

Railway Architecture

A Glance Back and A Look Forward





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The exhibition outlines the roles of British Rail's Chief Architect's Department and Property Board over a period during which a dramatic change has taken place in the national railway system.

British Rail has inherited a railway system which at its height during the latter part of the nineteenth century, was virtually the sole means of inland transport for passengers and freight for all except the shortest distances. The growth of the railways was fundamental to Britain's lead as an industrial nation.

The railway system in its present form is the result of successive amalgamations of competitive railway companies, nationalisation, rationalisation under the Beeching Plan and subsequent consolidation.

The Role of the Chief Architect's Department

The Architect's role is to build and adapt where possible to meet the requirements of an integrated passenger and freight service. The inheritance of buildings from the past has included many which have long outlived their reasonable lifespan and have suffered the ravages of two world wars. Neglect in successive periods of austerity and lack of sufficient investment has created additional problems. Many of the larger buildings which had in their time been major stations and termini have become redundant or their importance has been reduced. A large part of the exhibition explains some of the difficulties encountered and shows how a fine architectural heritage is being preserved.

The task of building to meet the new demands of a modern integrated railway network is also dealt with in full. Buildings recently completed which illustrate the wide range of properties required are included in the exhibition. Operational buildings include not only stations and termini, but transport interchange facilities, power signal boxes and other new types of buildings. Non-operational buildings cover research centres, railway offices, computer buildings, the Railway Museum at York and developments for the Property Board.

The Role of British Rail Property Board

British Railways Board is one of the largest landowners within the U.K. owning some 200,000 acres—one of the largest if judged on property values alone. Some of this land is put to uses not directly connected with running railways and is managed by the British Rail Property Board. These sites are used for agriculture, shops, offices, warehouses, factories and storage. Such properties currently contribute approximately £26 million a year gross to the Board's revenues whilst sales of property last year amounted to £14.7 million.

The Management of British Rail's estate is carried out by the Property Board through a headquarters and seven regions. In each of the regions the Estate Surveyor and Manager carries the responsibility to ensure that the Board's property is put to the most appropriate use whilst at the same time maintaining and improving the revenue derived from it.

British Rail will continue to retain the best examples of a fine architectural heritage while introducing the benefits of modern design and technology.

The exhibition is designed and co-ordinated by the Chief Architect's Dept. and features the wide range of work covered by that department and of the Property Board, drawing attention to the challenge, achievements and some of the problems encountered.

This brochure includes a pictorial selection of the work displayed in the exhibition.



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Heritage—Stations

1 Huddersfield Station 1846
Architect: Pritchett & Sons

3 Bristol Temple Meads Station 1839-40
Architect: Brunel & Wyatt

2 Chester Station 1847-48
Architects: Wild & Thompson

4 Brighton Station 1841
Architect: David Mocatta



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5 Great Malvern Station (Worcs.) 1861-62
Architect: E. W. Emslie

6 Barnes Station (Surrey)

7 Poulton-le-Fylde (Lancs.)

8 Stowmarket (Suffolk) 1847
Architect: E. J. Barnes

Heritage—Adaptation

9 Cambridge Station
Eastern Region

11 Hull Station, ticket office
Eastern Region

10 Glasgow Queen Street Station
Scottish Region

12 Waterloo Travel Centre
Southern Region



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Heritage—New Uses for Old Buildings

13 Stoke by Clare Station
Outline Planning Consent for dwelling house

15 Kings Cross
Goods Office conversion

14 Wolferton Station
Sold by auction and converted as dwelling house

16 Eastleigh Railway Workshops
Industrial Estate—Stage 1



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Railway Buildings of the 1960's

17 Coventry Station

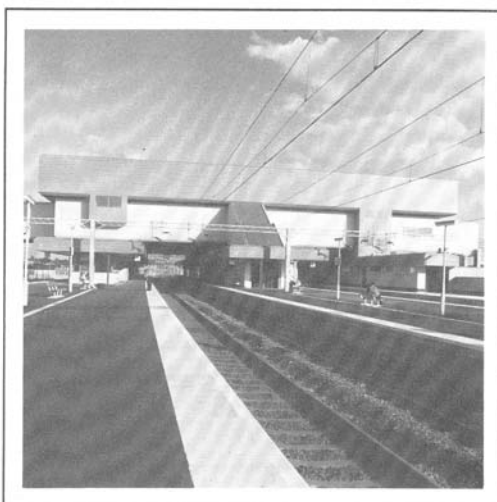
18 Euston Station

19 Harlow Station

20 Harlow Mill Signal Box



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New Buildings

21 Bradford Interchange 1977
Eastern Region

23 Gloucester Station 1977
Western Region

22 Birmingham International Station 1976
London Midland Region

24 Sevenoaks Station 1977
Southern Region

25 Hassocks Station 1973
Southern Region



25

26 Maze Hill 1972
Southern Region



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28 Fort William Station 1976
Scottish Region



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Recent Non-Operational Buildings

29 Railway Technical Centre, Derby
Scientific research, design and development complex

31/32 National Railway Museum, York.
Designed and built by B.R. for Department of Education and Science.

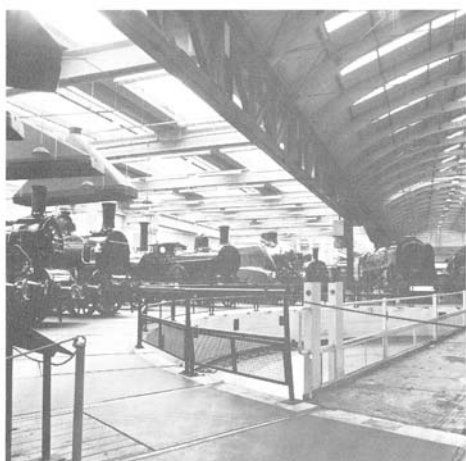
30 Hudson House, York
Eastern Region H.Q.



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Recent Property Board Developments

33 London Bridge Offices 1976

34 Blackfriars Offices 1977

35 Euston Offices, under construction

36 Buchanan Street Glasgow Offices
nearing completion.

The exhibition was designed by the Chief Architect's Department of British Rail and produced by British Railways Board Publicity Department.

Photography and processing by
British Transport Films.

Photographs of the following buildings were supplied by Sam Lambart:
R.T.C. Derby, Birmingham International Station, and Bradford Interchange.

Opp. page: Kirby Park Walkway: children enjoying the freedom of a public walkway along the disused West Kirby/Parkgate branch line, which was sold to the local authority.



