



The Settle and Carlisle Railway Trust

Caring for Historic Railway Buildings along the Line

Horton-in-Ribblesdale Station - Details of the Restoration

The Decline and Fall

Following the complete closure of Horton-in-Ribblesdale station on 4th May 1970 the building entered a period of decline which saw a marked deterioration in its condition. Like many station buildings along the line it found new use as a shelter and mess room for Permanent Way engineers and their staff.

Fortunes for the station began to improve with the introduction of the Dales Rail trains in 1974, followed by permanent reopening to scheduled passenger trains from 14th July 1986.

The building by now was in a poor state and urgently needed attention. Gone were most of its original features such as the decorative bargeboards and casement windows with margin bars. The biggest loss was the former Gents toilet and coal store wing to the north end of the building, which disappeared sometime during the 1970's.

Railtrack Takes Over

With the creation of Railtrack in 1994 came a programme of Backlog Maintenance to attend to buildings such as Horton that were in desperate need of repair and renewal. In 1995 Horton was included in this scheme, now rebranded as the Station Regeneration Programme.

Major work was undertaken to make the building weatherproof by renewing the roof and the windows. Care was taken to restore these features to their original pattern and design, replacing the inappropriate style of windows and bargeboards fitted over the intervening years.

The interior of the building was replastered throughout and new internal and external doors to original Midland Railway patterns were fitted.

Other work included resurfacing the platforms and installing lighting. Work was completed in 1997.



The Trust's Project

With the completion of its first major project at Ribbleshead, the Trust turned its attention to Horton-in-Ribblesdale as this building remained unoccupied since Railtrack's Station Regeneration Programme work.

The Trust successfully negotiated with Network Rail a 125 year lease on the building, similar to that obtained for Ribbleshead. This included the main station building in its entirety and the parcel of land to the rear. As with Ribbleshead, the Trust undertook full maintenance, repair and renewal responsibility for the building.

Although essential work had been carried out by Railtrack, much remained to be done to make the building habitable. What presented itself was effectively a shell.

Plans were drawn up for submission to the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority to obtain Planning Permission for the physical works and for change of use.

These plans in more detail included:-

- new electricity and water supplies, new drainage and telecoms connections;
- installation of damp-proof membranes under the stone and concrete floors in the former Ladies' Waiting Room, Ticket Hall and Waiting Shed;
- installation of power sockets, light fittings, heating and telephone points, with all the attendant wiring;
- creation of toilet and mess room facilities;
- relining the chimney flues in the former Ticket Hall and Booking Office and installing fireplaces to allow 'real' coal fires to be lit;
- internal redecoration throughout and fitted carpet tiles in the office accommodation;
- improved passenger waiting accommodation with lighting and heating;
- full external repaint in the maroon, cream and black scheme adopted for the S&C line.

In addition to this it was discovered that the bargeboards and ridge tiles previously fitted were to an incorrect pattern for this type of building, so plans were included to replace these with the correct design.

Work Begins

Full Planning Consent was granted by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority in May 2002.

In the meantime a detailed specification was drawn up with the accompanying working drawings. Once the statutory Building Regulations and Network Rail approvals had been obtained, the work was put out to tender and the contract was awarded to G. I. Hopleys Ltd., of Settle. Work commenced on site on Monday 9th September 2002.

Work progressed well with few major problems.

The installation of a new electricity supply proved to be the biggest challenge. Difficulty in obtaining wayleave to cross private land to link with the nearest suitable power supply threatened to escalate the costs considerably. Fortunately this matter was resolved and a costly detour was avoided.

An existing water supply was unearthed outside the building, which proved suitable for connection. Likewise the old drainage that had fallen into disuse proved to be suitable for restoration and reconnection.

Despite commencing work in the autumn the weather during the ensuing winter was relatively kind and no serious delays were experienced as a result.

Work was finally completed in January 2003.

There were a couple of interesting spin-offs as a result of this project.



Mention has been made of the wrong pattern of bargeboards and ridge tiles. It was pointed out that a similar mistake had been made with the Waiting Room on the opposite platform. Separate funding was obtained from Railway Heritage Trust to replace these to match the main building.

At the back of the main building there was a former signal box lamp hut, commonly found on the Midland Railway, made of corrugated metal. A separate grant was obtained from the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority to restore this for use as a storage shed for the gardener.

