

DESIGN AND ACCESS /HERITAGE STATEMENT

NETLEY Railway Station, The Badgers, Hound, Butlocks Heath, Eastleigh SO31 5PT – Replacement of existing handrails to footbridge stairways to Platforms 1 &2 with new DDA-compliant handrails, and installation of tactile tiles at each landing in accordance with current codes of practice.

Introduction

This Design and Access/Heritage Statement is provided in support of a Listed Building Consent application for works in boundaries of a Grade II Listed Building, Netley Railway Station. The station is currently owned by Network Rail and is leased and operated by South Western Railway as a train operator. The proposed works comprise the replacement of existing handrails to the footbridge stairways to Platforms 1 & 2 with new DDA-compliant "warm to the touch" handrails, and installation of tactile surfacing at each landing in accordance with the current codes of practice.

1. Historical Background

Netley Railway Station is a Category E Listed station located near the village of Netley in Hampshire, and is run by South Western Railway. Built near the Royal Victoria Park, the line into the village from the west was built by the Southampton and Netley Railway, though by the time it was opened in March 1866 the aforementioned company had been taken over by the London and South Western Railway. The LSWR was then extended further east to Fareham in 1889. The current network is on the West Coastway Line.

Netley Station played its part in 1900s, where a branch from the station conveyed patients to the nearby Netley Hospital. Heavy casualties during the First World War resulted in the station being for a time the third busiest in Britain. More recently, the passenger footfall has dropped slightly (with 2020/21 being the lowest at 25,292 passengers) but growing steadily since with the figure confirmed at just over 74,000 passengers in 2023/24.

Almost all the services at Netley Station are operated by South Western Railway using Class 450 EMUs (electric multiple unit or self-powered electric train), with additional services provided by Southern using Class 377 or Class387 EMUs. The typical off-peak service is one train per hour in each direction between Portsmouth & Southsea and Southampton Central Stations. Additional services call at the station during the peak hours, including two services to Southampton Central operated by Southern, one originating from Littlehampton and the other from Brighton.

The station building itself is Grade II Listed (no1204612) under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest. Built circa 1867, the Station building is of symmetrical classical design, reflecting the style of Tite who designed the earliest local stations (e.g. Eastleigh, Gosport, Southampton). Two-storeyed front of 2.3.2 windows with single-storeyed wings, featuring slate hipped roofing with wide eaves on brackets. The walls are in painted stucco finish, incorporating eaves bands, projecting quoins, first floor banding to the main wings, plinth, architraves to windows, and cills on brackets. Upper openings are cambered, with square side openings. The recessed centrepiece has on the ground floor a triple arcade with a moulding carried along at impost level, recessed arched openings, being a window on either side of a central doorway. Prominent chimneys stand out, incorporating cornice, band and plinth details. The building is virtually unaltered to this day, except for the colour to the main wall façade.

Its history and building style make Netley Station worthy of its Listed status, and the scheme proposed has been considered in terms of limiting the impact on the actual station building whilst looking to improve the safety standards for all station users.

2. Planning Applications Summary

Since being granted Grade II Listed status in February 1983 there have been approx. 10no. planning applications submitted for Netley Station, predominantly for Listed Building Consent, the majority of which have been granted.

Details of the various applications are listed in the main body text of the Planning Portal application form accompanying this submission for Listed Building Consent.

3. Environmental Impact Assessment

The proposed development will not have an adverse impact on the environment in this area and is aimed at enhancing the user experience by creating a safer use of the stairways serving the footbridge over Platforms 1 & 2.

4. Design

4.1 Use

Netley Railway Station is managed and operated by South Western Railways, which provides all services but one which is supplied by Southern.

Replacing the existing handrails with DDA-compliant units (and associated tactilets at each landing) to the existing access stairways serving the concrete footbridge is a much-needed safety upgrade for the growing passenger footfall at this station.

4.2 Amount

The proposal includes minor alterations as shown in the attached drawings, comprising the replacement of the existing handrails with safer double rail units (and installation of tactilets at landings) which now meet all the current codes of practice and safety standards.

4.3 Layout

The proposed new handrails and associated tactilets are to be set out in the same alignment of the original stairways.

4.4 Scale

The proposed replacement of safer handrails (and associated tactilets to landings) to the footbridge stairways on Platforms 1 & 2 will be insignificant in terms of scale of the existing stairways and unnoticeable when compared to the scale of the existing station building and curtilage.

4.5 Landscaping

Landscaping is as existing. The proposed installation of DDA-compliant handrails do not impact on the landscaping in any way.

4.6 Appearance

The proposed replacement closed-end handrails (and buff-coloured tactile) are now a common stairway feature which contrast well with the concrete background making them visible (hence the colour Yellow RAL 1018), which help enhance the station environment and promote safety standards.

Conclusion

The Listed Building Consent application proposes the replacement of tactile pavings and the existing handrails to the footbridge access stairways located on Platforms 1 and 2 with DDA-compliant closed end double handrails which are yellow-coloured "warm to the touch" and meet the requirements of the DfT Accessible train Station Design for disabled people, to provide much-needed improvement to safety standards for all station users.

South Western Railway's upkeep of the station has been continued throughout their tenure as Train Operator, and the proposed DDA-compliant handrails and associated works to tactile pavings are a much-needed addition to the station with minimum disturbance to the fabric of the footbridge.

The proposed installation of DDA-compliant handrails and associated works form part of a major improvement programme being implemented throughout the South Western Railway network.