

Haltwhistle Station – Conservation and Change of Use of Waiting Rooms

Design and Access Statement



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1. Introduction

Platforms 1 and 2 of Haltwhistle Station feature railway waiting room buildings. Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership (TVCRP) are in the process of renovating and adapting the buildings so they can be used in an economically sustainable way whilst maximising the benefits for local communities and businesses. Whilst not listed in their own right, the buildings are within the setting of Haltwhistle Station and associated listed structures and part of Haltwhistle Conservation Area. This Design and Access Statement should be read in conjunction with the Heritage Statement for the proposed development.

2. Location and Context

The two railway buildings are located on platforms 1 & 2 of Haltwhistle Station respectively. The buildings are a standard North Eastern Railway design and date from the first two decades of the 20th century. Whilst the larger shelter on platform 2 occupies a site highly visible from the station forecourt and drop-off area, the smaller shelter on platform 1 is visually less prominent.

Haltwhistle town centre is somewhat disconnected from the station by roads and mixed development which reduces its ability to capitalise on tourists and visitors that arrive to visit Hadrian's Wall, Northumberland National Park and the North Pennines AONB. Two national cycling routes pass closely by the station. The redevelopment of the waiting rooms presents an opportunity to create facilities that cater for the need to signpost visitors, offer local tourism information as well as providing space for and showcasing local business and crafts.

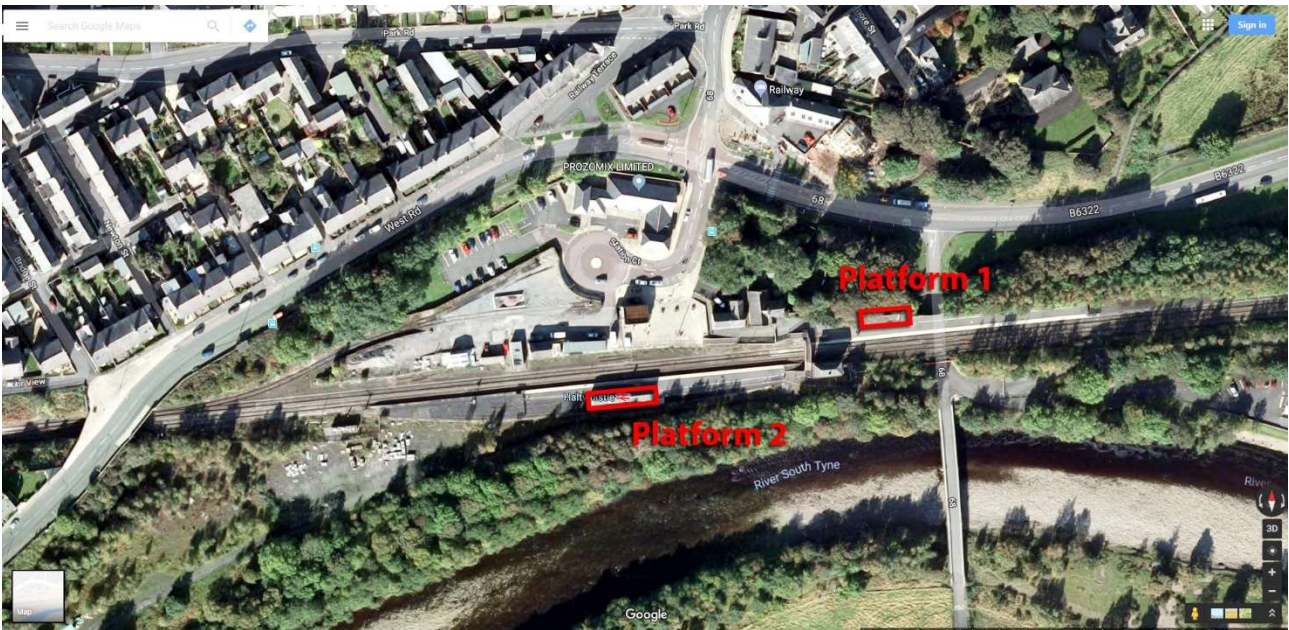


Figure 1: Location Plan

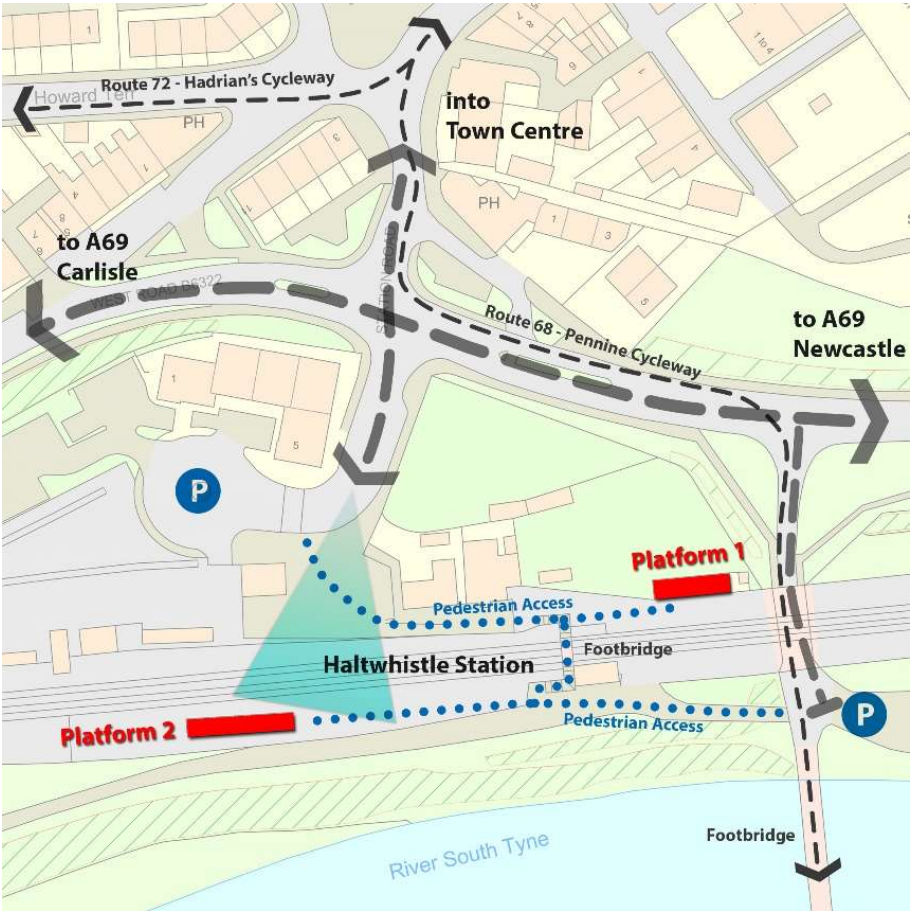


Figure 2: Context and adjoining connections of the site

3. Current Condition

Currently between one-third to half of the internal floor area of the buildings are used as waiting rooms whilst the remaining portions are vacant and were originally used as offices and workshops by the Great Northern Railway company.

Whilst the waiting room portions of the buildings have been maintained by current leaseholder Northern Rail, the remainder has been standing vacant for years and is increasingly deteriorating. The timber structure and cladding and floor joists show instances of rot and woodworm in places whilst moss grows on the slate roofs. Internal toilets including water and drainage connections have been defunct for approximately 50 years and can't be retained.

The proposed adaptation and redevelopment will provide an opportunity to halt the decline and restore the historic structures whilst keeping them in a befitting use. For more detailed information on the condition of the buildings please refer to the Heritage Statement submitted with this application.

4. Change of Use

The proposal entails the change of use of parts of the buildings from vacant workshop and office space into workshops and offices for small businesses, tourism agencies and artisans with TVCRP as leaseholder and landlord. It is envisaged that at least some of the units will be interfacing with customers / visitors. Waiting rooms will be maintained on both platforms although on a smaller footprint. The applicant believes that the change of use will contribute positively to the provision for the local community and local businesses as well as create opportunities for Haltwhistle to benefit from local tourism.

A small vacant brick building next to the waiting rooms on platform 1 was the former gent's toilet. The roof has collapsed. The proposal is for the building to be re-instated as an accessible unisex toilet and storage room. There is no other public toilet in the vicinity of Haltwhistle Station.



Figure 3: Platform 1 - Former Gent's toilet block with collapsed roof

5. Amount and Scale

The redevelopment occupies already present but partially vacant floor space and does not increase the overall Gross Internal Area of the two buildings. The new uses are all contained within the existing building envelope. Small scale adaptations include the proposed addition of a porch on the platform 2 building and the proposed installation of photovoltaic panels on the roof of the platform 1 structure. Given the above, the applicant considers the amount and scale of the proposed development appropriate and in keeping with both, the existing buildings as well as with the context of Haltwhistle Station.

6. Layout and Appearance

Both structures are spatially well-suited for a conversion into small offices or studios as per drawings provided. It is a client requirement to retain a portion of the existing spaces as waiting rooms.

The external envelope will, with minor adaptations, preserve its appearance, scale, shape and most of its fabric. Internally, proposed subdivisions have been designed to work with the external elevations and with existing walls as far as possible. In order to adapt the building to its proposed use as studios or offices, walls, roof and floors will have to be insulated. To that end it is proposed to do that on the inside of the external envelope.

One key idea Platform 2 is to relocate the entrance to a reduced waiting area to the gable end of the building and provide a new canopy, steps and ramp to upgrade the visual presence of the building. Most of the visitors arrive at platform 2 from the direction of Newcastle and the use of the remaining building could be connected to tourism in some way. This would enable the adjoining space to be internally connected to provide information or showcase local crafts made or sold on site. An exhibition about the world heritage sights in the area could be incorporated into the design of the waiting room area. A second office space can be either used in conjunction or separately with a shared use of toilet facilities. The offices are well-lit and connected utilising existing window and door openings. On platform 1, the smaller footprint allows for the creation of either one larger or two smaller studios, again, with shared toilet facilities.

The small brick building next to the platform 1 building is to receive a new contemporary mono-pitched roof and new doors.

7. Access, Parking and Refuse Arrangements

Please also refer to existing and proposed site plans submitted with this application.

The Northern approach to the station provides for vehicular access and a drop-off point to all users of the station. Alternative vehicular access to platform 2 is available up to the area South of the underpass underneath the railway close to the Tyne. Pedestrian access exists to both buildings via the main approach to the station and a footbridge across the railway line. Wheelchair access to platform 2

is via an accessible path from a parking area at the foot of platform two. All vehicular and pedestrian access routes already exist and are proposed to be utilised unchanged.



Figure 4: Accessible approach to platform 2

The proposal utilises existing public parking provision on Station Ct and the parking area at the foot of platform two. No additional parking spaces are proposed as the development is very minor and existing provision ample. Furthermore, because of the location of the site on the station platform, on-site parking provision would not be feasible.

Access and maintenance arrangements for the proposed accessible unisex public toilet on platform 1 are to be discussed with the leaseholder.

Refuse and recycling generation is anticipated to be very low as the development is small and office use. TVCRP as the landlord will commission a waste disposal company to collect waste. The proposal for future tenants in both premises is to take their refuse and dry mixed recycling to a 240l commercial waste and a dry-mixed recycling bin behind The Old Ticket Office which is leased by TVCRP. (indicated on proposed site plan)

8. Existing Photographs



Figure 5: Platform 1 - View from South West



Figure 6: Platform 1 - View from North West

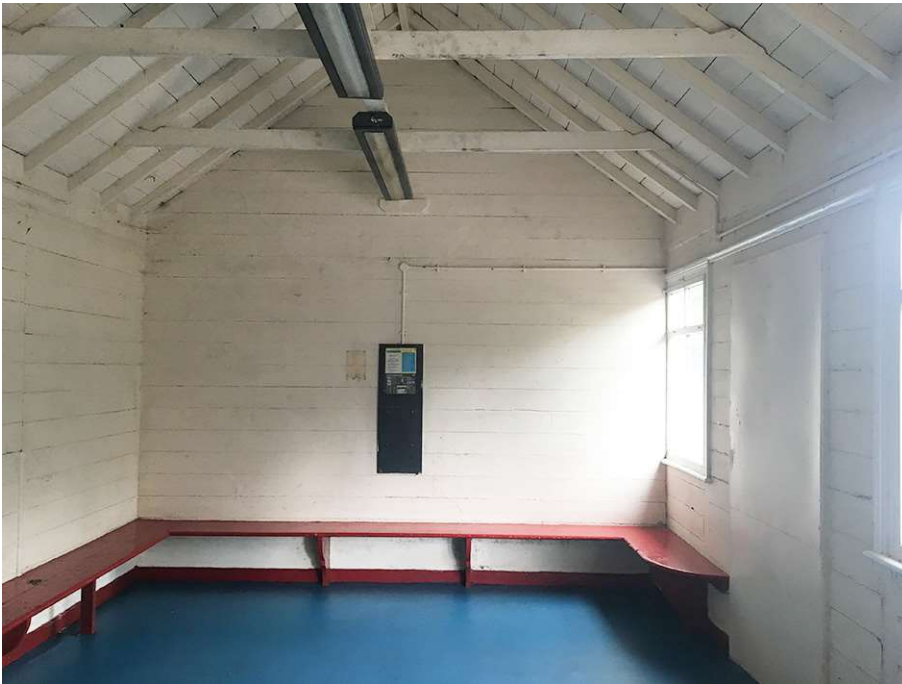


Figure 7: Platform 1 - Waiting Room

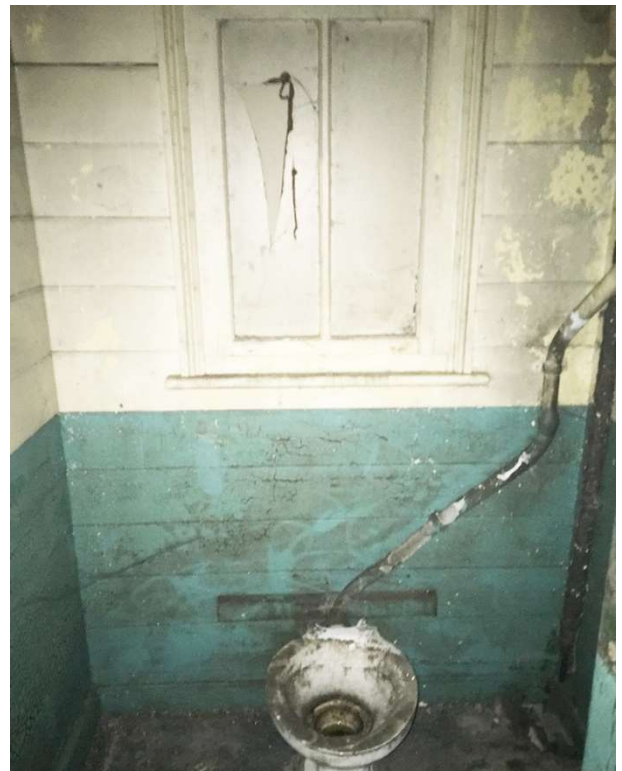


Figure 8: Platform 1 - Disused part of waiting room and WC



Figure 9: Platform 2 - View from North East



Figure 10: Platform 2 - View from South East



Figure 11: Platform 2 - Waiting room and fire place



Figure 12: Platform 2 - Waiting room with blocked up door opening to East gable



Figure 13: Platform 2 - fire place and door in disused part of building

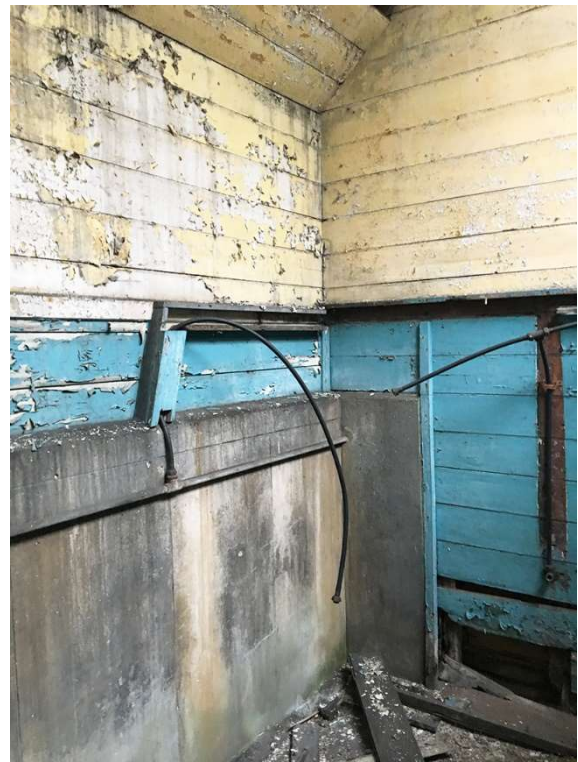


Figure 14: Platform 2 - Disused toilet and urinal