

## Bath Southgate Transport Interchange

### 1.0 Background to the Project

The promoters of the Southgate Development have previously submitted planning and listed building applications for the design of a transport interchange in the locality of Bath Spa Station. Those proposals were not consented, but have served to highlight issues of primary concern and to quantify the aspirations of the key legislative and advisory parties.

To bring some fresh thinking to the scheme, BANES advisers, in conjunction with English Heritage, suggested that the Southgate Development team engage a new designer for the transport Interchange part of the project, the aspiration being to create a contemporary architecture for the development.

The Southgate Development Team appointed Wilkinson Eyre Architects and Livingston Eyre Landscape Architects back in 1999 to develop designs for the interchange and its environs.

After helping to develop a brief in conjunction with Bathnes, Wilkinson Eyre Architects developed proposals for relocating the existing bus station in Bath, and creating a transport interchange, primarily for bus and rail services, and a gateway worthy of a city of the stature of Bath.

Bath Transport Interchange is central to the concept of the Southgate Redevelopment; an extensive mixed-use development occupying the site from the River Avon to New Orchard Street and from Southgate to Manvers Street. The project is fundamental to the objectives of Bath & North East Somerset Council, and is also key to the commercial rationale for the much needed redevelopment of Southgate.



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### 2.0 Executive Summary

The basic diagram of the scheme relocates the bus station to the same side of Dorchester Street as Bath Spa railway station, and enhances the feeling of interchange between the two transport nodes through the introduction of a new civic plaza. This is a key element of the proposals and offers clear benefits to both the successful functioning of the interchange and the ability of the plaza to succeed as a 'place'. The removal of the existing ramp facilitates access into the previously hidden station vaults, unlocking them for refurbishment and allowing them to be used as a public amenity to enliven the plaza.

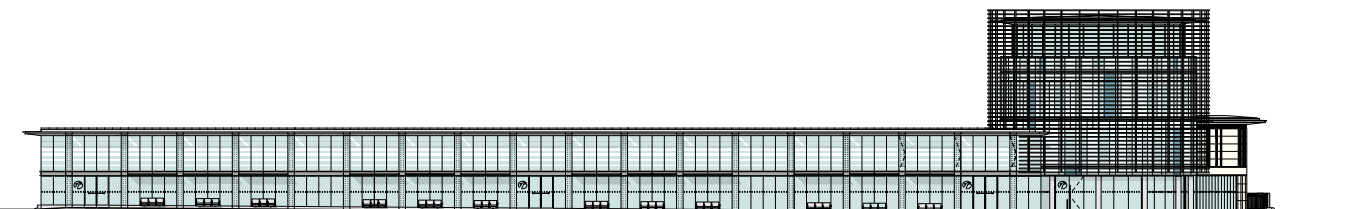
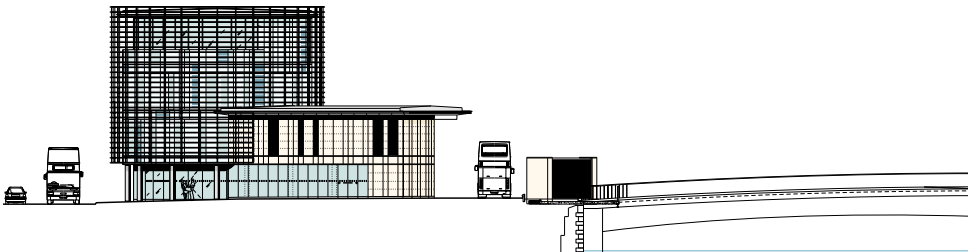
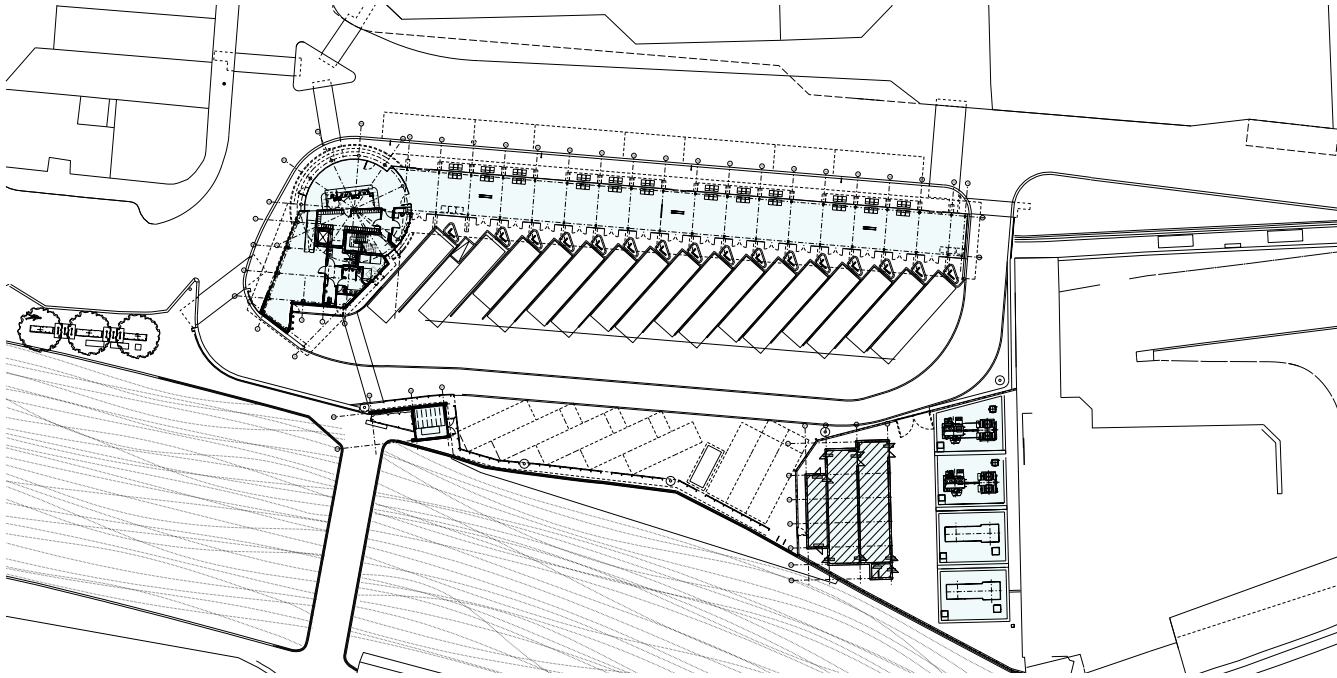
Bath Spa station has been reviewed and re-organised with proposed amendments to uses within the station, and changes to the permeability and navigation of the station environs by passengers and pedestrians. New station entrances are proposed to the south and north-west and alternative routes to the east and west have been retained and improved. The 1841 and 1897 buildings are revealed by the demolition of poor-quality 20th century additions to the north-west and south-east. New views to the station have been opened up by the removal of physical constraints as well as the current saturation of the station perimeter by parked and moving vehicles.

### Principal Objectives

- To create a legible gateway to the City of Bath
- To deliver an effective and attractive urban transport interchange
- To preserve and enhance the heritage of Bath Spa Station
- To unlock the potential of the existing station vaults

### Architectural Issues

- Create a dynamic, contextually aware and appropriate architectural solution
- Provide comfortable, practical and attractive working and public environments
- Design for durability, low maintenance and sustainability



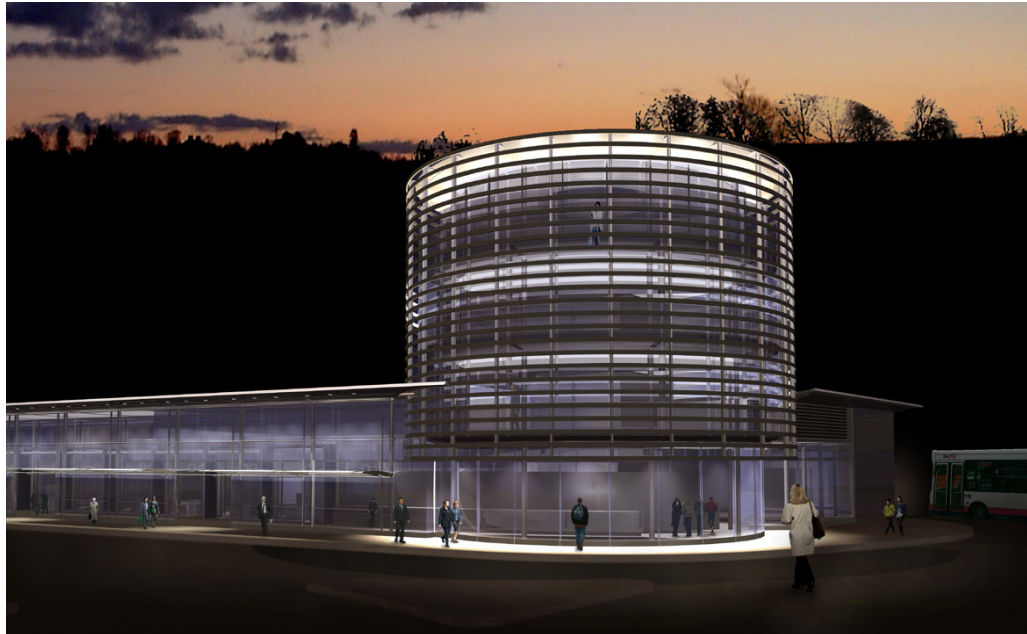


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### 3.0 Site Strategy

The scheme proposes an integrated transport interchange, orientated on an east – west axis bordering the river Avon to the south, and Dorchester Street to the north. Dorchester Street is central to the proposal, as it acts as a threshold between the defined transport zone to its south and the commercial City to its north.

The design for Bath Spa Bus Station, to the west of Bath Spa Railway Station, considers the speculated capacity requirements at 2008 and combines with the railway station as a single cohesive single site public transport hub for Bath. The anticipated level of on-street bus activity is largely facilitated by the disposition of the elements of the Interchange and most significantly the retention of Dorchester Street in a legible form.



### 4.0 Building Form and Layout

#### The New Bus Station Building

The design consists of two main elements; the passenger concourse and the bus operator's building.

The passenger concourse provides shelter and seating for passengers waiting for buses. The concourse is an enclosure consisting of a predominantly glass screen to Dorchester Street, with seating to the passenger concourse distributed along its length and to the bus stops along Dorchester Street. Canopies provide shelter to the seating outside the concourse. The south elevation consists of portals to the 16 bus bays within the interchange. Each bay has its own number and bus information signage, remotely controlled glass doors and barriers to control the flow of people on and off the buses.

A standing seam roof to the concourse is proposed, addressing the sensitive view from Beechen Cliff of the roofscape of the development.

The concourse building connects to the bus operator's building to the west of the site. The majority of the bus operator's accommodation is housed within the 4 storey rotunda building. The decision on a rotunda style building was driven on the grounds of its contribution to the townscape by the BANES Architectural Adviser, Sir William Whitfield.

The public amenity is located on the ground floor. This comprises of the ticket office, information desk and café. This includes public toilet provision appropriate to the café. Outside café opening times, public toilets will be operated within the station vaults development. The meter and refuse rooms are also located at ground floor, both with external access.

#### Alterations to Bath Spa Station

The proposal assumes the provision of new lifts, kiosk retail and potential re-opening of the station's south entrance.

The scheme proposes a number of minor changes to the Grade 2\* listed Bath Spa Station, primarily to integrate the station building cohesively within the new transport interchange and improve usage and clarity of the building. The proposals also look to improve the setting of the historic structure.

The building is in effect two independent structures, built to the north and south of the railway viaduct and encompassing arches 36-44. Currently the majority of these vaults are unused or under utilised and the scheme aims to unlock them for viable commercial use by the careful manipulation of existing spaces and current leases. In order to enable this regeneration, several alterations are required to the listed fabric.

The scheme proposes the demolition of the late 20th century single-storey crescent extension that houses the Lemon Tree Café, and which partially abuts the historic brick façade at the north-west of the station. It is proposed to relocate the café use into the ground floor of the 1897 extension, which will be given an improved setting by the design. Openings in the arcaded wing of Brunel's station frontage will be reglazed and a new western entrance into the station constructed behind it.





National Waterfront Museum Swansea



Explore at-Bristol



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### 5.0 Wilkinson Eyre experience dealing with sensitive sites / listed fabrics

Many of Wilkinson Eyre's projects have involved designing for sensitive historic locations, or within a wider estate of architectural significance. These require an approach which respects the context, while at the same time introducing high quality interventions that stand the test of time in their own right,

We have extensive experience working with English Heritage and similar groups on the refurbishment and redevelopment of historic buildings. These projects include Explore@Bristol, where the result of our collaboration with the client, English Heritage and our co-consultants is an innovative science exploratory. The challenge was creating this, the most contemporary of environments within the context of a listed concrete structure, built in 1903 and representing an early and elegant example of the Hennebique reinforced concrete system. The National Waterfront Museum at Swansea, which has this year received an RIBA Award, a Civic Trust Award and a Regeneration Award, also involved the addition of new elements to an existing listed structure – and here too we worked closely with heritage advisors, this time from Cadw, English Heritage's counterpart in Wales.

We are also working on projects for Cambridge and Oxford Universities within highly sensitive contexts.





Royal Botanic Gardens Kew - Alpine House



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Several of our projects have been concerned with wider sites that are internationally recognised for their historic status. These include a development plan for Kew Gardens and the Liverpool King's Dock development, both of which have recently become UNESCO World Heritage sites. At both projects, our principal concern has been to ensure that the environments continue to develop and grow their unique heritage rather than simply being 'preserved' at a single point in history. We believe this objective mirrors closely those for Bath where any redevelopment is very much part of a continuity, drawing from the past to create an improved future.

We feel that it is important to outline in more detail our work within sensitive locations as this experience is critical to the success of the Southgate project.



King's Waterfront Liverpool

