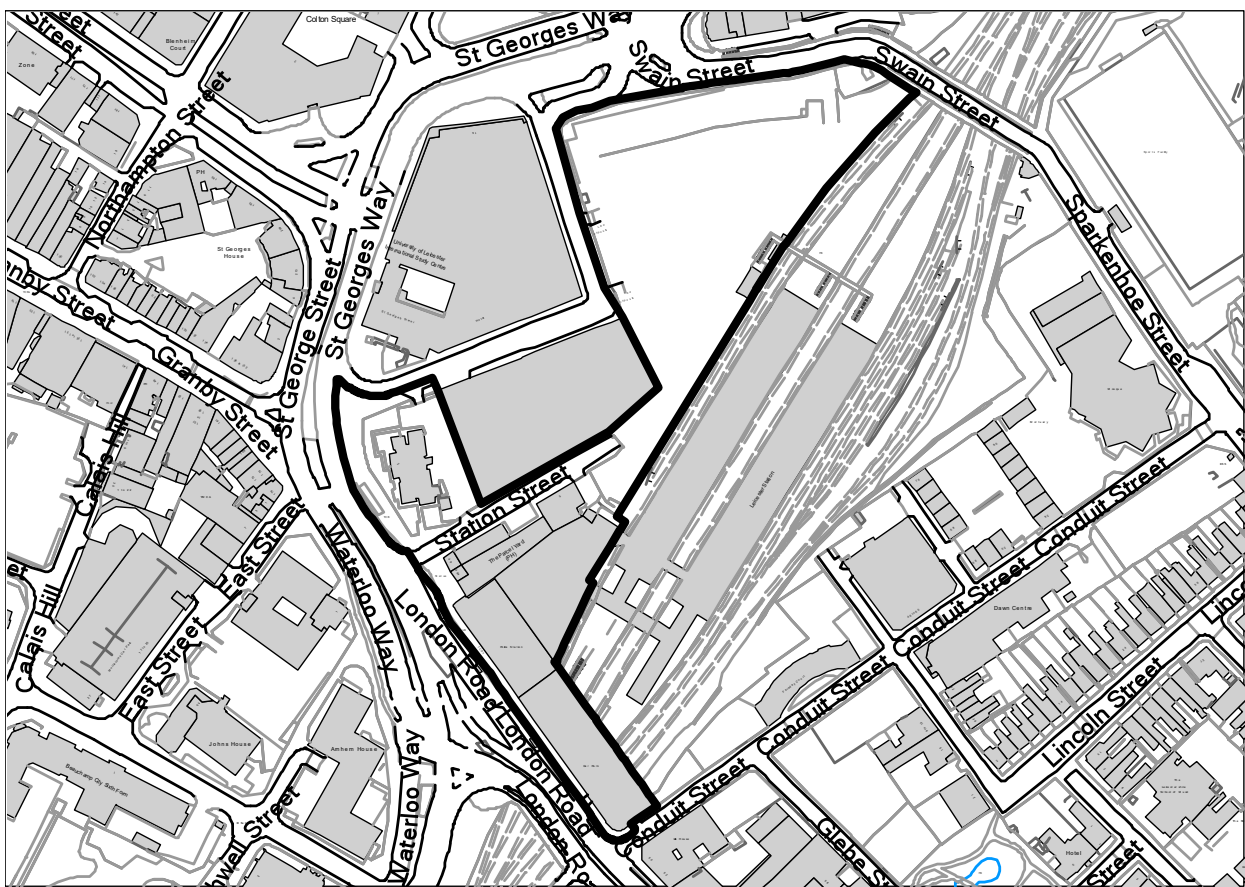


COMMITTEE REPORT

20240595	Leicester Railway Station, Midland Main Line, London Road	
Proposal:	Internal and external alterations to Grade II listed building and relocation of Grade II listed gate piers.	
Applicant:	Leicester City Council	
App type:	Listed Building Consent	
Status:	Other development	
Expiry Date:	30 July 2024	
KI	TEAM: PM	WARD: Castle



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Summary

- The application is brought to committee at the discretion of the Head of Planning and in the context of Planning & Development Control Committee's determination of application 20231214 for the Demolition of 48 London Road and the associated Listed Building consent application 20231215 (Date: 06/12/2023).
- One objection has been received for this application.

- The main issues to consider are the principle of development, design and the impact on the heritage assets.
- The application is recommended for conditional approval.

The Site

The application relates to 2.15ha of urban land on the southern edge of Leicester City Centre, contained within Conduit Street, London Road, Fox Street and Campbell Street. The specific development parcels comprise the operational Leicester Railway Station, including the associated parking area, Elizabeth House (2 Waterloo Way) and adjoining highways land.

The southern part of the application site hosts the operational Leicester Railway Station. The railway station is a two-storey Grade II listed building. The majority of publicly accessible spaces are located at ground floor level and include the ticket hall, passenger circulation concourse and platform access areas, retail units, and the Porte Cochère (covered forecourt) structure which currently serves as a taxi rank and vehicular pick-up / drop-off (PUDO) point. The port cochere provides 16 taxi rank bays, four Person's of Reduced Mobility (PRM) bays and 10 PUDO bays. The lower ground floor is used predominantly for cycle storage, railway offices, and other ancillary uses as well as providing a rear pedestrian entrance to the ticket hall which is accessed via lifts.

Demolition of buildings is currently underway at 48 London Road which adjoins the railway station immediately to the north-west. This previously housed the Parcel Yard public house, a taxi company, and office facilities. Planning permission (ref: 20231214) and listed building consent (ref: 20231215) was approved by the Planning & Development Control Committee at its meeting on 06/12/2023.

At the north-west of the site is Elizabeth House, a 16-storey residential building which fronts onto London Road, and which has associated paving and planting areas, and car parking to the rear. There are access points to the Elizabeth House car park from Campbell Street and Station Street.

The northernmost part of the application site serves as the railway station car park, accessed via Fox Street, Campbell Street or Station Street.

In front of the main London Road railway station frontage there is a footpath and cycle lane, which provides connections to the city centre, and bus stops and pedestrian road crossing areas.

The bronze Thomas Cook statue is positioned on the main pedestrian route to the railway station at the front of the main building. Also, close to the Thomas Cook statue, there is a semi-mature tree situated within the footpath.

The application site and the adjacent public realm areas contain a number of heritage assets, both designated and non-designated. This includes the Grade II Listed gate piers which currently marks the end of Station Street and cast iron gates located at the bays of the porte cochere, as well as two Grade II Listed telephone kiosks and a

Locally Listed post box on London Road. The South Highfields Conservation Area lies immediately south of the application site and the Granby Street Conservation Area lies to the north.

The railway station building sits on the western side of London Road, a major arterial route into the city, and is located 0.5 miles southeast of Leicester city centre designated retail core area. The University of Leicester, Leicester Tiger's stadium and Leicester City's Stadium are all located to the south of Leicester Railway Station, some 1.3 miles, 0.8 miles and 1.3 miles away respectively.

Other significant designations are:

- Air Quality Management Area (AQMA);
- Leicester City Centre;
- Archaeological Alert Area;
- Critical Drainage Area;
- Flood Zone 1;
- Strategic Regeneration Area.

Background

A number of applications have been made at the application site, the most notable applications include:

20231215 – Listed Building Consent for proposed demolition of 48 London Road (Approved)

20231214 – Demolition of 48 London Road (Approved).20171639 – Change of use from telecommunications kiosk to retail kiosk class A1 (Refused)

20171640 – Internal alterations to Grade II listed telephone kiosk (Approved).

20152423 – Retrospective application for ATM at front of taxi office sui generis (Approved).

2015242 – Retrospective application for internally illuminated sign to ATM at taxi office sui generis (Approved).

20151582 – Internal alterations to Grade II listed building to provide temporary retail kiosk.(Approved)

20141164 – Continuation of use of taxi booking office sui generis (Refused).

20130227 – Change of use from retail class A1 to taxi booking office sui generis; alterations to shop front (Approved).

20111191 - Internal alterations to the Porte Cochère (covered forecourt) (Grade II listed building) including insertion of glazed screen to create separate pedestrian and vehicular routes: new disabled access routes; alterations to entrance and interior. (Approved)

20100791 – External and internal alterations to Grade II listed building (Approved).

025586A – Cleaning of masonry of Leicester Station Grade II Listed building (Approved).

The Proposal

This Listed Building Consent application is for internal and external alterations to the Grade II listed Leicester Railway Station building and the relocation of Grade II listed gate piers on Station St. These alterations are to facilitate the redevelopment of the railway station and the surrounding highways for which planning permission is also sought, as detailed in the associated planning application elsewhere on this agenda (ref: 20240524).

The redevelopment proposals seek to provide modern railway station facilities and improve the user experience within and surrounding the site, whilst improving overall accessibility, and respecting the railway station's edge of city centre location and enhancing its heritage buildings and public realm setting.

This application is only concerned with the alterations which require Listed Building Consent. They relate to two listed structures specifically:

1) Grade II Listed Leicester Railway Station alterations

The proposed new pedestrian ramp is designed to lead to a new main railway station entrance, with a canopy structure above the main entry area, via the northern elevation of the railway station building and into a larger and improved ticket hall and station concourse area. The new railway station entrance would be created by a curved pedestrian ramp connecting the public realm to the ticket hall. There would be a new and expanded secure cycle storage area underneath the ramp structure, accessed from the ground level public realm area. Part of the proposed new public realm plaza area would be sited on the footprint of 48 London Road and Station Street, and would include hard and soft landscaping with a range of planting and the inclusion of SUDS drainage within the planted areas.

Proposed changes to the design of the existing rear entrance include the erection of a new entrance canopy, the removal of physical barriers, and regrading of the land levels to allow for ease of access into the station from this access point.

It is proposed to re-use the Porte Cochère as (a) a new food hall (in use class E(b)) providing for a mix of street food vendors, cafés and bars, with a gross floor area of approximately 1,500 sqm gross; and (b) a new convenience store at the northern station concourse end of the Porte Cochère, with a gross floor area of approximately 398 sqm gross. To facilitate the uses in the Porte Cochère there would be various physical alterations including removal of the current glazed partition screen; re-levelling and re-flooring including removal of the ramps and steps and remediation of tarmacked areas; cleaning of masonry; glazing of external apertures; additional glazing to the roof; erection of a new glazed screen at the northern end to create a retail space; provision for food and beverage facilities within the southern end; and provision of new ramp and steps within the central pedestrian entrance from London Road.

On the ground floor the vestibule and booking hall will be reconfigured to provide additional retail space and a larger ticket gate. Back of house areas on the ground and lower ground floors will also be reconfigured to provide a more accessible bicycle store, office space and staff facilities.

2) Relocation of Grade II Listed Gate Piers

To facilitate the highway changes at the rear of the station, it is proposed to relocate the Grade II listed Gate Piers from their existing location to the edge of the new pedestrian public realm area, to the south-west of their current position. The piers will be repaired and refurbished and the missing iron gate to the southern pier will be recreated to match the surviving gate on the north side.

Amended plans have been received during the consideration of the planning application following consultation responses on the original submission. The representations included objections to the absence of WC facility in the ticket hall area on the ground floor of the train station. The applicant, in response to this specific objection, has amended the design to allow for WC facilities at the ground floor of the train station. The amendments comprise an altered proposed ground floor plan and a Design & Access Statement Addendum detailing the change.

Policy Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023

Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

The following paragraphs are particularly relevant to heritage matters.

Paragraph 195 states that ‘Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.’

Paragraph 197 states that ‘In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.’

Paragraph 199 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation.

Paragraph 200 states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.

Paragraph 202 states that ‘Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.’

Paragraph 203 states that ‘The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application.’

In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.’

Paragraph 204 states that Local Planning Authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.

Paragraph 206 states that Local Planning Authorities should look for new development to preserve or enhance significance of heritage assets

Development Plan Policies

Core Strategy (2014)

CS01 - Location of Development

CS02 - Addressing Climate Change and Flood Risk

CS03 - Designing Quality Places

CS04 - Strategic Regeneration Area

CS18 - Historic Environment

Leicester Local Plan 1996-2016 Saved Policies (2006)

UD06 - Landscape Design

AM01 - The Impact of Development on Pedestrians and People With Limited Mobility)

Other Guidance

National Design Guide (MHCLG)

Railway station Character Area (2022)

Other legal or policy context

Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed building or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 outlines the statutory duty of local planning authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas.

Development plan policies relevant to this application are listed at the end of this report.

Consultations

Historic England

Consider the works would result in a medium level of less than substantial harm, as referenced in the NPPF. The local authority should therefore consider;

- 1) Whether this harm is clearly and convincingly justified (paragraph 206 of the NPPF), and
2. Whether the harm is outweighed by the public benefits associated with the scheme (paragraph 208, NPPF).

Archaeology

This site is located in an area with nationally designated and locally listed non-designated heritage assets, including known archaeology within the wider historic landscape dating from the prehistoric to modern period. Following a review of the Heritage Assessment, there are no objections raised subject to safeguarding conditions.

Representations

One objection has been received to the proposal. The reasons for objections are summarised as follows:

- Negative impact on disabled parking, disabled access and other facilities for people with physical impairments.
- The development results in demonstrable harm to the heritage assets and the mitigation is not satisfactory.
- The removal and relocation of the Grade II listed gate piers does not preserve the heritage asset which is denoted by its position as a marker of the station boundary which is an integral part of the listed and its importance.
- Ticket office and assistance point is not adequate.

Conservation Advisory Panel

No objection however some panel members expressed concern about the works to the Porte Cochere. Some welcomed its re-purposing while others expressed concern about the change of character and experience for station users. There was general concern about the potential visual impact of the rear elevations of new structures in the Porte Cochere on the external appearance of the structure, especially when viewed through the openings onto London Road.

The Panel debated the appropriateness and design of the canopy, with a range of views expressed. Some Panel members felt a more distinctive design would be appropriate while others felt it was superfluous and should be removed. The visitor experience was then discussed with concerns raised as many station users would no longer experience the Porte Cochere - the historic station entrance, as their entry point which was regrettable. However, some others argued there still were entrances through the structure and ancillary uses in it would support the viability of the complex as a whole. Some members expressed concern about the experience when being dropped-off or getting a cab, noting the lack of cover relative to being in the Porte Cochere. Some sort of bus shelter type facility at the taxi rank was suggested, while others argued the removal of taxis / cars and the associated pollution was beneficial to the heritage asset.

The Panel were broadly comfortable with the principle of moving the historic gate piers but felt they should be relocated in a more prominent location to restore their historic function as gateway markers – closer to the new ramp. They re-iterated their previous point about marking the historic location of the piers in the new paving. Members also sought assurances that the existing heritage interpretation panels located within the Porte Cochere would be re-located as part of the scheme.

Consideration

Principle of development

By way of context for consideration of the Listed Building Consent application, this proposal is designed to address existing demand and a forecasted growth in future demand for rail services, improve overall user experience and provide for a new 'Gateway' destination in the city centre.

The railway station is a major transport hub in the city, currently with over five million visitors each year. It is forecast that this will increase to some seven million visitors in future years. The Grade II listed railway station and its surroundings are currently constrained by existing site features, in particular the adjacent highways which results in conflicts between highway users. In addition, there is currently no significant area of public realm serving the railway station, and despite its proximity to the Central Shopping Core, it feels physically and psychologically detached from other parts of the city centre.

The Council will seek to preserve heritage assets, however as set out in both NPPF and local planning policy this does not preclude positive changes being made which would benefit the heritage asset and its wider setting in the long term. Ultimately, any potential harm must be balanced against the potential benefits of development.

In principle, it is considered that the proposal would be of significant public benefit in terms of its enhancement of the railway station and wider setting which would provide an area of improved public realm and seeks to enhance the use of Leicester Railway Station. The application proposal is compliant with the NPPF and CS18.

Design

The Railway Station Character Area Appraisal (2022) has been produced to guide future development. The appraisal forms the basis for managing change effectively by guiding development strategies so that new development contributes positively to the townscape's character, supports local identity, and generates built-up areas that are appealing to live, work and visit. One of the key objectives of the appraisal is to deliver a new railway station entrance, create a new well designed public space and public realm and to reconfigure the transport hub to strengthen its visual and physical presence. This aligns with the objectives of the planning application.

The proposed new main entrance to railway station on the northern elevation would be orientated to provide a strong sight line from the Granby Street, addressing the current visual separation of the city centre's retail core from the railway station. This would be emphasised by the new canopy overhead providing a strong physical landmark. A new curved access ramp, articulated by landscaping features either side, would connect the plaza with the new front entrance to the railway station. The new public space in front of the main entrance is positioned to take advantage of the significant area of space that would be vacated by the demolition of 48 London Road and the proposed pedestrianisation of Station Road.

This combination of a new hard and soft landscaped public space area, access ramp and glazed entrance marked by a sympathetic canopy would present an attractive space for railway station users as well as improve the setting of the Grade II listed station and Grade II listed gate piers.

The proposed canopy structure marks a departure from the existing design of the listed building, adding a new modern quality. It is considered that the canopy has been designed to ensure a striking, highly visible feature, but would crucially, not detract from the attractiveness of the host building. Given its importance to the overall design, it will be necessary to recommend a condition to ensure that the canopy would result in a high-quality finish and not impact on the heritage asset. Conditions to this effect are recommended below.

The rear entrance would present a similarly designed canopy as that proposed on the main entrance highlighting the entrance for visitors whilst not detracting from the heritage asset. In addition, to aid movement and legibility at this point much of the existing hard features and physical barriers would be removed, the levels graded to provide a smooth visitor experience. There would be an accessible lift provided which would connect the lower ground with the Ticket Hall area allowing those mobility impairments to access the concourse area. The improvements at this entrance are welcomed and, the decluttering and opening of this space is positive for all users.

Internal changes to the railway station would create a larger ticket hall area, enlarge gate lines, and introduce natural light which result in a more open space. Alongside this, there would new retail areas surrounding the ticket hall area.

Following the period of consultation, the applicant has submitted amended plans. The amendments relate to the ground floor layout to provide for toilets in the main concourse area before reaching the gate lines, responding to a specific objection relating to insufficient WC facilities.

The relocation of highway uses to the rear of the railway station opens up the Porte Cochere to new uses comprising an improved retail and food offering which are more amenable to a modern train station. To facilitate the internal changes, new glazed curtain walling is proposed at all of the Porte Cochere openings. This is considered to be sympathetic to the main station building and would allow thermal insulation whilst also not appearing as an incongruent feature when viewed from London Road. The submitted bay studies provide indication of fittings, but to ensure minimal impact, conditions are proposed below.

Thought has been given to safety and security throughout the design of the building, with the concourse levels being as open as possible to provide good natural surveillance. Outside bollards would be strategically placed to protect the building from vehicular attack whilst not appearing as overly dominant features.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed design would be of high quality which would significantly enhance the character of the area. It would provide a fitting entrance to the City Centre and would comply with national policy, Policy CS03 of the Core Strategy and the Railway Station Character Area. With respect to the objections raised, the proposed design has sought to meet the needs of users of the space through design, principally through pedestrianisation of Station Street, removal of significant physical barriers and providing step free access across all key entrances and exists of the station. As such the proposal would accord with Policy AM01 of the Local Plan (Saved Policies).

Building Conservation & Heritage Assets

Policy CS18 of the Core Strategy states the Council will protect and seek opportunities to enhance the historic environment including the character and setting of designated and other heritage assets. There is support for the sensitive reuse of high-quality historic buildings and spaces, promote the integration of heritage assets and new development to create attractive spaces and places, encourage contemporary design rather than pastiche replicas, and seek the retention of existing heritage features.

Paragraph 196 of the NPPF identifies that Local Planning Authorities, when determining planning applications involving designated or non-designated heritage assets should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

Paragraphs 206 and 207 of the NPPF address harm and state that “where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless

it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

Paragraph 208 of the NPPF addresses harm that would be 'less than substantial' in nature. It states that where development proposals will lead to less than substantial harm, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

The Council has a statutory duty under s66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have a special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

The proposed works relate to the Grade II Listed Leicester Railway Station. The site and the adjacent public realm contain a number of other heritage assets, both designated and non-designated. The most significant are the Grade II Listed gate piers and cast-iron gates to the original Midland Railway Station on Station Street, as well as two Grade II Listed telephone kiosks and a Locally Listed post box on London Road. In addition, to the south of the site is the South Highfields Conservation Area, with the Locally Listed railway bridge parapet to the west, and Granby Street Conservation Area to the north. This application and associated listed building application are supported by a detailed Heritage Statement that addresses the impact of proposed work on the significance of the various heritage assets. The document thoroughly meets the requirements detailed in paragraph 200 of the NPPF.

The railway station is a complex building group and much of the internal and external detail is more modern and of lower heritage significance. The Porte Cochère is the largest structure of heritage significance that will be directly affected by works and the already approved works to better reveal the original architectural form of the structure will have a beneficial impact on the setting of the structure. More detailed plans for works to enhance the pedestrian experience within the newly opened up peripheral spaces will enhance its use and have a beneficial impact on the setting of the Listed Building. The direct changes proposed to the structure are in one sense more limited, with the majority of change internal and not affixed to the historic walls and roof. The most notable proposed change in those terms would be the addition of new curtain glazing sections and glazed doors across the existing openings. These have been carefully designed and will appear as legibly modern and less visually intrusive in form, with appropriate design for the junctions. The valuable existing ornate metal gates are generally to be either fixed shut or open in their historic positions. However, a minority will either be moved slightly to accommodate the new glazing or relocated to as yet undetailed position in the building. The latter detail in

particular will need to be covered by an appropriately worded condition if the scheme is approved, as if these are not appropriately located this will cause harm to the significance of the heritage asset.

The loss of some permeability from the new glazing will cause some harm in terms of the historic function of the transitional space, as will the imposition of additional freestanding units within the Porte Cochère. However, the harm will be mitigated somewhat by the restoration and repair works to the structure as a whole and the wider public benefits from improving general accessibility and use within the building. The removal of the later floorscape treatment and the introduction of a simpler design, as well as the removal of some visual clutter relating to the different existing uses, will be clearly beneficial. The design now works harder in terms of limiting visual clutter from new freestanding units in the internal space, when viewed through the existing openings, and this is positive. Taken as a whole and subject to an appropriate design for the re-sited gates, these works are acceptable.

Beyond the Porte Cochère, the primary area of historic structures that will be subject to more extensive alterations is the northern range facing onto Station Street. The roughly triangular shaped structure between the retained Porte Cochère and octagonal tower dates to the late 19th century and although much of its form at lower level has either been altered or is visually concealed, it has an attractive roofscape that enhances the setting of the Porte Cochère and the other more historic buildings and structures on Station Street. There is a pleasing visual relationship between the chimney on the outbuilding occupied by the Cross-Country office and the chimneys on the Victorian structure, as well as the two octagonal turrets either side of it.

It is therefore very positive that this element is proposed for retention, with the new canopy coming off its edge. Other later buildings at the periphery will be removed and allow a better appreciation of this attractive section of the station and this benefit will help counterbalance the harm from the visual clutter relating to the new entrance. The canopy is now of a simpler design and it is clearly read as being modern and subservient in scale to the host building. The new facing materials and fenestration will need to be appropriately specified and I recommend a condition on materials. Additional works to tidy up the rear entrance and add a new light weight canopy will similarly have an impact on historic fabric but have a sound justification and detailing. On balance and taken as a whole with the linked landscaping works, the works would be acceptable in terms of their impact on the significance of the heritage asset.

The internal aspects in the two floors of the northern range are much altered and there is less evidence of notable internal architectural detailing here. Much of the existing presentation is modern and the revised design would generally limit loss of historic material and help rationalise the internal layout. There is clear public benefit from enhancing the passenger and staff facilities here and improved accessibility will make the spaces more usable. Internally, within the vestibule that forms the space between the Porte Cochère and the main part of the station, the new retail space and associated seating will create more visual clutter and cause harm as detailed above. Ideally this would be rationalised or detailed better to limit the potential harm. However, aspects of the works are reversible and the use of glazing will reduce the visual impact. More generally, the layout and detail of new materials appear to be coherent and well considered.

Within the wider landscaping scheme, it is proposed that the existing Grade II Listed gate piers and gate that relate to the original station are relocated to the edge of the new pedestrian plaza, to the south-west of their current position. This would be on the same alignment as the current location and still sit adjacent to the later adjacent building, ensuring that they retain integrity in terms of their historic status as a gateway feature on Station Street. Although the structure is proposed to be carefully dismantled and reconstructed, this will represent substantial harm as per paragraph 207 of the NPPF as it will represent total demolition. This descriptor would conventionally be very challenging in policy terms but there are significant mitigating factors evident in this specific case.

The structure will be rebuilt entirely several metres away and enhanced with localised repairs and the reinstatement of the missing gate features. Moreover, the setting of the listed structure will be enhanced by the higher quality hard landscaping proposed for its base and wider environs. This will improve its legibility and ensure the special significance of the heritage asset is easier to appreciate. Taken as a whole, the substantial public benefits from the wider scheme and the public realm works relating more directly to this space, and which necessitate the relocation, can be seen to balance out the identified harm and give an acceptable heritage position in policy terms. However, I would recommend that there is additional work on heritage interpretation near to the structure to aid their appreciation, while the former base of the piers should be marked with some sort of contrasting floorscape material that makes a nod to their current position.

The revised proposal for relocating the Thomas Cook Statue on a lower plinth is acceptable and the new location nearby will enhance its setting. The works would be acceptable in terms of the specific section in the NPPF relating to moving statues (para. 204).

The existing locally listed post box has recently been redecorated and is proposed to remain in situ. The two existing Grade II Listed former telephone boxes are now proposed to be retained in situ and refurbished. Part of their special significance relates to their current location close to the entrances of the railway station and retaining them in situ is positive in those terms, while wider works to refurbish the adjacent building and the freestanding structures will be positive.

The works are sufficiently modest in scale and positioned such that they will have a limited impact on the setting of the two nearby conservation areas (Granby Street and South Highfields) or the locally listed railway bridge and more distant nationally listed buildings. The benefits from refurbishment works and the modest harm from some additional visual clutter around entrances will be broadly neutral in terms of setting impact.

As presented, the application will present less than substantial harm in terms of the Grade II Listed Station, although the wider harm to the setting of other nearby heritage assets will be very modest or entirely limited. It is considered that the harm will be less than substantial for the reasons detailed above, and subject to the securing of matters of design through planning conditions, the harm would be towards the lower end of the spectrum of harm within that assessment. There will be

some benefits to the setting of the heritage asset from opening up views of the side of the Porte Cochère and this partially mitigates against the harm ascribed above. Moreover, public realm works to the site will provide further public benefit that can provide a balance against the ascribed harm. The relocation of the separately listed gate piers and gate on Station Street will cause substantial harm; however, the heritage benefits from the linked works and substantial public benefits from the wider works will balance against the ascribed harm and in view of the overall benefits to users of the area for the long term, it is acceptable in this case and mitigation is suitable

A planning condition should be included with an approval for details of the relocation of the existing Porte Cochère gates, as this is not currently fully detailed, together with a materials condition on the new features that are integral to the Listed Building, such as the new brickwork and fenestration on the northern side of the station.

The Archaeological Officer has reviewed the heritage assessment and the potential for surviving remains within the site boundary. Whilst there is no evidence to suggest that remains of national archaeological interest would be negatively impacted upon at this stage, I concur with the Archaeological Officer that given the potential for impact that archaeology safeguarding conditions are required. A relevant condition to this effect is recommended below.

Historic England have been consulted on the application and consider that the proposal would result in medium level of less than substantial harm, as referenced in the NPPF. As such they have recommended the Local Planning Authority satisfies itself that the proposed development potential harm is outweighed by the public benefits associated with the scheme (paragraph 208, NPPF).

The Council's officers have scrutinised the proposals carefully in light of the statutory duty under s66 of the Listed Buildings Act and are satisfied, through its assessment and the negotiation of amendments and mitigation proposals, that the preservation of the Listed Buildings, their setting and features of architectural importance have been preserved.

In accordance with Paragraphs 205 and 206, 207 and 208 of the NPPF and local policy CS18, the degree of harm to the designated heritage assets should be both justified and weighed against the public benefits of the scheme. Overall, the impact of the proposed development would represent less than substantial harm to the listed railway station building while the relocation of the gate piers would represent substantial harm to those structures by virtue of their demolition and rebuilding. The proposals have demonstrated, however, that it would result in substantial public benefits (as described elsewhere in this report) relating to the improvement in public transport for rail users and enhancements to the public realm at a key location within the city centre and point of arrival to the city itself. It is considered that these public benefits would outweigh both the identified substantial and less than substantial harm caused by the development.

Conclusion

Whilst it is recognised that the proposals would result in significant alterations to the heritage assets, the redevelopment of the train station would deliver significant benefits to improve the appearance of the station, improve accessibility and help to encourage regeneration in this area of the City centre. It is considered that the alterations outlined in this application have been satisfactorily justified as defined in the NPPF at paragraph 205-208.

The redevelopment of the railway station will help to enhance the appearance of the heritage assets, improve accessibility and the appearance of the public realm of the entrance and setting of the railway station and act as a catalyst for regeneration in this area of the city in the future and the wider area. This future regeneration is seen to be a significant benefit arising from the scheme.

It is recommended that this application is **APPROVED** subject to conditions:

- 1) **Time Limits:** The development shall be begun within three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

- 2) **Approved Drawings:** The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in full accordance with the following drawings.

Location Plan, 177016-ARC-ZZ-ZZZ-DRG-EAR-081000 P04;05/04/24

Site Plan, 177016-ARC-ZZ-ZZZ-DRG-EAR-081001 P04; 05/04/24

Telecoms CCTV GA Layout 177016-ARC-ZZ-00-DRG-ETL-011000;05/04/24

Ticket Hall Bay Studies, 177016-ARC-ZZ-ZZZ-DRG-EAR-209006 P02;
05/04/24

External Lighting Layout, 1034002-CDL-ZZ-ZZ-DR-Z-9011 05/04/24

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Porte Cochere – Bay Studies – Sheet 2, 177016-ARC-ZZ-ZZZ-DRG-EAR-209002 P04
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Proposed Elevation SW & NW, 177016-ARC-ZZ-ZZZ-DRG-EAR-201001 P07
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Proposed Plan – Roof Plan, 177016-ARC-ZZ-RF1-DRG-EAR-2000R0 P07,
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Proposed Lower Ground Floor Plan, 177016-ARC-ZZ-000-DRG-EAR-200000
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Proposed Plans – Ground Floor, 177016-ARC-ZZ-001-DRG-EAR-200010
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273012 P01 05/08/24

Tree Plan 177016-ARC-ZZ-ZZZ-DRG-EEN-000110 P01 05/08/24

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt

- 3) Phasing Strategy:** No development shall commence until a Phasing Strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Phasing Strategy shall comprise a) a written scheme setting out the phases of construction, b) a plan identifying the phasing areas, and c) a timetable for construction and timescales for the implementation of the planning conditions set out in this Decision Notice. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved Phasing Strategy (unless superseded by a subsequent strategy approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority).

The specific matters controlled by planning conditions that require inclusion within the Phasing Strategy are: archaeology, entrance canopies, materials, gate piers, Porte Cochere details, and curtain wall details.

Reason: In order to secure the satisfactory development of the application site in accordance with Policies CS01 and CS02 of the Core Strategy. To ensure that the details are agreed in time to be incorporated into the development, this is a PRE-COMMENCEMENT condition.

- 4) Archaeology – Written Scheme of Investigation:** No groundworks, slab removal or new development shall take place or commence until a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording has been agreed in accordance with the timescales set out in the approved Phasing Strategy and a prepared Written Scheme of Investigation submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as the local planning authority. The scheme shall include:

- (1) an assessment of significance and how this applies to the regional research framework;
- (2) the programme and methodology of site investigation and recording;
- (3) the programme for post-investigation assessment;
- (4) provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording;

- (5) provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation;
- (6) provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation;
- (7) nomination of a competent person or persons or organization to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.

Reason: To ensure that any heritage assets that will be wholly or partly lost as a result of the development are recorded and that the understanding of their significance is advanced; and in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS18. To ensure that the details are agreed in time to be incorporated into the development, this condition will need to be discharged in accordance with the approved Phasing Strategy.

- 5) Entrance Canopies:** Architectural drawings detailing the entrance canopy structures illustrating their design, component size, technical specification, material, RAL colour and finish and how they will be assimilated with the existing building shall be submitted to and approved in writing to the Local Planning Authority in accordance with the timescales set out in the approved Phasing Strategy. The development shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved details and be retained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the Listed Building, and in accordance with Core Strategy policies CS01 and CS02. To ensure that the details are agreed in time to be incorporated into the development, this condition will need to be discharged in accordance with the approved Phasing Strategy.

- 6) Materials:** A full materials schedule shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority in accordance with the timescales set out in the approved Phasing Strategy. The sample panels shall illustrate how the materials are composed together and provide the depth and sculptural quality of the elevations for inspection by Officers and approval in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and be thereafter maintained.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity, the character and appearance of the area and in accordance with Core Strategy policies CS01 and CS02. To ensure that the details are agreed in time to be incorporated into the development, this condition will need to be discharged in accordance with the approved Phasing Strategy.

- 7) Gate Piers:** Details of the reconstruction of the Gate Piers shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in accordance with the timescales set out in the approved Phasing Strategy. The details shall outline the proposed method / technique of dismantling and reconstruction of the gate piers as well details on how the current location of the gate piers will

be marked for the purpose of heritage interpretation and also the provision of a heritage interpretation panel at a position to be identified to describe the historic importance of the gate piers and other heritage features associated with the railway station. The reconstruction shall take place in accordance with the approved details and be thereafter maintained.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity, the character and appearance of the area and in accordance with Core Strategy policies CS01 and CS02. To ensure that the details are agreed in time to be incorporated into the development, this condition will need to be discharged in accordance with the approved Phasing Strategy.

- 8) Porte Cochere Details:** Details of the treatment and positioning of the ornate metal gates and panels on the Porte Cochere shall be submitted to and approved in writing to the Local Planning Authority in accordance with the timescales set out in the approved Phasing Strategy. The details shall set out, where appropriate, the proposed locations for the removal and retention of the gates. The positioning of the ornate metal gates and panels shall take place in accordance with the approved details and be thereafter maintained.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity, the character and appearance of the area and in accordance with Core Strategy policies CS01 and CS02. To ensure that the details are agreed in time to be incorporated into the development, this condition will need to be discharged in accordance with the approved Phasing Strategy.

- 9) Curtain Wall Details:** Details of curtain wall glazing fixings shall be submitted to and approved in writing to the Local Planning Authority in accordance with the timescales set out in the approved Phasing Strategy. This will include how these features will relate to floor and walls, and how far they project from the structure as well as the RAL colour specification. With regard to glazed elements detailed information is required on fixings, corners, soffits and junctions between materials, overall design, headers, sills, glazing bar and frame dimensions and arrangement, materials, reveal depth. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and thereafter maintained.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity, the character and appearance of the area and in accordance with Core Strategy policies CS01 and CS02. To ensure that the details are agreed in time to be incorporated into the development, this condition will need to be discharged in accordance with the approved Phasing Strategy.

NOTES FOR APPLICANT

1. The City Council, as local planning authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received. This planning application has been the subject of positive and proactive discussions with the applicant during the process (and/or pre-application).

The decision to grant planning permission with appropriate conditions taking account of those material considerations in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF 2023 is considered to be a positive outcome of these discussions.

Policies relating to this recommendation

- 2006_UD06 New development should not impinge upon landscape features that have amenity value whether they are within or outside the site unless it can meet criteria.
- 2014_CS03 The Council will require high quality, well designed developments that contribute positively to the character and appearance of the local natural and built environment. The policy sets out design objectives for urban form, connections and access, public spaces, the historic environment, and 'Building for Life'.
- 2014_CS18 The Council will protect and seek opportunities to enhance the historic environment including the character and setting of designated and other heritage assets