

Web site: <http://www.DurhamCity.org>

13th November 2024

Ms Clare Walton
Durham County Council Planning Development
PO BOX 274
Stanley Co Durham
DH8 1HG

Dear Ms Walton,

DM/24/02768/LB Railway Station, Station Approach Durham DH1 4RB
Refurbishment of platform canopy structures and replacement of the glazing and support system on canopies to platform 1 and 2 and the station building entrance canopy (at platform 2) and the stairwell glazed enclosure on platform 2

The Trust generally supports this application primarily because of the need for repairs to the canopies. There are a number of issues that the Trust has reservations or concerns about. The Trust particularly values the station and its historic features and awarded its 2009 Architectural Award for its restoration and contemporary new build. While the front block is Grade II listed, the historic canopies are not but should be considered as heritage assets.

These are as follows:

1. Canopy Columns

It was very concerning that under the Design and Access Statement Section 2.0 Proposals that the cast iron columns may be under threat of replacement. The thorough Inspection and Refurbishment Options Report (Civils) appears to conclude that repair and watching brief are adequate. It needs clarifying what the proposals are and if there is a risk of removal of these essential elements, an indication of the proposed means of replacement. In addition, the metal slots on the columns for train indicator finger posts are still visible on some columns. These should be conserved as railway memorabilia rather than being removed.

2. Lightweight Acrylic Glazing System

The Trust understands the need for replacement and reduction in loading necessary to relieve pressure on the columns. There are reservations about the degree to which the aluminium glazing bars and glazing material are sympathetic to the historic structure. More assurance is needed on the retention of the existing glazing pattern, ridging materials and choice of finish. It needs reassurance that the acrylic system does not become opaque similar to polycarbonate panels as they age.

3. Replacement Lighting

The existing platform column lights have a significant impact on the City's nighttime setting because of the height of the railway line and station close to the skyline. They are visible from the Sands area up to the A690 road approach into the City as an

THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

example. Their impact has been exacerbated by the highly visible lighting to the new station multi storey car park.

There is no lighting impact assessment for the replacements and although the LED column heads may offer more focused lighting and less spillage, this should be confirmed. The canopy lights appear to offer different focus settings that could create spillage or reduce it dependent on the adjustment and intensity. This also requires confirmation.

The appearance and suitability of the angled luminaires for the historic canopy is not clear from the drawings. The Trust seeks reassurance that these are an appropriate option for the historic sections of canopies. It also would wish to know what the proposals are for the Platform 2 outside canopy.

The Trust also considers that the cube topped lighting columns are inappropriate – is it possible for these to be replaced as well?

Yours sincerely,

John Lowe

Chair, City of Durham Trust