

Rochdale Station Square (20/01551/FUL)

Discharge Condition 14

MARCH 2025

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1 Introduction

Rochdale Station Square (RSSq) is a new public realm scheme outside the northern entrance of the railway station which will provide a new gateway to the town and a catalyst to the regeneration of the Station Area. Arcadis have been appointed as to progress the scheme from the concept within the permission through to Detail Design, with construction programmed to commence within the first quarter of 2025.

Planning permission (20/01551/FUL) was granted in July 2023, subject to conditions, which the Arcadis team are currently in the process of seeking to discharge.

1.1 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to address the matters raised in Condition 14 (Accessibility) of the planning permission and seek permission from the Local Planning Authority to discharge this condition. The report will demonstrate how the RSSq provides the continuation of access for residents, visitors to the area, and businesses is retained including opportunities for on-street parking.

1.2 Requirements of Condition 14

Condition 14 of planning permission 24/01551/FUL states:

Prior to commencement of development, a statement (and supporting technical details as necessary) setting out how the development hereby approved will ensure an acceptable standard of accessibility for all visitors (including those with disabilities) to premises around the development, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In order to support the accessibility objectives of Strategic Objectives SO4 and SO5 and policies T1 and T2 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy 2016.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: Owing to the nature of the development, it is not considered that the condition could otherwise be made enforceable.

2 Rochdale Station Square Accessibility for Visitors

2.1 Key Visitor Destinations

There are numerous existing land uses within and immediately around the boundary of RSSq that attract visitors on a daily basis and these are highlighted in Figure 1.

Figure 1 – Location of Existing Visitor Destinations Local to



2.2 Accessibility by Design

Accessibility to the buildings and businesses surrounding RSSq will be enhanced for those accessing on foot through the following key design factors:

- The removal of sections of highway reduces the number of road crossing required and provides greater space for pedestrians to move between different destinations.
- There is level and seamless surface across the majority of the square.
- The crossing of Station Road directly outside the station entrance will almost level with the main square with a reduces height kerb and tactile paving to assist recognition of the crossing by those with visual impairments.
- Tactile paving, in accordance with current guidance and best practice, is to be provided across all dedicated road crossing points.
- Contrasts in materials used for the paving and footways are proposed to be used around crossing points to further enhance the usability of the square by those with visual impairments.

2.3 Accessibility by Public Transport

There are 4 modes of public transport within that provides access to the wider Rochdale Station Area for visitors, namely:

- Metrolink (tram)
- National / Local Rail
- Buses
- Taxis

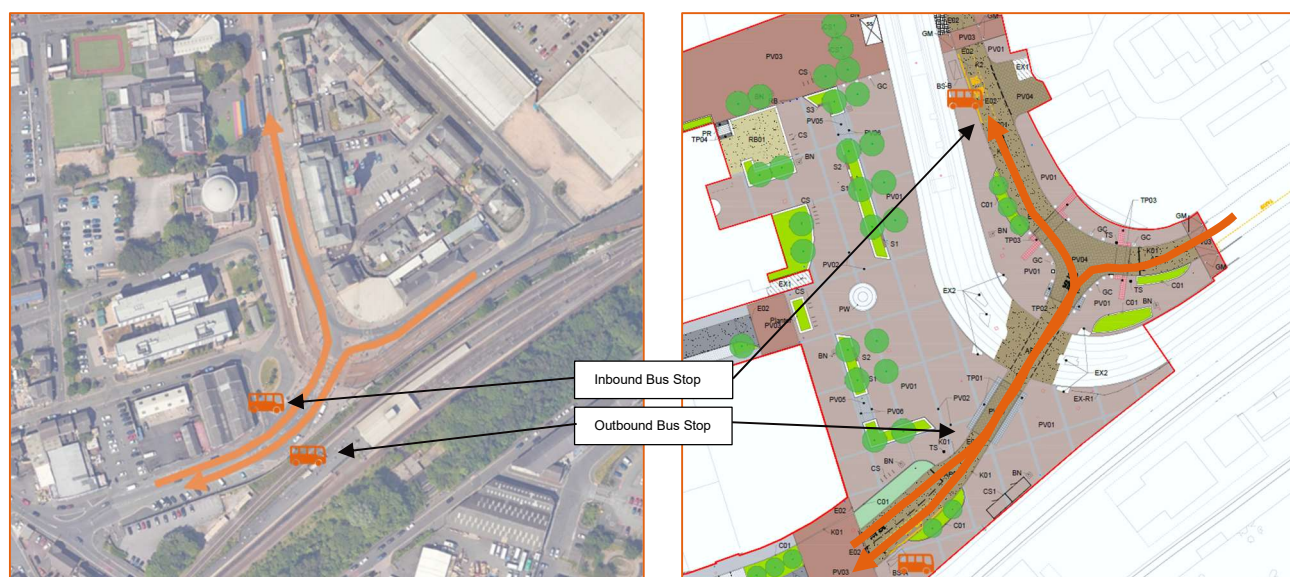
Metrolink & National / Local Rail

Accessibility to the Rochdale Station Area by both Metrolink and national / local rail services are not impacted by the proposed scheme. The high level of accessibility to and from their respective stations when the RSSQ scheme is implemented will be retain for visitors.

Buses

The routing for local bus services is unaffected by the scheme when implement. Currently the bus services that call at the bus stops on Station Road outside the train station take one of two routes, depending upon destination. These routes will remain when RSSq has been implemented, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 – Current Routes of Buses & Proposed Through RSSq



The outbound (westbound services) bus stop is to be retained in the same position on the south side of Station Road to the immediate west of the entrance to the train station. The inbound (eastbound services) bus stop is proposed to be relocated to west side of Maclure Road to a position opposite the Greater Manchester Fire Museum, 65m walk from the current position, as shown in the comparison in Figure 2.

The new bus stops will be constructed to the specifications of TfGM including shelters and level-access kerbs to allow easier access to the bus.

Taxis

The taxi rank (Hackney Carriage pick-up) is proposed to be relocated to from its current position at a dedicated space on Station Road (East) consolidating the current rank on Dowling Street and feeder rank on Station Road (East). This proposed relocation as part of RSSq, supported by the Rochdale Taxi Association, does not change the distance passengers have to walk from the entrance of Rochdale train station to the head of the rank.

Drop-off to the station area, particularly for the train station and Nye Bevan House, currently takes place in dedicated short-stay parking bays located on Station Road either side of the station entrance. This provision is to be retained within RSSq when implemented.

2.4 Accessibility to Key Destination

2.4.1 Local Residences

Within and immediately adjacent to RSSq there are several residential properties including those along Maclure Road, Station Yard (accessed from Maclure Road), Ann Street and Lower Tweeddale Street. Access to these homes on a street-by-street basis with RSSq in place is described below.

- **Maclure Road** – Access remains unchanged with Station Road (east) and Maclure Road remaining open to general traffic and continuing to operate as a one-way street northbound. Residents parking on the east side of Maclure Road will be retained.
- **Station Yard** – Vehicular and pedestrian access remains unchanged as with Station Road (east) and Maclure Road remaining open to general traffic and continues to operate as one-way street.
- **Lower Tweeddale Street** – Access and departure will be from the western end of the street through the revised priority junction with Milkstone Road / Tweeddale Street and change of operation to two-way.

2.4.2 Nye Bevan House

Pick-Up & Drop-Off

Pick-up and drop-off of staff, visitors and patients coming to Nye Bevan House currently takes place, legally, from both Lower Tweedale Street and Dowling Street utilising the dedicated on on-street parking bays that are time limited to allow for this. This can also take place along a short section of the northern side of Dowling Street where there are Double Yellow lines but no loading and unloading restrictions. With the RSSq scheme these pick-up and drop-off will continue to be available. See Figure 3.

Dowling Street and Lower Tweedale Street will be converted to two-way operation to allow vehicles to arrive and depart.

Parking

Time limited on-street parking bays are provided on Dowling Street and Lower Tweedale Street with further nays available on Ann Street and Station Road. There is also Nye Bevan House's dedicated patient car park that is accessed from Ann Street. With the closure of traffic past the front of the train station to general traffic and the removal of Dowling Street vehicular traffic is required to re-route.

Pedestrians

The creation of RSSq provides improved access for pedestrians, particularly those with disabilities and mobility impairments, to access Nye Bevan from different arrival points. The design creates level access routes through the square that are now free from vehicular traffic, apart from crossing the bus only lane (very low trafficked) and the Metrolink tracks, depending on arrival point.

These pedestrian routes are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3 – Nye Bevan House Key Pedestrian Routes



2.4.3 St John the Baptist RC Church

St John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church (the Church) car park is accessed from Dowling Street, and this will continue to be the case when RSSq is implemented. Dowling Street will be converted to two-way operation to allow vehicles to arrive and depart, and there are level pedestrian access routes across the shared turnaround space outside the Church.

2.4.4 St John's RC School

St John's Roman Catholic School is accessed by pedestrians from Ann Street and will not change with the implementation of RSSq.

2.4.5 Fire Station Museum & Fire Up

The Fire Station Museum and Fire-Up are accessed by Pedestrians from Maclure Road with visitors arriving by car or bus accessing the car park from Richard Street. This does not change with the implementation of RSSq.

2.4.6 Local Businesses

There are several private businesses currently on the periphery of RSSq with pedestrian and vehicular access to these local businesses is unobstructed by the implementation of the scheme.

A short section of Station Road (west) on the northern side will retain the current vehicular access to the car park for Worldwide Foods and the Station Approach Business Estate until such time as the sites come forward for redevelopment in line with the *'Rochdale Station Supplementary Planning Document'*.

Time limited on-street parking will continue to be provided on Dowling Street, Station Road, and Lower Tweedale Street.

3 Conclusion

The implementation of Rochdale Station Square will provide a transformation of the area outside the northern entrance with the creation of a new pedestrian only space. Whilst the closure of Station Road to general traffic, allowing buses to pass in front of the station entrance, will require some minor rerouting of general traffic access for residents, visitors to the area and businesses is retained including opportunities for on-street parking.

Appendix A

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