

Dartford Station Improvement

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TOP: New Dartford station structure

BOTTOM: Ticket hall

Creating a “landmark structure” at Dartford station

Dartford Station was built in the 1960s as a major interchange station in North Kent. The original station comprised of a main building, two station staff accommodation buildings and two island platforms, accessed via an enclosed overbridge with DDA lift access.

The aging station was identified as requiring significant works, and both Network Rail and Dartford Borough Council wished to raise the appearance of the area. Their vision was to create a ‘landmark structure’ as a new gateway to Dartford Town, along with much improved station interchange facilities for the railway users. The resulting new station is part of Network Rail’s National Stations Improvement Programme, and Dartford is the largest NSIP scheme in the country.

Through innovative designs, clever phasing and meticulous coordination to keep passengers flowing while the existing station building was demolished to make way for the new one, we are proud to have delivered this iconic structure. We developed a solution to provide fully segregated temporary pedestrian re-routing and ticketing facilities to platforms. This enabled the station to remain fully operational through the Olympics and created efficiencies for the main station construction. We also introduced alternative layouts to increase the useable floor space and efficient entrance layouts to improve revenue through additional parking spaces.

On 23 August 2013, the new station building was opened to the general public for the first time, along with new offices for Southeastern Trains. The new passenger’ facilities include improved ticket office, toilets, open concourse and station entrance. The offices are occupied by station management, revenue protection officers and train drivers. The building has been well received and there have been many positive comments. Network Rail’s Route Managing Director for Kent described it as an ‘impressive and a vast improvement’.

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The next phase of works included demolition of adjacent railway buildings, external parking and landscaping to complete the station improvement scheme.

Challenging objectives and sustainable successes

The successful award of this competitively tendered design and build project was due to our team's determination to find the best solution for our customer. We proposed an alternative location for a Temporary Ticket Office to offer significant savings in terms of minimising disruption, programme duration and cost. In addition, innovative foundation designs were developed for the platform canopy foundations again providing savings in terms of both cost and programme.

From the outset the collaborative project team set themselves challenging objectives:

- To create a seamless Network Rail and Osborne team to ensure that Southeastern Trains, adjacent neighbours, stakeholders and most importantly the railway passengers were at the forefront of our thinking at all times.
- To deliver a quality project by adopting personal behaviours and values of which we can all be proud and providing a demonstrable showcase for Network Rail and our supply partners to deliver further development works associated with the station.



TOP: New Dartford station and landscaping

MIDDLE: Meeting the team

BOTTOM: Station cladding reflecting the sunlight

Pushing on through the 2012 Olympics

In the build-up to the London 2012 Olympics, the temporary access works were accelerated to prevent disruption to the additional passengers experienced through the station during the Olympic period. Opening of the temporary access allowed the demolition of the existing building to be completed and the new building work to be commenced during a time when many other major schemes had to suspend site activities. In addition, the efficient use of possessions ensured successful realignment of the running

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Innovative design and commercially advantageous

The new main entrance was designed to modernise the appearance of the station front through the provision of a double volume stainless steel planar glazed main entrance. This provided level access into the station with a new canopy constructed from a ply membrane stretching the length of the South Elevation.

The canopy forms a 'floating roof' and offers weather protection to all major entrances to the building. The external envelope of the building consists of panelling which provides natural light and an open feel to the station and durable vitreous enamel metal rain screen.



One of the main design challenges was to manage the variance between the elaborate and expensive architectural demands with known budgetary restraints on the project. Our solution was to explore alternatives to the proposed design at an early stage in the bidding process and to engage early involvement of our designer partner.

As works continued within the weather proof fully encapsulated perimeter, our specialist Building Manager controlled the internal fit-out, driving coordination between trades to ensure a seamless transition and right-first time approach taking the project to completion.

TOP: Newly resurfaced platforms

BOTTOM: Station cladding reflecting the sunlight