

# AGENDA ITEM 5 & 6

## APPENDIX 2a

2016/0195/DET and  
2016/0196/LBC

## DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT



## Royal Station Renewal

### **DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT**

Prepared by Halliday Fraser Munro for Aberdeenshire Council

May 2016 V.1



## ROYAL STATION VISION

The town of Ballater is a gateway to Royal Deeside and the Cairngorm National Park, and the old station building in the heart of Ballater is a key focus for locals and visitors alike. The railway no longer reaches the town but the long, low wooden station building, built and extended from 1866, had been the royal terminus for nearby Balmoral Castle and the building, and Queen Victoria's waiting room and the replica royal carriage, important to the town's pride and economy.

Fire engulfed the station in May 2015, and Ballater was further and severely hit by the floods last winter. But the station is due to rise from the ashes, symbolising Ballater's resurgence, led by Aberdeenshire Council and with architects Halliday Fraser Munro. Waiting room and carriage are saved and repaired and a mix of public uses – visitor centre and town library – and private restaurant will occupy the recreated station building. A new town square out the front links the station to the town halls and a new exhibition space at the back of the station, to the old tracks, will mix royal heritage with local history, including presenting local Pictish standing stones.

This new exhibition space extends along the old, gently-curving platform and over the tracks where the royal carriage sits, and is realised as two long, simple, metal-clad sheds, one in dark copper, and the casket round the royal carriage in a golden copper alloy. The sheds' end gables are glazed and their sides have long, high windows, blocking views of the housing behind but diverting the gaze up to Craigendarroch Hill to the north, letting the Pictish stones and local heritage be seen against their landscape.

A Planning Application has been lodged with work on site programmed for November and the station and exhibition re-opening towards the end of 2017.

## PROJECT TEAM

This document has been prepared on behalf of Aberdeenshire Council by Halliday Fraser Munro:

V.1 Section 6.0 updated to include visual images



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Visit Scotland



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# 1.0

INTRODUCTION

# INTRODUCTION

## Aim

This Design and Access Statement is written in support of the application by Aberdeenshire Council for planning and listed building consent to renew the Royal Station, Station Square which was engulfed by fire in May 2015. Background and justification will be provided for the reinstatement of the grade B listed building and the formation of an enhanced exhibition space around the platform and royal carriage. Inclusive to the application are proposed improvements to Station Square.

This statement has been prepared with reference to The Scottish Government 4/2013 Development Management Procedures and Planning Advice Note 68: Design Statements.

## Background

The Royal Station has been a key focal point within Ballater since it's inception in 1886, attracting both Royals and tourists to the town. The station has undergone many changes during it's lifetime with various additions and uses. It faced an uncertain future following the closure of the Deeside Railway in 1966 but eventually found new use as a restaurant and visitor centre, which maintained it's popularity with both locals and visitors.

The fire, which completely destroyed the west wing and severely damaged the remainder of the building, was followed by the severe flooding in the town during winter 2015/16 which badly affected many local businesses and residents.

## Client Brief

To renew the fire damaged Victorian building to match the original architecture of the grade B listed building to the principle elevations, restoring the Queen Victoria Waiting Room and provide an enhanced exhibition space.

It is envisaged that the renewal of the station building will act as a catalyst for the regeneration of the town itself.



## INTRODUCTION



Ballater Station, circa 2000

# 2.0

SITE CONTEXT



## NATIONAL: CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK



Cairngorms National Park



## REGIONAL: ROYAL DEESIDE

### Royal Deeside

Ballater is situated on the River Dee in the heart of Royal Deeside, within the eastern boundary of the Cairngorm National Park. Balmoral Castle, the British Royal Family's holiday residence, is located 8 miles to the west of the village. The village's royal connection and location makes it a popular destination for both tourists and outdoor enthusiasts.



Royal Deeside



## TOWN: BALLATER



Town of Ballater



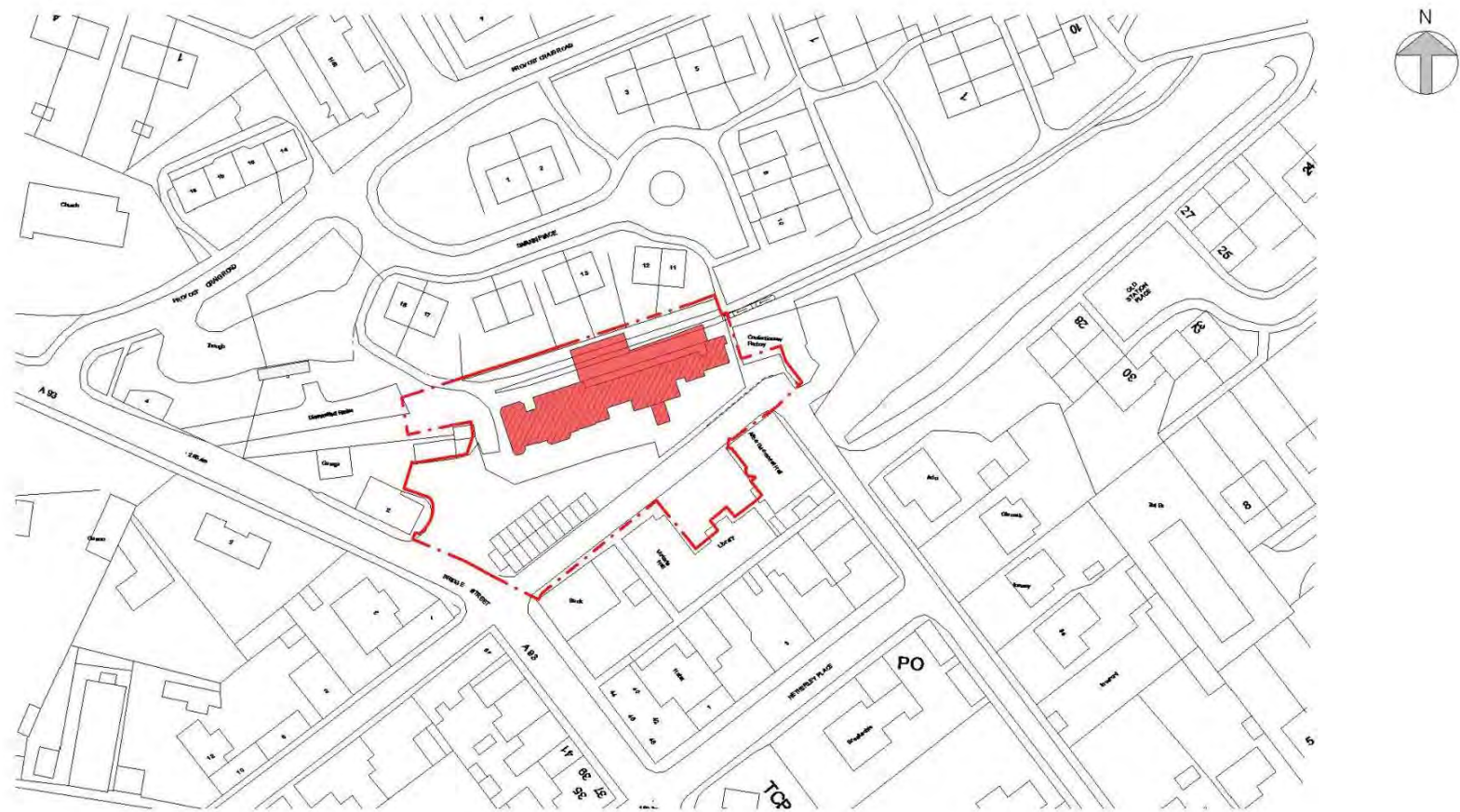
## IMMEDIATE: STATION SQUARE



Village Centre



# SITE LOCATION



Site Location Plan

# EXISTING SITE PLAN



Site Plan and Ownership Boundary



## SURROUNDING CONTEXT: BRIDGE STREET/A93



Bridge Street/A93



## SURROUNDING CONTEXT: VICTORIA & ALBERT HALLS



Victoria & Albert Halls

# 3.0

SITE ANALYSIS AND ACCESS

# HISTORY

## Deeside Railway

A local landmark, the Royal Station first came into operation in 1866 and was the Deeside Railway's western terminus. Its proximity to Balmoral meant it proved popular with the Royal Family, guests and the general public. Starting from what is thought to have been a simple shed-like structure, it quickly developed into a grander building with various additions, which included a richly detailed waiting room for Queen Victoria, a port cochere entrance & various extensions to the wings. The building also underwent various changes in colour scheme during its use, including a temporary black and gold scheme for the visit of Czar Nicholas II's in 1896.



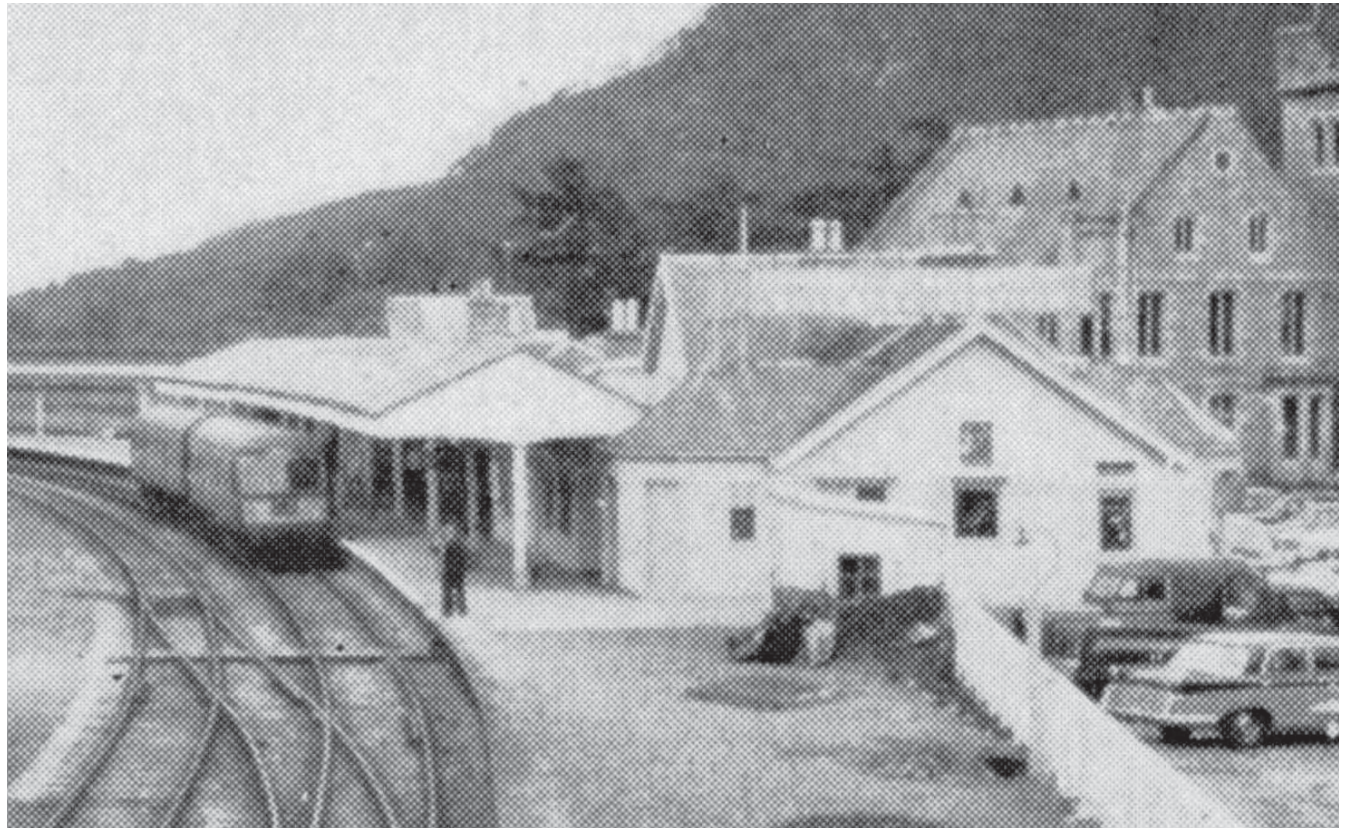
A Royal arrival



# HISTORY

## Beeching report

The Beeching Report led to the station's eventual closure in 1966 and, although the Scottish Tourist board and a café occupied the building in the mid 70's, the building gradually fell into a state of disrepair.



The Royal Station pre-Beeching Report



# HISTORY

## 1999/2000 Renovation

Aberdeenshire undertook extensive renovation works on the Royal Station with the focus on improvements to the underbuilding and internal layout. The works included a programme of propping of the entire building to provide a new underbuilding with insulated concrete floor slab. Internal refurbishment works were also completed to provide improved accommodation for Visit Scotland, The Station Restaurant and other small businesses. The construction of a new platform canopy with glazed infill created a new exhibition space which focused on the Royal connection, with the main attractions being Queen Victoria's Waiting Room and the replica Royal Carriage. Included in the restoration was replication of decorative wood panelling to Queen Victoria's Waiting Room.



Underbuilding work being carried out.

# HISTORY

## Fire

The fire in May 2015 devastated the building. The west wing and platform canopy were completely destroyed but firefighters were able to save the replica Royal Carriage and much of the building's central core, which houses the Queen Victoria Waiting Room, and east wing. Both areas suffered significant damage but it is expected that a large extent of the remaining walls may be incorporated into the renewal of the building.

## Conservation Statement

A comprehensive historic analysis of the Royal Station is provided within the Conservation Statement which is enclosed with this application for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent



Immediate aftermath of fire



# FOCAL

## Focal Point / Landmarks

The Royal Station is one of the principle focal points and landmarks within Ballater. In addition, Craigendarroch hill, which rises to the North of the village, is visible from various points in the village and forms a prominent backdrop to the site.



Craigendarroch rising behind the Royal Station

# FOCAL

## Focal Point / Landmarks

The immediate context of Station Square has a number of high quality views and focal points of both historic architecture and surrounding natural landmarks, the most significant of which was the original grade B listed Ballater Station. The station building was a key feature within the town, helping to support the local tourism industry.

The Victoria and Albert halls, which form the principle south elevation of the Station Square site, are of baronial style and are dated 1895 and 1874 respectively. The V&A halls are still in regular use.



Victoria & Albert Halls



# FOCAL

## Deeside Way

Wider contextual views of the Ballater Station site are limited as it is a single storey building within a village centre location with surrounding buildings of up to 3 storeys. The principle wider contextual view of the site is from the A93 which runs south—north along the western boundary of the site.

A key view of the building is from the approach along the Deeside Way. Formed along the old Deeside Railway, the station building is clearly visible for walkers and cyclists and identifies as the final destination on the route.



View of Ballater Station from Deeside Way Approach

## EDGE CONDITION

### Station Square

Station Square is currently dominated by car parking and access roads.



View of Ballater Station from Deeside Way

## EDGE CONDITION

### Station Square

Link road running to front of station provides access to businesses, car parking spaces and delivery vehicle unloading area. A93 forms the western edge of the square.



Station Square view from Confectionery Factory



## EDGE CONDITION

### South

The southern edge of the site is primarily fronted by Victorian baronial style architecture which presents possibilities for a small civic square.



South Edge Condition

## EDGE CONDITION

### North

Low density housing with private gardens and overgrown scrub forms the northern edge of the Royal Station site.



North Edge Condition



## EDGE CONDITION

### North

Adjacent to the site on the former petrol filling station which has been turned into a bicycle rental business. The business is popular with visitors to the Deeside Way and surrounding hills.



North Edge Condition



## EDGE CONDITION

### North-West

The north western edge of Station Square is completed by a low rise building which is run as a home furnishing shop.



North-West Edge Condition

# ACTIVITY

## Current Site Activity

Current activity at the building site is minimal, with only a handful of personnel attending with any regularity to continue debris removal and site cleaning.

There is still a moderate degree of activity within Station Square, which is generated by neighbouring small businesses such as The Bike Station and The Confectionary Factory, as well as the Victoria and Albert Halls. The V&A halls currently house Visit Scotland's information point on a temporary basis as they were displaced from their Ballater Station premises by the fire. It is expected that Visit Scotland will return to operate within the renewed Ballater Station upon its completion. The V&A halls also accommodate the village library and provides meeting rooms and hall space for local events.

In addition, the free car parking provided within Station Square also provides immediate access to the popular shops and cafes along Bridge Street.

The nature of the shops and businesses around Station Square are predominately daytime activities, with the only regular night time activity being provided by the earlier Station Restaurant, which was accommodated within the Ballater Station building prior to the fire.



View of site from Station Square

# ACTIVITY

## Active Frontages: Surrounding Area

The site lies to the north of the Ballater village green and is an important focal point within the town. There is relatively large footfall at the site due to the provision of car parking spaces within Station Square and its close proximity to local shops and businesses

Bridge Street had a very active and vibrant street frontage with many shops and cafes. The area suffered during the winter 2015/16 floods, with many local business badly affected and premises damaged. There is evidence that the street is regaining its activity with some businesses reopening.

The Royal Station itself was a key activity generator, with a number of small businesses occupying the building alongside the popular visitor centre and Station Restaurant.



Active Frontages



# ACTIVITY

## Day and Night Activities

The majority of the current activities within the surrounding area are daytime activities. These include small shops, cafes and some offices around Station Square and to the south along Bridge Street and the village green. The Deeside Way, which terminates at Station Square, extends to the east of the site and is a popular walking and cycling route. The area to the north and south east of the site is predominately residential with limited activity impact on the immediate site.

Before the fire, the level of daytime and night time activity in Station Square was much greater, with the station building providing a focal point for the village with both tourists and locals attracted by the visitor centre, Royal exhibition, The Station Restaurant and other small business that were accommodated within the building.



Day Activity

# ACCESS

## Vehicular

The Station Square site lies to the north of the village centre, with primary access from the adjacent Bridge Street/A93 which runs through the heart of Ballater. The A93 is the primary road link and a popular tourist route through Royal Deeside. Prior to the flooding during winter 2015/16, Bridge Street was an active area for retail and businesses. The site is bounded by Bridge Street to the west, with access to Monaltrie Road from Station Square to the south east. Monaltrie Road is primarily residential access with the majority of traffic expected to re-join the A93 upon exiting Station Square.

A 30mph speed limit is in place throughout the village. However, active street frontages and on street parking helps to create a low speed environment through the village centre. Station Square and all of the surrounding streets are open to vehicular movement.

In addition to passenger vehicles, there are also delivery vehicles which service local businesses both within the site and surrounding area.



Vehicular Access



# ACCESS

## Parking

Parking is provided immediately adjacent to the site within Station Square. The current parking order provision for the square is thought to be for 24 car spaces, there are also an additional 6 'unofficial' spaces which are currently in use. The parking at Station Square is popular with limited availability during daytime business hours. However, an overflow parking area is provided approximately 50m walking distance to the north of the site and is accessible by car from Provost Craig Road and Swann Place via Bridge Street.



Car Parking



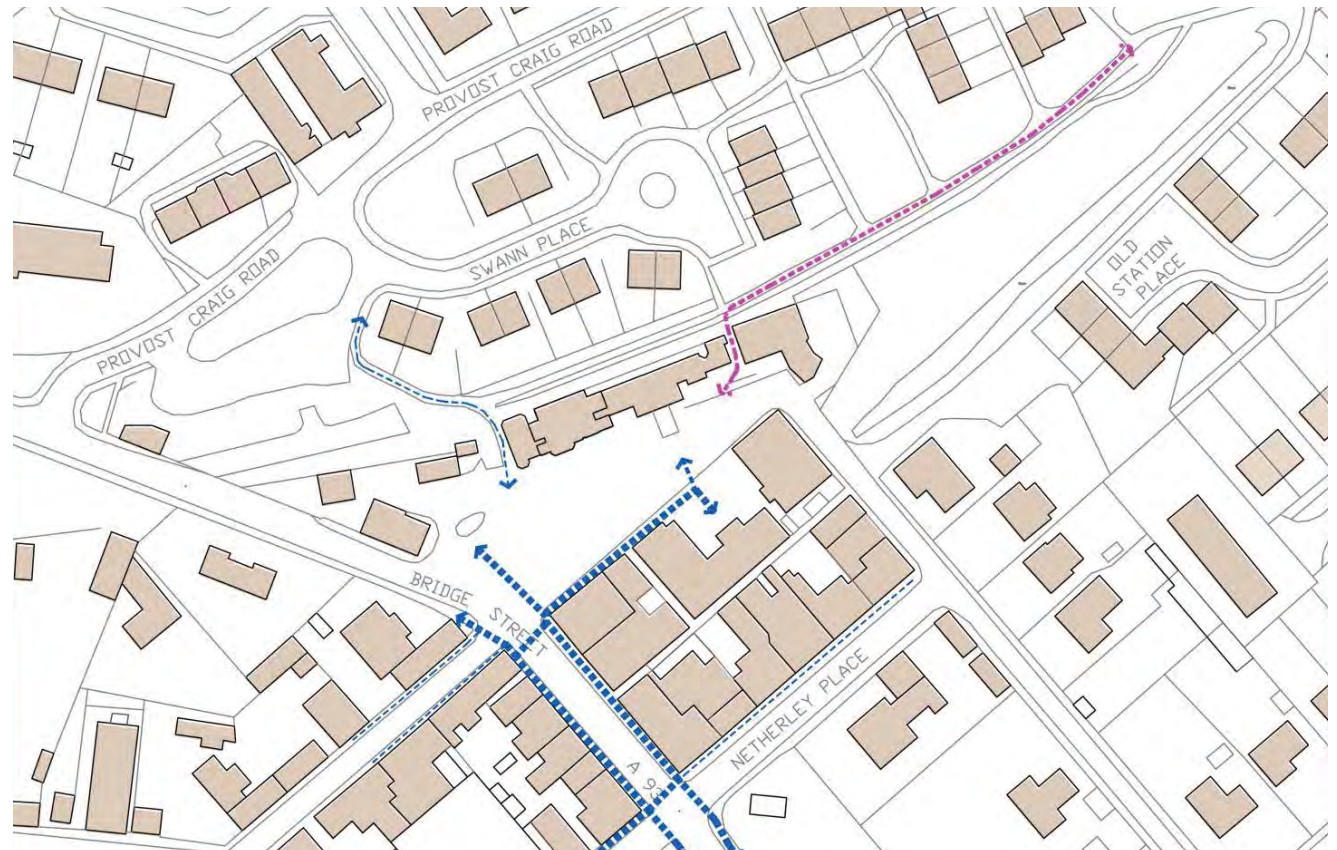
# ACCESS

## Pedestrian

Pedestrian movement to the south and south west of the site is high. The close proximity of Station Square to the shops along Bridge Street means that it is a popular area for car parking with resultant pedestrian movement. There are no dedicated pedestrian crossing points in the surrounding area site.

### Key

- ■ ■ ■ ■ Highest movement activity
- - - - - Reduced movement activity
- - - - - Deeside Way

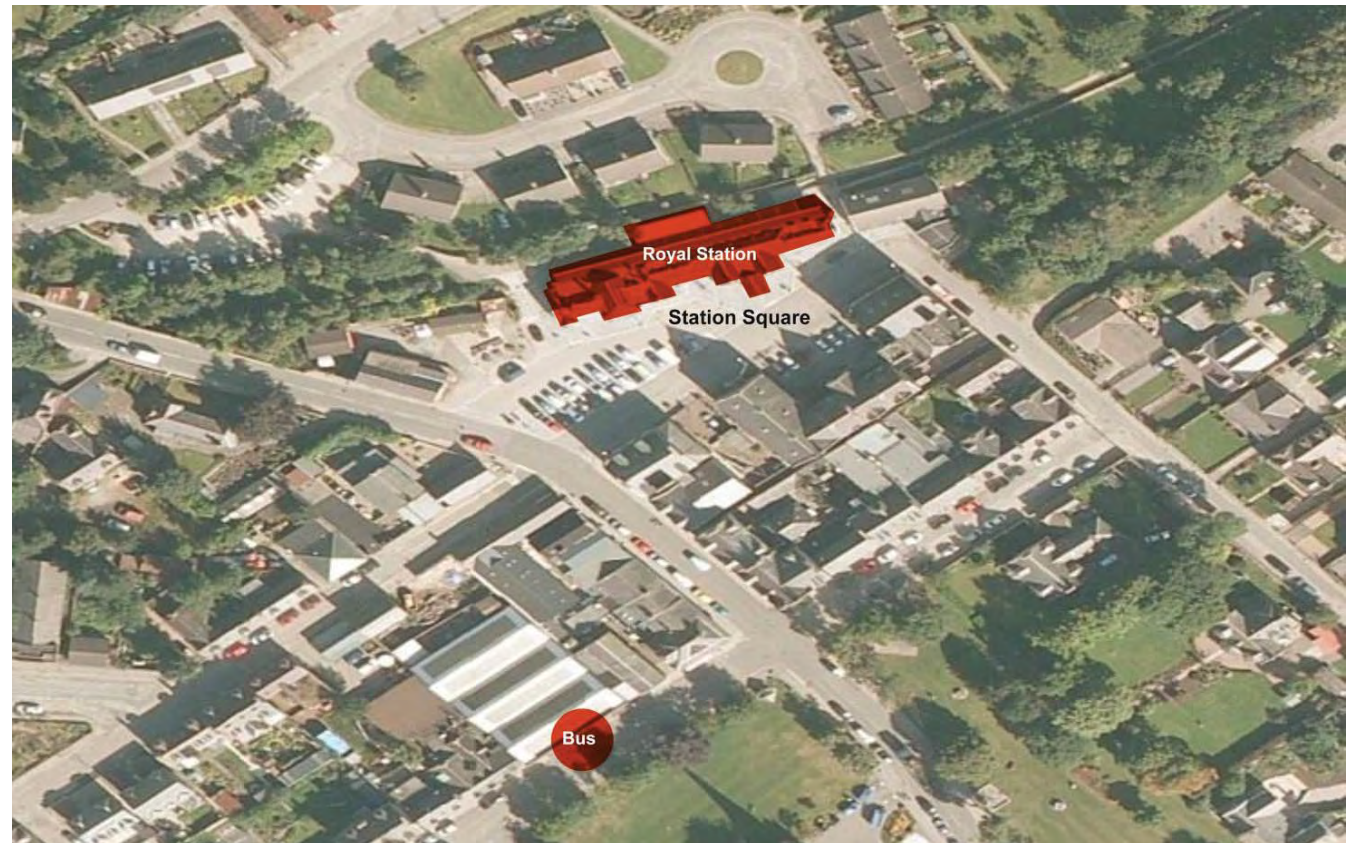


Pedestrian Movement Activity

# ACCESS

## Public Transport

Public transport in Ballater is limited. An hourly bus service connects the town to Aberdeen and Braemar, with the bus depot located next to the village green which is approximately 200yards from the site. There are a small number of local taxi service providers in the village.



Ballater Bus Station

# 4.0

EXISTING BUILDING ANALYSIS

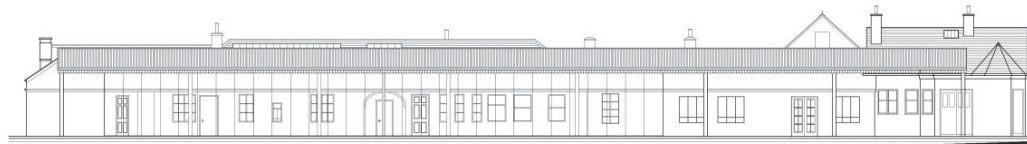


## EXISTING BUILDING ANALYSIS



Royal Station, pre-fire

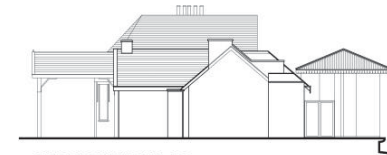
## DRAWINGS OF BALLATER STATION RESTORATION 1999/2000



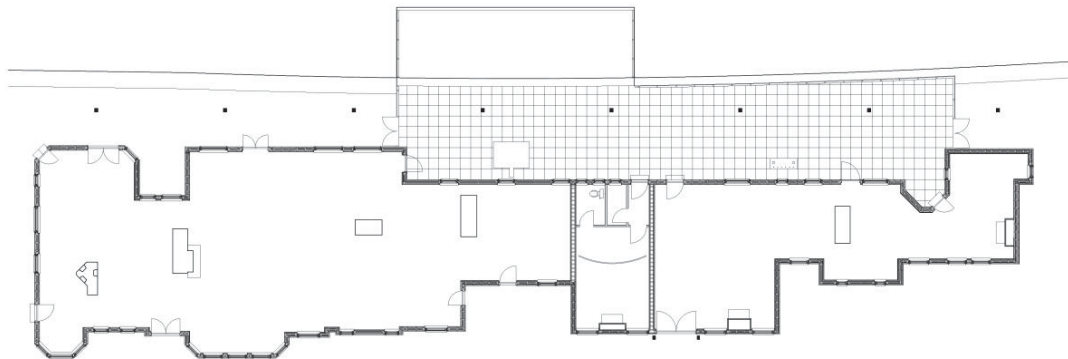
REAR ELEVATION 1:100



FRONT ELEVATION 1:100



SIDE ELEVATION 1:100



SIDE ELEVATION 1:100

Plans and Elevations of 1999/2000 Refurbishment Works

# FOCAL ELEMENTS

## Plan layout

Although the original building grew, with a number of extensions added and some elements removed both during and after its use as a train station, analysis and public feedback from Ballater Open Day highlighted the importance of three key elements within the building; the Royal Carriage, Queen Victoria's Waiting Room and the pend leading passengers out to Station Square.

### Key

-  Royal Carriage
-  Queen Victoria's Waiting Room
-  The Pend



Plan Layout



## EXHIBITION SPACE

### Exhibition Space

The exhibition space was formed by enclosing the existing platform with a new canopy and infilling the elevations with structural glazing. Analysis of this space from first hand accounts and photographic evidence identified that the exhibition suffered from poor lighting control, and lack of dedicated wall/exhibition space.

The view from the platform is also not representative of the Victorian era with a collection of small bungalows forming the backdrop to the exhibition. The expanse of glazing means that the views are uncontrolled and with light flooding into the space it creates a difficult environment for focusing attention on exhibits.

NB. The replica royal carriage was added as a later phase to the initial refurbishment and exhibition.



Exhibition Space circa 2000

# POST-FIRE CONDITION

## Survey

The fire of May 2015 destroyed a large portion of the building. The following key and survey plan identify the condition of each area with photographs of the immediate aftermath.

## Key

**Area A** - Western end of original station previously accommodating retail unit, restaurant and kitchen - area is generally completely destroyed by fire with only part of restaurant vestibule and chimneys/fireplaces remaining.

**Area B** - Central retail unit and toilets/store to restaurant - area is generally destroyed internally along with total loss of roof structure, generally only external walls remain to front elevation.

**Area C** - Western end of platform canopy and display/exhibit area (including extension for royal carriage) - area is generally destroyed by fire with loss of original timber wall between platform and station building. Further, damage is evident to kingpost trusses, canopy roof lights and enclosing platform patent glazing. Trusses have deflected resulting to some instability for the roof structure with some temporary propping in place meantime.

**Area D** - Eastern end of platform canopy and display/exhibit area - trusses have suffered fire damage and charring at node points to original station structure with kingpost trusses deflecting. In addition there are a number of damaged panels to enclosing patent glazing along with fire damage to linings to underside of roof structure.

**Area E** - eastern end of original station accommodating royal waiting room and Visitor Information Centre - roof structure over these areas is totally destroyed with collapse into remaining areas. Waiting room has suffered extensive damage to decorative panelling and linings along with original stained glass windows. Remaining external wall structure generally appears intact, however fire damage is evident to wall heads and local areas of vertical linings. Partial damage to external horizontal linings is also evident either side of Porte Cochere.



Post-fire Survey Drawing



## POST-FIRE CONDITION



Ballater Station post-fire



## POST-FIRE CONDITION



Ballater Station post-fire



## POST-FIRE CONDITION



Ballater Station post-fire



## POST-FIRE CONDITION



Ballater Station post-fire



## POST-FIRE CONDITION



Ballater Station post-fire



## POST-FIRE CONDITION



Ballater Station post-fire



## POST-FIRE CONDITION



Queen Victoria's Waiting Room post fire



## POST-FIRE CONDITION



Ballater Station post-fire



## POST-FIRE CONDITION



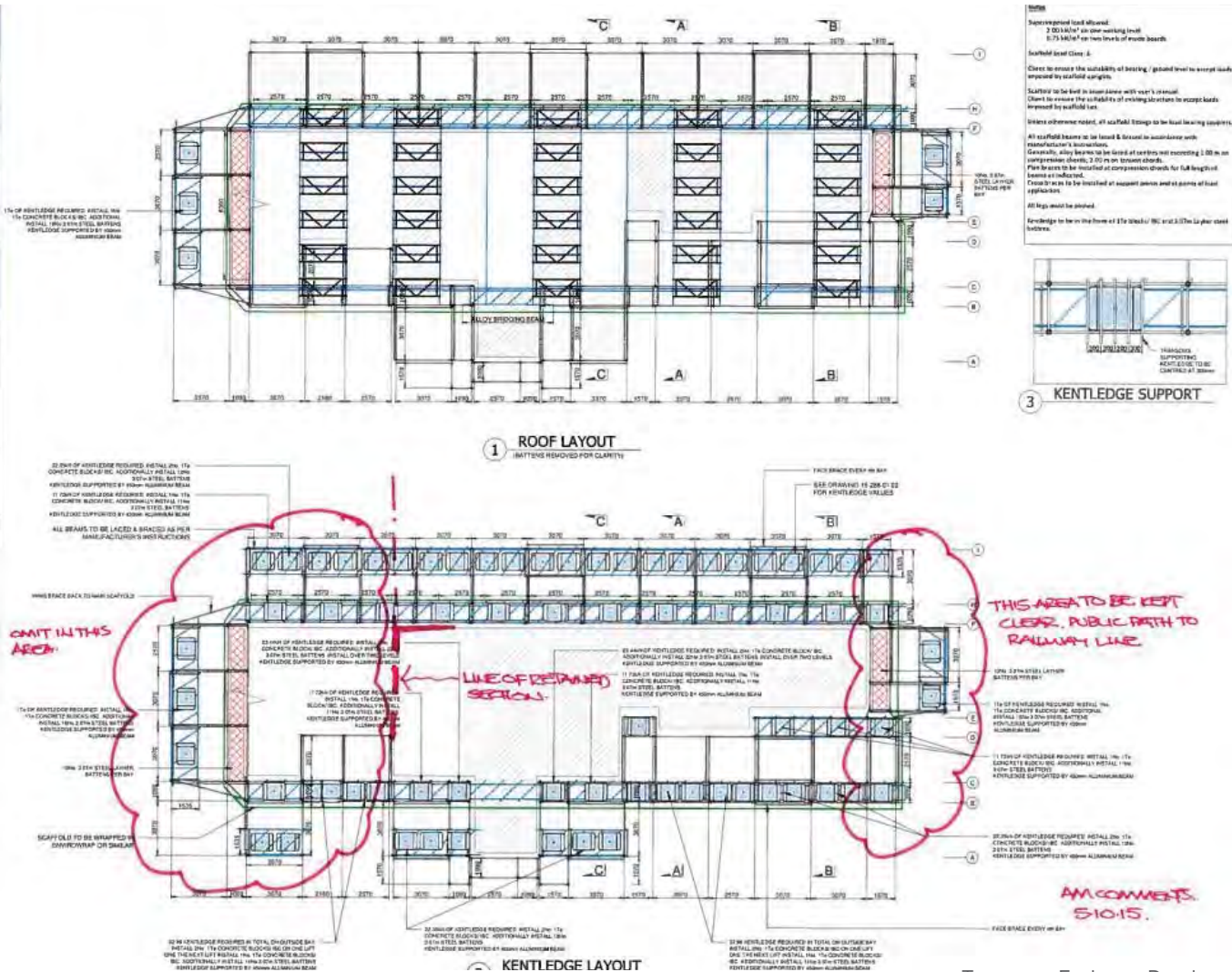
Ballater Station post-fire



# TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE

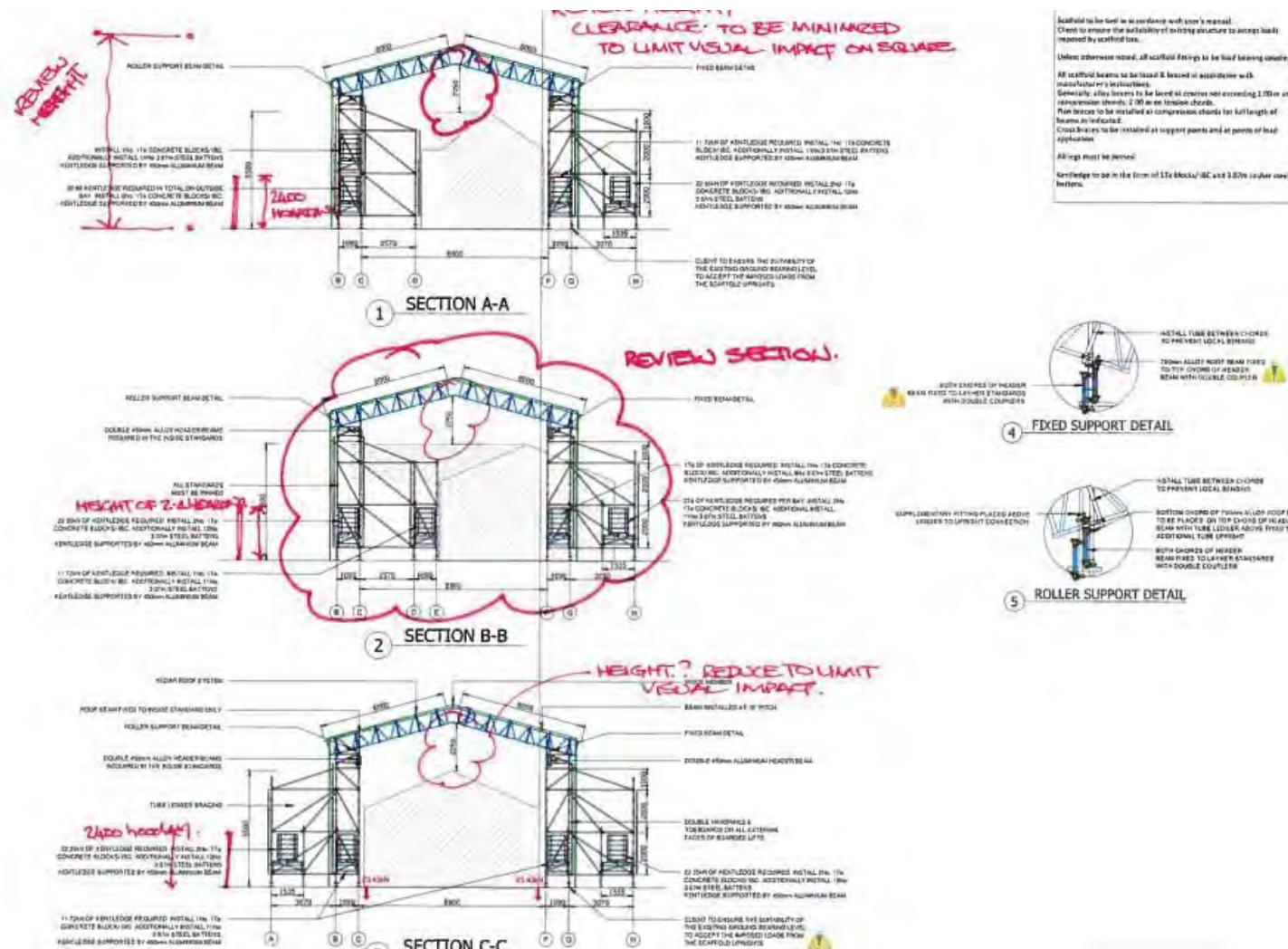
## Temporary Enclosure

Once the site was cleared a temporary enclosure was erected to protect the remaining structure from the elements and provide a safe platform for inspection and initial site works.



Temporary Enclosure Drawings

## TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE





## TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE

### Royal Carriage

The royal carriage was saved by firefighters from fire damage. A temporary protective timber framed and ventilated enclosure has been erected around the carriage in order to protect it from the elements and help maintain its current condition.



Erection of Royal Carriage enclosure

## TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE



Erection of Temporary Enclosure



## TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE



Erection of Temporary Enclosure

## TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE



Temporary Enclosure



## CURRENT CONDITION

### West Wing

Clearance of the building debris revealed the concrete slab and foundations installed by Aberdeenshire Council as part of the 1999/2000 renovation. The footprints of the original chimney breasts, which were taken down for safety reasons, are still evident also.



Ballater Station Footprint

## CURRENT CONDITION



Building within Temporary Enclosure



## CURRENT CONDITION



The Pend looking towards Platform entrance

## CURRENT CONDITION



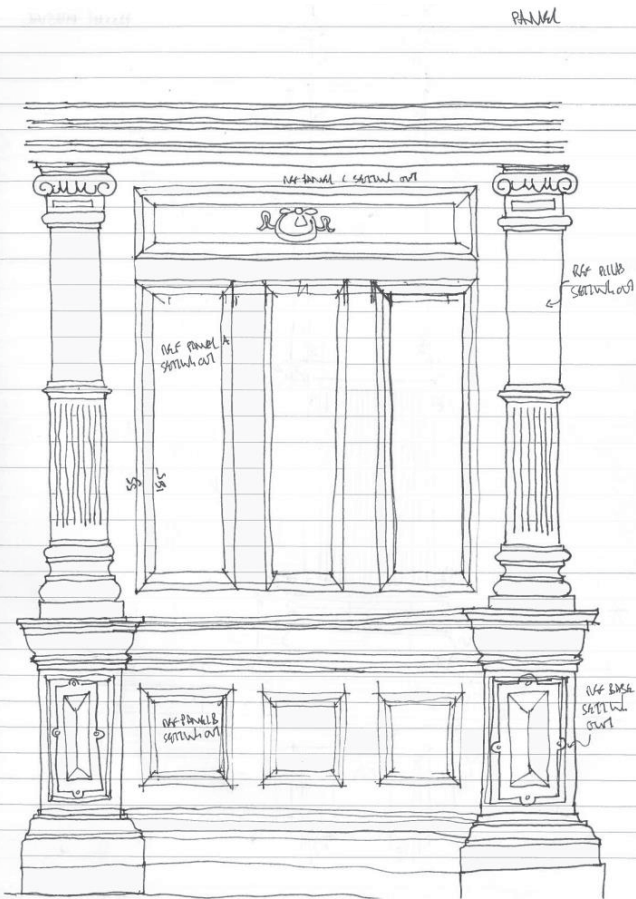
The pend looking toward Station Square entrance



# CURRENT CONDITION

## Queen Victoria's Waiting Room

Queen Victoria's Waiting Room was surveyed over the course of several site visits to detail and record the current condition of the remaining decorative wall panels. Specialists were consulted on the condition and restoration potential for the decorative wood panelling and stained glass, with their guidance used to direct the restoration process of this unique and historic room.



Survey Detail of Wall Panel



Stained Glass Window Condition

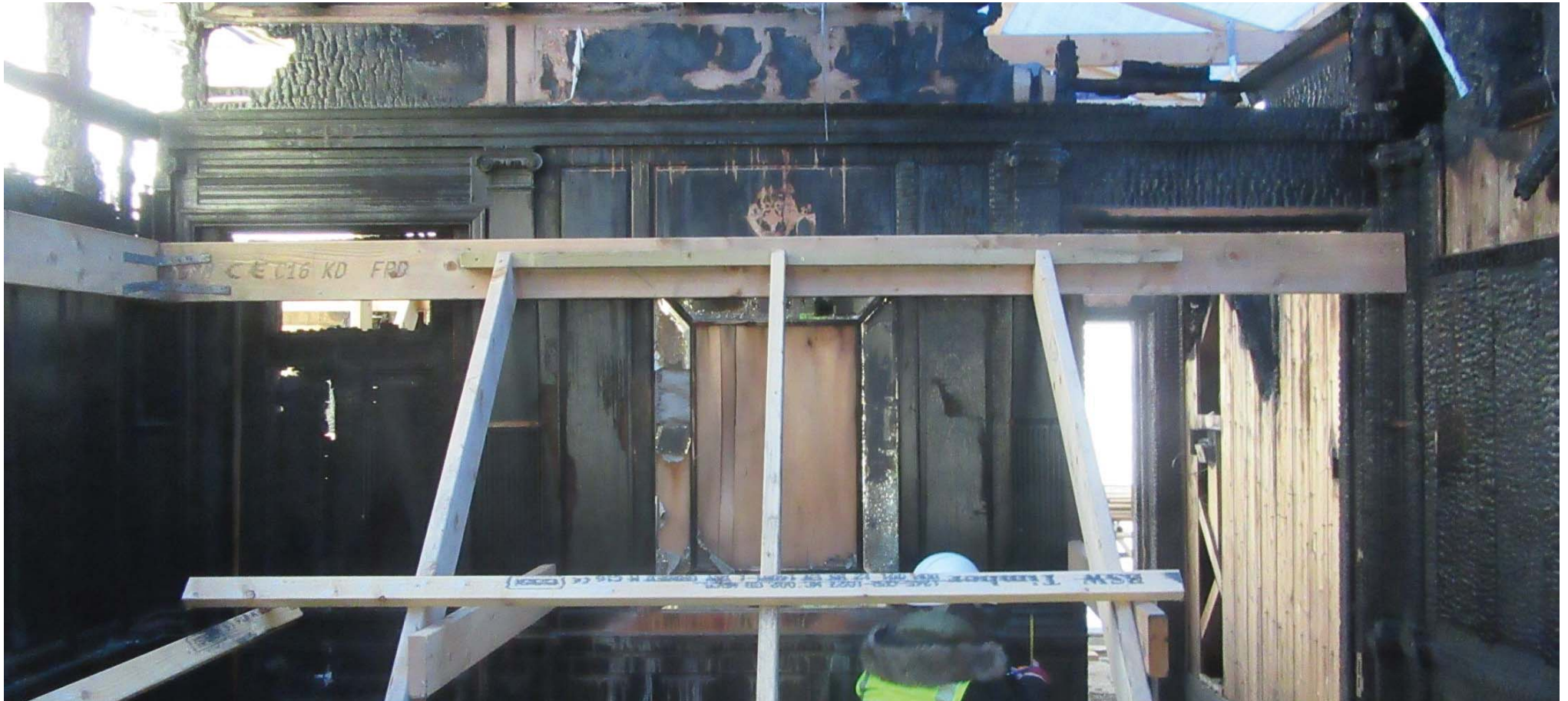
## CURRENT CONDITION



Queen Victoria's Waiting Room



## CURRENT CONDITION



Queen Victoria's Waiting Room

## CURRENT CONDITION



Wall Panel Condition